Introductory Statement

The Canadian Society of Church History presents herewith a selection of papers delivered at its meetings held in June, 1979, at the University of Saskatchewan. The reproduction of these papers in this form is essentially for the convenience of members of the Society, although a limited number of copies are available to interested persons and institutions, and may be ordered from the Treasurer, Prof. C.F. Johnston, St. Andrew's College, 1121 College Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7N 0W3. Distribution in this form does not preclude publication of these papers elsewhere, and copyright remains the property of the authors.

At the time of publication the Presidential address on religious radio broadcasting in Newfoundland was not available--it is hoped that it will be published in future. Professor Frank Peake's paper on Anglican theological education in Sakatchewan will be included in a forthcoming history of the College of Emmanuel and St. Chad.

The Society's next annual meeting will be held at the Université de Québec (Montréal), June 2 and 3, 1980. Persons interested in membership or seeking more information about the Society are invited to write to the Secretary, Prof. John Moir, Scarborough College, University of Toronto, 1265 Military Trail, West Hill, Ontario, M1C 1A4.

President John Netten
Memorial University

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THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH UNDER STRESS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA SINCE 1960

By
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The question of Christian involvement in political activities, especially those which employ bloodshed as a legitimate weapon has exercised the minds of Christian leaders of every denomination in the last twenty years. The dilemma itself is not new. Two examples will suffice. When Herr Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany in 1933, it soon became clear to certain German clergymen that his murder might save Germany of far greater wickedness than the act of murder itself. Eric Bonhoeffer conspired to murder, was arrested and died in prison. One wonders, in reflection, whether indeed his action was the supreme sacrifice to his nation.[1] In the history of Christian endeavor, the case of South Africa never fails to raise extreme pathos. I am reminded of the late Mr. Steve Biko's "case against the Christian church" in South Africa. There, the South African government based its iniquitous system of apartheid on Christian doctrine, arguing that the Christians (i.e. whites) should not be unequally yoked with pagans (blacks). What is heart-rending is that, according to Biko, on the whole, the Christian missions cooperated with the government and helped make the bitter results of this pernicious doctrine sweet. "But we charge the white man's church for lacking . . . men of vision, for the fact that we alone had to win our freedom and to discover our blackness. Thus missionaries . . . diverted our attention from this world and its demands and turned it towards a final hope in the future, towards a heaven unconnected with this world. With their moral precepts of humility and obedience they extolled an everlasting life and death."[2] We can add a few words from Lord George Mcleod, moderator of the Church of Scotland in 1959-60. It was to this state of affairs that he addressed himself. Christian leaders in Southern Africa had said to him, "Without law and order civilization itself would wither away." He replied that "it was no good in the face of

(oppression) crying PEACE, PEACE when there is no peace. What we say, for the time being is that somebody must speak for the Africans."[3]

My thesis is that it is not so much that there were no men of vision, passion and charity in the Christian church in South Africa; indeed this paper will show that men of such stature and sensitivity have a strong prophetic tradition there, however, the dilemma is that the majority of whites have turned a deaf ear to the message of the Christian church, even within the bowels of the church itself. This is the basis of the stress the church is going through, voices crying in the wilderness.

The application of this doctrine to Southern Africa follows along the same lines. The details of the South African situation need not detain us needlessly. But it is necessary to emphasize that in a population of 25 million (1978) only 4 million of these enjoy basic human rights, the franchise, freedom of movement over 87 percent of the country, the right to property, and the freedom to job promotion. The rest of the population, 18 million of which are Africans, are condemmed to a life of semi-slavery, a brutish and barbaric experience similar to that described by Thomas Hobbes in Leviathan.

The British Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office in 1909 was told of the brutal treatment of Africans in South Africa at that time to which he replied.

> "I have endevoured to find a single example where a great body of persons like this, a whole race, has been disfranchised in democratic times. If there is such an instance, I cannot find it. That such a thing will happen I cannot believe."[4]

Recently, the British Ambassador to the United Nations was reported to have observed that in South Africa, no amount of virtue, no amount of wisdom, of learning or skills and accomplishment in the arts or sciences would uplift an African from his position of semi-slavery. The significance here is that a man is condemmed or uplifted, not by his own accomplishments but by virtue of his birth. In 1900, some shrewd Scots missionaries had come to the conclusion that "no worse fate could befall the African than to be thrown aside (as in South Africa) as a

useless factor in the development of the country."[5]

. . .

The present crisis in church-state relationships is generally dated to 1960. In that year, the movement for African political independence from Europe was described by the then British Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Macmillan, as having become "a wind of change." Macmillan confessed that the British government had until then failed to realize "the almost revolutionary way in which the situation would develop and the rapid growth of African nationalism throughout the African continent."[6] The massacres by the South African police of black rioters in 1960 and the consequent banishment of all black political leadership shows that even that citadel of white supremacy was shaken by the winds of change.[7] But, as Kenneth Kirkwood has pointed out, the catalyst was the entry of communist influence into Africa with the arrival of newly independent states. Secondly, the communists, by ideology and by technical training, encouraged blacks in the white-ruled states to resort to violence which is generally called "the armed struggle."[8] This point needs emphasis. Throughout their history, Christian leaders had championed various humanitarian causes, legally and within the free enterprise system. Indeed it was because Dr. J. Philip and his friends were stalwart loyalists to the empire and to the "system" that they were so effective. South African Christians, however, have to face the dilemma that by espousing needful reform, they must of necessity be seen to be on the same side with communists. The association between these two groups, which is unintentional but extremely embarrassing,is at the heart of the Christian dilemma in South Africa or indeed any liberal minded white.[9] We must also add another complexity. This association does not worry blacks in South Africa, who consider it a matter of the lion advising the lamb of the oppressive nature of wolf's character.[10] The Christian conscience we are talking about is a minority even within the white Christian community, the great bulk of that community believing that in natural law there are those born to serve, to be hewers of wood and drawers

of water, in this case the African race. Dr. Edward Norman of Oxford University, in his book on Christianity and the world order, ponders and wonders whether this activist Christian minority would not be better served if they concentrated on heavenly matters rather than earthly affairs.[11] With reference to South Africa, Dr. Norman does pronounce his fears, which I believe to be two, namely that with the advent of communist influence, the possibility of peaceful change is now ruled out, secondly, that whatever small and outdated changes may now occur will not be credited to Christian activists. I may have misunderstood his treatise, but if my impression is correct, these are fears with which I fully concur.

. . .

The history of Christian dissent in South Africa can be traced to the indomitable Scottish missionary, the Reverend Dr. John Philip, superintendent of the London Missionary Society (1819-1863) in South Africa. Space does not allow us to detail his achievements but he is associated with the 50th Ordinance of 1828 which in brief said that all men in the Cape, black or white were equal before English courts. This is the basis of the voting rights enjoyed by blacks and coloreds in the Cape Province until 1958. What is often forgotten is that the law was passed while he was in London. He happened to call at the Colonial Office and just to make sure, he asked the colonial secretary to add a clause saying that that law could not be amended retrospectively.[12] His fears were proven to have been well grounded: in 1834, in 1909, in 1928 and in 1958, the last one being the successful one. One can generalize then by saying that there was no love lost between the Dutch people (Afrikaaners) and this militant wing of the Protestant churches.

The present extreme Afrikaaner Nationalist party came to power in 1948 and set up a commission to investigate the activities of these missionaries in black education. The Commissioner, Dr. W. W. M. Eiselen, found the government fears more than justified. The missionaries continued to teach skills even though they knew that blacks were not allowed to practice these skills in a "white man's society."

Worse still, they continued to preach the pernicious doctrine of racial equality even though the realities of the situation contradicted that teaching. Dr. H. F. Verwoed, later prime minister of South Africa, told parliament that racial relations between blacks and whites were poisoned by missionary education. Missionaries caused frustrations among Africans because they roused "expectations in life which circumstances in South Africa do not allow to be fulfilled. It is therefore necessary that native education should be controlled in such a way that it should be in accord with the state policy" of white supremacy.[13] While government support was withdrawn from black schools run by missionary societies, white Christian schools continued to receive support.

The banishment of the African National Congress and the imprisonment of its leaders in 1961 brought a new challenge to the Christian humanists. The black leadership of the African National Congress was almost wholly Christian and non-violent in ideology. Their incarceration meant that there was no organized voice to speak for blacks. Between 1960-1970 this duty fell upon the Anglican Church community. Leading clergymen of this church expressed themselves through the Christian Institute, a non-denominational organization and through the South African Council of Churches. We ought to mention that the English-speaking clergymen were joined by some Dutch-speaking clergymen, the most notable of whom was the Reverend Dr. Beyers-Naude, who in 1970 was moderator of one of the Dutch Reformed Churches. In that year, the Spro-Cas Church Commission was appointed by the South African Council of Churches from which I shall quote only the most controversial of its findings. While the Church Commission "itself cannot bring about the fundamental changes so urgently required in our society . . . we are at variance with those churches and Christians who seek to reconcile the Christian faith with apartheid." (pp. 2-3)

"All too often in the past the church has regarded recommendations and resolutions as a sufficient response to the needs of men in church and society. A faith

which does not issue in action is like a corpse." (p. 69)

The most far reaching conclusion was that apartheid which seeks to divide mankind into groups rather than reconciliation is in actual fact heretical gospel. "It rejects as undesirable the reconciliation and fellowship which God gives us. It thus calls good evil. It re-inforces the divisions which the Holy Spirit calls us to overcome. It is thus a form of resistance to the Holy Spirit."[12] If therefore in the event of armed conflict between the state and forces opposing it, it was incumbent upon good Christians in conscience not to support the state. This is the most radical departure in South Africa to the spirit of co-existence between church and state.

I now wish to discuss the other side of the religious crisis in South Africa. The South African government naturally condemned this report as communist-inspired and placed the Christian Institute under surveillance. The Reverend Theo Kotze and Dr. Beyers-Naude, the Reverend G. French Beytagh, Dr. Alan Patton and the Reverend Cosmos Desmond among others were either placed under house arrest or actually brought before the courts for subversive activities. This of course can be expected. The most fearful development, however, is that the white congregations on the whole agreed with the position taken by the government. The Reverend Dr. Beyers-Naude was expelled and defrocked by his church, the Gereformeede kerk which also suffered a decrease in membership in the ten year period of 1960-1970. The Anglican church suffered notoriety, which was heightened by the arrest of the Reverend G. French Beytagh, Dean of Johannesburgh. From a total membership of 416,472 in 1950, it dropped to 384,448 among its white adherements. This decline is the more significant in that on the whole those churches which maintained a prudent silence actually increased their membership and therefore maintained financial stability as well. The church commission referred to earlier noted with trepidation that the "whites . . . came to demand that instead of questioning their beliefs and (racial) attitudes, the church should support the status quo. In turn members come to regard their church . . . not as demanding something from them . . .

On the contrary it is thought proper for the church to adapt itself to the group, not vice versa." (p. 28)

But this is only one side of the coin. Among black Christians, it was noted, "many articulate black Christians are no longer prepared to meet with white Christians," obviously because it gives them a bad name among their followers. Generally, the missionary led black churches could hardly keep their membership, others suffered through break away churches. While this was true for them, break away churches were growing by leaps and bounds estimated at an average of 10 per cent per annum. The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Durban further noted that in religious as well as in political matters, the African population as a whole does not support gradualism any more. The most "articulate and determined segment of black opinion will not accept gradualism of any kind."[14]

How then does the religious and political crisis appear in the eyes of these articulate and determined blacks? They can be identified as members of the Black Peoples' Convention and the Black Students Organization, both of which have now been outlawed. Various documents, official and otherwise have been published about their perceptions of the truth. Their argument is along the following lines.

To many black people, the teacher and the priest wielded immense influence partly because of his higher income but also because of his European education which made him the go-between blacks and whites. His influence actually supplanted that of the chief or the witch-doctor in urban areas. The tragedy is that their influence was associated with (sic) Christian morality and their actual power with white supremacy. The open support of government policy by the Dutch Reformed Churches and the prudent acquiescence by others inevitably led Africans to the heretical conclusion that there was such a thing as a white Christian Church and a white god. This faith was identical with racial oppression. Unfortunately, white Christians encouraged this heresy by their behavior if not their preaching.[15]

Let me now follow Steve Biko's theology for a while. The old black leadership, particularly that of Congress missed the boat by identifying with white Christianity

and therefore a god dressed in a three piece suit. Secondly, white Christian leadership cannot make a significant contribution to the African struggle because they are part of the trouble. Their role is that of amelioration. The South African system does not need amendments but a thorough cleansing. White Christians have also placed their finger on the wrong problem, which they call racial discrimination, a view supported by the South African Council of Churches. "They tell us that the situation is a class struggle rather than a racial one," argues Biko. "We believe we know what the problem is . . . the whites are our problem." Further, Biko is opposed to reconciliation between the races (or intergration). Intergration would imply the acceptance by blacks of white Christian values, which up to now have negated the humanity of blacks. Thirdly, Christians are naive to believe that a compromise that is acceptable to whites can be found. "We must realize that our situation is not a mistake on the part of whites but a deliberate act, that no amount of lecturing will persuade the white man to 'correct' the situation. (That) all is well with the system apart from some degree of mis-management by irrational conservatives at the top" exceeds even the bounds of acceptable naivete.[16]

In conclusion, one cannot avoid the fact that the young blacks of South Africa have already judged that:

(a) The Christian faith is inextricably linked to capitalism and racism and supports these oppressive-isms.

(b) That an alternative society will therefore have to be sought outside the Christian faith, capitalism and racism.

I will not bother this learned society with further details but I hope you will agree with me that I was justified in entitling this paper: <u>The Christian Church Under Stress</u>.

SOUTHERN RHODESIA

We shall now briefly turn our attention to Southern Rhodesia. In Rhodesia, all the paradoxes of missionary enterprise come to the surface. While it cannot be denied that the Christian church was so tied to the colonial government which the majority of Africans saw as oppressive, the colonial government too saw the church as tied to the cause of justice and racial harmony, which was subversive. After the South African government had confiscated missionary schools in the 1954 Education Act, the Rhodesian colonial government began to appreciate the subversive nature of Christian education. The black Methodist Bishop, the Reverend Abel Muzorewa reminded some African students that while criticisms of missionaries were no doubt justified, they should "not forget that white settlers opposed every advance in African education proposed by the church. White settlers never forgave the missionaries for making natives clever or spoiling the natives, so to use their terms."[17]

Between 1954 and 1965 the Rhodesian government made strenuous efforts to prevent the licensing of new schools especially those that provided for higher education. It is interesting to note that missionaries provided all the capital funds for buildings and equipment, in itself the best example of economic aid to developing countries. This attitude brought the government into direct confrontation with black and white church leaders. We can only summarize the areas in which the Christian church still provides the only human services in direct opposition to government wishes.

(a) By and large remote and primitive areas infested by tsetse fly (sleeping sickness) and malaria are left entirely to missionary service. "For many years," one pastor writes, the Methodist Women's organization, "supported and provided a clinic and annual support of a nurse at Chickwizo, a poor, primitive, and often drought stricken community in the remote north-eastern corner of Rhodesia."[18] One can estimate that about 3 million of the 6 million inhabitants are provided for through Christian service.

