

REDEEMING THE TIME  
Conservative Evangelical Thought and Social Reform  
In Central Canada, 1885-1915

by

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## ABSTRACT

The development of religious thought and social reform in turn-of-the-century Canada has been an area of historical scholarship visited almost exclusively by historians interested in the emergence of a liberal evangelical expression. While much has been done to accentuate the nuances of the Canadian evangelical response to intellectual and social change, the bulk of scholarly work has focused on the maturation of a liberal theology and the corresponding rise of the social gospel. By examining the theology and social activism of a group of prominent clergymen and laymen, this study will add to recent historiography by highlighting the unique response to change by evangelicals on the conservative side of the ideological continuum. It will be demonstrated that these individuals were not “fundamentalists” or reactionaries, but rather, important figures in the religious and social establishment of Central Canada. As such, they were among the leaders in articulating a vision of community that sought as its end the establishment of a “godly nation.”

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## PREFACE

Recent historical works have demonstrated that the responses of Canadian evangelicals to intellectual and social change in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are best viewed on a continuum rather than in dichotomous (modernist - anti-modernist, liberal - fundamentalist) terms. The value of such an approach is made clear when looking at the beliefs and practices of one particular group of conservative evangelicals.

Held annually in Niagara-On-The-Lake, Ontario during the late nineteenth century, the Niagara Bible Conferences were attended by evangelicals from North America and Great Britain. Among the leaders of these meetings was a network of Canadian laymen and clergymen who, as a collective, were deeply involved in the religious and social development of Central Canada. Two of the most prominent members of this group were William Caven (1830-1904), clergyman and principal of Knox College from 1873 until 1904, and William Howland (1844-1893), mayor of Toronto from 1886 to 1888. Despite their activism, Caven, Howland, and the other members of this network have remained on the historical margins: historians have either paid little attention to them or have observed them only in the context of early fundamentalism. As a result of this limited perspective, historians have failed to recognize the contribution they make to an understanding of evangelical thought and social reform in turn-of-the-century Canada.

By viewing this network through a broader lens, this thesis will add to the existing literature on Canadian evangelicalism in at least three ways. First, an examination of some of the ideas espoused by Caven and other clergymen in this network will show that these evangelicals were informed by a number of intellectual currents. Their unique appropriation of these various movements further demonstrates that, while conservative in nature, the theology of

this group was above all else, practical and dynamic. Second, a discussion of Howland and the social activism of this network's laity will highlight the important contribution these evangelicals made to social reform. While this contribution has often been overlooked for its traditionalism, this study will show that conservatives shared many of the same concerns for the community as more radical reformers. Finally, the nature and extent of this network's activities reveals the extent to which evangelicals of all intellectual persuasion were, during the pre-war period, still able to work collectively towards the creation of a godly society.

CHAPTER 1  
LOCATING CONSERVATIVE EVANGELICALISM  
IN TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY CANADA

In the summer of 1885 Niagara-On-The-Lake, Ontario played host to hundreds of leading evangelicals from all parts of North America and Britain. The reason for this gathering was the annual Niagara Believers' Conference, a week long event that encouraged fellowship and the collective study of Bible prophecy.<sup>1</sup> This event was not new to the area, nor was it unique for the evangelicals that participated in it.<sup>2</sup> First organized in 1878 by a group of Americans, which included such prominent leaders as Nathaniel West, James H. Brooks, William J. Erdman, Henry Parsons, and Adoniram J. Gordon, the Niagara Conferences represented the most popular and continuous of several prophecy conferences staged in cities like Philadelphia, New York, and St. Louis in the late nineteenth century.<sup>3</sup> Several interesting features marked this gathering, including

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<sup>1</sup> The Niagara Conferences have received some attention by historians, but primarily from within a theological framework. The first major work to highlight the historical impact of this event was Ernest Sandeen's The Roots of Fundamentalism (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970). Sandeen considers these conferences as the foundation of the fundamentalist movement. Other unpublished works have used Sandeen's paradigm in their own assessments of the Niagara Conferences. See Larry Dean Pettegrew, "The Historical and Theological Contributions of the Niagara Conference to American Fundamentalism" (Th.D diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1976); Ronald G. Sawatsky, "'Looking for that Blessed Hope': The Roots of Fundamentalism in Canada, 1878-1914" (Ph.D diss., University of Toronto, 1985); Walter Unger, "'Earnestly Contending for the Faith': The Role of the Niagara Bible Conference in the Emergence of American Fundamentalism, 1875-1900" (Ph.D diss., Simon Fraser University, 1981). Sawatsky's thesis is particularly thorough in its account of the Canadian contribution to the Conferences.

<sup>2</sup> The terms "evangelical" and "evangelicalism" will be used with the following definition in mind. Evangelicalism, according to David Bebbington, was characterized by four main convictions and attitudes: biblicism (a reliance on the Bible as the ultimate religious authority), conversionism (a stress on the New Birth), activism (an energetic, individualistic approach to religious duties and social involvement), and crucicentrism (a focus on Christ's redeeming work as the heart of essential Christianity). See David W. Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s (Winchester, MA.: Allen and Unwin, 1988).

<sup>3</sup> Some of the largest conferences were held in New York City in 1878, Chicago in 1886, Boston in 1901, and Philadelphia in 1918. For historical accounts of these conferences see Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism, and especially Donald W. Dayton, ed., The Prophecy Conference Movement, five vols. (New York: Garland Publishing,



the degree of interdenominational cooperation that existed among those in attendance: the Niagara Conferences were among the most visible attempts by evangelicals from different denominations and religious traditions to organize in the name of world evangelism. Two of the most striking features of these conferences, however, was the social ascendancy of the evangelicals who participated in them, and the concept of time that they espoused.

One of the rare, inside commentaries on the Niagara Conferences that exists is provided by George Doran, a prominent, twentieth-century Canadian publisher who began his career as an assistant to Samuel Briggs, owner of the Willard Tract Depository in Toronto. This publishing company was one of the most successful and important suppliers of religious material in Ontario and had a particular following among those evangelicals who attended the Niagara Conferences.<sup>4</sup> Held in July, “in the dog-days, between tennis and polo tournaments, in a pavilion on the grounds of the Queen’s Royal Hotel on the high cliffs overlooking the river and the lake.” Doran explains, the annual conference provided “one of our best outlets for sales, and a means of contact for new customers.”<sup>5</sup> According to Doran, the reason for this was due in large part to the affluence of the buyers, particularly the Americans: “Here I came into contact with many Americans who bought liberally of our best Bibles and books, frequently paying for them in currency of twenty-, fifty-, and even one-hundred dollar bills - evidence of an affluence almost unknown to Canadians.”<sup>6</sup>

Doran’s fascination with American munificence at the Niagara Conferences might have clouded his own appreciation of the status of the Canadian evangelicals in attendance. Conspicuous in the leadership of the conferences was a group of Canadian laymen and clergymen who, at least by

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1988). Dayton’s work is a collection of the proceedings from some of the most important of these conferences and offers invaluable insight into the issues and ideas that were central to this movement.

<sup>4</sup> For an account of Briggs and the Willard Tract Society see Sawatsky, “Blessed Hope,” particularly chapter 4., “Willard Toronto Hallelujah.”

<sup>5</sup> George H. Doran, *Chronicles of Barabbas 1884-1934* (Toronto: Rinehart and Company, 1952), 12. Doran was not an evangelical himself and only spent a few short years with the Willard Tract Society before moving to Chicago to work with Fleming H. Revell. His critique of the evangelical circles he was exposed to through his involvement in the company is highly critical, but insightful. Of those gathered who supported Briggs and who attended the Niagara Conferences Doran suggests that they were a body of “holy discontents, something like the Fundamentalists of our day, who assumed for themselves a patent right to divine favor, and relegated all others to a more or less dubious state of mundane existence with grave questions of their immoral state” (8).

Canadian standards, enjoyed significant affluence of their own.<sup>7</sup> One historian has aptly defined this group of evangelicals as a network: a loose affiliation of individuals, essentially dynamic in character, “who have coordinated their actions to achieve a particular goal.”<sup>8</sup> Keeping in mind the fluid nature of this group, the term “network” is appropriate, and will be used also in this study. Although religion was a central organizing principle of this group, other deep-rooted familial, class, business, and ethnic bonds adjoined these established, Victorian gentlemen.<sup>9</sup> Primarily Toronto-centric in composition and focus, this network of evangelicals was part of a new, Canadian urban elite that “was inherently business derived and oriented, led by merchant princes and banking magnates with railway entrepreneurs, big contractors and industrialists in strong association.”<sup>10</sup> The ethnic background of these men mirrored that of most members of the urban elite by tracing its heritage to the generation of British, and particularly Scottish middle-class immigrants, which had arrived in Canada during the mid-1800s. It was this group of immigrants which had formed the backbone of the political, social, and religious reform movement of the mid-nineteenth century that expedited the demise of the Family Compact. In terms of social and economic standing, then, the Canadian evangelicals who participated in the Niagara Conferences were part of the new establishment of Toronto, a group that J.M.S. Careless has described as a “new business Family Compact” linked by intermarriages, common investments, and church connections.<sup>11</sup>

The influence these evangelicals wielded on the religious, social, and political life of Toronto and Central Canada was apposite of their own status in the upper echelon of the rising middle class. Like-mindedness in their quest to evangelize society, as well as a common belief in the efficacy of

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>7</sup> Sawatsky provides an extensive list of the Canadians who were involved in the leadership of the Conferences and offers some biographical information on them. His main source is the Evangelical Churchman, the voice of low-church Anglicans. See Sawatsky, “Blessed Hope,” especially chap. 2, “Well Known Ministers and Prominent Gentlemen.”

<sup>8</sup> Sawatsky, “Blessed Hope,” 30-31. Sawatsky takes his definition of network from Jeremy Boissevain, Friends of Friends (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974).

<sup>9</sup> While he suggests that this group operated as a collective in other realms, Sawatsky focuses primarily on their organized religious activities: for example, the Toronto Bible Training School, the Willard Tract Society, and the Niagara Conferences. He does, however, include a discussion of their social work with the Toronto Mission Union.

<sup>10</sup> J.M.S. Careless, Toronto to 1918: An Illustrated History (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1984), 128.

interdenominational, collective action united these men behind various religious causes. A spirit of interdenominationalism manifested itself in the foundation of several, permanent religious institutions, such as the Toronto Mission Union and the Toronto Bible Training School, and was also evident in the sponsorship of more short-term endeavors like the revival meetings held in Toronto in the 1880s and 1890s, the most notable of these being those conducted by the famous American revivalist D.L. Moody.<sup>12</sup> As prominent members of the local and national community, these evangelicals also sought collective action on numerous social and political issues. These “holy discontents” were just as concerned with their neighbors’ moral and physical condition as they were with their spiritual state. In an effort to create a godly society, they founded, or helped found, several philanthropic organizations that sought to cleanse the community of all types of social ills and restore traditional, Protestant middle-class mores.<sup>13</sup> This quest to redeem society was also carried on at the political level. Many of those who were involved in the Niagara Conferences were leaders of an inchoate urban reform movement that was already challenging the status quo of municipal politics in Toronto.<sup>14</sup> Through their own direct involvement as advisors, elected officials, and lobbyists, these evangelicals exerted significant pressure on the provincial and federal governments to implement

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 128.

<sup>12</sup> For an account of these revivals and the leadership provided by individuals who were part of this network see Eric Robert Crouse, “American Revivalists, the Press, and Popular Religion in Canada, 1884-1914 (Ph.D diss., Queen’s University, 1996). Elmore Harris, Samuel Blake, and Robert Kilgour were just three of the individuals who were involved in the leadership of both Moody’s campaign of 1892 and the Niagara Conferences. Crouse’s list of clergymen (provided in his first Appendix) who were involved in the planning of several different urban revivals in Toronto reveals the significant involvement of a number of other individuals who were active in the Niagara Conferences.

<sup>13</sup> Doran uses the term “holy discontents” to describe this network of evangelicals.

<sup>14</sup> This network was active in the first stage of urban reform that began in the mid-1880s and continued into the 1890s. This first stage of reform primarily focused on remedying moral shortcomings in the political system rather than on large-scale, structural problems. These larger problems were dealt with by a second group of professional urban reformers that emerged in the 1890s. See Paul Rutherford, “Tomorrow’s Metropolis: the Urban reform Movement in Canada, 1880-1920,” Canadian Historical Association, *Historical Papers*, 1971; John C. Weaver, “Elitism and the Corporate Ideal: Businessmen and Boosters in Canadian Civic Reform, 1890-1920,” in *Cities in the West: Papers of the Western Canada Urban History Conference*, A.R. McCormack and Ian Macpherson, eds. (University of Winnipeg, October, 1974); Weaver, “The Modern City Realized: Toronto Civic Affairs, 1880-1915,” in *The Usable Urban Past: Planning and Politics in the Modern Canadian City*, A. Artibise and G. Stelter, eds. (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada: Institute of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, 1979); Weaver, *Shaping the Canadian City: Essays on Urban Politics and Policy* (Toronto: The Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1977).

legislation that enforced certain standards of morality. Far from being a fringe group of malcontents, then, the evangelical network Doran saw in action during his brief stint with the Willard Tract Society was a coterie of Victorian gentlemen who shared a desire for religious, social, and political reform, and who had the money and power to ensure that it happened.

One of the salient features of this network was the degree to which laymen controlled its agenda. Those who participated in the Niagara Conferences and sponsored the various programs of the network were generally well-educated, ambitious men who were just as aggressive in their religious practices as they were in their business and political endeavors; this was a group of “movers and shakers” that celebrated the middle-class virtues of self-discipline, self-determination, and efficiency. These virtues accorded well with the sense of immediacy that characterized their evangelism and their willingness to work independently outside the bounds of clerical and denominational control.

While by no means an exhaustive list of membership, a sample of some of the lay-membership demonstrates the extensive legal, academic, and business acumen that proved efficacious to the network’s activities. Among those who were involved in the network were prominent businessmen Robert Kilgour (1847-1918), Elias Rogers (1858-1910), and George Hague (1825-1915). Kilgour was a Presbyterian who, in addition to being president of Carter-Crume Company, Trent Paper Company, and the National Trust Company, and vice-president of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, served as president of the Toronto YMCA and as a member of the Board of Management for Knox College.<sup>15</sup> Elias Rogers’ involvement in this network underscores the willingness of its members to bring together men of all denominational affiliation.<sup>16</sup> Rogers was a Quaker who controlled one of the largest coal, wood and fuel businesses in North America, the Elias Rogers Coal Company Ltd. He was also a life member and president of the Toronto Board of

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<sup>15</sup> For biographical information on Kilgour see H.J. Morgan, Canadian Men and Women of the Time (Toronto: William Briggs, 1898); George Maclean Rose, ed., Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography (1886); W. Stewart Wallace, Macmillan Dictionary of Canadian Biography, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1963), 288-289..

<sup>16</sup> For biographical information on Rogers see Edwin McCormick, Leading Financial and Business Men of Toronto

Trade, president of the National Life Assurance Company and the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, and served in Toronto's municipal government as an alderman for several years. George Hague's presence in the leadership of the network demonstrates the extent to which business and religious ties extended to other parts of the country.<sup>17</sup> Hague was an Anglican and a leading banker in Montreal who served as General Manager of the Merchants Bank of Canada, and as governor of McGill University, vice-president of the Montreal Diocesan College, and director of Montreal Boys' Home.<sup>18</sup>

Four of the most prominent laymen in the network were Samuel Blake, Henry O'Brien, William Mortimer Clark, and William Howland. The second son of Chancellor William Hume Blake of University College and brother to the popular Hon. Edward Blake, Samuel Blake (1835-1914) was born into a well established family with widespread influence.<sup>19</sup> Like his brother, Samuel became a lawyer and was called to the bar in 1860. In 1872 he was made a Queen's Counsel by the Ontario Government and then became vice-chancellor of the Ontario Court of Chancery, a post offered to him by John A. Macdonald. Retiring from the bench in 1881 to continue his own practice with the firm Blake, Lash and Cassels, Blake remained one of the foremost lawyers in the Dominion and was frequently called upon by all levels of government for his legal expertise. Like Samuel Blake, Henry O'Brien (1836-1931) was a low-church Anglican who succeeded in the legal profession.<sup>20</sup> O'Brien was also born into a reputable family which included his father, Col. E.G. O'Brien, a naval and military officer in charge of the first settlement at Barrie and Shanty Bay, and his brother, William O'Brien, a federal politician who acquired prominence during the Equal Rights

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(Toronto: n.p., 1912); Morgan, Canadian Men and Women, 962-963; Rose, Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography, 62.

<sup>17</sup> For biographical information on Hague see Morgan, Canadian Men and Women, 488.

<sup>18</sup> The leadership ranks of the network were also comprised of other prominent gentlemen from outside Toronto including Judge MacDonald, a Queen's educated lawyer from Brockville, W.C. Blayne, a professor from McGill University in Montreal, and Alfred Sandham, a historian and author from Montreal. For more on these individuals and other important laymen in the network see Sawatsky, "Blessed Hope."

<sup>19</sup> Blake's ties to the "establishment" were strengthened through his marriage in 1859 to Rebecca Cronyn, the daughter of the Anglican Bishop of Huron. Biographical information on Blake is readily available in Morgan, Canadian Men and Women; Rose, Cyclopedia of Canadian Biography; Wallace, Macmillan Dictionary of Canadian Biography.

<sup>20</sup> For biographical information on O'Brien see Morgan, Canadian Men and Women, 776, and Wallace, Macmillan

affair of the early 1890s. Henry was the long-time editor-in-chief of the Canadian Law Journal and editor of the important O'Brien's Division Court Manual; he also compiled Harrison and O'Brien's Digest of Ontario Reports and was the editor of Ontario Practice Reports, all significant contributions to the legal literature of the time. Although he was director of the Central Bank and of the Northern Iron and Steel Company, O'Brien was less involved in the business world than many of his evangelical associates. O'Brien did devote a great deal of time and effort to local politics, however, particularly in the drive for municipal reform in Toronto during the mid 1880s.

One of the leading Presbyterian laymen in this network was William Mortimer Clark (1836-1917).<sup>21</sup> The son of John Clark, the founder of the Caledonian Bank in Scotland, William came to Canada in 1859 and was admitted to the bar in 1861, becoming a Queen's Counsel in 1887. Clark was senior partner in the law firm Clark, Grey and Baird and became President of the County of York Law Association for 1878-1879. Clark held many important positions in the business world, including president of the Toronto Mortgage Company, and director of the Metropolitan Bank, the Canadian General Electric Company, and the Consumers Gas Company. Besides being a leader in his own church, Knox Presbyterian, Clark was also a popular leader in government affairs during his term as Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario from 1903 to 1908.

Without question, the most prominent layman in the network was William Holmes Howland (1844-1893).<sup>22</sup> Howland too was born into an economically and politically influential family: Howland's father was Sir William Pearce Howland, a man of Puritan stock who came to Canada at a

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Dictionary of Canadian Biography, 623.

<sup>21</sup> For biographical information on Clark see Morgan, Canadian Men and Women, 194. Wallace, Macmillan Dictionary of Canadian Biography, 158. McCormick, Financial The Leading and Business Men, and Alexander Fraser, A History of Ontario, Its Resources and Development, 2 vols. (Toronto: The Canada History Company, 1907), 474.

<sup>22</sup> Although a prominent figure in Toronto during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, there are few biographical accounts of Howland. The only comprehensive study of Howland is Desmond Morton's Mayor Howland: The Citizens' Candidate (Toronto: Hakkert, 1973). Morton's work primarily focuses on Howland's quest and attainment of the mayorship of Toronto in the mid-1880s. Another work which provides insight into his social and religious views is Lindsay Reynold's Footprints: The Beginnings of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada (Toronto: Christian and Missionary Alliance, 1982). Also see Victory Loring Russell, Mayors of Toronto, vol. 1 (Erin, Ontario: The Boston Mills Press, 1982).

young age from Watertown, New York and quickly made his fortune in the grain trade.<sup>23</sup> W.H. Howland was involved in numerous business ventures during his relatively short life;<sup>24</sup> he was, in fact, president, vice-president, or a director of more than a dozen companies during his lifetime. Among the positions he held was president of the Queen's City Insurance Company, Hand-in-Hand Insurance Company, and Canadian Lloyds, and the Toronto Board of Trade, vice-president of the Millers and Manufacturers Association, the Toronto Electric Light Company, the Globe Loan and Savings Company, and member of the Board of Directors for the Imperial Trust Company and the Toronto General Hospital. During the late 1870s and the 1880s Howland turned his attention toward the political arena by becoming a founding member of the Canada First Movement and,<sup>25</sup> most significantly, by running successfully for Mayor in 1886. During his two year stint as mayor of Toronto, Howland's name became synonymous with efforts to create "Toronto the Good."

While the religious and social impulses that galvanized this group were largely lay-driven, the network was not without the critical leadership of a number of prominent clergymen. Although their conception of vocation dictated some degree of formal separation from the laymen's world of business and politics, these clergymen were very much tied to the network through social, economic and political connections.<sup>26</sup> Three of the most prominent clergymen associated with this group were

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<sup>23</sup> William Pearce Howland's reward for supporting John A. Macdonald in the Confederation debate in 1867 was a knighthood and the lieutenant-governorship of the newly created province of Ontario. William H. Howland ended his formal education at age sixteen and took over his father's business while William Sr. pursued his political interests. In 1873 the younger Howland extended his ties among the elite by marrying Laura Chipman, the sister-in-law of Sir Leonard Tilley, another father of Confederation. William and Laura had six children.

<sup>24</sup> Howland died suddenly of pneumonia in 1893 at the age of 49.

<sup>25</sup> Howland's contribution to the Canada First Movement, an association of loyal Imperialists who sought greater recognition for Canada by the Crown, was an auspicious one. Despite knowing very little of the association's platform, Howland served as chairman for the organization's first public meeting held on December 6, 1873. According to Colonel George Denison, a leading member of this group, Howland's naiveté contributed to the downfall of the movement. In his first and only speech to the audience Howland "held that there was too much toadyism to English aristocratic usages in this country. There was too much toadyism to titles." Howland went on to say that "We would have no aristocracy in this country but the aristocracy of merit, and the sooner the English Government recognized the fact that the adornment of a man in this country with the feelings they entertained was rather an insult than an honour to our people, the sooner would they appreciate our real sentiment." In Denison's estimation, Howland "did not speak for more than fifteen or twenty minutes, but in that time he had practically killed the movement as a political organization." George T. Denison, The Struggle for Imperial Unity: Recollections and Experiences (Toronto: Macmillan and Co., 1909), 60.

<sup>26</sup> It is somewhat ironic that these clergymen were, in many ways, more tied to the world of politics and economics

Maurice Baldwin, Elmore Harris, and William Caven. Maurice Baldwin's ties to both the new urban middle class and the evangelical network came naturally.<sup>27</sup> Baldwin (1836-1904) was related to two prominent Toronto families: his maternal grandfather was Aeneas Shaw while his uncles were William Warren Baldwin and Augustus Warren Baldwin. After reportedly being refused ordination by Bishop John Strachan of Toronto on account of his ardent evangelicalism, Maurice Baldwin began his career as a clergyman in the diocese of Huron under the leadership of Bishop Cronyn. After serving briefly in London, Ontario, Baldwin assumed the position of rector at St. Luke's Church in Montreal. While there, Baldwin gained the reputation of being the city's greatest anglophone preacher, an unofficial title that did not go unnoticed by two younger Anglican ministers and members of this network, Dyson Hague and G. Osborne Troop. Elected to succeed Isaac Hellmuth as Bishop of Huron in 1883, Baldwin's career was characterized by an attempt to shape diocesan policy according to his own staunch evangelical and distinctly Canadian ideals.<sup>28</sup>

Elmore Harris (1854-1911) was another clergyman who involved himself directly in the religious and social activities of this network.<sup>29</sup> Elmore was the son of Alanson Harris, the Brantford farmer and inventor who merged his fledgling business with that of the Masseys to form one of the most successful companies in the agricultural equipment manufacturing industry. While Elmore remained a silent partner in the family business, his younger brother, John, who was also involved in the network, assumed most of the responsibilities of running the company after the death of Alanson.

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than those clergymen who were involved in the Family Compact of the early nineteenth century. Although espousing the complete separation of church and state, the former were, in some ways, more involved in "affairs of the state" than the latter. As such, this group of clergymen served not only as a voice for aggressive evangelicalism within the "sacred" realm but as articulators of the urban-middle-class worldview.

<sup>27</sup> For biographical information on Maurice Baldwin see Charles G.D. Roberts and Arthur L. Tunnell, eds., A Standard Dictionary of Canadian Biography: The Canadian Who Was Who (Toronto: Trans-Canada Press, 1938). For a more thorough and venerable account of Baldwin's life see Dyson Hague, Bishop Baldwin, a Brief Sketch of One of Canada's Greatest Preachers and Noblest Church Leaders (Toronto:n.p., 1927).

<sup>28</sup> One of Baldwin's goals was to give his diocese a distinctly Canadian character by recruiting Canadian clergymen rather than British. As the first native-born Bishop of Huron, Baldwin disdained the abandonment of Canadian posts by British clergymen who could not handle the "provincialism" of the new country. Baldwin also modernized his diocese by implementing new and efficient procedures of governance, fund-raising, and accounting. In fact, "the deficit that Baldwin had inherited had become a surplus, and by 1887 Huron was able to become the first Anglican diocese in Canada to guarantee minimum stipends for clergy." See Roberts and Tunnell, A Standard Dictionary, 38.

<sup>29</sup> For biographical information on Harris see Ronald Sawatsky, "Blessed Hope," chap. 6.



After committing himself to the pastorate early in his life, Elmore first served as pastor of the Centre Street Baptist Church in St. Thomas, Ontario until 1882, when he accepted a position at Yorkville Baptist Church in Toronto. In 1889, following his pastorates at Yorkville Baptist and Bloor Street Baptist, Elmore started another church in the outskirts of Toronto on Walmer Road. Walmer Road Baptist Church became the centre of network activity thanks in large part to the constant influx of Harris family money.<sup>30</sup> While at Walmer Road Baptist, Elmore Harris supervised numerous interdenominational projects, the most notable of these being the creation of the Toronto Bible Training School in 1894 and the publication of The Fundamentals.<sup>31</sup>

The most distinguished clergyman involved in the network was the Presbyterian clergyman-professor, William Caven (1830-1904). Born into a Scottish Secessionist family with strong Covenanting roots, Caven held to the politically liberal and religiously voluntaristic ideas of his heritage throughout his life.<sup>32</sup> The central focus of Caven's career was Knox College in Toronto where he served as principal from 1873 until his death in 1904. As a clergyman-professor, Caven promoted a practical approach to theological issues which stressed the utility of biblical studies in the teaching and pastoring of the laity over the practice of biblical exegesis as an intellectual exercise in itself. This utilitarian approach helped guide Knox College and the Presbyterian Church through a time of intense theological ferment marked by heated debate over the nature and authority of Scripture. Respected as a judicious arbitrator, both within the Presbyterian Church and in the larger evangelical community, Caven served in various leadership positions, overseeing associations such as the Evangelical Alliance and the Lord's Day Alliance. The most conspicuous of Caven's endeavors, in this respect, was his involvement in the Equal Rights Association, an organization that

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<sup>30</sup> Sawatsky notes that "Throughout the period of Elmore's pastorate, Harris money was flowing regularly and substantially into the church coffers." Sawatsky, "Blessed Hope," 266.

<sup>31</sup> For a detailed historical account of Ontario Bible College and the sponsorship of Elmore Harris see Alwyn Austin, "'The Great Design': A History of Ontario Bible College," Manuscript draft. The Fundamentals was a collection of articles published between 1910 and 1915 with the purpose of countering modern intellectual trends. Further analysis of this publication will be provided in chapter 2.

<sup>32</sup> For biographical information on Caven see Wallace, Rose, and Roberts and Tunnell.

was formed in 1889 in protest of the passing of the Jesuits' Estates Act.<sup>33</sup>

Along with its social standing, the second most striking feature of this network of evangelicals was their concept of time. The way in which individuals perceive time is a critical determinant that both shapes, and is shaped by, their worldview. The concept of time is also a "crucial part of all cultures, for every individual, group, and society must have a sense of time that can organize and explain every moment of existence in relation to what has gone before and what is yet to come."<sup>34</sup> In the late nineteenth century, most Canadians espoused a postmillennial view of time which corresponded with the Victorian era's celebration of progress.<sup>35</sup> In theological terms, postmillennialism is the "view of last things which holds that the kingdom of God is now being extended in the world through the preaching of the Gospel and the saving work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of individuals, that the world is eventually to be Christianized, and that the return of Christ is to occur at the close of a long period of righteousness and peace commonly called the 'Millennium.'"<sup>36</sup> As a cultural force in the late nineteenth century, postmillennialism buttressed notions of social order by suggesting that time moved "gradually according to fixed principles, and only careful and patient cultivation would transform the secular into the sacred."<sup>37</sup> This gradualism accorded well with the optimism of many Protestants who often saw their own material success and social status, as well as that of their churches, as signs of greater things yet to come.

Conversely, the evangelicals who gathered at Niagara-On-The-Lake had a quite different interpretation of time - past, present, and future. The concept of time that was expounded by those at the Niagara Conferences was premillennialism, the belief system which contends that Christians will

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<sup>33</sup> The most thorough account of the Equal Rights movement is J.R. Miller, Equal Rights: The Jesuits' Estates Act Controversy (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979). Caven's role in this movement will be discussed briefly in chapter 2.

<sup>34</sup> William Westfall, Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 160.

<sup>35</sup> For further analysis of this notion of progress and its effect on Canadian culture see Carl C. Berger, A Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970).

<sup>36</sup> Loraine Boettner, The Millennium (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Press, 1957), 14.

<sup>37</sup> Westfall, Two Worlds, 161.

realize “Christ’s kingdom only after He personally returned to rule in Jerusalem.”<sup>38</sup> Contrary to the postmillennial belief in progress and the gradual Christianization of society, nineteenth-century premillennialists believed that churches and culture were both in decline and that this inexorable trend would continue until the apocalyptic return of Christ. Rather than trying to “Christianize the social order,” an ideal which, in their minds, could never be fully achieved, premillennialists considered it the duty of all believers to “redeem the time” by saving as many souls as possible before Christ returned. Far from a radical innovation, this notion of time was deeply embedded in the historical development of Christianity and corresponded with nineteenth-century revivalism and its innate accent on crisis and immediacy.<sup>39</sup> As Jerald C. Brauer has demonstrated, premillennialism was “revivalism writ at large. It drew on the conception of God and creation that underlay the revivalistic interpretation of individual salvation and applied it to the structure of society and the world at large.”<sup>40</sup> Explicit in this theology, therefore, was a cultural view which decried the seeming complacency that accompanied societal “progress”: while social and human betterment was accepted as good in itself, it was not to be equated with the realization of a spiritual kingdom.

Premillennialism often assumed a more radical form in nineteenth-century Canada,<sup>41</sup> such as

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<sup>38</sup> George M. Marsden, Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), 39.

<sup>39</sup> Premillennialism is, arguably, the older of the two main Christian conceptions of time, tracing its roots to the apocalyptic millenarianism that was prevalent in the early church. As Joel Carpenter explains, “Christian millenarianism was revived by radical religious movements during the late Middle Ages and spread through left-wing Protestant ranks during the Reformation. It continued to have a wide circulation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially among the English Puritans and the Pietists of Europe.” Donald Dayton adds that “Protestants have moved back and forth between postmillennialism and premillennialism, especially in periods of revival that seem to promise the advent of the millennium and in times of social change that seem to enliven the more “apocalyptic” of the biblical texts.” In the nineteenth century, a time when evangelicalism enjoyed ascendancy in North American culture, the less drastic postmillennialism proved to be the most popular among Protestants. Joel Carpenter, Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 247; Dayton, The Prophecy Conference Movement, “Introduction,” 3.

<sup>40</sup> Brauer as quoted by Westfall, Two Worlds, 171. Brauer’s essay provides deep insight into the connections between revivalism and premillennialism. See Jerald C. Brauer, “Revivalism and Millenarianism in America,” in In the Great Tradition: In Honor of Winthrop S. Hudson, Joseph D. Ban and Paul R. Dekar, eds. (Valley Forge, Penn.: Judson Press, 1982), 147-160.

