

LIBERALISM IN WINNIPEG, 1890s-1920s:

CHARLES W. GORDON, JOHN W. DAFOE

MINNIE J.B. CAMPBELL, AND

FRANCIS M. BEYNON

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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**Liberalism in Winnipeg, 1890s-1920s: Charles W. Gordon, John W. Dafoe,  
Minnie J.B. Campbell, and Francis M. Beynon**

by

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## Abstract

During the first quarter of the twentieth century Canadians lived through, were shaped by, and informed the nature of a range of social transformations. Social historians have provided a wealth of information about important aspects of those transformations, particularly those of “ordinary” people. The purpose of this thesis is to provide further insight into these transitions by examining the lives and thoughts of a selection of those who occupied a comparatively privileged position within Canadian society in the early twentieth century. More specifically, the approach will be to examine four Winnipeg citizens – namely, Presbyterian minister and author Charles W. Gordon, newspaper editor John W. Dafoe, member of the Imperial Order Daughters of Empire Minnie J.B. Campbell, and women’s page editor Francis M. Beynon.

In examining these men and women, what becomes evident about elites and the social and cultural history of early twentieth-century Canada is that, despite their privileged standing, they did not arrive at “reasonable” assessments of the state of affairs in which they existed. Also, despite the fact that they and their associates were largely Protestant, educated Anglo-Canadians from Ontario, it is apparent that the men and women at the centre of this study suggest that there existed no consensus among elites about the proper goals of social change. Nevertheless, although their divergent experiences of the social order translated into a variety of aims and perspectives, what bound these people together was an acceptance of central liberal ideals and assumptions.

That this broad concurrence existed, and that the men and women at the centre of this study were part of a community that could bring considerable politico-economic pressure to bear in seeking to realize their envisioned future, is significant. What is of particular importance is that, even though the social reality that came to exist was not exactly like that which any of these men and women envisioned, it was the broad commonalities running through their diverse imaginings that informed the overarching shape of social relationships in the post-World War I period in Canada.

## Acknowledgements

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

Historians have long recognized that the first twenty years or so of the twentieth century represented a critical period in Canadian history. They were years wherein Canada was “a nation transformed.”<sup>1</sup> The population of the country increased by more than three million people.<sup>2</sup> Industrial production, after slumping during the 1890s, not only attained but surpassed the impressive rates of growth of the period from the 1860s to the 1880s.<sup>3</sup> With the opening of the West, agricultural production also increased significantly. As foreign investment increased dramatically, enormous corporate conglomerates began to supplant individual and family-held firms as the ruling force in Canadian business.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, if the period was one of growth and change, one in

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1974).

<sup>2</sup>Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921*, 1; Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987), 248.

<sup>3</sup>There has been considerable debate about the nature and timing of industrialization in Canada. Though the aim here is to provide some indicators of change during this period, for an overview of this debate see Kenneth Norrie and Doug Owram, *A History of the Canadian Economy* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1991), 358-371.

<sup>4</sup>On agricultural production see Richard Pomfret, *The Economic Development of Canada* (Toronto: Methuen 1981), 147. Foreign investment increased considerably during these years. Canada had been and continued to exist as a capital-starved region. The central development during these years was not that foreign capital was important for economic growth, but, rather that the source and nature of investment changed considerably. Though Canadian dependency on US capital was not new in the two decades after 1920, American financiers and businessmen increasingly became the central source of funds. Their tendency to provide direct rather than portfolio investment meant that the era of monopoly capitalism in Canada was characterized by large, foreign-owned corporations. See Brown and Cook, *Canada, 1896-*

which, to invoke a popular contemporary phrase, the nation was “maturing,” it was also a period in which the characteristics that “coming of age” had inscribed on the visage of the nation – in particular disparity in wealth, social unrest, and a “Canadianization”-resistant population of immigrants – were often deeply unsettling.<sup>5</sup>

What is most important to keep in mind about these development is that they were expressions of more general social transformations taking place. Put more accurately, it was those who inhabited northern North America who lived through, were shaped by, and themselves informed the nature of a range of social transformations. The form of these transformations was underwritten by deeply-rooted historical processes and cultural inheritances that shaped the nature of the reality which men and women living in early twentieth-century Canada perceived, as well as the ways that they perceived it. It was, thus, men and women, living out their lives in the social reality that they inherited, who stood as the agents through which the historical processes that underwrote that reality were enacted, and it was through them that potentially transformative forces were made actual. As men and women strove to achieve the ends that, from diverse experiences of

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1921, 3. See also H.G.J. Aitken, *American Capital and Canadian Resources* (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1961), 31-57; William L. Marr and Donald G. Patterson, *Canada: An Economic History* (Toronto: MacMillan 1980), 290-300.

<sup>5</sup>On these facets of early twentieth-century Canada see, David Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1990 [1974]); A. Ross McCormack, *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement, 1899-1919* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1977); Donald Avery, *Dangerous Foreigners: European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1979); Craig Heron, ed., *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998).

the social order, they deemed efficacious for themselves and their counterparts, they, in whatever small way, determined the shape of their collective future, even if they did so in unintended ways.

To note as much is not to suggest that the end toward which the collective energies of the populace of Canada were directed was the sum total of the decisions of men and women who, from diverse experiences of the social order, came to different conclusions about the proper goals of social change. The general characteristics of the early twentieth-century social reality within which men and women were enmeshed, clearly indicate, in material terms, a vastly inequitable social order. Scholars ranging from Karl Marx to Antonio Gramsci and those following in those traditions have noted that in such orders a subject's positioning within material relations is not only significant for understanding their experiences of it, but also is important for determining their ability to make known and to bring pressure to bear in realizing an envisioned future.

A central aim of the current study is to provide insight into central facets of the social transformations taking place during the first decades of the twentieth century through examining the lives and thoughts of a selection of those who occupied comparatively privileged positions within Canadian society in that period. The way that these insights are developed is through examining four subjects in Winnipeg – namely, Presbyterian minister and author Charles W. Gordon, newspaper editor John W. Dafoe, prominent member of the Imperial Order Daughters of Empire Minnie J. B. Campbell, and women's page editor Francis Beynon. In considering the question of elite roles

within early twentieth-century social transformations, it becomes apparent that despite the differences of opinion that separated them, all of the men and women at the centre of this study made sense of themselves, the wider world, and the relationship between the former and the latter, as liberals. Despite their elite status, however, they often did not enjoy immediate or overwhelming success in convincing or coercing the majority of the men and women with whom they co-existed to think and act in ways that would bring their respective envisioned futures into reality. Even though the end toward which the collective energies of the populace were geared was not exactly as these men and women imagined, and even though the social reality that resulted was not as they hoped, it is apparent that in accepting central liberal assumptions and in confronting (either physically or in public debate) real and perceived threats to them, they all helped to transform and to sustain the Canadian liberal-capitalist social order.

The purpose of the current chapter is to explain key terms and to provide some insight into how and why this study is constructed as it is. The discussion proceeds in three central stages. First, owing to the fact that it is central to the following chapters, attention is directed to framing the study by explaining what is intended by “liberalism.” Secondly, the reasoning behind centring the study on four subjects, as well as the rationale behind selecting the particular subjects who are at the centre of this study are explored. The chapter concludes by foreshadowing the central themes running through the main chapters of the study.

To begin, then, it is important to emphasize that suggesting that liberalism is important for the current study is not to imply that this thesis has only or primarily to do with the realm of party politics. While some of the figures who are at the centre of this study – in particular J.W. Defoe – were connected with the Liberal party, and while the party system itself contained within it central liberal assumptions, what is at issue here is a more diffuse means of conceiving of human beings and human relatedness that linked the subjects of concern here. It is difficult to determine when particular means of conceptualization come into existence. Yet, it is evident that liberal or quasi-liberal means of understanding the ways that men and women might and ought to act and interact have existed as a “totalizing philosophy” from the liberal revolutions in the seventeenth-century in England and the eighteenth-century in the United States and France. Cogent early expressions of this perspective are found in such novels as Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and, as C.B. MacPherson has emphasized, in the philosophical works of Thomas Hobbes.<sup>6</sup>

The simultaneous rise of capitalism and of liberal conceptualizations of society as comprised of a collection of discrete “individuals” as opposed to orders or ranks, moreover, was not coincidental. Since the seventeenth century liberalism (and later

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<sup>6</sup>It is important to note that Hobbes developed an account of human societies (“contractarianism”) that would be echoed in the works of later liberal thinkers even though the conclusions that Hobbes himself arrived at were illiberal. For discussions of these early works see, C.B. MacPherson, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism, Hobbes to Locke* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1969 [1962]), 9-100. See also Arblaster, *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism* (New York: Basil Blackwell 1984), 95-141. For an insightful discussion of the novel as liberal-bourgeois art form, see Arblaster, *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism*, 21-23.

liberal democracy) has existed only in capitalist societies.<sup>7</sup> This is because liberalism as a diffuse means of understanding human beings and human relatedness has and continues to reflect and reinforce capitalist market societies. In this perspective men and, more recently, women exist as atomized “individuals” who create their own destiny through their own free choices as opposed to having a station in life thrust upon them. In theory, as MacPherson notes,

individuals were free to choose their religion, their pattern of life, their marriage partners, their occupations. They were free to make the best arrangements, the best bargain they could, in everything that affected their living. They offered their services, their products, their savings, or their labour, on the market and got the market price, which was itself determined by all their independent decisions. With the income they got they made more choices – how much to spend, how much to save, what to spend on, and what to invest in. They made these decisions in the light of the going prices, and their decisions in turn made the prices, and so determined what would be produced, that is, determined how the whole energies and capital would be allotted between different possible uses.<sup>8</sup>

It is this conceptualization of society as existing as a series of freely choosing, self-possessed “individuals” that has been the central, overarching ideological position to

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<sup>7</sup>MacPherson, *The Real World of Democracy* (Toronto: Hunter Rose 1965), 4; Arblaster, *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism*, 237-263.

<sup>8</sup>C.B. MacPherson, *The Real World of Democracy*, 6.

which many elites have subscribed in capitalist societies since the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.<sup>9</sup>

In considering transformations within the “liberal order” in Canada and elsewhere, it is important to note that the centrality of the “individual” to liberalism is vital to understanding this study. It is also critical to recognize that the term “individual” is not synonymous with “human subject in general” or something of the like. Rather, “individuals,” in both the diffuse perspective that is of primary interest in this study, as well as in more cogent, systematic theoretical expressions of liberal theory, are those considered full-fledged members of liberal society. What is important about noting as much is that the criteria for individuality, and, therefore, who was included and excluded by whatever definition the term took on, varied over time. Indeed, as intellectual historians and political theorists have noted from the eighteenth century up through much of the nineteenth century,<sup>10</sup> liberals envisioned as full-fledged members of society only

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<sup>9</sup>It is important to note that while liberalism has been the ideology of bourgeois society from the outset, and while it (in its various manifestations) has served consistently to reaffirm the predominance of the bourgeoisie in capitalist societies, other groups have often also, wittingly or not, adopted central premises of that perspective in ostensibly counter-hegemonic efforts. There is evidence to suggest, for example, that in early twentieth century Canada many worker-oriented efforts in the formal political realm embraced what was in some respects a fundamentally liberal approach. James Naylor has commented on this quality of some workers' efforts. As he notes in his study of early twentieth-century Ontario workers, “the democracy familiar to Ontario workers was liberal democracy, with its promise of universal suffrage and entrenched civil liberties.... And it was this democracy that the labour movement undertook to rescue from the ‘propertied interest’ while, at the same time, appealing to labour’s own notions of direct working-class representation. Liberal democracy, however, cannot be separated from the social order within which it emerged.” See, James Naylor, *The New Democracy: Challenging the Social Order in Industrial Ontario, 1914-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991), 7.

<sup>10</sup>While this social order was that which the subjects of this study inherited, it was not itself timeless. As Lykke De La Cour *et al.*, have noted, there seems to have been a more thoroughgoing exclusion of women during the early to mid-nineteenth century in what is today Canada. See, Lykke De La

men who held productive property in sufficient amounts to allow them to sustain themselves and, thus, to operate (at least in theory) free of the wills of others.<sup>11</sup> Perhaps not surprisingly, the Canadian politico-economic state of affairs extant in the setting from which these presumptions and beliefs emanated was one which served primarily to benefit wealthy, Anglo-Canadian men.<sup>12</sup>

The nature of nineteenth-century liberal society, taken in conjunction with the fact that the concept of the "individual" was both central to liberalism and contestable is

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Cour, Cecilia Morgan, and Marianna Valverde, "Gender Regulation and State Formation in Nineteenth-Century Canada," in Alan Greer and Ian Radforth, eds., *Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992), 163-191.

<sup>11</sup>C.B. MacPherson has been particularly attentive to this facet of eighteenth and nineteenth-century liberalism. See his, *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism, Hobbes to Locke*, especially 262-271. He also mentions these facets of liberalism in *The Real World of Democracy*, 1-11; and in his, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy* (Toronto: Oxford University Press), 9-12. See also McKay, "The Liberal Order Framework," 624.

<sup>12</sup>Arblaster mentions the general exclusion of women and propertyless men in his *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism*, see especially, 236-238, 264-283; Not surprisingly, those who were considered "individuals" was closely related to those who were considered "citizens." For general theoretical discussions of the relationship between citizenship and liberalism see, Mary Dietz, "Context is All: Feminism and Theories of Citizenship," in Chantal Mouffe, ed., *Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community* (London: Verso 1992), 63-88; and Martha Nussbaum, *The Feminist Critique of Liberalism* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press 1997). For examinations of Canada see, Veronica Strong-Boag, "Who Counts?: Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth-Century Struggles about Gender, Race, and Class in Canada," in Yvonne Hébert, ed., *Citizenship in Transformation in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2002), 35-56; and Strong-Boag, "'The Citizenship Debates': The 1885 Franchise Act," in Robert Adamoski, Dorothy E. Chunn, and Robert Menzies, eds., *Contesting Canadian Citizenship: Historical Readings* (Peterborough: Broadview Press 2002), 69-94. See also, Robert Craig Brown, "Full Partnership in the Fortunes and Future of the Nation," in Jean Laponce and William Safran, eds., *Ethnicity and Citizenship: The Canadian Case* (London: Frank Cass 1995), 9-25. It is interesting to note that Paul Martin Sr., architect of and driving force behind the Canadian Citizenship Act, later recalled that a central departure of the legislation he developed in 1947 was that it allowed married women to choose their own citizenship. Seemingly this attests to the degree to which the assumption that women were not persons was ingrained. See, Paul Martin, "Citizenship and the People's World," in William Kaplan, ed., *Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1993), 73.

significant. To understand the subjects on which most of the ensuing chapters are centred, it is important to understand that many of the presumptions of this “classical” liberal view and many facets of the society connected with it were still prevalent, even if they were increasingly untenable as a basis for understanding modern societies and as modes of governing social relationships -- particularly as the propertyless and some women expressed dissatisfaction with it.<sup>13</sup> It was, that is, in part this social reality that the subjects at the core of this study experienced and in response to which they developed and sought to foster their respective social visions. By remaining focussed on altering diffuse operative liberal presumptions entailed in definitions of the “individual” as a means of changing the functioning of the society of which they were a part, they could and did have divergences of opinion resultant of the particulars of their respective positions within the social order and, nevertheless, remained within the same conceptual universe.

While the differences and similarities of the perspectives of Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon are the subject of most of the rest of this study, in framing the ensuing chapters it is instructive to discuss briefly the biographically-centred approach

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<sup>13</sup>MacPherson and Arblaster both note the surprising rapidity with which democracy, in MacPherson’s words, “became a good thing” during the late nineteenth century. The advent of liberal democracy was seemingly connected with the rise of labour, socialist, and “first wave” feminist movements which demanded it. See, MacPherson, *The Real World of Democracy*, 1; Arblaster, *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism*, 264-282; Arblaster, *Democracy* (Philadelphia: Open University Press 2002 [1987]). In addition to Strong-Boag’s, “Who Counts?” and her “The Citizenship Debates,” evidence of women’s dissatisfaction with their second class standing is found in various of the essays in Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s* (Toronto: Canadian Women’s Educational Press 1979).

that underlies the chapters, as well as the choice of particular subjects. In a pragmatic sense, part of the rationale for considering two men and two women is that while historians of marginalised men and women often find themselves having to deal with a paucity of sources, owing to the biases that underlie the process through which repositories for materials that serve as the basis for historical studies are constructed, the volume of material created by or at the behest of elites is enormous. Using four subjects as an entry point into the world of the early twentieth-century Canadian elite is one means of delineating a manageable body of source materials.

It is evident, however, that while this approach serves the end of delineating a manageable body of source materials, it is only one among many possibilities. It is conceivable, for example, that an institution, event, or organization may have been the focus of and mode of selecting materials for analysis. The reason that this method rather than some other is adopted here has to do with the fact that a central part of the aim is to come to grips with the nature of and transformations within ideology. Examining a selection of subjects allows for a depth of understanding of the particulars of these subjects. That familiarity is significant in that it allows for a sensitivity to and an ability to recognize changes in the subjects' perspective – whether they developed slowly or abruptly. The ability to examine the social reality through its expression in a single consciousness, thus, helps to direct attention toward developments within the relationships through which the subject came to understand and to sustain him or herself.

In terms of the selection of men and women, two things are clear in considering those who are central here. First is an obvious effort to include both men and women. The reason for selecting two men and two women has to do with the fact that the liberal order was, as is implied in the foregoing description, a profoundly gendered order. Noting as much, and noting that the rationale for considering Campbell and Beynon has to do with the gendered nature of the liberal order is, of course, not to suggest that gender was particular to women. Indeed, the recent tendency to stress the relational nature of gender is taken to heart in the ensuing chapters.<sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, it is still important to include both female subjects and an emphasis on gender in a consideration of liberal society. While means of understanding the propensities and predispositions presumably particular to men and women respectively undoubtedly informed the ways that liberals defined the “individual,” it is apparent that part of the results of those beliefs about the presumed natures of men and women was the wholesale exclusion of the latter from the “public” world of “individual rights.”<sup>15</sup> However divided by race, ethnicity, class, and so

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<sup>14</sup>There have been a series of exchanges about the relative merits of gender and women’s history. For the flavour of these debates in Canada, see, for example, Franca Iacovetta and Mariana Valverde, eds., *Gender Conflicts: New Essays in Women’s History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992). See also the exchange which took place in *Left History* in the mid-1990s. In particular, see, Joan Sangster, “Beyond Dichotomies: Reassessing Gender History and Women’s History in Canada,” *Left History*, 3 (Spring/Summer 1995), 109-121; Karen Dubinsky and Lynne Marks, “Beyond Purity: A Response to Sangster,” *Left History*, 3,2 and 4,1 (Fall 1995/Spring 1996), 205-237. There are useful commentaries in Joy Parr’s “Gender History and Historical Practice,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 76 (September 1995), 354-376; and in Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan, and Nancy M. Forestall, “Introduction: Conceptualizing Canada’s Gendered Pasts,” in Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan, and Nancy M. Forestall, eds., *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1999), 1-11.

<sup>15</sup>Nussbaum is particularly attuned to this facet of liberalism. See, Nussbaum, *The Feminist Critique of Liberalism*.

forth, in classical liberal theory, as well as in Canadian liberal society of much of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, women were excluded as a result of the fact that they were women.<sup>16</sup> Thus, while it is important to explore the mode of conceptualizing what were central parts of a social reality wherein women held the status of second class human beings, it is also important to consider if and how women, marginalised as an entire group, dealt with, understood, acquiesced in, and challenged their existence as such.<sup>17</sup>

In addition to noting the importance of studying both men and women of Winnipeg's elite, the value of using that city as a case study is also worth noting explicitly. In part, in 1919 Winnipeg was the scene of a general strike. To understand something about elites and their ideology during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, it is important to recognize if and how the postwar labour revolt affected their thinking. The labour revolt was perhaps most clearly manifested in that city; therefore, Winnipeg makes a valuable example.

Apart from the labour revolt, Winnipeg was also a good choice for a case study because it exemplified well the central tensions within Canada at the turn of the century. In particular, as western Canada's most populous and most industrial city, it was the "gateway" to what many contemporaries believed was "new" and "vigorous" about the

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<sup>16</sup>De La Cour, Morgan, and Valverde, "Gender Regulation and State Formation in Nineteenth-Century Canada," 168-172.

<sup>17</sup>The term "second class human being" is used here because, as is noted above, women were not citizens.

country. Moreover, as an important industrial centre, which was increasingly divided along class lines, it also represented what many urban and rural citizens feared were aspects of the burgeoning monopoly capitalist order in Canada. The tensions especially between rural and urban communities were central to city and country relations: the question of how those strains figured into the perspectives of elites that also made Winnipeg most useful as a setting for this study.<sup>18</sup>

In addition, the emphasis here is also clearly not on those who owned businesses or who directly related with workers in such a manner as to ensure the continued or intensification of extraction of surplus, even though, as James Naylor has observed, much social power and “elite-making” qualities in capitalist societies are ultimately connected with that process.<sup>19</sup> Rather, the focus here is on “middle class cultural producers.”<sup>20</sup> The reasoning behind the decision to look at this type of men and women is complex. To demonstrate that the perspective and aims that these men and women adopted served to bolster the liberal-capitalist social order – even if in an altered form – is to provide some insight into the nature of the Canadian class structure. While middle class professionals are often viewed as moderating between the class which presumably are above and below

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<sup>18</sup>On industrial development in the city in the early years of the twentieth century see, Bellan, *Winnipeg First Century*, 59-82.

<sup>19</sup>Naylor makes this observation in his insightful study of early twentieth-century Ontario. See, *The New Democracy: Challenging the Social Order in Industrial Ontario, 1914-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991), 8. We shall return to consider this point more extensively in the next chapter.

<sup>20</sup>Ian McKay uses this term to describe similar men and women in his *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1994).

them, in examining the perspectives and social rootedness of those at the centre of this study, it is apparent that those among them who directed attention to class tensions and social inequity in early twentieth-century Canada did so in a manner that worked to explain away and to justify prevailing social relations of which they and their counterparts stood as beneficiaries.

Another central reason for focussing the study on these types of men and women has to do with the significance of linkages between power and culture. As particularly noted by those drawing on the insights of Antonio Gramsci, the maintenance of social stability is based on the capability of an elite to shape the collective imagination of a particular society.<sup>21</sup> In essence, as societies which involve the transfer of a portion of the productive powers of the majority of men and women to a small wealthy elite, the social relations that prevailed were such that most men and women stood to gain very little – that is to say, often a meagre subsistence or less – from them.<sup>22</sup> As such, it is evident that for social stability to prevail, there must be a measure of acceptance of the social order by men and women whose marginalised position ensured that they spent the most alert hours

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<sup>21</sup>These views inform Tom Mitchell's work on Winnipeg in the immediate post World War I years. See, for example, his "To Reach the Leadership of this Revolutionary Movement,': A.J. Andrews, the Canadian State, and the Suppression of the Winnipeg General Strike," *Prairie Forum*, 18 (September 1993), 239-255; and his "Repressive Measures': A.J. Andrews, the Committee of 1000 and the Campaign against Radicalism after the Winnipeg General Strike," *Left History*, 3-4(Fall 1995/Spring 1996), 133-167.

<sup>22</sup>As Bettina Bradbury has noted in her *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montréal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1993), often the "breadwinner" did not manage even to procure wages sufficient to provide for the subsistence of the family.

of the best years of their lives working toward an end that was neither one of their own choosing, nor one of which they were even necessarily aware.

As has been suggested in the opening lines of this chapter, the processes through which such a circumscribed reality came to exist is seemingly not entirely haphazard even if it is not the result of calculation. As will become apparent, the elites at the centre of this study were not malevolent plotters. Nevertheless, as a part of a privileged social class, they experienced the social order and accepted and developed ways of thinking and social visions which tended, even if those who conceived of them were not totally conscious of the fact, to affirm and sustain prevailing social relations. It is also seemingly the case that their standing within social relations served to amplify their efforts to inform the collective imagination in at least two ways. First, as is exemplified by Gordon, Dafoe, and Beynon, they could, as a result of their standing, inform the content of mass media channels, be they newspapers, public addresses, popular fiction, or others. Secondly, as is exemplified in the case of M.J.B. Campbell, they could select out and inform the definition of such conceptual rallying points as national or imperial symbols.<sup>23</sup> In exerting the force that their relation to wealthy and politically connected

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<sup>23</sup>While these matters are considered in more detail in the chapter centred on M.J.B. Campbell, it is worth noting that numerous scholars have, following the lead of E.J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, examined the processes underlying “invented traditions.” Early examples of this type of inquiry are found in E.J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1983) and in David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985). Recent works in Canada centred on this approach include, Norman Knowles, *Inventing Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997); Jonathan Vance, *Death So Noble: Memory, Meaning, and the First World War* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1997); H.V. Nelles, *The Art of Nation Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec’s Tercentenary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1999); Colin

men and women allowed them, they could confront other contenders in the struggle to define concepts like “Britishness” and to determine the assumptions and prescriptions entailed by the “common interest” that presumably joined Canadians or Britons in sentiment despite divergences in their existence in and experience of the social order.

Obviously elites’ ability to develop and to inform flows of information did not mean that a “top down” system of social control prevailed. As social historians examining a variety of temporal and spatial locations have found, working-class men and women developed different cultures and social visions and engaged in a general and at times acute process, however lopsided it may have been, of struggle and negotiation.<sup>24</sup> Thus, in recognizing – whether implicitly or explicitly – that capital is a social process, they have underscored that coming to grips with the history of capitalism involves both

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Coates and Cecilia Morgan, *Heroines and History: Representations of Madeleine de Verchereres and Laura Secord* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2001); Ian Radforth, “Performance, Politics, and Representation: Aboriginal People at the 1860 Royal Tour of Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 84(March 2003), 1-32.

<sup>24</sup>While there are a large number of works that might be cited in support of this claim, early examples include E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Penguin Books 1996 [1963]); E.J. Hobsbawm, *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson 1964); Herbert Gutman, *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History* (New York: Random House 1977 [1976]). While Canadian historians (nor, for that matter, the scholars listed above) have by no means concurred on which periods are most significant, examples of historical studies developed in light of this notion include Bryan Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1979); Gregory S. Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1980); Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labour in Ontario, 1880-1900* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1982); Craig Heron, *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1986).

understanding the “paths not taken” and determining why some ideals and views were “reasonable” or “relevant” and others were not.<sup>25</sup>

Indeed, as has been noted, one of the reasons that this study is centred on Winnipeg elites during the first quarter of the twentieth century is that it is a locale that provides an opportunity to examine an expression of a more and less effective rejection of the ideals and values that the men and women who are central here, as well as their counterparts elsewhere, held.<sup>26</sup> As such, it is an entry point into the world of the early twentieth-century elite which allows for an examination of those men and women as they lived through and responded to what were more generalized social cleavages and

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<sup>25</sup>The term “paths not taken” is particularly prominent in Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be*. Clearly “capital” here does not serve as a synonym for “big business” or “business owners.” Rather, in this usage, capital is, as Harry Braverman points out, “labour that has been performed in the past, the objectified product of preceding phases of the cycle of production which becomes capital not only through the appropriation by the capitalist of and its use in the accumulation of more capital.” Braverman, *Labour and Monopoly Capital*, 261.

<sup>26</sup>To note that workers challenged the assumptions and liberal social visions that the men and women at the core of this study held more and less thoroughly is not to accept the validity of the regional particularism underlying early accounts of the postwar labour revolt. Though, as James Naylor has astutely observed, some Canadian workers, particularly many of those in Ontario, adopted strategies to achieve significant social change which were more and less effective, seemingly their intentions were similar in nature as their counterparts in western Canada who such scholars as D.C. Masters, David Bercuson, and A. Ross McCormack have erroneously argued was a more “radical” western Canadian labour movement. See, D.C. Masters, *The Winnipeg General Strike* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1950); David Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1990 [1974]); A. Ross McCormack, *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement, 1899-1919* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1977). I have discussed this historiography in relation to a recent documentary on the Winnipeg general strike. See my, “Prairie Fire: The Winnipeg General Strike,” *Labour/Le Travail*, 45 (Spring 2000), 259-266.

connected ideological and social transformations of the period which cannot be understood without understanding something about working-class activities.<sup>27</sup>

It is, however, to suggest that it is necessary to avoid viewing the dynamics of central social processes which have informed Canada's past as consisting of a "top" or a "bottom." Rather, it is necessary to view the one as incomprehensible without reference to the other. This study, and its focus on the "cultural producers," is conceived as a way of understanding the social processes which are Canada's history with emphasis on what, since the decline of the "colony-to-nation" history in the 1960s and 1970s, has been a less popular subject of inquiry.<sup>28</sup> That is to say, the history of central ways in which the elite were participants in and were shaped and influenced by their relationship with their elite counterparts, and, importantly, where possible with members of the working class has been considered less often.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>For an overview of the period in international perspective, see, Leopold Haimson and Charles Tilly, *Strikes, Wars, and Revolutions in International Perspective Strike Waves in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1988). On Canada in this period see, David Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1974); Nolan Reilly, "The General Strike in Amherst, Nova Scotia, 1919," *Acadiensis*, 9 (1980), 56-77; Gregory S. Kealey, "1919: The Canadian Labour Revolt," *Labour/Le Travail*, 13 (Spring 1984), 11-44; James Naylor, *The New Democracy*; Craig Heron, ed., *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998).

<sup>28</sup>The means of describing this type of narrowly defined political history is borrowed from the title of A.R.M. Lower's *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada* (Toronto: Longmans 1953).

<sup>29</sup>It is worth noting here that no single, prolonged examination of secondary literature is included here in the introduction. Rather, relevant historiographical discussions occur within each chapter as they relate to the issues and questions raised by the writing surrounding each of the four subjects who are at the core of this thesis.

The subjects at the centre of most of the ensuing chapters developed social visions which, though linked, broadly speaking, by a common mode of conceptualization, reflected the particulars of their respective positions within the social order. The first biographically-oriented chapter is centred on Charles W. Gordon, a Presbyterian minister, novelist, and social gospeller. According to Gordon, human history unfolded according to a divine plan. The end toward which human societies properly tended, was what he termed the "Christian democracy." Perhaps not surprisingly in light of what has been said, this Christian democracy was a liberal-capitalist society, though it was one devoid of the "social evils" which had become manifested in other similar societies as a result of the wrongly directed individuals wills of the men and women who comprised them. To foster the Christian democracy required that individuals understand that their self-interest was to come to understand their individual relationships with God which, in turn, entailed that they come to demonstrate self-mastery and that they seek to foster conditions in which others were likely to do the same. Individuals, however, could contribute to this end to different degrees and in different ways depending on gender and race-ethnic standing. While he, thus, put forth a range of prescriptions for the modes of existence that men and women ought to adopt, and while he enjoyed little success in seeing those prescriptions become actualized, one of the areas in which he personally expended a good deal of energy in seeking to foster the Christian democracy was in the field of industrial relations. While he enjoyed little success in creating an atmosphere of tolerance, moderation, mutual respect, and brotherly love that he believed was central to

“Christianizing” industry in the first two decades of the twentieth century, the social upheaval of 1919 led his elite counterparts to search for means of addressing and undermining workers’ efforts. His ideals, expressed in the Joint Council of Industry, became relevant as part of the solution of the postwar “labour problem.”

The second biographically oriented chapter deals with longtime editor of the *Manitoba Free Press*, John W. Dafoe. What is revealed in considering Dafoe’s case is that, like Gordon, Dafoe conceived of liberal-capitalist society as etched into the forces that presumably governed the world itself. Dafoe, however, developed a secular, racially-oriented, nationalistic view. In his perspective, natural laws governed the operation of the human and non-human worlds and the most wealthy powerful societies were those which functioned according to those laws. While not fixed, particular “races” had been better than others at developing systems of governance that accorded with these laws, and, thus, though evolving toward the same end, some were further along that path than others. He perceived of Canada, and particularly western Canada, as a region that was the hope of the “progressive” and “civilized” world. On the Canadian prairies, he predicted in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there would come to exist a population whose members would find rewards of wealth and prestige in proportion to the effort that they expended. This utopia, however, like Gordon’s “Christian democracy,” remained a “path not taken” and, after the war and postwar social upheaval, the optimism that animated Dafoe’s musings early in the century waned. While he did not abandon his teleological view of the development of human societies, he took on a more defensive posture in his efforts to

defend the liberal-capitalist politico-economic order in the face of its critics. The shock of the crises of the war and postwar years, thus, gave rise to an altered perspective and a redirection of his efforts that would remain central for much of the rest of his life.

Both Gordon and Dafoe embraced a liberal ideology and supported the Liberal party. In contrast, it is evident that M.J.B. Campbell, the third subject to be considered, supported what are often considered “Conservative causes” like imperialism through the Imperial Order Daughters of Empire (IODE). She also had close connections with the Conservative party. Though the analysis of Campbell’s life and thought, centred as it is on organizational and associational work, is somewhat different from those of Gordon and Dafoe, it is evident that she was an expression of a more general ambiguity which defined the respective existence of herself and others who were subordinated members of a superordinate social class. In examining her case it becomes evident that despite her Conservative party ties, she embraced central precepts of a classical liberal view – in particular, her own relegation to the “private sphere.” That said, she also redefined the scope of what was encompassed by it as a means of justifying her own prominent social role. Her existence more generally speaking contained within it this duality which she expressed both in the way she presented herself and in the way that she characterized the efforts of her and her counterparts in the IODE. Even while she, even if unconsciously, challenged the liberal order, she also accepted that whatever form the social order took on, it ought to be liberal and capitalist and, thus, directed her energies toward preserving central facets of it against the increasingly overt challenges. That she embraced aspects

of the “totalizing philosophy” that was liberalism, and that she nevertheless had strong ties to the Conservative party and embraced what have often been deemed “conservative” causes, moreover, underscores the differentiations between *liberalism* and *Liberalism*.