(b) In education, between 1955 and 1962, the colonial government "closed as many doors to educational advancement for Africans as it opened . . ." The Christian churches and their supporters began "to take decisive steps to actualize their prayers by investing significant sums in building schools, by setting up adult education programmes and by giving scholarships . . ."[19]

The ten year period between 1955 and 1965 marked a watershed in Rhodesian history. White supremacy came under a strong challenge, but the history of this challenge is itself interesting. The Methodist Church had appointed two Africans, the Reverends T. D. Samkange and J. Risike to principalships of schools in 1945. An observer wrote that this revolutionary step broke the rules of segregation by "proving that they (the blacks) were no less than Europeans in taking part in the running of their educational institutions." Europeans were however correct in believing that this was an ill-omen for white supremacy. The Reverend T. D. Samkange actually became president of a Bantu Congress dedicated to the advancement of the blacks![20] This organization was superceded by the African National Congress in 1957. The ANC focused its attention on the land usage in the colony which was as follows:

Land available		96,425,840 acres
Europeans	population 260,000	land available 44,831,233 acres
Africans	population 6,000,000	land available 44,997, 731

(Figures for 1978)[21]

This opposition to white supremacy was recognized by the British Prime Minister in 1960 as a "wind of change". He wrote that the "most striking of all the impressions I have formed since I left London . . . is of the strength of this African national consciousness in peoples who have lived for centuries in dependence . ."[22] When Mr. Macmillan spoke, 500 leading members of the ANC had been imprisoned and the organization outlawed. Some of them were to remain in

prison until 1975. The vacuum had however been filled in January 1960 by the formation of the Democratic Party which lasted until December 1961. When this party refused to cooperate in a constitutional arrangement whereby Africans would be represented by 15 members in an assembly of 65, it too was outlawed and about 2,000 men and women were put into prison. Its successor the Zimbabwe African People's Union did not last for a year and its leaders too found their way into prison. At this time two camps in the remote bush countryside had been set aside for political prisoners. So far, because the Africans had followed the rules of political conduct set by Britain, they had failed to make an impression. In fact since 1963, an extremist white party, the Rhodesian Front had come to power to find that the African population had been thoroughly cowed down by massive imprisonments. In 1965, that party led by Mr. Ian Smith declared independence from Britain illegally. Any opposition by Africans was insignificant, in all, five different generations of African leaders were now in prison. The significance of this period needs to be emphasized. While the blacks and whites were polarized, any possible and experienced black leader was in prison or in exile. Mr. Smith could therefore negotiate with the British government without any hope of contradiction from Africans. No black political parties were allowed, and had they been allowed they would not have had time to organize effectively. The situation became a desperate one in 1971 when Sir Alexander Douglas-Home, the British Foreign Secretary came to an agreement with Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith, could now boast of the "happiest Africans" in the world precisely because the most stubborn were in prison. Whatever agreement was reached between the British government and himself had a fair chance of success. It was unthinkable that any African organization could put up any sufficient and credible opposition. The British government was tired of the Rhodesian issue and the isolation of Rhodesia by the international community had worsened not alleviated the suffering of Africans. Lord Goodman, a close aide of Sir Alexander Douglas-Home also felt that any settlement would prevent a "horrible

and violent insurrection" on the part of blacks. In any case, argued Lord Goodman, the Africans had already been sold out over the past fifty years, there was nothing left to sell.[23]

What then was this constitutional agreement between the British Government and Mr. Smith which placed Africans in a desperate plight? In summary, white supremacy was to be entrenched in Rhodesia with the aid of the British government until such time as the Europeans, in their wisdom, through a referendum would agree to hand over power to blacks. These arrangements were as follows:

(a) Out of a house of assembly of 66, sixteen would be black representatives.

(b) The assembly was to be elected from two voters' rolls, according to income and education. The higher roll would require a high school certificate and an income of $1,200 p.a., both of which are difficult for Africans to come by. The average European income is $3,000 p.a., while that of blacks is $200 and the majority have no measurable income.

(c) By a mathematical device, Africans would "gain" two new seats with each 6 percent enrollment on the higher roll. This advancement would however stop when they had gained a maximum of 34, or parity with whites.

(d) To sweeten the pill, the British government would place at the disposal of the Rhodesian government 10 million pounds for ten years for African education.[24]

The urgency and desperation engendered by these proposals among the African people cannot now be fully recaptured. The Anglo-Rhodesian settlement was signed on the 21st of November 1971 and on the 16th of December the British government sent Lord Pierce to Rhodesia to test public opinion.[25] A table attached shows that so many African leaders were in prison without trial and that others had been prosecuted and therefore sufficiently "taught a lesson" that by 1969 there were very few left to prosecute.[26]

There was no African political party whatsoever. Who was to speak for the Africans? Only one group capable of leadership seems to have been relatively

unaffected by the colonial government. These were the Christian pastors and it was said that should they decide to take the challenge, it would be extremely embarrassing for Mr. Smith to imprison them. That challenge was now presented in a most urgent form. In addition, pastors were better equipped than any other organization for their task. Despite government opposition, they still owned at least half of all the African schools in Rhodesia. Secondly, they need not call political meetings, they could use Sunday schools for whatever purpose they deemed religious. The churches also had their own printing presses and knew African languages better than the colonial officials. In January 1972 a "Guide to the Proposals for Settlement" was distributed by the Christian Council. The Christian churches through voluntary workers distributed 120,000 copies within a few weeks. When the British Commission reached certain remote villages, they found that the only propaganda the villagers had was that distributed through the local church, which was hostile to the government and to a compromise with white supremacy. That the African leadership, working through the institutions of the Christian church could have, within a period of two months, created such a formidable opposition to Mr. Smith was no less than a miracle. The British Commission concluded that "it was impossible not to be impressed by the efficiency of the African National Council machine . . . where we were prepared to go, so was the machine."[27] Even more shocking to Mr. Smith was the fact that this hastily put up organization had been able to convince the British government not to proceed on the grounds that "mistrust of the intentions and motives of the government transcended all other considerations. This was the dominant motivation of African rejection at all levels and in all areas."[26]

The situation has since worsened with the increasing success of the guerillas. The guerillas, though dating back to 1960, only formed the Patriotic Front in September 1975. Increased and better training on their part, political and military aid from the Soviet Union and Cuba has made them a formidable force.

Unfortunately, the war has been going on for so long now that the possibility of a compromise is out of the question. Bishop Abel Muzorewa of the Methodist Church, who led the formidable opposition to Mr. Smith in 1972 joined his former enemy in a remarkable turn-about in a "settlement of March 1978." Despite these changes, and the fact that the war goes on, I can only make the following conclusions.

(a) Table 2 shows beyond any shadow of doubt that this search for equality by Rhodesian Africans has had its most successful periods when it harnessed the support of the Christian missions. Indeed, it seems to me that the movements themselves were a direct off-shoot of the Christian teaching. In that sense our second conclusion is a natural corollary to the first.

(b) The Christian Missions served the colonial government but retained their right to serve as a conscience of the people. The episode of 1971-72 is the best example of such action in practice. This, in my view is a healthy sign and a good omen for the future. Even were the government to become an indigenous non-colonial government, the Christian church would still reserve the same right to serve as a conscience against oppression.

(c) Various reports between 1975 and 1979 show without doubt that missionary churches still serve in their historic role as comforters and healers of the poor. As the Muzorewa-Smith government is further pressed by the Patriotic Front guerillas, it closed medical, educational and commercial facilities in the remote and primitive areas. The only people left with the ability and willingness to serve are the missionaries and African pastors. Few would under the circumstances in Rhodesia wish to serve in any capacity away from the protection of the police.

As in South Africa, the position of the Christian Church in Rhodesia is undergoing severe change and stress, but of a more positive nature than those affecting its sister churches in South Africa.

FOOTNOTES

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5. Colonel W. W. Seely, Commons Debates. April 1909, pp. 1775.

6. Life and Work in British Central Africa. March 1900, p. 7.

7. MacMillan H., Pointing the Way. (MacMillan, 1972) p. 133.

8. The Johannesburg Star, 14th of May 1960. See also Rand Daily Mail, 10th May 1960.

9. Professor Kenneth Kirkwood, Director, International Studies, Cambridge University. Oval Interview, April 1976, Austin, Texas.

10. Letter of J. S. Marais, M. P. for Pinetowen, South Africa to President J. Carter of the United States. (No date but written in 1978).

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16. PRO-VERITATE: Christian Monthly. (Holland, June 1977) p. 9.

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22. Riddell, R. C., The Land Problem in Rhodesia. (Mambo Press, 1979) p. 33.

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24. Windrich, E., Britain and the Politics of Rhodesian Independence. (New York, African, 1978) p. 177-178.

25. Rhodesia: Proposals for a sell-out. South African Research Office, London, 1972.

26. Report of the Commission on Rhodesian Opinion. (London H.M.S.O. 1972) pp. 2-3.

27. Bowman, L. W., Politics in Rhodesia. (Harvard, 1973) p. 145.

28. Report, 1972, op cit p. 106.

APPENDIX

Table 1

Number of persons taken in hand by police 1964-69 (adapted).

Year	Restricted or detained	Prosecuted
1964	2,320	2,217
1965	482	925
1966	540	637
1967	104	369
1968	58	160
1969	14	19

Table 1 Section B

Christian groups involved in the struggle by order of importance:

1. American Methodist Church (sometimes known as American Board Missions).

2. British Methodist (through synodical resolutions).

3. Roman Catholic Church (through Commission for Justice and Peace).

4. Independent Churches (through moulding liberation theologies and active participation).

5. Others: Baptists
   Salvation Army
   Anglicans
   Lutherans

Table 2 (Appendix 11)

NATIONAL COUNCIL EXECUTIVE (1975)

Bishop Abel Mozorewa
American Methodist
President
Rev. Dr. Elliot Gabella
Vice President

Rev. Canaan Banana American Baptist Secretary	Rev. B. Kachidza British Methodist Treasurer	Mr. R. Mugabe Roman Catholic Also contender for leadership.
	Contenders for leadership	Executive Members Rev. Max Chigwida
Mr. J. Nkomo lay-preacher, Methodist Church	Rev. N. Sithole American Methodist	Mr. J. Chikerema Mr. G. Nyandoro lay-men.

Founding Fathers (African Congress)

Mr. Aeron Jacha Lay-preacher/farmer 1st President	Rev. T. D. Samkange 1946 British Methodist 2nd President	Mr. J. Nkomo See above 1957. President

THE WESLEYAN MISSION TO THE HBC TERRITORIES .. 1840-54

by

Gerald M. Hutchinson

The British Wesleyans, serving as Chaplains to the Company and missionaries to the Indians, contributed a brief but significant chapter in the Canadian story. Their work was obscured by some of the difficulties and unhappiness that developed, the major documents were buried in secret files for many years, and since the men all returned to England, there were few reminders in the Canadian public.

They were the first missionaries to gain access to the western prairies, made a major cultural contact with the native peoples, and initiated the pattern of church work which would prevail for 35 years. They created the first visual form of the Cree language, an ingenious, simple device so that native peoples could very quickly read and write in their own language. They experienced a unique and difficult partnership of monopoly business with Evangelical Church demonstrating some advantages and many problems. And finally, they marked a transition from the assumptions of the British-related colony towards the independent Canadian nation.

WHY DID IT HAPPEN?

The Roman Catholic Church was solidly established at the Red River and made repeated applications to move westward into the Territories, but were consistently refused, including a refusal in February of 1840.

The Church of England was solidly established at the Red River, placed Henry Budd at the Pas in 1840, had plans for Cumberland House and Fort Ellice and to establish a Bishopric of Rupert's Land. But the generous endowment in the Leith Estate was disputed and held in Chancery for 9 years.

But to the great exasperation of authorities in both Churches, the Honourable Company negotiated an agreement with the Wesleyans, and took missionaries right past the waiting churches to initiate work in the Territories. Three freshly ordained young Englishmen were assigned to posts at Fort Edmonton, Fort Norway House, and at Moose Factory. A Superintendent and two native assistants were soon added. Why 1840? and why Wesleyans?

1. The Methodists of Upper Canada were pressing westward having heard "that at Red River they are coming six hundred miles enquiring for missionaries." Methodism in Canada, Vol i, p.416. James Evans, Thomas Hurlburt, and Peter Jacobs were sent on an extensive tour along the North shore of Lake Superior in 1838. Evans met Governor Simpson on May 18, 1839 and reports,

   > "he proposes an arrangement with the Committee in London as to our supplies and assures me that the whole country is open to our Missionaries. To God be the glory."
   >
   > \- Evans Papers, UWO.

2. The Company badly needed an improvement in public relations.

   > "The red men of the far west have suffered as much as, if not more than, any other class belonging to the coloured portion of the human family, from the conduct of their white brethren towards them. The loss of those extensive territorial possessions, of which they were at one period the undisputed occupants, is the least in that catalogue of evils of which they have been the uncomplaining victims."
   >
   > \- Guardian Vol X11, No. 28, May 5.41, page 110.

> "A respectable and very influential society has been formed in England, of which the Royal Family are members, called the Society for the Protection of the Aboriginal Inhabitants of the British Dominions ... the day is not far distant when oppression shall cease."
>
> - James Evans, July 4, 1837, quoted in McLean: page 107.
>
> "The number of persons of colour attracts the notice of every stranger - not Indians, for these unhappy, persecuted, and deeply injured beings are exhibited as curiosities in New York."
>
> - Robert Rundle Journals, April 12, 1840.
>
> "You can have no idea of the popularity we have gained by patronizing this sect, the most zealous, well-regulated and well-conducted in England, and from every pulpit throughout the United Kingdom where their mission is established we have been spoken of in the most gratifying manner."
>
> - Simpson to Donald Ross, from London, Dec. 2.40 Ross Papers, B.C. Archives AE R73 La5.

3. The English Company was resisting French power over a broad front, and feared the development of Roman Catholic Missions as an expression of that power. Governor Simpson wrote from Hawaii to Donald Ross as follows:

> "I observed with concern that the Roman Catholic missionaries are gaining much influence ... it appeared to me that we should be empowered to communicate on behalf of the Government with some of the principal religious sects of England, and to encourage their sending missionaries to the Islands who would cooperate with the American missionaries as the field is too extensive to be occupied advantageously by them alone in opposition to the Roman Catholics backed and supported as they are by the French Government. By having the cooperation of such a sect as the Wesleyans a powerful influence would be raised in England, which would direct and call forth the interference of not only the British Government but of the British public in the event of such conduct as that which was recently exercised at these Islands."

4. There was considerable personal concern amongst the Company officials for the well-being of the native peoples. Donald Ross, Chief Factor at Norway House, J. Edward Harriott of Rocky Mountain House, and many others had urged a more concerned policy and welcomed the prospect of missionaries.

In any case, Governor Simpson presented the request of James Evans to the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay, and after suitable interviews and negotiations, Simpson reported to the Rev. Dr. Alder of the Wesleyan Society,

> "I beg leave to state the substance of the arrangement as I understand it, viz. - that the Mission shall appoint three of their missionaries to proceed to the Company's Territories this ensuing summer; one of these gentlemen to be located or stationed at Moose Factory, another at or in the neighborhood of Norway House, and the third at one of the establishments on the Saskatchewan River. The salaries of those gentlemen to be paid by the Society, and the expense of conveying them from Canada to the Interior and of their Board and Lodging in the country to be defrayed by the Company."
>
> - HBC Archives D 4/25.