<sup>41</sup> There have been two general schools of premillennial thought: historicists believe that the “prophecies in the Bible about the end of time are being progressively fulfilled in history,” while futurists hold that “most of these prophecies await fulfillment.” Carpenter, Revive Us Again, 248. Within the futurist school there are a number of sub-groups which hold to either one of three views according to when they believe Christ’s second coming will occur: posttribulational, pretribulational, and midtribulational. While Millerites and other more radical premillennialist sects

in the Millerites who predicted the end of the world in either 1843 or 1845.<sup>42</sup> As a result, this belief system has usually been dismissed by Canadian historians as a fringe movement which had little bearing on the mainstream of Canadian society. Even two of the most respected historians of Canadian religion, S.D. Clark and John Webster Grant, have reinforced this view by either typecasting premillennialists as religious fanatics dislocated from society, or by simply devoting little space to the development of this system within Canadian religion and culture.<sup>43</sup> By acknowledging that premillennialism “touched the core of Protestant life at a number of important points,” William Westfall has recently followed the lead of historians of Millerism who contend that even the most radical millenarians were indistinguishable from their Protestant neighbors.<sup>44</sup> Yet, while demonstrating the close ties that actually existed between premillennialists and the Protestant mainstream, Westfall still argues that “Millennialism was like a mirror to the dominant religious culture” and thus “functioned as a counterculture to the religious world that the major religious groups were creating.”<sup>45</sup>

The prevailing image of premillennialism as a fringe, counter-culture movement is one that begs further assessment when considering the preponderance of those who participated in the Niagara Conferences. Far from being disenfranchised extremists, these men were very much a part of the religious and social hegemony of late nineteenth-century Ontario; in fact, they were often the leaders in legitimating and maintaining a “dominant ideology.”<sup>46</sup> The lack of critical scrutiny

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held to a historicist interpretation, those at the Niagara Conferences espoused a futurist interpretation.

<sup>42</sup> The best account of Millerism is a collection of essays edited by Ronald L. Numbers and Jonathan M. Butler, The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993). For an assessment of Millerism’s impact in Ontario see Westfall, Two Worlds, chap. 6.

<sup>43</sup> S.D. Clark, Church and Sect in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948), chap. 6; John Webster Grant, A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

<sup>44</sup> Westfall, Two Worlds, 169; David L. Rowe, “Millerites: A Shadow Portrait,” in The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century, Numbers and Butler, eds. (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993).

<sup>45</sup> Westfall, Two Worlds, 173.

<sup>46</sup> The term “ideology” is borrowed from Paul Heidebrecht who defines it loosely as the “dominant set of social beliefs which those in power use to defend their status and which are acknowledged as legitimate by those in more subordinate positions.” Paul Henry Heidebrecht, Faith and Economic Practice: Protestant Businessmen in Chicago, 1900-1920 (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989), 195. Heidebrecht relies on Antonio Gramsci’s paradigm of “hegemony” (the “spontaneous consent” given by the masses to the general direction imposed on social life by the

accorded this network has, therefore, led to the difficult question of definition: how does the historian define this network and its place within late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canadian religion and society?

The only concentrated effort to define this network has come from both American and Canadian historians who have necessitated a revision in the historiography of fundamentalism. Prior to the late 1960s historical accounts of fundamentalism exhibited a decidedly functionalist perspective by reducing the movement to an ephemeral anti-modernist, anti-intellectual, lower-class and agrarian protest inflamed by economic dislocation. Imbued with a sense of indignation for the movement akin to that of the first generation of modernists, historians such as Norman Furniss and Richard Hofstadter focused solely on the social developments of the 1920s and on the way in which fundamentalists temporarily strayed from, and resisted the "inevitability of progress."<sup>47</sup> This interpretation of fundamentalism as an aberrant phenomenon of the 1920s went largely unchallenged until the late 1960s and early 1970s when, in light of a resurgence of fundamentalist activity, historians began to revise the historical account of the movement through a closer examination of its internal dynamics.

As products of, and participants in, the "renaissance in evangelical scholarship" which emerged in the 1970s, historians such as Ernest Sandeen and George Marsden offered an essential corrective to the functionalist interpretation of fundamentalist history, and religious history in general.<sup>48</sup> Employing a substantive approach to religious history,<sup>49</sup> these scholars distinguished

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dominant group of groups") in his use of the term "ideology" to describe the ideas and actions of evangelical businessmen in Chicago. Heidebrecht, *Faith and Economics*, 198.

<sup>47</sup> For the quintessential functionalist interpretations of fundamentalism and the definitive works on the movement prior to the late 1960s see Norman Furniss, *The Fundamentalist Controversy* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954) and Richard Hofstadter, *Anti-Intellectualism in American Life* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962). Impervious to the possible relevancy of theology or religious belief, Furniss portrayed fundamentalism as an aberration that died out when the volatile social and intellectual conditions of the 1920s were succeeded by the dramatic changes brought on by the Depression.

<sup>48</sup> See the introduction to D.G. Hart, ed. *Reckoning With The Past: Historical Essays on American Evangelicalism from the Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995) for a concise account of this "revival" in evangelical scholarship.

<sup>49</sup> The substantive interpretation of religious history views religious development largely on its own terms rather than in conjunction with, or as a result of, external, social conditions. Rather than considering religion only a social

between the fundamentalist movement and the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the 1920s by focusing on the inner dynamics of the movement and positing its theological roots in late-nineteenth-century American evangelicalism.<sup>50</sup> While differing in emphasis, both Sandeen and Marsden attached special importance to the premillennialist teaching of the Niagara Conferences as an organizing principle for fundamentalist theology.<sup>51</sup> Accordingly, they determined that those evangelicals who participated in the Niagara Conferences were “proto-fundamentalists” who, while not yet militant, nevertheless adhered to a belief system that was, at its core, “fundamentalist.”<sup>52</sup>

While the substantive interpretation of religious history has spawned a more nuanced treatment of fundamentalism and its historical development, it has also, inadvertently, exposed fundamentalist historiography to a number of nascent academic hazards. One of the effects of adopting such an approach to fundamentalism has been a tendency to read back into history. By widening the lens through which the development of fundamentalism is viewed historians have left themselves vulnerable to whiggish interpretations of history. Grant Wacker, in his article “The Holy

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construct, the substantive approach sees it as a unique force characterized and fueled by its own internal dynamics.

<sup>50</sup> The two most important “substantive” interpretations of fundamentalism are Ernest Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism, and Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980). In reconciling the theologically driven fundamentalist movement with the overtly social and political composition of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the 1920s Marsden suggested a two-tiered approach. According to Marsden, when fundamentalism emerged as a potent voice of political protest after World War I it was primarily defined by its religious beliefs and practices. In the midst of the mounting controversy with modernism and evolution, however, definition along religious lines became scoured. Fundamentalism became a focal point for various forms of protest against change, whether it meant urbanization or northern intellectualism.

<sup>51</sup> Sandeen and Marsden disagreed on how important premillennialism was in the formation of fundamentalism.

While Sandeen saw fundamentalism as a direct outgrowth of the premillennial tradition, Marsden viewed it as more of a subspecies of American revivalism, pietism, the holiness movement, and other denominational orthodoxies than of premillennialism specifically. In doing so, Marsden located the movement closer to the centre of the Protestant evangelicalism that was the dominant form of religion in nineteenth-century America. Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 4.

<sup>52</sup> While the label “proto-fundamentalist” is one prescribed by Sandeen, Marsden’s term “classical fundamentalist” is essentially the same in definition. In distinguishing “proto-fundamentalists” or “classical fundamentalists” from the fundamentalists of the 1920s, Marsden employs a behavioural standard as a gauge; what disengaged fundamentalists from other evangelicals was not necessarily ideology but behaviour. In Marsden’s terms, it was the degree of militancy in their opposition to modernism which set fundamentalists apart from other like-minded evangelicals. For a compendium of this definition see Marsden, “Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon, A Comparison with English Evangelicalism,” Church History 46 (June 1977), 215-232. See also Ian Rennie, “Fundamentalism and the Varieties of North Atlantic Evangelicalism” in Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond 1700-1990, Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington, and George A. Rawlyk, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Spirit and the Spirit of the Age in American Protestantism, 1880-1910,” explains the pitfalls of relying too heavily on such an approach. Writing specifically in response to contemporary scholarship on the holiness movement Wacker states that “Often the movement appears to have merited historical attention, not for its own sake - not, that is, for what it represented in the 1880s - but for what it became in the 1920s: the ideological backbone of fundamentalism.”<sup>53</sup> His remark is equally pertinent to the wider fundamentalist movement. By emphasizing the legitimacy of fundamentalism as a movement with deep theological roots in nineteenth-century evangelical Protestantism historians have often stressed historical continuities at the expense of important discontinuities. Two historical distortions emerge from this tendency. On one hand, by viewing late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century evangelicalism through a historical lens already tainted by the factionalism of the 1920s, one loses sight of the degree to which unity still prevailed. On the other, by vigorously emphasizing the intellectual roots of fundamentalism one loses sight of the peculiar social climate of the 1920s which induced such an unprecedented response by some evangelicals.

Though in many ways helpful, the substantive approach of Marsden and Sandeen has also had a potentially corrosive effect on Canadian fundamentalist historiography. Historians interested in Canadian fundamentalism have invariably relied on American paradigms as benchmarks for the Canadian experience. Ironically, as a result of this tendency, the history of Canadian fundamentalism has been told more frequently within an American than a Canadian context. The few nondenominational works that have focused on Canadian conservative evangelicals in the late nineteenth century have, by depending heavily on American models, placed Canadians in the mainstream of fundamentalist development.<sup>54</sup> Similarly, historians concerned with the emergence of

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<sup>53</sup> Grant Wacker, “The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Age in American Protestantism, 1880-1910,” *Journal of American History* 72 (June 1985), 48.

<sup>54</sup> Ronald Sawatsky’s work, “Blessed Hope,” for example, readily adopts Sandeen’s and Marsden’s paradigms by placing the Canadian evangelical laymen who were involved with the Niagara Conferences in the mainstream of fundamentalist development. Although he himself recognizes the need for a distinct approach to these individuals, one which examines them on their own terms in the context of the late nineteenth century (334), Sawatsky still labels them “proto-fundamentalists.” He concludes that although this coalition was “composed of a distinct group of people who were joined around a theologically conservative cause, it was also a group which was remarkably open and broad-minded” (334). In considering this behavioral difference significant enough to distinguish this coalition

fundamentalism in the 1920s and 1930s have drawn on Marsden's definition to ascertain whether or not fundamentalism had a significant impact on Canadian religion and culture.<sup>55</sup> By depending too heavily on American models, therefore, Canadian historians have become prone to similar academic shortcomings displayed by their American counterparts. In an attempt to provide a substantive interpretation of religious history, historians of Canadian fundamentalism have postulated a direct relationship between fundamentalism, as reconsidered by Marsden and Sandeen, and the network of Canadian evangelicals who participated in the Niagara Conferences during the late nineteenth century.

By characterizing the Canadian evangelicals who participated in the Niagara Conferences as progenitors of 1920s fundamentalism the substantive approach not only reinforces popular conceptions of these individuals as operating on the margins of Canadian society, but further obfuscates the essence of their beliefs and practices by making two false assumptions. First, by defining these evangelicals as "proto-fundamentalists," such an approach assumes that these individuals adhered to the same "ideology" as fundamentalists in the 1920s. As will be demonstrated, the theology of these evangelicals was, in fact, an amalgam of various denominational traditions and intellectual currents that was not as dependent on premillennialist teaching as fundamentalist theology was. In many critical instances, these evangelicals displayed intellectual and theological traits that were, at a number of critical junctures, dissimilar from the core beliefs of fundamentalism. Furthermore, in their social and political thinking, these evangelicals clearly

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from its apparent "fundamentalist successors," Sawatsky employs the term "proto-fundamentalist" instead of "fundamentalist." Another account of late nineteenth-century Canadian conservative evangelicalism which also places it in the mainstream of fundamentalist development is Phyllis D. Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

<sup>55</sup> Canadian evangelical scholars have generally agreed in their assessment of Canadian fundamentalism in the 1920s and 1930s. They contend that cultural and religious moderation prevailed during this period thus marginalizing "American-like" fundamentalists. They note that even in the cases of Canada's two most renowned fundamentalists, William Aberhart and T. T. Shields, fundamentalist ideas engineered minimal, long-lasting support. The most notable works on Canadian fundamentalism by evangelical historians are Robert Burkinshaw, *Pilgrims in Lotus Land: Conservative Protestantism in British Columbia, 1917-1981* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995); Rawlyk, *Champions of Truth: Fundamentalism, Modernism, and the Maritime Baptists* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990); John G. Stackhouse Jr., *Canadian Evangelicalism in the*



identified with the “establishment” and, unlike fundamentalists in the 1920s, did not set themselves up in opposition to modern culture.<sup>56</sup> This identification with the hegemonic order engendered a view of society that was engaging, and active, rather than separatist in leaning.<sup>57</sup>

Secondly, the “proto-fundamentalist” label overestimates the degree of discontinuity in late-nineteenth-century Canadian religion. That there were some signs of discord in Canadian evangelicalism by the late nineteenth century is evident. Writing about Toronto in 1884, the contemporary historian C. Pelham Mulvany noted the predominance of Protestantism in the city, observing that “One of the titles of the Queen City of English Canada is ‘The City of Churches,’ a name whose appropriateness can be seen by any visitor who watches the heaven-pointing spires that rise from every part of Toronto and form a leading feature of the city.”<sup>58</sup> Mulvany astutely added, however, that far from being homogenous, Toronto religion was rife with ethnic, class, and theological divisions. “It has often formed a subject of reflection to philosophical observers,” Mulvany interjected, “that a vast amount of religious energy is wasted by the multifarious subdivisions of the Protestant denominations in our city. Each sect must have its own minister, its own denominational college, where the minister may be educated in all the narrowness of party lines.”<sup>59</sup>

While such a critique was not uncommon, much more evident in the late nineteenth century were the points of contact that still continued to facilitate collective action on the part of all evangelicals in Canada as well as in the United States. A number of American historians have demonstrated the degree to which “conservatives” and “liberals” in the late nineteenth century still exhibited a similar appreciation for the theological underpinnings of evangelicalism. In his account of liberalism and modernism in American evangelicalism, William Hutchison suggests that liberal

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Twentieth Century: An Introduction to its Character (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

<sup>56</sup> See Bruce B. Lawrence, Defenders of God: The Fundamentalist Revolt Against the Modern Age (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1992).

<sup>57</sup> In defining the social views of American fundamentalists in the 1920s, Marsden suggests that they displayed a “strikingly paradoxical tendency to identify sometimes with the ‘establishment’ and sometimes with the ‘outsiders.’” This contradictory approach “also involved an ambivalence toward American culture” which was “especially apparent in fundamentalist attitudes toward patriotism and social reform.” Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 7.

<sup>58</sup> C. Pelham Mulvany, Toronto: Past and Present (Toronto: W.E. Caiger, 1884), 147.

evangelicals were not necessarily modernists; they were not inexorably driven to consciously and intentionally adapt religious ideas to modern culture, just more willing to view traditional evangelical precepts in the context of human development.<sup>60</sup> Similarly, William McGuire King contends that while the social gospel was innovative in proclaiming that “religious self-realization manifests itself as a religious enthusiasm for humanity,” it still operated within the same categories of Christian theology and experience as other evangelical movements.<sup>61</sup> Grant Wacker’s recent article on the holiness movement in the United States has offered a unique paradigm to articulate the tenuous, but measurable degree of unity that still existed among turn-of-the-century evangelicals. In his comparison of two strands of thought emphasizing the work of the Holy Spirit, one which would become associated with liberal Protestantism and the other with fundamentalism, Wacker characterizes the two as quarreling siblings of the same father.<sup>62</sup>

Historians have recently demonstrated that Canadian evangelicalism at the turn of the century was also beginning to experience some internal disunity. Ideological distinctions were, they acknowledge, beginning to come to the forefront of denominational politics. As the debate in 1910 surrounding the teachings of George Workman at Victoria College illustrates, Methodism was, by this time, becoming increasingly divided along theological lines.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, a similar controversy at McMaster University, a Baptist school, which saw the teachings of Isaac Matthews censured by

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>61</sup> William McGuire King, “An Enthusiasm for Humanity: The Social Emphasis in Religion and Its Accommodation in Protestant Theology,” in Religion and Twentieth-Century American Intellectual Life Michael J. Lacey, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 1989), 53. John Webster Grant has argued the same for Canadian social Christianity. See John Webster Grant, A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).

<sup>62</sup> Grant Wacker, “The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Age,” 58.

<sup>63</sup> See Marguerite Van Die, An Evangelical Mind: Nathanael Burwash and the Methodist Tradition in Canada, 1839-1918 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1989); Michael Gauvreau, “The Taming of History: Reflections on the Canadian Methodist Encounter With Biblical Criticism, 1830-1900,” Canadian Historical Review 65 (1984), 315-346; Tom Sinclair-Faulkner, “‘Theory Divided from Practice’: The Introduction of the Higher Criticism into Canadian Protestant Seminaries,” Studies in Religion 10 (3) 1981. Sinclair-Faulkner’s work is particularly helpful in outlining the controversy within the Methodist tradition in 1910. He sees the George Jackson controversy over the teaching of higher criticism as the turning point in the history of Canadian Christian education. The “victory” by Jackson supporters make it “reasonably safe to teach higher criticism in Canadian Protestant seminaries” (343).

Elmore Harris demonstrates that the Methodist denomination was not the only one experiencing division.<sup>64</sup> Yet, while divisions were beginning to appear in Canadian evangelicalism, historians point out that they were relatively minor and late in coming.

More prevalent in Canadian evangelicalism, historians contend, was an inveterately optimistic theological and cultural outlook that fostered “consensus and consolidation.”<sup>65</sup> Further analyses of the “conservative” and “liberal” wings of evangelicalism has, in fact, found very little predilection for either fundamentalist or modernist thinking among Canadian evangelicals.<sup>66</sup> In their evaluation of the “liberal” side of evangelicalism, Marguerite Van Die and Michael Gauvreau contend that a liberal evangelicalism rather than a full-fledged modernism was the norm.<sup>67</sup> Other historians have found that a “progressive orthodoxy” characterized the theology of most “conservative” evangelicals.<sup>68</sup> While working from different perspectives, then, historians have similarly concluded that Canadian evangelicals remained committed to what can best be described as a “mediating evangelicalism.” Theologically, this mediating evangelicalism generally “focused less strictly on the individual, gave greater credence to tradition and social regeneration, and did not set piety and doctrine in opposition.”<sup>69</sup> In its social application this “mediating evangelicalism” was

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<sup>64</sup> See Clark H. Pinnock, “The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University, 1887-1927,” in Baptists in Canada: Search for Identity Amidst Diversity, Jarold K. Zeman, ed. (Burlington, ON: G.R. Welch, 1980) and Rawlyk, “A.L. McCrimmon, H.P. Whidden, T.T. Shields, Christian Education, and McMaster University,” in Canadian Baptists and Christian Higher Education, Rawlyk, ed. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1988).

<sup>65</sup> Marguerite Van Die, “‘The Double Vision’: Evangelical Piety as Derivative and Indigenous in Victorian English Canada,” in Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond 1700-1990, Bebbington, Noll, and Rawlyk, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 254.

<sup>66</sup> In his account of Canadian Presbyterianism, Brian Fraser uses the term “progressive orthodoxy” to describe the theology taught at Knox College. In his assessment of William Caven, for example, Fraser states that the college principal was conservative in the sense that “he insisted that Presbyterians should never ‘waver in our attachment to the Doctrine of Grace, and in our love of those great Evangelical Principles which our Church has been so much honored to uphold and propagate.’” Fraser adds that Caven “warned the church, however, against a conservatism that became obstructive and prevented the kind of progress in Biblical interpretation and theology that clarified and improved the church’s understanding and presentation of God’s revelation in the Scriptures.” Brian J. Fraser, Church, College, and Clergy: A History of Theological Education at Knox College, Toronto 1844-1994 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1995), 75.

<sup>67</sup> Michael Gauvreau, “The Taming of History”; Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada from the Great Revival to the Great Depression (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1991); Marguerite Van Die, An Evangelical Mind.

<sup>68</sup> See Brian Fraser, Church, College, and Clergy; John S. Moir, A History of Biblical Studies in Canada: A Sense of Proportion (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1982).

<sup>69</sup> William Katerberg, “‘A Born Again Protagandist’: Dyson Hague and Evangelical Anglicanism in Canada, 1857-

informed and fueled by a pragmatism that placed the collective goal of Christianizing the Canadian people over the promotion of particular doctrines or creeds.

Recent scholarship has also shown that turn-of-the-century Canadian evangelicalism is best viewed on an ideological continuum rather than in dichotomous terms. Although subtle in degree, important theological differences on issues such as divine and human agency were, by this time, beginning to place evangelicals at different locations on this continuum. Historians interested in the liberal, or left, side of the continuum have focused on accounting for the move of some evangelicals from the traditional revivalistic ideas of nineteenth-century evangelicalism to those of Idealism and humanism.<sup>70</sup> Though not adopting the term "evangelical", Ramsay Cook has recently shown that one group of Protestant reformers downplayed distinctions between the divine and the human by contending that humanity was actually infused with the divine; that is, God was immanent in human development.<sup>71</sup>

Further to the right on the continuum was another group of evangelicals which Phyllis Airhart and Brian Fraser have described as "progressive." This group, Fraser contends, attempted to uphold a theology that bridged traditional, revivalistic notions of a transcendent God with the new Idealist conception of divinity advanced by more liberal evangelicals.<sup>72</sup> Closer to the centre was a more common, mediating liberalism which, as Van Die and Gauvreau suggest, elevated the natural element in development without entirely discounting traditional understandings of eternal, divine principles.<sup>73</sup> While less work has been done to elucidate theological distinctions on the conservative, or right, end of the continuum, William Katerberg has shown that some evangelicals sought to preserve a traditional theology that accentuated distinctions between the supernatural and the natural

1935 (M.A. thesis, Queen's University, 1991), 4.

<sup>70</sup> For an in-depth account of John Watson and the emergence of Canadian Idealism see A.B. McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Thought in the Victorian Era (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979) and Contours of Canadian Thought (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

<sup>71</sup> Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

<sup>72</sup> Phyllis Airhart, Serving the Present Age, 1992; Brian Fraser, The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915 (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988).

<sup>73</sup> Van Die, An Evangelical Mind; Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century.

without becoming extreme in their disavowal of modern, developmental theories.<sup>74</sup>

When relating religion and social reform, Canadian historians have also implicitly or explicitly adopted a continuum model. In his work on the social gospel in Canada, Allen notes that Protestants adopted either a radical, progressive, or conservative approach to social reform depending on their theological views.<sup>75</sup> Allen contends that the further evangelicals were to the left or liberal end of the continuum, the more willing they were to censure and restructure the existing social system. This willingness stemmed from a greater acceptance of Idealism and the organic notion that the spiritual and physical needs of the individual were intertwined with those of the community. Conversely, those who were more conservative in their theology saw social reform as occurring within existing structures, and largely through individual initiative. This corresponded with a revivalistic ideology that elevated the spiritual needs of the individual over environmental concerns.

Recent developments in the historiography of Canadian religion and social reform suggest, therefore, that a more effective way of defining this network is by viewing it within the context of the mediating evangelicalism that prevailed during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When evaluating its theology and social activism it becomes clear that this group is best located closer to the centre of the ideological continuum (just to the right of the moderate liberals defined by Van Die and Gauvreau), than on the far right, or fundamentalist end. As such, the most appropriate label for this network is simply "conservative". While aware that this network was not, by virtue of its premillennialist views, representative of all conservative evangelicals, this study will, nevertheless, refer to it and its members as "conservative evangelical."

Defining the theology of this network as conservative is precarious when considering the fluidity and variance of denominational loyalties represented by its members. Generally speaking, however, this network drew exclusively from only those denominations that were committed to a

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<sup>74</sup> See William Katerberg, "A Born Again Propagandist" and "Gospel and Party: The Varied Courses of Evangelicalism in the Anglican Communion in North America" (PH.D diss., Queen's University, 1995).

<sup>75</sup> Richard Allen, The Social Passion: Religion and Reform in Canada, 1914-1928 (Toronto: University of Toronto

Calvinist view of the Christian faith: the Anglican, Presbyterian, and the Baptist.<sup>76</sup> Conspicuous in their absence from this network were Methodists.<sup>77</sup> This absence can be explained in several ways. Drawing his own conclusions on the network's lack of Methodist membership, Doran, the contemporary observer alluded to in the introduction, suggested that for this group of Calvinists, there "was always the sinister doubt as to whether on that particular day, or in that particular week or month, the Methodist was or was not fallen from grace; they were for ever suspect."<sup>78</sup> While derisive in tone, Doran's explanation nevertheless points to the theological differences that prevented Methodists from joining the ranks of this network. Unlike the Arminian belief system upheld by Methodists, the Calvinist impulse that informed the network's theology was predicated on an understanding of salvation and human development which emphasized divine intervention over human agency: humans were not able to cultivate their own spiritual regeneration or rise above their physical, moral, and spiritual shortcomings without first being chosen by God. This emphasis on the sovereign power of God accorded well with the premillennialist belief system and its emphasis on a cataclysmic and supernatural conclusion to human history. Thus, unlike Methodists who remained committed to a human-centered and optimistic postmillennialism, many Calvinists found a natural extension for their predestinarian beliefs in the eschatology of premillennialism.<sup>79</sup>

While the Anglicans, Presbyterians, and Baptists who were part of this network saw themselves as different from Methodists, they did not define themselves in opposition to Methodism. As demonstrated in their numerous enterprises, these evangelicals frequently acted in direct cooperation with Methodists to further the common interests of evangelism and reform. This sense

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Press, 1971), 17.

<sup>76</sup> The network was also comprised of individuals who were part of other sectarian groups, such as the Quakers and the Plymouth Brethren, or who were just in the process of leaving the mainline churches to start new "denominations," most notably the Christian and Missionary Alliance.

<sup>77</sup> Sawatsky makes note of the general absence of Methodists at the Niagara Conferences. The only Methodist minister who participated on the committee of the Conferences was Rev. Samuel John Hunter, minister of Elm Street Methodist Church in Toronto. Sawatsky, "Blessed Hope," 98.

<sup>78</sup> Doran, *The Chronicles of Barabbas*, 7.

<sup>79</sup> George Marsden has noted the intrinsic link between Calvinist and premillennarian ideas. See Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 46. For a critical view of premillennialism from an early twentieth-century Methodist, see Thomas Voaden, *Christ's Coming Again: An Exposition of His Teachings on that Subject and a*

of commonality speaks to shared experiences and to a similar dependency on certain precepts that transcended denominational boundaries.<sup>80</sup> In general theological rather than denominational terms, conservative evangelicals remained solely committed to the revivalistic tradition and to a moderate form of Common Sense Realism, the philosophical system of most early nineteenth-century evangelicals. In comparison to more liberal evangelicals, conservatives were less willing to support Idealist notions of divine immanence and human development which seemingly obfuscated distinctions between the spiritual and the material, the sacred and the mundane. At the same time, however, they were not extreme in their disavowal of developmental theories, but rather sought to appreciate and test new knowledge in the light of the fundamental precepts of the Christian tradition. As William Caven intimated, this balanced approach “Is conservative of everything good which comes down to us, while it seeks by careful investigation to enlarge the boundaries of ascertained truth and to purge away errors and mistakes.”<sup>81</sup> This appreciation for a developing theology set Caven and other conservative evangelicals apart from fundamentalists who held to the literalist and static interpretation of scripture advanced by certain Calvinist theologians in the United States.<sup>82</sup>

Similarly, the conservative evangelical network displayed a social activism that is best understood within Allen’s “conservative” group of reformers. As such, this network offers further insight into an area of reform that has been largely ignored. While historians such as Allen have acknowledged the formative contribution of “traditional evangelicalism” to social reform, they have focused almost exclusively on the radical and progressive element in the social gospel. Among the reasons for this tendency is the perception that conservatives were a prohibitive or reactionary force bent on reasserting hegemonic control by enforcing traditional religious, moral, and social values. This view of conservative social reform is not entirely unwarranted: as will be shown, the social

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Refutation of Premillennial Views (Toronto: McClelland and Sons, 1918).

<sup>80</sup> For insight into the theological variance within the Methodist Church see Neil Semple, The Lord’s Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1996) and William H. Magney, “The Methodist Church and the National Gospel, 1884-1914,” The Bulletin 20 (1968), 3-95.

<sup>81</sup> Caven, as quoted in Fraser, The Social Uplifters, 25. These sentiments are also put forward by Caven in his article, “Progress in Theology,” Catholic Presbyterian 1 (1879), 401-411.

<sup>82</sup> See Brian Fraser, Church, College, and Clergy for a comparison between the Calvinism taught at Knox College and

attitudes of those in the conservative evangelical network were decidedly white, Anglo-Saxon, middle-class Protestant and their quest for social reform was certainly an attempt to maintain and even impose this value system on the rest of society. However, to completely dismiss the contribution conservative evangelicals made to social reform is to overlook the concerns and vision for community that they shared with more radical reformers.

Having attempted to locate the conservative evangelical network within their own time and within the current historiography, one needs to emphasize that the conservative evangelical network and its extensive involvement in the development of Canadian society has, in the past, failed to garner much attention. By examining some of the writings of these men, as well as the records of some of the organizations they were a part of, this thesis will attempt to demonstrate the relatively central position this network occupied in both the “mediating evangelicalism” and the social reform movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Chapter two will focus on the theological system of this network as articulated by its leading clergymen. As a close reading of The Fundamentals will show, this network was informed by a number of theological and intellectual currents which, as a collective, fostered a view of history, the church, and culture that was inclusive and dynamic. Published between 1910 and 1915, The Fundamentals represented a collective effort by evangelicals from around the world to reinforce a traditional belief system; among the 64 authors who contributed to this publication were five Canadian clergymen. In their dual roles as pastors and educators, these five clergymen adhered to a theology that was, at its core, practical; brief discussion of the social activism of one of the leading clergymen in this group, William Caven, will demonstrate how this pragmatic theology translated into a concerted effort to construct a strong local and national community.

The focus of chapter three will be on the social activism of the conservative evangelical laity. As leading professionals in the community and as ardent defenders of the revivalistic tradition these men too adhered to a faith that was pragmatic, activist, and efficient, and one that facilitated social



reform.<sup>83</sup> As the writings and activities of William Howland will demonstrate, far from advancing an “other-worldly” approach, these evangelicals were among the most outspoken in their effort to improve the environment of society’s disenfranchised classes. While their crusade to alleviate the ills of modern society often amounted to a reinforcement of traditional middle-class values, these men were just as much innovators as traditionalists. Like his clerical associates, Howland was, above all else, driven by the quest to establish a godly community that would ensure the salvation of souls before Christ’s return; whether this goal was best served by traditional or modern means was considered secondary in importance.

By introducing some of the theological and social views of this network, this thesis will attempt to provide yet another lens through which to view late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canadian religion and culture. Such a lens could prove helpful in delineating broader historical trends, like modernization and secularization, and in clarifying historiographical discourse surrounding these changes. The conservative evangelical network was also part of the transatlantic exchange of evangelical leaders and ideas that marked this period. As such, this study not only offers further insight into the bonds Canadian evangelicals shared with their American and British counterparts, but highlights the unique position they held within the larger, international community.

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<sup>83</sup> In his description of the religious beliefs and practices of a number of Chicago businessmen Heidebrecht defines their faith as “a businessman’s religion” - “such a faith was pragmatic, activist, and geared to measurable results. It was a Protestantism that above all else was efficient.” Heidebrecht, Faith and Economic Practice, 4.

## CHAPTER 2

### REDEEMING THE FAITH: THE FUNDAMENTALS AS A WINDOW INTO CONSERVATIVE EVANGELICAL THOUGHT

Describing his own experiences at the Niagara Conferences, George Doran once wrote: to these conferences “came the great fathers of fundamentalism from all over the world. They were all devout, reverent, zealous premillenarians. So ardent were their beliefs and supplications that at times it seemed almost as though the compassionate Jesus would appear and relieve the straining souls.”<sup>1</sup> Such vivid recollections make it difficult to imagine that those who attended these meetings were anything but Christian fanatics cast in the mold of an Elmer Gantry, the notorious character of Sinclair Lewis’s fictional account of fundamentalism in the 1920s.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the notion that those who attended these conferences were early ambassadors of 1920s American fundamentalism has, in some ways, been perpetuated by scholars (who do not view fundamentalists in the same negative light as Lewis) interested in uncovering the ideological and theological roots of the twentieth-century movement.<sup>3</sup> Even those Canadians who attended these conferences have, by virtue of this perspective, been cast as important players in this movement.<sup>4</sup> Yet, when viewed in the broader context of religious and cultural developments in the late nineteenth century, a slightly different image of these premillennialists, and especially of those who were Canadian, emerges. Far from

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<sup>1</sup> Doran, The Chronicles of Barabbas, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Sinclair Lewis published Elmer Gantry in the wake of the famous battle between modernists and fundamentalists at the 1925 Monkey trial in Dayton, Tennessee. Gantry represented, at least in Lewis’s mind, the quintessential charlatan who “adopted fundamentalist rhetoric largely because he was not bright enough to understand liberalism and because it served the purposes of his sensational campaigns for moral reform.” Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, 188.