Francis Marion Beynon, the final subject of interest, stood in contrast to Campbell. Unlike Campbell, she wrestled with and directly confronted her subordinate status. Early in her tenure as editor of the women’s page of the *Grain Growers’ Guide* she accepted and sought to develop a rationale for a more equitable status for women by referring to women’s supposedly innate maternal characteristics. Her experience with the concerns of and greater familiarity with the conditions under which many farm women lived and worked led her to an astute analysis of the interconnectedness of the work undertaken by men and women respectively. These experiences, combined with the assault on individual liberties during World War I led her to an ardently individualistic, populist view which challenged the chauvinism of many of her counterparts. Assaults on her friends and reprisals against her like-minded family members, as well as the discomfort of the editor of the *Guide*, G.F.G. Chipman, with her increasingly critical tone led her to leave Winnipeg and to relocate in New York City where she continued on promoting a liberal-individualistic social vision wherein “individuals” would be taken to mean “human beings.”

Before proceeding to consider these men and women and demonstrating what each reveals about early twentieth-century Canadian society, it is necessary to make a final point. While there have been indications of what it is that underlies the “elite-ness”

of elites in the foregoing pages, it is evident that such a status must be demonstrated and not simply asserted. As a result, before examining the articles, speeches, minutes, letters, and so forth from which evidence for the preceding claims is drawn, it is necessary to place them within the community and history of which they were parts. It is toward that task that attention now turns.

## Chapter 2: The Social Location of Four Winnipeg Elites

Before proceeding to consider the lives and thoughts of the men and women on whom this study is centred, it is instructive to place them within the early twentieth century social reality with which they were connected. The purpose in doing so is two fold. First, it is to demonstrate that broad commonalities prevailed amongst the community of which the subjects of this thesis were parts. Second it is to understand whether that community and the subjects of this study might be considered “elite,” the criteria for which should not be assumed and cannot be assumed to have prevailed in the subjects of this study. Determining the parallels between the subjects of the current study and those with whom they associated is largely descriptive and central aspects of the collective biography of the community of which the subjects of this study were parts are ascertained by drawing on secondary materials and on primary data. A discussion of the nature of and process through which the primary data was selected will ensue shortly. As to the other, related aim of determining what elites were and whether the men and women at the centre of this study merit being termed such, it is evident that other scholars have sought to determine the criteria for and nature of Canadian elites. In considering those efforts, it is apparent that those scholars who have directed attention toward understanding elites have rightfully linked “elite-ness” with wealth. In failing to acknowledge that the existence of wealth itself was resultant of and contingent upon a

particular kind of social process, however, they have also tended to provide static, rigid accounts of what was a fluid, dynamic lived social reality. To appreciate central facets of elite-ness, and to come to grips with the means by which to determine if and why the men and women who are at the core of the ensuing chapters were parts of the elite, it is necessary to understand that social standing is fundamentally linked with the process of wealth creation and accumulation in capitalist societies.

The discussion proceeds with a brief consideration of aspects of the early twentieth-century social, cultural, and economic setting in which the men and women at the core of this study operated. While considering central historical processes that underlay that reality is significant, it is also not an end in itself. Rather, the aim here is to consider what sorts of general states of existence the subjects of this study shared with those with whom they associated. Having considered central historical processes that underlay the social realities of which the men and women who are central here were parts, and having considered some common subjectivities amongst them and their associates, attention turns toward understanding the meaning of and central criteria for “elite-ness,” and to determining whether or not the men and women who are at the core of this thesis were of such a social standing.

To understand something of the nature of the social, economic, and cultural conditions in early twentieth-century western Canada, it is, perhaps not surprisingly, necessary to consider the decades that preceded it. In considering the decades prior to the turn of the century it is evident that in contrast to the post-1900 boom years, for much of

the last third of the nineteenth century contemporaries throughout the western world complained that they were in the throes of a “Great Depression.”<sup>1</sup> Such observations are obviously not in themselves novel in capitalist societies. What is striking, however, as E.J. Hobsbawm has pointed out, is that at the very time that men and women bemoaned the economic hard times in which they perceived themselves as living, economic expansion took place at unparalleled rates.<sup>2</sup> The apparent contradiction of having unrivalled economic expansion and, at the same time, a widely held belief that there existed a depression, is most readily explained by the fact that the economic expansion which took place was connected to both the increase in the number and extent of industrial centres and the growing up of and integration of agricultural hinterlands. While these two developments underlay a vast increase in the number of commodities produced, they also brought about a deflationary crisis – that is, a depression in profits.<sup>3</sup>

What is most important to understand about this state of affairs for the present discussion is that it gave rise to a range of strategies geared toward expanding profit margins – including the intensification of the external and internal expansion of markets, the consolidation and “rationalization” of business concerns, and protectionism.<sup>4</sup> Some of the specific ways that these processes informed the lives of the men and women at the

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<sup>1</sup>E.J. Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (New York: Vintage 1989 [1987]), 34-35.

<sup>2</sup>Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire*, 34-35.

<sup>3</sup>Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire*, 37-38.

<sup>4</sup>Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire* 44-67.

centre of the study are considered in the ensuing chapters. What is most significant for the subjects at hand in a broad sense was that efforts to secure territories that would serve as sources of raw materials and potential markets that would, at least theoretically, absorb commodities and thereby alleviate the “crisis in overproduction,” were a driving force behind the advent of the “new” imperialism.<sup>5</sup>

In the Canadian context the decision to expand and to monopolize vast expanses of territory had a dual significance. Not only did British and Canadian politicians and businessmen view what is now western Canada as a potential market, but they also viewed the staking of a claim to it as essential for the generation of the Canadian nation and the slowing of the growth of the United States which stood as one of Britain’s rising competitors.<sup>6</sup> The will to develop a Canadian nation which encompassed a vast territory, thus, made the expansionary visions of men like George Brown, Allan Macdonell, William Macdonell Dawson, William Kennedy, William McDougall, Phillip M.

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<sup>5</sup>Hobsbawm, *Age of Empire*, 67-68; P.J. Cain and A.G. Hopkins, *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (London: Longmans 2001), 151-158.

<sup>6</sup>On the US-British relationship, see, Cain and Hopkins, *British Imperialism*, 270-283. For insights into changing conceptions of the region, see, Owsram, *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Image of the West, 1856-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1980), 48. See also, B. Kaye and D.W. Moodie, “Geographical Perspectives on the Canadian Prairies,” in Richard Allen, ed., *A Region in the Mind: Interpreting the Western Canadian Plains* (Regina 1973), 17-46; and D.W. Moodie, “Early British Images of Ruperts Land,” in Richard Allen, ed., *Man and Nature on the Prairies* (Regina 1976), 1-20.

Vankoughnet, and Sir John A. Macdonald “realistic,” “reasonable,” “relevant,” and “important.”<sup>7</sup>

Beginning in the 1870s, Anglo-Canadian settlers – primarily from Ontario – began to enter the region in considerable numbers, and the region that is now western Canada, which had for most of post-contact history existed as a sparsely settled fur trade hinterland, was transformed with remarkable speed.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, between and 1870 and 1885 the region was, despite the protestations of long-established Métis and Aboriginal residents, surveyed and connected to the rest of the country and to the wider capitalist

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<sup>7</sup>Owram, *Promise of Eden*, 57. Owram notes that the expansionists initially viewed the expansion into the interior of northern North America as primarily a commercial endeavour. By 1847, however, the expansionists presented a more idealistic rationale claiming that “if Canada was allowed to expand into the North West, it would continue to mature as surely as the child becomes a man or the feeble sapling becomes the sturdy monarch of the forest.” the even posited that “with growth, its relationship to Britain would be transformed. Canada, not the United States, would ultimately inherit the British position of the centre of the English speaking world” (57). As will become clear in the ensuing chapters, Dafoe and Gordon adopted views that echoed these sentiments. Some of the men listed here – for example, John A. Macdonald – are well known. Others are not. All were early proponents of western expansion who used their positions within the government, as newspapermen, and as businessmen to draw attention to the issue. George Brown, for example, was the editor of the *Toronto Globe*. Allan Macdonell was an early expansionist who was instrumental in the development of the North-West Transportation, Navigation and Railway Company. William Macdonell Dawson was a onetime employee of the Crown Lands Department and was involved with Macdonell in the abovementioned company. Vankoughnet was the President of the Executive Commission and the Commissioner of Lands. Finally, William McDougall was originally the editor of the *North American*, but later merged with and worked as part of the staff of George Brown’s *Globe*. See, Owram, *Promise of Eden*, 38-41. A.A. den Otter has also provided insights into the lives and thoughts of these and other similar individuals. See his, *The Philosophy of Railways: The Transcontinental Railway Idea in British North America* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997).

<sup>8</sup>Useful general accounts of the fur trade era are found in Harold A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (Toronto 1962); and Graham Taylor and Peter A. Baskerville, *A Concise History of Business in Canada* (Toronto 1994), 87-166. The influx of settlers from Ontario was particularly large after 1880. It was for this reason that W.L. Morton described the period as having witnessed the “triumph of Ontario democracy.” See his, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1967 [1957]), 199-233.

world by rail.<sup>9</sup> If there was any question as to the type of society that the architects of the “National Policy” had in mind, it is evident that the fact that they carved the region into square-mile blocks intended for individual, Anglo-Canadian, male owners indicated they believed that “self-possessed individuals” in a classical liberal sense would theoretically be those who would populate the prairies and produce agricultural commodities to exchange for eastern Canadian industrial products and on world markets more generally.<sup>10</sup>

In the early 1880s in Winnipeg it appeared to some men and women that the settlement of the West would ensue rapidly, and that the region would soon become both

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<sup>9</sup>On railway expansion see, Robert England, *The Colonization of Western Canada* (London: P.S. King and Son 1936), 72-74; H.A. Innis, *Essays in Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1956), 225-232; Marr and Paterson, *Canada an Economic History*, 325-331; Norrie and Owsram, *A History of the Canadian Economy*, 307-315; Donald Kerr and Derych Holdsworth, eds., *Historical Atlas of Canada, Volume III, Addressing the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 1896-1961* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1990), Plate 5.

<sup>10</sup>Though there is no overview of women and property law in Canada, there are studies of some provinces. Issues relating to women and property law are found in R.E. Hawkins, “Lillian Beynon Thomas, Woman’s Suffrage and the Return of the Dower to Manitoba,” *Manitoba Law Review*, 21, 1 (2001), 45-113. Catherine Chambres, *Married Women’s Property Law*, 133-147. On Alberta see, Catherine Cavanaugh, “The Limitations of the Pioneering partnership: The Alberta Campaign for Homestead Dower, 1909-1945,” in Catherine Cavanaugh and Jeremy Mouat, eds., *Making Western Canada: Essays on European Colonization and Settlement* (Toronto: Garamond Press 1996), 180-214; Philip Girand and Rebecca Veinott have explored these issues in Nova Scotia in their “Married Women’s Property Law in Nova Scotia, 1850-1910,” in Janet Guilford and Suzanne Morton, eds., *Separate Spheres: Women’s Worlds in the 19th Century Maritimes* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press 1994), 67-91. Aboriginal people, who were relegated to reserves were also clearly not those that the architects of this policy had in mind as settlers. Similarly, despite the fact that, as Gerhard Ens has astutely observed, the Manitoba Metis were to some degree authors of their own destiny, they too were not the envisioned “self-possessed” individuals who it was hoped would populate the prairie West. On aboriginal peoples, see, James Miller, *Sky Scrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2000), 197-282. On the Metis see, Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987), 91-161. See also, Gerhard Ens, *Homeland to Hinterland: The Changing Worlds of the Red River Metis in the Nineteenth Century* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996).

prosperous and populous. The extension of the railway to the city in 1881 was particularly significant in giving rise to optimism and anticipation, not to mention a frenzy of real estate speculation which sent prices soaring.<sup>11</sup> As it turned out, this optimism was premature. The boom turned bust approximately sixteen months after it began, and for more than a decade following the arrival of the railway, Winnipeegers had to content themselves with a far slower level of economic and population growth than they envisaged and hoped for.<sup>12</sup>

Nevertheless, inhabitants of Winnipeg and the prairie West in the 1880s and 1890s did see some settlement and some expansion in farming and in some industries – particularly banking, real estate, and various extractive industries.<sup>13</sup> Though it remained small in comparison with some eastern cities, by 1883 Winnipeg was the service and commercial centre of the West with a population of approximately 14,000 people.<sup>14</sup> The slower rate of growth continued on until the late 1890s when an upturn in the world economy, the dislodging of men and women from central and eastern Europe, and the

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<sup>11</sup>Ruben Bellan, *Winnipeg First Century: An Economic History* (Winnipeg: Queenston House 1978), 25-38. For a contemporary account of the boom, see, George Ham, *Reminiscences of a Raconteur Between the '40s and the '20s* (Toronto: Musson 1921), 51-74.

<sup>12</sup>Bellan, *Winnipeg First Century*, 37.

<sup>13</sup>Bellan, *Winnipeg First Century*, 40-58.

<sup>14</sup>By way of comparison, at approximately the same time, Montréal had a population of approximately 160,000 and Toronto had a population of about 100,000. On the growth of Winnipeg, see, Alan Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1975), 130. For comparisons with other cities, including Toronto and Montréal, see page 132.

development of crops and farming techniques that would provide prospective farmers with a better chance of success in a relatively arid region with a short growing season combined to provide both a source of settlers and to make the region a viable one for relocation.<sup>15</sup>

Although clearly much more could be said about the particulars of the economic state of affairs which prevailed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, these general observations are sufficient for locating the subjects of this study within the social setting of which they were parts. Before proceeding to consider something of the particulars of their situation within and general experience of this order, it is important to indicate the means by which some of the broad qualities of the social matrix within which they were intertwined have been discerned. The approach here has been to trace out some of the web of social relationships within which each subject was enmeshed, and to determine some of the general characteristics of the groups of men and women with whom they associated. The means of selecting out those who would be examined varied

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<sup>15</sup>Bellan, *Winnipeg First Century*, 59-71; Daniel Hiebert, "Class, Ethnicity, and Residential Structure: The Social Geography of Winnipeg, 1901-1921," *Journal of Historical Geography*, 17(January 1991), 58-59; Kenneth H. Norrie, "The National Policy and the Rate of Prairie Settlement: A Review," in R. Douglas Francis and Howard Palmer, eds., *The Prairie West: Historical Readings* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press 1992), 243-263. On immigration see John Bodnar, *The Transplanted: A History of Immigrants in Urban America* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1985), 1-56. Though Bodnar's work is centred on American cities, the first chapter provides an overview of conditions in immigrants' countries of origin, most of which – for example, Ireland, Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Poland – were the same for both countries in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is worth noting here that central and eastern-European immigrants constituted parts of a larger stream of settlers which also included many men and women from the United States and the British Isles. Central and eastern Europeans became particularly significant around 1910. See, M.C. Urquhart and K.A.H. Buckley, eds., *Historical Statistics of Canada* (Toronto: Cambridge University Press 1965), 27-29. My thanks to Joe Cherwinski for bringing this information to my attention.

slightly owing to differences in the respective situations of and sources available for Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon. With Gordon, names of men and women to research were derived from lists of those with whom he served on church committees at St. Stephen's Church where he was the minister. With Dafoe, the list of names which served as a basis for determining which of his associates would be included came from his regular correspondents. Campbell's associates were identified by consulting society page reports about various gatherings that she attended, as well as through considering Imperial Order Daughters of Empire membership lists. Finally, for Beynon, membership lists for the Women's Press Club, an organization in which she held membership during her years in Winnipeg, were consulted.

Clearly this means of selecting out men and women to research and of providing information about the community of men and women with whom Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon associated does not, nor is it intended to, provide anything approaching a random or representative sample. Rather, the aim is, it is worth emphasizing, to discern information about the characteristics of the group of men and women with whom the subjects of the study associated. Thus, the sample is a convenient one of people for whom there was an association with the subjects of this study, and for whom there were records. On compiling the abovementioned, subject-oriented lists of associates, key biographical information about the men and women who appeared on them was collected using biographical dictionaries, biographical and historical files that are housed and maintained at the Legislative Library of Manitoba, and from biographical

files located in the Gerald Friesen papers at the University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections.<sup>16</sup> That information, in turn, was entered into a database and analysed. In total, information about 171 men and women was considered.

On considering this material in light of the previous account of the general contours of the history of Winnipeg and the West, it is evident that Campbell, Beynon, Dafoe, and Gordon, like those with whom they associated, were part of the earlier, 1870s-1890s wave of migration into the West. Indeed, though the time of arrival into the province for 23 of the 171 men and women considered here is not known, of those whose date of arrival is known, the majority (65 per cent) arrived between 1870 and 1895. Of those decades, the most extensive movement of these men and women into the region (35 per cent of the total) was in the ten years between 1880 and 1890. Approximately equal portions (15 per cent respectively) of the group travelled to Manitoba in each of the ten-year intervals from 1870-1880, 1890-1900, and 1900-1910. Virtually all of the men and women were Anglo-Canadians, and most (100 people or 58 per cent), came from Ontario. Of the remainder, 19 per cent came from the British Isles, 7 per cent from other Canadian provinces, and approximately 3 per cent were born in Manitoba.<sup>17</sup>

The fact that the subjects of this study and most of their associates were Anglo-Canadians who originated from Ontario and travelled to western Canada in the last third of the nineteenth century is significant in understanding their position within and

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<sup>16</sup>See, MSS 154, Gerald Friesen Papers, boxes 14-19, "Winnipeg Elites Study."

<sup>17</sup>In addition to these, one came from Germany and several from the United States.

experience of the social order because there tended to be links between ethnicity and time of arrival, and between class, ethnicity, and neighbourhood in Winnipeg.<sup>18</sup> More particularly, as other scholars have noted, those who occupied the upper rungs of the class ladder in Winnipeg and western Canada tended to be Anglo-Canadians who travelled to the West from Ontario in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. In contrast, eastern and southern Europeans constituted a larger portion of the later (i.e. late 1890s and early twentieth-century) surge of immigration into the region and also tended to work in low-paid, labour intensive jobs. Rich and poor, in turn, lived, to a considerable degree, as Daniel Hiebert has observed, in “two worlds” with Anglo-Canadian elites occupying the southern sections of the city and with southern and eastern European, working-class immigrants in the North end.<sup>19</sup>

Though it became more pronounced over the course of the first two decades of the twentieth century, even at around the turn of the century the emergence of these patterns is evident.<sup>20</sup> As Anglo-Canadians, Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, Beynon, and their associates did not stray from this more general trend. In determining their street

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<sup>18</sup>For a striking visual representation of this trend, see, Donald Kerr, *et al.* eds., *Historical Atlas of Canada*, Volume III, *Addressing the Twentieth Century, 1891-1961* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1990), Plate 31.

<sup>19</sup>Hiebert, “Class, Ethnicity, and Residential Structure,” 60-64. See also, T.W. Acheson, “Changing Social Origins of the Canadian Industrial Elite, 1880-1910,” in Glenn Porter and Robert D. Cuff, eds., *Enterprise and National Development: Essays in Canadian Business and Economic History* (Toronto: Hakkert 1973), 58-59; Artibise, *Winnipeg*, 158-173. Ed Rae, *Parties and Power: An Analysis of Winnipeg City Council, 1919-1975* (Winnipeg: Department of Urban Affairs 1976), 2.

<sup>20</sup>Hiebert notes as much. See, “Class, Ethnicity, and Residential Structure,” 61-67.

addresses and plotting on a map the residences of 144 of the 171 men and women examined, it is evident that all of those with whom Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon associated lived South of the CPR yards. While the fact that they were all outside of the immigrant and working-class North End may not be surprising, it is also clear that 82 per cent lived to the South of Portage Avenue. Moreover, fully 80 per cent lived in a section of the city bordered on the East by the Red River, on the West by Evanson Street, and to the South by Stradbrook Avenue.

Beyond their places of origin and their residential location in Winnipeg after resettlement, another commonality among the group considered, and among the subjects of the ensuing chapters, is that they were relatively well educated. As to the subjects of this thesis, all completed high school and only Dafoe did not undertake post-secondary schooling of some sort.<sup>21</sup> The broader group of men and women with whom the subjects of this study associated were similarly well educated. Seventy four per cent had at least a high school education, and approximately 57 per cent had post-secondary education of some sort – be it college, university, business college, or teacher's training.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Gordon attended the University of Toronto and Knox College, Toronto. On Gordon's education see, Brian J. Fraser, *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier Press 1988), 23-27. On Dafoe, see, Ramsay Cook, *The Politics of John w. Dafoe and the Free Press* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1963), 3-6; and Murray Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press* (Toronto: MacMillan 1968), 1-10. Campbell attended Wesleyan Female College in Hamilton, Ontario. On Campbell, see, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Minnie J.B. Campbell Papers, P 2497, folder 10, "Mrs. Colin H. Campbell Fifty Years in Winnipeg: Daughter of the Late Anson Buck and Former Resident of Palermo," [1934]. Beynon underwent teacher's training. See, Anne Hicks, "Francis Beynon and *The Guide*," in Mary Kinnear, ed., *First Days Fighting Days: Women in Manitoba History* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre 1987), 41-52.

<sup>22</sup>About 25 per cent of those for whom information was available did not complete high school.

Clearly, while educational levels do not, in themselves, indicate any particular tendency in perspective, they are indicative of a certain level of wealth. In many instances working-class families and farm families required the efforts of children to sustain the family unit.<sup>23</sup> The fact that they often had to devote much of their time to ensuring the survival of the family often precluded their attending school. Moreover, even if the contributions of children and young adults could have been spared, it is apparent that post-secondary and non-public institutions would have required a considerable outlay of money as well. While the comparatively high level of education which prevailed amongst those considered here, thus, is not indicative of elite-ness, it is suggestive of the fact that the families from which the subjects of this study and their associates came occupied a broadly similar (that is to say, relatively comfortable) position within the social order. More specifically, they enjoyed a comfortable enough existence that they could survive without the help of children who were at school. It is evident that a considerable number of the men and women considered here could also procure enough money to enable them to pursue education (including the money for fees that doing so entailed) after highschool.

In addition to occupying a comfortable enough position to enable them to attend school through to the completion of high school and often post-secondary education of

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<sup>23</sup>See, Mary Kinnear, "'Do you want your daughter to marry a farmer?': Women's Work on the Farm, 1922," in Donald H. Akenson, ed., *Canadian Papers in Rural History, Volume VI* (Gananogue: Langdale Press 1988), 137-153; and Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1993).

some variety, it is apparent that most of the men and women with whom Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon associated adopted similar political outlooks as well. Though women could not participate in the formal political realm for much of the period, those men who indicated a political affiliation were divided into even camps. Approximately 45 per cent of those for whom information was available indicated their political preference as Conservative, and approximately 45 per cent indicated that they supported the Liberals. The remaining 10 per cent – including such men as F.J. Dixon and G.F.G. Chipman who, like Beynon, had some connection with the growing populist movement of the prairie West – indicated that they were independents.<sup>24</sup>

To note these various qualities of the subjects of the current study, as well as those with whom they associated, is significant. Put more precisely, noting that the men and women who are at the centre of this study, like most of those with whom they associated, were Anglo-Canadians who hailed from Ontario in the last years of the nineteenth century, were well educated, lived in the southern parts of Winnipeg, supported one of the major national parties, is important. In particular, these factors are significant for two major reasons. First, they demonstrate that the men and women on whom this study is centred were parts of a more general group of men and women who held broadly similar positions within the social order. In a related vein, they are significant because the evidence of these broad parallels makes it reasonable to expect corresponding broad

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<sup>24</sup> Additionally, approximately one quarter of those who for whom information was available indicated that they served in a political office of some variety – be it federal, provincial, or in city politics.

commonalities in experiences of the social order. The broad commonalities in their positions within the social order which were conducive to broad commonalities in their experience are significant in combination because they suggest that Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon were not unusual. Though they have left a considerable body of material on which historical analyses can be centred, they were in a general sense not unusual or unique in most other ways when they are compared with members of the more general community of which they were parts.

To point out these similarities is, however, not to demonstrate that they were elites. Indeed, it is apparent, for example, that while the above discussion of trends and tendencies is apt, it is also not indicative of absolutes. The fact that elites were almost exclusively Anglo-Canadians does not mean, for example, that all Anglo-Canadians were elites. It is clear that in addition to elite Anglo-Canadians or those who through the "frontier of opportunity" would become elites, there were a considerable number of Anglo-Canadians who did not take on that social standing.<sup>25</sup> Indeed, despite the highly charged and ethnically chauvinistic language that suggested otherwise, as is evidenced by

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<sup>25</sup>See, for example, Allan Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1975), 22-42, 129-147. See, also, J.E. Rae, "The Politics of Class: Winnipeg City Council, 1919-1945," in Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook, eds., *The West and the Nation: Essays in Honour of W.L. Morton* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1976), 232-249; and Rea, "The Politics of Conscience: Winnipeg After the Strike," *Canadian Historical Association, Historical Papers* (1971), 276-288. David Burley, "The Social Organization of Self-Employment in Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1881-1901," *Social History/Histoire Sociale*, 31(Mai-May 1998), 35-69.

the make-up of the leadership of the Winnipeg general strike, some of the most vocal members of the working class were Anglo-Canadians.<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, such factors as residential segregation also stand as indicators rather than proof of "elite-ness." While residential segregation along lines of class and ethnicity was pronounced in the city, it is apparent, as Hiebert has noted, that there were pockets of wealthy, Anglo-Canadians in the North end, and there were poor, non-British and British immigrants in the southern sections of the city as well.<sup>27</sup> Thus, it is conceivable, if unlikely, that many of those with whom Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon associated were non-elite and, nevertheless, were Anglo-Canadians who lived in southern portions of Winnipeg.

To a considerable extent, these sorts of ambiguities arise as a result of a problem with approach rather than with the nature of the information itself. That is, while there are certain historically specific qualities that tend to prevail amongst members of a particular socio-economic status, it is also apparent that in recognizing these qualities we are not determining what constitutes "elite-ness" and, therefore, who was and was not elite. Whether focussed on Winnipeg and the West, or on Canada more generally speaking, scholars (sometimes non-historians), who have directed attention to understanding elites have generally provided accounts from what is best termed a social

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<sup>26</sup>See, David Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1990 [1974]).

<sup>27</sup>Hiebert, "Class, Ethnicity, and Residential Structure," 67-73. See also, Kerr *et al.*, *Historical Atlas of Canada*, Plate 5.

stratification perspective.<sup>28</sup> That is, their efforts have been directed toward examining the nature of a social structure at a particular time and place and to dividing the men and women therein according to income, occupation, source of income, home type, dwelling area, education level, and so forth. Scholars who take on this approach have assumed, reasonably enough, that wealth is an important elite-making quality and have thus sought to develop methods of determining levels of wealth amongst particular people and have drawn lines across the population such that, for example, those who make above or below certain levels of income or who exhibit qualities for which wealth is necessary are those who belong to one of two or, more often, three or more classes or groups.<sup>29</sup>

However useful such studies may be as sources of information about the particulars of a specific temporal and spatial location, it is apparent that they are also not without problem. The intent here is not to suggest that it is not reasonable to presume

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<sup>28</sup>There are elements of this view in John Porter's pioneering *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1965), especially 3-28. Other examples include, James Curtis and William G. Scott, eds., *Social Stratification: Canada* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall 1979); Dennis Forcece, *The Canadian Class Structure* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill 1997). Many of the above-cited works centred on Winnipeg fit this pattern as well. See, for example, Hiebert, "Class, Ethnicity, and Residential Structure"; Acheson, "Changing Social Origins of the Canadian Industrial Elite"; Ed Rae, *Parties and Power*.

<sup>29</sup>Often those approaching social analysis from a stratification perspective attempt to classify men and women at a particular temporal and spatial location through considering the particulars of their work. Michael Katz, for example, provides a study of the history of Hamilton from this perspective, see his *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth-Century City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1975). With Katz's work the population is broken into a variety of occupational groups – including, skilled, unskilled, and so forth. American historians have also found this approach appealing, see, for example, Stephen Thernstrom, *Poverty and Progress: Social Mobility in a Nineteenth Century City* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1964); and Thernstrom, *The Other Bostonians: Poverty and Progress in the American Metropolis, 1880-1970* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1973). Thernstrom used such categories as "high white collar," "low white collar," "skilled," "semi-skilled," and "unskilled."

that wealth is a significant elite-making quality. It is also not to suggest that it is not useful to examine the particulars of the existence of men and women at particular spatial and temporal locations. Indeed, in doing so, as has been suggested above, it is possible to infer that some commonalities in the experience of the social order amongst particular men and women existed, and much of the chapter thus far has been geared toward determining if and what sort of commonalities existed so as to be able to infer something about the broad positioning of the subjects of this study and their associates within, as well as their experience of, the social order.

What is significant is that understanding historically-specific indicators of wealth – for example, the specific characteristics of an occupation at a particular time and place – is not the same as demonstrating that a person or group were elites. One of the most problematic features of attempting to consider historically-specific indicators of affluence and “elite-ness” is that the particulars associated with and taken as evidence for “elite-ness” vary considerably over relatively short periods. Scholars often point to “white collar” positions, for example, as indicative of elite status in the early twentieth century. Yet, clearly it is the case that while elites may have rarely gotten their hands dirty, even by the early twentieth century the connection between white collars and elite social standing was weakened and rapidly weakening further.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Graham S. Lowe has explored transformations in some “white collar” jobs in Canada. See his, “Mechanization, Feminization, and Managerial Control in the Early Twentieth-Century Canadian Office,” in Craig Heron and Robert Storey, eds., *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1986), 177-209. Harry Braverman has also addressed these issues in his *Labour and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century*

To determine whether a person was elite seemingly requires attention not only to the minutia of the nature of particular occupations, or other constantly shifting specifics, but, rather, emphasis on where that subject sat within the more general web of social relations of production which underlie the wealth that other scholars have rightly deemed important to elite-ness. While elites stood in a particular relation to wealth, it is necessary to understand them and the social standing that they enjoyed as existing as part of a social process. Although it is evident, as James Naylor has recently reminded us, that over the *longue durée* there have been a variety of means by which wealth has been amassed, in capitalist societies it is the expropriation of surplus, which occurs during the production process and is “realized in the market” which underlays the production of the *capital* accumulated by capitalists.<sup>31</sup> It is this capital which is the wealth that stands, as those adopting the stratification perspective have observed, as a central characteristic of elite-ness more generally speaking.

While it may be readily apparent, it is worth emphasizing that understanding elites as participants in a process, even if indirectly, is to view them as inextricably connected with the working-class men and women in distinction to whom they were defined and on whom the existence and furtherance of their privileged standing as those who enjoyed wealth and social power depended. Indeed, the predication of elites on non-elites

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(New York: Monthly Review Press 1998 [1974]), 203-260.

<sup>31</sup>James Naylor, *The New Democracy: Challenging the Social Order in Industrial Ontario, 1914-25* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991), 8; Harry Braverman also provides a more detailed discussion of this process in his *Labour and Monopoly Capital*, 35-40, 175-177.

seemingly operated on several levels. On the level of self and group identification, it is the case that the operation of means of experiencing and understanding to which scholars influenced by the “linguistic turn” have been particularly attentive, are a part of elite-ness. Thus, the self and group identification, when and where such explicit identities are manifest, are predicated on the existence of “others” who are not elites.

However important this facet of experiencing and conceiving is, the interconnectedness of elite and non-elite that is implied in the above-mentioned process underlying the production and accumulation of wealth in capitalist society is not obviously limited to explicit means of identification. Indeed, the fact that workers create wealth and stand in relation to their non-elite counterparts so as to transfer part of the product of their labour to an owner of productive property means that elite existence is predicated on non-elite existence not only in the realm of experience, but also in a material sense as well. Seemingly, the reason that wealth is central to elite-ness is because it is from it that the social power which is necessary to the furtherance of the social relationships and processes that underlie sustenance and expansion of that wealth is derived. That is to say, if wealth is the result of the expropriation of surplus, for elites to exist as such they must not only stand in relation to working-class men and women, but they also must depend on the agency of those men and women for the carrying out of their aims. Part of those aims must be the sustenance of means of thinking and interacting with the human and non-human worlds that are conducive to the sustenance of

the production and appropriation of wealth that underlay elite existence in capitalist societies in the first place.

To note as much is not to suggest that the sustaining of these relationships is the only goal of elites. Indeed, as will become apparent in the ensuing chapters, there is a great deal more involved in the ideals tied up with, for example, nationalist and imperialist (and nationalist-imperialist) musings through which elites often expressed the assumptions and prescriptions that constituted the basis of their respective social visions. It is also evident that elites' attempts to make their envisioned futures actual could, as will be addressed more directly momentarily, have such momentous results as the transformation of vast swaths of the territories in which they lived and to which they laid claim. Rather, it is merely to note that these developments depended on elites' ability to realize their will through the agency of their working-class counterparts. The ability to do so, in turn, was tied up with the fact that they owned property or capital and that they furthered the configuration of social relationships conducive to the continuation of their status as such.<sup>32</sup>

It is also vital to understand that the assertion that elites were defined as such because they related to the creation and accumulation of wealth in a manner that afforded

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<sup>32</sup>It is worth noting here that capitalism and the existence of elites within capitalist societies is contingent on not only the existence of wealth, but on the social processes necessary for the expansion of capital. Since capitalism is realized only through the appropriation of the product of past cycles of production, for there to be capital (and, hence, capitalism and all of its component parts) there must also be the social processes through which surplus is extracted. See, Harry Braverman, *Labour and Monopoly Capitalism: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press 1974), 261.

them the power to exercise their will through the agency of working-class men and women is not to suggest that they enjoyed absolute power over their working-class counterparts. While the labour revolt of the immediate post-World War I years attests to the fact that working-class men and women were not automatons, it is important to note that even in less turbulent periods the fact that elites depended on workers for the realization of their envisioned futures entailed that elites would not obtain a future just as they imagined it.<sup>33</sup> The fact that, as we have seen, capital is a social process means that even in times of relative social peace relied on agents who were not necessarily amenable to carrying out aims that were not their own or of which they may have had no clear understanding. As social historians have long observed, this situation meant that the social realities that came to exist were not exactly as elites, however wealthy and powerful they may have been, had hoped.<sup>34</sup>

Obviously the above discussion is also not intended as a profoundly original assessment of capitalist social relations. Rather, it is to remind the reader of some central aspects of the functioning of capitalism long noted by social (particularly labour and working-class) historians and to understand some fundamental qualities of elite existence

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<sup>33</sup>Craig Heron has directed attention to the process of negotiation and daily struggle on the shop floor. See Craig Heron and Robert Storey, eds., *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1986); and Heron, *Working in Steel: The Early Years in Canada, 1883-1935* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1989).