The Society then proceeded to recruit their missionaries in England, apparently overlooking entirely the Upper Canada initiative where both Evans and Thomas Hurlburt were ready to move west. The British Society selected Messrs. George Barnley, William Mason, and Robert T. Rundle, ordained them on March 8, and on March 16, 1840 shipped them under sail from Liverpool to New York and thence to Montreal. But in the meantime, by some agreement not presently known, a decision was made to add James Evans as Superintendent. After the tour of 1838-39 and his interview with the Governor, he had been settled in Guelph. On April 7 he was summoned to Toronto where he learned that he was to join the Brigade in Montreal by May 3. He hastened home to Guelph, packed up the requirements for a prolonged stay in the West with his wife and grown daughter, and made his way to Montreal by April 24 - only to discover that the Brigade had left the day before because of an early breakup of river ice. The Brigade

expected to meet Evans in Sault Ste. Marie. So he had to make private plans for travel requiring two months to reach Norway House where Rundle had been waiting to meet him before continuing to Fort Edmonton. Late decisions, poor planning, and faulty communications gave the Mission a costly and poor start.

However, by fall the four men were settled into their posts - Rundle at Fort Edmonton, Evans at Norway House, Mason at Lac la Pluie, and Barnley at Moose Factory. Each of these men is deserving of deeper study than has thus far been done, and of more attention than can be provided in this paper.

George Barnley has had the least attention and is generally not well-known. He won the respect and support of the Company and of the natives in his area, a well-intentioned hard-working man working well with others and sharing in the educational pursuits under Evans' inspiration.

> "While at Ruperts House I spent a great deal of time in trying to cast type; and at the vice, carpenter's bench and ladle of molten lead, wrought sometimes hard enough to produce a good deal of fatigue. But my ink, not being sufficiently fine - the black employed was soot from the funnels - together with the existence of many defects in the type itself, rendered my first attempts to print abortive, though the hope of eventual success is far from being abandoned. In the meantime I have cut wooden blocks, and from them some impressions have been taken off, which are perhaps preferable for elementary use to those which would have been produced by lead, in consequence of the letters being much larger."
>
> - Sept. 23, 1843, Missionary Notices

Barnley's career changed when he was given leave to return home to be married. Rundle had been refused the same request in 1842, and Mason had married Miss Sophia Thomas of Red River, so Barnley was the only one to attempt to introduce a European bride into the Company Fort. They lived in Company rooms though a house was eventually

promised them. There was neither place nor function for a missionary wife in the congested and highly structured Fort community, nor was there any relief for her loneliness. Barnley was no longer free to make the long journeys to Ruperts House and Whale River or to native encampments and she could not accompany him. Resentments and tensions built up until in 1847 the Barnleys returned to England and released their complaints to the public press.

Rundle at Fort Edmonton is a more familiar name since it is carried by one of the more famous mountains known to tourists, and since the settlements of Central Alberta offer more resources for research. His mission was more scattered and developed more slowly. There was no native community in or near Edmonton, and he met many who came to trade and to visit at the Fort, his main mission required continuous and extensive travel. Nor did he attempt to share in the printing. He did, however, have the great advantage of Chief Trader J. E. Harriott's competence in Cree, and warm support of the Protestant Mission. In November of 1841 Fort Edmonton was host to a meeting of profound importance. Harriott brought his knowledge of Cree and of the Scriptures, James Evans brought his decade of experience in native languages and in particular the newly-created writing form known now as the Cree Syllabic, Rundle brought his eagerness to learn. For three weeks all attention was given to perfecting the language of worship in the Cree language. Rundle learned the Syllabic form quickly, and worked for the rest of his years to learn the Cree language itself. But even before he knew the language, he could use the symbolic form of the Cree syllables so that natives could read. Since printing was not available in quantity for some time, he prepared handwritten copies of what he called "Sunday Books," Scripture texts, hymns and prayers so that each enquirer might have his own set of words to take home and share with his camp. So effective was this learning process that within two years he could exchange notes with leaders such as Maskepetoon and interpreters were no longer necessary - or rather, the native communities provided their own.

Rundle seems to have had an uncomplicated philosophy of life - he believed that the love of God was the essential corrective to the need of man, and that native persons were as needy, and as deserving, as any other. Because he was not highly educated, claimed no personal accomplishments, and had little talent for leadership or organization, he came to depend upon the leadership and talents of the native communities. And they responded to him. Maskepetoon, James and John Wetaskimakan, Makokis, Chagta (Master Bow), Eagle Man, Pacaskahas and many others took the initiative in proposing mission sites, planning visits and tours. A form of native church was evolving which lasted several years beyond his departure.

The excessive hunting for furs had seriously depleted the animals on which native people depended for food. Hunger and starvation became familiar scenes to Rundle, and he longed to share the Good News of the seed, and of storing food. In his first year he began planning a settlement, but neither Company nor Society provided the support or the necessary consent. He could not know what is now apparent to us that the growing tension between his Superintendent James Evans and Sir George Simpson was steadily restricting the mission effort. There would be no expansion, no new support, no new ideas, until the crisis reached the breaking point in 1845 when the Company requested the recall of James Evans, and in 1846 when Evans did return to England for questioning and then died suddenly of heart attack. With the Superintendent gone, the Company readily agreed to grant passage to Ben Sinclair to travel from Norway House to Edmonton as an assistant in the new settlement.

The opportunity came almost too late for Rundle, however, for his left wrist was broken before Sinclair arrived. However, in spite of being incapacitated they explored the proposed site for settlement in consultation with native people, moved from Battle Lake to Pigeon Lake, had prayers in the new house, cultivated the ground for the first time, planted seeds, organized the first official Class Meeting,

wrote out yet another Sunday Book. Then back to Edmonton to build a bateaux, gather up a supply of food, and on July 4 Rundle, James Wetaskimakan and George Makokis pushed off into the currents of the North Saskatchewan for a most arduous trip to Norway House. He was entitle to free passage on the Company Brigade which left at the end of May but declined the opportunity because the Brigade travelled on the Sabbath. For 8 years he had accepted gratefully the support of the Company but had never become a dependent Company man; he frequently writes of his own weakness and inadequacy but still had the strength to follow his own convictions.

The intentions of the British Mission were clearly expressed by Rundle near the Rockies, and by Barnley near the Bay, but the central drama and the critical relationships were being shaped at Norway House where the Evans family, the Mason family and native assistants lived in daily contact with Chief Factor Donald Ross who in turn corresponded regularly with the Governor Sir George Simpson. The copious correspondence of each of these parties now collected, along with the gossipy letters of Letitia Hargreave of York Factory present an amazing and complicated interplay of mission and Company.

THE COMPANY SIDE -

The original agreement anticipated one missionary at each of three posts, with the possibility of marriage in which case a house would be provided. Now at Norway House there were three adult Evans, joined by William and Sophie Mason, and Henry Steinhauer - all dependent upon the Company supplies. Donald Ross who had to deal with the problem urged a new policy of a set payment per year to avoid the hassle of trying to control supplies. Mrs. Evans attracted most of the criticism as reported by Letitia Hargreave -

> "May 14, 1842 ... When Mrs. Evans passed Oxford House last fall on her way home, she had the cool impudence to plunder Mr. Clouston's garden & carried off all the pease the boy was chuckling over ... carried all off in her boat, and Evans lifted one of the Company canoes there being no one but a half-breed guide to protest it."

> "Sept. 10, 1843 ... Mrs. Ross's hatred of the parson's wife has reached a pitch. Mr. Gladman declares that she consumed between 30 & 40 kegs of butter, each weighing 56 lbs, the flour was even worse."

The Company felt that Evans was too anxious to intrude in Company business, was unreasonable in his demands re Sabbath travel, had gained tyrannous control over native behaviour, was encouraging them to trade outside the Company. The regular reports from Donald Ross provide the details until the crisis in May 1845.

> "Our Reverend neighbor here has at length shown the cloven hoof and unmasked himself ... I am quite aware that if Mr. Evans' career be not speedily checked, the trade of this valuable section of the country will soon be lost to the Company .... Last fall we had before us the prospect of passing a happy peaceable and contented season, the affairs of the Company and the Mission bearing a fair promise of success and prosperity each in perfect harmony with the other when this man like an evil genius came back to disturb our repose after having destroyed the life of a fellow creature (Thomas Hassels) I do not say wilfully, but with a degree of fatal forgetfulness and careless use of firearms almost amounting to criminality."
>
> - HBC Archives D 5/14

In June 1845 Governor Simpson wrote to request the Missionary Society to remove Mr. Evans. In June 1846 Evans received the invitation to come to England to talk things over and to consider resuming his old post at St. Clair in Upper Canada.

THE MISSION SIDE -

Mr. Evans in his reports could document with considerable satisfaction the rapid growth of the Indian Village, Rossville, the thriving school, the growing project of translation and printing though the long delay in delivering the new press from England was a severe disappointment. He had a real dilemma as Superintendent in that he could not gain permission to open new positions. Mason's ministry at Lac la Pluie did not develop satisfactorily, and there was a promising opening at La Ronge, but the Company would not allow

it. The Masons then moved into Norway House, rather than into Rossville, for the Evans family had been moved out of the Fort into the village.

He had some grievances too against the Company in their treatment of Indian women discarded when the Gentlemen went home, in their unjustifiably high prices for supplies on which the natives depended. Did every fur belong to the Company? When an independent merchant can provide flour at a tenth of the price, should he honour the Company monopoly? These questions never did get properly discussed, however, for the abundant rumours of Evans' sexual indiscretions burst into the open in February of 1846 resulting in a Church Trial under the Wesleyan Discipline conducted by Mr. Mason. Since the complex and emotional issues of that experience were the main topic of my paper appearing in The Bulletin Number 26, 1977, I will not discuss them now except to remark that Mason declared him not guilty but imprudent, and sent the papers to the Society for their judgment. The invitation to visit England was providential to Evans since he could now discuss the whole matter with the Secretaries. While the letters and reports were still being added to the original trial papers, Mr. Evans died suddenly of heart attack, November 1846. The Secretaries agreed with Mason's verdict of not guilty but 'unseemly and improper'.

And the gathering issues of conflict with the Company were never presented nor discussed. Not unnaturally the men of the Company each commented on the misfortune that such a rascal should have been sent on such a worthy service. Then the matter was buried in Mission files and Company files for a century.

Twenty years later, April 3, 1865, a man named Richard Jones of London, England, wrote to the Rev. J. Carroll,

> "... It affords me much satisfaction to see that you are inclined to do what you can to rescue the good name of one of the most successful missionaries we ever had among the Indians from the grasp of the slanderer and from being forgotten by the Church of his choice."
>
> \- Evans Papers UWO #242

About the same time, Ephraim Evans, brother of James, also wrote to the Rev. J. Carroll as follows:

> "As regards the difficulty to which you allude, that it has been hinted that he fell into disgrace &c., you have been misinformed in supposing that the HB Co were prominent, if at all connected with the attempt to blast his reputation. At least I have no evidence of that. He was antagonism (sic) with their policy on the Sabbath question, and other matters, but I have reason to believe that the attempt to injure his moral character was made by an assistant in the Mission who soon after left our work, and became a Puseyite ultra."
>
> \- Evans Papers UWO #243

In August 1865, Secretary Elijah Hoole informed Mr. Carroll,

> "(re Memoir of the late James Evans) ... I regret to state that the conclusion to which we have come is that we cannot encourage the enterprise, but must advise you to relinquish it."
>
> \- Evans Papers UWO #244

The Canadian Methodists could never entirely relinquish the idea of a suitable Memoir. He was known in Ontario, his brother Ephraim continued in the Ministry of the Church for many years, and his crowning achievement, the Cree Syllabic was being more broadly used every year. In 1890 John McLean wrote his book "James Evans, Inventor of the Syllabic System" but of course had no access to files of either Mission Society or the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1900 Egerton Young wrote "The Apostle of the North" drawing largely

on his own experience of the Mission field to interpret the sketchy records he had of Evans. An in 1966 Mrs. Shipley wrote "The James Evans Story," weaving a golden blanket to adorn a man she truly and properly admired. But Elijah Hoole was right - the complete file does not make a golden blanket. They do reveal a zealous man of genius proportions who did create the Cree Syllabic, and did all the things the Curch remembers proudly, but who was also beset by his own weaknesses, struck by the tragedy of shooting his friend and interpreter, suffering chronic illness culminating in a heart attack at the age of 45 years. A sad story of a great man.

And William Mason - the Puseyite ultra? The anger of the Methodists is understandable for they had only sparse and incorrect information. The verdict of Ephraim Evans was widely believed that Mason was the slanderer, and that he soon after left the Methodist Church taking the manuscripts with him. The Methodists were indignant when the first Cree Bible carried only the name of Mr. Mason, and when in 1877 Edward Barrass saw "in the Guardian a week ago, an article respecting the fraudulent conduct of a clergyman in declaring that he originated the Syllabic character for the Indians in the Northwest."/UWO. #246. Nor were they satisfied when Archdeacon Kirby wrote,

> "Whilst in charge of the Mission at Norway House, Mr. Mason married a daughter of one of the Hudson's Bay Co's officers a half-caste lady thoroughly well educated ... She longed to see the entire Bible printed for their use, and she with her husband began. Possibly at that time Messrs. Steinhauer and Sinclair may have helped them ... but it could not have been to any extent as they were not educated men. Anyway the translation was not completed until long after Mr. Mason had left the Wesleyans and had taken charge of the York Mission .... I am not aware that the Wesleyans have ever translated the Bible into the Cree language."
>
> - United Church Archives, John McLean Notes.

As the controversy developed, Mr. Mason was prompted to write from England, December 30, 1886,

> "In the translation of the Bible into the Cree language I was assisted by Henry Steinhauer and John Sinclair ... The final revision was the joint work of myself and my wife. I never claimed to be the inventor of the Cree Syllabary that honour belongs to the Rev. James Evans."
>
> - McLean Notes, U.Ch. Archives

The correspondence of the time reveals a much more responsible Mason than the Canadian Methodists talked about. He had been raised in the Church of England, accepted ordination by the Wesleyan Society in 1840, stationed at Lac la Pluie until 1844. In the meantime, James Evans had invented the Cree Syllabic and initiated the printing and translation program. Both Mason and Steinhauer were moved into Rossville to share in the work. Mrs. Mason was an admirable helpmate but heavily burdened in bearing and raising their young family. The printing press did not finally arrive until 1845 so that only limited editions of hymns and scriptural portions could be produced.

In 1846 Mr. Evans was removed to England following a most unpleasant season of rumour and trial. Mason remained at Norway House to re-assemble the Mission and develop the printing program. For 8 years he reported and served faithfully as a Methodist responsible to the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

When Bishop Anderson arrived in the Red River in 1849, Mason was interested and attracted. The Bishop was not impressed with the Cree Syllabic at first, but after witnessing its use, Mason reported to the Secretaries that the Bishop had approved its use, and their missionaries used it widely.

In 1854 the Wesleyan Society transferred the Western missions to the Canada Conference. Mason had advised, and Bishop Anderson had requested that the western Missions be placed under his care.