<sup>3</sup> Pettegrew, “The Historical and Theological Contributions of the Niagara Conference”; Ernest Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism; Ronald G. Sawatsky, “Blessed Hope”; Walter Unger, “Earnestly Contending for the Faith.”

<sup>4</sup> Ronald Sawatsky, “Blessed Hope.”

exhibiting the anti-intellectual and ultraistic tendencies of an Elmer Gantry, these Canadian evangelicals were respected laymen and clergymen who were defenders of a theological tradition that had deep roots in the Canadian evangelicalism of the nineteenth century.

By viewing the Niagara Conferences only in terms of their contribution to 1920s fundamentalism, historians have advanced a paradigm that is constricted in at least two ways. First, by observing these conferences through the lens of fundamentalism, historians have advanced a static view of history that fails to appreciate the intellectual fluidity and change within the evangelical community during the late nineteenth century. As a result, little has been said about the intellectual and social forces that were acting upon conservative evangelicals at this time, and about how these individuals responded to them. Secondly, by reading back fundamentalism into the thought of this group of evangelicals historians have overemphasized the importance of premillennialism in their theology. As intimated by Doran, premillennialism was clearly one defining feature of the conservative evangelical network, just as it was for fundamentalists in the 1920s; the belief that Christ's return was imminent certainly cast a different light on religious and cultural development for these evangelicals than it did for postmillennialists.<sup>5</sup> Yet, while this belief system was important in conservative evangelical theology, it was not the only one; nor was it the most critical.

Only when viewed within the broader context of religious change in the late nineteenth century do the complexities of the conservative evangelical belief system emerge. Far from being a one-dimensional, self-contained group, the conservative evangelical network was a loosely organized collective that participated in, and was informed by, a number of different intellectual movements. As an interdenominational body, this network was, on one level, informed by the various denominational traditions represented by its members. On a broader level, it was also part of an

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<sup>5</sup> The differences between postmillennialism, which postulated that "under divine providence the world was moving toward a 'millennium' (a period of a thousand years) of peace and prosperity to take place before the return of Christ to judge the world," and premillennialism, which stated that Christ would return unexpectedly before the millennium and that until that time the world would experience steady decline, fostered a contrasting view of human agency in historical development. While postmillennialism spoke optimistically of human agency in the historical process, premillennialism was imbued with an overwhelming sense that supernatural rather than human forces dictated historical development. Dayton, ed., The Prophecy Conference Movement, vol. 1, p. 1.

international exchange of ideas and leaders that extended beyond the annual prophecy conferences held at Niagara-On-The-Lake. Among the most important of these exchanges was Keswick Holiness, a belief system that originated in the annual meetings held in the Keswick lake region of Britain. Finally, through the personal ties of its members to Britain and the United States, this network also had access to the intellectual traditions and trends of two more sophisticated cultures.

The variance of intellectual currents that informed the conservative evangelical network clearly suggests that viewing this group only through the narrow lens of premillennialism and its involvement in the Niagara Conferences produces a restrictive, and distorted image. In an attempt to account for the extrinsic and intrinsic, international exchange of evangelical ideas, historians from the United States, Britain, and Canada have, recently, found virtue in contextualizing national religious development within the broader transatlantic world.<sup>6</sup> Such an approach seemingly offers a more effective way of evaluating the full range of beliefs and practices of Canadian conservative evangelicals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

One enterprise that has remained untapped as a source into this network's theological composition, and one which facilitates a comprehensive and comparative approach, is The Fundamentals. As an international enterprise consisting of authors, editors, and readers from the United States, Britain, Canada, and continental Europe, The Fundamentals represented one of the first collective attempts to shore up Christian orthodoxy against the influx of modern thinking. While much attention has been given to the American and British element in the project, very little has been said about Dyson Hague, G. Osborne Troop, William Caven, John McNicol, and E.J.

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<sup>6</sup> Two of the best examples of this comparative approach are: Rawlyk and Noll, eds. Amazing Grace: Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993); Noll, Bebbington, and Rawlyk, eds. Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond 1700-1990 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). Historians of fundamentalism have also used this approach to account for some of the religious and cultural peculiarities of different nations which both fostered and forestalled the development of militant fundamentalism. For two short, but important comparative treatments of fundamentalism see Ian Rennie, "Fundamentalism and the Varieties of North Atlantic Evangelicalism," in Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies, Noll, Bebbington, and Rawlyk, eds., and Marsden, "Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon."

Stobo, the five Canadian men who contributed directly to the writing of the publication.<sup>7</sup> In their appraisals of the authors and themes embodied in The Fundamentals, American and Canadian historians alike have been negligent at best in their treatment of these five individuals.<sup>8</sup> This negligence is both perplexing and ironic in light of the potentially valuable contributions these men make to a greater understanding of conservative evangelicalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

As a compendium of ideas from some of the leading evangelical thinkers in the Victorian era, (many of the written contributions to The Fundamentals were posthumous, including Caven's) The Fundamentals offers direct access to the nuances of evangelical thought at the turn of the century. As such, it not only offers a window into the transatlantic exchange of ideas and leaders, but also provides a unique medium for appraising the nature of Canadian conservative evangelicalism and its role in this phenomenon. A close reading of the The Fundamentals will demonstrate that within this international exchange, Canadian conservative evangelicalism assumed a distinct character of its own. Unlike that of other contributors, the theology expounded by the five Canadian contributors to this publication was, above all else, a practical one that encouraged active involvement in the community. A brief discussion of the political and social activism of William

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<sup>7</sup> It could be argued that the most important Canadian involved in The Fundamentals was Elmore Harris. Harris was one of only three clergymen on the editorial committee and probably had a direct hand in the selection of the Canadian contributors to the project. Elmore was one of the unofficial leaders of the conservative evangelical network. While pastor at Walmer Road Baptist Church in Toronto, Harris involved himself in such projects as the creation of the Toronto Bible Training School in 1894, an institution modeled on Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Harris was also involved in the notorious controversy over the "liberal" teaching of Isaac George Mathews, professor of Hebrew at McMaster University, in 1908-1909, an event that foreshadowed the actions of a later fundamentalist in the 1920s, T.T. Shields. See Rawlyk, "A.L. McCrimmon, H.P. Whidden, T.T. Shields, Christian Education, and McMaster University."

<sup>8</sup> In the most comprehensive historical analyses of The Fundamentals offered by historians George Marsden and Ernest Sandeen, the breakdowns of authorship of this publication provide either only brief mention of a Canadian contingent or ignore it altogether. See Marsden, Fundamentalism and American Culture, and introduction to Marsden, ed., The Fundamentals: A Testimony to Truth (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988).; Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism. What is more perplexing is the limited treatment of the five Canadian authors by Canadian historians. There are no historical works, to my knowledge, which examine these five men as a collective. Indicative of this neglect is the fact that even the most comprehensive work on Canadian "proto-fundamentalism", Ronald Sawatsky's "Blessed Hope," fails to accurately account for the Canadian contributors to The Fundamentals. Sawatsky incorrectly includes Maurice Baldwin in the project and ignores the contributions made by E.J. Stobo and G. Osborne Troop altogether (313).

Caven will further demonstrate that this practical theology catered to the communal interests of the clergy as much as it did to the laity.

The diversity of backgrounds and careers represented by these five men suggests the broad, encompassing nature of the coalitions which allowed conservative evangelicals in Canada to present a relatively united front in their defense of orthodoxy. As a collective, these men represented three different denominations. Dyson Hague (1857-1935) was an Anglican clergyman-professor who served in various parishes throughout the Dominion, taught occasionally at Wycliffe College in Toronto, and wrote extensively on the Anglican tradition and the Prayer Book. Hague's fellow Anglican, George Osborne Troop (1855-1932), served as a clergyman in Halifax, where he was ordained in 1878, and in Montreal at St. Martin's parish from 1886-1913.<sup>9</sup> John McNicol (1869-1956) was a Presbyterian clergyman-professor who had studied at Knox College in Toronto before being ordained for ministry in 1896. After serving for a short time in Alymer, Quebec as a minister, McNicol became an instructor at the Toronto Bible Training School in 1902,<sup>10</sup> and later principal of the school, a post he held from 1907 to 1954. McNicol's fellow Presbyterian and former teacher from Knox College was William Caven (1831-1904). As the only member of the "first generation" of Canadian conservative evangelicalism, Caven served as principal of Knox College from 1873 until his death in 1904. Finally, E.J. Stobo Jr. (1867-1922) was a Baptist minister who held a number of posts in Ontario and Manitoba. His longest stay was in Smiths Falls, Ontario, where he pastored

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<sup>9</sup> Biographical information on Troop provided by Rev. J. Douglas Barthwick, History of the Diocese of Montreal 1850-1910 (Montreal: John Lovell and Sons, Ltd., 1910), 210. Troop was a popular man in Montreal during his twenty-seven year stay. He was well-loved for his commitment to the evangelism of Montreal. One of the most notable causes he promoted, according to his parishioners, was the abolishment of pew rents. In 1900 Troop stated that he would resign from his office if the Financial Committee of St. Martin's reinstated the pew system, which had originally been abolished in 1890. As a testament to his popularity, his congregation and most of the Committee were deeply affected by Troop's own convictions and agreed to keep St. Martin's rent free. See Edgar Andrew Collard, "The Renting of the Pews" in All Our Yesterdays (Anglican Archives Diocese of Montreal). For the most thorough account of Troop's life see Dyson Hague's tribute, Prophet, Presbyterian, and Servant of Mankind: A Memoir of the Reverend Canon G. Osborne Troop, M.A. Containing "Intimate Recollections" by Mona Johnson and a Selection of His Writings (Anglican Church of Canada General Synod Archives).

<sup>10</sup> The Toronto Bible Training School became the Toronto Bible College in 1912. From this point forward the latter title will be used to refer to the school, both in reference to the years prior to, and following 1912.

from 1907 until his death in 1922.<sup>11</sup> While it is not known for sure how these men came in contact with one another, their involvement in the various movements sponsored by the network would have fostered at least some awareness of each other.<sup>12</sup> What is significant about the diversity of this group is the willingness with which they transcended their own denominational boundaries for the larger cause of evangelism. While denominational traditions remained important for these five men, they were also committed to transdenominational evangelicalism, “the belief that the evangelical basics are most important in Christianity and that transdenominational cooperative action should be undertaken on this basis.”<sup>13</sup>

Published between 1910 and 1915, The Fundamentals was a series of twelve pamphlets containing ninety articles written by 64 authors from Canada, the United States, and Europe.<sup>14</sup> These pamphlets were published and distributed free to between 175 000 and 300 000 “English-speaking Protestant pastors, evangelists, missionaries, theological professors and students, Y.M.C.A. secretaries, Sunday School superintendents, religious lay workers, and editors of religious publications” throughout the world.<sup>15</sup> While the idea and financial backing of this project was provided by brothers Lyman and Milton Stewart, two wealthy Californian oil barons who controlled

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<sup>11</sup> Stobo was born in Kilmarnock, Ayrshire, Scotland in 1867 and came to Canada with his family in 1872. Educated at Woodstock College (B.A. 1903), McMaster University (B.Th. 1896, B.D. 1899 and 1903), and Temple University (D.S.T. 1907), Stobo was ordained in 1896. Within the short span of ten years Stobo served in eight different churches, including Logan Avenue Baptist Church in Winnipeg (1906-1907[?]), before settling in Smiths Falls. At his death he left behind a daughter, a mother, four sisters, and two brothers, all of whom considered Quebec City home. Biographical information taken from The Canadian Baptist LXVIII (March 30, 1922).

<sup>12</sup> Dyson Hague seems to have been the central figure in this circle of evangelicals. It is known that he was good friends with Troop (a result of Hague’s brief posting in Montreal in 1902), and that he attended Stobo’s funeral (See Obituary in The Canadian Baptist, March 30, 1922). Dyson, along with his father George (1825-1915), would have known Caven from their work in the Evangelical Alliance and other endeavours. Caven and McNicols would have been familiar with each other through each one’s involvement at Knox College and at Toronto Bible Training School. It has been suggested, in fact, that Caven recommended McNicol for a teaching position at T.B.T.S. Biographical Sketch. John McNicol File, Ontario Theological Seminary Library.

<sup>13</sup> Stackhouse, Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century, 9.

<sup>14</sup> The writers came from four different countries: 41 were Americans, 17 were British, 5 were Canadian, and 1 was German. According to Sandeen, most of the American writers were Presbyterian (15) or Baptist (11), and came from the northeastern cities. See Sandeen, Roots of Fundamentalism, 200.n.

<sup>15</sup> See Publisher’s note in Marsden, ed. The Fundamentals, vol. 12. It is also interesting to note that the only published “Word of Appreciation” from the readership was from a missionary to the Native people of British Columbia. It is apparent, then, that The Fundamentals had an impact on at least one evangelical in Canada. See “Word of Appreciation” in the introduction to vol. 7.

Union Oil Company, the process of selecting and editing the articles was the work of an editorial committee under the leadership of Rev. A. C. Dixon, pastor of Moody Memorial Church in Chicago.<sup>16</sup> Indicative of the lay-impulse in this project is the fact that among the editors, only three were clergymen: Reuben A. Torrey, dean of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Louis Meyer, a converted Jew working under the auspices of the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions, and Elmore Harris, president of Toronto Bible College.<sup>17</sup> Although there is no record of the selection requirements and process, Elmore Harris undoubtedly had the final say on which Canadians would contribute to the publication. The selection of Stobo, Hague, Caven, McNicol, and Troop suggests not only that these five were well known in the community, but that Harris was interested in presenting a cross-section of Canadian conservative evangelical thought.

As a multifaceted, multinational enterprise, The Fundamentals contained a wide spectrum of views from a varied group of evangelicals. When it came to selecting articles concerned with defending more critical doctrines like inerrancy, however, only those from writers who were ardent defenders of the “divine role in authoring Scripture, consistent with strict inerrancy” were included in the publication.<sup>18</sup> In fact, while some leeway was given to those writing on “peripheral” issues, little freedom was allowed for those addressing the issue of higher criticism, by far the greatest concern of the publication.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, the very inclusion of such authors such as James Orr and G. Campbell Morgan, two British evangelicals who were known to be dismissive of biblical inerrancy, indicates the degree of flexibility and moderation which existed within transatlantic

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<sup>16</sup> See Sandeen, Roots of Fundamentalism for analysis of the editorial committee.

<sup>17</sup> In the introduction to his edition of the works, Marsden points out an interesting and significant coincidence connected with the patronage of the Stewarts. Marsden explains that Lyman Stewart got the idea for The Fundamentals while Dixon was preaching against “something that one of those infidel professors in Chicago University had published” (6). Marsden notes that “Perhaps it was only coincidental... that what sparked Stewart to move on the project were the teachings emanating from the school founded by his arch-rival in the oil business, John D. Rockefeller. The coincidence at least points out that big money could be behind either wing of American Protestantism.” (7) Marsden, ed., The Fundamentals.

<sup>18</sup> After Dixon left in 1911 to pastor Charles Spurgeon’s Metropolitan Tabernacle in London, England, Louis Meyer became editor-in-chief. Meyer was in turn replaced after his death in 1913 by Reuben Torrey.

<sup>19</sup> Marsden breaks down the thematic content in the following way: one-third of the articles defended the Bible against the attacks of higher criticism, one-third were expositions of basic Christian doctrine, and the remaining included a “mix of personal testimonies, discussions of various practical issues, appeals for missions and evangelism,



evangelicalism at this time.<sup>20</sup>

This moderation was also evident in the conspicuous absence of any explicit defence of dispensational premillennialism, the eschatological system that served as an organizing principle for fundamentalists in the 1920s.<sup>21</sup> The inclusion of only two articles dealing specifically with eschatological matters by an editing committee that was comprised largely of dispensationalists suggests that those in charge sought to attract a broader audience.<sup>22</sup> As Ernest Sandeen submits, “That such a dispensationally-dominated committee should produce such a balanced series would seem to demonstrate that these early fundamentalists could still find some grounds for cooperation with other Christian leaders.”<sup>23</sup>

The moderation in tone, authorship, and content of The Fundamentals has been a source of ongoing debate among historians. At issue has been the placement of this publication in the overall scheme of fundamentalist history. Some, like Sandeen, suggest that “although the series is often viewed as the first shot in the fundamentalist controversy, there is little evidence of this in the pamphlets themselves.”<sup>24</sup> Similarly, George Dollar concludes that rather than viewing The Fundamentals as a foundation for the fundamentalist movement, the publication should be considered simply as “The Fundamentals of Orthodoxy.”<sup>25</sup> Marsden, however, finds enough consistencies in the publication to warrant its appreciation as “an important stage in the development of the fundamentalist movement, and hence indeed a part of true fundamentalism.”<sup>26</sup>

While the tone and content of The Fundamentals is cause for debate within American fundamentalism historiography, it only serves to reinforce the mediating character of Canadian evangelicalism around the turn of the century. The Fundamentals was, by its nature, a publication

and attacks on the various “isms.” See Marsden’s introduction, The Fundamentals, 11.

<sup>20</sup> See introduction to The Fundamentals, 12.

<sup>21</sup> According to Sandeen, Sawatsky, and Unger, dispensationalism premillennialism also served as the organizing principle of late nineteenth-century “proto-fundamentalism.”

<sup>22</sup> Ironically, one of the two articles dealing with eschatology included in The Fundamentals was written by John McNicol, a premillennialist who did not adhere to the dispensational system.

<sup>23</sup> Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism, 21.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 206-207.

<sup>25</sup> George W. Dollar, A History of Fundamentalism in America (Greenville, SC: Unusual Publications, 1973), 175.

directed towards the laity. Historians have commented that this move away from the academy to the laity not only explains the lack of scholarly attention paid to the publication, but suggests an entire paradigm shift resulting in the intellectual marginalization of American conservative evangelicalism.<sup>27</sup> In Canada, as Michael Gauvreau has demonstrated, where conservative evangelicals had always espoused an evangelical creed directed toward the laity, there was less concern with presenting an academically respectable defence of orthodoxy.<sup>28</sup> As an exercise in didactics rather than polemics, The Fundamentals provided Stobo, Caven, Hague, McNicol, and Troop not only with an opportunity to defend the divine authority of scripture, but to do so in a way that offered practical knowledge and continuity with familiar teachings for the laity. Regardless of the fact that it took on a larger symbolic meaning for 1920s fundamentalism, when viewed in the context of pre-World War I Canadian evangelicalism, The Fundamentals simply represented another attempt by moderate clergymen-professors to provide the laity with a working understanding of scripture in light of a rapidly changing society.<sup>29</sup>

It is in this context, therefore, that the writings of the Canadian contributors must be viewed. Evident throughout their articles in The Fundamentals, as well as in other corresponding works, was the importance these five men placed on their roles as both spiritual leaders and educators. Inherent in these dual roles was a conscious effort to balance intellect with piety; this balance was clearly manifested in their defence of scripture as divinely inspired. Rather than focusing on the finer points

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<sup>26</sup> See Marsden introduction, The Fundamentals, 2.

<sup>27</sup> Mark Noll, Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986), 44. Noll sees this shift away from the academy as a significant turning point in the development of fundamentalism and of American evangelicalism in general. As he states, The Fundamentals "are important, rather, as an indication of the estrangement of evangelical scholars from the academic marketplace and their own turn toward the evangelical populace as the audience to which they will present their learned work on the Scriptures" (44). This paradigm shift has caught the attention of evangelical scholars in recent decades, particularly since it is this move away from the academy which they themselves are trying to reverse. See Hart, ed. Reckoning With the Past; Noll, The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind (Grand Rapids, Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans Press, 1994); Marsden, The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

<sup>28</sup> See Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 12.

<sup>29</sup> Not all urban laymen were interested in maintaining the scriptural views of these five conservative evangelicals. As Marguerite Van Die and Tom Sinclair-Faulkner have pointed out, some laymen advanced the higher criticism in an effort to keep "up to date." See Van Die, An Evangelical Mind; Tom Sinclair-Faulkner, "Theory Divided from Practice."

of theology which hinged on the elaborate defence of scripture, conservative evangelicals defended inspiration in order to preserve the essential foundation of the church. William Katerberg's assessment that "Hague did not defend scripture for its own sake, but because he believed that the faithful could receive religious assurance and experience regeneration in the Holy Spirit only through the solid foundation of God's Word" can be equally applied to the other four conservative evangelicals.<sup>30</sup>

The urgency with which these conservative evangelicals viewed their task is evident in the fact that each submitted articles to The Fundamentals which defended the divine authenticity and accuracy of the Bible. In their defence of scripture, the five Canadians assumed a moderately orthodox position on the issue of inspiration. Unlike Charles Hodge and his fellow Princeton theologians who, at the time, were beginning to endorse a plenary theory of inspiration which downplayed the human element in the Bible altogether,<sup>31</sup> Canadian conservative evangelicals like Caven promoted a dual explanation of scripture which stated that the Bible was first, the Word of God, and second, the product of the human hand. "This balance of the divine and human elements," Michael Gauvreau suggests, "enabled Caven to view the Bible as a process of progressive revelation, a development of the religious consciousness under divine guidance, not natural law."<sup>32</sup> In his article "The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament," Caven thus dismissed the debate within conservative evangelical circles over what type of inspiration authored scripture by contending that "All is divine and at the same time all is human. The divine and the human are so related that separation is impossible."<sup>33</sup> While he acknowledged the human element in biblical inspiration, then, Caven, like his associates, ultimately attributed scripture to the divine work of God. What mattered to Caven above all else was that Christ himself believed the Old Testament to be inspired by God, a sentiment echoed by Hague in his article, "The Doctrinal Value of the First Chapters of Genesis."

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<sup>30</sup> Katerberg, "A Born Again Propagandist," 39.

<sup>31</sup> See Noll, ed., The Princeton Defense of Plenary Verbal Inspiration (New York: Garland Publishing, 1988).

<sup>32</sup> Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 153.

<sup>33</sup> William Caven, "The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament," The Fundamentals, vol. 4, 58.

According to the five Canadian contributors, evidence of divine inspiration also resonated throughout the teachings of the New Testament. Stobo argued in “The Apologetic Value of Paul’s Epistles” that the reality of Paul’s extraordinary conversion experience spoke to the “credibility of the other New Testament documents, and also for the accuracy of the portrait painted of its central figure, the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>34</sup> Even in eschatological matters, McNicol contended, Christ’s teachings demonstrated the divine hand of God in the unfolding of biblical prophecy. Most indicative of this approach to scripture, however, was Troop’s article, “The Internal Evidence of the Fourth Gospel.” Rather than concern himself or his reader with elaborate exegetical support for the inspiration of scripture, Troop simply contended that the “whole Bible is stamped with the Divine ‘Hall-Mark.’”<sup>35</sup> For Troop and his associates, acceptance of the divine inspiration of scripture was ultimately a matter of faith. As demonstrated throughout their defence of scripture, these evangelicals based their intellectual premises on a sound foundation of pious reverence for the mysterious power of the Holy Spirit. In the final analysis, the Bible was authentic and accurate simply because Christ Himself said it was.

The relative openness to developmental theory (at least in comparison to the Princeton theologians) demonstrated by Caven and his associates in their defence of scripture was denotative of their moderate approach to evolutionary science. Michael Gauvreau has recently argued that for Canadian evangelical leaders during this period “scientific evolutionary thought was not the major intellectual challenge. Their anxieties centred on the implications of higher criticism, historical scholarship, and the insights of the social sciences for their religious outlook.”<sup>36</sup> This contention not only proves well-founded when examining the writings of the five Canadian contributors, but also when assessing the entire collection of writings included in The Fundamentals.

Historians have regarded the publication’s relative ambivalence toward evolution as another significant discontinuity in the development of the fundamentalist movement. Unlike in the 1920s

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<sup>34</sup> E.J. Stobo, Jr. “The Apologetic Value of Paul’s Epistles,” The Fundamentals, vol. 10, 90.

<sup>35</sup> G. Osborne Troop, “The Internal Evidence of the Fourth Gospel,” The Fundamentals, vol. 10, 18.

<sup>36</sup> Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 6.

when evolution became a rallying point for fundamentalists, The Fundamentals is void of any sustained polemic on the theory. Many of the authors represented in the publication were, in fact, quite willing to incorporate evolutionary thinking into their theology. Marsden notes that James Orr, the leading British theological critic of liberalism and contributor to The Fundamentals, was quite “amenable to limited forms of biological evolution.”<sup>37</sup> Although little was said about evolution in the articles written by Stobo, Caven, McNicol, and Troop, those assessments of the scientific theory offered by Hague in his article “The Doctrinal Value of the First Chapters of Genesis” were likely representative of the general sentiment among his Canadian colleagues. Hague was most adamant in his criticism of those theorists who integrated evolutionary theory with divine revelation. In particular, Hague denounced the theory which promoted the “development of the idea of God,” charging instead that “There is an expansive, and richer, and fuller revelation of the attributes and dealings and ways and workings of God; but not of the idea of God.”<sup>38</sup> Hague was also captious of the idea of human evolution, complaining that the theory was degrading to humanity.<sup>39</sup> Yet, in a more general sense Hague emulated the moderate position of British evangelicals by allowing for evolutionary development of the species. In the most definitive statement of his critique Hague stated:

The Bible stands openly against the evolutionary development of man, and his gradual ascent through indefinite aeons from the animal. Not against the idea of the development of the plans of the Creator in nature, or a variation of species by means of environment and processes of time. That is seen in Genesis, and throughout the Bible, and in this world.<sup>40</sup>

For Hague and his associates, then, far more important than a total ambush of Darwinism was a defence of the orthodox understanding of history.

This orthodox understanding of history was predicated on a number of essential truths. Primary among these was the idea that the Bible was divinely inspired and infallible, and therefore

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<sup>37</sup> Marsden, “Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon,” 219.

<sup>38</sup> Hague, “The Doctrinal Value of the First Chapters of Genesis,” The Fundamentals, vol. 8, 80.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

historically accurate. More than a theological treatise, the Bible contained the unfolding of God's plan for both supernatural and natural history. McNicol summarized this perspective when he wrote that "In the Bible God has revealed His mind and will regarding the human race and the world in which we live. Here we are told of the beginnings of history; here we are shown God at work through history; and here the end of history is foretold."<sup>41</sup> Moreover, the Bible contained the account of what Canadian evangelicals considered the climax of history: the incarnation.<sup>42</sup> The incarnation was not only the most striking example of God's hand on history, it was the point at which human history became infused with the divine. In contrast with liberal theology which, at this time, was emphasizing the humanity of Jesus, conservative evangelicals looked to the incarnation as evidence of Christ's divinity. It was Christ's divinity which, according to these men, ultimately facilitated the atonement of all humanity through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross.<sup>43</sup> More than an example of moral perfectibility to be emulated by all humans, Christ was a "God-man," the Saviour who assumed the sins of the world. Thus, by undermining the historical accuracy of the Bible, higher critics, at least according to conservative evangelicals, were severing that most essential link between God and humanity upon which the entire foundation of the Christian faith rested.

Because they "viewed the equation of theology and history expressed in the Bible as the foundation of all education and culture,"<sup>44</sup> these evangelicals considered their defence of biblical history as critical on several levels. The importance they placed on this task was evident in the fact that each Canadian contributor to The Fundamentals concerned himself with defending the historicity of certain portions of scripture. While Stobo and Troop defended the historical accuracy of the New Testament, both Caven and Hague vigorously defended the Old Testament against the assertions by higher critics that many of the ancient texts were of mythical origins or historically

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<sup>41</sup> John McNicol, The Bible's Philosophy of History: A Series of Three Lectures Delivered by Principal John McNicol, D.D. of the Alumni Jubilee Conference, Sep. 1944 at the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of the Toronto Bible College (Toronto: The Board of Governors of Toronto Bible College, 1944), 5.

<sup>42</sup> The incarnation is the doctrine that the second person of the Trinity assumed human form in the person of Jesus Christ.

<sup>43</sup> See Dyson Hague, "At-One-Ment by Propitiation," The Fundamentals, vol. 11.

<sup>44</sup> Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 58.

inaccurate. In an attempt to balance once again the human and divine elements in biblical inspiration, Caven countered the higher critics' claim that many of the older portions of the Bible were mythical by suggesting that the "Lord's brief references to early Old Testament narrative would not suggest the distinction so often made between earlier and later Old Testament records on the score of trustworthiness."<sup>45</sup> This dependence on an argument from faith was emblematic of the Canadian emphasis on piety over intellect. While other contributors to The Fundamentals invoked the evidence of contemporary archeology which seemingly proved the accuracy of biblical history, Caven, Troop and their associates simply maintained that the Bible was historically accurate because it was "stamped with the Divine 'Hall-Mark.'"<sup>46</sup>

Canadian conservative evangelicals also defended the historical significance of Bible prophecy regarding the "end-times": they believed that Scripture was clear and accurate in its foretelling of the apocalypse that was to befall humanity before Christ's Second Coming. However, although they were premillennialists,<sup>47</sup> and hence rejected the liberal idea that the world would be increasingly Christianized as history unfolded,<sup>48</sup> Caven, McNicol, and their associates rejected the more radical form of dispensational premillennialism upheld by fundamentalists, which stated that

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<sup>45</sup> Caven, "The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament." The Fundamentals, vol. 4, 51.

<sup>46</sup> Troop, "The Internal Evidence of the Fourth Gospel," The Fundamentals, vol. 10., 18. There are a number of articles in The Fundamentals which enthusiastically employed archeological findings to discount the higher critics. One of the articles, for example, demonstrated how contemporary archeological finds were confirming the historical accuracy of the Mosaic Tabernacle in the wilderness spoken of in the book of Exodus. See David Heagle, "The Tabernacle in the Wilderness: Did it Exist?" The Fundamentals, vol. 4, 7. Archeology was looked upon with favour by these writers because it was a hands-on science which accorded well with Baconian methodology. Nevertheless, it is somewhat ironic when looking at The Fundamentals to see how modern sciences, such as archeology, are utilized by conservative evangelical writers to oppose liberal theologians, the champions of modern scientific techniques.

<sup>47</sup> While there is no direct evidence that Stobo was a premillennialist, his involvement in conservative evangelical circles at this time was likely predicated on his acceptance, at least in some form, of premillennial views. There is evidence, however, that Caven, McNicol, Hague, and Troop were premillennialists. McNicol demonstrated a clear premillennial view of history in all of his writings on prophecy. While seemingly an insignificant issue for Caven, he did envision the return of Christ in premillennial terms. See Caven, "The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament," The Fundamentals, vol.4, and Christ's Teaching Concerning the Last Things and Other Papers (Toronto: The Westminster Co. Ltd., 1908). Evidence of Troop's premillennialism appears in Hague's tribute, Prophet, Presbyter, and Servant of Mankind. Katerberg's assessment of Hague's own views encapsulates the views of the entire group. Katerberg suggests of Hague that "It is likely that he held to a mild premillennialism, given the context of Canadian evangelicalism during his lifetime; but he did not get caught up in literalist, dispensational readings of history and prophecy." Katerberg, "A Born Again Propagandist," 70.

<sup>48</sup> McNicol contended that "The kingdom of God is not coming 'with observation.' The evangelizing of the world is not resulting in the conversion of the world. The New Testament gives no indication that the conversion of the world

through the proper interpretation of biblical prophecy Christians could actually discern where present culture stood in relation to the impending apocalypse.<sup>49</sup> One of the central complaints these Canadians had with this extreme form of premillennialism was that it undercut the essence of prophecy by emphasizing the act of prediction over the necessity of spiritual readiness communicated in the prophecy itself.<sup>50</sup> Caven underscored this when he explained that “What the prophet wishes to fix attention upon is the justice of the Divine government and the necessity of man keeping in mind that the day of retribution will certainly arrive. This is what is really important in the case.”<sup>51</sup> Moreover, Caven rejected the notion that biblical prophecy could be applied literally to specific historical development. In a clear indictment of the dispensational penchant for “systematic

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was to be expected.” McNicol, *The Bible's Philosophy of History*, 15.