<sup>34</sup>See particularly, E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Penguin 1996 [1963]). For similar reflections on the Canadian context see, Bryan Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict*; Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond*. See also Palmer's more recent, explicit account of this process in his *Working-Class Experience* 2nd edition.

within them. The point in doing so is to emphasize that owing to the fact that they are processes, social classes of whatever variety cannot, as those working from stratification perspectives would have it, be frozen or understood as isolated entities. Rather, determining whether men and women were elites requires at least two, related efforts, one centred on determining their relationship to wealth, and another geared toward ascertaining something of their possibility for over-arching modes of consciousness conducive to the reinforcing of these positions.

Discerning central aspects of the means by which the subjects of this study related to wealth is relatively straightforward. It is apparent, for instance, that 50 per cent of the men and women with whom Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon associated claimed as their central occupation the running of a business concern that they either owned or in which they were a central figure – for example, a president or vice-president of one or more of the corporate concerns that were coming to predominate as business consolidation intensified.<sup>35</sup> Yet, seemingly this figure does not capture all of those who were central as owners or controllers of wealth. Fully 15 per cent of the 171 people examined purported to be lawyers. While they were indeed lawyers, they also, like Campbell's husband, Colin H. Campbell, served as central political actors and sat on the boards of directors of a host of companies. Fifteen of twenty two of the men who claimed "lawyer" as their occupation were in a situation similar to that of Colin Campbell

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<sup>35</sup>For insight into the changing nature of business elites in this period see, T.W. Acheson, "Changing Origins of the Canadian Industrial Elite," 51-79.

and, thus, 66 per cent of the 171 subjects examined here can be shown to have been in a position to benefit from the expropriation of and to make decisions which arose from the creation and accumulation of wealth (See also Appendix A).<sup>36</sup>

Thus far the emphasis has been on demonstrating that broad commonalities in the respective positions that the subjects of this study and their counterparts held within the social order existed. It has also been on demonstrating that the men and women considered here existed in relation to wealth in a manner that accorded with central criteria for elite-ness in capitalist societies. Noting as much is important in that it is suggestive of the fact that Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon likely developed means of understanding and thinking about themselves and the wider world that were similar to those of their counterparts. Indeed, what is also indicative of this fact is that many of the men and women with whom Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon associated were connected to each other independently of their association with the subjects of this study.

In some sense close proximity of living quarters might have been conducive to such a state of affairs. In addition to general proximity of residences, however, connectedness between Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon and their associates is evident. With social clubs and fraternal organizations, for example, the men and women with whom the subjects of the ensuing chapters associated were most likely to attend the

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<sup>36</sup>Richard Willie has noted that lawyers could also be prominent businessmen. See his, "A Proper Ideal During Action': Fraternity, Leadership and Lifestyle in Winnipeg Lawyers' Professional Culture, 1878-1900," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 27(Spring 1992), 67. See also his, "These Legal Gentlemen": *Lawyers in Manitoba, 1839-1900* (Winnipeg: Legal Research Institute of the University of Manitoba), 240-280.

Manitoba Club, the St. Charles Country Club, the Odd Fellows, and the Masons. Three of these organizations -- the Manitoba Club, Odd Fellows, and the Masons -- did not permit female members. Of the 146 men who could belong to these clubs, there is evidence to suggest that 15 per cent belonged to the Odd Fellows and Masons respectively. By far the most popular organizations among those with whom Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon associated were the Manitoba Club and the St. Charles Country Club. Just over 40 per cent of the overall eligible group belonged to the Manitoba Club, while some 30 per cent of the group -- including two women -- belonged to the St. Charles Country Club.

The fact that in all of these clubs only two women held memberships and that three of the four most common clubs were exclusively male underscores the fact that the early 20<sup>th</sup> century social order was a profoundly patriarchal one. One might expect to find more female participation in church committees and church organizations.<sup>37</sup>

Unfortunately, though denominational affiliation is readily apparent (all but one of the 171 men and women belonged to a Protestant church of one kind or another), it is not, with the exception of Gordon and some of his associates, clear which church particular men and women attended.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Indeed, as Ruth Compton Brouwer has convincingly argued, church organizations were an outlet for women to act in the "public sphere." See her, *New Women For God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and India Missions, 1876-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1990).

<sup>38</sup>In light of the fact that Gordon's associates were chosen by examining those who sat on church committees, it is evident that in the overall group Presbyterians are over-represented. If we exclude Gordon's associates, however, it is apparent that the most prevalent denominations were Anglicans (38 per cent), Presbyterians (31 per cent), and Methodists (17 per cent).

In any event, of the organizations discussed above, it is evident that the social clubs are more certain to have been centres of elite activities. In the late 1970s and early 1980s labour historians noted that a considerable number of working-class men belonged to friendly societies. They argued that they likely served as a forum of socialization through which a working-class consciousness was formed.<sup>39</sup> David Bright, following David Bercuson, subsequently argued that both workers and elites often were members of these organizations. He has suggested that they served to mitigate against class consciousness.<sup>40</sup>

To make note of these historiographical debates centred on working-class men and women is not to suggest that these societies could not have served to provide a forum through which associates of Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon developed, broadly speaking, similar means of understanding and thinking about the world around themselves. What it is to suggest is that without some understanding of the actual conversations that took place in meeting halls, it is simply impossible to say whether they did.

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<sup>39</sup>See, for example, Bryan Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1979), 39-44; and Gregory S. Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1980), 41-42.

<sup>40</sup>See, David Bercuson, "Through the Looking Glass of Culture: An Essay on the New Labour History and Working-Class Culture in Recent Canadian Historical Writing," *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 7(Spring 1981), 99-101. See also, David Bright, *The Limits of Labour: Class Formation and the Labour Movement in Calgary, 1883-1929* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1998), 57-60.

In terms of elite social arenas, and the development of broadly similar views of the world, clubs like the Manitoba Club and the St. Charles country club are less ambiguous. Clubs such as these were generally limited to elites as a result of the fact that they charged membership fees and imposed strict guidelines for new membership. With the Manitoba Club, for example, for prospective members to become actual members, they had to have both a proposer and a seconder.<sup>41</sup> They also had to get the approval of the majority of pre-existing members. Once admitted, moreover, members had to pay an entrance fee of 75 dollars and an annual fee of 45 dollars.<sup>42</sup> It is difficult to make adjustments for inflation with certainty. The fact that at around the turn of the century, when the rule book from which this information comes was published, a general labourer could expect to make a dollar per day is suggestive of just how costly a proposition such Club memberships were. Thus, the fact that more than 40 per cent of the men and women with whom Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon associated belonged to these clubs indicates that they both had the disposable income to allow them to belong to the clubs, and that they were accepted by the more general community of those who were in a similar position.

Those clubs are also significant in that they not only provide a means of linking Winnipeg elites, but also are suggestive of the connections between prominent

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<sup>41</sup>Manitoba Club, *The Act of Incorporation, Constitution, Rules, and Regulations, and List of Members of the Manitoba Club, Established 1874* (Winnipeg: Stovel 1897), 8.

<sup>42</sup>Manitoba Club, *The Act of Incorporation*, 9.

Winnipeggers and much broader elite networks. T.W. Acheson has observed that the most wealthy elites among Canada's industrial elite generally belonged to clubs like the Manitoba Club in the locales in which they resided, and that they also belonged to similar clubs across the country, and, indeed, even in other countries.<sup>43</sup> The cases of some of the men with whom the subjects of this study associated indicate that this trend prevailed among elites other than those who were engaged in industry. M.J.B. Campbell's husband, Colin H. Campbell, for example, belong to not only the Manitoba Club and the St. Charles Country Club in Manitoba, but also to the Albany Club of Toronto and the Grosvenor Club of London, England. J.T. Gordon, part owner of what was by 1906 the largest cattle exporting agency in North America, belonged to both Winnipeg Clubs and to the Rideau Club of Ottawa.<sup>44</sup> Similarly, prominent Winnipeg businessman Augustus Nanton belonged to both the St. Charles Country and Manitoba clubs and to the Rideau Club of Ottawa and the Chinook Club of Lethbridge (See Appendix A).

Moreover, the practice of those from outside of the province holding memberships in the Manitoba Club seems to have been common enough and looked on favourably enough that the rules of the club itself were developed to accommodate this type of member. Indeed, the Manitoba Club created the designation "privileged member" for

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<sup>43</sup>Acheson, "Changing Social Origins of the Canadian Industrial Elite," 77.

<sup>44</sup>According to Ruben Bellan, the firm of Gordon, Ironsides and Fares "was the largest cattle-exporting company in the world in 1906, surpassing both Swift and Armor in the United States, and shipping some fifty thousand head annually from the Canadian West." See, Bellan, *Winnipeg First Century*, 61.

those who did not reside in the province, but who belonged to a similar club in another city.<sup>45</sup> Not only could they become members of the Manitoba Club if they were already “ordinary members” of those other clubs, but they also did not have to pay the 75 dollar entrance fee.<sup>46</sup>

To demonstrate that there were opportunities for the subjects of the following, biographically-oriented chapters and their associates to interact socially and to develop some broadly similar view from their broadly similar experiences of the social order (including their relation to wealth) is significant. Even while these social clubs stand as more solid examples of what were elite social forums, it is apparent that noting as such is only important if there was some significance to the interaction that occurred within these organizations.

In any event, the interconnections for which these organizational memberships seemingly provide evidence are important. More specifically, they suggest that there was not only a broadly similar positioning within the social order amongst the subjects of this study and those with whom they associated, but also an opportunity for socialization and the development of an overarching perspective. Having demonstrated that certain broad

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<sup>45</sup>It is apparent that the architects of this rule had particular “equivalent clubs” in mind when they did so. Thus, the club memberships that would entitle a particular person to “privileged member” status in the Manitoba Club were the St. James Club of Montreal, the Garrison Club of Quebec, the Hamilton Club of Hamilton, the London Club of London, Ontario, the Rideau Club of Ottawa, the Halifax Club of Halifax, the Union Club of Victoria, British Columbia, the Union Club of St. John, New Brunswick, and the Union Club of Quebec. See, Manitoba Club, *Act of Incorporation*, 14.

<sup>46</sup>Manitoba Club, *The Act of Incorporation*, 14.

similarities in social location existed, and having demonstrated that opportunities for the development of an overarching view existed, the question becomes that of determining its nature and its significance as expressed through the four subjects of the following, biographically-oriented chapters.

### Chapter 3: Charles W. Gordon and the "Christian Democracy"

In the first years of the twentieth century Charles William Gordon, was a Presbyterian minister, advocate of what has come to be termed the social gospel, and a best-selling novelist. Like a considerable number of his counterparts within his own and other churches, he sought to determine the results of the social transformations to which he bore witness and in which he participated. Gordon and other "social gospellers" more generally described the end toward which they aimed to move vaguely and variously as that of a "Christian civilization," a "Christian democracy," the "Kingdom of God on earth," or that of a "Christianized society." Clearly terms like "Christian society" or "Christian democracy" are not valuable because they convey precise or obvious meanings. In considering the state of affairs that Gordon sought to legitimate by reference to them, and in considering the phenomena in response to which he developed definitions of them, it is possible to gain insight into his view of and place within early twentieth-century social transformations. It is also possible to determine something of the dynamics which underlay those social transformations. What is evident about Gordon's social vision is that it was premised on the notion that the "liberal order" was part of a divine design that underlay human history. In essence, Gordon envisioned as ideal a liberal-capitalist society, albeit one wherein men and women would come to understand that their self-interest was to serve those with whom they shared membership in the

“Canadian community.” His overarching assumption that a liberal-capitalist society was “natural” to human beings knit together, however tentatively, a range of modes of conceiving of the propensities innate to “different types” of human beings. While the beliefs and connected prescriptions that he related through his modes of understanding such relational identities as gender and race-ethnicity are significant for understanding his perspective and the setting in which he operated, it is vital to understand that these imaginings did not go uncontested. Indeed, there was much about the modes of behavior implied by the assumptions and prescriptions that formed the basis of central identities like gender and race-ethnicity that remained in the realm of fiction and imagination. What is revealing about Gordon’s case in terms of the social realities that came to exist, thus, is that it was in the area of industrial relations, the area to which he devoted much effort to live out a life as a Christian man, that he enjoyed the most success in witnessing the rise of a social reality that approximated the social vision that he developed in the very last years of the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth centuries. Importantly, the relevance of his views and his efforts in this area was directly connected with the rise and defeat of working-class efforts to realize an alternate democratic vision.

Though few scholars have extensively examined Gordon’s thought in particular, they have directed attention to understanding the social gospel of which he was an advocate. Richard Allen provides the earliest large-scale study of the social gospel in Canada. He argues that it was “primarily a religious and intellectual movement” wherein an array of intellectual and religious impulses stemming from the late eighteenth through

to the mid-nineteenth century together predisposed clergymen to seek to ameliorate social ills that became rife as urban-industrial development intensified.<sup>1</sup> He contends that the movement began as a “broad ameliorative program of reform.”<sup>2</sup> By 1914, however, three emphases within the movement — conservative, progressive, and radical — “began to crystalize.” The crisis of World War I and the electoral victories of many reformers associated with the Progressive Party in the postwar period signaled both the “crest and crisis” of the movement. So long as the progressive social gospelers could maintain bonds between the left and the right flanks of the movement, it remained a potent social force. As the social gospelers found themselves faced with the “true test” of social gospel concepts — which was, according to Allen, an “encounter with social reality” in the parliamentary arena — internal divisions separating each of the wings of the movement from one another widened. The complexity of the social reality, he argues, “inevitably set one wing of the social gospel in conflict with another” and the movement collapsed in on itself.<sup>3</sup> The postwar period of decline, however, was not the end of the movement, for, according to Allen, the “epilogue of the social gospel was the prologue of the Radical Christianity of the years of the depression.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Richard Allen, “The Background of the Social Gospel in Canada,” in Richard Allen, ed., *The Social Gospel in Canada: Papers of the Interdisciplinary Conference on the Social Gospel in Canada, March 21-24, 1973, at the University of Regina* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada 1973), 11.

<sup>2</sup>Richard Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-28* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1973), 17.

<sup>3</sup>Allen, *The Social Passion*, 17.

<sup>4</sup>Allen, *The Social Passion*, 356.

In contrast, Ramsay Cook has argued that the social gospel had less to do with a compulsion to ameliorate social ills and more to do with the “crisis of faith” inspired by challenges to traditional theology that manifested themselves in the course of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century debates among clergymen, theorists, and philosophers. In particular, he views the higher criticism and Darwinism as the most serious challenges. The latter called into question humanity’s status as God’s special creation, and the former stood as an affront to interpretations of the scriptures as revealed truth. One of the central responses to the “crisis of faith” was for clergymen to attempt to reformulate Christianity to accommodate them. In Cook’s view, an important method of doing so was through skirting theological perplexities by developing what was essentially a “new religion.” In essence, though a host of views which differed in their particulars developed, the central characteristics of the “new religion” were the retention of the ethical thrust of Christianity and the backing away from “outdated dogma” which rested on biblical literalism and which stressed the individual’s relationship with God. Updating Christianity by making it more socially relevant, Cook argues, had unintended consequences. By failing “to understand the distinction between the sacred and the secular,” and by sheering Christian ethics from their theological moorings, “many prominent social gospel advocates were unwittingly allowing the church to lapse into

irrelevance.” Thus, in an ironic twist of fate, through their efforts to foster the Kingdom of God on Earth, social gospellers in fact helped to build the “secular city.”<sup>5</sup>

Michael Gauvreau and Nancy Christie have argued that Cook’s tightly circumscribed definition of religion as that centred on biblical literalism and the formal church leads him to faulty conclusions. Christie and Gauvreau view the social gospel as a movement among clergymen away from narrow, elitist Victorian theology and religious practice and toward a new revivalism and an emphasis on social action which were parts of an effort to make religion “accessible to ordinary men and women.”<sup>6</sup> This transformation, they argue, provided the impetus for the supplanting of laissez-faire liberalism with a more organicist view of society and an interventionist, welfare state.<sup>7</sup> The shift away from institutionally-focused Protestantism rooted in stridently individualistic, elitist creed, they suggest, did not signal a decline of the influence of Protestantism in Canadian society. Rather, it was, they argue, the means by which Protestants filled the vacuum left by the failure of urban progressivism led by labour and capital and dealt with growing class strife and social malaise in their midst. The

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<sup>5</sup>See, Ramsay Cook, *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1985), 229. He subsequently reiterated this view. See, for example, his “Ambiguous Heritage: Wesley College and the Social Gospel Reconsidered,” *Manitoba History*, 19 (Spring 1990), 2-11. David Marshall has made a similar argument in his *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992).

<sup>6</sup>Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900-1940* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1996), xii.

<sup>7</sup>Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*, xiv.

embracing of a social religion allowed clergymen to make themselves the central, driving force for social reform throughout at least the first four decades of the twentieth century.<sup>8</sup>

The emphasis of the current study is somewhat different. The concern here is with locating social gospelers in the North American and European social realities out of which the movement grew and with determining what Gordon reveals about its ideological function. The shift in focus is, nevertheless, rooted in the means by which the aforementioned scholars have inquired into the social gospel. What is particularly significant to understanding the divergence is recognizing that while all of the abovementioned scholars provide careful accounts of important facets of the social gospel, the framework through which they view the movement is itself seemingly problematic. Both Allen and Cook, for example, despite their differences of opinion, examine the social gospel in a similar fashion. In particular, they make passing references to the broader social setting in which the social gospel arose, but they view the movement as resultant of developments within the narrowly conceived community of intellectuals – for example, scientists, clergymen, theorists, and so forth. In this view, intellectuals exist in some sense apart from, though they interact with, a social backdrop. What is at the core of the following discussion is a rejection of this view. That is to say, it is held here that to understand the social gospelers it is necessary to view them as

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<sup>8</sup>Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*, 165, 245. Gauvreau puts forth a similar view in his earlier monograph entitled *The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada From the Great Revival to the Great Depression* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1991), see esp. 179-204.

fundamentally social beings who were inextricable parts of a more general social organization that determined to some degree the means by which they lived in and conceived of the world around themselves.<sup>9</sup> To understand the social gospel, hence, it is necessary to view it as fundamentally rooted in that social reality — that is, as developed within and in response to the social conditions in which its advocates existed and with which they struggled to come to grips.

Christie and Gauvreau seek to recognize the more general social setting of which the social gospelers were a part as being that in which there was a more general movement away from a laissez-faire and toward a socially oriented liberal view. In some sense this interpretation represents an efficacious shift away from the narrow focus that underlay Cook's and Allen's respective studies. Yet, at the same time, they seemingly under-appreciate the nature of the social dynamics that underlay the "failure of urban progressivism," and overstate the departure that the social gospelers and their more socially-oriented Christian views represented. While clearly the shift away from more stridently individualistic liberal views was significant, it is also important to understand that the "rethinking of liberalism" was geared toward ensuring the furtherance of and rationalizing the inequities of the liberal-capitalist politico-economic order.

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<sup>9</sup>Marianna Valverde has undertaken a similar effort with the social reform movement in Canada. See her, *The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1991). For her discussion of methodological questions, see, especially pages 9-33.

The discussion proceeds in four central stages. First, in light of the fact that much has been said of the necessity of rooting the social gospellers in a social reality, the first section of the chapter deals with outlining central social dynamics from which the social gospel grew. Next, attention shifts toward considering something of Gordon's relationship to those social dynamics and to the religio-philosophical currents connected with them. The third portion of the chapter deals with discerning the particulars and significance of the religio-philosophical position that Gordon developed by the first decade of the twentieth century. Finally, the discussion concludes with an analysis of Gordon's social vision as it related to the social realities that he faced and sought to shape.

In setting out to consider central processes which underlay the social realities that Gordon and his counterparts faced, it becomes evident that their scope was not, in a general sense, limited by national boundaries. As scholars from Richard Allen onward have noted, the tendency among protestant clergy to move away from narrowly drawn, individualistic creeds in the last years of the nineteenth and first years of the twentieth century took place throughout Canada, the United States, Britain, and elsewhere.<sup>10</sup> Not surprisingly considering the scope of the intellectual and cultural trends, the processes — what Cook and Allen refer to as “urban-industrial” development — with which they were connected were in a general sense also not constrained by national boundaries. Though

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<sup>10</sup> Allen, *The Social Passion*, 3-17; Cook, *The Regenerators*, 7-25; Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full Orbed Christianity*, xi-xiv.

obviously the complexities of the social realities in North Atlantic triangle nations cannot be considered here, it is necessary to highlight two processes that seem to have been central to the rise and form of the more general ideological reorientation of the last decades of the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth centuries. First is that, as one intellectual historian has noted, “the nineteenth century had witnessed an uneven, but steady and cumulatively vast expansion of the activities and responsibilities of both the state and local authorities. More and more aspects of economic and social life came under legal regulation and restriction.” The increasing regulation itself provided a reality that did not correspond to such central classical liberal beliefs as that of the necessity of a minimalist state, or the notion that freedom “consisted essentially in the absence of all but a minimum of law, regulation, and compulsion.”<sup>11</sup>

Yet, it is clear that the social gospellers and a host of other philosophers, government officials, economists, and so forth did not only concern themselves with vague problems of coming to grips with the significance of intervention. Rather, a central part of the concern among liberals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was also connected with the fact that throughout those years there was a tendency for members of the working class increasingly to come to a consciousness of themselves as such. That is to say, what is vaguely referred to in the aforementioned studies of the social gospel as the intensification of “urban-industrial development” involved, among

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<sup>11</sup>Anthony Arblaster, *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism*, 285.

other things, the increasing concentration of working-class men and women in urban centres. The intention here is to not suggest that these men and women represented an undifferentiated mass, nor is it to suggest that the organizations that they developed were unaffected by modes of understanding the “differences” that separated various segments of the working class from “others.” Rather, what it is to suggest is that workers were no doubt were divided along the lines of and shaped by modes of self-identification and conceptualization connected with, for example, ethnicity, gender, race, and so forth. Nevertheless, as is suggested by the increasing extent and number of labour and socialist organizations over the course of the last decades of the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century, workers increasingly came to view themselves as a distinct group with particular commonalities that distinguished them from other men and women with whom they co-existed.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>For a general account of the rise of labour and socialist organizations in Europe and North America see, E.J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875-1914* (New York: Vintage 1987), esp. 84-141. With regard to Canada in particular, A. Ross McCormack's *Reformers, Rebels and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement, 1899-1919* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1977) is predicated on the existence of a significant number of such groups. Bryan Palmer has provided insight into the earlier manifestations of labour and socialist movements in Hamilton in his *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1979), as has Gregory Kealey in his *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1980). See also Kealey and Palmer, *Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900* (Toronto: New Hogtown Press 1987 [1982]). To note that these organizations and the experiences and sentiments that underlay them became prominent after the 1860s is not to suggest that they remained static. Clearly organizational forms changed as did the realities that the men (and less often women) who comprised them changed. On later eras and organizations see, for example, Gregory Kealey, “1919: The Canadian Labour Revolt,” *Labour/ Le Travail*, 13(Spring 1984), 11-44; James Naylor, *The New Democracy: Challenging the Social Order in Industrial Ontario, 1914-25* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991); Craig Heron, *Working in Steel: The Early Years in Canada, 1883-1935* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988); Craig Heron, ed., *The Workers' Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998); Larry Peterson, “The One Big Union in International Perspective: Revolutionary Industrial Unionism,

Generally speaking these combined processes disconcerted a range of thinkers. Indeed, such prominent figures as T.H. Green, Arnold Toynbee, L.T. Hobshouse, J.M. Keynes, Richard Ely, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, and William James directed their energies toward providing a theoretical basis for, and to thinking through the implications of, a move away from conceiving of society as a collection of discrete individuals whose central concern was with the defense of the "freedom of the individual," and toward a more organic conception of human relatedness and a greater emphasis on the "condition of the people."<sup>13</sup> To some degree the social gospel is best understood as connected with this more general conceptual shift. Indeed, often prominent figures in the political and philosophical circles were precisely the same people who Protestant clergymen drew on in rethinking their own theological positions.

While social unrest was, as Barry Ferguson has pointed out, of central concern for many late nineteenth and early twentieth-century liberals in Canada and elsewhere, for clergymen the perceived need to reorient creed and practice was likely particularly

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1900-1925," *Labour/ Le Travailleur*, 7(Spring 1981), 41-66; and Peterson, "Revolutionary Socialism and Industrial Unrest in the Era of the Winnipeg General Strike: The Origins of Communist Labour unionism in Europe and North America," *Labour/ Le Travail*, 13 (Spring 1984), 115-132. .

<sup>13</sup>These quotations come from Arblaster, *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism*, 285. Ely's case is interesting in that while the influences that shaped the thinking of men like Gordon is often traced to Britain and, in Cook's case, to the narrowly circumscribed debates amongst clergymen and natural scientists. Ely's training under proponents of the German Historical School of economics is suggestive of the fact that the concerns that stood as the impetus for the more general ideological reformulation of the era were more generally felt. On Ely, see Dorothy Ross, *The Origins of American Social Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1991), 99-110.

pronounced.<sup>14</sup> That is to say, while a paucity of sources on working-class church attendance make commenting on trends therein necessarily somewhat speculative, the evidence that does exist suggests that alongside the growth in the number and extent of labour and socialist organizations, there was a decline in the size of church congregations.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, such tendencies among working-class men and women would not only do much to explain the frequently and urgently expressed fears of irrelevancy that Ramsay Cook has noted but left unexplored, but they also accord well with the findings of labour historians.<sup>16</sup> Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, for example, find that “a vital plank” in the appeal of one of the largest late nineteenth-century labour organizations, the Knights of Labor, was that, according to many of its proponents, it

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<sup>14</sup>Ferguson, *Remaking Liberalism: The Intellectual Legacy of Adam Shortt, O.D. Skelton, W.C. Clark, and W.A. MacKintosh, 1890-1925* (Montréal and Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press 1993), 97-117.

<sup>15</sup>For information on Church attendance see, Lynn Marks, *Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure and Identity in Late Nineteenth Century Small Town Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996). See also her, “No Double Standard?: Leisure, Sex, and Sin in Upper Canadian Church Discipline Records, 1800-1860,” in Katherine McPherson, et al., eds., *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1999), esp. 60-64. E.J. Hobsbawm also notes a drastic falling off of church attendance among working-class men and women in Europe, though he, like Marks, finds that men were more willing to leave the church than were women. See his *Age of Empire*, 264-266. Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau also note the perceived decline in church attendance in their “‘The World of the Common Man is Filled With Religious Fervour,’: The Labouring People of Winnipeg and the Persistence of Revivalism, 1914-1925,” in G.A. Rawlyk, ed., *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1997), 337-350.

<sup>16</sup>Cook notes that social gospellers “argued that if Protestant Christianity failed to find solutions to the plight many Canadians faced in the emerging capitalist order, then the Church would lose the working classes [i.e. the bulk of its membership] to some form of secular materialism that seemed so dominant.” He does not connect the popularity of “secular materialism” with increasing class consciousness among workers. This quotation comes from Cook's “Ambiguous Heritage: Wesley College and the Social Gospel Re-Considered,” 10.

provided a forum in which they could practice “true” Christianity as opposed to the “churchianity” of formal religion.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, other scholars have found that though ostensibly opposed to religion, part of the appeal of organizations like the Industrial Workers of the World lay in the fact that they filled a spiritual void.<sup>18</sup> Though no such investigation of the Canadian One Big Union exists, there is evidence to suggest that at least some members viewed the organization religiously. In fact, after the 1919 strike in Winnipeg a Thomas Pinnell equated the socialist revolution with the second coming of Christ and claimed that God had spoken to him and told him that the revolution and, hence, the “new world” would be born on 29 July 1920. So convinced was Pinnell that judgement day was upon him and his counterparts, and so certain was he that the One Big Union was the vehicle of salvation, that he wrote letters to prominent Winnipeg businessmen like R.A.C. Manning in which he described the nature of the new world order and pleaded with them to forsake their Earthly possessions and to join the union so that they too might be saved.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Bryan Palmer and Gregory Kealey, *Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900*, 144-145.

<sup>18</sup>Donald Winters, *The Soul of the Wobblies: The IWW, Religion, and American Culture in the Progressive Era, 1905-1917* (Westport: Greenwood Press 1985). Herbert Gutman also provided an important essay on the American Working Class and Protestantism. See his, “Protestantism and the American Labor Movement: The Christian Spirit in the Gilded Age,” in Herbert Gutman, ed., *Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf 1976), 79-117.

<sup>19</sup>For a copy of the letters that Pinnell wrote to R.A.C. Manning, see, PAM, Manning Papers, MG 14, box 36, folder 3A. R.A.C. Manning was the son of coal baron Robert Furby Manning. Born in Winnipeg in 1878, R.A.C. Manning went on to earn a law degree and to serve in the government of R.P. Roblin. He was a member of the Citizen’s Committee of 1000 during the General Strike and was a leading figure in the post-strike Citizen’s League. For information on Manning see, C.W. Parker, ed., *Who’s Who and Why: A Biographical Dictionary of Men and Women in Canada and Newfoundland* (Vancouver:

In any event, whether clergymen worked with the same or a greater level of concern than other elites or not, Gordon's explicit link with the more general reformulation likely was not forged until after he left his boyhood home in western Ontario. He was born in Indian Lands, Glengarry Country, Ontario in 1860 where his father, Daniel Gordon, served as a Presbyterian minister. In 1870 the family moved to Zorro in western Ontario (now Harrington) and it was there that Gordon completed his high school education with first class honours in Classics and English. On graduating he taught school for a year and a half, and then, like a host of aspiring "professional gentleman" before him, traveled to Toronto to attend university.<sup>20</sup> He completed a BA at the University of Toronto in 1883 and, after serving for a year as Classical Master at Chatham High School, enrolled in Knox College, Toronto to undergo theological training. It was at Knox College that he met and worked with then professor of metaphysics George Paxton Young and classicist Maurice Hutton, both of whom embraced British Idealism.<sup>21</sup> He later met a range of similarly oriented figures —

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International Press 1916), 936.

<sup>20</sup>Seemingly Gordon was among the Canada West/Ontario elites whom R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar have examined. According to Gidney and Millar, the acquisition of a liberal education was a mark of authority. It was a colonial reformulation of British views of gentility in a capital-starved colonial outpost. In this reformulation, the celebration of an education, particularly one involving the acquisition of dead languages, was viewed as a form of property in and of itself. Interestingly, though Gordon was the only member of his immediate family who followed in the footsteps of father, two of his brothers took up "gentleman professions" — namely medicine — while another was a civil engineer. For an insightful discussion of the meaning of 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ontario professions see R.D. Gidney and W.P.J. Millar, *Professional Gentlemen: The Professions in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1994). In regard to the abovementioned facets of these professions, see especially pages 3-25.

<sup>21</sup>Brian J. Fraser. *The Social Uplifters: Presbyterian Progressives and the Social Gospel in Canada, 1875-1915* (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press 1988). 24-25.

including Henry Drummond, George Adam Smith, A.B. Davidson, and Marcus Dods — during a year of study at New College, Edinburgh. Many of these men were either themselves involved with, or embraced the philosophy of leading figures engaged in, systematizing and thinking through justifications for and implications of a curtailed individualism.<sup>22</sup>

At least partly owing to his training, Gordon, like many of his counterparts elsewhere, came to accept a theological view that accorded with the sketches of the social gospel that the aforementioned scholars have provided.<sup>23</sup> That is, he, like a host of other social gospel ministers, rejected Christian doctrine which included an individualistic emphasis — he claimed that such views constituted “religious systems” based on “mystical belief” — that had preoccupied clergymen.<sup>24</sup> He, moreover, bristled at the notion that Christians ought to concern themselves primarily with formal institutions or with seeking to “discern, define or express the truth by [reference to] theological theory.” Indeed, he believed that these views and practices were “based largely on semi-heathen Jewish doctrines which [were] antagonistic to the character of [the] infinite love God

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<sup>22</sup>On this period of his life see *Postscript to Adventure: The Autobiography of Ralph Connor* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1975 [1938]), 3-90; Brian Fraser, *The Social Uplifters*, 23-27; University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections (hereafter UMASC), Gordon Papers, (hereafter GP), MSS 56, box 1, folder 1, “Chas. W. Gordon, D.D., L.L.D., F.R.S.C.,” undated.

<sup>23</sup>For these general outlines see, for example, Richard Allen, *The Social Passion*, 4-34; Cook, *The Regenerators*, 3-6; Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*, xi-xiv, 3-12.

<sup>24</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 30, folder 9, “Christianity,” 1911. This sermon is untitled. Because several of his sermons were untitled, however, I have labeled each by the first word of the first paragraph in each so as to distinguish between them.

sustains to Man.” “True” Christianity was that which centred on “the truth as revealed by Christ.” That truth, in turn, was that Christ himself was “a Revelation of God’s character ... the most advanced state in the evolution of man toward the highest development ... a human condition of life that may be common to all men.” In his view, then, Christ was the embodiment of that to which men and women ought to aspire to achieve salvation. Their specific duty was to live in a manner that would allow “Divine regenerating Power” to manifest itself “through human agency.” They must seek to create “the Kingdom of God and of His Christ.”<sup>25</sup>

He also came to embrace what were popular idealist theoretical precepts among his counterparts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. In their efforts to come to grips with the increasingly vociferous calls for change from below and the increasing bureaucratization of day-to-day life, a range of thinkers — including many of the men under whom Gordon studied — drew on the organicism of philosophers ranging from ancients like Plato and Aristotle to more recent figures such as G.F.G. Hegel.<sup>26</sup> The latter was seemingly particularly significant for Gordon, for just as Hegel had developed a philosophical system wherein history was a progressive expression of the “eternal idea” culminating in a social state in which the tensions between authority and liberty were

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<sup>25</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 30, folder 9, “Christianity, 1911.