It seemed incredible that the great barrier of rocks and trees and lakes separating Toronto from the western territories could be effectively bridged. But the Methodists were ready to take a step towards a Canadian nation so Mason accepted the invitation to return to the Church of England. He had been a Methodist Minister for 14 years, and most of that time in charge of their printing. His letter of resignation is full of gratitude for his experience, and respect for the Church in which he had served.

Four years later, the Masons returned to England. The New Testament appeared in 1859, and the entire Bible in 1861. Methodist Mason and Church of England Mason had been working on it for at least 15 years.

It is unfortunate that it should have become a matter of denominational rivalry. When Evans was on the 1838 tour, he wrote of the need,

> "We want a translation of the Scriptures ... that one version approved by all denominations, would be preferable to several. (We need) ... a uniform orthography. Could not the Bible Society take this in hand?"
>
> - Christian Guardian, May 15, 1839

He made his contribution to the vision, and would have welcomed the contributions of others.

"Theory divided from practice: The introduction of the higher criticism into Canadian Protestant seminaries" by Tom Sinclair-Faulkner.

> But why is it, I wonder, that such a very mild heretic as I am sets so many folk protesting?
>
> - The Rev. George Jackson in a letter to one of his students, 25 August, 1922.[1]

Why indeed? But there are many puzzles to this story, and that is only one of them. In the year 1910 conservative evangelicals within the Methodist Church of Canada attempted to condemn once and for all the liberal teaching of the higher criticism of the Bible in Methodist seminaries, particularly by Prof. George Jackson, an Englishman teaching at Victoria College and preaching at Sherbourne St. Church in Toronto. The evangelicals were headed by Albert Carman, the 84-year-old General Superintendent of the Church, while the liberals were headed by Nathaniel Burwash, Chancellor of Victoria University. Carman's forces, the histories tell us, were beaten back at the Eighth Quadrennial Conference of the Methodist Church in Canada, held in Victoria, B.C., that year, and the place of higher criticism was henceforth assured in Methodist seminaries.[2] Despite occasional rumblings that followed the controversy (notably the controversy over "modernism" that split the Baptist churches in the twenties) the Jackson case seems to have represented a turning point in the history, not just of Methodist seminaries in Canada, but of all the mainline Protestant denominations.

Principal Burwash had gone to the Victoria conference in a highly agitated and apprehensive state of mind. He had committed decades of his life to building a strong Methodist college and seminary, first at Cobourg, Ontario, then within the University of Toronto federation. When he arrived in British Columbia for the General

Conference of 1910 he immediately put in a thirteen-hour day preparing notes and tactics for the sessions, enlisting as his chief support the distinguished lawyer, Newton Wesley Rowell.[3] Burwash knew that there was a good deal at stake. In the first place it was important to build momentum for the great union movement: since their last General Conference the Methodists had signed the Basis of Union with the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, paving the way for the creation of the United Church of Canada. And in the second place the Methodist Church depended heavily on the leadership and support provided to it by the laymen who, on the one hand, were using modern entrepreneurial skills to build industrial Canada and, on the other hand, were members of the Board of Regents of Victoria University and the Official Board of Sherbourne Street Church in Toronto. I have in mind not only Newton Rowell but men like Chester Massey (farm implements), H.H. Fudger (retail stores), A.E. Ames (investments) and Joseph Flavelle (meat-packing and banking).[4] "I had hoped Dr. Carman would refrain from attacking the millionairs [sic]," Maggie Burwash wrote to her husband from their summer cottage on Go-Home Bay in Ontario as he prepared to defend George Jackson. "But perhaps it is better he should speak all his mind then everything can be dealt with."[5]

My question is, Was everything dealt with? Burwash did his best. Billetted in the same Methodist home with Carman in Victoria, Burwash faced squarely the need to settle the issue rather than avoid it.[6] The tactics that he and Rowell developed proved successful against what their party saw as "the attempt to introduce lynch law into the Church,"[7] but not before Superintendent Carman had delivered

a public blast against those who had brought Jackson to Canada. Burwash does not seem to have found much comfort in his victory. On the long train ride home he remained agitated and anxious. Somewhere outside of Port Arthur at the head of the Great Lakes he fought the motion of the coach to scribble another exasperated note to Maggie, his wife, about Carman's speech:

> Carman goes for Workman [sic], the Metropolitan and Sherbourne St. Churches & the rich man in his address which he has in print...[8]

The note trails off into illegibility as he realizes that even the relief of writing about his frustrations is denied to him.

I want to argue that Burwash was right to feel exasperated. The apparent resolution of the controversy over the teaching of the higher criticism dealt inadequately with one important issue that lay at the heart of the matter: the relationship between theory and practice in the study of the Bible among Canadian Protestants. Because this issue remained untouched controversy over the higher criticism has continued to take us by surprise even in recent times -- I mention, for example, the excitement stirred up in 1964 by the use of the word "myth" in the New Curriculum of the United Church of Canada, and again in 1977 by notices of a British collection of essays entitled The Myth of God Incarnate. In making this argument I hope to make a contribution, not so much to the history of doctrines or even of church institutions, but to the history of spirituality in Canada.

It is worth asking how the controversy should have worked out, and happily Ralph Connor has provided us with an answer in one of his later novels, The Arm of Gold (1932).[9] Following a look at Connor

I want to step back for a brief examination of western understandings of "theory and practice" over the past 2500 years in order to see how these categories may help us to see why the higher criticism remains problematic for Canadian Protestants. To see how we came to this pass it will be necessary to look fairly closely at the piety of the key figures in the Workman and Jackson controversies in the Methodist Church at the turn of the century.

Let us begin with Ralph Connor's answer to how church people should have handled higher criticism. Most of Ralph Connor's novels deal with the Scots who settled Glengarry county in south-eastern Ontario or with the people of the Canadian prairies. Towards the end of his career as the most popular Canadian novelist of the first half of the twentieth century, however, Connor wrote a story about how the stock market crash of 1929 and the higher criticism came simultaneously to a small Cape Breton community. Connor called his story The Arm of Gold, a title that served to explain the meaning of the geographical location of his tale (Bras d'Or) to the uninitiated west of the Straits of Canso, but which also hinted at the mysterious power of New York finance to reach out and touch the lives of those living in rustic isolation far from the canyons of Wall Street. It is a story about the inevitable spread of urbanization, the necessity of integrating the higher criticism of the Bible into the life of faith and, incidentally, the way in which the seminary may be instrumental in resolving the difficulties posed by these two historical developments.

This story tells us a good deal about the aspirations of many Protestant clergy in Canada during the early twentieth century. Ralph

Connor's real name was, of course, Charles W. Gordon and he was a leading Presbyterian clergyman, a conservative proponent of the Social Gospel, and one-time moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.[10] His novels were widely read and, since they were intended to be "realistic" romances (Connor showed a great gift, for example, for reproducing colourful local dialects), I take it that we can read The Arm of Gold today in order to learn something about what Connor and his readers understood the great issues of their time to be and how those issues might best be met. He was a marvellous storyteller who peopled his novels with a variety of characters just like the ones we would expect to find in the times and places about which he wrote, who provided them with trials and tribulations that were equally likely, albeit served up with more fortuitous timing than Providence is usually perceived to provide, and who then produced a happy ending. He was, in short, a myth-maker who revealed what life is really like and how one should live it.

Hector MacGregor is a typical Connor hero: a Presbyterian clergyman with a passion for loving service rather than for doctrine, upright and handsome with a propensity for moderate swearing when under physical stress, skilled as a woodsman and sailor yet blessed with an active intellect. A vacationing New York financier and his flapper daughter are rescued by Hector and he befriends them, drawing on the financier's knowledge of the stock market in order to make a modest killing for his own good purposes. The profits go to pay for medical treatment for Hector's dying brother and to fund a farmer's cooperative that Hector founds, rather as Moses Coady was doing at that time in Antigonish and elsewhere.[11]

But, alas, some of the local people lack Hector's Calvinist mesure and ride into the stock market on his coat-tails. Hector pulls out when he has the money that he requires but they hang on in time to be caught in the great Crash of 1929. At the same time Hector has been challenged by the village atheist to preach from the pulpit the sort of things he learned in seminary about the Bible: that it began as oral tales, that it was never intended to be a scientific textbook, etc.. Hector rises to the challenge and is promptly threatened with discipline by the leading elder of his congregation.

> Is the Bible true? Is the Bible the inspired Word of God? Or is it a collection of myths and fairy tales, mostly lies? If the Bible is not true, if it is not the inspired and infallible word of God, why bother with it? For my part if it is not true, I will not be taking trouble with it.[12]

The elder is not alone. He is seconded by a sharp-tongued old lady who once visited a church in Boston where she heard a sermon by Reuben A. Torrey, one of Moody's successors.

> Then that man Mr. Torrey -- oh, he was a great and godly man -- he began on the Bible and he said, I mind like it was to-night: "The Bible is the inspired Word of God, true and unfailable, the chart and compass on the voyage of life." And then he holds the book to his heart and says: "The book, the whole book, nothing but the book. Every word necessary, every word true." And then he said, "It is like a necklace of pearls: break the string and the whole necklace is lost." And that is what I think. One lie in the Bible and there is no Bible for me.[13]

This is heady stuff that threatens to shatter the congregation, already reeling under the financial disaster inflicted by the stock market crash. It is true that people had been warned not to be greedy, not to hang on to the stock that had already earned a reasonable but not excessive profit.

But was not the minister the one who led them into the stock market in the first place, forsaking the traditional ways of their rural ancestors?

In the end everything turns out well. Out of his own pocket Hector reimburses the people for their losses, and the outraged elder is converted to the way of the higher criticsm. The New York financier undertakes to introduce the notion of the Just Price on Wall Street, presumably paving the way for a rapid end to the Great Depression, and the village atheist becomes a Presbyterian. Hector marries a local girl and the flapper turns into a social reformer. But how is all this accomplished? How does one get stubborn Cape Bretoners to accept "charity" from their minister and a fundamentalist elder to take up Harry Emerson Fosdick?

The turning point occurs when the saintly principal of an unnamed Presbyterian seminary in Halifax comes to town and explains, first, that he too invests in the stock market and, second, that his own religious faith necessarily embraces the higher criticism of the Bible. The principal is obviously modelled on the Reverend Clarence Mackinnon, a renowned preacher and principal of Pine Hill from 1909 to 1937.[14] Connor goes to considerable length to show us that the principal is a familiar and highly respected figure throughout Cape Breton.

We have here a fictional account of how the higher criticism and urbanization (i.e. the world of stocks and bonds) are related phenomena that pose spiritual problems to Canadian Protestants. The problems are resolved with the help, not only of training received at seminary, but of the direct intervention of the seminary in the person

of the Principal. It is a marvelous solution and once again one is left thinking that even if Ralph Connor fell short of producing "literature", he certainly knew how to tell a good story. But in point of fact the resolution of the Jackson controversy in 1910 had made it highly unlikely that Connor's fiction could ever be realized in historical Canada.

My point will be made clearer if we pause here for a consideration of the terms "theory" and "practice". In recent years continental historians have become fascinated with the effort to trace the course of fundamental human standpoints that change slowly or very rarely, in _durée longue_ -- I think, for example, of Philippe Ariès on _Western Attitudes towards Death_.[15] Nicholas Lobkowicz had undertaken a study of the concept of theory and practice in western civilization from Aristotle to the present,[16] and I think that his findings can be broadened to cover not only "concept" (which has to do with intellection alone) but also "standpoint" (which has to do with _mentalité_, the way in which I am reflectively disposed to live).

Today you and I take it for granted that "theory" refers to abstract ideas and "practice" to their application. We take it for granted because we are modern folk raised in a culture that has contrived to forget the older meanings of these two terms and to use them in a way that owes more to modern science than it does to traditional Christianity. Moreover, we take it for granted that practice is what really counts. We are a race of "doers" whose heroes are engineers and astronauts. Henry Adams made the point vividly when he observed that the symbol of the old order is the Virgin and the symbol of our age

is the Dynamo.[17] So obsessed is the modern West with nervous urgency that when a Catholic reformer prescribes "economics as if people mattered" he calls it "Buddhist economics."[18] Karl Marx, himself a great philosopher, spoke for more than the Communist Party when he dismissed philosophers who only want to interpret the world. "The point," he said, "is to _change_ it."[19]

If practice is what really counts in the modern world, then theory is the handmaiden of practice. A good theory is by definition an abstraction which may be applied effectively to the accomplishing of some practical task. This understanding of theory was first articulated by the father ("midwife" might be a better title) of modern science, Francis Bacon,[20] but it lies behind the query of every student who indignantly demands, "Why should I learn this stuff?" -- an echo of Bacon's understanding that theory is abstraction whose only justification is that it serves practice.

Before the time of Francis Bacon, before the rise of the modern West, theory and practice bore different meanings and therefore had a different relationship to each other. _Praxis_ meant roughly the same as "practice" now means ("doing"), but there was no conviction that _praxis_ is what really counts. The order of importance was, if anything, reversed by a sneaking tendency to honor _theoria_ over _praxis_. _Theoria_ did not refer to abstractions whose worth is measured in terms of their applicability to practical ends. _Theoria_ was "contemplation", an activity complete in itself and focussed on higher things, while _praxis_ was "doing", a worldly activity which Plato (and to a lesser extent Aristotle) tended to regard as less worthy than _theoria_. Origen echoed

him when he compared _theoria_ and _praxis_ to Mary and Martha.[21]

My point is that our spiritual ancestors did not take it for granted that theory is an abstraction intended to serve practice. For them theory included the contemplation of God, an activity that is different from worldly practice and that is certainly not subordinate to it. At their best (or what I hold to be their best) they understood that to be fully human is to live a life in which both _theoria_ and _praxis_ are harmoniously united.[22]

This understanding was taken for granted for centuries until, with the development of technology and modern science, our attention was snared by the fascinating possibilities inherent in newly discovered means of mastering the phenomenal world. When our attention shifted, so did our language. "Practice" moved to center stage, and "theory" was gutted of much of its meaning and reduced to the status of an auxiliary. The shift was underway in the sixteenth century when seminaries first made their appearance in the Catholic world, and it was completed in the nineteenth century when the Protestant world began to rely seriously on seminaries for the formation of its clergy. If the fictional accounts of twentieth-century Canadian church life written by ardent Methodists are any indication, Methodists were particularly likely to disparage theory and to praise practice. In "One of the McTavishes," for instance, Nellie McClung presents a distressed sinner who fails to win consolation from an Anglican clergyman. Ineffectual though he is, the Anglican priest offers to tend McTavish's farm and sends the man on to a Methodist minister. But even the Methodist minister cannot talk McTavish into salvation; the redemption occurs

when the Methodist falls ill and McTavish the sinner must mend the minister's faltering faith with words of consolation. McTavish returns to the farm, his face shining with salvation, and the Anglican clergyman cries,

> I knew you would find it, and I wanted to see for myself the change that would be worked in you... I have worked all my life, I think, on the edge of things, hoping that some good would come; but it has all been vague, abstract, indefinite. Now I know that once, anyway, I was able to help in a work that counted.