<sup>49</sup> Even Elmore Harris refrained from offering an endorsement of dispensationalism. See Preface of “Addresses of the International Prophetic Conference Held December 10-15, 1901 in the Clarendon Street Baptist Church Boston, Mass.” in Dayton, ed., *The Prophecy Conferences* vol.3,(New York: Garland Publishing, 1988). Of the five, McNicol was most involved in combating dispensationalism. While serving as principal of Toronto Bible College, McNicol consistently opposed the inclusion of dispensationalism into the official theological statement of the college.

The battle between McNicol and dispensationalists eventually reached a climax in the 1940s when a group of young dispensationalist pastors and members of a Missionary Society, of which McNicol was a part, leveled charges against the college for being too liberal. McNicol responded to these charges by writing a strong, by polite rebuttal of dispensationalism in which he outlined why his school would remain outside the dispensational camp (see “Fundamental but not Dispensational,” *Toronto Bible College Recorder*, 52 [March, 1946], John McNicol File, Ontario Theological Seminary Library). Among his criticisms of the movement was that dispensationalism promoted a sectarianism which Toronto Bible College was specifically trying to avoid in its program. On a theological level, McNicol believed, like Caven, that biblical prophecy was something more than the unraveling of human history. In using the early church as a reference point, McNicol explained that for early Christians the Second Coming of Christ “lay in the future, of course, but it springs were within the veil. They lay not in the affairs of this world, but in the world of eternal realities where their master was.” (See McNicol, *The Essential Reality in Christianity* [Reprinted from *The Biblical Review* for October, 1924], John McNicol File, Ontario Theological Seminary Library). For McNicol, the primary importance of prophecy was the sense of divine direction, purpose, and hope it provided for the church.

<sup>50</sup> A product of John Nelson Darby and the Plymouth and the Plymouth Brethren movement in Britain, dispensationalism was known for its “‘rightly dividing the word of truth’(2 Timothy 2:15), or interpreting the Bible according to its relation to various ‘dispensations’ or periods in the history of redemption. Each of the periods had its own characteristic scheme for God’s activity and humanity’s expected response.” Dayton, *The Prophecy Conference Movement* vol. 1, p. 2. While dispensationalism had many converts among those gathered at the various prophetic conferences in the late nineteenth century, including the Niagara Conferences, it was not considered the dominant form of premillennialism until the 1920s when it was endorsed by most fundamentalists. Dispensationalism became appealing to fundamentalists as a way of deciphering God’s plan for humanity by matching historical events with biblical prophecy, and more directly, as a means of justifying and legitimizing their own exclusion from modern culture. For the most thorough accounts of dispensationalism see Timothy P. Weber, *Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979) ; C. Norman Kraus, *Dispensationalism in America* (Richmond, VA.: John Knox Press, 1958). For a brief account of the impact of the Plymouth Brethren in Canada, see Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*.

<sup>51</sup> William Caven, *Christ’s Teaching Concerning the Last Things and Other Papers*, 89.



prophecy” Caven charged that prophecy “is not history. It is not the presentation in exact chronological sequence of the events which it relates. In a measure it lifts the veil off the future, but not so that we can set down, in their exact position, as on a chart, the things which are spoken of.”<sup>52</sup>

Another factor that militated against any embrace of dispensationalism was their conception of the church and its role in history. McNicol articulated this conception by suggesting a two-tiered definition. On a spiritual or “transcendent” level, the church, as comprised of all who were true believers, represented the “Body of Christ.” On an institutional level, McNicol explained, “the Church means organized Christianity. It denotes the sum total of all Christian groups in every part of the globe who profess a common loyalty to Jesus Christ.”<sup>53</sup> It was on this level that the church served as a mediator between the spiritual and the material realm. McNicol suggested that “It performs functions in both worlds. As the invisible Church is the Church considered on its Godward side, so the visible Church is the Church considered on its earthly side.”<sup>54</sup> This two-tiered definition thus allowed Canadian conservative evangelicals to balance their evangelical outlooks with a strong allegiance to the traditions of their particular denominations. As leaders within the Presbyterian, Baptist, and Anglican denominations, these evangelicals remained committed to the reformed ideal which emphasized the importance of institutionalized Christianity.

One corollary of this approach to the historical church was an ingrained anti-Catholicism. Gauvreau has noted that for Canadian Protestants, the “study of history was all-important to the outcome of the battle with Rome. Protestant ministers employed both biblical and universal history to reassure their congregations as to the final outcome of the struggle.”<sup>55</sup> The Canadian contributors to The Fundamentals all demonstrated this type of anti-Catholicism in their writings; Roman Catholicism and its papal institution was not only an apostasy, they charged, but more importantly, an impediment to evangelism. McNicol voiced this view when he stated that “The Church which gave Christianity to the nations of Europe in the early centuries has become, in the present age, the

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>53</sup> McNicol, The Bible's Philosophy of History, 19-20.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., 20.

greatest hindrance to world evangelism.

A second corollary of McNicol's dual conception of the church was a willingness, and even eagerness, to participate in interdenominational activities. Because McNicol and his associates also defined the church as the spiritual collective of believers, they were willing to set aside denominational differences for the greater cause of evangelism. As McNicol explained, "Neither episcopal ordination, nor presbyterian polity, nor congregational independence, nor adult baptism or baptism by immersion, has anything whatever to do with the one significant thing that makes the Church the Divine thing which it is - the presence of the Holy Spirit in its corporate life."<sup>56</sup> As principal of Toronto Bible College, McNicol was involved in one of the most visibly interdenominational projects.<sup>57</sup> This ecumenical spirit, however, did not render denominational differences insignificant. McNicol, for example, considered the concept of denominations as necessary and serving a positive function. He noted that while the spiritual underpinning of each denomination was the same, denominations appealed to a variety of groups in society by exhibiting some "material differences in their outer framework."<sup>58</sup> Moreover, McNicol and his associates concerned themselves first with the renewal that was needed in their particular denominations before seeking larger alliances.

The way in which they perceived history and the church's role in it, therefore, placed Canadian conservative evangelicals on a continuum in between liberal and fundamentalist conceptions of historical development.<sup>59</sup> Whereas liberal evangelicals espoused a human-centred,

<sup>55</sup> Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century*, 114.

<sup>56</sup> McNicol, *The Bible's Philosophy of History*, 20.

<sup>57</sup> During his term, Toronto Bible College maintained the strong interdenominational tradition on which it had been founded by promoting an open and balanced statement of faith and curriculum. One example of the interdenominational spirit that prevailed at the school was the 1899 Summer Session during which four leaders from different denominations served as guest speakers: Professor Henry J. Cody from Wycliffe College (Anglican), Professor Jones Hughes Farmer from McMaster University (Baptist), Professor John Edgar McFayden from Knox College (Presbyterian), and Dr. Nathanael Burwash from Victoria College (Methodist). See Sawatsky, "Blessed Hope," 279. For a historical account of the college's interdenominational mission and curriculum see Alwyn Austin, "The Great Design."

<sup>58</sup> Sawatsky, "Blessed Hope," 20.

<sup>59</sup> Marsden sees both the liberals and the fundamentalists as oversimplifying the issue of historical development. He explains that "Fundamentalists, seeing clearly that the Bible spoke of antithesis, would hear almost nothing of natural

developmental interpretation that celebrated present culture over the past, and fundamentalists rejected notions of natural development altogether, Canadian conservative evangelicals adhered to a progressive view of history that appropriated historical development in the light of immutable truths or creeds. In this sense, Canadian conservative evangelicalism more clearly emulated its British counterpart than its American. In his important essay, "Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon," Marsden suggests that British evangelicalism did not become fundamentalist because it was informed by "a sense of gradually developing tradition that appears characteristic of English thought generally."<sup>60</sup> Conversely, in America where the "dynamics of unopposed revivalism" held sway, "newness" was celebrated, both in the political and the religious realm.<sup>61</sup> Significantly, then, in Canada where the dynamics of revivalism did not go unopposed, ecclesiastical tradition and the evangelical impulse achieved a state of reasonable equilibrium. As William Westfall has demonstrated in his account of nineteenth-century religion in Ontario, revivalism merged with a culture of order and stability. As in Britain, therefore, the individualism and dissent associated with Canadian revivalism was mediated by older ecclesiastical traditions and loyalties.<sup>62</sup> Canadian conservative evangelicalism and its mediating character thus prevented it from fully adopting the revivalist tendency of thinking in strictly dichotomous terms, a tendency clearly manifested in fundamentalist ideology.<sup>63</sup>

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development: liberals, enamored of historical and developmental explanation, proclaimed that the old antithesis must be abandoned... both sides oversimplified the issues and each overestimated the degree to which recognition of historical development necessitated the abandonment of traditional Christian teaching." See Marsden, "Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon," 232.

<sup>60</sup> Marsden, "Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon," 219.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 219 and 225.

<sup>62</sup> Katerberg, "A Born Again Propagandist," 76-77. See Westfall, *Two Worlds*.

<sup>63</sup> Marsden, "Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon," 227. The dual appreciation for denominational traditions and the larger evangelical community also precluded any endorsement by Canadian conservative evangelicals of the primitivist concept of church history embraced by American fundamentalists in the 1920s. The primitivist impulse, as Joel Carpenter contends, caused fundamentalists to reject completely the historicism of modern thought. This tendency manifested itself in a fervent anti-developmental and separatist mentality based on a strict literal reading of scripture. Fundamentalists believed that primitive Christianity had been restored during the Reformation and revived several times since then. As Carpenter explains, they believed that their "task, then, was not to recover it, but to defend, cultivate, and promote it - to contend earnestly for it." Carpenter, "Contending for the Faith Once Delivered: Primitivist Impulses in American Fundamentalism," in *The American Quest for the Primitive Church*, Richard T. Hughes, ed. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), 101. In this "pursuit of purity,"

The mediating evangelicalism espoused by Canadian conservative evangelicals thus prescribed an appreciation for both the natural and the supernatural in its interpretation of scripture, history, the church, and culture. This approach not only discounted the developmental and idealistic theories espoused by liberal thinkers, but also rejected the primitivist and separatist ideas endorsed by later fundamentalists. While this moderate approach suggests a greater British influence on Canadian conservative evangelicalism at this time, it also underscores the peculiarity of the Canadian experience. Two significant ideological forces which informed and defined this experience were Common Sense Philosophy and Keswick Holiness.

In their defence of scriptural truth, Stobo, Troop, Hague, Caven, and McNicol relied heavily on the Common Sense tradition. A product of the Scottish Enlightenment of the eighteenth century, Common Sense philosophy was comprised of three different elements. In his account of the effect of this philosophy on the American evangelical mind Mark Noll classifies these elements as epistemological, ethical, and methodological. Epistemological and ethical Common Sense were based on the idea that “just as humans know intuitively some basic realities of the physical world (epistemological), so they know by the nature of their own being certain foundational principles of morality (ethical).”<sup>64</sup> While some Canadian historians have suggested that, like Americans, nineteenth-century Canadians generally embraced all three aspects of the Common Sense tradition,<sup>65</sup>

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fundamentalists did not hesitate to sever all ties with those mainline denominations which, in their eyes, had failed to uphold the ideals of the original church. In response to what they perceived as a threat to this ideal by modernism, therefore, fundamentalists focused more on the ahistorical theories of dispensational premillennialism and, consequently, championed the “supernatural” character of the Bible and historical development at the expense of their human character. David O. Beale, in his work, *In Pursuit of Purity: American Fundamentalism Since 1850* (Greenville, SC: Unusual Publications, 1986), effectively demonstrates how the fundamentalist quest for “pure” Christianity was equated with separatism. Beale explains that “Fundamentalists have striven progressively for what they regard as biblical purity. This does not imply a belief in perfectionism, but it means their goal has been a position as consistent as possible with the doctrine of holiness” (5). Linking holiness with separatism, Beale states that in “both the Hebrew and Greek languages, the word holiness, or sanctification, carries the basic idea of separation” (6). Carpenter adds to this that “What they called ‘the separated life’ marked fundamentalists, in their own view, as what the Bible called a peculiar people.” Carpenter, “Contending for the Faith Once Delivered,” 102.

<sup>64</sup> Mark Noll, “Common Sense Traditions and American Evangelical Thought” *American Quarterly* 37:2 (Summer 1985), 221.

<sup>65</sup> A.B. McKillop, in *A Disciplined Intelligence*, suggests that all three aspects of Scottish Common Sense Realism informed the Canadian mind. Michael Gauvreau, in *The Evangelical Century*, argues convincingly that only methodological Common Sense made any inroads in Canada. For a concise account of this debate see Michael

Michael Gauvreau's contention that only the third element, methodological Common Sense, had a significant impact in Canada seems the most accurate assessment.<sup>66</sup>

Although distinctions between the American and Canadian experiences with Common Sense are evident, they should not be overstated. As Mark Noll argues, and as demonstrated in The Fundamentals, Common Sense philosophy was embraced by American evangelicals in different ways, and to varying degrees. American evangelicals who participated in this project did not always concern themselves with structuring their defence of Scripture on a systematic appropriation of Common Sense philosophy; nor were they worried about defending a sophisticated philosophical system. Gauvreau contends that one reason why Canadians did not embrace all three aspects of Common Sense was that the Canadian environment lacked the "cosmopolitan culture" necessary for the incorporation of such an elaborate philosophical system. He argues, for instance, that "The belief in the concept of biblical inerrancy and in a biblical theology detached from systematic intellectual or institutional defences was characteristic of the colonial churches whose formative years were between 1820 and 1860."<sup>67</sup> Yet, while an accurate assessment of the Canadian experience, this claim perhaps overemphasizes the "cosmopolitan" element in American conservative evangelicalism.<sup>68</sup> There is some evidence, moreover, that ethical Common Sense ideas had an effect on the Canadian contributors to The Fundamentals. In their works, both Troop and Caven intimated

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Gauvreau, "Baconianism, Darwinism, Fundamentalism: A Transatlantic Crisis of Faith" Journal of Religious History 13 (1985), 4.

<sup>66</sup> Gauvreau contends that this discrepancy between the American and Canadian reception of Common Sense ideas existed because "the theological outlook that governed Canadian Methodists and Presbyterians was forged in a time of religious revolt against those very speculative theologies that defined the character of British and American Protestantism." The current of thought which had the greatest effect on these evangelicals was that of John Wesley and Thomas Chalmers, two post-Enlightenment Christian leaders who "broke decisively with the reasonable, benevolent Christianity of the Enlightenment by insisting on the importance of divine revelation in the apprehension of religious truth." Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 11-12; 17.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>68</sup> Many contributors to The Fundamentals demonstrated the same penchant for the "evangelical creed" which precluded Canadian evangelical embrace of Common Sense philosophy in its entirety. If one looks at the pastors and laymen who contributed to fundamentalism from outside the "institutions of higher learning" one finds a similar emphasis on faith over theological and philosophical systematic defenses. Granted, The Fundamentals was a project directed at the laity, and as such, perhaps does not reflect the degree of reliance by American evangelical leaders on the systems of thought defended at such institutions as Princeton.

the existence of an inner faculty which instinctively perceived truth.<sup>69</sup>

Nevertheless, it is clear in the writings of the Canadian evangelicals that methodological Common Sense had the greatest impact on their thinking. Common Sense methodology was based on the inductive approach to inquiry originally espoused by Francis Bacon, an English thinker in the seventeenth century. It was Bacon's contention that "truths about consciousness, the world, or religion must be built by a strict induction from irreducible facts of experience."<sup>70</sup> Inherent in this approach was an emphasis on the careful and rigid "attention to the collection of data, rather than to the formulation of hypothesis."<sup>71</sup> The ingrained utilitarianism of this system had an obvious appeal for Canadian evangelicals. As clergymen concerned with educating their communities, Canadian evangelicals embraced the innate humility of the inductive method. Because it based its conclusions on the availability of "concrete evidence," Baconianism did not allow for speculation on those truths unseen, but rather maintained that only those realities of experience could be subject to scientific inquiry. Reason was limited, therefore, particularly in "the disputed borderland between religion and science"<sup>72</sup> where divine revelation represented the controlling variable. For Canadian clergymen, Baconian induction thus "provided the intellectual matrix of Christian revelation and theology, and, far from establishing science as the idiom of culture, offered the much-sought guarantee against 'unsound' or impious research."<sup>73</sup>

By employing the inductive method, Canadian evangelical clergymen were able to bridge (however tenuously) the gap between science and faith.<sup>74</sup> In doing so, they brought both scientific

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<sup>69</sup> Troop suggests, for example, that when reading the Gospel of John and its account of the life of Jesus "we feel ourselves instinctively in the presence of truth." "The Internal Evidence of the Fourth Gospel," 25. Similarly, in his work Christ's Teaching Concerning the Last Things and other Papers, Caven suggests that "In their own consciences men have continual evidence that God is judging them, and not seldom to the eye of others. He makes manifest the estimation in which He holds individuals and nations" (59).

<sup>70</sup> Noll, "Common Sense Traditions," 222.

<sup>71</sup> Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 40.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>74</sup> See Van Die, An Evangelical Mind, chap 4, for an account of one liberal evangelical clergyman, Nathanael Burwash, and his own attempt to integrate faith and reason. Burwash's approach differed little from Caven's, suggesting once again that at this point Canadian evangelicalism was not split into a clear "liberal - conservative" dichotomy.

and theological matters down to a level of discourse which was readily accessible to the laity. Believing that truth was equally available to all, Canadian evangelical clergymen were constantly aware of how scientific and theological developments were perceived by their constituents. This appreciation and concern for the mind of the laity consistently manifested itself in the writings of Stobo, Hague, Troop, McNicol, and Caven. Throughout their articles in The Fundamentals there were not only frequent references made to the intellectual capabilities of the “common layperson,” but a conscious effort to speak on behalf of the common believer. Dyson Hague in his critique of higher criticism claimed to speak for the “common” Christian by suggesting that the modern views of inspiration were wrong because they did not correspond to those held by the average Christian.<sup>75</sup> Similarly, Caven suggested that the “plain reader” possessed the clearest understanding of the inspiration of the Old Testament.<sup>76</sup> For conservative evangelicals, then, the ultimate litmus test of theory was how it was appropriated by and for the laity.

This reliance on Baconianism at the popular level did not preclude its employment at higher levels of theological discourse; conservative evangelicals believed that the inductive method also provided the most effective, and balanced means of addressing new, sophisticated currents of modern thought. This was most evident in their battle with higher critics over textual criticism of the Bible. Canadian conservative evangelical clergymen did not shun the use of textual analysis in the study of the Bible; in fact, they readily employed inductive methodology to enhance their examination of scriptural passages, a practice regarded as “lower criticism” by biblical scholars. Clergymen-professors like Hague and Caven especially championed the practice of lower criticism because it ensured, through careful investigation of the various versions, codices, and manuscripts, that the Bible contained the “original words as they were written by the Divinely inspired writers.”<sup>77</sup> Even the practice of higher criticism, a second branch of biblical criticism which employed scientific methods to delineate the historic origins, dates, authorship, and accuracy of biblical texts, was not

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<sup>75</sup> Hague, “The History of the Higher Criticism,” The Fundamentals, vol. 1, 109.

<sup>76</sup> Caven, “The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament,” The Fundamentals, vol. 4, 59.

<sup>77</sup> Hague, “The History of Higher Criticism,” The Fundamentals, vol. 1, 87.

completely eschewed by Caven, Hague, and their associates. Hague echoed the views of McNicol and Caven when he acknowledged that higher criticism “is a very valuable auxiliary in the interpretation of the Word of God. By its researches floods of light may be thrown on the scriptures.”<sup>78</sup>

While Hague and his associates agreed in theory with the tenets of higher criticism they censured the methods used by those who practiced it. As ardent supporters of the inductive approach, conservative evangelicals rejected the deductive reasoning employed by liberal theologians, charging that their methodology was tainted by subjective conclusions. Confident that “objective fact” actually existed and that it served as the foundation of any scientific investigation, Canadian conservative evangelicals decried the seemingly warped practice of beginning inquiry with hypotheses, a notion anathema to Baconianism. A second, related criticism leveled by these men was that by over-emphasizing the human dimension of their quest, liberal higher critics undermined the supernatural qualities of the Bible; by subjecting scripture to modern literary standards, they were equating the Bible with other “humanly inspired” literature. In general, higher critics, according to Hague, were working not “to confirm the authenticity and credibility and reliability of the Scriptures, but to discredit in most cases their genuineness, to discover discrepancies, and throw doubt upon their authority.”<sup>79</sup>

What Hague and his associates found most injudicious about the higher critics’ “humanization” of the Bible was that it disparaged some of Christ’s own teachings concerning the accuracy of scripture. In questioning the authorship and dates of sections of the Old Testament, higher critics often found themselves at odds with Christ’s own teachings in the New Testament. Two ways in which these scholars reconciled this discrepancy was to claim either that Jesus “had no knowledge beyond that of His contemporaries as to the origin and literary characteristics of the Scriptures”<sup>80</sup> or that “where spiritual truth was not involved - He allowed Himself, even where the

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 88.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 92.

<sup>80</sup> Caven, “The Testimony of Christ to the Old Testament,” The Fundamentals, vol. 4, 65.



common belief was erroneous, to speak in accordance with it."<sup>81</sup> Caven clearly voiced the convictions of his associates when he stated that "It is folly, it is unutterable impiety, to decide differently from the Lord any question regarding the Bible on which we have His verdict."<sup>82</sup>

Finally, as Caven's reproach demonstrates, the most critical indictment of higher criticism was that it lacked the piety and humility needed for biblical inquiry. By "humanizing" the Bible and the process of critiquing it, higher critics were accused of redefining the relationship between faith and reason upheld by Canadian conservative evangelicals: reason was no longer subservient to faith.<sup>83</sup> One of the primary reasons for the higher critics' heightened appreciation of human reason, according to Canadian conservative evangelicals, was their disregard for the sinfulness of human nature. McNicol succinctly voiced this complaint when he stated that "the tendency today is greatly to exalt man and to ignore the fact of the fall."<sup>84</sup> As moderate Calvinists, Canadian conservative evangelicals believed that human depravity limited the ability of the human mind to completely grasp truth on its own. This belief corresponded with the sense of intellectual "humility" inherent in the Baconian methodology. Baconian epistemology "implied that the effects of the fall into sin on human consciousness were pervasive but limited," and that the mind had to be enlightened spiritually before it could process objective truths.<sup>85</sup> The convergence of Baconianism with a Calvinist view of human nature thus further prohibited any subordination of faith to reason in the

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<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 68.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 71.

<sup>83</sup> This shift both perplexed and disturbed those who maintained an orthodox approach to textual criticism. Particularly disturbing and tragic for conservative evangelicals was how certain men "of deep piety and high spirituality... with a sincere regard for the Word of God" could embrace the teaching of liberal higher critics (see Hague, "The History of Higher Criticism," The Fundamentals, vol. 1, 96). Hague was referring, in this instance, to the case of Dr. Robertson Smith, a former student of Julius Welhausen, who recast German theories in English. John Moir notes that Canadian Presbyterians were particularly well acquainted with the controversy surrounding this case. Moir states that ironically, "the Robertson Smith case had reputedly caused many Canadian theological students to read his books and, according to W.G. Jordan a half century later, 'made them realize the importance of the views which up to that time had not received much attention here.'" (Moir, A History of Biblical Studies in Canada, 8.) Moir also notes the way in which Canadian Presbyterians watched the Charles Briggs case in the United States with great interest. Both these cases demonstrate the awareness Canadians had of developments both in Britain and the United States.

<sup>84</sup> John McNicol, "The Hope of the Church," The Fundamentals, vol. 8, 125.

<sup>85</sup> Katerberg, "A Born Again Propagandist," 41.

intellectual endeavours of Canadian conservative evangelicals.<sup>86</sup> The ultimate foundation of any inquiry into absolute truth was faith in the power of the Holy Spirit, a notion summed up by Hague when he stated that “The qualification for the perception of Biblical truth is neither philosophic nor philological knowledge, but spiritual insight.”<sup>87</sup>

Even more critical in the formulation of the conservative evangelical worldview was Keswick holiness, a transatlantic movement that emerged during “Bible and holiness” conferences held at the scenic Lake-District site of Keswick, England.<sup>88</sup> As a movement which celebrated moderation and inclusion, Keswick holiness selectively integrated ideas from Wesleyan perfectionism, Romanticism, and moderate Calvinism, and blended them into a unique theology which stressed personal holiness, intense piety, and millennial expectations.<sup>89</sup> Critical to this theology was the middle-ground it sought on the issue of human nature. As Marsden explains, “While rejecting as too strong the Wesleyan view of the eradication of one’s sinful nature, the Keswick teachers rejected as too weak the more traditional view that one’s sinful nature was simply suppressed by Christ’s righteousness.”<sup>90</sup> Adherents to Keswick teaching, therefore, believed that a state of holiness, or victory over sin, could be achieved, but that this state had to be constantly maintained and renewed through a continual process of repeated “emptyings by consecration and ‘fillings’ with the Holy Spirit, or the ‘Spirit of Jesus.’”<sup>91</sup> This belief evidently distinguished Canadian conservative evangelicalism from the Canadian Methodist tradition and the strict Calvinist, Princeton theology in the United States, even as it tried to bridge the gap between both.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> The simultaneous appropriation of both Baconian methods and Calvinist theology by Canadian conservative evangelicals was demonstrated by the absence of any significant tension between science and faith in their contributions to *The Fundamentals*.

<sup>87</sup> Hague, “The History of Higher Criticism,” *The Fundamentals*, vol. 1, 89. Caven echoed this statement when he wrote that “a mere profession of doctrine, however scriptural, is not orthodoxy. The Holy Spirit alone can produce right thinking about God and Christ... the Christian heart alone can, in any vital sense, hold fast the truths of the Gospel.” *Christ’s Teaching Concerning the Last Things and Other Papers*, 308.

<sup>88</sup> See Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 77.

<sup>89</sup> See Katerberg, “A Born Again Propagandist,” 31.

<sup>90</sup> Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, 77.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>92</sup> See Marguerite Van Die, *An Evangelical Mind*, chaps. 3 and 6 on Methodism. For a discussion of the Princeton theology see Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*, chap. 13.

Essential to this teaching was the idea that the Christian experience was two-tiered consisting of a lower or “carnal” state, and a higher or “spiritual” state. Movement from the lower to the higher state required first a crisis conversion experience, and second, a definite act of consecration at which time the believer fully surrendered to God. It was only after this full surrender that the believer was able to realize victory over sin and become a “clean vessel” ready for Christian service. While strict Calvinists like B.B. Warfield criticized Keswick teaching as being “at once curiously pretentious and curiously shallow” because it sought to reconcile the unreconcilable, Wesleyan perfectionism and Calvinist depravity,<sup>93</sup> the only inherent tension in this system for Keswick adherents was that which existed between the carnal and the spiritual inner-self. Stobo effectively described this tension when he suggested that “We are not single, we are double. There is a higher self and a lower self, and these two personalities (if so we may designate them) make ceaseless war within us.”<sup>94</sup> Keswick leaders found little that was contradictory about their teaching, and in fact, had few qualms about defending them against strict Calvinists.<sup>95</sup>

The continual process of sanctification essential to Keswick teaching was most clearly delineated in the writing of Stobo. In his work The Glory of His Robe: Meditations for the Quiet Hour, a compilation of his own experiences and views published after The Fundamentals and in the year of his death, 1922, Stobo outlined the constant “ebbs and flows” which characterized the quest for a victorious Christian life, a quest which began with the conversion experience. Unlike the Plymouth Brethren who, in the late nineteenth century, had sought to undermine the way evangelicals understood the salvation experience,<sup>96</sup> Keswick followers, like Stobo, rejected the notion that salvation was simply a mental decision made by the individual. While they

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<sup>93</sup> Marsden, 98.

<sup>94</sup> E.J. Stobo, Jr., The Glory of His Robe: Meditations for the Quiet Hour (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Publishers, 1922), 133.

<sup>95</sup> Hague, for example, criticized the Calvinist view of election in his article “At-One-Ment By Propitiation,” The Fundamentals, vol. 11, 31. Hague stated that “The Socinian view that Christ’s death was mainly, if not exclusively, to produce a reconciling influence upon the heart of mankind which Workman espouses, is as narrow, if not narrower, and as partial as Hodge’s advocacy of the theory that Christ died for the elect only.”

<sup>96</sup> See Airhart, Serving the Present Age, for an account of the Brethren movement and its impact on Canadian Methodism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

acknowledged the immediacy of conversion, Keswick adherents also recognized that as a truly life changing event, salvation was an experience unique to the individual. Although voicing displeasure with the way in which some holiness groups over-emphasized the dramatic experience of conversion, for example, Stobo acknowledged that "Conversion takes many forms."<sup>97</sup> Stobo effectively articulated this middle-ground approach when he explained:

We are not concerned here with the peculiar methods which some sects use in getting men into the kingdom. Some of them are very objectionable to sensitive souls. Nor are we troubled regarding the varieties of Christian experience. We are aware that there are some folks that are anxious to put everybody through the same little cheese-press squeezed out into exactly the same shape. God has many methods of dealing with the soul of man.<sup>98</sup>

According to Keswick teaching the proper understanding of salvation rested somewhere in between those views promulgated by the Methodists and the Plymouth Brethren.

Canadian conservative evangelicals who adhered to Keswick teaching believed that even more important than the conversion experience itself were the "fruits" of conversion manifested in the spiritual, moral, and even physical life of the believer.<sup>99</sup> Stobo underscored this when he stated that "the most eloquent testimony regarding the reality of this experience is the changed life that results therefrom."<sup>100</sup> Essential to the realization of this changed nature was the constant, disciplined application of Christian principles to everyday life. Much more than a product of the intellect, this disciplined life was achieved through consistent introspection and soul searching.<sup>101</sup> With a disciplined life also came two other important attributes, both essential to Keswick teachings: the subordination of the body to the soul and the belief in the empowerment of holiness for Christian service. Keswick teaching saw the Christian spirit as being most clearly manifested in the strength of

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<sup>97</sup> Stobo, *The Glory of His Robe*, 12.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 35-36.

<sup>99</sup> Stobo spent a good deal of time in his work on topics concerning the countenance of the spirit-led Christian. According to Stobo, a spiritual Christian was to wear a smile and have a good sense of humour. Stobo also emphasized the need for the Christian to take vacations. Not only did the vacation refresh the body, it was also "one of the best means known to impress upon the soul the blessings of work" *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

<sup>101</sup> Stobo's devotional work was written for this very purpose of providing believers with a daily meditative guide to the attainment of this type of victorious life.

the individual will during times of physical hardship. While suffering was not to be celebrated, it was also not to be feared; it was a reality of life which, if viewed through the lens of the spiritual Christian, actually offered the believer a corporeal opportunity to share in the sufferings of Christ.<sup>102</sup>

Throughout his work Stobo gloried in the opportunity to share physically as well as spiritually in Christ's sufferings.<sup>103</sup> Indicative of the Keswick emphasis on service was the fact that Stobo gloried more in the benefits suffering had on one's ministry to others than he did in the personal benefits incurred by the inflicted individual. Stobo rejoiced, for example, in the fact that "Pain sometimes opens the door to a very gracious ministry."<sup>104</sup>

As exemplified in the life experience and writing of Stobo, then, the ultimate "fruit" of the spiritual Christian was a life committed to service: perhaps no other aspect of Keswick teaching appealed more to conservative evangelicals than the way it empowered the believer for service. The Keswick teaching on holiness and service represented a meeting point between Methodist perfectionism and the Calvinist notion of depravity. While their Calvinist conception of human nature prevented them from espousing in full the notion that holy living ultimately led to moral and spiritual perfection, Keswick teachers did emphasize the motivation for Christian service offered by perfectionist teaching.<sup>105</sup> The quest for holiness, it was believed, was both realized through, and manifested in, a commitment to Christian activism, not only in the Christian community, but in society as a whole. According to Canadian evangelicals who adhered to this teaching, the pursuit of the holy life was to have as great an impact on the mission field as it was on domestic social reform. Unlike the social gospel, however, Keswick teaching emphasized the need for spiritual regeneration over social regeneration; behind Keswick reform was a deep commitment to the idea that Christianity could change the life of a society only after it changed the life of the individual.

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<sup>102</sup> The writings of Stobo were particularly trenchant in this regard since at the time he was writing The Glory of His Robe he was suffering through the last days of his own battle with a serious illness.