<sup>26</sup>Gordon’s mentors at Knox College are a case in point. Maurice Hutton studied under Benjamin Jowett, whose social philosophy was a combination of Platonism and Christian ethics, while George Paxton Young embraced T.H. Green’s neo-Hegelianism. Brian Fraser provides information on these men’s respective backgrounds in his *The Social Uplifters*, 8-9.

resolved, Gordon argued that “there was an apparent design running through all of human history,” one that “was within the limit of ordinary minds to recognize.” More precisely, he explained, evidence for a design was revealed in the fact that there had been a series of epoch-defining civilizations — including those of Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Alexander’s Empire, Greece, and Rome — which shaped human history. The success of these civilizations, he related, stemmed from the committedness of their respective citizenries to a “worthy ideal.”<sup>27</sup> Ultimately, these peoples strayed from their “worthy ideal” and the result was that God “disintegrated” their civilizations “to lessen evil that would result from universal unity based on principles or beliefs other than actual truth relative to human life.”<sup>28</sup>

While this perspective may have applied to virtually any locale, it is also evident that Gordon’s view was shaped and made more complex by his efforts to come to grips with conditions in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada. He spent the year immediately following his return to Canada from Scotland at home in Ontario. With his mother’s death in 1890, however, he volunteered to serve as a missionary in the region around Banff, Alberta under Superintendent of Western Missions, James A. Robertson.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box. 28, folder 21, “How a Nation Wins Its Right To Live,” 21 March 1914.

<sup>28</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 28, folder 21, “How a Nation Wins Its Right To Live,” 21 March 1914.

<sup>29</sup>John P. Ferré, *A Social Gospel for Millions: The Religious Bestsellers of Charles Sheldon, Charles Gordon, Harold Bell Wright* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press 1988), 43-44.

The region around Banff no doubt seemed far removed from the congested, urban-industrial centres which had been sources of the social dynamics that served as a central impetus for the ideological reorientation with which Gordon was connected.

Nevertheless, it was in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains that he became acquainted with those who constituted a considerable portion of the western Canadian industrial proletariat during the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>30</sup> That is, it was in his travels in the West that he ministered to the inhabitants of and observed the conditions in lumbering, mining, and railway construction camps, some of which he later described as “suburbs of hell.”<sup>31</sup>

Gordon did not make his views about the particulars of the camps known until after he, at Robertson’s urging, took up a post at the West End Mission (later St. Stephen’s Church) in Winnipeg in 1894.<sup>32</sup> In addition to tending to an expanding urban-based congregation, he continued his involvement with the western missions in an administrative and advisory capacity.<sup>33</sup> In 1897, Gordon found himself appealing to the Home Mission Committee which had “cut ruthlessly the annual grants for ... Western

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<sup>30</sup>Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987), 274.

<sup>31</sup>Cited in Edward H. Wood, “Ralph Connor and the Canadian West,” MA Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1975.

<sup>32</sup>In 1893 Robertson asked that Gordon travel to Europe to raise funds for the western missions. On his return, and at Robertson’s request, he took charge of the West End Mission. See, John P. Ferré, *A Social Gospel for the Millions*, 43-44.

<sup>33</sup>Ferré, *A Social Gospel for the Millions*, 43-44.

Mission work.”<sup>34</sup> On providing a barrage of statistics engineered to demonstrate the urgent need of missionaries in the West, he found his audience unmoved. His lifelong friend and editor of *The Westminster*, James A. Macdonald, observed the address and suggested that Gordon might find more success in presenting his appeal by crafting a story based on his experiences as a missionary that would both entertain and make clear the need of missionary work in the West. He set about providing a series of articles for Macdonald’s weekly. These early serials found such a warm reception that Macdonald, after failing to find a publishing house that would print them as a book, decided to print them himself and *Black Rock: A Tale of the Selkirks* (1898) was the result.<sup>35</sup>

The story of *Black Rock* is set in a mining camp in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. What the broad contours of the story reveal is that Gordon viewed the “social evils” that were rife in the camps as resultant not of the social system itself.<sup>36</sup> A central

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<sup>34</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 30, folder 1, “The Writing of My First Book,” 1928.

<sup>35</sup>Gordon, “The Writing of My First Book.” See also, an article by Gordon’s grandson, also named Charles Gordon, entitled, “Ralph Connor and the New Generation,” *Mosaic* 3(Summer 1970), 11-18. It is not clear exactly how many copies of Gordon’s novels were sold. Gordon himself estimated that *Black Rock* alone sold over one million copies. Several subsequent novels — namely, *The Sky Pilot* (1899), *The Man From Glengarry* (1901), *Glengarry School Days* (1902), *The Prospector* (1904), *The Doctor* (1906), and *The Foreigner* (1909) — also sold millions of copies. David Staines estimates that three of Gordon’s novels (*Black Rock*, *The Sky Pilot*, and *The Man From Glengarry*) sold in excess of five million copies within a few years of publication. See, Gordon, “The Writing of My First Book”; Maura Taylor Pennington and Susan Bellay, “Biographical Sketch,” in Maura Taylor Pennington and Susan Bellay, compilers, *For God, King, Pen and Country: the Papers of Charles William Gordon* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press 1990), 2-7; David Staines, “Moving Away From Disbelief: The Rise of a Canadian Reading Public,” *American Review of Canadian Studies*, (Fall 1984), 351; Susan Wood, “God’s Doormats: Women in Canadian Prairie Fiction,” *Journal of Popular Culture*, 2(Fall 1980), 351.

<sup>36</sup>C.W. Gordon, *Black Rock : A Tale of the Selkirks* (New York: A.L. Burt 1905 [1898]). Though Gordon published his fiction under the pen name Ralph Connor, for the sake of clarity I have used only his actual name for the purposes of referencing his work.

part of the “lesson” that Gordon sought to relate was that the problem lay in the fact that the miners who inhabited the camps, though good hearted, were made “devils by [the] circumstances” of frontier life.<sup>37</sup> More specifically, they lived out a lonely existence on the frontier where they were far from the strictures of “civilized life,” which had the effect of weakening them in the face of temptation. It was the prevalence of sin aided and abetted by destabilizing frontier forces connected with the “savagery” of frontier life that was the cause of the mens’ suffering.<sup>38</sup>

Before proceeding to consider some of the specifics of *Black Rock* and other literary works, it is instructive to direct attention to some of the assumptions that underlay the general contours of this and many of Gordon’s other novels. What was a particularly prominent part of Gordon’s fiction was the conception of the interplay between “savage” and “civilized” regions and peoples as central, defining forces at work in the world. This perspective is itself significant for it was reflective of, predicated on, and reinforcing of a geopolitical reality wherein a handful of industrial nations dominated and carved up vast swaths of the non-industrial world. Thus, it is evident that Gordon’s modes of conceptualization not only resulted from and were premised on the class strife and

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<sup>37</sup> It is important to note that Gordon intended his novels — which he published under the pen name Ralph Connor — not merely as light reading, but from the outset used fiction as a means of “presenting a problem through characters.” His literary works were themselves a means of teaching a wider audience of “right conduct,” and the means by which to work to develop the “good society.” As such, his works are referred to in the foregoing discussion as a means of elucidating his view. UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 1, folder 12. “Presenting a Problem Through Characters,” 69-70, 1925.

<sup>38</sup>Gordon provides an account of this facet of frontier existence frequently. See for example, *Black Rock*, 31, 76.

bureaucratization of everyday life which transpired within industrial nations, but also were premised on the realities which resulted from the relationships between the industrial and non-industrial worlds.

To note that social dynamics within industrial nations and as between industrial nations and the non-industrial world were significant for Gordon's view is important. It is equally important, however, to understand that his training, the social ills manifested in urban-industrial settings, and the colonization of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century western Canada were inextricably intertwined. That is, Gordon's idealism became enmeshed with his imperialism and he came to the conclusion that the epoch-defining civilization of his own era was that connected with the British Empire.

According to Gordon, the "worthy ideal" which underlay and explained the success of the empire was that of establishing a world order based on "democracy in subjection to divinity."<sup>39</sup> The spread of "Britishness" was synonymous with the spread of a righteous society, for if God guided history and determined which civilizations should stand and which should be reduced to dust, that the empire was powerful and vast proved divine sanction.<sup>40</sup>

Though these broad facets of Gordon's view are significant, it is clear that in incorporating uncritically terms that Gordon himself used to describe his aims, the result is that no precise indication of what Gordon actually envisioned as the qualities of an

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<sup>39</sup>C.W. Gordon, "How a Nation Wins Its Right to Live."

<sup>40</sup>C.W. Gordon, "How a Nation Wins its Right to Live."

efficacious human society emerge. Put differently, terms like “Britishness” and “democracy in subjection to divinity” are no less contestable and in and of themselves no more revealing than are “Christian civilization” or the “Kingdom of God on Earth.” It is through seeking to discern the meanings of these terms that we come closer to understanding the nature and significance of his view.

What is evident, and what is important to emphasize is that the ideals that Gordon projected onto and sought to legitimate by reference to the fact of empire were not what he believed underlay the realities of life in Britain. Indeed, it is evident that he actually detested much of what he perceived to be the realities of life on the British Isles. Gordon believed that the rigid social hierarchies — holdovers from the aristocratic tradition — served to corrupt both elites and the dispossessed. With respect to the aristocracy, the problematic types of individuals were of two central varieties. First, were aristocrats whose attempts to transplant their own views that humanity was naturally divided between high and low-bred individuals stood as a potential barrier to the type of society that Gordon envisaged. The mine manager in *Black Rock*, for example, was such a transplanted upper-crust Briton. A central source of temptation for the miners in the novel was the booze that Mike Slavin, the Saloon keeper, served up. Part of the battle for men’s souls revolved around a temperance league, the effectiveness of which depended on the men’s willingness to abstain entirely from alcohol. The mine manager ridiculed “the idea of a total abstinence pledge as fanatical and indeed ‘absuad.’” Though he disliked Slavin’s saloon, he suggested that the problem with it was that it was a base

facility. What the miners needed, he told those assembled to organize a temperance league, was a club “dontcheknow to make the time pass pleasantly.” It was, however, he reiterated ““absuad to ask men to abstain” from “proper” use of “nourishing drinks” because “some men made beasts of themselves.”<sup>41</sup> In attempting to set up a club rather than encouraging abstinence, the manager, from Gordon’s perspective, sought nothing less than undermining the process whereby the workmen could attain salvation and a harmonious society.

In a slightly different vein, Gordon portrayed what he called “the adventure seeking class” of aristocrats who lived on a remittance as no less problematic.<sup>42</sup> In *The Prospector*, for example, Victor Stanton — “the Kid” — was, like many of Gordon’s characters, good at heart or “white” as he put it. His goodness was evidenced by his generous nature, kindness, spiritedness, physical prowess, and the fact that “when he smile[d] ... the sun beg[an] to shine.”<sup>43</sup> The central problem for Stanton was, as one cowboy explained to Shock MacGregor, a Presbyterian missionary and the main character of the novel, “Money! Some blamed uncle kept a-sendin him money.”<sup>44</sup> The result was that he did not have to work, and that he thus, did not enjoy the “purifying effects” of

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<sup>41</sup>Gordon, *Black Rock*, 95.

<sup>42</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 1 folder 15, “A Chat With ‘Ralph Connor.’ The Rev. C.W. Gordon, D.D., F.R.S.C., On Canada and its Future,” 40, [1910?].

<sup>43</sup>Gordon, *The Prospector: A Tale of Crow’s Nest Pass* (Toronto: Westminster 1904), 195.

<sup>44</sup>Gordon, *The Prospector*, 193.

doing so. Moreover, when he got his remittance, he “cut things loose” — meaning that he indulged in what Gordon frequently invoked as symbols of evil, gambling and drinking.<sup>45</sup> Stanton’s indulgence, however, not only harmed him personally, but also helped to sustain sources of vice which threatened to corrupt the community at large.

With regard to members of the subaltern classes, most of Gordon’s commentary is found in his addresses and articles. Generally he described these men and women as a mass of debased, suffering humanity primarily by way of reference to statistics regarding incidents of crime, prostitution, drunkenness, and the frequency with which infants died in urban squalor.<sup>46</sup> The intention of these musings was invariably to impress upon his audience the necessity of ensuring that Canada did not incorporate the hierarchy which led to the urban blight that was clearly expressed in Britain. In the few instances that he did create characters based on his views of the nature of the men and women from these areas, however, the images were not flattering. In *To Him That Hath*, a quasi-fictional account of the Winnipeg General Strike, for example, he portrayed the two Cockney characters — Sam Wigglesworth and a character known only as Brother Simmons — as loud, ill-mannered, intellectually stunted, and morally suspect. These two men and their

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<sup>45</sup>Gordon, *The Prospector*, 193.

<sup>46</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 1, folder 12 “The Conservation of Ancestors,” *Western Home Monthly*, (December 1910). 1: UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 29, folder 3, “The City of Winnipeg in the Lights of New York,” 10. December 1911. In “The City of Winnipeg in the Lights of New York” Gordon also provide a comparison, as the title of the sermon suggests, between Winnipeg and New York. Also included in this sermon are allusions to London. For similar musings see, UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 29, folder 11, “World Unrest — The Heritage of Evil Systems,” 21 December 1919.

like were “very vociferous and for the most part glib talkers, with passions that under the slightest pressure spurted foaming to the surface.” They also constituted the majority of the “guerilla bands ... of the new [labour] organizations emanating from the far West,” in particular “the One Big Union.”<sup>47</sup> Left to themselves they did not command respect from their fellow workers, lacked the “manliness” needed to face their employer, and, hence, were ultimately unsuccessful even as “trouble makers.”<sup>48</sup>

If his celebration of “Britishness” did not entail a love of what Gordon perceived as life on the British Isles, it is reasonable to question why it was that he was interested in embracing the connectedness between Canada and Britain. The answer to this query, perhaps not surprisingly, is found in his efforts to develop a means of understanding himself and those “like” him that was distinct from “others” who constituted the world’s rising imperialist power, the United States. Probably partly because of the fact that American lore of national origins was based on a revolutionary breaking away from Britain, and partly to the existence of a “wild west” and a host of bloody Indian wars, Gordon perceived American-ness as linked with rowdiness, lawlessness, and

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<sup>47</sup>Gordon, *To Him That Hath: A Novel of the West Today* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1921), 113.

<sup>48</sup>Gordon, *To Him That Hath*, 117-119.

rebelliousness – qualities that he hoped would not become characteristics of the Canadian community.<sup>49</sup>

Other scholars have been attuned to – indeed, have repeatedly stressed – the significance of Gordon’s view of Canadians as neither British, nor American.<sup>50</sup> It is clear in examining his writings that this emphasis is reflective in part of the fact that Gordon was indeed highly nationalistic, and in part it is a reflection of the nationalism of the scholars themselves. In emphasizing Gordon’s celebration of “the nation” as a shining, if somewhat wrong-headed, example of the basic sentiments that these scholars believe ought to have manifested themselves more generally amongst Canadians, they ignore what were central prescriptions implicit in Gordon’s view.<sup>51</sup> To come to terms with what he intended by “Britishness” and the “democracy in subjection to divinity” it is

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<sup>49</sup>His characterizations of Americans in the Canadian West have been thoroughly examined elsewhere. In essence, he provided little commentary that would add to other historians’ portrayal of him as viewing American society as briefly described above. That is, namely, that he characterized Americans as somewhat reckless, quick to grab for guns, and usually as using profanity extensively. See, for example, Staines, “Moving Away From Disbelief,” 351-352; J. Lee Thompson and John H. Thompson, “Ralph Connor and the Canadian Identity,” *Queen’s Quarterly*, 2(summer 1972), 163-165.

<sup>50</sup>See, Edward W. Wood, “Ralph Connor and the Canadian West,” 14-33; Thompson and Thompson, “Ralph Connor and the Canadian Identity,” 159-169; Staines, “Moving Away from Disbelief,” 351-362.

<sup>51</sup>J. Lee and John H. Thompson suggest that the central reason for Gordon’s decline in popularity was that his “Canadian identity [was] foredoomed” because it presupposed “one common Canadian type.” He, hence, failed to recognize the cultural diversity that had been a fact of the matter in Canada from its inception. However pleasing this interpretation may have been to 1970s nationalists inundated with the talk of multiculturalism, it is seemingly difficult to explain Gordon’s decline in popularity as a novelist in the United States and Britain (the other nations wherein his works found a warm reception) by reference to his wrong-headed Canadian nationalism. See, Thompson and Thompson, “Ralph Connor,” 167. Edward W. Wood makes a similar argument. See his, “Ralph Connor and the Canadian West,” MA Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1975.

instructive to consider briefly examples of the comparisons that he drew between the presumed rigidities of British society and Canada.

The hope that western Canada in particular provided, was to Gordon's mind to be found in the aforementioned, ill-defined forces of the frontier. Though this environment could, if totally unabated, be "the devil's campground" for pioneers from eastern Canada or Britain, if a representative of empire — a preacher, post master, or Mountie — stood as the link between that frontier and "all that was best" in "civilization," the outcome was more beneficial.<sup>52</sup> The frontier in his latter scenario stood as a leveling force which, as Gordon explained in *Black Rock*, took a collection of individuals "emanating from all classes and ranks originally" and subjected them to "real measurements" whereby they "ranked simply according to the man in them."<sup>53</sup> It was this setting that, as he related in the *The Sky Pilot*, the "Noble Seven," a group of "seven young fellows of the best blood in Britain ... banded together for the purposes of mutual improvement and social enjoyment ... had its character changed." Its members, "well born and delicately bred," once "freed from the restraints of custom and surrounding, soon shed all that was

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<sup>52</sup>The quotation about the linkages between "civilization" and the frontier comes from *The Prospector*, 121; The Mounties in *Corporal Cameron of the North-West Mounted Police* (Toronto: Westminster 1912) play a similar role as does Michael McGrath in *Michael McGrath, Postmaster* (Toronto: F.H. Revell 1900).

<sup>53</sup>Gordon, *Black Rock*, 90.

superficial in their make-ups and stood forth in the naked simplicity of their natural manhood. The West discovered and revealed the man in them.”<sup>54</sup>

The differences between the situation in Canada and what Gordon presumed was the situation in Britain demonstrate that while he was undoubtedly a nationalist, there was a great deal more than a vague celebration of the nation involved in this view. These musings indicate not only that he believed that Canadians were neither like Americans, nor like Britons, but also that he conceived of an ideal society that could develop in Canada — one that both Americans and Britons had failed to obtain. The central problem with British society was that, on the one hand, it involved “terrific barriers” for some individuals thus preventing them from realizing whatever potential they possessed.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, it propped up those whose character, actions, and so forth did not suit them for positions of leadership and allowed them to stand outside of the “natural” functioning of human society thus placing in positions of authority and sustaining individuals like Stanton and the mine manager. Possessing what was presumably an “artificial” station in life — that is to say, one that had not been earned through individual effort — and equipped with a skewed moral compass, these individuals behaved or supported social organizations that gave rise to and sustained evils and thus stood as barriers to the advent of a righteous society which functioned according to God’s design.

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<sup>54</sup>Gordon, *The Sky Pilot: A Tale of the Foothills* (Toronto: Revell 1899), 26-27.

<sup>55</sup>Gordon, UMACS. GP. MSS 56. box 28. folder 6. “The Parable of the Vineyard — The Teaching of the Parable of the Vineyard.” 23 October 1910.

If the social situation in Britain exemplified the enormous suffering which resulted from acting against natural law, what was more “real” or “natural” to human existence — as is evidenced in the desirability of ranking individuals according to the “man” in them — was that they found the rewards entailed by “success” according to their respective characters, abilities, and so forth. That is to say, at base what Gordon envisioned as the “good society” was an individualistic, meritocratic society. While noting as much is important, however, it is also too vague to capture the nature of his departure from a range of other liberal and proto-liberal views. To understand the departures that Gordon made in light of the social realities that he faced, it is useful to consider the structure and functioning of the type of view to which he subscribed more closely.

On reflecting on Gordon’s basic perspective, it becomes clear that there are three interrelated elements in meritocratic, individualistic models of the functioning of society — namely, a notion of success, a criteria, and a governing force or principle. In “success” we find an outward expression or signifier of a more general state of existence wherein a particular person possessed efficacious traits, characteristics, and propensities. If it was only individuals who possessed particular efficacious qualities that found the reward of success, then it was necessarily the case that there existed some criteria against which the character traits, propensities, and predispositions that a particular individual held could be measured and deemed worthy or unworthy of reward. Finally, this entire mode of conceptualization hinged on the view that only those who deserved reward in fact

received it. If it were the case that “success” was meted out in proportion to the degree that an individual met the aforementioned criteria, the implication is that there was some governing force or principle ensuring the just distribution of those rewards.

To understand Gordon’s argument about the nature of the criteria and governing force over right conduct and the rewards that resulted from it, it is necessary to turn again to his view of the generalities of the human condition. He believed that human beings “owed their life to God.” That is, they owed not only their beating hearts and their capacity to breathe, but they owed “the whole system of things in which they lived” to God.<sup>56</sup> That such was the case meant that, in return for the opportunities that God had provided, it was necessary for individuals to “take the whole of [their] lives and present it to Jesus Christ.”<sup>57</sup> Right character, conduct, and so forth, hence were judged according to the degree to which the individual existed in a manner that accorded with the behaviour demanded by God.

To understand the nature of that behaviour, it is instructive to turn again to the “lessons” that he related through the characters in *Black Rock*. As has been noted, a central part of the story played out around a struggle between a group of miners and that “slick son of the devil,” Mike Slavin, who, it is worth reminding, as the saloon operator, was the source of the booze that stood as the temptation to which the miners, weakened

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<sup>56</sup>Gordon, “The Parable of the Vineyard.”

<sup>57</sup>Gordon, “The Parable of the Vineyard.”

by their lonely existence and the frontier forces, tended to succumb.<sup>58</sup> Fortunately for the miners, a Presbyterian minister, Mr. Craig, and a saintly woman, Mrs. Mavor, are on hand to help them to conquer evil. Craig, Mavor, and their initially small, but throughout the novel steadily growing army of reformed miners, launch their battle against evil not from the pulpit, but, rather, through community organizations. The most important such organization is a temperance league.<sup>59</sup> The premises on which this vehicle for salvation is founded are that men in the camp must first understand their individual relationship with God. The evidence for their having done so, and a necessary part of this first step toward salvation, is that they exercise a measure of self-mastery. In the case of *Black Rock*, this step is embodied in the miners' committing "to drink none themselves." They must also, however, swear "in every honorable way to stop others from drinking" as well.<sup>60</sup> This second step is vital, for if a particular miner is to obtain and maintain self-mastery, he must have a community of individuals committed to keeping him from "slipping," just as the other individuals in the league depend on that miner to some degree for their own deliverance.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Gordon, *Black Rock*, 31.

<sup>59</sup>There is an entire chapter devoted to discussing the creation of the temperance league. See, Gordon, *Black Rock*, "The Making of the League," 87-103. In this chapter several miners, the mine manager, and Mr. Craig argue about what the nature of the league ought to be. Eventually they decide that only a total abstinence pledge and a commitment to help each other will suffice in ridding the camp of evil.

<sup>60</sup>Gordon, *Black Rock*, 100.

<sup>61</sup>Ferré, *A Social Gospel for Millions*, 53.

Thus, the degree to which individuals achieved “success” — meaning material rewards and social prestige — hinged on the degree to which they fostered a rightly-directed will both with respect to their personal condition and the condition of others. That “success in life depend[ed] on the cooperation of God with you and your cooperation with him,” moreover, suggests that Gordon believed that the force or, as it were, entity, determining and meting out the rewards which symbolized an individual’s righteousness was God.<sup>62</sup>

Though these views are implied in Gordon’s sermons and articles, it is instructive to consider his explication of these themes in his novels both to provide further evidence of and to relate his more cogent expressions of his conception of individuals and their existence with the “system of things” handed to them by the Divine. In *The Prospector* a man named Walter Mowbray was “haunted by one enslaving vice. He was by disposition and by habit a gambler.” Prior to traveling to the Canadian West, Mowbray had been the “honoured head of a financial institution” in London. In the “madness of his passion ... one night in the old land he risked and lost the funds” of the institution that he headed up. Thus shamed, he “fled from his home leaving in her grave his broken-hearted wife, and abandoning to the care of his maiden sister his little girl of a year old.” He traveled to Canada where he “sought in the feverish search for gold, relief from haunting memory, redemption for himself, and provision for his child.” While the welfare of his child

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<sup>62</sup>Gordon, “Parable of the Vineyard.”

remained the motivating factor in his life, he found success. Indeed, "some of the most valuable mines in southern British Columbia had been discovered by him."<sup>63</sup> Yet, he sold these claims for enough money to enable him to continue prospecting because he "had fallen under the spell of an Indian tale of a lost river of fabulous wealth in gold that disturbed his sense of value." For more than a decade Mowbray searched in vein for the lost river which had been hidden because a mountain toppled over on it thus burying it under hundreds of feet of rock. In his thirteenth year of prospecting he found it, though he was unable to stake his claim because "a terrible storm" drove him "out of the mountains."<sup>64</sup> The following Spring on starting out to claim the find, he fell into a river and contracted pneumonia. After recovering from his illness, he set out once more but, on nearing his destination, he once again became stricken with an illness and died.<sup>65</sup>

Conversely, to the righteous — those who exhibited self-control and selfless devotion to others — the rewards were plentiful. In *The Foreigner*, for example, despite the fact that Kalman Kalmar is the unfortunate heir of the "hereditary instincts of the Slavic blood," his association with Jack French, a rancher who is a "Canadian of British decent," and several similar characters results in Kalman's learning to control his "semi-barbaric" and "stormy Slavonic passions."<sup>66</sup> Modeling himself on French's example

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<sup>63</sup>Gordon, *The Prospector*, 153.

<sup>64</sup>Gordon, *The Prospector*, 154.

<sup>65</sup>Gordon, *The Prospector*, 251-262.

<sup>66</sup>Gordon, *The Foreigner: A Tale of Saskatchewan* (Toronto: Westminster 1909), 79.

(minus French's tendency to indulge in drink), Kalman risks life and limb to save the love of his life, Lady Marjorie, from freezing to death in a sudden blizzard. In the course of carrying out this act, he discovers a coal mine.<sup>67</sup> According to Kalman, however, "mines were nothing."<sup>68</sup> What is of concern is both Lady Marjorie and those whom the mine would benefit — for example, Jack French, his sister, and a minister named Brown who, with funds procured from the operation of the mine is able to build and maintain a hospital and a school for the inhabitants of a "foreign colony" near Jack French's ranch. It also enables Kalman, by the end of the novel no longer a "foreigner," to make a life with Lady Marjorie who, Gordon implies, he marries.

As is clear in considering these examples, the criteria against which individuals were judged was tied up with Gordon's view of the "proper" Christian conduct that accorded with God's plan. Thus, Mowbray vacillates between being motivated by concern for his family and the desire to obtain riches for their own sake. When the latter motivation leads him, despite a host of warning signs, to persist in acting out of selfish greed, he dies. Kalman, on the other hand, who has little concern for material gain for its own sake, not only finds a mine, but, as a man of good character, uses wealth in the

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<sup>67</sup>See. chapter XVI, "How Kalman Found His Mine, in Gordon, *The Foreigner*, 305-328.

<sup>68</sup>Gordon, *The Foreigner*, 325.

manner that Gordon thought appropriate — namely, “as a trust to be used in the best way where it would do most good” — and continues to prosper.<sup>69</sup>

On combining these elements of Gordon’s view with what has already been noted about his view of the divine design underlying human history, it becomes clear that the social order that Gordon envisioned was in many ways close to the one in which he lived. If “success” went to the righteous, and if the “whole system of things” in which men and women lived was ultimately handed to them by God, it is difficult to understand how a thoroughgoing program of social change might develop. If individual will gone awry was the cause of misery and social strife, and if, as noted earlier, success was reflective of individual righteousness, then the central task for men and women was, rather, to focus on their personal condition and of trying to ensure a measure of self-control and good will toward others so that they might become Godly and, hence, “successful.” Indeed, Gordon himself acknowledged as much when he explained to his congregation that with regard to such questions, “God did not need so many brains. God [would] furnish the brains. He [would] make the plans.”<sup>70</sup>

Though these points are important to understanding the nature of Gordon’s social vision, it is apparent that they are also not sufficient for understanding his view in its entirety. What is particularly significant is that in the “competition of righteousness,” the

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<sup>69</sup>By 1910 Gordon himself was a millionaire who viewed his fortune as a “trust.” Evidence for his having done so is found in a letter that he wrote to Edith McLeod (which is the source of the above quote). See, UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 4, folder 2, Gordon to Edith McLeod, 29 November 1907.

<sup>70</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 28, folder 15, “Parable of the Loaves and Fishes,” 8 January 1911.

“individuals” who competed were seemingly male. That such was the case is evidenced in the fact that the qualities that were indicative of the essential goodness of male characters like “The Kid” were a source of ruination when manifested in female characters. Gwen in *The Sky Pilot* is a case in point. Gwen is a teenaged girl who “lived remote from civilization.” Like many male characters, she is daring and spirited. As one cowboy explains to the minister and central character of the novel — affectionately known as “the pilot” — “she kin bunch cattle an’ cut out an’ yank a steer up to any cowboy on the range.” She, moreover, also is not afraid to take on the role of authority figure as when she “threw her little head back” and “gave orders [to] her Indian,” Joe, who was her “most devoted slave.” The minister finds these stories deeply unsettling and undertakes to teach Gwen “something of the refinements of civilization ... something of the elementaries of a lady’s education.”<sup>71</sup> Gwen refuses to quit her rough and rugged ways despite the prodding of “the pilot” and finds that the “unnaturalness” of her acts is her downfall. Despite the selflessness of her riding heroically into a mass of stampeding cattle to save “her Indian” she is crushed under her horse and left dependent and in constant agony.<sup>72</sup>

Though it is not surprising that Gordon viewed strength, daring, and physical prowess as male characteristics, what is significant for understanding his view of the ideal human society is that his portrayal of Gwen indicates that he adopted a more general

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<sup>71</sup>Gordon, *The Sky Pilot*, 108-113.

<sup>72</sup>Gordon, *The Sky Pilot*, 144-151.

liberal mode of conceptualizing human activities. In particular, he, like a host of his contemporaries and predecessors, conceived of roles, qualities, and characteristics as expressions of innate male and female propensities for “public” and “private” realms respectively. Competitiveness, aggressiveness, and physical prowess were characteristics that suited men for the role of the “chief of the clan” whose major roles were those of acting in the “public” realm to provide for the family materially and for the “defence [sic] of woman and ... the protection of women, girls and children.”<sup>73</sup>

If what was “male” was “public,” then it is not surprising that, predicated as it was on “maleness,” “femaleness” encompassed what was “private.” More particularly, Gordon believed that women ought to shoulder the bulk of the domestic duties — cooking, cleaning, mending, and so forth. He did not, however, believe that these were of significance or reflective of the particular propensities that women held. As he explained to the women in his congregation,

women, you cannot make a home with meals; you cannot feed men’s souls with bread; you cannot dress your children with the robes of righteousness with the things you buy in Eaton’s store or the other stores. ... You cannot be homemakers with the things you touch and handle every day. True, you may be housekeepers, but men can hire housekeepers. They don’t hire housekeepers when they marry you. If you are a mere housekeeper, you are bringing

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<sup>73</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 28, fd. 10, “The Canadian Home--The Position of Women,” 15 February 1920. It is worth noting that Gordon did not believe that men should have nothing to do with domestic work. He, however, assumed that men could help with these duties only after they had returned home after working outside of the home.

failure to your homemaking and you are not doing right by your children if you are a mere housekeeper.<sup>74</sup>

The “real duties of the real work that belong[ed] to women,” he thought, were those centred on ensuring the spiritual welfare of the family, for “the spiritual alone [could] make a home.”<sup>75</sup>

Similarly, outside of the home Gordon believed that women’s most valuable asset was that they possessed a “spirit of goodness.” There was a “mystery of atmosphere” that clung to every soul and within this “atmosphere” women transmitted “their soul’s secret, subtle influence to others.” He claimed to have seen “a whole mining camp yield its unspeakable brutality to the subtle and powerful influence of the mere presence of a good woman ... a saintly and cultured woman.”<sup>76</sup> Whether he witnessed this phenomenon or not, he recurrently expressed this view of women in his novels. The earlier mentioned Mrs. Mavor of *Black Rock*, for example, is not forceful in her dealings with the miners in the camp, yet she prevents a rough, tumble, and drunken group of miners who are determined to start a fight with their sober counterparts from obtaining that end simply by singing hymns.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Gordon, “The Canadian Home--The Position of Women.”

<sup>75</sup>Gordon, “The Canadian Home--The Position of Women.”

<sup>76</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 30, folder 3, “The Teacher an Empire Maker,” undated. This sermons was probably written between 1908 and 1912.

<sup>77</sup>Gordon, *Black Rock*, 62-70.

Gordon sought to portray the presumed differences of men and women as complementary, and he attempted to present women as capable of carrying out tasks for which the aggressive, combative tendencies of men's supposed natures were not suited. Again, the case of Mrs. Mavor is instructive, for, as the minister, Mr. Craig, in *Black Rock* noted of one miner who wavered in committing himself to the temperance league, "She'll get him if any one can. I failed." The means by which she "got" this and other miners was through softly touching their arms and whispering a few words of encouragement and reassurance.<sup>78</sup> Similarly, in *The Man From Glengarry* Mrs. Murray carried with her "a fine spiritual air."<sup>79</sup> Though her husband proved himself a capable and at times intimidating minister, it is Mrs. Murray who is often the agent of "practical Christianity." It is she, for example, who convinces warring Scottish and Irish loggers to end their longstanding strife by replacing their code of vengeance with one of forgiveness.<sup>80</sup> It is also Mrs. Murray who serves as the influence behind the making of a great man. After her husband berates a boy named Ranald Macdonald for fighting on the Sabbath and advises him that he is "not fit for the company of decent folk," she works to convince him to remain in the community and to mend his ways.<sup>81</sup> As a result of her

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<sup>78</sup>Gordon, *Black Rock*, 89, 103.