McTavish agrees with the Anglican. "It is not what we say; it is not how well we can pray -- it is what we are, and what we are willing to do!"[23]

It is in the light of this understanding of theory and practice that I want to examine the history of the introduction of the higher crticism into Canadian Protestant seminaries. The first Methodist conflict occurred in 1877 when the Montreal Conference condemned a pamphlet entitled Methodism and Catholicity (1876) by the pastor of Sherbrooke Church, the Reverend James Roy. Roy was removed from his pulpit on the grounds that his views contradicted the Methodist Articles of Religion, and some of those views plainly favored the higher criticism, then flourishing on the European continent but only beginning to make its appearance in Canada.[24] Though Roy's dismissal divided his congregation the incident made little stir in the Church as a whole.

This was not the case with the controversies involving Professor George Workman whose advocacy of the higher criticism over the years kept his name so much in the center of attention that Chancellor Burwash (see page 3 above) was convinced that Carman was

aiming at Workman even as he attacked Jackson in 1910. One of the first men to be hired to teach in a Methodist seminary because of a European doctorate rather than a distinguished pastoral record, Workman had studied under Franz Julius and Friedrich Delitzsch at Leipzig, a father and son who sprang from pietistic Lutheran stock but pioneered higher critical studies at Leipzig.[25] Shortly after taking up his duties at Victoria College, then located in Cobourg, Workman was invited to read a paper to the Victoria Theological Union, a forum in which theological students and clergy regularly gathered for intellectual stimulation. On 28 May, 1890, Workman spoke on "Messianic Prophesy," arguing that the popular conception of prophesy as prediction was "entirely inadequate" and quoting in support of his case the words of Professor Charles Augustus Briggs: "It is one of the evil fruits of an unwholesome apologetic that has been transmitted to us from the previous century..."[26] Workman might have been more astute in his choice of authorities: Briggs was an American disciple of W.R. Smith who had been removed from his chair at Aberdeen for undermining the authority of Scripture in 1881, and Briggs was himself tried for heresy in 1891. Suspended by the Presbyterians in 1893, Briggs later became an Episcopalian.[27] In any case, the thrust of Workman's remarks was that the messianic prophesies of the Old Testament were not definite predictions of the coming of Jesus, but a less specific expression of cherished Hebrew hopes for Jehovah's anointed monarch.[28]

The address delighted its audience and the Secretary of the Theological Union opined that "Nothing could be more conducive to the prevention of intellectual ruts among the clergy of the Methodist Church."[29]

But when word of the lecture spread to other parts of Ontario, the Guelph Conference struck a Committee on Alleged Rationalistic Teaching in Victoria College and, on its recommendation, adopted a motion condemning Workman's views.[30] The Bay of Quinte Conference (Workman's home body) retaliated with a statement of support for Workman and hard words for Guelph's manner of proceeding,[31] but when Workman was invited to give the same lecture to the Toronto Conference the assembly was unable to reach agreement as to whether to support or condemn Workman. There seems to have been a good spirit at the Toronto meeting, however, for Superintendent Carman's address was laced with humorous comments on how Methodists should be proud of their ability to differ with each other honestly.[32]

The ethos of Canadian Methodism was going through considerable change at this time, as the student editor of Acta Victoriana observed late in the year.

> The old circuit-rider has fulfilled his mission and gone home to God. It is daily becoming more of a necessity that the preacher should be a college-bred man, and we are glad to know that the Methodist Church is not behind the times.[33]

It is apparent, however, that there were still some circuit riders left in western Canada who had no room for the higher criticism in their saddle bags. Pressure from this source led the Board of Regents of Victoria College to urge Workman to transfer from the faculty of Theology to that of Arts where he might provoke less criticism. Workman, who had already submitted one statement of his personal faith to the Board, protested and submitted a new statement. The new statement was not much altered from the old and, in January, 1891, the Board asked

Workman to end his comments on the higher criticism. Workman objected to the request and resigned from the College altogether, but not before many of the students had openly demonstrated their appreciation of his work. Superintendent Carman, on the other hand, had formed part of the opposition under the leadership of E.H. Dewart, editor of The Christian Guardian, the church's official newspaper.[34] Dewart had replied to Workman's publication with a 256-page book entitled Jesus the Messiah in Prophesy and Fulfilment: A Review and Refutation of the Negative Theory of Messianic Prophesy.[35] Though the church editor had responded temperately to the initial reports of Workman's position, during 1891-2 it was difficult to find an issue of The Christian Guardian that did not carry some refutation of the higher critics in general. One satirical piece told of an old deacon who began snipping offending sections from the Bible every time his preacher criticized them until at last only the front and back cover remained.[36] When the Toronto Globe offered a defence of Workman's position in the name of Dr. Lyman Abbott, Dewart remarked that Abbott "is known as a very loose theologian."[37]

The details of the 1890-2 controversy were purged from the minutes of the Board of Regents of Victoria College, no doubt because the revelation of divisions within the Board could not be expected to be edifying to outsiders. But the record of Workman's subsequent course has been better preserved. After leaving Victoria College he was unemployed until in 1904 he was appointed to the faculty of Wesleyan Theological College, Victoria's counterpart in Montreal, where students began to complain to the college administration that Workman was undermining their faith with his lectures on the Bible. Some young men were

reported to be in tears over the matter and, on 22 October, 1907, the Board of Governors terminated his appointment by the decision of a narrow majority (10 to 7). Workman appealed in vain, first to the Board itself, then to Superintendent Albert Carman, then, rightly suspecting that this time there would be no other Methodist refuge to which he might repair as he had in 1904, laid his case before Justice W.A. Weir of the Superior Court, District of Montreal, Province of Quebec.[38]

Today a college professor might be expected to plead such a case on the grounds of academic freedom, but in 1911 Workman took his stand as a faithful Methodist instead. He argued that the Methodist Standard of Doctrine should be interpreted according to Scripture, not vice-versa. It was an occasion in which a troubling point in the life of the Methodist Church might have been resolved in a disciplined way, but unhappily the court record reveals an angry power struggle rather than a faithful search for Christian truth. It appears that the Board of Governors, acting initially because of student complaints, had failed to take notice of a petition in support of Workman signed by 36 students. When the Board's secretary was asked by the court to produce the minutes of the Board's hearings, he explained that in the end he had torn up the only copy and now could not remember what had happened to the fragments. Complicating the matter further was the fact that the Board directed its criticism of Workman at his doctrinal views in general, not at his teaching in the classroom, and relied extensively on hearsay evidence.

Justice Weir, a former cabinet member of the Liberal government of Quebec and a Protestant layman who did not hesitate to look critically at clerical positions, found in favor of Workman, charging court costs and $3500 damages against the College. His lengthy decision was overturned, however, by a laconic ruling of the Court of King's Bench on 1 February, 1913, which decided that Weir had no business ruling that Scripture is superior to the Methodist Standard of Discipline since secular courts ought to refrain from overruling ecclesiastical courts on any matter of belief or discipline. This seemed to fly in the face of the precedent that had been set by the lengthy Guibord case fought out in Montreal during 1869-75,[39] but in fact reflected the historical differences between the state's relationship to the Catholic Church in Quebec and the state's relationship to the Protestant churches. In any case George Coulson Workman was finished as a Methodist seminary professor. He moved back to Toronto where he found occasional employment as a temporary pastor in liberally inclined urban congregations such as that of Metropolitcan Church until he died in 1936.[40]

The Workman controversy spanned 23 years, overlapping two other disputes at the University of Toronto over the teaching of the higher criticism. In 1908 University College offered classes in "Religious Knowledge" (a term chosen to emphasize its independence of any denominational responsibilities) in which advanced biblical criticism was featured. The incident did not initially involve Superintendent Carman but he later supported Samuel H. Blake, an evangelical Anglican member of the University of Toronto Board of Governors, who launched a formal protest and insisted that the offending courses be dropped from

the curriculum.[41] Blake had been one of the founders of Wycliffe College, an Anglican seminary founded at Toronto in protest against the High Church standpoint of Trinity College, which was itself Bishop Strachan's rebuttal to the "infidel institution" that had been born under the name "University College" in 1850.[42] The Board of Governors, however, ruled on 20 December, 1909, that the study of the Bible as literature was an acceptable and necessary feature of the curriculum of the University of Toronto, and so the matter was closed.[43]

The Jackson controversy was of greater moment than either the Workman or Blake affairs and unwound at approximately the same time. The Reverend George Jackson was a preacher on loan from the British Wesleyans who filled the pulpit at Sherbourne Street Church in Toronto from 1906 to 1909, joining the teaching staff of Victoria College in 1908 as Professor of English Bible. In February, 1909, Jackson offered a lecture at the Toronto YMCA in which he presented the higher criticism's understanding of the Book of Genesis. Report of the lecture led Superintendent Albert Carman to write an eloquently acid critique of Jackson's position which Carman published, not in The Christian Guardian or in the courts of the Church, but in a letter to the editor of the Toronto Globe. Carman was angry that Jackson should

> ...count it an achievement to startle the uninstructed youth in a Young Man's Christian Association contrary to its genius and law by attacking the historicity of Holy Writ on points absolutely unassailable, if we have a Christian faith at all, thus loosening moral bonds, debauching the public mind and producing ten or a hundred doubters when, as he boasts, he might forsooth effect possibly the cure of one or two.[44]

A flurry of letters to the Globe followed in which Jackson, Carman and

Jackson's lay supporters at Sherbourne Street Church took part. Passions were inflamed but, according to The Christian Guardian, "An Amicable Settlement" was reached on 23 March, 1909, when the Victoria University Board of Regents gave approval to a statement presented to it with the signatures of every faculty member appended to it. The statement purported to resolve the apparent conflict between the teaching of higher criticism and the formation of Methodist clergy and, since both Jackson (as a member of the faculty) and Carman (as chairman of the Board of Regents) had put their names to the document, the matter seemed to be closed.[45]

But it was not. Following reports of Jackson's lectures as a visitor to Ohio Wesleyan College in April, 1909, Dr. Carman concluded that Jackson had broken the "amicable" agreement not to give publicity to his controversial views. Carman's angry letters to Chancellor Burwash in the fall of 1909 reveal that he considered Jackson to be a liar and that the Ohio affair confirmed him in his conviction that higher critics were by nature given to duplicity.[46]

The dispute gathered momentum as word of Jackson's position and Carman's charges spread by letter and word of mouth. It came to a head in the Eighth Quadrennial Conference at Victoria, B.C., in the fall of 1910 described at the beginning of this paper. The ponderous procedures of the Methodist General Conference damped the confrontation somewhat, but the fact that interested parties held positions of influence stirred emotions. The chairman, for instance, was Dr. Carman himself, while the secretary of the Committee on Education that drafted the procedures under which Jackson was handled was Salem Bland, a longtime

exponent of the higher criticism who was himself to be removed from the faculty of Wesley College in Winnipeg seve n years later.[47] The Reverend Dr. Solomon Cleaver, himself a former minister of Sherbourne Street Church, led the floor attack on Jackson's teaching, saying, "If we want souls saved in our churches we cannot expect to have such when this teaching prevails." He was seconded by Mr. F.W. Winter, a Toronto layman:

> This is the most important matter that has ever come before this Conference. I am not a man of scholarship, but I have some common sense. I rejoice to say that I believe in Jesus Christ as the divine Son of God, but as the higher critics teach about Him He is no Saviour at all. These higher critics base their arguments on baseless assumptions. Their teachings are shipwrecking the faith of hundreds.[48]

George Jackson himself was not present at the Conference; he was in England attending to his dying mother. Chancellor Nathaniel Burwash and Newton Wesley Rowell had to sit through Superintendent Carman's opening address to the Conference in which he obliquely slashed at Jackson and his wealthy lay supporters,[49] but Carman in turn had to listen in silence as Burwash and Rowell made a rebuttal to Cleaver and Winter's attack. The whole case was then lifted out of the plenary discussion of the Conference and referred to the Committee on Education for further study by a vote that passed by a strong majority:

> Resolved, that having provided adequately for such cases as are referred to in this resolution, this General Conference affirms its allegiance to Christ as King, and Saviour and God, and its faithful adherence to the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever; That as in His word God has spoken to us by His Son, we acknowledge Him as the infallible teacher, as well as revealer, of the things of God.[50]

In effect this left the discipline of seminary professors in the hands of their colleges rather than the General Conference. Jackson's opponents seemed to have abandoned the struggle for no charges were brought against him and, from this point on, higher criticism was taught without formal challenge in the Methodist seminaries of Canada. Jackson returned to England in 1913 to become Professor of Homilectics and Pastoral Theology at Didsbury College, Manchester, but his reputation had preceded him and he faced a challenge at the General Conference of the British Wesleyans that covered the same ground.[51] Jackson cleared this hurdle and a final one that was presented at the Conference of 1922 in Sheffield, settling the question of the orthodoxy of the higher criticism among British Methodists as well.[52] In the last instance the conservative evangelical who had led the way against Jackson and others like him met the decision to refer the charges back to a committee by announcing in disgust that he would proceed no further since it seemed "utterly useless to try to defend our standards."[53] The higher critics were safe, at least in the lecture hall.

But why is it that their views so rarely circulate outside the lecture hall? And why did the controversy, apparently resolved at Toronto in 1909 and Plymouth in 1913, flare up again in Victoria in 1910 and in Sheffield in 1922? I think that the answer lies largely in the fact that both in Canada and England those who sought peace achieved it by defining the work of the higher critics as theory, abstractions to be considered apart from that which is "really" important: the practice of piety.

There is no need to quote in full the 1300-word statement with which the faculty at Victoria College tried to resolve the conflict in 1908. It began with an affirmation that the Theological Faculty aimed to teach in accordance with the Church's fifth Article of Religion:

> The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite to salvation.[54]

But the statement then went on to note that there were two different views of the Scriptures: some held them to be perfectly and completely inspired, others held them to be humanly fallible records of God's own revelation. Though the two views contradicted each other, the statement argued that both were consistent with the fifth article given above and could be supported by passages from John Wesley's own sermons and notes! In order to resolve the dilemma the statement then went on to distinguish between what theological professors think in the classroom and what they and their students preach in the pulpit.

> Inasmuch as perfect honesty in the investigation of truth and perfect candor in its statement are essential parts of our religion, and especially imperative in our schools of theology, standing as they do side by side with the great institutions of learning in the country, so long as our theological professors maintain their personal vital relation to Christ and the Holy Scripture, and adhere to the doctrinal standards of our church, Victoria College recognizes that they must be left free to do their own work in order that in an atmosphere of perfect Christian candor and true intellectual liberty they may conserve the faith of our church in the minds of those who in days to come shall minister in our pulpits. Our experience is that only as young men of a great university have full confidence that their instructors give them honest convictions reached by perfectly candid and scientific methods, will they retain their faith in Christianity itself.[55]

There were two sources of ambiguity in this statement. First, its Methodist signatories were proud that an institution like Victoria College could take its place beside other academic institutions of higher learning and they claimed the right of academic freedom for Victoria College. At the same time they asserted that as Methodists they adhered to the doctrinal standards of their church. Both higher critics and conservative evangelicals claimed that careful investigation according to scientific method had validated their own findings at the expense of the rival position, and so neither side was worried that there might develop a conflict between "Christian freedom" and "academic freedom". But there has developed a diversion, if not a conflict, between these two freedoms in twentieth-century minds. The Handbook of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, for example, states that academic freedom "involves the right to teach, investigate, and speculate without deference to prescribed doctrine,"[56] including, one presumes, the Methodist Articles of Religion. One can still make out the message chiselled into the red sandstone over the main entrance of Victoria College: "The truth shall make you free." How many undergraduates today reckon that it is drawn from John 8:32?