<sup>103</sup> Sharing his own experiences, Stobo wrote "that many a soul would not realize the sympathies of the Saviour were it not for his own experience of pain" (Ibid., 89).

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>105</sup> Perfectionist teaching was a stimulant for numerous Christian reform movements throughout the nineteenth century. See Timothy L. Smith, Revivalism and Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War (New

Understandably, this emphasis on Christian service had great appeal to Canadian clergymen-professors who sought to balance intellect with piety. By espousing the application of theology to practical service, Keswick teaching ensured that orthodoxy was not dis severed from orthopraxy, a concern voiced by Hague in one of his contributions to The Fundamentals.<sup>106</sup> As Katerberg explains, more than an important theological truth, the “atonement was a ‘life principle’ for Hague; when received it generated love for God, horror of sin, incentive for self-sacrifice, and a ‘most powerful dynamic for the life of righteousness.’”<sup>107</sup> For Hague and his associates the Bible was, above all else, a source of motivation and guidance for Christian living. Even those biblical texts concerned with seemingly peripheral issues such as eschatology took on greater importance when applied to the daily walk of the spiritual Christian. McNicol’s reading and presentation of eschatological texts epitomized this approach. Although he was a premillennialist, McNicol exhibited little concern for predicting when Christ would return; nor did he demonstrate a pessimism or a disregard for human development.<sup>108</sup> Rather, McNicol found ingrained in premillennial teaching the true hope of the church and a powerful stimulant for Christian service: just as Christ’s impending return motivated the early church to action, McNicol commended his contemporaries to respond likewise to Christ’s call to watch and “occupy” until his return.<sup>109</sup>

David Bebbington has recently suggested that Keswick allegiances in Britain continued to bind both conservative and liberal evangelicals together into the twentieth century, thus marginalizing fundamentalism.<sup>110</sup> This was not the case in the United States where, according to Marsden, by the turn of the century, Keswick holiness was already being gradually subsumed within conservative theology by the more radical and separatist ideas of dispensationalism.<sup>111</sup> The

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York: Abingdon, 1957).

<sup>106</sup> Hague, “At-One-Ment by Propitiation,” vol. 11, 41.

<sup>107</sup> Katerberg, “A Born Again Propagandist,” 45.

<sup>108</sup> McNicol’s writings on the Second Coming of Christ are potent examples of how, contrary to popular conceptions, premillennialism could serve as a positive and constructive belief system in terms of social activism. McNicol’s views of premillennialism counter those offered by Michael Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 120-121.

<sup>109</sup> John McNicol, “The Hope of the Church,” The Fundamentals, vol. 8, 117.

<sup>110</sup> Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain, 181-184, 226-228.

<sup>111</sup> Marsden sees three general movements contributing to fundamentalism: dispensational premillennialism, Keswick

collective impact of Keswick teaching and premillennialism on Canadian evangelicalism evidently resembled the British experience more than the American. More than premillennialism or any other broad theological current, Keswick holiness served as the primary impetus and organizing principle for interdenominational activity. In speaking to the specific religious and cultural concerns of the Canadian clergyman-professor, Keswick holiness, together with a Common Sense methodology tempered by a moderate Calvinism, was able to provide a useful paradigm for evangelicals concerned with the influx of modern thinking. By emphasizing piety over intellectualism, faith over reason, pragmatism over dogmatism, this distinctly Canadian paradigm was able to reckon with modernism in a way that curbed the radicalism and polarization already beginning to characterize Protestantism south of the border.

As demonstrated in the writings of the five Canadian contributors to The Fundamentals, then, conservative evangelicalism in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada assumed a distinct character of its own. While they gleaned selectively from their British and American counterparts, and even advanced ideas that were often derivative in nature,<sup>112</sup> Canadian conservative evangelicals were successful in forging a theological system that addressed needs indigenous to Canada.<sup>113</sup> Such a definitive brand of evangelicalism is best described as mediating in the sense that that it consistently balanced intellect with piety, orthodoxy with orthopraxy, the human with the divine.

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holiness, and Princeton theology. Within this group the closest connection remained between Keswick teaching and dispensationalism. As mentioned above, Princeton theologians like Warfield rejected Keswick teaching. Marsden also notes that the relationship between dispensationalism and Keswick holiness broke down in the United States by 1920. At this point Keswick teaching largely died out while dispensationalism became the key organizing principle for the fundamentalism movement. See Marsden, "Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon," 220.

<sup>112</sup> Mark Noll has noted that many of the articles in The Fundamentals were "unabashedly derivative" in that they relied heavily on experts who delineated the conservative position on relevant topics. Noll explains that "In several of the essays, references to scholars holding conservative positions replaces articulation of the positions." This tendency was evident in the writings of the Canadian contributors where Hague and his associates often focused more on the arguments of British and American scholars than they did on the issues themselves. Even in those less scholarly works like Stobo's The Glory of the Robe, which required little intellectual sophistication, Canadian evangelicals looked south across the border or across the ocean for anecdotes. Noll, Between Faith and Criticism, 40. Moir suggests that one reason for this was because of the lack of a strong tradition theological training. According to Moir, it was only in the first decade of the twentieth century that Canada was able to boast of world-class institutions and scholars. Moir, A History of Biblical Studies in Canada, 25.

<sup>113</sup> For a brief discussion of some of the peculiar social and religious needs of nineteenth-century Canadians see Marguerite Van Die, "The Double Vision."

This unique appropriation of Christian truth clearly manifested itself in the way Hague, Caven, Troop, McNicol, and Stobo placed the needs of the laity over the academy, maintained an equal appreciation for natural development and static, spiritual truth, tempered Common Sense philosophy with a Calvinist view of human nature, embraced the Keswick conception of faith and action, and promoted the well-being of both the spiritual and the social needs of the community.

This type of evangelicalism was also mediating in the sense that it offered a practical theology that easily translated into social action. More than a defence of certain theological precepts, The Fundamentals represented an attempt by one group of evangelicals to defend their particular vision of community. This vision was predicated on the traditional evangelical principles of revivalism and voluntarism which heightened the role of the individual in the quest for spiritual regeneration, both at the personal and communal level. These principles had particular resonance with the upper-middle-class laity in the conservative evangelical network who, as businessmen and professionals, already celebrated the virtues of individualism in the “secular” realm. Yet, they also spoke to the belief system of the clergymen in the group who, as demonstrated in their theology, valued the abilities of the individual to reason and to work out their own salvation. As clergymen and educators, the contributors to The Fundamentals considered it their responsibility to articulate this vision of community, both through their writing, and even more importantly, through their actions. All five of these men looked to collective action as a means of ensuring that their traditional definition of community was realized, and that the church maintained a central place in it. Among the most active in articulating this vision of community was William Caven.

Caven was a respected leader who made his voice an authoritative one on issues pertaining to the building of community. Upon his death Nathanael Burwash, President of Victoria College, noted that “For clearness of thought, purity of motive, steadfastness of purpose and broad grasp of all the problems of the country as well as of the Church, he has left few, if any equals behind.”<sup>114</sup> Similar sentiments were expressed by Principal Sheraton of Wycliffe College when he observed that Caven

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<sup>114</sup> Globe, December 2, 1904.



was “a true patriot and labored in every way to promote righteousness and truth in our social and political life. He never spared himself in any service by which he could advance the well-being of the community.”<sup>115</sup> A product of the Free Presbyterian tradition, Caven’s ideology was deeply impressed by the teachings of Thomas Chalmers and the Evangelical wing of the Scottish Presbyterian Church.<sup>116</sup> Besides accepting Chalmers’ main premise that Christianity was to be presented as a faith nurtured “through personal experience” rather than as a system “to be accepted upon authority,” Caven was also deeply impressed by the notions of community embedded in Chalmers’ idea of the “godly commonwealth.”<sup>117</sup> Caven worked to create such a “godly commonwealth” in Canada by articulating this vision in both the “sacred” and the “secular” realm.

Always the first priority for Caven was to ensure that his own church and denomination provided the spiritual and moral foundation of the community; indeed one of the most central features of the paragon he aspired to was Chalmers’ “parish system” which placed the responsibility for communal well-being on the local church. Caven’s efforts to realize this ideal started with his own quest to unite the Presbyterian Church. When Caven began his career as a clergymen with the United Presbyterian Church in 1852,<sup>118</sup> there were three different Presbyterian bodies in Canada: the Presbyterian Church of Canada in connection with the Church of Scotland, the United Presbyterian Church, and the Free Church. During his early career, Caven was a leading proponent of union and saw his goal realized, first in the official union of 1861 which brought together the United and Free Churches, and later in 1875 when these two bodies merged with the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> The Scottish Free Church tradition traced its roots to the 1843 protest over church - state relations between factions with the Scottish Presbyterian Church. While it was commonly held that church and state were “both of divine origin” and that the “jealously guarded spiritual independence of the church required that the civil courts should never interfere in ecclesiastical matters,” Chalmers and the Evangelical wing of the church believed that Moderates were compromising this ideal by supporting the practice of lay patronage by the British Parliament. Although Evangelicals agreed that the church should receive aid from the State they were adverse to any demonstration of State control over ecclesiastical matters. Moir, *Enduring Witness*, chap. 6.

<sup>117</sup> Stewart J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth in Scotland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 108.

<sup>118</sup> Caven studied for the ministry under William Proudfoot and Alexander Mackenzie at the United Presbyterian Seminary in London, Ontario. In 1852 he was licensed and ordained and accepted a call as minister to St. Mary’s and Downie.

At the same time, Caven viewed the renewal of the Presbyterian Church as a necessary step toward the ultimate goal of formal unity among all the denominations. While he, like Hague and the other contributors to The Fundamentals, recognized the historical necessity for denominations, Caven envisioned a new era in which division within the church would cease. This new epoch, according to Caven, would become a reality when churches realized that “spiritual unity should represent and complete itself in visible form.”<sup>119</sup> While he acknowledged that the different denominations were not yet ready to be united, Caven fostered open discussion on the possibilities of future union and encouraged Christians to pray for renewal within Christendom as a whole.<sup>120</sup> Although he died before official union was achieved with the Methodist and Congregational Churches in 1925, Caven was credited with helping the United Church of Canada become a reality. It was said of his contribution to this cause that the “fact that Dr. Caven, a man of conservative spirit, was closely identified with the union movement at once inspired confidence both among his own people and those of other Churches.”<sup>121</sup>

Just as recognizable was Caven’s attempts to articulate a vision of community through political activism. This activism assumed different forms. His most direct involvement came as a personal advisor to Oliver Mowat, premier of Ontario from 1872 to 1896. Throughout his career Caven remained committed to the Liberal Party at the provincial level; this loyalty, however was more one to Mowat than it was to the Party itself. As a committed evangelical Christian who attended St. James Square Presbyterian Church in Toronto, the same church attended by Caven, Mowat represented the quintessential Christian leader who, in Caven’s mind, was able to rise above party politics and act in the best interest of the community.<sup>122</sup> Caven also served as advisor to George William Ross during Ross’ term as minister of Ontario from 1883 to 1899 and as Liberal

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<sup>119</sup> Caven, Christ’s Teaching Concerning the Last Things and Other Papers, p. 300.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 305.

<sup>121</sup> The Presbyterian, December 10, 1904, 708. Appears in William Caven Biographical File C3, United Church Archives.

<sup>122</sup> For a brief account of Mowat and his involvement in the Presbyterian Church see A. Margaret Evans, “Oliver Mowat: Christian Statesman of Ontario,” in W. Stanford Reid, ed., Called to Witness: Profiles of Canadian Presbyterians vol. 2 (Hamilton: Committee on History, the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1980).

premier from 1899 to 1905.

Caven's political activism was more clearly demonstrated, however, in his leadership of a number of interest groups that worked on different levels, but towards the same ideal of Christian community. Caven's involvement in one of these organizations, the Evangelical Alliance, illustrates the degree to which conservative evangelicals were willing and able to act collectively with others in the quest for a godly society. Formed in London, England in 1846, the Evangelical Alliance was an interdenominational organization created by Christian leaders from all parts of the British Isles and from Germany, France, Switzerland, the United States, and Canada with the purpose of advancing religious freedom in all parts of the world.<sup>123</sup> As active participants in this international organization from its outset, Canadian Protestants ensured the relevancy of the organization in the development of Canadian nationhood by creating its own autonomous branch, the Alliance for the Dominion of Canada, in 1889.<sup>124</sup> Under the leadership of Caven, whose influence on the Alliance extended beyond the several official positions he held, including president from 1902 to 1904, the Toronto Branch of the Canadian Alliance assumed leadership of the national association.<sup>125</sup>

The primary concern of the Canadian Alliance was to mobilize Christians in the fight for moral standards in Canadian society. It attempted to do this in two ways: first, by organizing large public meetings that would capture the attention of citizens, the media, and the government, and second, by channeling Christian activists into lobby groups that targeted specific government policy.

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<sup>123</sup> The Evangelical Alliance was formed during a General Conference in the summer of 1846 by 800 to 100 Christian leaders - ministers, professors, and laymen - representing 53 different "bodies of Christians." Moir notes that Canadian evangelicals, and Canadian Presbyterians in particular, were deeply supportive of this organization. See John W. Ewing, Goodly Fellowship: A Centenary Tribute to the Life and Work of the World's Evangelical Alliance 1846-1946 (London: Marshal, Morgan and Scott, 1946), 15; Moir, Enduring Witness, 182. For an account of the Evangelical Alliance in the United States see Philip D. Jordan, The Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America, 1847-1900: Ecumenism, Identity and the Religion of the Republic (Toronto: The Edwin Mellen Press, n.d.).

<sup>124</sup> For an insightful discussion of the nationalist impulse in Canadian Protestant churches during this period see Neil Smith, "Nationalism in the Canadian Churches," Canadian Journal of Theology 9 (1963), 114-125.

<sup>125</sup> In the first fifteen years of its existence the Toronto Branch of the Alliance had William Howland, Samuel Blake, and Caven all served in the capacities of President and Vice-President. Howland was the first President of the Branch while Caven and Blake both served as Vice-Presidents. Blake followed Howland as President and Caven assumed the position in 1902 and held it until his death in 1904. Other conservative evangelicals deeply involved in the leadership of the Branch were Elias Rogers, Dyson Hague, and Elmore Harris. Their names, along with those of other conservative evangelicals, appear throughout the earlier records of the Alliance. Minute Books - Evangelical

One of the most successful of the public meetings sponsored by the Alliance, and one that illustrates the vision of community that this organization advanced, was, beginning in the early 1850s, the annual "Week of Universal Prayer." During the first week of each new year designated speakers addressed audiences (which often included prominent politicians) on topics that concerned the spiritual and moral welfare of the nation, and of the larger, international community. A typical evening sermon during this week would address issues such as the "confession of national sin through the love of amusements, neglect of the Lord's Day, and haste to get rich" and then close in prayer for the "revival of family religion; preservation of the young from abounding temptations; for schools and colleges; and for instruction in the pure Word of God therein; for all reformatory institutions" and "for a Church in which through faith in Christ and by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit shall be wholly Christian, doing God's will, and winning sinners to Christ."<sup>126</sup> Speakers for these events were drawn from various denominations in an effort to represent each constituency of believers. The inclusion of men such as Caven, Elmore Harris, and Samuel Chown, a Methodist sympathizer of the social gospel, on the same program in 1900 is evidence that Canadian evangelicals of all theological persuasions were still able to work together for the common cause of evangelism.<sup>127</sup>

Caven's leadership was most clearly demonstrated in two of the movements sponsored by the Evangelical Alliance: the Equal Rights Association and the Sabbatarian movement. The battle over the Jesuit's Estates Act in 1889 and 1890 which precipitated the formation of the Equal Rights Association pitted the evangelical vision of community espoused by Caven and conservative evangelicals against that advanced by the Ultramontanist wing of the Catholic Church.<sup>128</sup> For Caven

Alliance for the Dominion of Canada 1889-1918, MV 2090, Ontario Provincial Archives.

<sup>126</sup> First Annual Meeting of the Toronto Branch of the Evangelical Alliance for the Dominion of Canada, 1891, Minute Books - Evangelical Alliance for the Dominion of Canada, 1889-1918, MV 2090, Ontario Provincial Archives.

<sup>127</sup> Program for Week of Prayer, Minute Books - Evangelical Alliance for the Dominion of Canada, 1889-1918, MV 2090, Ontario Provincial Archives.

<sup>128</sup> For a detailed account of the Equal Rights Association see Miller, Equal Rights: The Jesuits' Estates Act Controversy. For an account of this movement in Ontario see Miller, "Equal Rights for All": The E.R.A. and the Ontario Election of 1890" Ontario History 65 (1973), 211-230. For related articles see Miller, "D'Alton McCarthy,

and his associates, Ultramontanism represented the antithesis to the construction of a strong national community.<sup>129</sup> Three aspects of this movement were particularly destructive, according to Caven. First, Ultramontanism undermined the most basic foundations of the Christian community by excoriating church - state separation. Besides compromising the sanctity of the church, this constituted a serious affront to the voluntaristic ideal which held that the strongest form of regulating community was through the collective power of moral individuals. Similarly, a second troubling aspect of Ultramontanism was that it hindered the evangelism of the world by giving little free agency to the individual. Finally, by focusing the loyalties of its followers on Rome, Ultramontanism prevented the establishment of a strong, national community.<sup>130</sup>

Not only does the Equal Rights Movement offer insight into the type of community conservative evangelicals envisioned, it also reveals the extent to which these men were willing to go in order to realize their ideal. One of the pressing issues in the Equal Rights Association was the question of whether or not the movement's constitution would only define Ultramontanists (instead of all Catholics) as the enemy. As president of the Association, Caven steered the organization away from the more extreme position by stating that the only battle was one with Ultramontanists.

Equal Rights, and the Origins of the Manitoba School Question" Canadian Historical Review (1973), 369-392; Miller, "'As a Politician He is a Great Enigma': The Social and Political Ideas of D'Alton McCarthy" Canadian Historical Review 58 (1977), 399-422.

<sup>129</sup> Most demonstrative in his anti-Catholicism was Stobo. As a son of a Baptist minister who championed the Protestant cause in Quebec (E.J. Stobo, Sr. pastored in Quebec City and was very involved in the promotion of civil and religious liberties), Stobo's clerical career was evidently shaped by his earliest experiences with Catholicism. Two of the most notable projects which Stobo involved himself in during his pastorate in Smiths Falls (1907-1914) were fueled by his anti-Catholicism. The first was the promotion of the Grande Ligne Mission, a Baptist organization established in Grand Ligne, Quebec in 1836 by the Swiss missionaries Madame Henriette Feller and the Reverend Louis Roussy which focused with the evangelization of French Canadians. Stressing the importance of this mission Stobo wrote, "the Evangelization of our French fellow-citizens is a call not only from the Great Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, but a call that is enforced by many a patriotic consideration." Stobo, "The Appeal of the Grande Ligne Mission to the Patriotism of Our People," The Canadian Baptist, (1910). The second cause championed by Stobo assumed a more prominent, public form. After the Catholic Church constructed the first hospital in Smiths Falls Stobo reacted by organizing local Protestant leaders and churches for the construction of a Protestant hospital. In his account of this controversy, Glenn Lockwood remarks that due in large part to Stobo, Smiths Falls, a town of 3000 people, ended up with two hospitals at a time when most towns of the same size did not even have one. On the Grande Ligne Baptist mission see W. Nelson Thomson, "Witness in French Canada," in Baptists in Canada. On Smiths Falls see Glenn Lockwood, Smiths Falls: A Social History of the Men and Women in a Rideau Canal Community (Carleton Place: Motion Creative Printing, 1994).

<sup>130</sup> For a brief discussion of Ultramontanism and how it was interpreted by both Catholic and Protestant Canadians see Brian Clarke, Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic

Throughout his writings and speeches, Caven constantly distanced himself and the Equal Rights Association from anti-Catholic prejudices. Like most evangelicals, Caven was appalled by the demonstration of Ultramontanist power in Quebec, but he continually argued that his association had no desire “to curtail the liberty of Roman Catholics, or to deny them any right which good citizens should enjoy.”<sup>131</sup> He even went so far as to suggest that the “Protestants of Canada would defend the rights of Roman Catholics as earnestly as they would defend the rights of their own....”<sup>132</sup> While Caven was zealous in his vision for a godly nation, therefore, he was not willing to employ arbitrary and reactionary measures to ensure that this vision was realized. This moderate approach was apparent when, unlike some members of the Equal Rights Association, Caven refused to join the more extreme Protestant Protective Association after the former organization disbanded.<sup>133</sup>

Caven’s crusade for Sabbath observance marked yet another attempt to construct and maintain community in the midst of social change. This crusade operated on different levels. At the federal level, Caven’s contribution to Sabbath observance amounted to an endorsement of John Charlton, the Liberal Minister of Parliament from Norfolk North in southwestern Ontario, and his quest in the late 1880s to secure a national Lord’s Day Act.<sup>134</sup> Like Caven, Charlton believed that while there should be no union of church and state in Canada, there “was nevertheless some intimate connection between the civil institutions of the country and religious obligations.”<sup>135</sup> He also

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Community in Toronto, 1850-1895 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1993).

<sup>131</sup> Caven, “The Jesuits in Canada” The Presbyterian and Reformed Review 1 (1890), 291. Also see Caven, “Equal Rights: the letters of William Caven” (1890) and “The Equal Rights Movement,” in University Quarterly Review 1 (1890), 139-145.

<sup>132</sup> Caven, “The Jesuits in Canada,” 291-292.

<sup>133</sup> James T. Watt, “Anti-Catholic Nativism in Canada: The Protestant Protective Association” Canadian Historical Review 48 (1967) 45-58. See also J.R. Miller, “Anti-Catholic Thought in Victorian Canada” Canadian Historical Review 66 (1985), 474-494.

<sup>134</sup> While there is no evidence that Charlton was directly involved in this network or adhered to premillennialism, his policies often voiced the same concerns held by conservative evangelicals. Charlton was a Presbyterian and served with William Caven on the leadership committee for the Equal Rights Association. He was most recognized for introducing both the Lord’s Day Act and the Seduction Act in the mid-1880s. See Charlton, Speeches and Addresses: Political, Literary, and Religious (Toronto: Morang and Company, 1905).

<sup>135</sup> John Charlton, Speeches and Addresses: Political, Literary, and Religious (Toronto: Morang and Company, 1905), 254. These sentiments correspond with Caven’s in the clergyman’s speech to the Lord’s Day Alliance of Ontario. See Caven, “The Divine Foundations of the Lord’s Day: An Address” (Toronto: Ontario Lord’s Day Alliance, 1897).

believed that no state could “be entirely divorced in its laws and usages and institutions from this obligation.”<sup>136</sup> Caven echoed Charlton’s sentiments at the provincial level by providing leadership to the Ontario Lord’s Day Alliance. One of his most significant contributions in this capacity was his published speech to the Alliance in 1897 which helped delineate a clear mission statement for the organization.<sup>137</sup> In this speech, Caven contended that the Sabbath warranted legal protection simply because it was a vital scriptural truth that guided a majority of Canadians.<sup>138</sup> Finally, Caven worked at the local level in an effort to prevent Sunday street cars from operating, a contentious issue that marked Toronto politics in the 1890s.<sup>139</sup> Although other conservative evangelicals like Howland and Blake played leading roles in this crusade, it was Caven’s intellectual guidance that enabled the movement to assemble “a mighty artillery of scriptural, spiritual and secular arguments in defense of an unsullied Sabbath.”<sup>140</sup>

Conservative evangelical thought is best described as dynamic and practical. As demonstrated in The Fundamentals, conservative evangelical clergymen advanced a theology that was adverse to extreme liberal notions of human development, but not static in its interpretation of scripture, the church, and the endtimes. These men did not entirely deny the efficacy of new ideas or the notion that human intellect was evolving; they were simply cautious in appropriating new intellectual currents before their value and truth were measured against the light of Scripture and

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<sup>136</sup> Charlton, Speeches and Addresses, 254.

<sup>137</sup> For account of the Lord’s Day Alliance and its campaign for the Lord’s Day Act (eventually passed in 1906) see Paul Laverdure, “Sunday Secularism? The Lord’s Day Debate of 1906,” in Papers of the Canadian Church History Society, 1986 and A.M.C. Waterman, “The Lord’s Day in a Secular Society,” Canadian Journal of Theology 11 (1965), 108-123.

<sup>138</sup> Caven, “The Divine Foundations of the Lord’s Day: An Address” (Toronto: Ontario Lord’s Day Alliance, 1897).

<sup>139</sup> The clash between Sabbatarians and the Toronto Street Railway Company was played out in three different civic referendums held in 1892, 1893, and 1897. While Sabbatarians won the first two, the third and decisive referendum was won by pro-Sunday car forces. For a thorough account of this controversy see Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, The Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company: Sunday Streetcars and Municipal Reform in Toronto, 1888-1897 (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates, 1977).

<sup>140</sup> Armstrong and Nelles, 108. Caven offered guidance on two levels. First, he provided the ideological glue that held the crusade together by offering a definition of the Sabbath that was inclusive and could mobilize as many concerned citizens as possible. Second, he helped draft a counter-argument against the claims of Sunday car advocates. This counter-argument declared that the “supposed advantages arising thereupon is more than counterbalanced by the evils to which inevitably give rise - the injury to religion, the depriving many of the rest which all require, but especially those who toil hardest, and the increased force given to the tyranny of selfishness and

their own traditional creeds. As demonstrated by its content and its focus, The Fundamentals also articulated a practical theology that called believers to service in the church as well as in the community. The social activism of William Caven demonstrates the empowerment of this theology for clergymen determined to realize a godly society. The degree to which this ideal resonated with the conservative evangelical network is made even more evident when considering the efforts of its laity in social reform.



## CHAPTER 3

### REDEEMING THE CITY: CONSERVATIVE EVANGELICALS AND SOCIAL REFORM IN TORONTO

When William Howland addressed his loyal supporters gathered at Shaftesbury Hall on December 1, 1885, the inauguration of his first campaign for mayor of Toronto, he spoke candidly and honestly about the need for urban reform. His speech that evening contained two particularly bold statements that seemed to encapsulate his political aspirations. About the election itself, Howland declared that it would be one “in which politics have nothing to do as far as I am concerned.”<sup>1</sup> While on one level this prediction resonated with a proverbial rhetoric typical of municipal politicians at this time, it also spoke substantively to the need for change in a civic governmental system that was clearly fueled by “partyism” and “self-interest.” Even more ambitious than his first, Howland’s second proclamation targeted the moral fabric of the entire city. Howland pledged to retain for Toronto “the character of an honourable city, a God-fearing city,” claiming that he “would rather see it thus than the greatest and richest city in the continent.”<sup>2</sup> The overwhelming support of these statements voiced by the 1500 supporters gathered in the Hall, as well as the pointed criticisms leveled against them by more cynical

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<sup>1</sup> *Globe*, December 2, 1885.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

observers,<sup>3</sup> revealed the degree to which the public already recognized Howland's campaign as an unprecedented one that extended beyond the traditional bounds of civic politics. Upon his election to the mayor's office, Howland quickly confirmed the public's perception of him as a new breed of politician by opening City Council in prayer and erecting a large motto in his office that read "Except the Lord keep the City, the Watchman Waketh in Vain."<sup>4</sup>

William Howland's speech to loyal supporters encapsulated the aspirations of conservative evangelical laymen in their quest for social reform. These aspirations characterized only one of many responses to social change in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As historians of religion and social reform have noted, the variegated response by evangelical Protestants to developments during this time has even made it difficult to refer to "social reform" in monolithic terms. American historians, for example, have uncovered a broad spectrum of Protestant social initiatives ranging from those proposed by the environmentalists, who focused on the physical qualities of the city,<sup>5</sup> to those advanced by traditionalists who found the solution for social dislocation in revival.<sup>6</sup> In between these two ideological poles, historians have also highlighted the contributions made by settlement workers who immersed themselves

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<sup>3</sup> The most scathing criticism of Howland's proposed agenda appeared in the pages of the World, the self-proclaimed voice of the working class. The World was critical of Howland's moral crusade, charging that "He is the candidate of that portion of the community who suspect their acquaintances, who are ready to interfere with their neighbors in order to make them 'better,' who trade on their own goodness, and hold up their hands at the alleged wrong-doing of fellow-citizens." Even while acknowledging the positive contributions of Howland, the paper undermined his political acumen stating that "the ratepayers are not voting on philanthropy, on zeal, or on teetotalism, but "on a question of civic administration." World, January 2, 1886.

<sup>4</sup> Globe, January 20, 1886; Morton, Mayor Howland: The Citizens' Candidate, 30. Howland was aware of his own role as progenitor of the reform movement in Toronto. Howland acknowledged that his term as mayor was unique, and represented only the first wave of what would become a long process of reform. World, January 4, 1888.

<sup>5</sup> This movement focused on the redefinition of space in the city via the construction of parks, playgrounds, and better housing. See Paul Boyer, Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1978).

<sup>6</sup> This movement centred around the revivals of Dwight L. Moody in the late nineteenth century. This movement has been looked at from various perspectives by many different historians. See, for example, William A. McLoughlin, Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607-1977 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978); McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham

in the environment they were trying to redeem,<sup>7</sup> the institutional churches, which attempted to fulfill the physical as well as the spiritual needs of the community,<sup>8</sup> and even those who remained more at a distance by seeking change through legislative means.<sup>9</sup>

The historiography on social reform in Canada is much less extensive than it is in the United States. Moreover, while Canadian historians have made some mention of a traditional, revivalistic approach to social reform,<sup>10</sup> greater attention has been paid to the emergence of new social movements like the Salvation Army,<sup>11</sup> settlement houses,<sup>12</sup> and a modernist evangelical critique of society.<sup>13</sup> One aspect of Canadian social reform that has received a particularly nuanced treatment is the social gospel.

Focusing specifically on the social gospel in Canada in the decades after World War I, Richard Allen has suggested a paradigm that defines three distinct approaches adopted by Canadian social reformers: radical, progressive, and conservative.<sup>14</sup> According to Allen, because of their greater appreciation of liberal theology, radical reformers viewed society in organic terms and called for a complete restructuring of society. On the other side of the spectrum were

(New York: Ronald Press, 1959); Sandra Sizer, *Gospel Hymns and Social Religion: The Rhetoric of Nineteenth-Century Revivalism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1978).

<sup>7</sup> See Allen Davis, *Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement 1890-1914* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1967).

<sup>8</sup> See Robert D. Cross, ed., *The Church and the City, 1865-1910* (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1967) and Aaron Ignatius Abell, *The Urban Impact on American Protestantism, 1865-1900* (London: Archon, 1962).

<sup>9</sup> This group has been looked at, usually critically, by many different historians. In his work, Boyer sees this group as "negative environmentalists" as opposed to "positive environmentalists", those who were heavily involved in making the city a physically healthy environment. See Boyer, *Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920*.

<sup>10</sup> Eric Crouse has recently shown the extent to which American revivalists were brought to Canadian cities by evangelicals interested in fostering reform through revivalism. See Crouse, "American Revivalists, the Press, and Popular Religion in Canada." Kevin Kee has demonstrated that revival was also offered by two popular Canadians: John Hunter and Ernest Crossley. See Kevin Kee, "The Heavenly Railroad: Ernest Crossley, John Hunter, and Canadian Methodist Revivalism, 1884-1910" (M.A. thesis, Queen's University, 1994). Evangelicals also used legislation as a way of combating the social ills of their day. See Brian Fraser, *The Social Uplifters*.

<sup>11</sup> See Lynne S. Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure, and Identity in Late Nineteenth-Century Small Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

<sup>12</sup> See Sara Z. Burke, *Seeking the Highest Good: Social Service and Gender at the University of Toronto, 1888-1937* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).

<sup>13</sup> Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators*, chap. 1.

conservatives who remained committed to “traditional evangelicalism, emphasizing personal-ethical issues, tending to identify sin with individual acts, and taking as their social strategy legislative reform of the environment.”<sup>15</sup> In between these two groups were the progressives who “held the tension between the two extremes, endorsing in considerable measure the platforms of the other two, but transmuting somewhat in a broad ameliorative programme of reform.”<sup>16</sup>

Though preceding by several decades the period covered by Allen, the social activism of Howland and the conservative evangelical network has much in common with Allen’s conservative wing. But at the same time, at least during the earlier years, it also suggests that there were no hard, fast boundaries between different ideological approaches. As will be demonstrated, the vision of community espoused by this group of laymen did not differ sharply from that of more radical reformers. In fact, these men often sought collective action with evangelicals outside their particular group, the most notable of these being John Kelso, a Presbyterian and Children’s Aid advocate.<sup>17</sup> All of this points to the fact that “the slow process of transition from older forms of Christian social outlook into the new was a slow one and the steps not always easy to discern.”<sup>18</sup> By using the career of William Howland as a window into the social activism of the conservative evangelical network, this chapter will attempt to shed light on this important, yet neglected earlier period of Canadian social reform.