<sup>79</sup>Gordon, *The Man From Glengarry: A Tale of Ottawa* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1993 [1901]), 61.

<sup>80</sup>Gordon, *The Man From Glengarry*, 60.

<sup>81</sup>Gordon, *The Man From Glengarry*, 117.

influence he becomes a shining example of the Christian man. Despite the loneliness and hardship of pioneering life, Ranald unflinchingly sets out to “build empire west of the lakes.” Employed as a manager for the British-American Lumber and Coal Company, he seeks to apply the “laws of the kingdom of heaven ... to the great problems of labor.” More specifically, by establishing “a reading room at the mills, and a library at the camps” to provide the workmen with “good clean” forms of entertainment, he seeks to create conditions that will help those on the fringes of “civilization” to achieve their own salvation.<sup>82</sup>

Yet, if women, to Gordon’s mind, possessed qualities and capabilities that did not “naturally” manifest themselves in men, and if he saw them as complementary to the authority and aggressiveness of “manliness,” his mode of conceptualization was not conducive to creating a state of affairs wherein men and women were different but equal. He embraced a mode of conceptualizing gender that was predicated on the long-held liberal notion that the “self-possessed” individuals who were the atoms of society were males who represented the interests of all those who supposedly depended on them.<sup>83</sup> The doctrine of separate spheres was an expression of this state of affairs and in adopting the basic tenets of that doctrine Gordon reaffirmed the patriarchal nature of the liberal order.

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<sup>82</sup>Gordon, *The Man From Glengarry*, 342-343.

<sup>83</sup>Though a host of scholars have noted as much, for a perceptive discussion of these issues in a Canadian setting see, Lykke De La Cour, Cecilia Morgan, and Mariana Valverde, “Gender Regulation and State Formation in Nineteenth-Century Canada,” in Alan Greer and Ian Radforth, eds., *Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992), 163-191.

Thus, though there were, as Glenys Snow has pointed out, a few instances wherein Gordon portrayed women as active agents in their own right, more often than not they were frail, highly emotional, apt to die as a result of their broken-heartedness, and clearly dependent on and miserable in the absence of their men.<sup>84</sup> In public they were subordinate “helpmates” in their role as attentive nurses<sup>85</sup> and were the “panting” and “squeeling” observers on the sidelines of sporting events wherein men carried out heroic acts on the playing field.<sup>86</sup> Finally, they were the kindly mothers who, other than providing sagely advice to their sons, seemed to do little beyond occasionally stirring the fire.<sup>87</sup>

What is also clear is that in emphasizing their role as paragons of moral virtue, Gordon minimized the significance of the vitally important, unpaid labour that many women performed. He also, in suggesting that these tasks were insignificant to the “real” welfare of the family revealed not only a gender, but also a class bias underlying his

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<sup>84</sup>Glenys Snow has drawn attention to Gordon’s willingness to create central female characters. See her “Astride a Galloping Pony: Scottish Canadian Womanhood in Ralph Connor’s Neo-Kailyard Novels,” *British Journal of Canadian Studies*, 1(1992), 52. As is implied above, while women do figure prominently occasionally, they generally stand as one-dimensional caricatures. As to the nature of female characters’ existence mentioned above, see, for example, *The Prospector*, 153. As has already been noted, Walter Mowbray’s wife dies of a broken heart after her husband gambles and loses the funds of the financial institution that he headed up in England.

<sup>85</sup>See, for example, *The Prospector*, 354-355; *Corporal Cameron*, esp. 421-433; *The Doctor* (Toronto: Westminster 1906), 287.

<sup>86</sup>This image of women manifests itself repeatedly in *To Him That Hath*, see, for example, 11-27; 142-167. It is also clear in second chapter of *The Prospector*, 24-54.

<sup>87</sup>Mrs. McNish in *To Him That Hath* takes on this role. So does Mrs. MacGregor in *The Prospector*.

entire mode of conceptualizing womanliness. Indeed, seemingly the ideal woman was a delicate, well-dressed, highly bred, and highly cultured saintly woman like Mrs. Mavor. This ideal is clearly divorced from the realities in which working-class (that is to say, the majority of) women lived and, further, seemingly entails that the “good woman” — a godly woman — in Gordon’s mind was one who was not only dependent, but dependent on a “successful” man — the kind of man who could hire a housekeeper.<sup>88</sup> In large part, the “Christian society” amounted to a society based on the sustaining of a liberal capitalist social order, albeit one wherein all individuals behaved and existed as Gordon envisioned the ideal bourgeoisie would.

If the muscular male and the saintly woman were in some sense mother and father figures, those who stood as their children were actual children as well as those who had yet to mature spiritually. The latter could include those who needed the assistance of the saintly women and muscular men to obtain personal salvation — that is, “Britishers” who had yet to realize their relationship to God. Frequently, however, Gordon focused on childlike “races” as being those in need of the guiding hand of “Canadians of British decent.” Historically speaking Gordon viewed aboriginal peoples as having been the

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<sup>88</sup>It is worth pointing out that not only did Gordon’s view involve an ideal that pertained to elites, but also one that distinguished him from the cultural traditions of other men and women in Canada. Ruth Frager and Mercedes Steedman, for example, have both noted that ideals of “womanliness” among working-class women and immigrants were shaped by both class and ethnicity. See Ruth Frager, *Sweatshop Strife: Class, Ethnicity, and Gender in the Jewish Labour Movement in Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992), 153; Mercedes Steedman, *Angels of the Workplace: Women and the Construction of Gender Relations in the Canadian Clothing Industry, 1890-1940* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1997), 16-17. On the necessity of women’s labour — paid and unpaid — for the survival of working-class families, see Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montréal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1993).

beneficiaries of their guidance. During the early 20<sup>th</sup> century he pursued and encouraged others to support policies and initiatives that would put in place the liberal-capitalist social relations that he viewed as necessary for the transformation of the “uncivilized” around the world – and particularly in India.<sup>89</sup>

That he viewed the end toward which he worked as centrally tied to the development of a capitalist order becomes apparent in considering an industrial missions scheme that he supported. The industrial missions

were formed for the purpose of assisting Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in Canada by establishing and developing on sound commercial lines the industrial elements of their operation, with a view to providing training and employment for converts and others in connection with the Missions, and helping them to become independent and self-supporting.<sup>90</sup>

The clergymen and church workers involved in carrying out these operations ensured an adequate source of labour, a source of raw materials, and “competitive” means of producing marketable commodities. Thus, in a central Indian Industrial Mission, the

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<sup>89</sup>*Corporal Cameron*, one of Gordon’s earlier works of historical fiction, for example, is set in the early 1880s. The story follows the life and transformation of a young Scottish gentleman, Allen Cameron, into a “Canadian.” Eventually he becomes a Mountie and, along with a few other members of the Royal North West Mounted Police, protects the Aboriginal population, who display a “childish glee” and are incapable of overcoming their “insane thirst” for “fire water” from whiskey traders and other shady characters. For particularly striking examples of this portrayal of Aboriginals see, *Corporal Cameron*, 308, 354-355, 387. Gordon also actually lived out the paternalistic role that he endorsed in his historical fiction. In particular, he set himself to the task of seeking to preserve groups of British Columbia Indians who were organized under the Allied Indian Tribes. See, for example, UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 9, folder 15, “Memoranda re present status of controversy between Federal Government and the British Columbia Government with the Allied Tribes of British Columbia regarding land rights and other rights.” This document is undated, though it was likely written around 1920.

<sup>90</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 9, folder 8, “Prospectus — Canada-Presbyterian Missions Industrial Company,” 1911.

products were rugs, furniture, clothes, though if funds were available, the organizers thought that brick and tile making would be suitable additions.<sup>91</sup> The rationale for producing furniture and clothing resulted primarily from the fact that raw materials and markets would sustain them. Rug making, the more profitable of the three industries, however, involved a more racially-specific reasoning. To produce high quality rugs required that the woolen thread from which the rugs were made be “cut and knotted 64 times in every square inch.” The “making of a rug” was, thus, a “slow and tedious business,” one that “no race but Orientals would ever be willing to learn.”<sup>92</sup> The products of the industrial mission found such a high demand from English houses that in 1910, after three years of operation, the missionary overseeing the operation thought it fitting to centralize the operations and to upgrade machinery.<sup>93</sup> Though they provided no precise figures for the number of workers engaged in rug and furniture making, the smallest of the three operations, clothes making, employed about 200 women and girls.<sup>94</sup>

What is significant about this mission scheme is that it seemingly reveals a more general element of Gordon’s view of the conditions necessary for the development of Godly men and women. For, as is suggested above, one of the central rationales behind

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<sup>91</sup>UMASC. GP, MSS 56, box 9, folder 8, “Facts re. Industrial Missions work in Central India.” 1912.

<sup>92</sup>Gordon, “Facts re. Industrial Missions work in Central India.”

<sup>93</sup>Gordon, “Facts re. Industrial Missions work in Central India.”

<sup>94</sup>Gordon, “Facts re. Industrial Missions Work in Central India.”

the missions scheme was to provide men and women with a means of becoming self-supporting and independent. To obtain that status, however, Gordon viewed working in wage employment as the first step toward becoming “civilized.” Though the missions were in part a means to provide converts with a way of sustaining themselves after they had left the so-called heathen system that was still predominant in India, employment itself was by no means limited to converts. Indeed, the “purifying effect” of working in these types of facilities could itself work as a tool of conversion. It also brought the “heathen” within earshot of preachers of the gospel.<sup>95</sup>

While Gordon thought it his duty to bring the “uncivilized” into the “civilizing” agencies of the church — including church-run industrial facilities — supposedly semi-civilized human beings came to him as well. Among the immigrant groups that entered Canada in the early twentieth century, eastern European immigrants demanded a considerable amount of Gordon’s attention. The central distinction between the missionary work in India, and that amongst the immigrants in Canada was that supposed threats and potential benefits that these immigrants presented were more immediate. He believed that these immigrants would be beneficial because, by whatever alchemy, their “highly sentimental” characteristics might become a positive addition to a beneficent Canadian capitalist order. More importantly, he believed that if the wealth of the nation was to grow, it would require both what he believed would be an endless supply of

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<sup>95</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 9, folder 8, “Prospectus — Canada-Presbyterian Missions Industrial Company,” 1912.

capital, as well as a large labour force. In this regard he believed that eastern Europeans were suitable settlers as well. As he explained,

Eastern Europeans bring strong healthy bodies, hardened muscles, endurance for every kind of the hardest manual work, painless backs and obedience for those who are directing the work. They supply the bulk of unskilled labourers for railway construction, maintenance of railways, city and town improvement work, building of roads, large numbers of harvest hands, common labourers in railway and other industrial shops, and such work in general as does not require the use of one's brains.<sup>96</sup>

On the down side, as is implied in the foregoing passage, was that the bulk of these immigrants were, in Gordon's estimation, stupid. As he noted, "I would not claim that Eastern Europeans are bringing high intellectual development from home.... We are getting the class which heard of America and Canada; of the great body of salt water called ocean, but does not know where their own country is situated on the Globe." Additionally, these men and women were of "low moral standing and ignorant of political matter" and tended to be unfamiliar with the rudiments of personal hygiene.<sup>97</sup>

Gordon refused to believe that a mass of impoverished men and women was the result of the social order extant in Canada. Instead, he projected dirt, disease, and poverty onto "others" who he presumed were morally and spiritually inferior and, hence, "unsuccessful." He feared the possibility that the habits that resulted in such a condition might, if left unchecked, "lower the standard of British Civilization" in Canada. Gordon

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<sup>96</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 30, folder 9. "The Eastern European Immigrant." 1912.

<sup>97</sup>Gordon, "The Eastern European Immigrant."

recommended addressing some of the particular problems that he perceived individually. He thought, for instance, that to encourage cleanliness “a wisely drafted educational campaign in hygiene with the aid of motion pictures” would likely “bring about gratifying changes.”<sup>98</sup>

Like his fellow social gospeler J.S. Woodsworth whose efforts at the All People’s Mission familiarized him with the plight of immigrants, Gordon viewed schools and Protestant churches as central to “Canadianizing” the “foreigner.”<sup>99</sup> As other scholars have noted, to his mind, the teaching of the English language and the adoption of Protestantism would make “Canadians” out of non-British immigrants. Yet, in noting as much, it is clear that the vague nature of this view also obscures even while it illuminates facets of Gordon’s assimilative program. Gordon did indeed believe, as he explained through one of his characters in what was probably his most complete expounding of his views on the “immigrant question,” *The Foreigner*, the aim was to make immigrants into

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<sup>98</sup>Gordon, “The Eastern European Immigrant.”

<sup>99</sup> Woodsworth was a Methodist minister who wrote extensively on immigration and on problems associated with urbanization. For his views of immigrants, see his *Strangers Within Our Gates or Coming Canadians* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972 [1909]). He also made frequent reference to the “immigrant question” in his, *My Neighbor: A Study of City Conditions, A Plea For Social Service* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972[1911]). See particularly the chapters on social life and religion (pages 79-96 and 97-110 respectively). On J.S. Woodsworth, see, Kenneth McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2001 [1959]); Allen Mills, *Fool For Christ: The Political Thought of J.S. Woodsworth* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991). Other historians have also recognized the centrality of these institutions to the assimilation programs of many early 20<sup>th</sup> century Canadian elites including protestant clergymen. See, for example, Ed Rae, “My main line is the kiddies ... make them good Christians and good Canadians which is the same thing,” in Wserolod Isajiw, ed., *Identities: The Impact of Ethnicity on Canadian Society* (Toronto: Peter Martin and Associate 1977), 6-22; Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies*, 346.

“good Christians and Good Canadians which is the same thing.”<sup>100</sup> While the churches and schools were important to Gordon’s broad program of assimilation, it also involved more than simply the creation of Anglo-Protestants vaguely defined. Just as he believed that ideal men and women possessed divergent propensities, predispositions, and, hence, ought to carry out different social roles, the programs of assimilation that Gordon prescribed were geared toward shaping the populace according to those presumed innate qualities — in essence, he sought to mold immigrants into “muscular men” and “saintly women.”

That these ideals were the ends that Gordon thought assimilative agencies ought to work toward is demonstrated in considering some of the central characters in *The Foreigner*. By the end of the novel, Kalman, the central character, and his sister Irma both have become “good Christians.” Irma worked as the head nurse in the minister Brown’s hospital. The hospital not only served to help the sick, but the spirit of the staff under the guidance of Irma and Mr. Brown “wrought in the Galician colony a new temper and a new ideal.”<sup>101</sup> Kalman, on the other hand, found that in the five years after he discovered his mine, “the hard grind of daily work, the daily burden of administration, had toughened the fibre of his character and hardened the temper of his spirit.” Moreover, he had undergone training at a business college where “he learned to know,

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<sup>100</sup>Gordon, *The Foreigner*, 253.

<sup>101</sup>Gordon, *The Foreigner*, 372.

not only the books of his college curriculum, but, through Jack's introductions, the men who were doing big things in the country."<sup>102</sup>

Thus, Irma and Kalman served as exemplars of the possibilities offered by the careful guidance of a few Anglo-Protestants committed to infusing eastern Europeans with "civilized" habits. Yet, what is also clear is that Gordon did not view these examples as obtainable by all members of the eastern European immigrant community. Indeed, when Gordon suggested that the "class" of immigrants coming into Canada were those who were ignorant and dirty, he spoke not simply of a "type" of immigrant, but, rather, emphasized a socio-economic distinction which he believed was significant. Just as he viewed "success" as reflective of individual character traits in Anglo-Canadians, he viewed eastern Europeans as divided on similar lines. Kalman and Irma were, unlike most eastern European immigrants, of the upper class. Gordon makes this clear early in the novel when Michael Kalmar, father of Kalman and Irma, explains to his children that they "are not of these cattle" — meaning the majority of the North Winnipeg eastern European immigrant population. "Your mother," he continued, "was a lady."<sup>103</sup>

Thus, Irma, whose task was to aid minister Brown in fostering the qualities of "proper" womanhood in her fellow "foreigners," became the incarnation of the ideal to which the other immigrant women ought to aspire. These women, however, require not simply schools and churches, but, rather, a Training Home provided by Brown. In the

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<sup>102</sup>Gordon. *The Foreigner*, 373.

<sup>103</sup>Gordon. *The Foreigner*, 77-78.

home, they were “indoctrinated into that most noble of sciences, the science of homemaking.” In addition to homemaking, more a spiritual exercise than one comprised of actual domestic duties, they also “were gaining experience in all of the cognate sciences and arts.”<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, just as Kalman found his character and spirit strengthened through hard work, so did the lower orders of male eastern European immigrants. They, however, started out on a somewhat lower plane as labourers in Kalman’s mine. In a similar fashion as the workers in central India, the work was that of “civilization,” and engaging in it was purifying in and of itself.<sup>105</sup>

The qualities that working in the training home and the mine fostered in these men and women provided the base for the advent of what Gordon viewed as the idyllic scenario of a household characterized by a male wage earner and a female who was dependent, nurturing, and served as a spiritual guide. In combination, the efforts of Irma, Kalman (who, although a “Canadian among Canadians,” was also the “acknowledged leader of the “foreign colony”) and others working in the agencies that they created soon achieved what Gordon viewed as efficacious results. The “old mud-plastered cabins were giving place to neat frame houses, each surrounded by its garden of vegetables and flowers.” Moreover, that the immigrants began to trade “the sheep skin and the shawl for

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<sup>104</sup>Gordon. *The Foreigner*, 372.

<sup>105</sup>Gordon. *The Foreigner*, 330,371-372.

ready made suits and the hat of the latest style” underscored the success of the program of transformation.<sup>106</sup>

In itself the general social vision that Gordon developed is significant for several reasons. First, it demonstrates that he not only came to understand and to sustain himself through a web of social relationships. Also, in examining his modes of consciousness it is possible to determine not only what Gordon thought, but also something of the social realities in which such means of conceptualization could make sense. That is, it links his thought with the more general nature of social relationships not only between men and women living in the industrial world, but also between them and their non-industrial counterparts.

In a slightly different vein, his perspective represents a means of coming to grips with his present and of seeking to inform the shape of the future through, wittingly or not, prescribing particular norms and by explaining the human condition and, indeed, the functioning of the universe as a whole, that legitimated a particular mode of social organization. Put more concretely, as has been demonstrated in the preceding analysis, he embraced a liberal, individualistic perspective that accorded with the more general theoretical backing away from stridently individualistic classical liberalism and toward a “new” liberalism. That “new” liberalism, in turn, spoke to the realities of the increasing regulation and bureaucratization of economic and social life, and was also inspired and

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<sup>106</sup>Gordon, *The Foreigner*, 372.

shaped by the increasingly vociferous demands for social change from below. Though the actual result of his efforts is unclear, by naturalizing, even deifying, the basic parameters of the socio-economic system, which he did consciously or not, the intent of the “lessons” contained within his novels and sermons was to extend and sustain the liberal order in a slightly altered form.

It is clear, however, that intent and effect are not the same, and while it is, to a great degree possible to establish the former, the latter is more difficult to assess.<sup>107</sup> Nevertheless, it is evident that in the first decade of the twentieth century, a considerable number of men and women did not live in accordance with the vision that Gordon possessed. Though attention will turn more directly to issues relating to women, gender, and liberalism in succeeding chapters centered on Minnie J.B. Campbell and Francis Marion Beynon, even without going into detail it is evident that as Gordon penned many of the novels in which saintly women figured prominently, material constraints, a lack of will on the part of even those who did not find themselves bound by such constraints, and divergent concepts of “womanhood” (particularly in immigrant communities) were a few

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<sup>107</sup>For the sake of clarity it is worth noting that the reason that the results of Gordon’s efforts are not clear is that, while to a considerable degree it is possible to discern his intended message and to sketch the nature of the social vision that was entailed thereby, it is also evident that determining effect is not the same as, and is more difficult to ascertain than, intent. Clearly Gordon sought to communicate and convince those who comprised his audience of the efficacy of his vision, and while clearly it is apparent that literally millions of people bought his novels and listened to his addresses and sermons, it is impossible to determine how those who read and listened to his words interpreted, selected from, and acted in light of the messages that they read.

central factors that worked to ensure that Gordon's ideals would remain in the realm of fiction.<sup>108</sup>

Similarly, so-called new Canadians also likely did not embrace Gordon's prescriptions and the assumptions underlying them. It is, for example, relatively clear that the bulk of eastern European immigrants would not have believed that they were stupid, nor that their presumed racial inferiority resulted in moral and spiritual bankruptcy which, in turn, caused the poverty, dirt, and disease which were facts of life for many North End Winnipeggers. Indeed, despite the fact that self-deprecation among immigrants<sup>109</sup> was not unheard of, many immigrants did not view their ethnic-racial standing as problematic is evidenced by the fact that, despite the appeals of men like Gordon and J.S. Woodsworth, large numbers of immigrants formed language locals of

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<sup>108</sup>There are an enormous number of studies that might be cited to support this assertion. On working-class women who almost certainly would not have fit Gordon's ideal see, for example, Linda Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890-1920* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998). Janice Newton also provides a perceptive analysis of similar subject matter in her, *The Feminist Challenge to the Canadian Left, 1900-1918* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1995). In addition to Bettina Bradbury's aforementioned work on Montréal, see, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "Weaving it Together: Life Cycle and the Industrial Experience of Female Cotton Workers in Quebec," in Alice Prentice and Susan Mann Trofinmenkoff, *The Neglected Majority, Volume II* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1985), 160-173. Carol Bacchi has provided a study of the interplay between various groups of women some who would have been more likely to endorse Gordon's view and others, — farm and labour women — who were less inclined to do so. See her, "Divided Allegiances: the Response of Farm and Labour Women to Suffrage," in Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s - 1920s* (Toronto: The Women's Press 1979), 89-108. Deborah Gorham's article in the same edited collection has provided a sketch of Flora MacDonald Denison. She finds that Denison was torn between the elitism of people who held views akin to Gordon's and her own more modest existence which entailed her working for a living. See, Gorham, "Flora MacDonald Denison: Canadian Feminist," 47-70.

<sup>109</sup>As far as self-deprecation goes, in his quasi-fictive account of growing up in the North End, John Marlyn has conveyed the sense of shame that the children of immigrants living in Winnipeg could experience as a result of their willingness to accept, to some degree the bigotry of some of their Anglo-Canadian counterparts. See his, *Under the Ribs of Death* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1971 [1957]).

socialist and social democratic organization which reflected and built upon the interconnectedness of class and ethnic-racial identification.<sup>110</sup> It is also relatively clear that immigrant efforts to organize schools wherein their languages were spoken and taught did not arise out of a desire to further the assimilative efforts of men like Gordon.<sup>111</sup>

While these discrepancies are important, Gordon seemingly did not undertake efforts to address them outside of urging men and women through his sermons and novels to adopt particular modes of behavior and styles of life. An area where he ultimately enjoyed a greater degree of success in realizing the imaginings he put forth in his fiction and addresses had to do with fostering the paternalistic relationship between employers and workers that is implied in his aforementioned suggestion that an enlightened elite ought to help to uplift their workers. Indeed, in terms of his actual efforts as a “practical Christian” he did not direct a significant amount of time and energy to assimilating immigrants or fostering “proper” womanliness. He did, however, put forth a considerable effort to deal with the “labour question.”

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<sup>110</sup>A. Ross McCormack has provided some insight into the “language locals” of organizations like the Socialist Party of Canada and the Social Democratic Party of Canada. See his, *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries*, 65-67, 71-75. For additional information see, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, P 227, Alan Artibise Papers, Orest T. Martynowych, “The Ukrainian Socialist and Working-Class Movement in Manitoba, 1900-1918,” unpublished paper, March 1973. See also, UMASC, Research Papers in Manitoba History (hereafter RP), MSS 72, box 2 folder 11, Noel Ginsberg, “The North and South-End Split of the Jewish Community in Winnipeg, 1914-1939,” 3 May 1976.

<sup>111</sup>Ed Rae has provided a perceptive discussion of bilingual schools in his “My Main line is the kiddies,” 3-11. As he notes, there was a push for bilingual education in not only French, but also Ukrainian, German, and Polish as well.

To note that Gordon spent much time considering industrial relations, and to note that he ultimately enjoyed a measure of success in instating his vision in reality is not to suggest that he found his urging employers to take on the role of enlightened elites concerned with the welfare of their employees immediately heeded. It is also not to suggest that his recommendations that workers disregard the socio-economic system in which they lived, adopt a “rightly” directed will with respect to themselves and their fellow human beings, and wait to find themselves duly rewarded were promptly taken to heart. Indeed, in most of the industrial disputes in which Gordon was involved throughout the prewar years his ideals appear to have often been disregarded. The first conflict in which he acted as a moderator, which he did in a quasi-official capacity, did not take place until after he took up his position at St. Stephen’s Church in Winnipeg.<sup>112</sup> The dispute took place in 1906 and was between the Winnipeg Electric Railway Company, a holding of William McKenzie, and its employees who had organized Local 99 of the Street Railwaymen’s Union.<sup>113</sup> The root of the dispute lay with the matter of

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<sup>112</sup>As has been suggested, his earliest efforts in industrial matters appears to have been with those engaged in extractive industries in the Canadian West. Despite the fact that the work camps in which Gordon worked as a missionary were important early western Canadian industrial activities, beyond passing references to the “questions of capital and labor” in *The Man From Glengarry*, Gordon seems not to have developed an analysis of the conditions in the camps other than the aforementioned view of de-evolutionary frontier forces having corrupted the workmen. There is, moreover, also no evidence to suggest that he acted as a moderator officially or unofficially while he served as a missionary in the camps. Indeed, the only evidence that he directed attention to these questions as a missionary is found in the second to last chapter of *The Man From Glengarry*. See, *The Man From Glengarry*, 345-358. In this section of the book Ranald MacDonald provides reading material and a club house for workers in extractive industries on the frontier to provide them a “wholesome” means of passing time.

<sup>113</sup>McKenzie was also, with Donald Mann, co-owner of the Canadian Northern Railway. On McKenzie and the 1906 strike, see David Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1990 [1974]),

union recognition. Though the company had never recognized the union, prior to the Spring of 1906 company officials had been willing to negotiate with what they termed a “committee” of workmen who, it happened, were also officials of Local 99. For reasons that are not clear, in the Spring of 1906, the company determined that the union posed a threat and for several weeks prior to negotiations harassed employees who were prominent in the union. Two days after negotiations began company officials fired the president and the executive secretary of the union for supposedly “insulting company officers.”<sup>114</sup> After several days of negotiation, the two side found themselves at odds and, when the workers got word that the company was bringing in scabs from Montréal, they voted unanimously to strike on 29 March. The day after the strike began large numbers of men and women, many of whom had no official tie to the union, set out to prevent the street cars from running.<sup>115</sup> The company, determined to undermine the union, hired Thiel Detectives from the United States to operate and to ensure that street car service was maintained. The result was that pro-strike protesters clashed with the company thugs in pitched street battles.<sup>116</sup>

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11-15. Another view is found in R.B. Fleming, *The Railway King of Canada: Sir William MacKenzie, 1849-1923* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1991), 120-1.

<sup>114</sup>Bercuson. *Confrontation at Winnipeg*, 11.

<sup>115</sup>Contemporaneous newspaper reports indicate that a large portion of the crowds were comprised of women and children. It is likely that they were members of strikers’ families. See, for example, *Manitoba Free Press*, 31 March 1906.

<sup>116</sup>All of the major Winnipeg daily newspapers carried accounts of events throughout the strike. See, *Manitoba Free Press*, *Winnipeg Telegram*, and the *Winnipeg Tribune* for March 30 through April 8.

Though few details of Gordon's role in this conflict are available, it is clear that he, along with several other Presbyterian and Methodist ministers who belonged to a study and information group called the Winnipeg Ministerial Association, sought to broker a settlement between the two factions.<sup>117</sup> True to the earlier-mentioned view of "practical Christianity" Gordon explained to his congregation that as minister, his place, as well as that of the other ministers, was "on the streets where the trouble was," and their duty was to "devote all their efforts to the bringing about of a settlement between corporations and their striking employees." He, however, found his message of tolerance and efforts to instill an understanding of the detriment of acting out of "selfish greed," which he saw as the cause of the strike, frustrated and largely ineffective. Despite his own efforts and "despite twenty centuries of Christian teaching," the striking workmen and the company representatives still fell "upon each other like beasts, and club[bed] and batter[ed] each other."<sup>118</sup>

In the end, then mayor of Winnipeg Thomas Sharpe called in the militia. Though sporadic street battles persisted, the workers continued on with their struggle with the company primarily by way of a boycott. They did so with a great enough degree of success that they achieved a wage increase and the reinstatement of their dismissed fellow

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<sup>117</sup>Bercuson notes the purpose of the Winnipeg Ministerial Association. See his, *Confrontation at Winnipeg*, 14. Gordon's involvement in with the conciliation efforts is mentioned in both the *Manitoba Free Press* and the *Tribune* for 2 April 1906.

<sup>118</sup>A recounting of a sermon that Gordon gave several days the day after the beginning of hostilities is found in the *Winnipeg Telegram*, 2 April 1906. The sermon was tellingly entitled "On Selfish Interest."

workers.<sup>119</sup> The company, however, remained adamantly opposed to, and did not in fact recognize, the union. While the settlement brought an end to the strike, the process through which employer and employee arrived at it reflected the fact that armed, company-hired strike breakers rather than an enlightened elite who sought to uplift the workers were a central part of the reality of the situation.

Nevertheless, Gordon was unwavering in his convictions and approximately three years later he began to work as a conciliator in an official capacity. In 1907 the passage of the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act provided a legislative framework for the setting up of tripartite boards of inquiry in industrial disputes involving “public utilities.”<sup>120</sup> The first dispute in which Gordon acted as a board member was in 1909 and was between the Manitoba Cartage Company and several of its teamsters who had been dismissed and blacklisted as a result of their efforts to extend their union. Gordon, R.R. Cochrane, and Thomas J. Murray constituted the board of inquiry which W.L.M. King, then Minister of Labour, called together.<sup>121</sup> After several days of intensive questioning of

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<sup>119</sup>Though the Winnipeg newspapers contain accounts of the settlement, there is a more succinct recounting in the *Labour Gazette* for May 1906, 1265-1266.

<sup>120</sup>W.L.M. King was the architect of the 1907 Industrial Disputes Investigation Act. The act, as Paul Craven has noted, “provided for the investigation of disputes by a tripartite board consisting of one representative nominated by each of the employer and union, and a chairman chose by these two or, failing that, by the government.” The decision of the board was not binding on either employer or employee, though if one or both parties did not accept it, the report was “published so as to bring the weight of public opinion to bear” (287). This act was aimed particularly at instilling harmonious relationships between employers and employees in industries relating to “public utilities” (288). For more on the development of this act see Paul Craven, *An Impartial Umpire: Industrial Relations and the Canadian State, 1900-1911* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1980), esp. 269-317.

<sup>121</sup>King called the board at the request of the employees of the Manitoba Cartage Company. He appointed Gordon as chairperson.

the dismissed men, union representatives, and representatives of the Manitoba Cartage Company, they found, miraculously, that in fact “no real cause of dispute exist[ed] between the Company and its employees.”<sup>122</sup> Rather, the problems that arose had “been due partly to mutual misunderstanding and partly to errors in tactics.” The company had, presumably as a result of the activities of a “foreign” labour man from the United States, over-reacted in their efforts to curtail whatever strife might have been stirred up thus unwittingly sending the message that they were opposed to “unionism.” The employees, on the other hand, had also erred in that they used their “employer’s time” for the “propagating of the principles of unionism or for the securing of recruits,” something that “they had no right to do.”<sup>123</sup>

True to the liberal religio-philosophical perspective that he developed, Gordon viewed the “social evil” as resultant of the mistakes and oversights of the human beings involved in the conflict rather than as resultant of the “system of things” in which the men operated. To rectify the problems that had resulted, Gordon advised that the company and workmen end their dispute and move ahead by ensuring that there was a “clear understanding and a frank restatement of certain principles that underlie all just and right relations between employer and employees.” In essence, he thought that the company officials ought to reaffirm their committedness to recognizing the right of employees to

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<sup>122</sup>This copy of the final statement of the board’s findings is found in a letter that Gordon sent to W.L.M. King. See UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 12, folder 2, Gordon to King, 27 March 1909.

<sup>123</sup>Gordon to King, 27 March 1909.

unionize. Employees, on the other hand, should recognize that “they [had] absolutely no right to use the employer’s time, property or organization for the propagating of the principles of Unionism.”<sup>124</sup> Both employers and employees claimed to have been satisfied with the board’s findings. Even though the employers agreed to adopt whatever recommendations that the board arrived at, a manager named Mr. Lemon, who had been reluctant to participate in the proceedings in the first place, also apparently believed that there was more than oversights and misunderstandings at work.<sup>125</sup> Ultimately he refused to rehire the pro-union men.<sup>126</sup>

Two years later King again requested Gordon’s service as a conciliator in a dispute in the coal fields of Alberta and British Columbia. On 1 March 1911 the employers, organized under the Western Coal Operators Association, and the miners, organized under the United Mine Workers of America, met to renegotiate their contract which was to expire at the end of March. Miners demanded higher wages, the check off, and the closed shop. The operators refused to accede to the demands and, despite W.L.M. King’s pleading that the miners submit the matter to a board of inquiry before striking, more than 6000 miners downed tools on 31 March 1911.<sup>127</sup> Two weeks later the

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<sup>124</sup>Gordon to King, 27 March 1909.