The second source of ambiguity is the reference to the professors' "personal vital relation to Christ and the Holy Scripture." Let philosophers and semanticists say what they will about the word "personal", in the popular mind it is sharply distinguished from the word "professional". Methodists who wished to know more of someone's "personal" faith looked to that person's testimony at a meeting, not in a classroom. For example, C.T. Currelly, a Vic graduate and later member

of the Board of Regents, recalled an incident in which a local association sent one of its elders to Victoria to denounce the teaching of "a brilliant young professor ... brought over from Scotland" -- almost certainly George Jackson himself. The elder arrived to find a Methodist meeting in progress, led in prayer by someone not known to him. When the leader had been identified as the professor he had been sent to denounce, the elder declared, "Yon man's good enough for me," and went home.[57] There was no need to see what went on in the classroom.

It was precisely the same manoeuvre that saved Jackson in England in 1913. Wilbert Howard reports that the vote that confirmed Jackson's appointment was swung by the efforts of Rodney "Gipsy" Smith. It was Jackson's Fernley Lectures, written while he was at Victoria College and published in 1912, that had provoked the opposition on his return to England, but Gipsy Smith urged the lay delegates at the Plymouth Conference to join him at a Sunday evening meeting to hear Reverend Jackson preach. The directness and fervor of his evangelical message won them over and they resolved to discount his academic writings.[58] Gipsy Smith was naturally inclined to stress the practice of personal piety over the pursuit of abstract theory since he was a former Salvation Army officer engaged in leading revival campaigns for the Wesleyan Methodists following the First World War. Had he been in Canada in 1910 he might have reconciled even Jackson and Carman.

In short, there was ambiguity as to the identity of Christian freedom and academic freedom, personal faith and academic teachings.

The Victoria statement of 1910 tried to avoid future conflict by adding a qualification of the freedom granted to its professors.

Noting that the conservative view of Scripture

> has become entwined with the most sacred convictions of many of our people, and has in the past produced a robust and aggressive type of Christian character, we recommend that our public utterances on this question, in the pulpit, on the platform, or in the press, should so present the modern view of Bible interpretation as only to manifest more fully the spiritual power and the Divine truth of the Holy Scriptures.[59]

Albert Carman took this to mean that George Jackson might continue to teach as he please in the classroom but would keep his higher critical views out of the public eye. When Jackson's lectures at Ohio Wesleyan College received public notice, Carman was sure that Jackson had broken the agreement but, as we shall see below, Jackson was equally sure that he had not. In any case the notion that classroom teaching is inoffensive while public statement is not is grounded in the understanding that the former is mere theory while the latter is practice -- a form of witnessing that makes for better lives.

It was precisely this understanding that informed Newton Wesley Rowell in the Victoria debate in 1910. "I am not prepared to say that Jackson ... or the others are correct. I am not capable of expressing an opinion." (This was a polite fiction; though both were laymen, Rowell and his friend, H.H. Fudger, were well read in the latest Biblical criticism.) But Rowell had been at a missionary congress in Europe when he read reports of the debate over Jackson in the Toronto newspapers.

> It made me sick. To think that while we were in that Congress discussing the great question of the evangelization of the world, at home they were quarreling over matters of theological controversy. Brethren, let us go forth as men to preach that God is able and willing to save men from their sins, and let us cease this haggling about non-essentials.[60]

The practice of piety is what counts; higher criticism is mere theory. The same denigration of theory was reflected in a committee report at the same Victoria Conference on the Workman controversy which off-handedly remarked that "erroneous doctrine is not to be thought of as being as bad as immorality."[61]

A closer look at the spirituality of some of the key figures in this debate will serve to conclude my argument that the controversy was inadequately resolved by treating the higher criticism as theory more or less distinct from the practice of piety. In particular I present Workman, Carman, McLaughlin, Jackson and Fudger.

Both George Workman and George Jackson were Methodist ministers and theological professors, but in Workman the professor dominated. He was, after all, one of the first in Canada to complete doctoral training in Germany and his writings convey an air of rigor and certainty that reflect his pride in the standards he observed. Even a sympathetic student who generally had nothing but warm praise for his teachers said, "No doubt he brought many of his troubles on himself, as he was dogmatic and did not suffer fools gladly."[62] Besides lecturing and writing in an academic setting Workman frequently appeared at devotional study sessions to speak of the Bible, but here too his tough, analytic approach prevailed. During the hiatus between his employment at Victoria and at Wesleyan he gave a long lecture to sunday school staff in Toronto which began, "The Bible is the worst understood book in the world ... I intend to say that with respect to historic meaning the Bible is of all books in the world the most understood."[63] The misunderstandings were

marshalled in neat orderly ranks, then dismissed with phrases like "erroneous views," "untenable position," "utterly impossible,"[64] while Workman declared his own faith in the power of faithful human understanding by saying,

> I believe the Bible to be a divine book, not because I cannot understand it, but because I can understand it, and because I know it was meant to be understood by those who study it with proper mental and spiritual qualifications. Mark ... qualifications of both kinds are needed... There are difficulties in the Bible, of course,... but there is no difficulty that cannot be fairly and reasonably explained. There are truths in the Bible, too, so deep, so high, so broad that no finite mind can comprehend them; but there is no truth that cannot be rationally conceived and rationally believed.[65]

Workman was persuaded that he could distinguish between the parts of the Bible that were human and the parts that were divine.

> Whenever we find in (the Scriptures) an utterance that appeals to our conscience, such as "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart," or a precept that applies to our conduct, such as "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them," we may know that it is divinely inspired.[66]

Workman showed himself a modern Methodist in stressing the importance of studying the Bible in order to live rightly.

> We ought to study it practically and experimentally before attempting to teach it, by homing its truths in our heart, by practising its precepts in our business, and by realizing its principles in our life.[67]

There is no room here for a contemplative study of the Scriptures in which the fruit is an encounter with God as an end in itself; the fruit is holy living and doing in this world.

In that respect Workman shared the goals of the conservative evangelicals who opposed him, and it is plain that he won the respect of many of his students. But his sharp dismissal of points of view that were not academically respectable left no room for accommodation and he earned a set of implacable enemies who eventually shut him out of Canadian seminaries. When Nathaniel Burwash sought a peaceful solution to the Workman controversy at Wesleyan in 1908, the pastor of Douglas Methodist Church in Montreal (one of Burwash's admirers and former students) wrote to warn Burwash against Workman.

> It is not fair for our theological professors to put us in the position before our people of being "back numbers" or "incompetents" or "obscurantists" in theology without explicitly pointing out our errors. Some of us have been diligent students ever since we left college and we think that a sound exegesis of Scripture only buttresses these great doctrines of Methodism and which are so vital to us because they have been fully verified in our experience.[68]

As the case wound its way through the secular courts Workman became entangled in a characteristic exchange of letters with a conservative evangelical in the pages of The Christian Guardian in which his protestation that he was himself "one with all evangelical ministers" was lost in his demolition of contrary views of Scripture.[69]

The conservative evangelicals, for their part, were remarkably intolerant of the higher critics, in part because of the modern standpoint that respects practice far more than theory. The Reverend J.B. Saunders, for instance, offered a lengthy lecture to the Theological Union of the conservative Conference at London, Ontario, in 1910 entitled "Some Mistakes and Perils of Higher Criticism from a Preacher's Standpoint."

> The professor in the college has his special work, and necessarily devotes himself to the minute examination of certain questions that are interesting, academic, theoretical or abstract. But we are in the field; we are where these theories are put to the test and their working character is tried. It is in theology as in medicine. In the medical class-room, fanciful theories and new discoveries are thoroughly canvassed and carefully examined. Possibilities and probabilities are weighed and sometimes advocated, but it is not unusual for the professor to stop in the midst of the experiment or the argument, and say, "This is all very well for the class-room, but practice is a very different thing. Try no experiments there. Keep to well-known working lines, for human lives are at stake."[70]

Saunders had read the higher critics but he dismissed them as Germans, materialists, evolutionists and, finally, "natural men" incapable of spiritual discernment (I Corinthians 2:14).[71]

The real leader of the opposition to the higher critics, however, was Dr. Albert Carman, General Superintendent of the Methodist Church, a vigorous man in his seventies at the time of the Jackson controversy. Formerly the head of a Methodist secondary school in Ontario and the last bishop in Canadian Methodism (the office was abolished in the Union of 1884) Carman had given effective leadership in a period of frontier expansion in western Canada. The man who painted Carman's portrait in oils described him as more stern than loving[72] but there is some evidence that he presided over Methodist meetings with both sensitivity and humor.[73] He read the higher critics and lectured on them, rejecting their findings but often speaking with reasoned care. Notes for one address concluded

> Think them over.
> Repress uncharitable judgment.
> Yet at the same time remember that a diminished Bible may mean a diminished Christ, & a diminished Christ will means a diminished Gospel, & a diminished

> Gospel will breed a race of spiritual degenerates.
> Get facts before you trust your all to theories.[74]

Nonetheless he could be stirred to furious rebuttal when criticized unfairly. When wealthy layman Chester Massey chose to defend Jackson against Carman by describing Carman as a "medieval Pope"[75] (surely the lowest blow one Methodist could inflict on another) the Superintendent responded:

> They say the old man is dogmatic, given to high ecclesiasticism, and good material for a Pontiff of the Middle Ages. So far as the venerable Pontiffs of the Middle Ages stood by the Word of God and the rights of their Ministers I am with them. Dogmatic! and why not? I grew up in a dogmatic country, in a dogmatic age and among a dogmatic people. We demand facts, and build our business and our religion on facts and not on theories, fancies and illusions. It is dogmatism all around me.[76]

It is in the light of this dispute that we have to read Carman's attack on "rich men" and "the money power" in his welcoming address to the General Conference of 1910, which in turn stirred the laymen of Sherbourne Street Church to make a formal reply.[77]

Curiously Carman has been described, in light of a novel written by his son, Albert A. Carman, as one who had "failed with his own family."[78] In fact The Preparation of Ryerson Embury (1900) reads more like a vindication of the author's father who plainly serves as a model for the hero's father. Ryerson Embury finds that his Methodist upbringing stands up poorly in the face of infidel critiques at college and he drifts from one standpoint to another. In the end young Ryerson aligns himself with the striking workers of his town and the fiery Methodist preacher who speaks for the poor against the respectable capitalists who dominate the town with the self-serving support of clergy

devoted to the higher criticism. This short summary does not do justice to a fairly well-written novel that presents a fascinating study of the development of a young Methodist in Canada at the turn of the century, but it is hard to believe that Superintendent Carman would not have read the story with approval, particularly in his son's portrait of a biblical scholar whose shallow intellect and shallower faith combined to cut Ryerson adrift on the shoals of infidelity.[80]

Carman was a conservative, not a reactionary. He was committed to preserving the missionary drive and personal experience characteristic of Methodism and worried that the cold speculation (as he saw it) of the higher critics would destroy both. In his own way he was a proponent of the social gospel and feared that the presence of personal wealth would blunt the church's search for justice. But did he see his opponents as they really were?

When George Workman was fired from Victoria College in 1891 he was replaced by John Fletcher McLaughlin, Chancellor Burwash's protégé who began as a biologist but was sent to Oxford to master Hebrew.[81] Every bit as devoted to the higher criticism as Workman and Jackson were, McLaughlin managed to avoid direct attack by the conservative evangelicals almost completely. Besides teaching for 41 years at Victoria and serving as Dean of Theology during 1920-32, he influenced students such as biblical scholar R.B.Y. Scott and activist J.S. Woodsworth. It was McLaughlin who drafted the statement signed by Carman and Jackson and all members of the Board and faculty in 1909,[82] and it may be that his deft distinction between sound personal faith and freedom to teach is reflected in his own practice of conducting devotional study of the Bible

for Vic students on Sunday afternoons. The classes were well attended but clearly extracurricular, and all reference to the higher criticism was made in an irenic and conciliatory manner.[83] Although McLaughlin saw the higher criticism as a pious pursuit it can be seen that his reconciling nature inclined him to draw attention away from the latest biblical scholarship when he confronted suspicious conservative evangelicals.

And what of George Jackson himself? Despite his position he was primarily a preacher, not a professor. Unlike Workman he made no original contributions to biblical research and, when he read books, he read to become a better person, not merely to satisfy his curiosity.[84] Though he wrote easily and, on his return to England, contributed a fortnightly column to The Manchester Guardian, he smarted under the comments of critics who described him as "journalistic."[85] He gave close attention in his later years to the education of Methodist clergy and Sunday School teachers, urging them to read A.S. Peake and the writings of other higher critics and worrying that clergy read one Old Testament while Sunday School students read another.[86] Goaded by Carman's attacks he could sound more like Workman than McLaughlin: "Intellectual fear on God's behalf is stupid impiety." But he saw a providential opportunity for preachers to master biblical criticism in order to build a bridge between it and the piety of their people.[87]

It was these remarks (made in the Fernley Lecture) that led to the heresy charges levelled at him in England, but the earlier lectures that brought Dr. Carman down upon him for the second time were, considering the reaction to them, startlingly evangelical. Dedicated to his congregation at Sherbourne Street Church and published as Studies in the Old Testament (1909),

in these lectures he argued that biblical scholarship can and should lead to a vision of God, that the higher criticism had saved souls, including his own, and that the chief importance of advanced biblical study is to lead students to God.[88]

"May I be pardoned a word of personal testimony?" he asked.

> Like most men in middle life I was brought up in a belief in the verbal inspiration, the literal accuracy, of every part of the Bible. To my own unspeakable relief I have parted with that ancient dogma for ever; I could as soon go back to it as an astronomer to the days before Copernicus, or a naturalist to the days before Darwin. And yet I am here to testify out of a full and glad heart that the Bible was never so much to me, it was never so truly 'the fountain light of all my day, the master light of all my seeing'; I was never so sure that God is in it. This is my faith; with all who in a spirit of reverent candour will join in these short studies I will do my best to share it.[89]

In offering this testimony Jackson was being true to himself as an evangelical but he was violating the agreement of 1909 by giving publicity to the higher critical view of the Bible. Carman, already suspicious and alerted by letters written by unreflective listeners, failed to recognize Jackson as a brother evangelical and set out to destroy him at the Conference of 1910. Would Carman and Cleaver have been reconciled to Jackson if Jackson had attended the Victoria meeting and preached through the good offices of a Gipsy Smith, as he did later at Plymouth? Perhaps not, but it is quite possible that the split might not have been so bitter as Burwash perceived it to be at the close of the Victoria sessions.

What made the Jackson-Carman confrontation still more tragic was the fact that both desired to reform a corrupt social order suffering

the abuses of urbanization. Jackson had made his mark as a young disciple of Hugh Price Hughes by establishing a highly successful down-town mission in the city of Edinburgh[90] and one of his sermons was reprinted in The Christian Guardian in 1897, bringing him to the notice of Canadians.[91] Part of it reads like a crib from Charles M. Sheldon's phenomenally successful In His Steps, an evangelical American's solution to the problems of the city, also published in 1897.[92] Furthermore Jackson had made it plain that he favored church union when he first visited Canada in 1902,[93] a project that most evangelical Methodists, including Carman, were coming to see as a way of marshalling Christian forces for the redemption of the modern world.