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<sup>14</sup> See Richard Allen, The Social Passion.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>17</sup> See Andrew Jones and Leonard Rutman, In the Children’s Aid: J.J. Kelso and Child Welfare in Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).

<sup>18</sup> Richard Allen, “The Background of the Social Gospel in Canada,” in The Social Gospel in Canada: Papers of the Interdisciplinary Conference on the Social Gospel in Canada, 1975, Richard Allen, ed. (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1975).

While exceptional for the political standards of the day, Howland's activism, both in its substance and intensity, was not considered anomalous by other conservative evangelical businessmen and professionals who shared his vision of a "godly city" and were just as determined to realize it through extensive social reform. That these laymen could aspire to such a lofty goal is a testament to the broad range of resources, human and financial, that they were able to call upon. Howland was, in fact, only the most visible member of a network that wielded influence in all sectors of society. In the political realm, conservative evangelicals furthered their own interests by either attaining official posts within municipal and provincial government, or by acting as advisors to those in power. Elias Rogers and Henry O'Brien, for example, were very involved in municipal politics with the former serving as an alderman and the latter as Howland's campaign manager.<sup>19</sup> At the provincial level, William Mortimer Clark served as Lieutenant Governor of Ontario between 1902 and 1904. This network also advanced its own ideas of reform at the federal level through established connections with sympathetic parliamentarians, the most notable being John Charlton.

Conservative evangelicals were also able to rely on their social and religious connections for support in the drive for reform. Far from a self-contained group, this network of laymen sought broader alliances with other evangelicals in an attempt to further their own particular vision. As part of the larger business community, these men consolidated ties with other reform-minded evangelicals through their involvement on various boards and councils, as well as

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<sup>19</sup> Elias Rogers also vied unsuccessfully for the position of mayor after Howland declined to run in 1888. Henry O'Brien was the campaign manager for Howland in 1886 and 1887 and had a direct hand in shaping the reform policy of the municipal government. As a distinguished lawyer and editor of the Law Journal, O'Brien was also sought after by government for legal advice. Like O'Brien, Samuel Blake was a prominent lawyer who was frequently called upon by the city to moderate or resolve legal matters, the clearest example of this being the battle over the Toronto Street Railway franchise in 1891. Blake was also asked to advise the provincial and federal governments on other matters; the most notable of his contributions in this respect was his involvement in the 1908-1909 federal inquiry into Native residential schools in the West.

through their common recreational interests. One of the most prominent social clubs in Toronto, the Argonaut Rowing Club, was, for example, founded by Henry O'Brien as an outlet for interaction with other leaders in the community.<sup>20</sup> Similarly, the aspirations of conservative evangelical reformers benefited from a broad range of ties within the evangelical community. Through annual events like the Niagara Conferences and the Keswick Holiness gatherings in Britain, Canadian conservative evangelicals were exposed to the experiences of evangelical reformers from all over the world.<sup>21</sup> Active involvement in such organizations as the Evangelical Alliance for the Dominion of Canada, a subsidiary of the larger and older international Evangelical Alliance, further linked the interests of these laymen with other evangelicals.<sup>22</sup>

In its quest for social reform, therefore, the conservative evangelical network was able to call on a broad range of human resources from the larger evangelical community. Just as important is the fact that it also had access to the necessary financial resources to support its various enterprises. In his study of conservative evangelical businessmen in Chicago, Paul Heidebrecht marvels at the wealth of his subjects and at the way they celebrated the material fortunes of other prominent evangelicals like Russell Conwell, pastor of what was, at that time, the largest church in America.<sup>23</sup> While the Canadian network did not enjoy the same degree of

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<sup>20</sup> O'Brien was an avid boatsman who served as the first president of the Canadian Association of Amateur Oarsman. He founded the Argonaut Rowing Club in 1872.

<sup>21</sup> One who participated in these conferences was Henry O'Brien. His personal records include a detailed, personal account of his trip in 1889 to Britain and the Keswick meetings. See Henry O'Brien Papers, Box 2, Envelope 6, Toronto Public Library, Main Branch, Baldwin Room.

<sup>22</sup> The Evangelical Alliance was formed during a General Conference in the Summer of 1846 by 800 to 1000 Christian leaders - ministers, professors, and laymen - representing 53 different "bodies of Christians." See Ewing, Goodly Fellowship, 15. For an account of the Alliance in the United States see Jordan, The Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America, 1847-1900.

<sup>23</sup> Heidebrecht notes the impact Andrew Carnegie's The Gospel of Wealth, and Russell Conwell's famous speech, "Acres of Diamonds", had on this network of wealthy businessmen. Heidebrecht, 212. Conwell's Grace Baptist Church in Philadelphia was founded as an institutional church that provided religious, educational, and material resources for its community. Conwell was also the founder of Temple University.

prosperity as Conwell or other American conservative evangelicals like Lyman and Milton Stewart, their standing in the upwardly-mobile middle class ensured them more than adequate funding for their reform activities. More important than their actual financial standing was the way in which these laymen utilized whatever resources they had to support their crusade. Steeped in a strong work ethic that elevated the virtues of “sobriety, probity, thrift, charity,” and was “duly informed by a democratic Christian conscience,”<sup>24</sup> these men saw it as their duty to use whatever money and time they had to benefit society. In the case of Howland, this commitment to Christian charity and service ultimately resulted in his own financial failures and premature death.<sup>25</sup>

While conservative evangelicals were willing to form alliances with other evangelicals in their crusade for reform, they maintained a distinct view of what this process meant, and how it should be pursued. The religious and social attitudes of these laymen dictated an approach to reform that was both traditional and innovative. In their diagnosis of, and prescription for, the social ills of the day, conservative evangelicals displayed a commitment to the basic tenets of nineteenth-century revivalism; among these was the idea that critical to the reformation of the community was the spiritual salvation of its individual members. In all of their reforming enterprises these men targeted the spiritual condition of the individual with a zeal that was concomitant with their premillennialist sense of urgency and expectancy. Corresponding with

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For a brief discussion of Conwell and his “industrial-evangelical” worldview, see Robert Wauzzinski, Between God and Gold: Protestant Evangelicalism and the Industrial Revolution, 1820-1914 (Toronto: Associated University Press, 1993), 150-158.

<sup>24</sup> Brian Fraser, The Social Uplifters, xiii.

<sup>25</sup> Howland died of pneumonia at the age of 43. The weakened state that precipitated this illness was attributed by some to the countless nights he spent in St. John’s Ward. By the time of his death Howland had seen his own fortune dwindle to \$40, 000.00, a modest sum according to the upper-middle-class standards of the day.

this belief was the notion that what plagued society in the industrial age was not necessarily copious evil in the system, but sin and immorality in the heart of people.

Conservative evangelicals also envisioned the amelioration of social problems through the traditional, voluntaristic approach of early nineteenth-century evangelicalism.<sup>26</sup> By substituting the older, church-state relationship that operated “according to hierarchical patterns of status and deference” with a democratic association of individuals who were allowed, and encouraged, to act on the basis of their common beliefs, voluntarism had spawned countless reform movements in North America during the early part of the century.<sup>27</sup> This system appealed to conservative evangelical laymen in the late nineteenth century for at least three reasons. First, by relying on the personal and financial support of individual believers rather than on that of the state, this system celebrated the same values esteemed by middle-class Christian businessmen: stewardship and efficiency. Secondly, the sense of personal duty that was ingrained in voluntarism accorded well with the impulse for Christian service that conservative evangelicals gleaned from the teachings of Keswick holiness. Finally, voluntarism offered a paragon of Christian community created through the democratic means of persuasion rather than coercion or obligation. This model appealed to conservative evangelical laymen who believed that reform could only occur from the bottom up: rather than restructuring the institutional makeup of society, as radical social gospelers were advocating, these men sought answers for social dislocation in the conversion of individuals, and in the gradual assimilation of

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<sup>26</sup> The clearest account of this approach is delineated by Timothy Smith in his important work, Revivalism and Social Reform.

<sup>27</sup> Michael Gauvreau, “The Empire of Evangelicalism: Varieties of Common Sense in Scotland, Canada, and the United States,” in Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond 1700-1990, Noll, Bebbington, and Rawlyk, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 220.



“the poor, the immigrants, and those who engaged in the business of vice into their middle-class Protestant culture.”<sup>28</sup>

While certainly conventional in their loyalty to certain revivalistic precepts, conservative evangelical laymen also recognized the need for innovative measures in dealing with the social problems of the day.<sup>29</sup> This awareness stemmed in large part from their own critique of traditional religious institutions and, at least in their view, the inability of these institutions to deal effectively with the challenges posed by the modern city. Urbanization had not only proven debilitating for evangelicalism and its perceived role in maintaining community, but had seriously undermined traditional notions of community. With the dramatic shifts in the demographic makeup of the city that occurred through immigration and migration came a redefinition of public space along class and ethnic lines. While new immigrants moved into districts, such as St. John’s Ward, inhabited by people of their own ethnic and class standing, the established urban middle class gradually dispersed to the newly formed suburbs.<sup>30</sup> Technological changes, particularly those that occurred in the transportation sector, also contributed to a redefinition of space. While innovations in transportation consolidated the modern city in a physical sense, they often did so at the expense of political and social unity. Political wrangling over where and how transportation systems would be maintained and who

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<sup>28</sup> Fraser, The Social Uplifters, xii.

<sup>29</sup> Challenging historians who have advanced the “stimulus-response” theory, Kevin Christiano suggests that evangelicals were not just reacting to a rapidly changing social environment, but actively and willingly engaging it; they viewed the “city as a God-given opportunity as much as a diabolical threat.” The social activism of the conservative evangelical network supports this claim. See Kevin J. Christiano, Religious Diversity and Social Change: American Cities, 1890-1906 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 13. See also James W. Lewis, At Home in the City: The Protestant Experience in Gary, Indiana, 1906-1975 (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1992). One of the main works advancing the “stimulus-response” theory is Henry F. May’s Protestant Churches and Industrial America (New York: Octagon Books, 1963).

<sup>30</sup> The redefinition of space in Toronto, is a common theme. See Weaver, “The Modern City Realized: Toronto Civic Affairs, 1880-1915,” and Shaping the Canadian City; Rutherford, “Tomorrow’s Metropolis: The Urban Reform Movement in Canada, 1880-1920,” 203-224; Careless, Toronto to 1918: An Illustrated History

would benefit most from these services not only accentuated the corruption in urban politics,<sup>31</sup> but magnified class and ethnic divisions between different urban communities and even highlighted discrepancies within the same class.<sup>32</sup>

In order to address this dramatic redefinition of space, conservative evangelical laymen significantly altered, but did not completely abandon, traditional evangelical conceptions of community. While careful to preserve their voluntaristic system of benevolence and its essential premise of church - state separation, these men recognized that some government support of social reform, both financial and legislative, was necessary if the deep fissures in society were to be sealed. Rather than distance themselves from government, they resolved to redeem it and use it to their own ends. These laymen also sought to expand, and regenerate church involvement in the community by adopting new ministries that spoke to the needs of every class and age group. This broadened vision of ministry was not only accompanied by an eagerness to enhance the role of the laity, but, as will be demonstrated, by a willingness to empower women for service.

In their own dynamic fashion, therefore, conservative evangelical laymen engendered a social reform movement that recast and adapted traditional evangelicalism in a way that would better meet the spiritual as well as moral and physical needs of the new urban community. As illustrated by the social attitudes and actions of William Howland, this cautious, and sometimes contradictory approach often placed this network at odds, both with those who sought to preserve traditional ideas and institutions, and those who were determined to change them.

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<sup>31</sup> The amount of corruption and bribery in urban politics in the late nineteenth century is well documented by Canadian urban historians. Weaver contends that bribery and patronage were as much a part of civic politics in Toronto as it was in other Canadian cities like Montreal. The only notable difference between Toronto and Montreal, Weaver suggests, is that in Montreal the "cash nexus accompanied patronage." See Weaver, "Elitism and the Corporate Ideal, 50.

<sup>32</sup> The battle over Sunday Street cars in Toronto was just one instance in which middle-class urbanites exhibited contrasting visions of the modern city. See Armstrong and Nelles, Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company.

William Howland's career as a social reformer assumed two forms: political reformer and private philanthropist. The most widely recognized and documented of Howland's reform efforts are those that were advanced during his tenure as Toronto's mayor in 1886 and 1887. Howland's election to municipal government in 1886 marked the apex of what has been considered, in retrospect, only the first phase in a broad urban reform movement that swept Canada in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>33</sup> Those who, like Howland, were involved in this earliest phase of reform called for the eradication of corrupt politics and government through the election of strong, moral leaders. Rather than criticize the system itself, these reformers considered the individuals within it responsible for the prevailing vice and suggested a corrective through the empowerment of honest men who had only the "public interests" in mind.<sup>34</sup>

As expressed by Howland in his inaugural speech in 1886, at the root of this first wave of urban reform in Toronto was the notion that once civic government was "depoliticized" it could be used as an effective tool to improve urban society. Activists like Howland saw urban reform in Toronto as the first step in the creation of strong, morally-upright nation; once their city assumed its designated role as moral exemplar, it was believed that the rest of Canada would soon aspire to similar ends.<sup>35</sup> In Howland, reformers believed they had the man who could help them realize their dreams of a godly city and nation. Like other members of the conservative evangelical network, Howland was a strong temperance advocate who was determined to use

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<sup>33</sup> See John Weaver, "Elitism and the Corporate Ideal"; Rutherford, "Tomorrow's Metropolis."

<sup>34</sup> See Weaver, "Elitism and the Corporate Ideal."

<sup>35</sup> Conservative evangelical reformers fit the mold ascribed by Rutherford in his work on municipal reform. Unlike Weaver who emphasizes the "home rule" mentality of civic reformers, Rutherford contends that these reformers were just as interested in transforming all of Canadian society as they were in redefining the urban environment. Rutherford, "Tomorrow's Metropolis," 215.

government legislation to curtail saloon licensing in Toronto.<sup>36</sup> This fact, plus his lack of any prior political experience or official ties to a political party, endeared him to the large number of prohibitionists who saw ward politicians as the tools of the liquor suppliers. Howland's electoral success, however, was also a testament to his support among other groups and classes in society. One of the most interesting aspects of Howland's political career, and one that offers further insight into the social attitudes of conservative evangelicals, was the relationship he had with the working class.

Many reasons could be offered for why Howland should not have garnered the support of the labouring class. One of the most obvious of these was that his stand on alcohol threatened a cherished, working-class institution: the tavern. The World, a local paper which claimed to speak for the working class, also suggested that Howland did not warrant the support of labour for the simple reason that he was not an employer "who gives a man work and thereby enables him to preserve his manhood"; Howland was, in other words, no more "a friend of labour than he who gives him a cast off coat, or an order on a lodging-house for a meal and a bed."<sup>37</sup> Despite the apparent shortcomings in his policy, Howland received a surprising amount of support from the working-class, both during his two election campaigns and while in office. At least two reasons can be offered for this. First, the labour unions that organized and informed the working-class were not, at this point, interested in upsetting the social order. In fact, many of their leaders were aspiring to the same middle-class status and values as Howland.<sup>38</sup> Secondly,

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<sup>36</sup> Howland was the president of the Temperance Electoral Union at the time he voiced his intentions of running for the mayor's chair.

<sup>37</sup> World, January 2, 1886.

<sup>38</sup> Morton, Mayor Howland, 23.

throughout his political career, Howland claimed to understand and even speak for the interests of the working class; his actions while in office did little to make critics question this claim.<sup>39</sup>

As mayor, Howland was forced to contend with two major strikes, the first at the Massey Manufacturing Company in January of 1886, and the second at the Toronto Street Railway Company later that same year. Although his support for the striking workers in both cases had little effect in resolving the issues that precipitated these conflicts, Howland's endorsement of labour did not go unnoticed.<sup>40</sup> Howland also advanced the cause of labour in his involvement in the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital. Sponsored by the Federal Government in the late 1880s, this Commission attempted to engender collective reform in Canadian industry by bringing together the interests of pro-National Policy capitalists and organized labour.<sup>41</sup> In his testimony to the Commission Howland offered numerous suggestions for further legislation that would improve working conditions for the lower class, and particularly for working-class women.

The relationship between Howland and labour reveals a great deal about how conservative evangelicals viewed social reform. While Howland claimed to speak for the working class, he demonstrated little understanding of the deeper, economic problems that caused this group's unrest. Any affinity Howland had with members of organized labour was a result of the similar middle-class agenda to which they both aspired. Moreover, his solutions to the labour troubles that marked the late nineteenth century were usually simplistic in nature: two

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<sup>39</sup> The clearest expression of this was when Howland testified before the Royal Labor Commission in 1887. In his testimony Howland claimed that his thirty years of serving in the working-class districts of Toronto allowed him to speak with authority and empathy on the issues facing this group. *Globe*, December 1, 1887.

<sup>40</sup> For accounts of these two strikes see Morton, *Mayor Howland*. Howland was, in both cases, powerless to provide any permanent solutions to the conflicts. In the case of the longer and more violent Toronto Street Railway strike, Howland was forced to end the affair after three days of rioting.

<sup>41</sup> See Greg Kealey, ed., *Canada Investigates Industrialism: The Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital, 1889* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973).

of his most trusted solutions were to call for greater government regulation or to simply appeal to the consciences of employers. Yet, Howland was also genuinely determined in his quest to change the environment workers were forced to endure, so much so that he was even willing to publicly challenge the business practices of Hart Massey, one of the foremost Christian benefactors of the day. This relatively naive, but ingenuous approach to labour exposes the narrowness of conservative evangelical attitudes. While Howland and other laymen were eager to affect their environment and foster change, they were only willing to do so within the bounds of their particular middle-class, evangelical value system.

Howland's political career was short and largely unsuccessful in terms of meeting the goals set out by reformers.<sup>42</sup> Perhaps the most enduring legacy of his term was the appointment of David Archibald to the newly-created position of staff inspector, a post which was established to combat "cruelty to women, children and animals," and battle "gambling, houses of ill fame, desecration of the Sabbath, indecent exposure and, of course, unlicensed drinking dens."<sup>43</sup> Overall, however, Howland's aspirations for political and social reform were stymied by a divided council and the more mundane tasks of governing. A more effective lens through which to view the reform efforts of the conservative evangelical network, therefore, is to examine Howland's less-public career as an individual philanthropist.

During his short life, Howland made a personal contribution to social reform that was unequalled by any other conservative evangelical layman in the city. While many of the network's activities were sponsored and led in part by other individuals like Samuel Blake and Henry O'Brien, Howland's leadership in these various endeavours was by far the most crucial.

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<sup>42</sup> Howland's two years in office were in accordance with the standards of the day. While there was no stated term limits, it was generally regarded as protocol for mayors to serve for no longer than two years. Howland's popularity, however, made his decision to decline a third year in office a surprising, and, by many, a lamented one.

Under his guidance several associations were created and maintained with the purpose of improving the physical, moral, and spiritual conditions of the disenfranchised members of society, including the poor, children, convicts, and women.

One of the first of these programs established by William Howland was the Toronto Mission Union. Howland, along with Blake and O'Brien, established the Union in 1884 as a corrective to what they considered a serious neglect of the poor by mainline denominations. The idea for the Union came from Howland in the wake of his own battle, and dismissal, over ritualism in Grace Anglican Church, a church he had helped build in the early 1880s to minister to the poor.<sup>44</sup> Howland's experience in this affair had led him to believe that many of the established churches lacked the necessary conviction and vision to "modify and check the usual evils of increasing population" in Toronto.<sup>45</sup> The Toronto Mission Union was Howland's attempt to fill this spiritual vacuum. By providing broader, more efficient services to the unchurched of St. John's and other areas of Toronto without the encumbering formalities of the denominational system,<sup>46</sup> this organization sought to provide for the physical and spiritual needs of the poor, with a decided emphasis on the latter. This is evidenced by the fact that at its zenith

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<sup>43</sup> Morton, Mayor Howland, 37.

<sup>44</sup> Howland's vision for Grace Church's ministry clashed with that of the rector, the Reverend John Pitt Lewis. Both Howland and Blake were convinced that the inability of Grace Church to deal effectively with the poor was a direct result of the high church liturgical style implemented by Lewis. After considerable controversy, Howland was voted out as warden by the Anglican Church in April of 1883.

<sup>45</sup> Henry O'Brien Papers, Box 1, Envelope 17, Toronto Public Library, Main Branch, Baldwin Room.

<sup>46</sup> This philosophy was at the root of the "institutional church" movement in North America which, during this, sought to establish independent churches that met all of the basic needs of the local community. This approach was adopted by some of the most prominent conservative evangelicals in the United States, including Russell Conwell. In fact, Conwell once estimated that there were 173 institutional churches in America in 1900. Howland was undoubtedly influenced by this movement. For an account of this movement see Cross, ed., The Church and the City; Aaron Abell, The Urban Impact on American Protestantism.

in the late nineteenth century, the Toronto Mission Union “operated five mission halls, one senior citizens home, one convalescent home, and Toronto’s first nursing service.”<sup>47</sup>

In the absence of what he considered the vital, spiritual guidance of the established churches, Howland looked to a nondenominational organization, such as the Union, as a means of realizing ministerial goals.<sup>48</sup> This broader form of alliance was clearly outlined in the Union’s by-laws which declared that “the Union is not formed or carried in the interest of any particular denomination but of the whole Church of Christ” and that all members shall “avoid all controversy upon the constitution and government of Christian churches.”<sup>49</sup> Although initially supportive of the Union, the mainline denominations became critical of it when it was evident that not all of those converted by the ministry were being channeled into the churches.<sup>50</sup> Various charges were levied against the Union by clergymen both inside and outside the Anglican ranks. After John Salmon, a Congregationalist minister who was also instrumental in the founding of the Union, administered the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper to the personnel of the mission, some Anglicans complained that Howland, Blake, and their associates were promoting rampant disorder.<sup>51</sup> One unnamed Methodist minister who was concerned with the popular appeal of the Union, complained that “most people who attended their services had left established churches” and that Howland was employing a number of preachers who used language that only exposed

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<sup>47</sup> The largest, and most important of the missions was the Sackville Street Mission. Located in St. John’s ward, this mission was, in 1953, the last of the Toronto Mission Union ministries to close its doors. Reynolds, *Footprints*, 214.

<sup>48</sup> The leadership of the Union drew men from many different denominational backgrounds, the most prevalent being Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian. The Committee included names such as Elias Rogers, Henry O’Brien, S.R. Briggs, C.S. Gzowski, Jr., Robert Sims, John Salmon, H.B. Gordan, G. Goulding, Alf Sandham, Robert Kilgour, J.D. Nasmith, H.C. Dixon, William Howland, Samuel Blake, and Jonathan Goforth. See O’Brien Papers, Box 1, Envelope 17, Toronto Public Library, Main Branch, Baldwin Room.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, Box 1, Envelope 17.

<sup>50</sup> Reynolds, *Footprints*, 52-53.

<sup>51</sup> This criticism appeared in the *Canadian Churchman* (Toronto) December 31, 1885, 697, as cited in Reynolds, *Footprints*, 53.



their ignorance.<sup>52</sup> Despite having to endure the public criticisms of certain clergymen, the Toronto Mission Union quickly gained the respect of Toronto's most fervent evangelicals for its well-organized programs.

As stated in its constitution, the primary objective of the Union was to "extend the knowledge of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ among the inhabitants of Toronto and its vicinity, and especially the poor and neglected classes...."<sup>53</sup> The organization worked towards meeting this objective through several evangelistic activities ranging from Bible readings and Gospel services to the distribution of Gospel tracts.<sup>54</sup> In his brief historical sketch of the Union O'Brien notes that its initial program "consisted of a Sunday School which began with twenty-five children and a few teachers, a Gospel service on Sunday night, meeting of Temperance Band on Tuesday evening, sewing class for girls on Saturday, Band of Hope on Thursday, and Gospel meeting on Friday night."<sup>55</sup> By 1887 the Union's program had become so extensive and well attended that its main branch, located on Sackville Street in St. John's ward, had to construct a new building. Upon completion of this building the Union expanded its influence by setting up ministries such as the Mother's Meeting, Girl's Club, the Soup Kitchen, and a Hospital visitation. Attendance records show that throughout the 1880's all of the ministries continued to grow at a steady rate.<sup>56</sup> While attendance numbers for special conferences and dinners were not recorded, the popularity of events such as the "Christmas Supper and

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<sup>52</sup> Reference is to the Bible men and women workers who served in the Union. See Reynolds, 53.

<sup>53</sup> O'Brien Papers, Box 1, Envelope 17.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, Box 1, Envelope 17.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, "Short Piece of History of Toronto Mission Union, Sackville Street Branch, Box 1, Envelope 6.

<sup>56</sup> The Union was particularly interested in the records of children attending the Sunday School. The records show a relatively equal amount of girls and boys attending with an average of 65 girls and 60 boys in 1888, 70 girls and 59 boys for the first half of 1889, and 82 girls and 58 boys for the second half of 1889. See O'Brien Papers, Box 1, Envelope 10 and 11.

Entertainment For Grown People” and the “Christmas Party For Children” was frequently noted by the local press.<sup>57</sup>

Unabashedly evangelistic in tone, the theological statement of faith outlined in the Union’s constitution clearly delineated a deep and primary commitment on the part of Union workers to the salvation of souls.<sup>58</sup> The passion with which workers pursued this end was also periodically reinforced by testimonials which told of encounters with the poor and their spiritual depravity.<sup>59</sup> The Toronto Mission Union also focused the attention of its members on the spiritual condition of those in other parts of the world. In having the famous Presbyterian missionary to China, Jonathan Goforth, as a member of its leadership committee the Union was not only able to teach about missions but offer real opportunities for its students to contribute financially and physically to the work overseas.<sup>60</sup> The minutes of the Bible Class reveal, in fact,

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<sup>57</sup> See “Mr. Blake Laughs” from the *Globe*, Dec. 27, 1889. Besides commenting on the attendance to these two events (150 to the adult gathering and 270 to the children’s party), the article describes the way in which Samuel Blake displayed his well-known sense of humour: “After the solid part of the entertainment, a programme was furnished, the chief part of which was a reading by Mr. S.H. Blake of one of Dicken’s Christmas stories. Mr. Blake laughed so heartily and to such good purpose during the reading that for nearly an hour he had the audience in roars of merriment - they laughed as they had not laughed before for many a day.”

<sup>58</sup> The statement of faith is basic in its theology requiring a practical commitment to 8 essential doctrines: the divine inspiration of scripture, the incarnation, the fallen state of humanity, the need for spiritual regeneration through Christ, justification by faith, the quest for holiness, the process of sanctification, and the atonement provided by the death and resurrection of Christ. See Constitution, O’Brien Papers, Box 1, Envelope 3.

<sup>59</sup> The emphasis on spiritual regeneration was clearly evident in a testimonial sent to Henry O’Brien from Elizabeth Pearman, dated March 21, 1892. Pearman was a former worker at the Union who went on to serve in a similar capacity in Chicago. Writing of her own recent experiences, Pearman’s letter told the story of an encounter she had with two parents and their dying son in the poorest sections of Chicago. While the son laid on his bed facing death Pearman explained the message of the gospel to him and “led him to Christ.” Only after she was assured of the child’s spiritual welfare did Pearman ask about his physical and material welfare. When she returned a few days later she found that the child had died but that he had told his mother to tell Pearman that she should not worry because “he knew he was going to Jesus and he knew Jesus would take him in.” In the conclusion of her letter Pearman praised the Lord for the child, marveling that while he “had been a boot black and newsboy... for such as him is the kingdom prepared.” Letter from Elizabeth Pearman to Henry O’Brien, March 21, 1892, O’Brien Papers, Box 1, Envelope 9.

<sup>60</sup> Goforth served as a worker with the Union while he attended Knox College in the mid-1880s. His dedication to missions was duly noted by others, such as William Caven. A. Donald Macleod describes one encounter Caven had with Goforth: “Principal Caven once stopped Goforth and inquired as to how many families he had visited in Toronto the previous summer. ‘Nine hundred and sixty,’ was the reply. ‘Well Goforth,’ said the Principal, ‘if you don’t take any scholarships in Greek and Hebrew, at least there is one book that you’re going to be well up in, and that is the book of Canadian human nature.’” Goforth and his wife Rosalind, who met while working at the Union, left for

that teachers and students involved with the Union contributed significantly larger portions of money to foreign missions than to domestic work.<sup>61</sup> In one of his letters back to O'Brien and the Union Goforth thanked the "teachers and the young folk" for the financial donation they had made to his ministry,<sup>62</sup> and rejoiced that because of the money "thousands of books and tracts are in the hands of thousands of idol worshipers."<sup>63</sup>

Although the spiritual welfare of individuals was the primary concern for the Union it was not the only one. Howland and other Union workers recognized an intrinsic link between the spiritual, mental, and physical faculties of the human being. As such, they viewed as necessary the establishment of institutions for the "aged, sick, friendless and helpless as adjuncts to practical mission work."<sup>64</sup> One of the ministries organized by the Union was hospital visitation. "Visitors" were not only commissioned to help people cope with their physical ailments, but to seek spiritual solutions for them. This ministry was deeply influenced by both the Keswick teaching and the holiness teaching of A.B. Simpson, founder of the Christian Alliance in the United States.<sup>65</sup> Keswick teaching highlighted the virtue of physical suffering by viewing it as an opportunity for the believer to share in Christ's sufferings on the cross, and thereby to realize a higher state of holy living. Hospital workers saw visitation, then, as a

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China in 1887. A. Donald Macleod, "Goforth of China (1859-1936)," in Called to Witness: Profiles of Canadian Presbyterians vol. 2, Stanford W. Reid, ed. (Hamilton: Committee on History, Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1980).

<sup>61</sup> Bible Class Minutes, O'Brien Papers, Box 2, Envelope 8.

<sup>62</sup> Jonathan Goforth letter from Lui Ching, China, April 10, 1898. O'Brien Papers, Box 1 Envelope 6.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, Box 1, Envelope 6. In his letter Goforth explains how instead of giving the books away free he sold them for half price those who were interested. He argues that when people bought the books they were more eager to read them than when they were simply given to them. This is an interesting argument which displays the "entrepreneurial savvy" of the middle-class moral reformers - only those who would use the services provided by the reformers deserved them.

<sup>64</sup> Toronto Mission Union Constitution, O'Brien Papers, Box 1, Envelope 17.

<sup>65</sup> For accounts of A.B. Simpson, his ideas on healing, and the emergence of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church see: Ewearitt, Body and Soul: Evangelism and the Social Concern of A.B. Simpson; Darrel R. Reid, "Towards a Fourfold Gospel: A.B. Simpson, John Salmon, and the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada," in Aspects of Canadian Evangelicalism, George Rawlyk, ed. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996); Lindsay Reynolds, Footprints.

process that benefited both the patient and the visitor; both were able to experience and even rejoice in Christ's sufferings. This idea of suffering was one that was even encapsulated in a "Hospital Sunday Hymn" sung by the Union workers.<sup>66</sup> While Keswick teaching promoted a stoic attitude towards pain and suffering Simpson's preached the power of the believer to overcome sickness through faith in Christ. Simpson's emphasis on divine healing was shunned by many evangelicals in Toronto,<sup>67</sup> but was supported by Howland and John Salmon, both of whom, in 1889, combined forces to form the first Canadian chapter of the Christian Alliance, a broad association of believers that would eventually become the Christian and Missionary Alliance denomination.

Howland was also involved in more traditional enterprises that sought to address the plight of the poor in less overtly religious terms: one of these was the House of Industry. Founded in Toronto in 1837, the House of Industry was an organization that was active in three general areas. First, the House functioned as a permanent residence for the elderly and the sick who could not take care of themselves and who had no friends or family to help them. Secondly, the House offered temporary food and accommodation for the homeless poor and transients. Referred to as "casuals" in the records, this second group of inhabitants was often required to work in order to qualify for each day's food and lodging. The third function of the House was to provide food and fuel for families in the neighborhood who, despite a lack of resources, had managed to maintain their own residences.<sup>68</sup> While the House of Industry continued to serve in the initial capacity, its casual relief and out-door relief programs were eventually phased out as government became more involved in social welfare after the turn of the century.