<sup>125</sup>*The Labour Gazette*, April 1909, 1097.

<sup>126</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 12, folder 6, “Re Dispute Man. Cartage Co. And Employees,” 1909. See also, *The Labour Gazette*, April 1909, 1101.

<sup>127</sup>Gordon, “Report of the Board in Dispute Between the Coal Operators Comprising the Western Coal Operators’ Association and Employés, Members of District No. 18, United Mine Workers of America.” *Labour Gazette* (August 1911), 152.

miners requested that a board of inquiry be set up. King readily agreed and called on Gordon to serve as chairperson.<sup>128</sup>

Unlike the Manitoba Cartage Company dispute wherein no history of disputes preceded the 1909 hearings, in the coal fields Gordon found “perennial strife” between operators and miners. As such, the board set out with the intention of discovering the “deep rooted reason ... for the spirit of hostility approaching to bitterness, and of distrust that cloud[ed] ... every relation” between employee and employer.<sup>129</sup> On inquiring into the matter, however, they found that wages were in some cases too low, but that this was an easily remedied problem. As to the causes of recurrent strife, they believed, as Gordon explained, that “a stupid, tyrannical or unsympathetic pit-boss or foreman may work great injury in a mine.” In addition, he furthered, “a meddling Secretary of a Local Union [could] with the greatest ease keep a camp in a state of turmoil.”<sup>130</sup> The central problem, he related on behalf of the board, stemmed from the fact that both parties refused to discuss the matter of the open shop openly and frankly.<sup>131</sup>

As a result, he suggested that “both parties frankly come out into the open in regard to the principle of the ‘Open Shop’.” He thought that operators ought to pay a “living wage,” that is, a wage that would enable a miner “to support himself and his

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<sup>128</sup>Gordon. “Report.” 151.

<sup>129</sup>Gordon. “Report.” 153.

<sup>130</sup>Gordon. “Report.” 153.

<sup>131</sup>Gordon. “Report.” 153.

family in decency and comfort as Canadian citizens.” Additionally, he recommended that “earnest and intelligent cooperation” with regard to providing facilities that would serve to “provide for the social, moral, and intellectual well-being of the workers in the mines” would “surely be productive of the best results.”<sup>132</sup> Despite his efforts, the miners rejected the recommendations of the board as did their representative who filed his own minority report, and the strike dragged on for several more months. With the onset of winter the miners, some of whom the company had evicted and others who, at the end of seven months, could not afford food or clothes, went back to work with a slight increase in wages and an open shop agreement on 20 November.<sup>133</sup>

Unlike previous disputes with which Gordon was involved, in the 1911 dispute recorded the workers’ reactions to his actions and findings. The miners made no effort to conceal their contempt. On 3 September 1911, the president of District 18 of the United Mine Workers of America, W.B. Powell, wrote to Gordon and both expressed his dissatisfaction with the board’s report and defied Gordon to come before the miners to explain himself.<sup>134</sup> After the strike was over, a miner named John W. Gray similarly argued that Gordon’s findings were inadequate and that it was not their efficacy, but “the

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<sup>132</sup>Gordon, “Report,” 157.

<sup>133</sup>Department of Labour, “Termination of Dispute in the Coal Fields of eastern British Columbia and Southern Alberta — terms of New Agreement,” *Labour Gazette* (December 1911), 543.

<sup>134</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 12, folder 17, W.B. Powell to Gordon 3 September 1911.

club of no work” which, in the end, had silenced the miners.<sup>135</sup> Gray astutely questioned Gordon’s impartiality as a representative of “the so-called PUBLIC.” A particularly questionable practice had been, he thought, that Gordon “stayed in a room costing \$7.00 a day” and took a daily wage that “would pay any miner for a full week at least.” Such a luxurious existence, to Gray’s mind, demonstrated Gordon’s class standing which made him unsuitable as “the judge as to what our wage should be.”<sup>136</sup>

Miners also questioned the value of “practical Christianity” itself. Gray’s case is again instructive, for after the strike was over Gray, son of a Methodist minister, asked that Gordon try to understand his perspective.<sup>137</sup> “I would like to have your opinion” he related,

as to how you would feel if you were in such a position as I am at the present, with five children and a wife, whom I love just as much as you do yours. I have to keep them shut up in the house, because they have no clothes to keep them warm. My wife cannot go out as she has cut all her clothes down to cover the children; and I have no need to go [to] the mines for work as I am told there is none for me. In spite of all this you put the profits of the rich before the needs of the poor working man. I have been taught from the cradle to look upon the man who wore the Black Cloak with respect, but since the stand of The Reverend Mr. Grant and yourself I feel I have lost all faith in the representatives of God and

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<sup>135</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 12, folder 17, John W. Gray to Gordon, 18 December 1911.

<sup>136</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 12, folder 7, John W. Gray to Gordon, 18 December 1911.

<sup>137</sup>Gray mentioned that his father served as a Methodist minister for 53 years in a letter to Gordon. See, UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 12, folder 7, John W. Gray to Gordon, 17 January 1912.

their teachings. This opinion is fast becoming general amongst our class.<sup>138</sup>

Similarly, after discussing what he viewed as the shortcomings of Gordon's recommendations, union representative C. Starkes explained that he and his fellow workers "are now learning that Moses only leads us around in the wilderness and not out of it and those who do point the way are branded as Anarchists, Agitators, or socialists which is sufficient justification for contempt by the intellectual and cultured."<sup>139</sup>

Gordon was apparently moved by these letters. In an effort to do his part as a caring Christian man, he directed one hundred dollars of the "trust" he had been handed toward helping Gray and five other miners to overcome the financial hardships brought on by the strike. Though deeply appreciative, Gray thought that Gordon and "his class" ought not "to be in a position to dole out sympathy" to workers "when they [the workers] themselves created all the wealth." To do so amounted to "handing back money to [t]hose who really by their labors were entitled to it without any stigma of charity."<sup>140</sup>

While it may not be surprising that the forthright and, at times, bitter remarks of the workmen did not result in a vast change in Gordon's perspective, it would not be unreasonable to believe that his wartime experiences might have. The war was significant in two central ways. First, he experienced the carnage and destruction on the

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<sup>138</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 12, folder 7, John W. Gray to Gordon, 18 December 1911.

<sup>139</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 12, folder 17, C. Starkes to Gordon, 12 December 1911.

<sup>140</sup>UMASC, GP, MSS 56, box 12, folder 17, John W. Gray to Gordon, 17 January 1912.

western front first hand. At age 54 he set out for Europe as chaplain to the 43<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, the members of which were almost without exception from Winnipeg. On arriving in England, he was appointed senior chaplain to the Canadian forces and was given the rank of major, though he resigned this position so that he could remain with his fellow Winnipeggers in the 3<sup>rd</sup> division.<sup>141</sup> It is worth emphasizing here that the conflict was of great significance for Gordon personally. While he volunteered to and served overseas, he also used his popularity as an author to garner support for the allied war effort in the United States and in Canada.<sup>142</sup> The considerable extent to which the images of the young men he tried to console in their last moments were burned into his mind is indicated by the facts that more than one third of his 423 page autobiography centres on his wartime experiences and that he wrote two novels about the war.<sup>143</sup>

One might expect that his stint as a chaplain in World War I, where he ministered to the young men — many of whom were members of his St. Stephen's congregation — as they died in the trenches, might have shaken his faith in a divinely-guided unfolding of history. Yet, while he appreciated the gravity of the situation, he explained it as a

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<sup>141</sup>Keith Wilson, *Manitobans in Profile: Charles William Gordon* (Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers 1981), 33.

<sup>142</sup>Wilson, *Manitobans in Profile: Charles W. Gordon*, 35-36.

<sup>143</sup>See, for example, Wilson, *Manitobans in Profile: Charles W. Gordon*, 27-36; Kirk Layton, *Charles W. Gordon/Ralph Connor: From Black Rock to Regina Trench* (Victoria: Trafford 2001), 35-44. For what is perhaps the most complete accounting, see Gordon's own, *Postscript to Adventure*, 210-358. Gordon's novels were *The Major* (New York: George H. Doran Company 1917), and *The Sky Pilot in No Man's Land* (New York: George H. Doran Company 1919).

necessary process of atonement, after which humanity could get on with the business of building the Kingdom of God on Earth.<sup>144</sup>

The other calamity which befell Gordon during the war years had to do with his personal finances. When R.M. Thompson, the commander of Gordon's battalion, an elder at St. Stephen's Church, and Gordon's close friend, lawyer, and financial advisor died in 1916, it became apparent that he had defrauded Gordon out of the entirety of his fortune.<sup>145</sup> Gordon, thus, went from holding an estate worth more than a million dollars by 1910, to being in debt and having to face the embarrassment of being unable to cover unforeseen bills.<sup>146</sup> Gordon rarely mentioned the matter and forbade his family to discuss it.<sup>147</sup> Thus, it is difficult to discern how he conceived of this personal calamity in light of his views of the relationship between material wealth and social prestige and the "plan" that underlay human history. It is possible that the fact that he continued to receive a salary from St. Stephen's, that his friends refused to seize his Armstrong's Point mansion

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<sup>144</sup>See, for example, UMASC, GP, MSS 56, "Canada's Duty," 12 November 1914.

<sup>145</sup>Wilson, *Manitobans in Profile: Charles William Gordon*, 35; Kirk H. Layton, *From Black Rock to Regina Trench*, 46-47.

<sup>146</sup>Gordon's financial standing in 1910 is revealed in a *Winnipeg Telegram* article entitled "Winnipeg's Millionaires" which appeared on 29 January 1910. It must have been particularly embarrassing when, in 1925, he had to write to explain his loss to the Canadian military when they requested that he reimburse them for having overpaid him. See, Gordon to Smith, UMASC, GP, box 21, folder 6.

<sup>147</sup>Wilson has noted Gordon's unwillingness to discuss the matter, see, Wilson, *Manitobans in Profile: Charles W. Gordon*, 35. Gordon mentioned the matter in his autobiography, though he left the details unexplained. He noted that "the death of our colonel made an important change in my life. Shortly after that sad event advices from home in relation to the colonel's estate, which unfortunately had become involved with affairs, seemed to make my presence in Winnipeg necessary." See, *Postscript to Adventure*, 285.

when he could not pay the taxes, and that he was, thus, able to maintain the style of life to which he had been accustomed had something to do with his persisting in the religio-philosophical perspective he had developed by the first decade of the twentieth century.<sup>148</sup>

Whatever the case, that he did persist with it is evidenced in considering his view of the postwar labour revolt. No record of his view of the strike as it occurred is available owing to the fact that he was in Britain during the Spring and Summer of 1919.<sup>149</sup> He apparently kept abreast of the events, for two years later *To Him That Hath*, a quasi-fictional account of the strike, appeared. The story of *To Him That Hath* centres around a general strike in a town called Black Water. The remote causes of the strike were the dissatisfaction with life among returned soldiers, the rising cost of living, and the impersonal nature of employer-employee relationships in large, modern firms.<sup>150</sup> The primary cause, however, was a personal dispute between an industrialist's son and the main character of the novel, Captain Jack Maitland, and Malcolm McNish. The latter was a labour man originally from Scotland. Though well versed in socialist doctrine, McNish was, as a result of the influence of his deeply religious and saintly mother, level

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<sup>148</sup>Beth Paterson mentions that the city seized the building only after he died in 1937. See her, "Ralph Connor and his Million Dollar Sermons," *MacLean's Magazine*, 15 November 1953, 60. Armstrong's point is located across the Assiniboine River from Wellington Crescent. C.W. Gordon lived at 54 Westgate in Armstrong's Point. For information on the area and its residents in the early part of the twentieth century see, UMASC, MSS 72, RP, Joanne Ledohowski and Alice Mark, "Armstrong's Point, 1880-1920," undated. Gordon's residence is mentioned on page 18.

<sup>149</sup>Keith Wilson makes note of Gordon's whereabouts in *Manitobans in Profile: Charles William Gordon*, 37.

<sup>150</sup>Gordon, *To Him That Hath*, 168-169.

headed.<sup>151</sup> He, moreover, had enough influence to temper the dissatisfaction of his fellow workers and to counteract the radical proposals of some of his counterparts. When he mistakenly comes to believe that Captain Jack is out to steal away the love of his life, Annette Perrotte, however, his earthly desires get the better of him. Indeed, his “passion for vengeance ... became an obsession, a madness with him.” It is his seeking “to gratify his passion” that leads him to side with Brother Simmons, Sam Wigglesworth, and other advocates of “radical labour” — the result is the setting off of a general strike.<sup>152</sup>

The climax of the novel occurs when a labour parade which starts out as a harmless, even jovial procession of striking workers and sympathizers turns ugly when they get word that a foundry owner is bringing in strike breakers. The strikers become

a mob ... a mad yelling, frenzied thing, bereft of power of thought, swaying under the fury of their passion like tree tops blown by storm, reiterating in hoarse and broken cries the single word “Scabs! Scabs!”<sup>153</sup>

Thus driven to a frenzy, the “mob” descends on the facility of the offending businessman and proceeds to set it on fire. On locating the scabs they continue on “brutally battering them into insensibility.”<sup>154</sup> Luckily for the scabs, Captain Jack and a band of “specials” arrive to protect them. Brother Simmons, in a drunken stupor, attempts to prevent

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<sup>151</sup>Gordon. *To Him That Hath*, 103-108.

<sup>152</sup>Gordon. *To Him That Hath*, 200.

<sup>153</sup>Gordon. *To Him That Hath*, 262.

<sup>154</sup>Gordon. *To Him That Hath*, 253.

Captain Jack from doing so by shooting him. The bullet misses Captain Jack, however, and hits and seriously wounds Annette Perotte instead.<sup>155</sup> The mishap shocks members of both warring factions to their senses. The next day they meet to discuss the matter of reconciliation and in “less than an hour” of dispassionate reflection and negotiation, have the whole dispute worked out. The men receive an increase in wages and a decrease in hours. Both parties also agree to set up a “General Board of Industry, under whose guidance the whole question of the industrial life of the community should be submitted to intelligent study and control.”<sup>156</sup>

If the tenacity with which Gordon clung to his conceptual and theoretical perspective in the face of a long period of negligible success, personal misfortune, and witnessing the most horrific scenes on the Western Front, is striking, it is also clear that he did so, in the end, to good effect. Despite the fact that the general strike ended in the summer of 1919, the elites who had worked against it through the Citizens’ Committee of 1000 continued their efforts both formally and informally to attempt to ensure that the defeat of working-class movements was a long term accomplishment. In addition to what Tom Mitchell has demonstrated were both overt and covert campaigns of repression that the Winnipeg and wider Canadian elite carried out, there was a simultaneous and more positively directed effort to institute an “acceptable” mechanism — i.e. one that accorded

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<sup>155</sup>Gordon, *To Him That Hath*, 264.

<sup>156</sup>Gordon, *To Him That Hath*, 279.

with the liberal-capitalist social order — through which to deal with and attempt to minimize industrial strife.<sup>157</sup>

In Manitoba part of those efforts were embodied in the Joint Council of Industry (JCI). The JCI, or an agency of the like, was among the recommendations of the post-strike Robson Commission.<sup>158</sup> The body came into existence with the passage in 1920 of amendments to the Industrial Conditions Act of 1919. In essence, it was based on the basic design that W.L.M. King had developed earlier in the century. The Council was made up of five individuals — two employer representatives appointed by the government, two appointed by the workers, and an ostensibly independent chairperson. Gordon, who was also appointed by the government, served as chairman. The central distinction between the Council of Industry and the boards of inquiry set up under the

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<sup>157</sup>Regarding the suppression of the labour revolt, on Winnipeg specifically, see, Tom Mitchell, “‘To Reach the Leadership of this Revolutionary Movement’: A.J. Andrews, the Canadian State and the Suppression of the Winnipeg General Strike,” *Prairie Forum*, 2(Fall 1993), 239-255; see also his “‘Repressive Measures’: A.J. Andrews, the Committee of 1000 and the Campaign Against Radicalism After the Winnipeg General Strike,” *Left History*, 2 and 4(Fall 1995-Spring 1996), 133-167. Gregory Kealey has provided insight into the development and functions of the machinery of state repression more generally in the first decades of the twentieth century. See, for example, his “State Repression of Labour and the Left in Canada, 1914-1920: The Impact of the First World War,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 3(1992), 281-314; and his “The Surveillance State: The Origins of Domestic Intelligence and Counter-Subversion in Canada 1914-1921,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 3(1992), 179-210.

<sup>158</sup>*Royal Commission to Enquire into and Report Upon Causes and Effects of the Winnipeg General Strike Which Recently Existed in the City of Winnipeg for a Period of Six Week, Including Methods of Calling and Carrying on Such a Strike*, Report of H.A. Robson, K.C., Commissioner (Winnipeg 1919), 30.

Industrial Disputes Investigation Act was that while the latter was *ad hoc*, the former was a permanent body which was not limited to disputes concerning “public utilities.”<sup>159</sup>

Though all but a handful of fragmented transcripts of interviews carried out by Gordon and his counterparts on the JCI have been lost, the agency was, in the years 1920-1923, involved with over 100 disputes.<sup>160</sup> Though, owing to a paucity of sources, the nature of these conflicts is impossible to ascertain, it is evident that from the outset the JCI and the regime of class relations envisioned by its progenitors, including Gordon, held no place for the socialists and industrial unions who had been proponents or leaders of the general strike and the One Big Union (OBU). Indeed, the representatives on the council were, despite (or, perhaps more accurately, because of) the popularity of the OBU in the months immediately following the strike, representatives of the international unions who embraced “pure-and-simple” unionism — meaning constructing organizations around wage rates and hours of work rather than on questioning the efficacy of capitalist social relations more generally speaking.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>159</sup>On the origins and nature of the Council of Industry, see PAM, MG 14 C58, “Council of Industry for Manitoba.” See also, PAM, RG 14 D1, Henry Trachtenberg, “A Preliminary Investigation into Labour-Government-Management Relations in Manitoba: The Joint Council of Industry,” unpublished paper (my thanks to Brian McLean for directing me to this source). Though there is no direct reference to the work in Gordon’s papers, it would be surprising if he had not considered King’s, *Industry and Humanity* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1973 [1918]) which was, as J.W. Benough demonstrated pictorially, similar in nature. Ramsay Cook provides a discussion of King in his *The Regenerators*, 196-213. For a copy of Benough’s rendering of King’s view of industrial relations see page 212.

<sup>160</sup>Trachtenberg, “A Preliminary Investigation,” 36.

<sup>161</sup>There was a battle between the OBU and the International Unions. David Bercuson has provided some insight into this struggle in his *Fools and Wise Men: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson 1978), 129-170. Trachtenberg, “A Preliminary Investigation,” 18. See also, Paul Craven and Tom Traves, “The Class Politics of the National Policy, 1872-1933,” *Journal of*

The need to attempt to provide a system and to devise an overt means by which workers might seek to have grievances addressed declined in the early 1920s. As divisions amongst workers, an economic slump, and the assaults on the industrial unionists and socialists led to the decline of the workers' revolt and the OBU, the need for the JCI too declined. Thus, the organization ceased to exist as a permanent body in 1923, though the machinery that had been put in place in 1923 remained "in case of emergency situations." By 1923 there was at least a partial development of governmental machinery which accorded with the religio-philosophical position Gordon had long advocated, and a more general willingness amongst his elite counterparts to seek to work in accordance with that social vision.<sup>162</sup> To note as much is not to suggest that all men and women came to view the prescriptions that Gordon put forth in his imaginings of the "Christian democracy" positively. Indeed, as has been suggested above, a large number of men and women did not respond favorably to the prescriptions entailed by Gordon's definition of the "Christian democracy," and in some instances their unwillingness to concur with his ideals seemingly stood as an obstacle to the development of the future that he envisioned. What it is to suggest, however, is that the view that Gordon had

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*Canadian Studies*, 14 (Fall 1979), 14-38.

<sup>162</sup>Something of the depth of the fear that was inspired by the strike in Winnipeg is revealed by the fact that for the 25 years following it municipal politicians were no longer distinguished from one another by party lines, but, rather, those of class. See, Ed Rae, "The Politics of Conscience: Winnipeg After the Strike," *Canadian Historical Association Papers* 1971, 276-288; "The Politics of Class: Winnipeg City Council 1919-1945," in Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook, eds., *The West and the Nation: Essays in Honour of W.L. Morton* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1976), 232-249.

advocated in vain throughout the first decades of the twentieth century became relevant after the social upheaval of the postwar years when some members of the working class developed and sought to actualize their own, very different imaginings, imaginings that some, as James Naylor has observed, referred to as the “new democracy.”<sup>163</sup>

While obviously the future did not turn out as a reflection of either democratic vision, it is evident that policies geared toward achieving the end that Gordon championed eventually did become manifested in formal political apparatuses. In considering how and why ideals like those which he had professed in vain for several decades became relevant it is apparent that his social vision and the “new” liberalism that it expressed did not do so, as such scholars as Christie and Gauvreau have suggested, by the filling of “the vacuum left by the failure of urban progressivism led by business and labour following World War I.”<sup>164</sup> Rather, the defeat of working-class movements, and with them, if temporarily, the alternative view of what the future ought to look like, allowed for the reassertion of the liberal individualist visions of men like Gordon, visions geared toward sustaining and extending the liberal capitalist order to inform the shape of the future. It was the *creation of* such a vacuum combined with the fear engendered by the specter of social revolution in 1919 that provided the soil from which the beginnings

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<sup>163</sup> See Naylor’s *The New Democracy*.

<sup>164</sup> Christie and Gauvreau, *A Full-Orbed Christianity*, xiii.

of an order based on the socially-oriented liberal view that men like Gordon held could grow.

Thus, while some of Gordon's views were made "reasonable" by the end of the period under review, it is apparent that most of the aims that he expressed remained in the realm of fiction. His perspective evidences both a host of identities which themselves were indicative of a range of disparate power relationships which existed in the social order of which Gordon was a part, and which he to some degree reaffirmed. He also worked to achieve a different social reality – one he often referred to as the "Christian democracy." While he was unsuccessful in realizing many aspects of that view, in a broad sense his aim of developing a more socially oriented liberal order – one that spoke to the class polarization and bureaucratization of the social reality of which he was a part and in light of which he formulated his perspective. It is apparent that, as one who served to affirm the basic form of the politico-economic order, some of his aims became important to those who sought a broadly similar end.

#### Chapter 4: John W. Dafoe and the “Canadian Nation”

At about the same time that Charles Gordon related “lessons” through his novels and sermons, John Wesley Dafoe preached a complementary message, albeit from the editor’s chair at the *Manitoba Free Press* rather than from the pulpit. In contrast to Gordon, who made sense of himself, the wider world, and the relationships between the former and the latter in terms of divine influence and the “Christian civilization,” Dafoe embraced a more secular, racially-oriented, nationalistic view. Further separating the two men was that while Gordon maintained a relatively constant perspective, Dafoe’s view, as well as the direction of his energies, shifted markedly during the period under consideration. He began the century certain that Canada would develop into a wealthy, densely populated, liberal-capitalist nation. He, like Gordon, believed that on the Canadian prairies there would be born an ideal form of that society, one devoid of the pitfalls of poverty, pauperism, and social strife that plagued other nations, and one that would provide a sound future for humanity in general. Despite the fact that he held these high ideals, as was the case with Gordon, there was a considerable distance between them and the possibilities afforded by the social realities within which he operated. Indeed, the degree to which those realities made his utopia unrealizable is evidenced by the shape of his own mode of existence during the early years of the century. That is, as a staunch supporter of the Liberal party, and as a manager of a business concern, he undertook

courses of action that tended to contradict the ideals to which he gave voice, and to contribute to the undermining of the possibility of making his imaginings actual.

Particularly Dafoe's role as a businessman was an expression of a more general socio-economic state of affairs that, with the added strains of World War I, produced a period of social crisis which stood as the impetus for a fundamental shift in his perspective.

Coming to grips with the war and the postwar social upheaval ultimately translated into his moving away from the boundless optimism of the prewar years and toward a more defensive posture. While he remained committed to a liberal social vision, after the war and the postwar social upheaval a central goal was that of defending and transforming the liberal-capitalist social order in Canada and elsewhere in the face of rising dissatisfaction with it.

Before proceeding to consider Dafoe's secular, racially charged nationalism, a few comments are in order, for to note that Dafoe was a nationalist is, in and of itself, to relate little that is novel. In contrast to Gordon, Dafoe has received considerable attention, scholarly and otherwise, particularly in the 25 years or so following his death in 1944. All of those who have considered his life and thought have noted that he was a nationalist.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, the two central scholarly works on Dafoe – Ramsay Cook's *The*

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<sup>1</sup>See, for example, Victor Sifton, ed., *John W. Dafoe, Editor in Chief of the Free Press* (Winnipeg: Winnipeg Free Press 1944); G.V. Ferguson, *John W. Dafoe* (Toronto: Ryerson Press 1948); Roy St. George Stubbs, "John W. Dafoe," in Stubbs, ed., *Prairie Portraits* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1954), 59-84; Ramsay Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe of the Free Press* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1963); Murray Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press* (Toronto: MacMillan 1966); and his "J.W. Dafoe," in Robert L. McDougall, ed., *Our Living Tradition* fourth series (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1962), 84-97.

*Politics of John W. Dafoe of the Free Press* (1963) and Murray Donnelly's *Dafoe of the Free Press* (1966) – are organized around describing Dafoe as a “western liberal nationalist” and on explaining his views about and efforts in relation to a range of issues and events – for example, the Alaska boundary dispute, the question of territorial schools, the 1911 tariff question, the 1917 Union Government – which figured prominently in the formal political realm.<sup>2</sup> As nationalists themselves, Cook and Donnelly reassert and confirm the ideological project of which Dafoe and his counterparts were proponents. Dafoe himself sought to identify and celebrate the builders of the nation so as to express and, at the same time, legitimate a vision of what “Canadians” ought to be like. Cook and Donnelly, in turn, elaborate the “unique” role that Dafoe had played, both behind the scenes and in a more official guise through his work on government commissions and as an advisor to various officials, in the “formation and growth of the Canadian nation.”<sup>3</sup>

Clearly disputes among various figures over the nature of the legislative framework that would stand as the basis for the nation are significant. It is also evident that Dafoe corresponded with and likely influenced in some ways the men who shaped and enacted the policies and carried out debates involved in lessening imperial authority over, and binding the region of North America above the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel into an autonomous political entity. As such scholars as E.J. Hobsbawm and Benedict Anderson have noted,

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<sup>2</sup>Ramsay Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe of the Free Press*, 26-27, 31-34, 43-48, 78-85, 284-295; Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 44-46, 48-50, 57-59, 62-68, 78-85.

<sup>3</sup>This quotation comes from Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, ix.

however, “nation-ness” involves a great deal more. In particular, as is the case with many similar contested concepts, the definition of “the nation” that became embodied in the “official view” was an effort to codify and enshrine in law what was a shifting struggle over meaning amongst a host of contenders whose divergent experiences of the social order fostered different views of the proper goals of social change.<sup>4</sup>

Although the complexity of that struggle cannot be examined here in its entirety, conceiving of nationalism as a struggle to define the nature of the community and, hence, to determine the direction toward which the collective energies of the members thereof are aimed, encourages the examination of Dafoe’s roles not as an actor who sought to realize what was self-evidently or “essentially Canadian.” Rather, it directs attention to the fact that his own views contained within them an ideological perspective which included assumptions about the nature of human beings and prescriptions about the type of society that best suited them. It is also to recognize that not all men and women accepted the assumptions and prescriptions that Dafoe held, and to encourage placing him within the processes of struggle and negotiation that characterized the social matrix of which he was a part, and through which he came to understand and sustain himself.

In terms of his personal background, Dafoe, like Gordon, was born in rural Ontario. To be exact, he was born on 8 March 1866 near the town of Combermere,

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<sup>4</sup>Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1990), 101; Benedict Anderson has also provided a similar assessment in his earlier study entitled *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso 1991 [1983]).

Ontario where his father worked as a farmer and a lumberjack. He attended high school in Arnprior, Ontario before beginning his working career as a school teacher at Bark Lake, Ontario at the age of fifteen.<sup>5</sup> Two years later, in 1883, Edmund O'Connor, editor of the *Montreal Star*, hired Dafoe to work as a cub reporter.<sup>6</sup> He eventually began working in the press gallery in Ottawa, and it was there that he reportedly underwent a transformation from "Toryism" to "Liberalism." The community and family from which Dafoe came were staunchly Orange and Tory. He claimed that though he had considered himself a Conservative in his early years, he had not given politics much thought.<sup>7</sup> In a moment of reflection late in his life Dafoe claimed that the transformation had resulted from the inspiring performance of "the greatest parliamentarian in Canadian History," Edward Blake.<sup>8</sup> There is, however, some discrepancy on this point, for earlier, and somewhat less romantically, he claimed that his admiration for the party stemmed from the fact that there were "more sons-of-bitches per square foot in the Tory Party than there [were] in the Liberal Party."<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 7.

<sup>6</sup>J.W. Dafoe, *Sixty Years in Journalism* (Winnipeg: Publisher unknown 1943), 1.

<sup>7</sup>J.W. Dafoe, *Sixty Years in Journalism* (Winnipeg: Publisher unknown 1943), 2.

<sup>8</sup>Dafoe, *Sixty Years in Journalism*, 2. Edward Blake was the leader of the Liberal party.

<sup>9</sup>Murray Donnelly, quoted in University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections (hereafter UMASC), Collection TC 74, Tapes #17-74r "John W. Dafoe Transcriptions of the Original Recordings From the Sheila Rabinovitch Tape Collection" (1996), 18.

Whatever his reasoning, he befriended such key political figures as Sir Wilfrid Laurier and proceeded to build something of a career around criticizing Conservative politicians and policy. He did so well enough to attract the attention of the owner of the recently established *Ottawa Journal* who offered him a job as editor in 1885. He took up the position, but soon realized that he was “beyond his depth” and accepted a job offer from Archie McKnee, at the time the managing editor of the *Manitoba Free Press*.<sup>10</sup> He travelled to Winnipeg in May 1886, worked as the legislative reporter, and initially found an ally in the paper’s owner, W.F. Luxton, who was a Liberal MLA at the time. By 1890, however, Luxton had fallen out with key members of the administration of Thomas Greenway and was, as a result, “inclined to denounce anybody.”<sup>11</sup> Thus, Dafoe’s thrashing of the Tories – and his unwillingness to do the same to the Liberals – was no longer welcome and he returned East in 1892 to work once again for Edmund O’Connor, only this time as editor-in-chief of the *Montreal Herald* where O’Connor was now publisher. He remained at the *Herald* until 1901 when the new owner of the *Manitoba Free Press*, Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior in the Laurier Government, offered him a job as editor of that paper.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Dafoe, *Sixty Years in Journalism*, 5.

<sup>11</sup>Elmer H. King, “The Old Lady of Carlton Street,” in Marjorie Earl, ed., *Torch on the Prairies: A Portrait of Journalism in Manitoba, 1859-1988* (Winnipeg: Nor Wester 1988), 25.

<sup>12</sup>King, “The Old Lady of Carlton Street,” 25; Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 30.

In 1897 Sifton purchased the *Manitoba Free Press* in part because, as we have seen, the paper had become a source of criticism for the Liberal party, in part because he wanted to develop a strong Liberal voice in the West, and in part because he hoped to transform the paper into a profitable business concern. His first task was to find a suitable editor, and he initially decided on Arnott J. Magurn who had worked as political correspondent for the Toronto *Globe*. By 1900, Magurn's reportedly lack-luster performance and his incessant battling with the paper's business managers, first J.B. Somerset and later E.H. Macklin, led Sifton to decide not to renew the editor's contract which was to come due on 1 August 1901.<sup>13</sup> He, hence, once again found himself looking for an editor, and this time he chose Dafoe.<sup>14</sup>

One of the most striking facets of Dafoe's early musings in the editorial page of the *Free Press* was the centrality of natural resources and material wealth to his conception of the future of the nation. In contrast to Gordon whose aim was to encourage men and women to come to grips with their relationship to the divine, Dafoe was fixated on the possibilities offered up by various resources, and he seems to have enjoyed few exercises more than describing their nature and the possible future nation that they could sustain. In 1902, for example, he informed readers of the *Free Press* that the iron deposits of Cape Breton and the region North of Lake Superior had provided a basis for

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<sup>13</sup>D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton*, Volume I, *The Young Napoleon, 1861-1900* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1981), 214-218.

<sup>14</sup>D.J. Hall, *Clifford Sifton*, Volume II, *A Lonely Eminence, 1901-1929* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1985), 20.

considerable steel production. He not only believed that they would continue to do so, but, indeed, that these resources would “make Canada no unworthy rival of Pennsylvania.” In a similar vein, he remarked that “in the minerally rich province of British Columbia and along that modern Pactolus, the Yukon, the output of gold would bear comparison with that of California of the ‘50’s.”<sup>15</sup>

It is evident, however, that he did not view all of the natural resources as of equal significance to the future of the nation. It was, rather, the development of agricultural lands which stood as the “fundamental source of national wealth” that were particularly significant.<sup>16</sup> In Dafoe’s mind the “future of Canada was tied up with the development of the Western country.” These resources had been and would continue to be exploited, broadly speaking, according to the plan set out by his predecessors in the “National Policy.” The “fertile prairies” had allowed for and ensured “the future harvest of millions of bushels of wheat” which would be “turned into money.” The finances procured from these harvests underlay the “enormous trade done with the West by the East” in the opening years of the century, and Dafoe was confident that if burdensome Conservative

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<sup>15</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 15 March 1902. For a similar discussion see *Manitoba Free Press*, 1 January 1902, 3 December 1902. See also his later article entitled, “Western Canada: Its Resources and Possibilities,” *The American Review of Reviews*, 35, 6(June 1907), 702.