Jackson was wounded by the conflict. Though he had responded quickly enough to Carman's challenge at first he did not have Workman's willingness to carry on a dispute indefinitely[94] and found it difficult to understand those who did. His farewell sermon to Sherbourne Street Church, given in 1913 at about the same time that Albert Carman retired as General Superintendent, made an oblique reference to himself even as he spoke ostensibly of a Scottish minister whose views of the Bible had placed his career in jeopardy:

> I know a minister in the Old Country - R.J. Campbell - who a few years ago was denounced up hill and down dale as a dangerous man and a heretic; and I am not going to say that he did not deserve, because of the unwisdom of his speech, some of the things that came upon him. But a little while ago, in a company of his own brethren, he made use of words like these: 'Jesus Christ is the central fact of my spiritual life. I worship Him; I trust my soul to Him for time and for eternity.' Brethren, when a man speaks thus, our quarrel with him should surely be at an end. He has the root of the matter in him, and he can be left safely, in things theological, to work out his own salvation.[95]

What was it that won for Jackson the support of the wealthy business leaders who made up the Official Board of Sherbourne Street Methodist Church? Besides being a splendid preacher Jackson approved the things that such laymen admired but that other clergy have frequently scorned: for example he had praise for the Salvation Army (though he wished that they held more respect for the intellect) and for Bruce Barton's robust Jesus in The Man Nobody Knows.[96] Chester Massey, who contributed to Workman's legal defence fund [97] and attacked Carman in the pages of the secular press, reminded his colleague Rowell that the higher critics were to be supported because they used "up-to-date methods" and did "everything in a business-like manner."[98] Jackson reciprocated this respect for their common style and insisted that both preacher and layman must do the work of the church -- the preacher in the pulpit, the layman in the world.[99]

He found a kindred spirit in Harris Henry Fudger, who was president of the Robert Simpson Company and ran the Infants Class at Sherbourne Street Church. Jackson was welcomed into his home to lead discussions of English literature and received Fudger's steady support, though Fudger was by habit more conciliatory than, say, Chester Massey.[100] His suggestion to a friend that one should be reluctant to treat different parts of the Bible with the same respect was phrased in an almost courtly manner.[101] He read philosophers, notably Bergson, with interest, though it is not clear that he grasped them. Consider his opening words to a Bible class he was conducting:

> Loyalty to Jesus Christ is the essence of Christianity. This is my own short creed and I believe it is one in which we can all join. If he hold to this, I shall not quarrel with any man about inspiration, revelation of other theological dogmas. In fact I shall not introduce here at all those controversial subjects which belong to the field of higher criticism and expert scholarship.
>
> I would rather try to establish some vital practical relation between our conversation and study here together and our every day work and administration of our lives.[102]

Once again we see the higher criticism relegated to the realm of abstract theory and emphasis placed on practice in the world. Yet we know that Fudger was well acquainted with the higher criticism and, according to Nathaniel Burwash, given to contemplation as well as to action.

> No one I have ever known sought the light of knowledge on matters of religion more eagerly, and no one knew better the serious import of the changes going on in the intellectual world. This is why he sponsored so heartily the Student Christian movement in our Universities. To talk with Mr. Fudger on these matters was as if one went to church. It was a deeply religious action and I can bear witness that I never returned from one of these evenings in his library that I did not feel mentally and spiritually invigorated.[103]

Even when allowances are made for the fact that Burwash was giving a eulogy here it is apparent that Fudger was capable of *theoria* when in private or among intimate friends.

But it is no wonder that Fudger left such meditations in his study rather than introduce them into his Bible class. Immediately after the Victoria Conference of 1910 an anonymous layman anxious to redeem the seminaries wrote to *The Christian Guardian* regretting "the inability of the (preacher) to apply the abstract learning he has received in college to the concrete conditions of life as they exist."[104]

The suggested solution was to appoint a new professor ("not necessarily a minister"!) who would give students at Victoria College what they so obviously lacked in their preparation for ministry. Even those who respected the work of the higher critics found it difficult to believe that their findings could usefully be circulated outside the lecture hall.

Though the Jackson case made it reasonably safe to teach the higher criticism in Canadian Protestant seminaries, it resulted in a double tragedy. First, it split the social gospel and unionist forces at a time when they needed to get on with the practical tasks they had set themselves. It was not only the Presbyterians who began to drag their feet over the proposed union shortly before the First World War; Methodists dissipated some of their own unionist energies in this conflict over the higher criticism. And second, the Jackson case invited seminary graduates to avoid unpleasant conflict by warning them that the higher criticism must be mastered in the classroom but not preached from the pulpit. As The Christian Guardian warned preachers at the time, in an editorial called "What to Leave Out,"

> Abstract theological speculation has had its day, and has ceased to appeal to the practical men and women who sit in our pews.[105]

Ralph Connor's fictional hero Hector MacGregor tackled the problem head on in The Arm of Gold and won, but not all fictional heroes did so. Ryerson Embury aimed to refute the infidels with the weapons of the higher critics in open debate before Christian congregations,[106] but the learned critic to whom he turned for guidance proved to be so shallow in both intellect and faith that Ryerson temporarily lost his own way.

The professor of Bible who appeared in Grace Irwin's fictional account of a young theologue at Victoria College in the period following the First World War treated the Scriptures in an equally cold and facile manner, with results equally dangerous to his students.[107]

George Jackson, on the other hand, was a higher critic who consistently strove to read the Bible with "awe," as he put it,[108] studying the Scriptures for themselves, not only as a tool for better living. Though rooted in the modern age he attempted to do both _theoria_ and _praxis_ and to unite them harmoniously in his work as a seminary professor. He was not altogether successful, in general because of the modern tendency to denigrate theory and thus to divide it from practice, in particular because of the Methodist decisions of 1909-10 that exacerbated this tendency among Canadian Protestants.

* * * *

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The Canadian Society of Church History--a twenty-year retrospect

by

John S. Moir

* The substance of this paper is drawn primarily from the minutes of the Society, and also from the records of the secretaries and treasurers. The complete records of the Society have recently been deposited on indefinite loan with the United Church Archives (Victoria College, University of Toronto) and are available there to interested researchers.

Although our sister societies, the Canadian Catholic Historical Association and the Canadian Church Historical Society, were respectively a quarter-century and a decade old when our Society was inaugurated, the intention for this society was "to promote the study of Canadian Church History" outside of any denominational context. The idea for such a society seems to have originated with the late Dr. Lorne Pierce, who as editor-in-chief of Ryerson Press had published H.H. ("Nick") Walsh's The Christian Church in Canada in 1956. The dust-jacket of that book announced that the volume was "a pioneer attempt to give a complete view of the religious development of Canada, based upon research into original sources." This attempt, as Walsh and Pierce knew, was beyond the capabilities of any single author at that stage in Canadian religious historiography, but Pierce had in mind the production of a larger and more definitive work in three volumes to mark Confederation's centenary in 1967. With this larger project in view the two men fostered the formation of this Society, to learn

precisely who was doing what in the field of Canadian church history.

Together these two godfathers asked Arthur Reynolds, then Archivist/Historian of the United Church, to convene a meeting of the history professors of the larger Protestant theological colleges of Toronto in February, 1959. Principal Kenneth Causland of Emmanuel, Tom Millman of Wycliffe, Allan Farris of Knox and Lyndon Smith of Trinity were invited but only Tom Millman could attend. Millman, Pierce and Walsh, with Reynolds as secretary, agreed that the need for publication of scholarly Canadian works in the field required the formation of a church history society and interested persons should be invited to meet in April that year when Emmanuel College was hosting a gathering of church historians.

The April meeting actually took place under the aegis of Knox College--seventeen persons of the thirty-six invited were present. These founders of our Society accepted a proposal to form such a body, named Walsh as president, Reynolds as Secretary-Treasurer, and George W. Brown, Allan Farris and Tom Millman as executive members. They also asked each participant to contribute one dollar to defray expenses--only $16 was collected--and agreed to request Abbé Arthur Maheux to join their organization. The honour roll of founding fathers includes, as well as those already mentioned, Gaylord Albaugh, George Boyle, C.R. Cronmiller,

Earl B. Eddy, Goldwin French, J.L.H. Henderson, Henry Hill, Keith Markell, R.K. Naylor, D.M. Schurman, W.E.L. Smith, Neil G. Smith, and George Spragge. Obviously the churches and seminaries were heavily represented--only French and Schurman were connected exclusively to university departments of history, with George Brown of the Dictionary of Canadian Biography and Spragge, the archivist of Ontario, being the other two laymen.

The executive met in September to examine a draft constitution and plan a day-long meeting of the Society. A letter from Abbé Maheux conveyed his desire to support the Society (although there is no record that he ever joined), and a letter from D.M. Schurman suggested the Society should approach English-speaking as well as French-speaking Catholics, a suggestion accepted because as the minutes noted, "it is our desire to open our Society to all who are seriously interested in Church History." The first regular meeting of the Society was planned for the following May, to coincide with those of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies and the Canadian Theological Society. The executive ended its session by deciding to send its minutes and an offprint from the Canadian Journal of Theology of Walsh's paper, "The Challenge of Canadian Church History to its Historians", to all persons on the mailing list.

The first regular meeting, held in Toronto, attracted twenty-six persons including two more laymen, four members

of the working clergy and two professors of theology. Another twenty persons sent regrets. The draft constitution was discussed and adopted with one amendment; the Treasurer reported a balance on hand of $3.72; and then the delivering of papers began. The presidential address was followed by reports from some ten persons on religious archival resources in Canada. An evening session was addressed by John Grant, Pierce's successor at Ryerson Press, on "Indigenization in Canadian Church History." Originally the meeting had been planned for one day only, but instead the historians were at it again the next morning, hearing addresses from Goldwin Smith on Canadian Methodism and from George Brown on his great enthusiasm, the DCB. When elections followed, Lorne Pierce was chosen honorary president, Walsh president, and Waldo Smith vice-president, while Clyde Smith assumed the care of the modest treasury. In the full executive of seven members no less than three belonged to the ubiquitous Clan Smith, the third one being Neil Smith of Knox College.

The annual fee for membership had been set at $3--it remained unchanged until 1976!--but historically there were few takers for the exalted ranks of sustaining member at $10 or life member at $100. When the next annual meeting was held the Treasurer announced that he had in hand the princely sum of $137.10. Meanwhile progress was being made in other directions. President Walsh reported to the Executive

a plan to integrate the meetings of the three learned religious societies and an offer from McGill University's Faculty of Divinity to pay for the meals (breakfast excepted) and accomodation of all participants. Apparently the executive was unanimous in accepting this generous offer; however the announcement of the programme in February carried the warning that "accomodation for ladies is not available in the Colleges, but members wishing to be accompanied by their wives" could have a double room at the Berkley Hotel for $11.00.

At McGill the three societies met jointly to hear the presidential addresses, thus assuring the speaker of a larger audience than his own society alone could provide. In the historical society meetings the possibility of affiliating with the Canadian Historical Association and other bodies was discussed and rejected in favour of the existing arrangement with the CSBS and the CTS. Perhaps the nostalgia of hindsight colours one's impressions, but certainly those meetings with the other two groups were particularly satisfying. The clientele was small enough that one could even make friends, and the interdisciplinary atmosphere seemed to provide a mental stimulus for all. With the subsequent decision to join with the Learned Societies, meeting a fortnight later than was then our custom, these personal contacts were first weakened and then broken entirely by the scheduling of meetings for the three religious societies at differ-

ent times. The joint presidential papers became less frequently attended even before the staggered scheduling, and the death blow may well have been delivered at St. John's in 1971 when the historians collectively and happily lingered very long over lobster dinner and wine.

Only fourteen persons attended the McGill meetings in 1961, the beginning of a regrettable trend, although membership in the Society continued to climb slowly. Two other developments at that meeting are worth noting--the first was the inclusion of papers on other than Canadian topics, and the second the use of a general theme to connect not merely the historical papers but those of the two other societies as well. Other traditions were also being established for the young society--the meetings now stretched to three very full days, and the addresses, hitherto largely by Protestants, for Protestants and about Protestants, included a paper by Fr. G.E. Giguère on "The Roman Catholic Tradition in Canada."

It was at the McGill meeting that the final arrangements for Pierce's three-volume history were made, as John Moir replaced George Boyle in the roster of authors and John Grant agreed reluctantly to edit the series. Also set on foot, as an example of aroused Canadian Nationalism in the face of American historical insensitivity, was a project to outline on a denominational basis the traditions which make up the Canadian religious experience. This provided

the title to the small book of essays also edited by John Grant, published in 1963. At these meetings the Society elected Neil Smith its second president and regretted the passing of Canon Kelley, archivist of the Anglican General Synod.

The new executive met twice that year (its meetings were still opened with prayer, a practice that disappeared early in the general meetings) to plan its session for Toronto in 1962. Among the notable events of that meeting were the glad tidings that the coffers of our treasury now contained over $200. For the next seven years this sum remained fairly constant, but suddenly in 1971 our balance jumped to over $450. Two years after that it passed the $600 mark and in 1975 nearly touched one thousand dollars. Since then, however, our status as non-profit organization has been assured by a sudden decline to a mere $400, despite our belated decision to recognize the real presence of inflation and raise the fee to $5. In 1962, however, overwhelmed by this heady new of affluence, the Society granted $25 to the Canadian Journal of Theology, a practice continued with fair regularity until the unfortunate demise of that excellent periodical. Only twelve persons attended those sessions at Wycliffe College during a spell of oppresively hot humid weather, but the proximity to beer dispenseries along Bloor Street brought some relief in the evenings. Everyone of the six papers read in 1962 was on a Canadian topic.

Early in the life of our Society the Canadian Journal of Theology had expressed interest in publishing more articals on church history and after 1960 it became in a large measure the publishing vehicle for our members. John Grant served on the directorate of the Journal for several years, and normally several historians were on its Editorial Advisory Committee, but the Journal for the most part relied more heavily for personnel on the CSBS and the CTS. Throughout its fifteen years the CJT carried historical articles in most issues and a high percentage of these had originally been presented to our annual meetings. With few exceptions the presidential address to the Society found its way into the pages of the Journal, and during the early sixties offprints of articles which had originated as papers in the Society's programme were regularly distributed to the membership.

The 1963 meetings were at Waterloo Lutheran University under the umbrella theme of "God and the Secular World." The history programme included one paper on the English-speaking Catholic church in Canada and one on late medieval England. A previous proposal to develop a single society for religious studies had been examined and rejected by a tripartite committee, in large part because the historians were satisfied with the existing arrangements. The Waterloo meetings saw the replacement of Neil Smith as president by Waldo Smith. The last of the unrelated Smith triumvirate, Clyde, passed the office of Treasurer to John Moir. At this

point in time the executive appears to have ceased meeting, and all planning and decision-making was conducted by mail. The three members-at-large henceforth had nothing to do but bask in the honour of their prestigious appointment, although there were occasional complaints from newly elected members-at-large, unacquainted with the rules of this academic game, that they were being underemployed.

By now two facts about the presidency has become established. The vice-president was given the apostolic right "cum successione" on his election, but he (we have still not found ourselves a female president!) had to give presidential papers in both of his presidential years. Waldo Smith complained of this burden during his incumbency, but the two-year term was not abandoned until his successor, Pierre Letellier, had served his time in 1966. Since then no president has served more than one year, which may reflect the membership's opinion of its presidents, or more likely a presidential desire to see others suffer in their turn.