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<sup>66</sup> See Appendix.

<sup>67</sup> One of those who disapproved with Simpson's view was William Caven, another member of the conservative evangelical network and one of Simpson's former professors at Knox College.

Since its creation in 1837 the House of Industry had promoted the view that the poor were to be helped only if they demonstrated a willingness to help themselves. While poverty was looked upon as an inevitable reality, pauperism and the dependency on almsgiving that resulted from haphazard charity was considered counterproductive and even dangerous for the public good. This attitude continued to frame the programs offered by the House of Industry in the 1880's and 1890's when Howland was most involved. Howland, in fact, was very supportive of "systematic benevolence," and voiced this publicly when he served as a witness for the Royal Labour Commission in 1887.<sup>69</sup> During his testimony Howland spoke out against the open immigration policies of Canada which allowed paupers living in the poor-houses of East London to come to Canada.<sup>70</sup> While acknowledging the need to assist those who had experienced misfortune, Howland suggested that the greatest problem with the poor immigrants was not that they "were bad or dissipated people" but that they "did not know how to help themselves."<sup>71</sup>

With the support of Howland and others, then, the House of Industry maintained a strict adherence to guidelines that ensured the industriousness of both its workers and those who were receiving aid. Rules were established to determine the eligibility of those seeking admission into the House for either temporary or permanent stays. Those who were ineligible for admission were classified as such for a variety of reasons: either they were considered "depraved in their morals," could support themselves without substantial aid, had contagious disorders or required

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<sup>68</sup> House of Industry Papers - Historical Background, SC 35, City of Toronto Archives.

<sup>69</sup> The term "systematic benevolence" is borrowed from Magney, "The Methodist Church and the National Gospel," 23.

<sup>70</sup> *Globe*, December 1, 1887. Howland suggested to the Commission that Canada adopt the American system of immigration which stopped paupers at the border. Howland stated clearly that "People who are paupers should not be sent to Canada." Explaining his reasons for this position he stated "I should be very sorry to limit any class for which there is any hope of their doing well, such as the trained boys from Dr. Bernardo's homes and other institutions."

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* Howland believed that the poor only needed free assistance in cases of misfortune. This, Howland believed, "was principally occasioned by two causes - drinking and shiftlessness."

medical attention, were mentally ill, or did not live in Toronto.<sup>72</sup> Once admitted to the House inmates were required to follow a strict schedule that included morning and evening prayers. All of these rules were established to promote the physical, moral, and spiritual improvement of those who had to abide by them.<sup>73</sup> Those who benefited from the out-door relief program were also subject to the strict rules of the House. After requesting aid from the House, applicants were visited by someone from the organization who would hear the case of the applicant. It was the job of these “visitors” to determine the eligibility of the applicant according to their material and moral conditions.<sup>74</sup> Howland was just one of the conservative evangelicals who worked in this capacity.<sup>75</sup>

The involvement of conservative evangelicals in the House of Industry suggests that they continued to support more conventional avenues of reform. It also suggests that the agenda and guidelines of the House corresponded with the socio-economic values esteemed by Howland and his associates. These evangelicals approached ministry to the poor in the same way they pursued their interests as middle-class businessmen steeped in the tenets of liberal capitalism. While their “systematic benevolence” is open to criticism for its innate paternalism, these men truly believed that it was their duty as Christian leaders to be proper stewards of their time and money. This meant that resources, regardless of whether they were financial or spiritual in nature, needed to be dispensed carefully to those who would use them to their fullest. For many of these

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<sup>72</sup> “By-Laws, and Regulations of the House of Industry Adopted November, 1887 with the Act of Incorporation and Amending Act” (Toronto: Raswell and Hutchison Printers, 1887). Located in House of Industry Papers, SC 35.

<sup>73</sup> Physical, moral, and spiritual purity were all emphasized in the house-rules for the inmates. Article XI of the Rules, for example, state that “All the inmates who, under the advice of their spiritual advisers, do not object, shall attend morning and evening prayer.” In almost the same breath the next article states that “No person shall be allowed to sit down to meals without appearing clean and properly washed.” Rules, 12.

<sup>74</sup> See Rules for Visitors, in “By-Laws, Rules, and Regulations,” 9.

<sup>75</sup> Howland was also Manager of the House in 1884. Other conservative evangelicals who contributed financially to the organization were William Caven, Elmore Harris, Elias Rogers, S.R. Briggs, and Dyson Hague.

evangelicals this attitude was reinforced by an ingrained Calvinistic outlook which assumed that those who failed to demonstrate any inclination for self-improvement were already lost.

One group of city dwellers that warranted unconditional attention was juveniles. Children, according to Howland, deserved particular attention for a number of reasons. First, they were the most vulnerable to the risks posed by the urban environment. Like most middle-class Protestants in the Victorian era, conservative evangelicals believed that children needed to be nurtured and morally trained within a secure family environment, a view that supplanted the traditional Calvinistic emphasis on depravity.<sup>76</sup> When proper nurturing did not take place within the family, children became ill-equipped to deal with temptations offered by the urban setting and usually fell into lives of crime. A second reason for the network's emphasis on juveniles was that because of their naïvete and vulnerability, children were especially deserving of redemption. In their dealings with adults, conservative evangelicals were careful to provide only for those who demonstrated a need and a willingness for self-improvement. Children, on the other hand, were incapable of making life-style choices on their own and, therefore, more deserving to receive training and work towards self-improvement.

Finally, conservative evangelicals also realized that the only way society would improve itself was if the next generation of citizens were trained at an early age to abide by certain moral

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<sup>76</sup> Their belief in this philosophy distanced Canadian conservative evangelicals from the strict Calvinistic attitude toward children which held "that children were born in original sin and required either baptismal rite or a mature conversion experience to equip them for living new lives of purity and love." Allen, "The Background of the Social Gospel in Canada," 21. The importance of nurture in the nineteenth-century family is an area of great interest among historians. For the importance of the home in the progressive wing of the social gospel see Brian Fraser, The Social Uplifters, 100-105. For an account of the role of the Victorian mother in the nurturing process see Van Die, An Evangelical Mind. See also Colleen McDannell, The Christian Home in Victorian America, 1840-1900 (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 1986) and E. Antony Rotundo, "Boy Culture: Middle Class Boyhood in Nineteenth-Century America," in Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victorian America Mark Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. For an account of the importance of nurture in the lives of social gospelers see Susan Curtis, A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).

standards. One of the most consistent and intense public campaigns these laymen waged was to ensure that the education system in Ontario provided the necessary “moral” training.<sup>77</sup> Samuel Blake, a leader in this campaign, suggested that while learning “cut down to the root of conceit” by exposing the individual to the vastness of knowledge, it also curbed, restrained, and ruled the cries for indulgence by the “self.”<sup>78</sup> Moreover, education was seen to play a vital role in the formation of nationhood by equipping young people, and specifically young men, with the spiritual, moral, and mental tools to guide society towards “righteousness.”<sup>79</sup>

Howland contributed to several programs that focused on the condition of urban children. One of these was the Children’s Fresh Air Fund, a program organized in 1888 by John Joseph Kelso to allow poorer children to leave the environment of St. John’s ward for a day-outing on the water.<sup>80</sup> The first of these excursions, on June 27, 1888, started with the collection of approximately 400 children in St. John’s ward, and continued with a procession down Yonge Street to the water culminating in a boat ride on Lake Ontario. The spectacle of 400 children marching down Yonge Street was made even grander by those who led the procession. At the front of the children were two of the leading humanitarians of the city, William Howland and the

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<sup>77</sup> Conservative evangelical laymen were involved in numerous controversy’s concerning education. Among the most notable of these was the battle over Trinity College and its ties to High Anglicanism and the state. This controversy resulted in the creation of Wycliffe College. For an account of this controversy see Samuel H. Blake, Wycliffe College: An Historical Sketch (Toronto: Wycliffe College, 1910) and The Jubilee Volume of Wycliffe College (Toronto: Wycliffe College, 1927). Blake was also involved in a campaign to rid the Univeristy of Toronto of higher criticism. Rather than argue from a religious or theological perspective, Blake, in 1909, wrote a public letter to the Chancellor of the University, Nathanael Burwash, in which he outlined the illegality of the teaching of “religious knowledge” in a state-funded educational institution. See Blake, The Teaching of Religious Knowledge in University College Ultra Vires (Toronto: Haynes Press, 1909).

<sup>78</sup> Blake, The Young Men of Canada: A Lecture by the Hon. Vice-Chancellor Blake (Toronto: B.J. Hill, 1876), 9 and 26.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 39. In his address to students at University College Blake continually exhorted his student audience to remember that “Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people” and reminded them that it was their duty to see that “this exaltation is the lot of your land.” Blake’s quote is in direct reference to Proverbs 14:35.

<sup>80</sup> John Joseph Kelso was definitely conservative in his religious and social views and had a lot of contact with Howland and other laymen in the conservative evangelical network. There is no indication, however, that he was a premillennialist, or that he was involved in any of the other projects undertaken by the network.



Methodist entrepreneur, William Gooderham, and a fife band of the Boy's Home which led the children in hymns such as "Shall We Gather at the River?" and "Jesus Loves Me."<sup>81</sup> This excursion marked only the first of many for the organization. In his own account of the project Kelso claims that other "excursions followed, until two thousand five hundred of the city's poorest children had been given a day's outing."<sup>82</sup>

While conservative evangelicals like Howland worried about the health of children their most pressing concern was for the damage that the urban environment had on a child's moral development. Programs such as the "Fresh Air Excursion" were viewed as vehicles through which children could be taught, either through parades, boat rides or the singing of songs such as "Jesus Loves Me," the virtues of a morally clean life. Helpful as these short-term activities were, however, conservative evangelicals realized that instilling these virtues in a young life required longer-term commitments. One of the programs instituted by the network that demonstrated this type of commitment was the Victoria Industrial School.

Among the most pressing concerns of Howland was the plight of the urban juvenile boy. Whether they were working as newsboys or loitering in gangs, all "poorly-clad, unkempt children on the city streets" were considered an affront to order and respectability, and susceptible to begging, pilfering, and even more serious criminal behaviour.<sup>83</sup> Consensus on the part of these reformers was that a large amount of the crime committed in the city was done by these juveniles.<sup>84</sup> Evangelical reformers like Howland and Kelso unsystematically contended that the "extent of juvenile depravity that existed can be guessed from the fact that in less than

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<sup>81</sup> J.J. Kelso, Early History of the Humane and Children's Aid Movement in Ontario, 1886-1893 (Toronto: L.K. Cameron, 1911), 26.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>83</sup> Jones and Rutman, In the Children's Aid, 39.

<sup>84</sup> See Globe, December 1, 1887.

six months in 1883, there were 200 police court convictions of children whose average age was between 11 and 12."<sup>85</sup>

Although juvenile crime was a reality in Toronto,<sup>86</sup> its embellishment by Howland was part of general lobby for a new reformatory system. By the 1880s it had become evident that conventional methods of dealing with juveniles was ineffective, and even damaging to the public good. While reformers implemented new rules, such as the licensing of newsboys,<sup>87</sup> to control the street population, these proved only temporary solutions to a deeper problem: the lack of a proper facility to house and reform juvenile delinquents. "Prior to the year 1887," Kelso explains, "the only institution in the Province dealing with vagrant and criminally disposed boys was the Ontario Reformatory in Penanguishene, and as this institution was intended for older and more hardened youths, a large field of work still remained entirely neglected."<sup>88</sup> As a result of this flawed system, younger juveniles were not only convicted in the same manner as adults but placed in a reformatory with older criminals.<sup>89</sup> Instead of reforming the impressionable young boys, critics charged, the current system only created hardened criminals and prepared them for lives of crime on the streets.

Howland and his associates found a potential solution to juvenile crime in the 1884 amendment to the dormant Industrial Schools Act which broadened the scope of involvement in

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<sup>85</sup> Kelso, "Early History of Victoria Industrial School," Industrial Schools Association of Toronto Papers, MU1409, Ontario Provincial Archives.

<sup>86</sup> See Susan Houston, "The 'Waifs and Strays' of a Late Victorian City: Juvenile Delinquents in Toronto," in Childhood and Family in Canadian History, Joy Parr, ed. (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1982).

<sup>87</sup> Jones and Rutman, In the Children's Aid, 39-40.

<sup>88</sup> Kelso, "Early History of Victoria Industrial School."

<sup>89</sup> Kelso and Blake both note that the process of Police Court convictions for juveniles was the same as it was for adults. This, according to the reformer, had left an indelible mark on the younger kids. See Kelso, "Early History of Victoria Industrial School," and Blake, Our Faulty Gaol System: Memorandum of an Address Delivered on Behalf of the Prisoners' Aid Association, in the Metropolitan Church, Toronto (Reprinted from The Methodist Magazine and Review, 1896).

child reform.<sup>90</sup> This Amendment, known as the Children's Protection Act, authorized school trustees to "delegate the power, rights, and privileges conferred upon them concerning the establishment, control and management of an Industrial School to any philanthropic society incorporated under the 'Ontario Benevolent Societies Act.'" <sup>91</sup> The Children's Protection Act was significant for two reasons: it not only broadened the involvement and responsibility of the community in the lives of its disadvantaged children but also created a reciprocal association between the state and courts and the private charitable organization.<sup>92</sup>

In 1887, Howland and Beverly Jones, a lawyer and children's aid advocate, responded to this new Act by establishing the Victoria Industrial School at Mimico, a small community just outside Toronto. Victoria School was, in the words of its first historian, J.J. Kelso, "established to provide a home and special training for homeless and neglected boys under 14 years of age and originally in its work was confined to Toronto as an auxiliary of the City schools."<sup>93</sup> Howland saw Victoria's purpose as providing corrective education in the provision of both academic instruction and industrial training. While regular academic courses were taught in arithmetic, reading, and writing, the focus of the school was on providing training in areas such as carpentry, tailoring, printing, shoe-making, laundry work and pressing, the baking of bread,

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<sup>90</sup> The Industrial Schools Act was initially passed in 1874. As the first attempt by government to curtail child abuse and neglect, this Act, among other things, gave public schools the "right to establish residential, custodial, and educational institutions for certain categories of problem children." Jones and Rutman, *In the Children's Aid*, 27-28. While this act was welcomed by child aid advocates, it failed to generate any tangible action on the part of the school boards.

<sup>91</sup> Kelso, "The Early History of Victoria Industrial School."

<sup>92</sup> Jones and Rutman, *In the Children's Aid*, 29. See also Richard B. Splane, *Social Welfare in Ontario 1791-1893: A Study of Public Welfare Administration* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 254. Of this new relationship between private and public interests Splane states that the main elements were: provincial legislation and supervision, together with some financial support by way of annual grants; municipal financial responsibility for maintenance payments for children committed to the schools and for the provision of teaching staff, the right of the municipality to make further grants, and the right to representation on the board of the philanthropic society formed to develop and operate the schools; and private participation in initiating, developing, operating, and financing the institutions within the framework of provincial law," 254.

<sup>93</sup> Kelso, "The Early History of Victoria Industrial School."

cakes and pastry, and farming.<sup>94</sup> By working in these areas, students not only learned a strong work ethic but also contributed to their own material well-being while at the school.<sup>95</sup> The comprehensive program at Victoria Industrial School also paid “careful attention to the development of the spiritual and moral side of children’s natures in the hopes of compensating in some measure for the lack of these elements in their previous home training.”<sup>96</sup> One subtle way in which the development of morals was conveyed was by allowing students a relative degree of freedom, at least in comparison with the prison system. Although he was aware that this freedom was often taken advantage of by students bent on running away, Kelso stated confidently that “There is little virtue in following the right path unless a wrong path lies open.”<sup>97</sup>

For Howland and like-minded reformers the most critical aspect of child development was environment. More than an institution, the Victoria Industrial School was seen by its founders as a safe and secure “world” in which troubled juveniles could receive the proper nurture they had lacked in their own homes. The first necessary ingredient for creating this world was rescuing the boys from the unclean urban centre and placing them in the pure, natural environment of the rural hinterland.<sup>98</sup> A second important ingredient in establishing this secure world was the re-creation of a family environment. Upon arrival students were placed in a “cottage” under the care of a matron and guard who acted as ‘mother’ and ‘father’ of the ‘family’ and who endeavoured to have “the home feeling restored and implanted in the breast of

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid. Victoria was a partially self-sustaining community that depended on the work of its students to produce a great deal of the necessary supplies.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report of Victoria Industrial School, October 19, 1889. Industrial Schools Association of Toronto Papers, General Correspondence, MU 1409.

<sup>98</sup> When it was opened in 1887 the School was situated on 20 acres of farmland. The school eventually expanded to 50 acres, consisting of a number of buildings, including a gymnasium named Howland Memorial Hall.

each boy.”<sup>99</sup> While recognized as a poor substitute for the natural family, the cottage system was seen by reformers as essential to the student’s own reintegration into the community.

Despite its early successes as a reformatory for young juveniles, circumstances outside the School’s control forced it to significantly alter its initial program. Present throughout the Victoria School’s early existence was an uneasy relationship between its private sponsors and the provincial government. The school was founded on the idea that government and private charitable organizations would work jointly in its administration. Initially, Howland and other reformers looked to the government for only minimal financial support. Kelso notes that the “per capita grant of one dollar per day for each child committed only provided the ordinary upkeep without allowing for capital expenditures on buildings and machinery.”<sup>100</sup> With little government involvement Howland and his associates were able to fashion Victoria School’s program as they had envisioned it. The stable environment they created at Mimico received a permanent setback, however, when the government imposed its own agenda on the institution in the 1890’s. Two related developments particularly affected the School. First, in 1894 the government closed the Pentanguishene Reformatory thus putting more pressure on Victoria School to accept larger numbers of older juveniles. Then, in an attempt to deal with the larger numbers of boys the School was forced to depend more heavily on government assistance. According to Kelso these two developments resulted in the substitution of the voluntaristic spirit with the systemization of a bureaucratic institution.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Splane, Social Welfare in Ontario, 253.

<sup>100</sup> Kelso, “The Early History of Victoria Industrial School.”

<sup>101</sup> In his account of the early years of Victoria School and of child aid in general Kelso laments the bureaucratization of social welfare. In his opinion the worst thing to happen in this field was the loss of the voluntaristic, philanthropic spirit and its emphasis on individuals rather than on larger organizational structures.

The evolution of Victoria Industrial School into a government institution highlights some of the values Howland and other conservative evangelicals considered essential to their reform efforts. While cognizant of the need for increased state intervention, Howland believed that the old voluntaristic spirit of nineteenth-century evangelicalism was the most efficient and effective means of dealing with social problems. Unlike radical social reformers whose organic view of society abated distinctions between the state and the individual, conservative evangelicals maintained a classical liberal idea of government that saw the institution as a source for primary aid only when called upon by individuals. Too much government intervention in social reform, Howland believed, only stymied the necessary motivation for communal action. For one thing, increased government intervention resulted in the greater dependency of “victims” on the state. For juveniles, this often meant that they would have to “carry the mark of state guardianship” for the rest of their lives.<sup>102</sup> In addition, greater state intervention, according to Howland, prevented concerned citizens from serving others out of personal spiritual and moral conviction.

While the reformation of juveniles was considered an essential preventative to the development of older, more serious criminals, conservative evangelicals did not abandon or ignore the condition of adult felons. After witnessing the conditions of the prison system firsthand, Blake, Howland and another lawyer, J.G. Hodgins, decided to form an organization that would address the problem of prison reform more directly.<sup>103</sup> With Howland acting as its first president,<sup>104</sup> the Prisoners’ Aid Association was founded in the 1870s to serve convicts on

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<sup>102</sup> Kelso, Early History of the Humane and Children’s Aid Movement, 42.

<sup>103</sup> Blake and Howland became familiar with the condition of the prison system through the bible studies, Sunday School classes, an religious services they held in the Central Prison. They continued to minister through these meetings throughout their lives.

<sup>104</sup> For brief account of the creation of the Prisoner’s Aid Association see Sawatsky, “Blessed Hope,” 241-243. The most active years of the organization began in the mid-1880s after Blake replaced Howland as president. Splane suggests that Blake “appears to have been able to devote more attention to the work than Howland, who was mayor of Toronto during this period.” Splane, Social Welfare in Ontario, 186.

two levels. On an individual basis, the Association helped prisoners reenter society after their release by maintaining a lodging house that provided accommodation and employment workshops. In addition to providing training, the Association also provided jobs for reformed criminals, often in companies, like the Willard Tract Society, that were owned by members of the network.<sup>105</sup>

The Association also worked in the prisoners' best interests by promoting change at the institutional level.<sup>106</sup> Besides lobbying for greater distinctions between juvenile and adult offenders, the Prisoners' Aid Association petitioned for the proper classification of adult prisoners according to the severity of their crimes. The problem with the existing penal system, it was observed, was that all prisoners, regardless of their crime, were placed in a general block. Prison reform advocates argued that this system served as a breeding ground for more serious criminal behaviour; petty thieves who entered prison came out as seasoned veterans after spending time with hardened criminals. The Association suggested two remedies to this system: separation and work. By placing criminals in their own individual cells, Blake and others argued, prisoners would be "separated from contamination" and "from the power of contaminating."<sup>107</sup> The Association also felt that enforced labour by all prisoners would prevent a "prison culture" from taking hold of inmates and deter potential repeat offenders from committing further crime upon release. In a criticism that continues to resonate with today's conservative evangelicals, Blake charged that after a few experiences in the existing system,

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<sup>105</sup> Doran makes special note of the released criminals who were placed by the Prisoner's Aid Association with the Willard Tract Depository. He explains, "That the heathen might be saved, and that there should be available dividends devoted to the free distribution of tracts among the unregenerate at home, all employees were paid just enough to keep body and soul together. As a measure of economy and mercy, we drew upon the Prisoner's Aid Society for our Male help. These men were reformed just long enough to find themselves employed." Doran, *Chronicles of Barabbas*, 9.

<sup>106</sup> Many of the ideas that the Prisoners' Aid Association endorsed came out of its participation in the Congress of the National Prison Association held in 1887.

inmates came to regard the gaol “not as a place of punishment, to be carefully shunned, but as a club or hotel, where they are comfortably housed, clothed, and fed, at the public expense of it.”<sup>108</sup>

Howland and his conservative evangelical associates also concerned themselves with the reformation of female criminals. Adult female prisoners were provided for through the Prison Gate Mission, an organization that was founded in 1878 by the Gaol Committee of the Women’s Christian Association but which operated under the auspices of the Toronto Mission Union.<sup>109</sup> Like the Prisoners’ Aid Association, the Prison Gate Mission focused on rehabilitating discharged female prisoners through the provision of employment counseling and placement, as well as food and accommodation at the Haven, a women’s rescue home owned by the Mission.<sup>110</sup> Like that of the Prisoner’s Aid Association, the program of the Mission was also aggressive in its evangelistic tone. Bible studies were held in “the City Jail every Thursday afternoon, in the Mercer Reformatory every Thursday evening, and in the Haven every Thursday afternoon and on Sunday afternoon and evening.”<sup>111</sup> Workers were also sent out by the Mission to visit women in both the Maternity Hospital and the “Locked Ward” in the General Hospital. The success of the Mission was evident in the fact that between 1883 and 1893 it was forced to expand the Haven, increasing its capacity significantly. Howland along with Blake, O’Brien and

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<sup>107</sup> Blake, Our Faulty Gaol System, 3.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 6. The Association continued to petition for these changes well after they first presented them to the Royal Commission on the Prison and Reformatory System of Ontario in 1890. Splane, Social Welfare in Ontario, 188.

<sup>109</sup> See Sawatsky for brief description of this ministry. Sawatsky, “Blessed Hope,” 245-248.

<sup>110</sup> Howland was instrumental in founding a similar home for women in Ottawa called the Home for Friendless Women. See Sharon Anne Cook, “Through Sunshine and Shadow”: The Women’s Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism, and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930 (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1995), 161.

<sup>111</sup> Sawatsky, “Blessed Hope,” 246.



other conservative evangelicals contributed significant portions to the financing of these projects.<sup>112</sup>

The Alexander School was another institution founded and directed by Howland. Modeled on the Victoria Industrial School, Alexander School provided an “all round ‘home’ training” for juvenile girls who had either run into problems with the law or had been subjected to abuse in some manner. While at Alexander School girls received instruction in both regular academic subjects and practical home economics. Unlike the program at Victoria School which trained boys for work in the public realm, Alexander School focused its attention on preparing girls for work in the private realm of the home. After receiving instruction in math, reading, and writing, students spent the other half of the day learning the basics of cooking, gardening, milking, feeding chickens, sewing, dressmaking, fancy work, including knitting, crocheting and embroidery, and choral class.<sup>113</sup> All of these courses were designed to meet the goals of the school: “the development of true womanhood, industrial, physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual.”<sup>114</sup> The school’s administrators considered it their duty to not only lift their students out of the “low sphere” from which they came, but to surround them with influences of “culture, in speech, modesty, manners, dress, general deportment, cleanliness and the feminine virtues in general,” thereby equipping them for life as respected, morally upright, middle-class women.<sup>115</sup>

The program at Alexander School reflected the Victorian ideal of womanhood espoused by the conservative evangelical network. Howland’s own involvement in projects such as the Alexander School, as well as his stated opinions on women, provide access to this “ideal” and

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<sup>112</sup> Sawatsky notes that Blake was also one of the speakers at the official opening of the new wing completed in 1883. *Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>113</sup> Kelso, “The Early History of Victoria Industrial School.”

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

suggest ways in which conservative evangelicals appropriated it in their religious and social activism. Like most middle-class Protestants of the time, Howland believed that the foundation of a nation was located in the moral fortitude of the single family home; the political and economic strength of a nation could only be measured in direct correlation with the moral strength of its family units.<sup>116</sup> This notion corresponded directly with the division of labour that placed women in charge of the “private sphere,” and men in charge of the “public.” Middle-class men did not consider this division of labour restrictive, but rather empowering for women because it placed them in a position of influence that extended well beyond the confines of the home. As Clyde Griffen suggests in reference to the United States, by acting as managers of the home and moral teachers of the young, women were seen to control the very destiny of the nation. As he explains,

Although evangelicals presumed male authority in the family, gender-defined division of labor, and separate spheres, they also believed devoutly that economic life must be governed by moral values, that individual and collective righteousness ought to be sustained by public policy, and that the gentler virtues should be applied wherever possible in human relationships. The wider world should be made more like the home.<sup>117</sup>

Howland’s attitude towards lower-class, working women was decidedly patronizing in tone; often he regarded them as victims and weak individuals who, for any number of reasons, had fallen short of virtuous womanhood. This attitude was an offspring of Howland’s notion that women were the “weaker vessel,” a belief that was accepted by most evangelical men at this time, and one that was even beginning to shape legislation at the federal level. One of the

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<sup>116</sup> Karen Dubinsky, “‘Maidenly Girls’ or ‘Designing Women’? The Crime of Seduction in Turn-of-the-Century Ontario,” in *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women’s History*, Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde, eds. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 32.

clearest expressions of this idea was encapsulated in the Seduction Act of 1886. First introduced in 1886 by John Charlton, this Act proclaimed that “in certain situations there could be no consent to sexual relations.”<sup>118</sup> The underlying premise of this Act was that women were vulnerable and needed to be protected from the sexual appetites of men by the government and the court. While not explicit, Howland’s support for the general sentiments of the Seduction Act were made evident in his own report on working women to the Royal Commission on Labour.

One of the central issues facing the Commission was the plight of women workers. Despite coming from two different perspectives, the two ideological camps involved in the proceedings voiced a greater concern for “the morality of the women who were swept up in the process of industrial growth” than for the need to curtail improper male behaviour in the work place or facilitate female unionization.<sup>119</sup> In his own contribution to the Commission, Howland echoed this concern by characterizing working women as victims, “a helpless class” subject to the whims of greedy industrialists. According to Howland, the only way fair treatment of women in the work place would be achieved was if government regulation was expanded. Even though in principle he eschewed increased state intervention, Howland saw government regulation of the female workforce as necessary for the reason that while men could combine to protect themselves, working women and girls were a helpless class.<sup>120</sup>

Howland’s testimony before the Commission also highlighted the two options open for women as a response to their exploitation in the workplace. One way women responded to harsh working conditions, Howland noted, was through prostitution. While recognizing that poverty

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<sup>117</sup> Clyde Griffen, “Reconstructing Masculinity from the Evangelical Revival to the Waning of Progressivism: A Speculative Synthesis,” in *Meanings for Manhood: Constructions of Masculinity in Victoria America*, Mark C. Carnes and Clyde Griffen, eds. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 187.

<sup>118</sup> Dubinsky, “‘Maidenly Girls’ or ‘Designing Women,’” 34.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

was a major determinant in influencing women to seek employment in this area, Howland still maintained that women who took this approach did so in order to gain an “easier way of life.” As Carolyn Strange has recently observed, by simultaneously raising and discounting the economic rationale for prostitution, Howland thus “declared his belief, typical of evangelical reformers, that working-class women’s ‘rooted laziness’ was the real cause of the problem.”<sup>121</sup> In the final analysis prostitution was an option only for those girls who “had no good training” or supervision and who chose to abandon a moral livelihood for one of leisure.

On the other hand, Howland praised the working women who chose the second possible response to exploitation: perseverance. Believing that “a good woman would prefer death to prostitution,”<sup>122</sup> he extolled the ability of working women to endure their hardships. In reporting his own findings to the Commission he singled out sewing girls and shop girls as a class “worthy of all respect.”<sup>123</sup> In his opinion it was “wonderful how bravely they fought the battle of life and how honestly and decently they lived.”<sup>124</sup> When attempting to explain the moral fortitude of this group, he attributed their steadfastness to the fact that most of them had come from “the country,” where the virtues of true womanhood had not yet been challenged by industrialization and where girls were still being nurtured by morally astute mothers.

Howland’s contribution to the Royal Commission highlights the contradiction that existed in the conservative evangelical attitude towards lower-class women. While women who endured hardship without falling victim to immorality were considered deserving of praise and

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Carolyn Strange, *Toronto’s Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 35.

<sup>122</sup> *Globe*, December 1, 1887.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

assistance, “fallen women” who chose the “easier” path could only be pitied.<sup>125</sup> While recognizing that political and economic changes were necessary on a larger scale, Howland and other conservative evangelicals still held working women ultimately responsible for their own plight. What was really needed to ensure better labour practices was working women who were properly trained and nurtured and who were able to raise the moral standards of all those around them, including their employers.

Howland’s view of middle-class, evangelical Protestant women was decidedly more complex than his view of working-class women. Recent historical works on gender and evangelicalism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries have not only underscored the effect that the changing ideas of womanhood had on conservative evangelicals, but also the ambiguity of their response to these developments.<sup>126</sup> Where some historians have argued that the empowerment of women was perceived as a threat,<sup>127</sup> and others have countered that women’s involvement in the church and in society was actually promoted,<sup>128</sup> Margaret Bendroth has effectively demonstrated the ambiguity of the changing gender definitions adopted by conservative evangelicals. Howland’s own views of women supports this latter view.

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<sup>125</sup> Strange notes that in the first decades of its work the Y.W.C.A. was also operated on the principle of two classes of women: “respectable” and “fallen”. See Strange, Toronto’s Girl Problem, 17.

<sup>126</sup> For a historical debate on the role of women in turn-of-the-century American evangelicalism see: Margaret Lamberts Bendroth, Fundamentalism and Gender, 1875 to the Present (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), Betty DeBerg, Ungodly Women: Gender and the First Wave of American Fundamentalism (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), Michael Hamilton, “Women, Public Ministry, and American Fundamentalism, 1920-1950,” Religion and American Culture 3 (Summer 1993), 171-196, and Janette Hassey, No Time For Silence: Evangelical Women in Public Ministry Around the Turn of the Century (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1986).

<sup>127</sup> DeBerg argues that late nineteenth century conservative evangelicals were just as intolerant of women in leadership roles as fundamentalists were in the 1920’s. Both saw the increased involvement of women in both secular and sacred matters a threat to Christian orthodoxy, and consequently, the masculine, Victorian “separate sphere culture.”

<sup>128</sup> Hassey argues that women were at the forefront of conservative evangelical activities in the late nineteenth century and that the men in leadership promoted this involvement. She also contends that this mutual partnership dissipated with the rise of fundamentalism in the 1920’s. Hamilton argues that women were involved in leadership in conservative evangelical and fundamentalist circles from the late nineteenth century through to the mid twentieth.