<sup>16</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 15 March 1902. Dafoe observed that the “great achievement” by the United States in the 19<sup>th</sup> century had been the “transformation of the West from a savage wilderness to a settled, orderly, prosperous and populous community within a single generation.” This process was “now being repeated north of the forty ninth parallel by Canada.” See, Dafoe, “Western Canada: Its Resources and Possibilities,” *The American Review of Reviews*, 35 (June 1907), 697.

fiscal policies did not hamper it, the trade would “go on increasing year by year by immense strides.”<sup>17</sup>

He viewed the bringing of the region into the liberal-capitalist fold and the exchange of commodities on the market, by way of a “peaceful invasion” as bringing about the end of a period of prehistory of sorts. Yet, his view of the relationship between men and women and between they and the non-human world involved a great deal more than a vaguely defined view of the “progressive” movement of that political economic logic into the region. To come to grips with the nature and significance of his view of the development of those resources and regions, however, it is essential to understand that, as was the case with Gordon, Dafoe’s entire view involved a vague, diffuse positivism which translated into the notion that there was a logic underlying human history. In this schema one of human beings’ central purposes was to discover natural laws which presumably governed the world so that they might interact with each other and with it in ways that maximized the advantages and minimized the disadvantages of doing so. Looking back over the 19<sup>th</sup> century, he remarked to readers that

a great deal has been said, and quite within the truth, as to the marvellous advance of knowledge and skill.... Never before in human annals did a century bring mankind to so decisive a mastery of Nature, to so deep an insight into her laws, as stand to the credit of the thinkers and workers of the three generations past.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 15 March 1902.

<sup>18</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 2 February 1902. Roderick Nash has explored similar conceptions of the relationship between “civilization” and “nature.” See his, *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press 1989); and his, *Wilderness and the*

Evidence for the veracity of this statement was found in the fact that “scores of hardships” which to generations past had been “as inevitable as winter’s cold” were now easily avoidable, and the lives that men and women could expect to live “grew longer and better worth having” while they lasted. Of particular significance in providing a longer, more pleasurable existence were inventors who provided “conveniences and luxuries unknown to monarchs of a century ago,” and physicians whose efforts led to a better understanding of the causes and means of treating disease. Indeed, with respect to the latter, he believed that he and his counterparts approached “the day when it would be deemed wicked to be ill.”<sup>19</sup>

Similarly, the development and functioning of human societies presumably involved a set of laws, and “progress” indicated the movement toward living in accordance with what was “natural” to human beings and their ways of relating to one another. In some respects the form of Dafoe’s reasoning mirrored Gordon’s. Like Gordon, Dafoe based his suppositions about what were superior modes of social organization on the state of affairs that he observed around him. More specifically, he made sense of and sought out the laws which presumably governed the world by observing the relationships entailed by the “new imperialism.” Instead of interpreting this geo-political reality as evidence of Britain’s divine sanction, however, Dafoe came to

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*American Mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1973).

<sup>19</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 3 February 1902.

view the workings of history by way of a racial schema. In his view, it was the “Anglo-Saxon race” that was central. It was the mode of social organization developed by this race that accorded most closely with the dictates of the laws that presumably underlay the evolution of human societies. The proof of the efficacy of the social order was, he thought, found in the fact that the “great Anglo-Saxon nations of the world, Great Britain and the United States,” were enormously wealthy and, indeed, occupied “a position of supremacy not fully understood by the average citizen.”<sup>20</sup> Efficacious modes of the social organization and the rightly directed wills of the individuals who presumably comprised such an order found favour not with a god, but with the process of selecting out the fittest form of society.

The general movement of “Anglo-Saxon” societies – that which explained their wealth and their dominance – was that toward a “democratic” system of governance.<sup>21</sup> By democracy, he envisioned “people standing equal in opportunity, governing themselves.” The democratic government would be one where “a free people, all equal in the law, governing themselves, enacting and enforcing humane laws, holding the scales of justice true between the mightiest and the humblest, providing universal education, coping with the problems of poverty and disease -- in short, making a world where

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<sup>20</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 16 June 1906.

<sup>21</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 3 February 1902.

freedom and happiness are not the privileges of the few but the achievable attainments of the many.”<sup>22</sup>

Like Gordon, however, while Dafoe believed that Britain and the US contained within them the seeds from which such a society might grow, and while he viewed Canada as, thus, linked with them, he did not believe that a “truly” democratic society had as yet been realized. As he noted,

democratic government dates from but yesterday. Perhaps it would be truer to say that it will date tomorrow -- that the race is today simply trying to accustom itself to the use of a freedom coming after countless centuries of subjection, and finding it hard to discard the shackles that had become second nature. Men today are free, in theory; in fact, they are escaping slowly, as they come more and more within the play of modern influences, from the moral and intellectual thralldom of the past. They still remain in subjection to ancient shibboleths and time-worn prejudices, rejecting in fact the freedom they hold in theory. Yet the Democratic dawn deepens, giving sure promise of the day.<sup>23</sup>

It is not surprising that, in light of his view of the end toward which human social evolution properly tended, he viewed as “other” societies wherein a non-liberal or “freedom-limiting” government reigned. He related this general view through his musings about the roles that Canada served with respect to the wider world – particularly in terms of immigration. As he explained in the Spring of 1902, in Canada

the Russian Quaker, who has endured for conscience sake a century of Muscovite tyranny, and the persecuted Pole, with the

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<sup>22</sup>UMASC. MSS 3. John W. Dafoe Papers (hereafter DP), box 16, folder 4. “The New Citizenship,” 1911.

<sup>23</sup>UMASC. MSS 3, DP, box 16, folder 4, “The New Citizenship,” 1911.

memory of the wrongs endured by his unhappy country burned into his soul, may each dwell in peace, forgetting the things that they have suffered, and learn to realize that all government is not organised tyranny.<sup>24</sup>

He further explained that to all “who [had] been burdened by oppression, Canada offer[ed] a sanctuary.” To “all these immigrants and more,” he proclaimed, “Canada offer[ed] a ... kindly welcome.”<sup>25</sup>

In light of contemporary elite views of eastern and southern European immigrants, which were rarely expressed more clearly than in Gordon’s *The Foreigner*, it is perhaps not surprising that Dafoe defined “Canadian-ness” and the form of social organization entailed thereby in distinction to the social systems that he believed existed in their countries of origin. It is worth emphasizing, however, that he viewed these immigrants positively and, as is implied in the quote above, as welcome in Canada. So long as they were hardworking, sturdy, and agriculturally-oriented, he was happy to see the country populated with even those, like the Doukhobours, whose “strange habits” made them questionable to some of his elite counterparts.<sup>26</sup>

His tolerance of immigrants whom he believed were debased but potentially beneficial did not carry over to Britons. To Dafoe, as with Gordon, the problem with

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<sup>24</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 26 April 1902.

<sup>25</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 26 April 1902.

<sup>26</sup>Dafoe actually defended the Doukhobours against Conservative critics during outbreaks of “religious mania” in 1901 and 1902. See, for example, *Manitoba Free Press*, 19 September 1901, 11 October 1901, 20 January 1902, and 10 November 1902.

Britons was that they had grown up within a society that contained an aristocratic tradition. Dafoe's view of the democratic society entailed the lack of a social system that he viewed as entitling individuals to material wealth and social prestige by no other criteria than the fact that they were born of parents who belonged to a privileged minority. Again, as with Gordon, this perspective is most easily perceived in Dafoe in his musings about men and women who entered Canada from Britain.

With regard to the aristocracy, he believed that those who came to Canada were not particularly threatening, for they lost "their accent and methods when they established themselves in Canada." That is to say, their "stiffness, their phlegm, their positiveness, and their exclusive notions ... melted away" and were "confounded in the atmosphere of go-as-you please" which he believed enveloped the Canadian "social organization."<sup>27</sup> The major threat that these individuals posed was in their efforts to develop policies in Britain – where their exclusivity presumably reigned supreme – that would affect those living in the "go as you please" atmosphere of what Dafoe believed was the basis of social organization in Canada.<sup>28</sup>

He seems to have viewed the effects of this "atmosphere" -- something akin to the "frontier forces" that Gordon discussed -- on the working class as negligible. His

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<sup>27</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 29 June 1902.

<sup>28</sup>The number of articles in which he bemoaned imperial control of Canada is enormous. Cook and Donnelly have paid close attention to Dafoe's views of the relationship between Canada and in British empire. For a typical statement see, "Our Future in the Empire: Our Alliance Under the Crown," in J.O. Miller, ed., *The New Era in Canada* (Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons 1917), 279-299.

reservations about these men and women were particularly pronounced in his analysis of those who had entered Canada, and particularly Winnipeg, and had become a “public charge.” These immigrants he thought, were of two types -- those deserving of aid and those who were “parasites.” With respect to the deserving poor, those who in economically sluggish periods found work hard to obtain, he thought that “the dictates of humanity and self-respect compels [sic] the city to extend relief.”<sup>29</sup> To this end, he further noted, a shelter had been erected by the Salvation Army. The object of the shelter “was excellent” and became problematic only in that “intended as it was to give temporary aid to men whose means of subsistence gave out” it had “become their permanent abode.” The men, Dafoe further observed, did not seem to be ashamed of having to ask for relief, but, in fact, made up little ditties to sing while they waited in line at City Hall to “get tickets from the relief officer entitling them to another week’s lodging.” He found the levity with which the men asked for relief appalling and as evidence of the personal qualities that had caused their plight in the first place.<sup>30</sup>

To Dafoe’s mind, endemic poverty was not part of the ideal that he envisioned and if there were such men and women, it was the result of individual spiritual and moral failings rather than with anything about the social system itself. While in theory the deserving and undeserving poor could be of any nationality, Dafoe believed that those from British cities constituted the bulk of the latter group. As he explained, “the

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<sup>29</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 5 April 1905.

<sup>30</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 5 April 1905.

predominant element were the Englishmen with the cockney accent who ... demeaned themselves by their constant appeal for aid." Having accumulated "this collection of physical and moral wastrels," the question became that of "how to get rid of the community of them."<sup>31</sup> He thought that any social welfare efforts should be engineered to sort the deserving poor from the "parasite" and should serve to imbibe the "chronically out-of-work" with certain habits. Making those who applied for relief "do a certain amount of work" before receiving either food or lodging would serve the former purpose. In terms of the undesirable habits, particularly the "vermin and filth that [were] the natural concomitant of the habitual out-of-work" -- "the aversion to cleanliness being one of his most powerful emotions" -- were in need of correction.<sup>32</sup> Dafoe believed that "if every applicant for relief [was] made to submit to strict regulations regarding cleanliness," it would not only help to remedy this problem, but would also "have a great effect in causing the chronic out-of-work and parasite on charity to seek other fields than Winnipeg upon which to exercise their art of imposition."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 5 April 1905.

<sup>32</sup>It is likely that Dafoe's concern with the cleanliness of immigrants was connected to the periodic outbreak of typhoid epidemics which affected those in the North End particularly severely. See Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1975), 227-235. In slightly later years, the immigrant-working-class sections of the city were also those hit hardest by Influenza. See Daniel Hiebert, "Winnipeg: A Divided City," in Donald Kerr, et al., eds., *Historical Atlas of Canada, Volume III, Addressing the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 1891-1961* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1990), Plate 31.

<sup>33</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 5 April 1905.

While Dafoe thought that the aforementioned course of action was the best way of dealing with parasitic, working-class Britons who were in Canada, even better strategies were to bar them from entering the country in the first place, or to have them re-educated prior to leaving Britain. Thus, he applauded British efforts to train immigrants for life in Canada prior to their departure for several years and by 1905 believed that the philanthropic organizations of Britain “now as highly organized and specialized as a railway company or a big manufacturing enterprise,” were travelling the right path to “abolishing the charitable pensioner, whose existence, by continued doles, was reduced to the lowest degree of efficiency and pauperism.” They had done so by establishing a farm near London where they sent “deserving men ... before their sailing for Canada for training in the practical work of farming.”<sup>34</sup> Similarly, three years later Dafoe explained that “the welcome which western Canada extends to desirable settlers is most cordial and was never more so than it is now.” Persisting in his view of the West as central to the development of the nation and in his belief in the necessity of excluding debased Britons who might otherwise introduce the qualities that resulted in their dirty, dependent existence into western Canada, he elaborated that

arable lands, at present wholly unoccupied, are calling for settlement. Railway lines have been built through these districts and are prepared to afford communication between farms and the outside world. Canadian manufacturers are ready to supply all the essentials of comfortable life. The development of the industrial life of the entire Dominion is bound up with the settlement of

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<sup>34</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 13 May 1905.

suitable colonists on these uncultivated areas. Under these circumstances the arrival of thousands of healthy, industrious law-abiding immigrants who are prepared to settle on these lands and bring them under cultivation must be a matter of large interest to the people, not only of the West, but to a large extent of the entire Dominion.<sup>35</sup>

He emphasized, however, that while the policy of the Liberal government had been to encourage the influx of these settlers through advertising and offering steamship operators financial incentives, it was imperative that “no bonus is paid for townsmen, tradesmen, or artisans.” The ideal settler remained the individual who had “been accustomed to farm life in their former homes.” Alongside this criterion, the other factor that now loomed large was that “paupers or demented or physically-diseased persons ... not be transported in order that escape may be had from the burden of their maintenance.” Of particular concern were the “immigrants from some of the large cities of Britain, and notably from east London,” who were “destined to become a charge on the public revenue.” The solution, he thought, to all of these problems and the means of assuring that only “suitable” settlers gained admittance into the country was to have all immigrants pass through London so that the Canadian representative there could assess their “fitness to become self-supporting citizens of this country.”<sup>36</sup>

In contrast, he viewed Americans and Canadians as kindred spirits. Both groups had grown up in environments which were devoid of impeding artifices, and, were

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<sup>35</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 13 April 1908.

<sup>36</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 13 April 1908.

defined by efficacious qualities and thus, to his mind, welcome.<sup>37</sup> As he explained in the fall of 1902, for example, he thought that American settlement was “a fact fraught with significance both materially and internationally.”<sup>38</sup> That they were “men of Anglo-Saxon stock and speech” was by no means problematic. What was more important, however, was that they were “men of tireless energy, ample means and agricultural skill” who would “bear no inconsiderable part in opening up for the benefit of Canada and mankind the limitless material resources of the country ... they selected for their home.”<sup>39</sup> Indeed, as he later recalled, their experience on the American prairies allowed them to succeed in Canada where others had failed. Large districts which had been, according to Dafoe, “tabooed by Canadian settlers had become prosperous and populous because the American newcomer showed himself to be competent to raise immense harvests upon land erroneously regarded by the first settlers as semi-arid.”<sup>40</sup>

Moreover, American settlers, he thought, served to stimulate further immigration in two ways. First, he reflected, the northward trek of Americans had validated the claims

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<sup>37</sup>Indeed, unlike Gordon, who, as we have seen, viewed Americans as a lawless lot, the central problem for them to Dafoe’s mind seems to have been that space in their nation was becoming limited. He was not the only one to have come to this conclusion. Frederick Jackson Turner’s influential, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* was written after the official closing of the frontier in 1891 largely in an effort to come to grips with what the role of the frontier had been so that Americans might plot a course forward without the egalitarianism bred of recurrent exposures to the “savagery.” See, Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* (New York: Irvington 1993 [1893]).

<sup>38</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 25 October 1902.

<sup>39</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 25 October 1902

<sup>40</sup>J. W. Dafoe, “Western Canada: Its Resources and Possibilities,” *The American Review of Reviews*, 35 (June 1907), 702.

that some Canadian officials, particularly Clifford Sifton, had made about the boundless opportunities offered up to land-hungry settlers. That is, once “the fact of American success on the Canadian prairies was driven into their consciousness,” previously reluctant settlers “began to hold that if Western Canada was good enough for ‘Yankees’ it was good enough for them.”<sup>41</sup>

In a slightly different vein, he recollected that the influx of settlers from the United States played to international tensions of the day. For several decades British officials had nervously eyed the ascendancy of the United States. In part, their advocacy for the development of a confederacy to the North stemmed from their desire not only to sustain a potential market, but also to slow the growth of the Republic.<sup>42</sup> The spectre of an “American invasion” of the British Dominion, Dafoe believed, had stirred otherwise apathetic British officials to study the conditions in and develop means of directing the flow of settlers who were *properly trained* as farmers and farm labourers from the British

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<sup>41</sup>Dafoe. “Western Canada.” 702.

<sup>42</sup>Cain and Hopkins provide a compelling account of Canadian confederation from an international perspective. See their *British Imperialism, 1688-2000* (London: Longman 2001), 230. Canadian scholars have also been aware of these facets of confederation and the “National Policy,” as well as the fact that financial rather than diplomatic bonds were the glue that tied the empire together. See, for example, Donald Creighton, *British North America at Confederation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1939), 9; Harold Innis, *Essays in Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1956), 395; Frank Underhill, *The Image of Confederation* (Toronto: CBC Publications 1964), 24-26; R.T. Naylor, “The Rise and Fall of the Third Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence,” in Gary Teeple, ed., *Capitalism and the National Question in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972), 15; A.A. denOtter, *Civilizing the West: The Galts and the Development of Western Canada* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press 1982), 41; Peter J. Smith, “The Ideological Origins of Canadian Confederation,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 20(1987), 28; see also, den Otter, *The Philosophy of Railways: The Transcontinental Railway Idea in British North America* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997), 185-207.

isles to Canada.<sup>43</sup> In Dafoe's eyes this was an agreeable scenario, for not only had Americans constituted a source of sturdy agriculturists for the "awakening giant of the North," but their movement into Canada had also "prickled the national pride" of both imperially-minded eastern Canadians and their counterparts in Britain which, in turn, translated into the development of policies geared toward securing yet another potentially "vitalizing stream of humanity."<sup>44</sup>

In all of these instances Dafoe counterposed himself and the "Canadian community" of which he imagined himself a part with "others." Central among the qualities that he hoped would come to constitute the populace in Canada were those that would aid in transforming the "fundamental source" of the nation's wealth from a potentiality to an actuality. In particular, he hoped that sturdy, hard-working, agriculturally-oriented immigrants would take up homesteads, cultivate crops, and exchange them on the market. Yet, the significance of Dafoe's insistence on agricultural producers is not only or primarily interesting because it reveals a preference for the country over the city.<sup>45</sup> Rather, what is interesting about his means of constructing and projecting meaning onto this conceptual divide is that it was linked with a more general

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<sup>43</sup>In the 1907 article Dafoe provided an overview of western Canadian development to that point in time. He, hence, included information about British emigration schemes which had been a subject of discussion earlier in the century. See, for example, *Manitoba Free Press*, 2 September 1901.

<sup>44</sup>Dafoe. "Western Canada," 702-704.

<sup>45</sup>Raymond Williams directs considerable attention to the significance of the shifting meanings and feelings associated with this conceptual split. See his, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press 1999 [1975]).

uneasiness amongst his elite counterparts. In particular, as was the case with Gordon, it was concerns over the materialistic emphasis of Canadian society and increasing social polarization and its results, including especially the advent of a “leisure class” and an increasingly large urban proletariat, that were most troubling.<sup>46</sup> Noted American scholar Thorstein Veblen, for example, provided an acerbic analysis of the society of “pecuniary emulation” and its roots.<sup>47</sup> In Canada, Stephen Leacock, Veblen’s student, echoed these views in his quasi-fictional satire of Montréal elites.<sup>48</sup> In a different, though related vein others viewed the problem as stemming from “over-civilization.” That is, they worried that these transformations might be the manifestation of a disconcerting law of civilization whereby the results of “success” – measured in terms of the level of material wealth an individual accumulated – tended to undermine the virility, capacity for hard work, determination, and other “success making” qualities and propensities that had been

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<sup>46</sup>Both T.J. Jackson Lears and Ian McKay have identified this “anti-modernism” as a transnational cultural phenomenon of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. See T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon 1981); Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1994)

<sup>47</sup>Thorstein Veblen, *A Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York: Random House 1934 [1899]). Veblen argued that human social evolution contained four central stages. In the earliest, that of primitive savagery, was a sort of golden age. In this era there was no leisure class, but, rather, men and women were equals and all worked for the benefit of the group (5). With the advent of an increasingly sophisticated division of labour, however, the scene was set for the “coercive utilisation of man by man” (10). Veblen placed the advent of a recognizable leisure class in the second stage of human evolution, that of “predatory barbarism.” (20)

<sup>48</sup>Stephen Leacock, *Arcadian Adventures With the Idle Rich* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1965 [1914]). For information about Leacock’s involvement with Veblen see Ramsay Cook, “Stephen Leacock and the Age of Plutocracy, 1903-1921,” in John S. Moir, ed., *Character and Circumstance: Essays in Honour of Donald Grant Creighton* (Toronto: MacMillan 1970), 168.

so generously rewarded in the first place. The deterioration of these qualities was particularly problematic when combined with the fact that the rugged, Spartan existence of the subaltern classes supposedly imbibed them with the strength and virility to overthrow their leisurely counterparts.<sup>49</sup>

Not surprisingly, responses and proposed solutions varied in their particulars as widely as did views of the sources of the problem itself. Like the diagnosis, the proposed remedies for the perceived maladies of modern life also shared a similar thrust. In general it was not the socio-economic system itself which came to be viewed as a problem, but, rather, the degradation of spiritual virility which many observers believed the increasingly inequitable social order entailed.<sup>50</sup> Some, perhaps best exemplified in Canada in the personage of George Taylor Denison, urged a celebration of martial values as a means of awakening the conquering spirit.<sup>51</sup> Others sought spiritual awakening through occult religions, a practice that Stephen Leacock spent some time satirizing in his *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich*.<sup>52</sup> What is more, while Leacock himself may

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<sup>49</sup>Lears discusses these concerns in an American context in his, *No Place of Grace*, 21-32.

<sup>50</sup>Ramsay Cook, "Stephen Leacock," 164-167. It is also worth noting that these sentiments came to be expressed in turn-of-the-century poetry as well. Archibald Lampman, for example, expressed disdain for the increasingly large urban centres as well as for the politicians and millionaires who became increasingly prominent during these years. See, his "The City of the End of Things" (1899), "To a Millionaire" (1900), and "The Modern Politician" (1900), in Malcom Ross, ed., *Poets of the Confederation* (McClelland and Stewart 1984), 73, 80.

<sup>51</sup>On Denison see Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1970), 12-22.

<sup>52</sup>Leacock, *Arcadian Adventures*, see in particular chapter four entitled "the Yahi-Bahi Oriental Society of Mrs. Rasselyer-Brown," 57-78.

have chided some of his counterparts, he did so only to propose a different path to a similar end – namely, that of fostering an invigorating international spiritual bond through developing a more tightly-knit imperial federation.<sup>53</sup>

Dafoe neither totally accepted the more dire predictions of some of his counterparts, nor, hence, the means by which they sought to avert their realization. Rather, while he acknowledged as early as 1902 that “the hearts of civilized men [had] been softened within less than a century is a fact too little in our view,” he did not regard this development as entirely problematic. Counterposing the world in 1902 with the century that preceded it, he argued that the “marvellous advances in knowledge and skill,” which the scientists and engineers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had obtained, and the corresponding increase in wealth that these “discoveries” made possible, contributed toward the advent of a more compassionate and spiritually and culturally rich society. As he explained, “one of the commonplaces of history” had been “that a nation must first be rich if it is to flower.” His attitude toward those who he termed the “dissident voice,” that is those who claimed that “the noble Canadian character [was] being depreciated by the acquisition of wealth,” seemingly did not waiver over time.<sup>54</sup> Approximately a decade later, for example, he told members of the Fort William branch of the Canadian Club that “a man was never more harmlessly engaged than while engaged in money making.” He further explained to his audience that

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<sup>53</sup>Cook. “Stephen Leacock.” 171.

<sup>54</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*. 3 February 1902.

ninety-five per cent of money is made honorably, and while we all deplore a man in the grips of money lust -- the most frightful appetite that can conquer a man, the one appetite that age cannot kill nor abundance surfeit -- yet the reasonable desire of the individual to make a competence for his children is one of the most laudable ambitions; and I am sure that the growing wealth of Canada and of Canadians is being employed very nobly for the purposes of public good.<sup>55</sup>

From these reflections he elaborated that “we want a progressive people, and it is a very proper thing for every man, as far as his abilities go, to make as much money as he can.”<sup>56</sup>

Nevertheless, like Gordon and the others Dafoe did perceive a general law of civilization and decay. He mused that the dominant position of the “Anglo-Saxon race,” though perhaps seemingly “assured to the end of time,” was not so. Just as Gordon understood himself in relation to the broad sweep of human history, Dafoe looked back over the ages and argued that Rome, once in a similar position of being the “proud mistress of the world,” had met a catastrophic end. Even a “domination so strongly entrenched” as that of the “Anglo-Saxon race,” one that surpassed Rome at its zenith, was, nevertheless, subject to the “mutability of all things earthly.”<sup>57</sup>

Where others sought solace in military drills, religious movements, and imperial federation, Dafoe pursued, at least throughout most of the prewar years, a more moderate,

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<sup>55</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, Box 16 Folder 4, “Optimism as a Factor in Empire Building: An Address to the Fort William Canadian Club, 1911” 33.

<sup>56</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, “Optimism as a Factor in Empire Building: An Address to the Fort William Canadian Club, 1911,” 33.

<sup>57</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 16 June 1906.

materially-centred course. His belief that there was the possibility for an affable future for Canada and the wider world was a strong one, and that such was the case primarily resulted from the fact that he viewed the Canadian nation itself as providing a means of developing a “truly” democratic alternative to the social polarization and poverty of the increasingly urban and industrial societies that became ever more clearly manifested around the globe. In a broad sense, he believed that for the “Anglo-Saxon race” to perpetuate its position of dominance would require “a wholesome public, commercial and domestic life, by clean democratic administration of laws ... and a broad and just attitude towards each other on the part of the United States and Great Britain.” The “vast fertile plains” of the Canadian West, he believed, had provided a context wherein

thousands of homeseekers from Great Britain and the United States are settling side by side with the sons of the soil. Of all Anglo-Saxon countries Canada possesses the best system of government and the best type of citizen. The welding together in this country of overseas Britons and Americans into an harmonious whole with Canadians is perhaps the most notable movement of the times and fraught with the greatest of results from an Anglo-Saxon point of view. It presents a visible and concrete example of kinship and compatibility, comprehensive enough to include the old countryman, the colonial and the son of the Republic. Canada’s great West has the climatic conditions, the resources and the laws to breed, maintain and wisely govern the most virile community of Anglo-Saxons in the world.<sup>58</sup>

The vastness and “unlimited capacity” of the territory of northern North America made it “one of the best guarantees of the supremacy of the race,” and ensured that “Anglo-

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<sup>58</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 16 June 1906.

Saxonism, united in sympathies and ideals, [would] largely control the progress and evolution of humanity for many generations.”<sup>59</sup>

What is implied in these remarks is both the tension that lay at the base of Dafoe’s thoughts and a description of the solution that he proposed for it. In this view, for the benefit of Canada and the wider world, the problems associated with modern life could be averted through strict adherence to policies that would contribute to the development of an agrarian-based, egalitarian society. In “older communities ... by the operation of social and commercial conventions and regulations ... access to the means of making a competence [had] become almost a privilege.” On the Canadian prairies, however, conditions were different. These “conditions [were] simply that here, more than anywhere else on the globe large rewards [could] be earned by individual energy.”<sup>60</sup> Having “struggled long against unfavourable conditions in other lands” and having “given up the unequal struggle,” settlers could “start afresh in a country where success reward[ed] enterprise and industry.” Thus, individual property holders pursuing their respective self-interests on the level playing field of the Canadian prairies would constitute a society which was a truer expression of the democratic society that was “natural” to the human condition. Its vastness ensured that it would sustain that ideal individualistic society, the efficacy of which was evidenced by the dominance of societies of a similar, if imperfect, sort.

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<sup>59</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 16 June 1906.

<sup>60</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 1 August 1901.

Had men and women accepted this view, it is relatively easy to surmise that it would have served to promote a belief that a liberal view was not only a way to understand human beings and their relationships with each other and the wider world, but indeed, that the individualistic society was itself etched into the very laws governing the functioning of the universe. To move toward the ideal that Dafoe envisioned would maximize the number of men and women who could live a fulfilling existence. To move away from it was to court disaster. It is evident, however, that as was the case with Gordon, despite the relatively prominent position that Dafoe enjoyed as editor of a newspaper that was not only the most widely circulated in Manitoba, but was also highly regarded and widely read both nationally and internationally, it is impossible to determine who his musings reached and, importantly, how the men and women that they did reach received and acted in light of them. Considering the utopia that he envisioned is significant. It is through considering these views that we can provide important insights into the relationship between the ideals that Dafoe held up and the possibilities allowed by the social reality in which he operated. Considering his early vision and subsequent shifts within it, moreover, allows for an understanding of key periods wherein shifts in the nature of the social reality necessitated alterations in Dafoe's means of conceiving of and explaining the world around himself.

In considering his efforts it is apparent that there was a marked difference between the nature of his earlier efforts, and those of later, particularly postwar, years. Besides reflecting on the future greatness of the Canadian nation in editorial columns in the early

years of the century, he was also, as has been implied throughout the chapter thus far, a political infighter. In part these efforts involved the harsh editorials of which Cook and Donnelly have provided carefully researched analyses. It also, however, involved a lesser known set of responsibilities, the nature of which are most easily comprehended in light of the role of the *Free Press* in the political machinery of the era.

To some extent, it is difficult to unearth the exact nature of the operation of what was an extensive political network. Particularly problematic is that Sifton destroyed much of the correspondence relating to it – including many of the letters that he and Dafoe exchanged.<sup>61</sup> Further complicating matters is that many of the letters and telegrams that do remain are written in code. Nevertheless, in considering those letters that do exist and that are written in standard English, it becomes apparent that particularly in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Sifton devoted himself to maintaining a vigilant watch over the national political situation and to doing anything that he could to make sure that his party attained or remained in control of it. As D.J. Hall has noted, “a skillfully manipulated press was important” to obtaining this end, for “it could sustain party morale, counter opposition thrusts, and keep a positive image of the Laurier government constantly before the public.”<sup>62</sup> The means by which Sifton sought to manipulate these media channels was through his “Press Bureau” in Ottawa. Though

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<sup>61</sup>Cook, in his *The Politics of John W. Dafoe and the Free Press*, mentions that Sifton instructed Dafoe to burn correspondence prior to 1910. See page 297.

<sup>62</sup>Hall, *A Lonely Eminence*, 145.

much of the particulars of this bureau remain shrouded, it is, as Hall further notes, “clear that the principle organs in the English-language network were the Montréal *Herald*, the Toronto *Globe*, and the *Manitoba Free Press*.”<sup>63</sup> Obviously in considering Dafoe’s role, it is the *Free Press* that is of interest, and what becomes clear in examining his efforts is that as far as media networks go, with Dafoe at the helm, the *Free Press* and the *Free Press* office stood as the nucleus of a web of lesser newspapers. In essence, the smaller papers were dependent not so much on the *Free Press per se* as they were on the Liberal party patronage for which the paper’s offices and editor served as distribution centre and distributor respectively. In return for presenting candidates, political figures, and policies in an “appropriate” manner, papers received advertising contracts and subscriptions from the government – in particular, from the Department of the Interior for which Clifford Sifton served as Minister for the first years of the twentieth century.

The extent of this patronage network is indicated by the fact that by 1904 there were 35 papers in Manitoba, 22 in the Territories, and 16 in British Columbia on the Liberal patronage list. The central means by which Dafoe helped to maintain the press network was through channelling government money to papers through purchasing advertising space and subscriptions. Both Dafoe and Sifton, however, were aware of the fact that money was in itself not enough to ensure that the messages and portrayals remained friendly. One of Dafoe’s tasks, thus, was to keep track of who edited which

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<sup>63</sup>Hall, *A Lonely Eminence*, 145.

paper and whether they were friendly or were with, as he termed Conservatives and their sympathizers, “the enemy.” While he could manage to keep an eye on the city papers, he explained to Sifton in late 1908 that “it is impossible to keep track of the politics of the country weeklies, which are continually changing hands.” As a result, he undertook a complex campaign of correspondence. “I ... communicated with all the candidates in the last election in each constituency,” he explained, and asked them “to report any additions or changes.” Having received the candidates’ responses, he renewed or cancelled advertising contracts and subscriptions accordingly.<sup>64</sup>

As to the type of messages they deemed suitable for continued funding, it is clear that Sifton and Dafoe demanded nothing less than unswerving loyalty. That is, the lesser-known newspapermen had to follow a line similar to that which Dafoe himself followed in the *Free Press* – namely, they had to consistently present Liberals in a positive light and Conservatives in a negative one no matter what. Those who sought a more moderate path were, to Dafoe’s mind, not to be trusted or funded. On 11 January 1910, for example, a J. Bruce Walker who worked in the Office of the Commissioner of Immigration wrote to Dafoe explaining that a new editor had taken over at *Der Nordwesten*.<sup>65</sup> The new editor’s first column included the announcement that “a German

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<sup>64</sup>*Clifford Sifton Papers*, Reels C 734-C735, “Correspondence With J.W. Dafoe,” (Ottawa: National Archives of Canada 1953), microfilm (hereafter Sifton Papers), Dafoe to Sifton, 31 December 1908.

<sup>65</sup>Sifton Papers. J. Bruce Walker to Dafoe, 11 January 1910. The commissioner of immigration was, according to D.J. Hall, given charge of keeping track of and seeking to rally the immigrant vote.

weekly of such widespread influence as this paper [Der Nordwesten] should not in questions of either Provincial or Federal Politics follow a party through thick and thin. Our readers prefer to be informed above all about the contrasts of the two parties.” The purpose of the paper, as he saw it, was to educate readers and to “make clear this or the other political question.”<sup>66</sup> Ten days after having received the initial reports about the unwillingness of the new editor to promote Liberal party policy, Walker wrote to Dafoe informing him that he had “suspended the contract between his paper and the Department.”<sup>67</sup>

While Dafoe was instrumental in exercising control over media channels, his job was by no means limited to financing and ensuring that newspapers related the “right” news. Rather, he carried on a regular (i.e. sometimes daily) correspondence with Sifton in the early years of the century which covered topics ranging from determining if and how particular political issues would be dealt with in the *Free Press* and other papers, to which candidates would run for which constituencies, to who would be appointed to judgeships, to who would receive patronage jobs.<sup>68</sup> In March 1909, for example, Sifton wrote to Dafoe asking about the status of a man named Francis Sedziak who had asked

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<sup>66</sup>Sifton Papers. Walker to Dafoe. 20 January 1910. The editorial originally appeared in *Der Nordwesten* on 5 January 1910. There is a copy of the translation of the article in Sifton’s papers which was originally attached to Walker’s 15 January letter to Dafoe.