From Waterloo the meetings moved to Kingston in 1964 where the theme was "Calvin and His Significance", but of the four historical papers presented, only that of Allan Farris concerned the confernece theme. Our Society noted with regret the passing of its second honorary president, George Brown, and elected the Venerable N.K. Naylor in his place. The records suggest that this position was considered a life appointment for Naylor was succeed-

ed at his death in 1968 by the beloved Tom Boon, upon whose death in 1972 the post was left vacant for no stated reason. The fact that no honorary president lived beyond his fourth year in office may provide a clue.

When the 1964 meeting learned that our assets has soared to a staggering $277 the members undertook to reduce the embarrassment of riches by giving an unprecedented $75 to the CJT (our sister societies, the CSBS and the CTS, habitually gave nothing), and also proposed to establish a prize for church history writing. The latter project was referred to the executive but nothing has been heard since of the prize suggestion.

Declining or at best stable membership (the roll still included many who were years in arrears with dues) began to bother the Society about 1964 and has continued to be a hardy perennial for discussion. As president in 1965 and 1966 Letellier made a concerted but fruitless effort to win support among French-speaking Canadian historians. At Letellier's first election another tradition commenced, that the Nominating Committee shall be formed of three past presidents. That same year, 1965, the offices of secretary and treasurer were again combined as Art Reynolds, secretary since that first meeting in February, 1959, passed his chores to John Moir. At that 1965 meeting, in Huron College, the CSBS proposed the joint publication of a volume of essays to mark Canada's centenary. With the proviso that the theme of the volume should be Canadian, the project was passed to

the inevitable committee, with John Grant and John Moir to represent church history in a planning session at Toronto on 17 June. It is doubtful if that meeting was ever held--our minutes make no reference to it and John Moir was literally on that day in the midst of moving his worldly goods from Ottawa to Toronto.

When next the historians foregathered, at Master University in May, 1966, surprises and excitement awaited them. The expenses of bringing the late G.R. Cragg from the United States as a guest speaker was about to flatten an already reduced bank balance. Further, a purging from the roll of non-paying members of long standing reduced the membership to less than forty. A membership drive among English-speaking historians had been no more successful than President Letellier's efforts with francophones. In the discussion that followed the working clergy were singled out as the target of another membership drive, but John Grant asked whether our policy of separation from the Learned Societies should be reconsidered, particularly as the founding of the Canadian Society for the Study of Religion raised again the question of our relationship to the CSBS and the CTS. To date our Society had met only in Montreal or Ontario--was it time to consider the possibility of meeting in western Canada? Other members regretted that the Society could not support a publication to advertise our existence, and invited the executive to explore the possibility of merg-

ing the existing publications of other religious history societies into a new quarterly.

So much for the surprises--the excitement, first in the history of the Society, was provided on the second morning by Tom Boon, that venerable English gentleman, priest and scholar, who apologized twice in the midst of Morris Zaslow's paper and then fainted on the floor. Dr. Boon was rushed to the hospital and later the same day, when visited by concerned friends, expressed dismay because the hospital had forced him to reveal his true age, some ten years more than he normally admitted to.

Perhaps it was the fringe benefits of meeting in Montreal, close to Expo, that made the 1967 meetings more successful, if less exciting. Whatever the cause a larger than usual attendance heard the Treasurer report that an increase in memberships and the prompt payment of fees made the financial outlook of the Society much brighter.

The programme for that year included papers on the Church of England, the German Reformation, and the middle ages, but a promising innovation was the inclusion of a paper by a senior graduate student. By this date most of the academically established members had presented one or more papers and scarcely needed much more public exposure, whereas younger members, especially graduate students, could be and were deliberately offered through the Society an opportunity to make a mark in the great world of learned

societies and publications. Publication took the form of a mimeographed volume of as many of the papers as the Secretary could collect from each annual meeting. Since the CJT could accept only a small number of historical papers and since the supplying of offprints from the CJT was never dependable, the volume of papers proved to be an acceptable alternative. Since 1967 the "Papers" have appeared annually except for a double volume covering 1972 and 1973.

Expo was visited by the historians but only after they had chosen John Grant as president. Before the next regular meeting the Executive met, apparently for the first time since 1962. The Secretary was authorized to begin publication of the "Papers", while other societies were sounded out about the possibility of a single journal for the field. At the same time it was decided to discuss at the next business session the subject of joining the Learned Societies. A second interesting event of that year was the joint meeting of the American Society of Church History, the American Historical Association and the Canadian Historical Association in Toronto at the end of December. On that occasion three of our members, Goldwin French, John Grant and John Moir gave papers, two of which were later published in Church History.

During the famous centennial year Nick Walsh's volume of the three-part history of the church in Canada had been published, a reminder of why and how the Society had been started. Nick, however, was suffering from stomach cancer

and had been unable to supervise the proofreading and indexing of his book. He was still in the hospital, a shadow of his former hearty self, when we met in Montreal. Two years later he was back in the hospital, terminally ill. The remaining two volumes by John Grant and myself were delayed by Ryerson Press and did not appear until 1972 when the American purchasers of Ryerson issued them as a part of their policy to Canadianize their image.

The next annual meeting, held at St. Michael's College, opened with John Grant's after-dinner presidential address, "The Reaction of WASP Churches to Migration in the Laurier Era." While the topic sounds timely today, and Grant's study has been seminal, Canada was not ready for such scholarship in 1968--the paper was rejected by the academic journals and is known to posterity only through the exclusive pages of our Society's annual "Papers". The other papers given in 1968 ranged from "Civil Disobedience in Elizabethan England" to "The American Religious Press before 1830". In the business session we inched forward on two fronts as the executive were directed to investigate the possibility of establishing a journal, and the possibility of meeting with the Learned Societies.

This second objective was achieved in 1969 when the president, John Henderson, addressed the Society at one of the galaxy of Learned Societies meeting at York University. Although bibliographical papers had been presented before,

Keith Clifford's analysis of Canadian religious historiography was a first of its kind for the Society, and particularly interesting because several of the persons discussed were present in the audience. A third first in 1969 was the election of a layman as president. The previous year John Moir had been relieved of his duties as Secretary and Treasurer and promoted to Vice-President. The new Treasurer, the ever-dapper Bill MacVean, was in Saskatoon, but John Kenyon the Secretary, occupied the office next to myself at Scarborough College which made that change of command simpler.

Our tenth annual meeting, at Winnipeg, produced another first, a joint meeting with the Canadian Catholic Historical Association. This was so successful that it has become an annual habit of the two societies. On the debit side 1970 marked the death of the _CJT_ because Canada Council refused to support a "religious" journal and offered its largesse to a new periodical, _SR_ or _Studies in Religion_, which was supposedly uncontaminated. At least there was good news on the financial front. Since the appointment of a new treasurer the Society's assets had increased by twenty-two per cent, and the Treasurer reported that of the forty-eight members, twenty were clerics, sixteen were laymen, and twelve were academics.

There had in fact been a subtle shift occurring over the years--older teachers in church-related institutions had passed away and their replacements showed no interest in church history societies, whereas secular historians

were joining the Society in increasing numbers each year. Indeed the next president, Gaylord Albaugh, asked whether the term "religious history" was not closer to the Society's interests, than "church history" with its institutional and denominational presuppositions. In the meantime, however, the Society had become aware of both the advantages and disadvantages of membership in the Learneds. For the first time members could receive travel grants from the Canada Council, which was particularly important to professors in seminaries where money was always embarrassingly scarce. The disadvantages lay in the feeling of loss of identity in the madding crowds attending the Learneds, and especially the separation from old friends in the CSBS and CTS. These last two groups preferred to meet at the time of the new Canadian Society for the Study of Religion, whereas the historians felt drawn to the Canadian Historical Association. In an effort to have our cake and eat it the Society wanted the CSSR to meet about the same time as the CHA. Nothing came of this proposal, but at least the CCHA accepted the plan of joint sessions while rejecting the idea for joint publications as too problematical an undertaking.

From Winnipeg in 1970 the Society journeyed east to St. John's in 1971, where our programme was particularly broad in terms of themes, periods and geography. In the business meeting discussion centred on relations with the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion (CCSR) which was to

publish SR. Some fears were expressed that history seemed to be low in the priority of interests of the new body, but in the end it was agreed that the Society should give the venture its support. Henry, now Bishop, Hill was elected president and Ed Furcha took over the secretaryship. During the next year members were canvassed as to what type of volume we might publish as an invited supplement to SR. Much thought and effort went into this and John Grant and Keith Clifford were made an editorial committee, but in the end no volume was ever produced for or by the historians.

When the Society met in Montreal in 1972, for the first time a president was unable to attend, and the minutes fail to record what papers were given. The secretary's correspondence suggests that an unusually large number of problems had arisen in the planning of this programme and that new difficulties occurred right up to the moment of meeting. By contrast the next year's session at Queen's went particularly smoothly and twenty-six persons registered. This 1973 programme concentrated heavily on Canadian history and younger members were prominent as speakers. Once again, however, the external relations of the Society were a cause of concern. Clifford, president, recommended that the Society should apply for membership in the Humanities Research Council to show that the CSSR did not speak for the other societies involved in religious studies. Perhaps because of the high cost of membership in the HRC the

Society never did make such an application. The meeting admitted that it had an internal conflict between those attracted to history and those drawn to the field of religion, and it was symptomatic of the uncertainty developed since 1969 that a member demanded to know why there was so little interaction with related societies. The meetings elected Tim Suttor as president and John Netten as Secretary-Treasurer to replace Ed Furcha who had assumed the combined jobs a year earlier but was now leaving for a teaching post in India.

What had started as a most enjoyable session at Queen's was ended sadly by the news that John Henderson had died suddenly in Venice, the third president of our Society to pass on in the space of four years. A year later, 1974, the Learneds were back in Toronto. Our sessions started well, but ended less successfully. President Tim Suttor was absent because of illness but his presentation was available because it was an audio-visual TV-taped discourse on art and religion. Modern technology was found to have feet of clay when the tape and tape deck could not be co-ordinated to put colour into the presidential message. The result was an interesting talk accompanied by continuous and hazy pale blue images floating on the silver screen.

Allan Farris, one of the Society's founding fathers, was elected president, and the CCSR was on the carpet again as in the business session at Memorial University. Dissatis-

faction with the Corporation's policies and with the contents of SR seemed general and Keith Clifford was sent as representative of the Society with a mandate to seek improvements that would mollify historians. At the same time it was announced that the Corporation was planning a series of "mini-publications" from typescript and that one mini-volume would be primarily about the history of religion in Canada. With the decision to poll the members for their reaction to this lateest project, the Society adjourned for another year.

Our next meeting, in Edmonton, will be remembered for several reasons, including the copious liquid hospitality consumed by a few members. Of course the Corporation business, or lack of business, was again on the agenda. A letter from the Corporation asked for a committee of the Society to prepare a "mini-publication" on Canadian religious history. The Society had some understandable forebodings but agreed to form yet another committee provided the Corporation understood clearly that the Society could not and would not finance such a book. By now the consensus was that the Corporation and its offspring, SR, should put up or shut up about any supposed interest in reviewing historical books, printing historical articles, or publishing historical collections. Not suprisingly John Grant reported no progress a year later and the tenuous connection of the Society and Corporation was cut once more.

After this debate on the Corporation the Society seemed headed towards another of its academically satisfying but

uneventful sessions. Unfortunately the Treasurer and the attending members were due for a rude surprise. All the travel grant cheques were bounced by the bank on the specious grounds that it could not locate our account of two-year's standing in its St. John's branch. Embarrassment reigned, and the reddest face of all belonged to an esteemed Anglican scholar who had passed his rubber cheque to the Roman Catholic college as payment for room and board in Edmonton. But even our Society's stories have happy endings, for the bank eventually lost one of the controversial cheques and unaccountably refused to debit the $100 from the Society's account. A year later the Society homolugated the bank's strange behaviour and spent the hundred dollars again!

The 1975 Edmonton meetings had an additional reason for celebration--the Society's bank balance was just $10.46 short of the thousand dollar mark. Such affluence was unprecedented--but it was also ephemeral. By the time we gathered together again in 1976, at Laval, the balance had shrunk by half, back to its usual level around the beginning of the decade. Attendance was down even further from the declined numbers at Edmonton, and we were becoming aware of the painful truth that going to the Learneds has become an expensive luxury in this age of recession. At Edmonton the Society had elected John Moir as Secretary again, but wisely, in view of Moir's previously displayed incompetence as a bookkeeper, had retained John Netten in the treasurership. The

Society had also elected its second lay president, John Kenyon, so for the academic year 1975-6 most of the Society's correspondence and the annual "Papers" issued from those adjoining offices in Scarborough College.

The Edmonton programme had for the first time involved the Society in joint sessions with both the CCHA and the Canadian Association for Scottish Studies. This arrangement proved profitable and was repeated again at Laval in 1976. Before leaving the Laval meetings the Society elected Frank Peake as president and it was his pleasure to convene the 1977 session at Frederiction amid fog, drizzle and downpours. Again good papers were presented and new faces introduced to the Society as has been the trend and desire in recent years. After an absence of one year relations with the Corporation for Religious Studies reappeared on the agenda with Tom Sinclair-Faulkner arguing effectively that the Society should give the Corporation one more chance to show or develop an interest in religious history. A motion to renew membership in the Corporation for one more year was carried, amid grumblings, at the second business session of the meetings. Rick Ruggle was elected president and John Netten, presumably as part of the Society's registered retirement programme for aging historians, was promoted from treasurer to heir apparent, or vice-president, with Charles Johnston assuming charge of our dwindling, inflation-battered finances, which had dropped below the $400 mark in the last year.

The last entry in these chronicles of Zadok must concern our meeting at London in 1978. For the first time the Society entered fully into the scientific spirit of the twentieth century: all registrations were computerized with predictable results--general chaos. The registration list included names never seen before or since. As for the programme it reflected particularly the professional interest in missiology that has become apparent in our meetings, as elsewhere, in the past half-dozen years. As might be expected John Netten was elected president of the Society by the unanimous vote of the members, thus maintaining inviolate what is probably the oldest and most hallowed tradition of our twenty-year old Society.

In retrospect--and in a more serious vein--over the span of these twenty years the Society has attempted with some success to meet its avowed purpose "to promote and encourage research in Church History, with particular attention to Canadian Church History". We have failed to develop an effective publishing programme, but the annual meetings are an incentive to research and writing. In our historiographical interests we have transcended denominational and institutional allegiances and interests. Our programmes have offered an opportunity for promising young scholars to be heard and seen--and for older members to reminisce. The Society's programmes have mirrored and to some degree we hope led in the changing historical emphasis of the past

generation. Similarly our membership reflects the coming of age of religious history as a reputable academic discipline. What began as a largely seminary-oriented group has seen the steady increase of interest and participation by university-related, lay historians. Finally, from a small and semi-isolated organization we have changed into a small society accepted and integrated into the Learned Societies, a society that has developed close relations and co-operation with similar learned bodies sharing our interest in the historical study of religion. As a society, I believe, we have made some solid and creditable progress, however slowly, towards our objectives during these past twenty years.