On a broader, political level, Howland was unabashed in his support of an expanded franchise for women. In 1884 the Ontario Government passed legislation which allowed unmarried women and widows with the necessary property qualifications to vote in municipal elections.<sup>129</sup> The election of 1886, won handily by Howland, was the first time women exercised this right. General consensus among political pundits was that the female vote was instrumental in bringing Howland to power. This came as no surprise to observers as most knew that the middle-class women “could be depended upon to vote for purity, morality, and domestic happiness was axiomatic in the accepted version of Victorian womanhood.”<sup>130</sup> It was Howland’s temperance crusade and his quest for moral reform that consolidated the support of this bloc of female voters.<sup>131</sup> Although content with the outcome of the election, Howland continued to lobby for an even broader franchise that included “married women whose names are on the rolls and who have property that should be represented.”<sup>132</sup>

While Howland’s call for greater political participation by middle-class women was undoubtedly shaped by his own political aspirations, it was also indicative of his view of women as coequals in the fight against immorality. Howland recognized that women were the most concerned about moral reform and the most willing to devote all of their energies to the cause; he also realized that they had the most time to give to the numerous reform organizations. This was made strikingly clear to him when he considered the extent of female involvement in the various programs established by the network.<sup>133</sup> Howland also praised the work that women

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<sup>129</sup> The property franchise in civic elections at this time was based on \$400.00 worth of real estate or the equivalent. See Morton, *Mayor Howland*, 8-9 and Victor Loring Russell, *Mayors of Toronto* vol. 1 (Erin, Ontario: The Boston Mills Press, 1982), 112-115 for assessment of the role of the female vote in Howland’s mayoral victory.

<sup>130</sup> Morton, *Mayor Howland*, 9.

<sup>131</sup> For an account of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union see Sharon Cook.

<sup>132</sup> See “Mayor’s Inaugural Address, 1887” in William H. Howland Biographical File, City of Toronto Archives.

<sup>133</sup> Although men assumed most of the formal leadership positions in the various organizations, many of the programs, particularly those which served women exclusively, were run by women. Often the women who assumed

who served with the Salvation Army,<sup>134</sup> Women's Christian Temperance Union, and the different Missions Halls throughout the world were doing for the cause of evangelism. Unlike many women who, in Howland's opinion, had become enamoured with the leisure culture of the day, those who were serving under the auspices of these various organizations were seen to be making significant contributions to society by concerning themselves with the souls of the unsaved. Describing a meeting of postal and telegraph workers in London, England organized and led by female workers, Howland observed that there "were no tea and cakes, no glowing reports, no glorifying speeches; but two earnest preachers spoke on the higher Christian life of holiness, to an intensely interested audience, and souls were saved that night."<sup>135</sup> Howland also celebrated the work of female evangelists such as Bertha Wright, the popular revivalist and ambassador of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in eastern Ontario.<sup>136</sup>

Howland's open support for women in the area of moral and spiritual reform was not unqualified. His endorsement of these women was predicated on three essential conditions. First, the women Howland supported in the moral and spiritual crusade were of the middle class who acted within the boundaries of Victorian womanhood. What was important to Howland was not whether or not women were allowed to assume a greater role in the mission of the church, but whether or not they did so in a way that did not threaten the standards of female propriety. Secondly, the women preachers and evangelists Howland supported worked within what he considered a sound, conservative theological system. While Howland gloried in the thousands of

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leadership roles were the wives or even daughters of those men in control. The wives of William Howland, Elmore Harris, and C.S. Gzowski, Jr., for example, were often placed on leadership committees. Howland's daughter was also a prominent member of the committee that oversaw the Prison Gate Mission and Haven.

<sup>134</sup> For an account of the involvement of Canadian women in the Salvation Army see Marks, Revivals and Roller Rinks.

<sup>135</sup> Howland, "Women Preaching: A Sign of the Last Days," Faithful Witness (June 14, 1890). Appears in Lindsay Reynolds, Footprints, Appendix 14.

<sup>136</sup> For a detailed account of Bertha Wright's career see Sharon Cook, Through Sunshine and Shadow.

souls that were being saved by women preachers,<sup>137</sup> he did so cautiously, never allowing his orthodox theology to be compromised. Thus, when characterizing evangelists such as Wright, Howland emphasized the fact that they “are all gospelers; they have neither difficulties concerning, nor respect for, the higher criticism. Evolution has no place in their theology.”<sup>138</sup> Finally, Howland’s support for the work of Christian women stemmed directly from his premillennialist belief system. As a premillennialist he believed quite simply that the “principle sign of the last days would be the preaching of the Gospel by women.”<sup>139</sup> The advancement of women in Christian reform was not only to be celebrated as a sign of renewal in the church, therefore, but as prelude to the Second Coming of Christ.

The complex, and in many ways contradictory, view of middle-class women espoused by Howland and other conservative evangelicals was one that reflected their own inability to come to terms with changing gender roles in modern society. While these men allowed for some empowerment of women in the church, they did so only within the bounds of a traditional middle-class, evangelical value system and with the idea that this trend was a “temporary” and necessary aberration until the imminent return of Christ. On a broader scale, this view of women also reveals the tension in the approach conservative evangelicals took to social reform in general. These men recognized the need for change in existing social structures but were unwilling to completely abandon the main tenets of their traditional revivalistic ideology. In their opinion, this belief system still had the relevancy and the power to redefine the new, urban society.

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 546.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 549.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 544.



When viewed on the broader continuum of social reform it is, in many ways, both understandable and perplexing why the efforts of this network of evangelicals have often been overlooked and even dismissed by historians. In their diagnosis and prescription of social ills this group often advanced a guarded approach that sought resolution to new problems through the reinforcement of an older value system. Although they were, in some instances, able to adapt this system to the peculiar environment of the modern city, their strong commitment to what one historian has labeled, a traditional “revivalist-industrialist” worldview, often prevented conservative evangelicals from procuring enduring, substantive change.<sup>140</sup> In hindsight, their efforts to reform society can also be viewed as an effort by one group to reassert its control over a rapidly changing community.<sup>141</sup> Howland and other conservative evangelicals certainly had a particular social and economic vision for Toronto and Canada, and were determined to use various means to ensure that society adhered to it.<sup>142</sup>

The extent to which Howland and conservative evangelicals were active in the community, however, suggests that they did affect change in society, and that they warrant

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<sup>140</sup> For an insightful analysis of this “revivalist-industrialist” worldview, see Wauzzinski, Between God and Gold. Arguing that “industrialism was at root driven by a religious imperative” (31), Wauzzinski suggests that the marriage of evangelicalism and industrial-capitalism was deep-seeded, and located in the simultaneous maturation of both in the nineteenth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, a shift in the “revivalist-industrialist” worldview took place with industrial capitalism assuming control of the relationship. Evangelicalism became “incorporated” and eventually “lost the ability to transform culture because it failed to see the ultimate demands of Industrialism” (54). As a result, evangelicalism became a “culturally captive” religion.

<sup>141</sup> The “social control” interpretation of reform has been a popular one in American historiography. It postulates that reform movements are designed “by elite groups seeking to control and manipulate the poor in order to benefit the upper class and promote economic and social stability.” Allen F. Davis, Spearheads for Reform: the Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement 1890-1914 (New Brunswick, NJ.: Rutgers University Press, 1967), xx. A variation of the theory is advanced by Robert Wiebe, The Search for Order 1877-1920 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967). Two other key works in this area are Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism: A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900-1916 (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1963) and Frances F. Piven and Richard A. Cloward, Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare (New York: Pantheon, 1971). Another variation of this interpretation is provided by Paul Boyer, Urban Masses and Moral Order in America, 1820-1920.

<sup>142</sup> Mariana Valverde suggests that moral reform cannot be looked at only in “social control” terms. According to Valverde, “Social purity was a campaign to regulate morality, in particular sexual morality, in order to preserve and enhance a certain type of human life. It was not merely a campaign to punish and repress.” See Valverde, The Age

historical attention. In her evaluation of temperance crusades in early nineteenth-century Canada, Jan Noel suggests that it is misleading to portray social reformers as self-serving. According to Noel, the indignation of temperance workers was indeed righteous for they “were attacking not just a symptom of misery but one of its root causes.”<sup>143</sup> Similarly, although conservative evangelicals in the late nineteenth century are often dismissed as moralizers who focused on ameliorating behavioural rather structural deficiencies, the fact is that many of the problems they attempted to address were serious and legitimate public concerns. Finally, to suggest, as social control theorists would, that the primary impetus behind the social activism of these laymen was economic in nature is to disparage their genuine and fervent desire to act out their religious beliefs .

The social activism of conservative evangelical reformers has further been dismissed for its emphasis on individual, spiritual salvation. That conservative evangelicals did elevate the cause of evangelism above social reform is evident. Yet, this commitment to spiritual regeneration did not proscribe any concern for the physical and environmental conditions of the community. As Timothy Smith has shown, embedded in the revivalist tradition was a strong sense of noblesse oblige that focused attention on societal needs.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, these laymen embraced a practical theology that insisted on moral responsibility, and therefore compelled them to address all the needs of society. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, a new element in revivalism, Keswick holiness, considered public service essential to the sanctification of the individual believer. This teaching also held that salvation itself was more than an instantaneous, spiritual event; it was a process that required the submission of body, soul, and

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of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1991), 24.

<sup>143</sup> Noel, Canada Dry, 6.

spirit to a disciplined life. Translated to the communal level, this belief system offered a holistic view of reform that called for the “physical” as well as the “moral,” and “spiritual” redemption of society.

Not only have historians and critics largely overlooked the influences of Keswick holiness, they have also failed to realize that the premillennialist belief system held by conservative evangelicals served equally as a stimulant for social reform. In his important treatise, Christianity and the Social Crisis, Walter Rauschenbusch, the exponent of early twentieth-century social Christianity, decried the “number of Christian bodies and... individuals who have systematized the apocalyptic ideas of later Judaism and early Christianity and have made them fundamental in their religious thought.”<sup>145</sup> Besides “placing themselves artificially in the attitude of mind which primitive Christianity took naturally,” these Christians were, according to the social gospeler, suppressing the mission of the church by perpetuating a historical pessimism that was “a dead weight against any effort to mobilize the moral forces of Christianity to share in the modern social movement.”<sup>146</sup>

While Rauschenbusch was more plaintive than captious in his critique of popular apocalyptic thinking,<sup>147</sup> his remarks have resonated, nevertheless, with historians who have continued to portray premillennialists as non-involved and little-concerned individualists “who folded their arms in anticipation of the Lord’s return and let their dying world pass them by.”<sup>148</sup> In support of this view, historians have frequently referred to one of the most famous lines from

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<sup>144</sup> Timothy L. Smith, Revivalism and Social Reform.

<sup>145</sup> Walter Rauschenbusch, Christianity and the Social Crisis (London: Macmillan, 1910), 202.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>147</sup> Rauschenbusch recognized and respected the evangelistic zeal that many premillennialists displayed. In his opinion, this made their views all the more pathetic because these men had “a nobler ingredient of social hope for humanity than ordinary Christians” (203).

<sup>148</sup> Weber, Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming, 66.

D. L. Moody: "I look upon this world as a wrecked vessel. God has given me a lifeboat and said to me, 'Moody, save all you can.'"<sup>149</sup> From this perspective has emerged a "two-party" paradigm which submits that premillennialism fostered a "private," disengaged form of evangelicalism.<sup>150</sup> While other evangelicals advanced a "public" Christianity that focused on the present world, socially dislocated evangelicals who adopted this "private" form of evangelicalism turned inward and focused on the world yet to come rather than on the current one they felt was passing them by. According to Jean Miller Schmidt, the choice for evangelicals in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was thus a simple one: either "save souls" or save the "social order."<sup>151</sup>

The two party-paradigm fails to appreciate, however, that behind the apocalyptic imagery of premillennialist rhetoric was an essential optimism that was fueled by the "moral and salvific meaning of the Lord's return," a stimulant for social action that was similar to the "surge of

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<sup>149</sup> As quoted in Jean Miller Schmidt, *Souls or the Social Order: The Two-Party System in American Protestantism* (Brooklyn, New York: Carlson Publishing, 1991), 46.

<sup>150</sup> Among the first to articulate this paradigm were Aaron Abell and Henry May. They saw the evangelicals response to industrialization as two-pronged: while conservatives remained committed to revivalism, liberals offered a radically new form of evangelicalism that actively engaged modern culture. This dichotomy was first advanced in terms of a "private" versus "public" paradigm by Martin Marty and Jean Miller Schmidt. See Abell, *The Urban Impact on American Protestantism*; May, *Protestant Churches and Industrial America*; Martin E. Marty, *Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America* (New York: Dial Press, 1970); Jean Miller Schmidt, *Souls or the Social Order*.

<sup>151</sup> Other historical works have slightly modified the two-party paradigm by arguing that a "great reversal" occurred in premillennialists' social attitudes around the turn-of-the-century, and that earlier premillennialists were often anxious to deal with the needs of the new urban environment. David Moberg was the first to contend that the premillennialist worldview did not oppose social reform until the early twentieth century when reform became synonymous with the social gospel. Nevertheless, even in these revisionist works, the conception of premillennialism as essentially a private, introverted belief system continues to inform discourse. For revisions on this paradigm see Christiano; Weber; Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*; Paul Carter, *The Decline and Revival of the Social Gospel: Social and Political Liberalism in the American Protestant Churches 1920-1940* (Ithaca, NY.: Cornell University Press, 1954); Barry Gene Hankins, "Saving America: Fundamentalism and Politics in the life of J. Frank Norris" (Ph.D. dissertation, Kansas State University, 1990); David Moberg, *The Great Reversal: Evangelism Versus Social Concern* (New York: J.B. Lippincott, 1972); Norris Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work, 1865-1920* (Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, 1977); Douglas Matthews, "Approximating the Millennium: Toward a Coherent Premillennial Theology of Social Transformation" (Ph.D. dissertation, Baylor University, 1992). Matthews's work is particularly detailed in its breakdown of premillennialism into subgroups according to their social application of premillennialist ideas. Matthews identifies four categories: Antagonistic Premillennialism, Anticorrosive Premillennialism or Preservative Premillennialism, Transformed Premillennialism, and Relief-Oriented Premillennialism.

historical hopefulness that irradiated the new theology” of liberal evangelicalism.<sup>152</sup> A more nuanced understanding of premillennialism suggests, therefore, that the meaning of salvation and social reform for conservative evangelicals was not that dissimilar from the one held by radical reformers. While they differed on what came first, both saw the redemption of the individual and the community as intrinsically linked. Indeed, the question for conservative evangelicals was the same one facing radical reformers: not one of whether to save souls or the social order, but how to save both.

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<sup>152</sup> Wacker, “The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Age,” 282. One recent work on British evangelicals and economics has come to a similar conclusion. In his study, Boyd Hilton found that premillennialism often led to the same competitive policy conclusions as growth-oriented postmillennialism. Boyd Hilton, The Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1865 (Oxford :Clarendon Press, 1988), 213.

## CONCLUSION

While recent scholarship has contributed to a greater understanding of turn-of-the-century Canadian religion and social reform, its preoccupation with an emerging liberal expression has, in some ways, perpetuated a monolithic, homogenous view of historical development.<sup>1</sup> While this trend has resulted in the elucidation of fine subtleties in liberal evangelical responses to social and intellectual change, it has also produced a vacuum towards the other side of the ideological continuum. In part informed by American historiography, some Canadian historians have attempted to fill this void by paying closer attention to the nuances of conservative evangelical belief and practice. Reliance on American paradigms, however, has prevented this scholarship from appreciating the distinctiveness of Canadian religious and social development. While informed by this latter historiography, this thesis has attempted to recover one group of conservative evangelicals from the historiographical margins by viewing them within the context of the “mediating” evangelicalism peculiar to Canada.

Canadian conservative evangelicals were, as demonstrated, successful in shaping a belief system that selectively embraced ideas from the various intellectual currents they were immersed in. As demonstrated in the writings of the five Canadian contributors to The Fundamentals (a

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the important works in this area are Phyllis Airhart, Serving the Present Age; Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, A Full-Orbed Christianity; Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators; David Marshal, Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992); A.B. McKillop, A Disciplined Intelligence; Marguerite Van Die, An Evangelical Mind. Among the works on liberal evangelicalism, most look at the Methodist denomination.

publication with clear symbolic meanings for American fundamentalists), though resistant to new scientific and theological currents, this belief system was not fundamentalist. Though they too were writing within the Calvinist tradition, Canadian conservative evangelicals did not follow the same trajectory traveled by the Princeton theologians in the United States. While they ardently defended the divine authorship of scripture, for example, they were not willing to go as far as some theologians who, like Charles Hodge and Benjamin Warfield at Princeton, advanced a literal interpretation of the Bible. Moreover, conservative evangelicals displayed an openness to new theological ideas, provided these were tested by what they considered to be the eternal spiritual and moral truths already revealed in the scriptures. Finally, unlike fundamentalists in the 1920s, conservative evangelicals refused to adopt the extreme, literalist reading of biblical prophecy espoused by dispensational premillennialism. Although they viewed historical development in a general premillennialist framework with one eye on scripture and the other on the impending advent of Christ, they did not attempt to use prophecy as an interpreter of current events or as a justification for spiritual separation from modern culture.

The theology upheld by the conservative evangelical network was, above all else, practical and dynamic. As evinced in their written contributions to The Fundamentals, conservative evangelical clergymen were most concerned about delineating an understanding of the church, history, and the Bible that was nuanced, but accessible to the laity. It has been argued in this thesis that their appropriation of Keswick holiness and premillennialism, coupled with a distinct vision of a godly society, also ensured that their theology would be easily translated into service in the community. These attributes suggest that the most appropriate term to characterize conservative evangelical theology is mediating. This was certainly the way they saw themselves. Alexander Fraser sought to capture the essence of this belief system when he

described William Mortimer Clark: "His views on religious and theological questions, while inclining to the older school, are qualified by practical considerations and the light of well digested experience and are therefore generally moderate and reasonable though firmly entrenched concerning the great essentials."<sup>2</sup>

As an extension of their theology, the social activism of the conservative evangelicals was marked by a similar balance of tradition and innovation. On one hand, the devotion to a traditional revivalistic worldview fueled and defined their social reform efforts in such a way as to elevate the spiritual salvation of the individual over the regeneration of the community. On the other, these laymen were also informed by Keswick holiness which saw salvation in more holistic terms: salvation was the redemption of body, soul, and mind. This idea was translated by Howland and other conservative evangelicals into a commitment to the physical and environmental needs of the disenfranchised groups within the city. Corresponding with this belief was an inveterate sense that the spiritual redemption of the individual was closely tied to the redemption of the community: it was in a morally upright and nurturing environment, these men believed, where individuals would be most able to realize salvation, and in turn, live out the disciplined Christian life.

Though hearkening back to the approach which evangelicals had taken to social reform in an earlier and simpler period, the methods conservative evangelicals adopted to realize their ideal of a godly society were often quite innovative in character. Conservative evangelical laymen were especially animated in their frustration with religious institutions and their perceived lack of concern for the needs of the urban community: these men recognized that new times called for new measures. In the case of Howland, this frustration resulted in his own

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<sup>2</sup> Writings of Alexander Fraser, Box 23, Envelope 4, Alexander Papers, MU 1083-1086, Ontario Provincial Archives.



withdrawal from Grace Anglican Church and the establishment of the Toronto Mission Union; it also led him to help start what would eventually become another denomination, the Christian and Missionary Alliance. While deeply committed to the principles of voluntarism, which held that the most effective means of affecting social change was through the collective action of individuals, Howland and other conservative evangelicals also realized that the social problems of their day required at least some degree of increased government involvement in reform. So too, in their attitudes concerning the spiritual role of women, they represented a departure from the conventional standards of the established churches. Again, this was a mediating position. While Howland was willing to grant women greater freedom in their roles as evangelists, he also insisted that they continue to uphold the virtues of Protestant middle-class womanhood.

By conveying another view of turn-of-the-century Canadian evangelicalism, one which sought to maintain in tension the old with the new, a study of this network allows for a revisit of two larger historiographical issues: modernization and secularization. The thought and action of this group underscores the reality of modernization as a protean, complex process that initiated a variety of responses. It also suggests that measuring the response of evangelicals to this process in dichotomous terms (modernist - anti-modernist) terms is too simplistic. As recent works on fundamentalism have noted, to suggest that fundamentalists rejected modernity is to fail to appreciate the extent to which they appropriated, and even promoted, modern ideas and techniques.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, as American scholars have demonstrated, the liberal evangelical

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<sup>3</sup> Marsden defines the fundamentalist response to modernity as an ambiguous one: sometimes they identified themselves as part of the establishment while at other times they defined themselves in opposition to modern culture. Joel Carpenter adds that contrary to what they believed, fundamentalist were also advancing a new type of theology. See Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture*; Carpenter, "Contending for the Faith Once Delivered: Primitivist Impulses in American Fundamentalism." See also Jeffrey Hadden and Anson Shupe, eds., *Secularization and Fundamentalism Reconsidered: Religion and the Political Order Volume 3* (New York: Paragon House, 1989).

endorsement of modernity too was not necessarily unified or definitive.<sup>4</sup> Where liberals were receptive to modernity, and fundamentalists sought to curtail it, the conservative evangelicals who formed this network saw it as a force to be controlled. As businessmen and civic boosters,<sup>5</sup> conservative evangelical laymen welcomed innovations that increased efficiency in the workplace and in the public sector. While they strove to make their city a modern one, however, their “booster spirit” was held firmly in check by an unwillingness to compromise their traditional value system.<sup>6</sup>

Given their position of relative power and privilege, conservative evangelicals were also convinced that the response to social change could be selective. That they held such a view and sought with some success to implement it during these decades, also sheds light on the historiographical debate surrounding secularization. Several theories have surfaced in recent years offering contrasting interpretations of when and how secularization took place in Canada.<sup>7</sup> A few of these contend that this inexorable trend started in the late nineteenth century, and largely as a result of the supple willingness of the clergy to adopt modern social and intellectual paradigms.<sup>8</sup> The thought and action of the conservative evangelical network offers a more complex insight. Urbanization and modernization were certainly accompanied by trends that were a source of consternation for conservative evangelicals: one of the most frequently cited of these was the emergence of a leisure culture.<sup>9</sup> Yet, the way in which these evangelicals were

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<sup>4</sup> See Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse*.

<sup>5</sup> See Weaver, “Elitism and the Corporate Ideal.”

<sup>6</sup> Conservative evangelicals often used Chicago as a foil for Toronto. While they admired Chicago’s economic development they were also quick to point out the loss of moral fortitude that had accompanied unbridled growth. These Canadians sought to reach the heights of a modern Chicago with out suffering the moral consequences.

<sup>7</sup> For a general sense of this debate see: Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*; Allen, *The Social Passion*; Cook, *The Regenerators*; Marshall, *Secularizing the Clergy*; Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*.

<sup>8</sup> See Marshall, *Secularizing the Clergy*, and Cook, *The Regenerators*.

<sup>9</sup> Evident throughout the writings of men like Blake is a concern for the effect unchecked leisure was having on the moral and social fabric of the nation. For an account of leisure culture and its correlation with secularization see R.

able to articulate these concerns in public and, more importantly, galvanize the necessary support to combat them, demonstrates that theirs was a time when the larger evangelical world, of which they formed a part, still retained significant ascendancy. More striking is the fact that even while working from a traditional, theological framework, conservative evangelical clergymen were respected for their leadership in the church and the community. This suggests that the traditional evangelical views on individual change and moral reform were still welcomed and relevant in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada.

Finally, the beliefs and practices of this group of conservative evangelical laymen and clergy also point to necessary revisions in the historiography of fundamentalism. One of the dangers with looking too hard for the roots of fundamentalism in late nineteenth-century conservative evangelicalism is that the social and intellectual peculiarities of that period can be overlooked. In the case of Canadian evangelicalism, where a mediating form of evangelicalism prevailed, attaching a "proto-fundamentalist" label to conservative evangelicals seems particularly hazardous.<sup>10</sup> Now that historians have succeeded in recasting fundamentalism as a movement with legitimate ideological roots, it seems time to focus once again not only on ideology, but also on the social and economic factors that precipitated a militant approach by some conservative evangelicals. If, as Marsden effectively demonstrates, fundamentalists were ultimately defined by their behaviour rather than their ideology, it is important to ask what factors precipitated a militant response by some conservative evangelicals in the 1920s and not

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Laurence Moore, Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>10</sup> George Marsden's contention that fundamentalism was an indigenous to the United States seems accurate when considering the mediating theology of the conservative evangelical network and the tendency of Canadian evangelicals to work towards consensus. See Marsden, "Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon." This argument is also advanced by Joel Carpenter in his recent work, Revive Us Again.

by others? It would seem, in this respect, that more work on the transitional period between 1910 and 1920 would greatly enhance an understanding of fundamentalism.

Comprehending the beliefs and social reform of the conservative evangelical network examined in this study is of value to the historian of Canadian religion, not just for what it reveals about the nature of turn-of-the-century evangelicalism, but for the parameters it offers for future research. Speaking of the United States, Grant Wacker has suggested that in the years immediately preceding World War I, class differences were beginning to emerge between liberals and conservatives.<sup>11</sup> Because, as Marguerite Van Die has noted, "Scholarship correlating economic status with religious belief in nineteenth-century Ontario is still in a beginning stage,"<sup>12</sup> there is no way of knowing if similar economic discrepancies were forming in Canadian evangelicalism during this time.<sup>13</sup> Further work in this area could, therefore, prove illuminating, not only for deciphering economic differences between evangelicals, but more specifically, in showing how economic interests motivated conservative evangelical laymen to engage in public life.

Finally, moving from the public to the private, how their material circumstances motivated their particular mediating positions towards social and intellectual change may offer further valuable insight into the variety of responses with which evangelicals at the turn of the century were able to encounter modernity. When, in his 1885 campaign speech, Howland boldly

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<sup>11</sup> Wacker, "The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Age in American Protestantism," 273-274.

<sup>12</sup> Van Die, "Evangelical Piety in Victorian English Canada," 264.

<sup>13</sup> The only work that has tried to correlate economic standing with fundamentalism in Canada is Walter Ellis. Ellis suggests that the most likely individuals to become fundamentalists belonged to the lower-middle class. While narrow in focus (Baptist denomination only) Ellis' approach offers possible points of departure for future research. See Walter E. Ellis, "Gilboa to Ichabod, Social and Religious Factors in the Fundamentalist-Modernist Schisms Among Canadian Baptists, 1895-1934," *Papers of the Canadian Society of Church History*, 1975. For a similar study in the United States see Gregory H. Singleton, "Fundamentalism and Urbanization: A Quantitative Critique of Impressionistic Interpretations," in *The New Urban History: Quantitative Explorations by American Historians*, Leo F. Schnore, ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

proclaimed that he would rather see Toronto as an “honourable, and God-fearing city,” than “the richest city in the continent,”<sup>14</sup> he did not mean that he cared little as to whether Toronto achieved financial greatness. As part of the booster class,<sup>15</sup> Howland and conservative evangelical laymen undoubtedly recognized the economic benefits of cleaning up their city, but how this meshed with their concerns for the spiritual and physical well-being of the poor is an important question yet to be answered.

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<sup>14</sup> Globe, December 2, 1885.

<sup>15</sup> See Weaver, “Elitism and the Corporate Ideal.”

## APPENDIX

## Hospital Sunday Hymn

Father who Mak'st Thy suffering sons  
 Thy ministers to stronger ones,  
 To light love's holy flame within  
 Depositing self, abasing sin,  
 Oh, teach my soul, confiding still,  
 To suffer or to do Thy will.

If in this world of mystery,  
 Unequal favors fall on me,  
 While brothers, better for than I,  
 Are called to languish or to die,  
 Help me, in turn, their ills to share,  
 Their wounds to heal, their load to bear.

Blest is their task, 'mid human woe  
 Thy gifts on others who bestow;  
 For suffering lies at plenty's door,  
 And God appeals when cries the poor.  
 His law ordains, for all that live,  
 What sorrow lacks let money give.

The day shall come when veils remove,  
 And all shall see that God is love.  
 Then He Himself all tears shall dry,  
 And show of pain the reason why,  
 And then shall be the great reward.  
 Who in His pour beheld the Lord.

Rt. Rev. A. Cleveland Coxe

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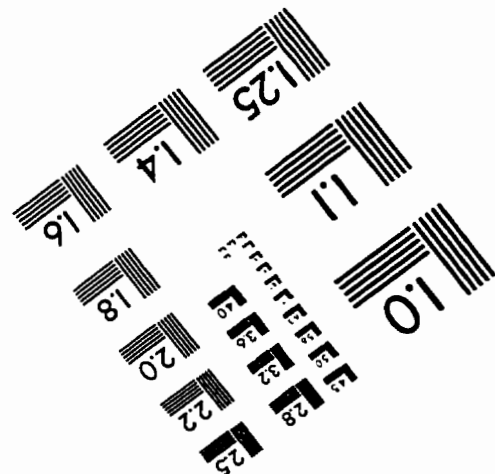
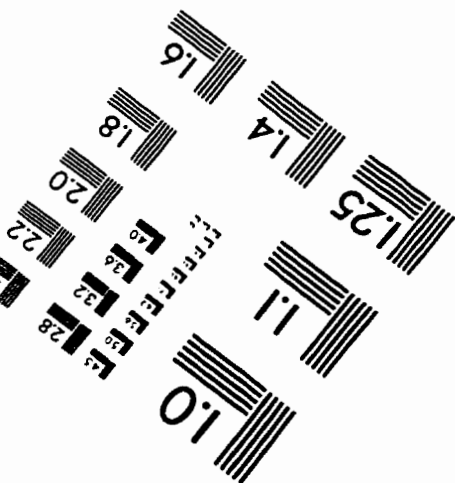
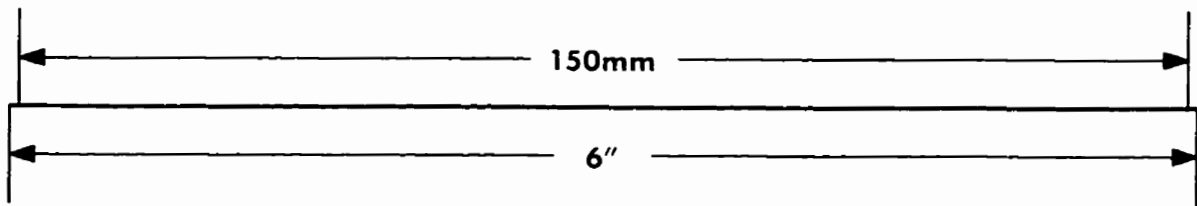
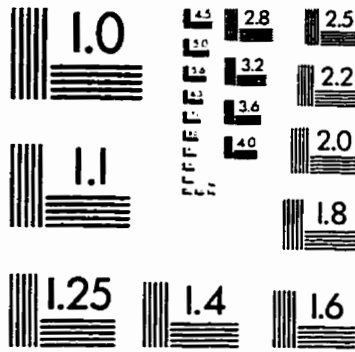
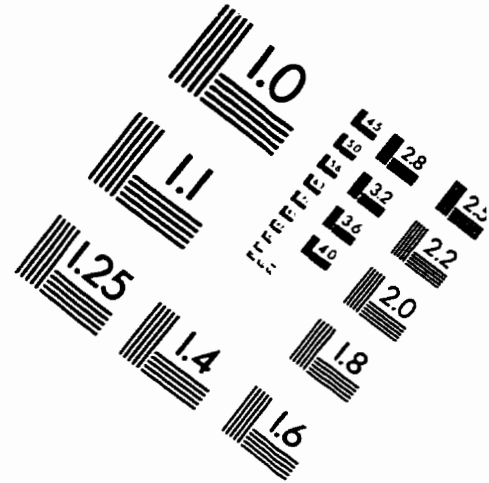
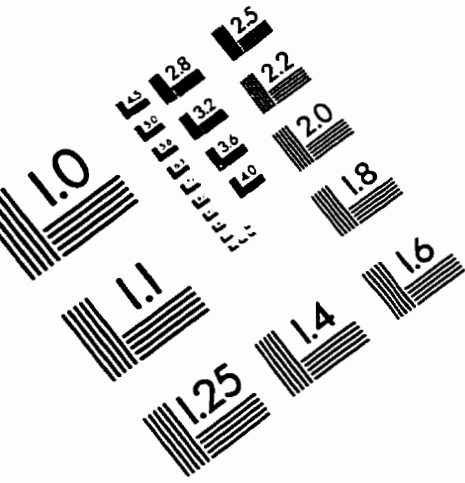
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