<sup>67</sup>Sifton Papers. Walker to Dafoe. 20 January 1910.

<sup>68</sup>See, for example, Sifton Papers. Dafoe to Sifton. 4 February 1904; 11 December 1903; 4 October 1906; 6 October 1909.

Sifton “to recommend him for the position of mechanical Engineer with the Transcontinental Railway.”<sup>69</sup> Dafoe replied several days later noting that he thought that Sedziak was “alright both in a professional and political sense.” He was “an educated Pole, and held positions of responsibility in St. Louis before coming here.” Dafoe “believed him to be fairly proficient at his calling, which is that of a mechanical engineer,” and to be “an active liberal” who had “considerable influence with his countrymen.” As a result, he got Sifton’s backing.<sup>70</sup>

In other instances, the role of distributor of party will (both good and ill) took on a more sensational form. In December of 1908, for example, Dafoe related a strange tale about one J.W. Baker who the officials for the Grand Trunk Pacific were thinking of making superintendent of their telegraph system. Dafoe explained to Sifton that the appointment would be “bad ... from every point of view, particularly from a political one.” The problem lay in the fact that

Baker was at one time, at least nominally, a Liberal, although I never heard that he did any active work on our behalf; but, some months ago, he went over completely to the other side. This would not have been so bad, if he had been frank about it; but, during the last campaign, he played a treacherous role. He tried to make himself busy in our committee rooms, and he also went out of his way to impress upon me that he was labouring earnestly for [Liberal candidate] D.C. Cameron – whereas, as a matter of fact he was a very active member of the Conservative machine.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>Sifton Papers. Sifton to Dafoe, 12 March 1909.

<sup>70</sup>Sifton Papers. Dafoe to Sifton 18 March 1909.

<sup>71</sup>Sifton Papers. Dafoe to Sifton, 10 December 1908.

Dafoe reassured Sifton that he and his counterparts in the party “knew this all the time; and he was therefore not able to do us any harm.” For his part, Baker found it “impossible to maintain his double-faced role and, towards the end of the campaign, was frankly Conservative.” Dafoe had heard, however, that Baker “had made a dicker with them [the Conservatives] by which in return for his support of the Conservatives in the Dominion election, the Conservative machine should ensure his re-election as controller of the city of Winnipeg. To Dafoe’s delight Baker lost his election by about 1000 votes. He knew, however, that “it would be just like Bob Rogers to get his dear friend Frank Morse to give Baker a good job.” It was, Dafoe thought, up to Sifton and the Liberal machine “to see that he does not get it if there is anyway to stop it.” The aim was not only to ensure that one who was a turncoat in Dafoe’s eyes would find hardship, but also that allowing Baker to be in close proximity to confidential communications “would be very undesirable.”<sup>72</sup>

It is clear that these undertakings did not accord with the “clean government” that Dafoe spoke of in his musings about the ideal society that he hoped would develop in Canada. They also seem relatively distanced from, and, indeed, seem likely to have, if taken to their logical end, stunted the growth of the kind of meritocratic society that Dafoe thought was the promise of the nation. It is also clear that whatever faith Dafoe had in the frontier “atmosphere,” the direction of his efforts suggest that such a force did

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<sup>72</sup>Sifton Papers. Dafoe to Sifton. 10 December 1908.

not immediately transform immigrants into a populace who supported free trade and other liberal policies.

While the case of the engineer Sedziak is indicative of the fact that immigrants were central to Dafoe's political aims, it is clear that the nature of Dafoe's efforts suggest that the forces of the frontier were not enough to ensure that immigrants voted correctly. Despite the fact that in theory the Commissioner of Immigration (in the earliest years of the century the Commissioner was J. Obed Smith) was responsible for securing the immigrant vote, Dafoe also did not, as is implied with the example of *Der Nordwesten*, hesitate to employ tactics similar to those he used with respect to newspapers generally speaking.<sup>73</sup> In addition to punitive measures, he also rewarded those who seemed pro-Liberal. On 22 January 1904, for example, after having "had a talk" with "a man named Lange" who was "one of the leaders of the Benedictine German settlement near Rosthern," he explained to Sifton that Lange was "exceptionally well educated ... and [was] very well disposed towards us." The Benedictine Germans had, he continued,

started under his editorship a German newspaper called St. Peter's Bote which is being published at Rosthern. He [Lange] tells me that while it is not the intention of the paper to take part in politics, its main purpose being religious, it is prepared to say a good word for the Liberal Government on its record in settling the west.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>Hall mentions the role of the Immigration Commissioner in his *A Lonely Eminence*, 156.

<sup>74</sup>Sifton Papers. Dafoe to Sifton, 22 January 1904.

As such, Dafoe advised Sifton that if he could “throw any business their way it would be an expenditure that can be justified on its merits.”<sup>75</sup>

The bulk of his efforts in seeking to win the votes of recently arrived immigrants, however, appear to have been tied up with publishing non-newspaper propaganda in the appropriate language.<sup>76</sup> Likely owing to the fact that he believed that many of the eastern European immigrants were unintelligent, he thought pamphlets with a particular candidate’s picture and with captions reading, “This is the Government Candidate for such and such a constituency, all Galicians should vote for him” would be most effective. However insulting the pamphlets might have been to the immigrants who read them, the volume of material required in Liberal propaganda campaigns reached such heights that by late 1908 Dafoe wrote to Sifton that the *Free Press* facilities were insufficient to meet the demand as were the facilities of the local bindery at which “15000 small pamphlets of 16 pages represented the maximum daily output.”<sup>77</sup>

It is possible that Dafoe dealt with the divergence of his view of the ideal form of the Canadian nation and the nature of, as well as his role within, this formal political realm by viewing Liberal governments and Liberal policies as essential to the development of the end he envisioned. There is, however, no evidence to suggest that he

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<sup>75</sup>Sifton Papers. Dafoe to Sifton, 22 January 1904.

<sup>76</sup>It is interesting to note that Dafoe directed his efforts in this regard both toward the French and toward Ukrainians — “Galicians” as he called them. See, Sifton Papers. Dafoe makes mention of a French and a “Galician” pamphlet in letters written to Sifton on 11 December 1903 and 7 April 1904 respectively.

<sup>77</sup>Sifton Papers. Dafoe to Sifton, 18 November 1908.

ever sought to reconcile the separation between the future he imagined and the fact that his own efforts did not conduce to the obtaining of that end. Whatever the case, it is evident that determining who received which jobs as a result of their loyalty to a political party, and the coercion of newspaper editors with regard to the content of their papers were seemingly not conducive to the advent of, or in line with the character of, the liberal society that Dafoe envisaged.

While this inconsistency is significant, what is perhaps more important for coming to grips with the nature of the social transformations that eventually proved most fundamental to shaping his perspective is examining his role as a leading figure in a business concern. Indeed, next to strategizing about how to ensure that Liberals would obtain or remain in political office, and how to sustain the “right” flow of information, despite the fact that in theory the onus of the business and financial part of the operation fell with business manager E.H. Macklin, the profitability of the *Free Press* figures prominently in surviving letters between Dafoe and Sifton. While the particulars of Dafoe’s exchanges about circulation, competition, and so forth reveal little of the ways in which the economic conditions of the day informed the ways that Dafoe acted, it is seemingly the case that his efforts within the Western Associated Press (WAP) do, and it is toward a consideration of his efforts in relation to that agency that the discussion now turns.

To understand the significance and nature of the WAP, it is necessary to view it as formulated within and in response to the social and economic situation in which Dafoe

operated. During the last decades of the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century, one of the central socio-economic developments was the concentration in ownership. Despite the fact that historians have frequently cited the abundant opportunities of the frontier as a significant factor in western Canadian history, as David Burley has recently convincingly argued, by the turn of the century, no such reality existed.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, as was alluded to in Chapter 2, the advent of an increasingly inequitable, urban-industrial society was manifested with ever-increasing clarity in the first decades of the twentieth century in the very urban landscape of Dafoe's own hometown of Winnipeg. The CPR yards stood as a dividing point, and while the tracks themselves were only a few yards wide and were easily traversed, the social distance that separated those living in the North and South stood as an increasingly impassable chasm. This burgeoning state of affairs was reflected in the form of the ideal society that Dafoe imagined. That is, Dafoe's conceptualization of poverty and pauperism as caused by an outside force and, hence, as "other" than Canadian still reveal that these phenomena of impoverished men and women – however much he disdained or ridiculed them – were a part of his experience, one which he acknowledged if only to explain it away.

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<sup>78</sup>David Burley, "Frontier of Opportunity: The Social Organization of Self-Employment in Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1881-1901," *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, 31(Mai-May 1998), 35-69. This notion of the frontier as a force in western Canadian history is exemplified by the work of historians like David Bercuson and Alan Artibise. See, for example, Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1990 [1974]); Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth*, 29-30.

In any event, the miserable conditions in which many inhabitants of the largely immigrant, working-class North end lived have been well documented both by concerned contemporary social reformers and latter day historians.<sup>79</sup> While interclass relations were, as will be seen, significant for Dafoe's view particularly in the second decade of the twentieth century, it is intra-class relations that are of central concern for understanding his efforts during the first. The concentration in ownership which took on a particularly feverish pace during the last decade of the nineteenth and first decade of the twentieth century had several significant ramifications for the newspaper industry. First, it led to a "commercialization" of the industry.<sup>80</sup> Throughout much of the nineteenth century newspapers were generally relatively small and were created not only or solely for the purposes of making a profit. In fact, during this period, the vast majority of newspapers were affiliated with a particular political party and ran less than 500 copies at a time.<sup>81</sup> By the late nineteenth century, rather than being small proprietors, the owners or those who invested heavily in newspapers were often the nation's leading capitalists. Men like

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<sup>79</sup>For contemporary accounts see G.F. Chipman, "Winnipeg the Melting Pot," *Canadian Magazine*, 33, 5(September 1909), 409-416; J.S. Woodsworth, *Strangers Within Our Gates, or Coming Canadians* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972 [1909]); and his *My Neighbour: A Study of City Conditions, a Plea for Social Service* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972 [1911]). For historical accounts see Alan Artibise, *Winnipeg*, 177-194, 223-245. See also Daniel Hiebert, "Winnipeg: A Divided City," in Donald Kerr, et al. eds., *Historical Atlas of Canada, Volume III, Addressing the Twentieth Century, 1891-1961* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1990), Plate 31.

<sup>80</sup>Minko Sotiron, *From Politics to Profit: The Commercialization of Canadian Daily Newspapers, 1890-1920* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1997). See also, Paul Rutherford, *A Victorian Authority: The Daily Press in Late Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1982).

<sup>81</sup>Douglas Fetherling, *The Rise of the Canadian Newspaper* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1990), 23.

mining magnates Francis Cochrane and Robert Dunsmuir; department store owner Timothy Eaton; food processing giant and financial magnate Sir Joseph Flavelle; and, we might add, financier Sir Clifford Sifton purchased papers with the intention of both putting forth a particular political perspective, but also of turning a profit.<sup>82</sup>

Though Dafoe, who travelled in journalistic circles all of his life, did not comment on the concentration of newspapers as it occurred, he was not, in later years, unaware of the differences between the papers of his youth and those which existed during the last decades of his life. As he explained to members of the Manitoba Historical Association in 1930, “if you want to start a newspaper nowadays you can do it with \$300,000 or \$1,000,000; but those were the days [the 1880s] when political papers could be established given a handful of type, a printer and a slashing writer.”<sup>83</sup> Similarly, in an address to the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, Dafoe compared the early 1880s when he began his career to his own present over 40 years later. In the intervening years, he remarked,

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<sup>82</sup>Sotiron, *From Politics to Profits*, 133. It is worth mentioning that while Sifton was always concerned with the profitability of the *Free Press*, by the end of the period under consideration here, he was increasingly so. While the waning of animosities between he and his counterparts was likely negligible, in the early 1920s the Southam family who had begun the first newspaper chain in Canada at the turn of the century, purchased the *Winnipeg Tribune* in the early 1920s. The Southams infused what had been the lesser of the three Winnipeg dailies with “all the features and advantages that the chain could afford” so as to compete with the then dominant *Free Press* (Sotiron 134). Sifton had to choose either to sell or to begin his own chain so that he could compete. He chose the latter course, thus bringing into existence what became a media empire to which John Porter drew attention in his *The Vertical Mosaic*.

<sup>83</sup>UMASC, DP, box 16, folder 5. “Pioneer Newspapers and Newspapermen: Lecture Delivered by J.W. Dafoe, Editor in Chief of the *Manitoba Free Press* at a meeting of the Manitoba Historical Association,” 2 April 1930.

there [had] been a revolution in methods, techniques and purposes of newspaper making. What were the influences that brought about the change? Forty years ago the publishing of newspapers with certain exceptions, was not a business proposition. The newspaper press was still a part of the fighting equipment of the political parties. In the still earlier days when a handful of type, a few printers, a flat press and a bewhiskered old gentleman equipped with a thorough knowledge of the villainies of the other party and a gift of invective constituted the essential equipment for a paper.<sup>84</sup>

While the developments associated with this transformation are many, a central one for understanding the WAP was that as business concerns increased in size, the efforts of one to increase profit margins could result in the encroaching onto the bottom line of another, related business concern. It was precisely this scenario that provided the impetus for the organization of the WAP in 1907. Prior to 1907 the amassing and transmission of news was carried out by the corporations that owned the telegraph lines which formed parts of the increasingly dense web of communication networks that tied those living in various regions of Canada together and, in turn, linked the nation to the wider world. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, those who were coming to dominate in the field of telegraphic communications, thus, were the railway companies who had instructed workers to string telegraph cable alongside each mile of track they laid. The Canadian Pacific Railway (owner of Canadian Pacific Telegraph) was particularly powerful, for the company was the first to extend a railway across the entire North American continent

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<sup>84</sup>UMASC, DP, box 16, folder 4, "Manitoba Editor Reveiws the Evolution of Newspaperdom," undated.

above the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel, and, hence, were the first to have telegraph service over the same expanse. Indeed, by the last decade of the nineteenth century, they held a virtual monopoly over telegraph services in what was as yet a sparsely populated western Canada.<sup>85</sup>

Early in July 1907, officials at Canadian Pacific Telegraph (CPT) notified the owners and operators of the three Winnipeg dailies (the *Free Press*, *Tribune*, and *Telegram*) that “commencing 1 August, they would receive their basic news service in a new form, over a new route and at a new price.” Up until the summer of 1907 news came to Winnipeg directly from Montréal, and consisted of a composite service which included “an abbreviated Associated Press [AP] report and a summary of Canadian news.” Under the new arrangement, the composite report would be abandoned and the AP report would be delivered to Winnipeg via leased wire across the border in St. Paul, Minnesota. Additionally, it would be necessary for Canadian papers to bring Canadian news from the East at their own expense and the price for the delivery of the AP report from St. Paul was twice the amount the Winnipeg papers had been paying for the composite services from Montréal. In total, the new service format would cost Winnipeg newspapermen from three to four times as much as had been the case.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>85</sup>The other major telegraph company in Canada at the time was the Great North Western which was affiliated with the Grand Trunk Railway.

<sup>86</sup>Nichols. *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 20.

In theory the owners of Winnipeg's dailies detested each other either for political reasons or as a result of personal disputes, or both. For example, Clifford Sifton — a staunch Liberal, one time Attorney General of Manitoba, one time Cabinet minister in the Laurier government, and owner of the *Free Press* — reportedly hated R.P. Roblin — a Liberal-turned-Conservative, Premier of Manitoba, and part owner of the *Winnipeg Telegram*. Sifton also reportedly detested Robert Rogers, “the power behind the Roblin throne,” and held no small measure of disdain for R.L. Richardson, owner of the *Winnipeg Tribune* who resented the Sifton's being appointed to a federal Cabinet position in 1896 and registered his discontent by regularly criticizing Sifton and by contesting Sifton's run for office in Brandon.<sup>87</sup>

Yet, what D.J. Hall has shown to be Clifford Sifton's insistence that the *Manitoba Free Press* be a paying concern seems to have at times superceded personal enmities and party loyalties.<sup>88</sup> When faced with the dramatically increased cost of production entailed by the Canadian Pacific Telegraph rate hikes, the owners of the major Winnipeg papers decided, as did many of their counterparts in various other lines of business, that cooperation against a common enemy was preferable to competition and division. Thus, within 24 hours of having been notified about the new rates that were to come into effect, representatives (Dafoe, M.E. Nichols, E.H. Macklin, and R.L. Richardson) of each of the

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<sup>87</sup>Nichols notes the sources of tension between the owners/operators of the three papers in his *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 18-19.

<sup>88</sup>On Sifton's view of and efforts to ensure that the *Free Press* was a money-making endeavour, see, Hall, *A Lonely Eminence*, 145-148.

major Winnipeg dailies met. The first meeting was to ascertain the frame of mind of each representative and their respective employers. It soon became apparent that all were committed to fighting the CPR and, at least informally, they directed the considerable political and financial clout of the papers and their respective owners to the battle.<sup>89</sup>

Initially the newspapermen did not make their plans public. Rather, they set about tending to the practical tasks of making the envisioned news-gathering agency a reality. Among the first tasks that they undertook was to determine how they might gather the news that they needed for their papers with neither the help of CPR employees, nor the Associated Press report, the rights for which the CPR held. Dafoe, Nichols, and Richardson believed that between them they could cover events within much of North America by expanding the scope of the news-gathering efforts their correspondents employed in major Canadian and US cities. For international news they turned to a range of smaller organizations including the United Press Association, the Publishers' Press, and Lafferin's.<sup>89</sup>

After having made the necessary arrangements, the three dailies announced on 31 July, the day before the inauguration of the new Canadian Pacific Telegraph arrangement, their intention to develop a cooperative news gathering agency that would be called the Western Associated Press. The official beginning of cooperative news gathering in Canada, however, would not become a reality until 3 September 1907 when the

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<sup>89</sup>Nichols. *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 21.

<sup>89</sup>Nichols. *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 30.

government of Manitoba gave legal status to the efforts of the Winnipeg publishers by granting a charter to the WAP. The initial board consisted of M.E. Nichols (president), R.L. Richardson (vice president), E.H. Macklin (treasurer), and J.W. Dafoe (secretary).

Though Dafoe ended his official involvement with the managing of the affairs of the newly formed company a short time after its incorporation, he did not remain aloof of the battles that ensued shortly thereafter.<sup>90</sup> By the end of September 1907, the WAP was doing well. The populist sentiment that was growing in intensity on the prairies and that was given a formal voice in organizations like the Grain Growers' Association, meshed well with a western association opposing the "big interests" of the East. A number of western papers signed on with the WAP. Indeed, by the end of September, Dafoe reported to his employer, that "all the Winnipeg papers are staunch and have made two year contracts with the W.A.P. We already serve seven outside papers and will pick up the whole lot once we bring the C.P.R. to time."<sup>91</sup> Though some western newspapermen remained hesitant to sever ties with the CPT, the WAP functioned well enough and had taken over enough CPT business that by the end of September it had, in the view of B.S. Jenkins (General Superintendent) and John Tait (District Superintendent), become intolerable. The two men, thus, set out to destroy the cooperative news gathering company. They attempted to do so by citing a company rule that had never been invoked

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<sup>90</sup>Nichols mentions that Dafoe resigned as secretary on 23 September 1907. See, *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 31.

<sup>91</sup>Sifton Papers, Dafoe to Sifton, 26 September 1907.

before which stipulated that press rates for dispatches carried via CPT wire applied only to press matter addressed to a single newspaper office. Any material addressed to the WAP, because it represented more than one paper, was subject to a 50 per cent surcharge.<sup>92</sup>

The newspapermen argued that it cost the company no more to send information to the press service than to the individual papers. Though Tait and Jenkins were unmoved, the Winnipeg newspapermen were not to be outdone. To circumvent this rule, they asked their New York agencies and the correspondents from whom they received their news to address the dispatches to individual newspapers. Having received a dispatch, each paper would share with the others.<sup>93</sup> Tait and Jenkins again went searching for policies that would enable them to thwart the Winnipeg editors' efforts. In searching through company regulations, they found a rule that served their purposes. Now they noted that press rates applied only to dispatches received by and used in only one paper. On hearing of the new rule, E.H. Macklin wrote to Tait. He explained that the *Free Press* had been "receiving messages over Canadian Pacific Telegraph for over twenty-five years and never had been advised of the rule that was now applied." He further argued that

If ... the Canadian Pacific can make this the condition of granting press rate privileges, we do not see why it should not further stipulate that press rates shall only be allowed on such dispatches as meet with the approval of the Superintendent of the Canadian

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<sup>92</sup>Nichols, *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 34-35.

<sup>93</sup>Nichols, *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 35-36.

Pacific Telegraph, or such other official as may be nominated by the company to supervise and censor newspaper matter.<sup>94</sup>

Tait reiterated company policy and asked for a guarantee that the *Free Press* would adhere to it.

Judging from the evidence, Dafoe remained remarkably quiet up to this point.

The tactics of the CPT officials, however, seem to have struck a raw nerve, and his irritation is apparent in his explanation of the situation to his employer, Clifford Sifton.

“The C.P.R.,” Dafoe explained,

is very hostile, ... they have the nerve to put forward the contention that in transmitting telegrams to our paper at press rate, they do so on the understanding that they can be used in our paper only. This, if admitted, would prevent the exchange of news which is the basis of our association and would put the W.A.P. out of business. I am now carrying on a correspondence with the C.P.R. which is likely to get to the public one of these days. We intend of course to fight the C.P.R. on this point to the finish, because to give in would be to let them rivet their collar on our neck.<sup>95</sup>

On 27 September, the day after he wrote Sifton, press rates were formally withdrawn from the Winnipeg Papers. A short time later the correspondence that he mentioned in his letter to Sifton did indeed get to the public. Dafoe gathered all of the correspondence between Winnipeg newspaper editors and the CPT and published it on the front page of

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<sup>94</sup>Cited in Nichols. *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 36.

<sup>95</sup>Sifton Papers. Dafoe to Sifton, 26 September 1907.

the *Free Press*. He also included a headline, printed in the largest capital letters possible, that read: “TRIED TO PUT ITS COLLAR ON THE WINNIPEG PAPERS.”<sup>96</sup>

Aware of the appeal a David-and-Goliath portrayal of events would have for prairie populists, Dafoe described the struggle between the WAP and the CPT in those terms. On 2 October, for example, he explained that

the C.P.R. appears to be the only licensed free booter left. This Dick Turpin still swaggers along the highways, spoiling the wayfarers with insolent nonchalance of the knight of the road. Let him enjoy his license while he may, for even now the shackles are being forged that will end forever his career of plunder.<sup>97</sup>

Similarly, the following day he explained that the battle was not centred on profit margins, but rather, on principles. Western editors were, “thrown on their own resources by their declaration of independence, and threatened by angry powerful corporations, which had deemed itself impregably rooted in monopoly, organized in self defense, the Western Associated Press.” The reaction against the WAP was reportedly “nothing new,” for “monopolies like the C.P.R. are never brave enough to risk a contest, unless they have some secret, cowardly, illegal advantages.”<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>96</sup>Nichols, *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 36; *Manitoba Free Press*, 7 October 1907.

<sup>97</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 2 October 1907.

<sup>98</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 2 October 1907.

Despite a series of blunders on the part of CPT officials, Dafoe and the others found themselves at a stalemate.<sup>99</sup> After attempting, with little success, to gain concessions by contacting Sir William Shaughnessy, president of the CPR, they went to Sir Wilfrid Laurier and, ironically in Dafoe's case at least, explained that if he could not force concessions, freedom of the press was imperiled. Laurier contacted the CPR headquarters and found that Shaughnessy and his counterparts, who apparently sought to scapegoat Tait and Jenkins, claimed that they "had no previous knowledge of the rupture between the western newspapers and their (the CPR's) telegraph department." He, however, promised "to give the matter immediate attention."<sup>100</sup> Several hours later, the CPT notified the Winnipeg papers that press rates would all revert back to those which prevailed before 1 August and that meetings would be held to determine the relationship between the CPT and WAP.

Beyond demonstrating that Dafoe lived and had to operate within a reality informed by the increasing concentration of capital, and beyond shedding light on some

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<sup>99</sup>Of particular significance was that CPT officials sought to silence those who were proponents of the WAP. Such was the case with F.J. Deane, owner of the Nelson, BC *News*. When he refused to cease his criticism of the CPT, officials of the company informed him that "as nothing seems to please you the Associated Press service will be discontinued after September 30." The WAP men did not fail to see that this effort to silence Deane presented them with a golden opportunity to foster sympathy for and to further publicize their efforts. In the *Manitoba Free Press* of 5 October 1907, Dafoe ran a front page article entitled "MUST WORSHIP OR BE PUNISHED." He and the other editors also publicized the fact that the WAP provided Deane with a skeletal news report and thereby enabled him to continue with his paper. These tactics gained the WAP sympathy from other newspapers across the country. On this incident see, *Manitoba Free Press*, 3 October 1907, 5 October 1907. See also, Nichols, *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 39.

<sup>100</sup>Nichols, *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 44.

of the dynamics between large business concerns in that setting, the WAP seems to have served another function as well. In particular, while conflicts between large firms were significant, what other scholars have noted was a more general movement toward cooperation and efforts to move away from competition also was expressed through the WAP. As M.E. Nichols recalled, those who were already members “were on singularly friendly terms with one another.” Tensions arose, however, with the “question of admitting new members which meant subjecting our established members to competition.” Those who decided who would be admitted and who would not were the board of directors of the WAP who were also the operators of the leading Winnipeg dailies. Before the papers were admitted to the WAP, the applicants had to demonstrate that the town in which they were planning to operate could sustain another paper, or had to show that he would not interfere with a pre-existing paper.<sup>101</sup>

It is interesting to note that it was established newspapermen who were interested in maintaining and expanding profit margins — indeed, were so struck on it that they unflinchingly entered into battle with one of the largest corporations in Canada at the time — should be those who also determined to some degree who could and could not belong to a news service and determined when the region was “over-serviced” by newspapers. To established newspapermen aiming to limit the number of competitors and to gain market share it would take only a few papers to “over-service” a given region. The fact

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<sup>101</sup>Nichols, *The Story of the Canadian Press*, 51.

that the WAP was in direct conflict with the CPT which controlled the AP report meant that it was probably not as effective in delimiting competition as some of its members would have liked. Nevertheless, the seemingly contradictory aims of challenging the control that accompanied the advent of monopoly capitalism, and seeking to engender the stability that would result were cooperation among a handful of large business enterprises achieved, speaks to the more general tensions under which Dafoe and the other Winnipeg editors operated.

While Dafoe's ideal and his actions, as well as the socio-economic system for which the latter provided evidence, remained unreconciled in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, World War I and its aftermath led him to a different view and set of concerns. Still, as both Cook and Donnelly have noted, his support for the war was consistent with his nationalism. The war effort was a Canadian struggle. A war effort that was to be carried out by Canadians, for Canada, and in alliance with Britain.<sup>102</sup>

Moreover, Dafoe, like many of his counterparts, appears to have initially underestimated the extent and duration of the devastation that would be brought about by the war. If he, understandably, had not predicted that tens of millions of casualties and the devastation of the economic infrastructure of much of Europe would be the result of the conflagration, he did appreciate the gravity of the situation after the fact. In 1918 he welcomed the end of the conflict. He did so not only because it theoretically signalled the

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<sup>102</sup>Both scholars spend a considerable amount of time dealing with Dafoe's wartime experiences. See, for example, Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe*, 65-107; Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 76-97. See also Ferguson, *John W. Dafoe*, 49-63.

end of death and destruction, but also because he was to attend the Paris Peace Conference and saw it as an opportunity to lay the foundations for an era of peace and, as Cook and Donnelly have emphasized, as a means of redefining Canada's role with respect to the rest of the world.<sup>103</sup>

What Donnelly and Cook have not been as attentive to was the fact that in addition to finding Canada's status as an autonomous political entity exciting, and in addition to deeming the squabbling of diplomats troubling, the war and postwar social crisis led to a dramatic alteration of Dafoe's perspective. During the Peace Conference of 1919, and with the memory of the mass slaughter of the war years fresh in mind, Dafoe nervously eyed the social upheaval which surrounded the hotels in which he and other delegates held meetings supposedly geared toward determining the shape of the postwar world.<sup>104</sup> He may have, in accordance with his prewar view, hoped that Canada would be immune to such upheavals, though if he had such hopes, they were undoubtedly put to rest in the Spring of 1919.

The causes of the labour revolt lay both with deeply-rooted historical processes and with more immediate developments related to World War I. In terms of the long term developments, the most central had to do with the concentration in ownership which, as we have seen, informed Dafoe's efforts in the WAP. The flip side of business

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<sup>103</sup>Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe*, 88-90; Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 85-97.

<sup>104</sup>See, for example, his discussion of the Spartans in the *Manitoba Free Press*, 22 February 1919. For a discussion of strikes in Italy see, *Manitoba Free Press*, 28 April 1919. These articles were two in a series of "Special Cable" articles that appeared in the *Free Press* in the winter and spring of 1919.

strategies geared toward concentration and cooperation was that workers found themselves with less control over their working lives as mass production and “rationalization” became more pronounced. This “degradation of work” encouraged workers to experiment with industry and class-based unions as a means of confronting their employers.<sup>105</sup> In addition to these general trends, with the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, the Canadian government encouraged Canadians to “subordinate private to public concerns,” thus tearing “many groups of Canadians from their traditional social and ideological moorings” and opening a wide-ranging, intense debate about ‘reconstruction’ in post-war society.” This debate came to include returning veterans, many of whom, having endured the misery of trench warfare and believing to have made a considerable sacrifice for the common good, thought that they should have a say in the direction of postwar Canadian society. Other voices included those of farmers, social gossellers, and, of course, working-class men and women.<sup>106</sup> The war also had the effect of providing a boost to what had been a sagging economy and of providing an initial increase in living standards for working-class men and women. Additionally, labour shortages allowed workers greater power relative to business owners. The initial material gains soon began to deteriorate in the face of rising inflation, while the greater degree of control over their working lives seemed likely to slip away in the postwar years if there were a return to

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<sup>105</sup>Larry Peterson, “The One Big Union in International Perspective: Revolutionary Industrial Unionism, 1900-1925,” *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 7(Spring 1981), 41-66.

<sup>106</sup>Craig Heron, ed., *The Workers’ Revolt in Canada, 1917-1925* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998), 17.

“business as usual.” The combination of deeply-rooted historical processes with wartime conditions – and particularly the economic strains and talk of democracy and sacrifice of the individual for the common good – led to an upheaval in Canada that resembled those which took place around the world in this period.<sup>107</sup>

From Vancouver to Nova Scotia workers expressed their dissatisfaction with the society in which they lived through strikes, independent labour parties, and class-based industrial unions. This general state of unrest, as is well known, was clearly expressed in Winnipeg where workers staged a general strike in 1919. The workers organized and coordinated their activities through a Strike Committee. Employers, often working closely with the federal government, guided efforts to defeat the strike through the Citizens’ Committee of 1000.<sup>108</sup> By 1919 Dafoe was thoroughly connected up with what

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<sup>107</sup>Heron, *The Workers’ Revolt*, 18-20. How best to interpret the nature and meaning of the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 has been a point of contention among historians of labour and the working class. During the mid and late 1970s such historians as David J. Bercuson and A. Ross McCormack argued that the strike and “radicalism” in western Canada more generally were regionally specific. Left-wing scholars like Gregory Kealey, Bryan Palmer, Nolan Reilly, and, more recently, Craig Heron, argued that the strike and the “radicalism of the era were part of a more general wave of unrest that was of national and international proportions. The latter interpretation both is logically consistent and accounts for evidence which has come to light since the earlier studies appeared. It is, hence, the one adopted here. For examples of the earlier works on the strike and western radicalism see, David Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations and the General Strike* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill Queen’s University Press 1990 [1974]); A. Ross McCormack, *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries: the Western Canadian Radical Movement, 1899-1919* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1977). Of the later accounts, see Nolan Reilly, “The General Strike in Amherst, Nova Scotia, 1919,” *Acadiensis*, 2(Spring 1980), 55-78; Gregory Kealey, “1919: The Canadian Labour Revolt,” *Labour/Le Travail*, 13(Spring 1984), 11-44; Craig Heron, ed., *The Workers’ Revolt*. Another volume that is useful for putting Canadian events in their international context is Leopold Haimson and Charles Tilly, eds., *Strikes, Wars, and Revolutions in an International Perspective: Strike Waves in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Cambridge University Press 1989).

<sup>108</sup>Bercuson, *Confrontation at Winnipeg*, 115-141.

Donnelly terms the “Winnipeg establishment,” and his immediate reaction was to condemn the strike.<sup>109</sup> On the advice of Clifford Sifton, however, Dafoe attempted to urge a dialogue between the two parties and offered suggestions about how they might come to an agreement.<sup>110</sup> After several days it became clear that strikers were both determined, strong, and adept at organizing their efforts -- all of which proved unsettling to Dafoe and his counterparts. What compounded the situation for him was that much of his own staff joined the strike thus shutting down his paper for several days and reducing it to a single page for several more.<sup>111</sup> He, hence, cast whatever moderation Sifton had inspired in him by the wayside and, approximately from a week after the strike began on 15 May until it ended on 25 June, he made the *Free Press* the “virtual mouthpiece of the Citizen’s Committee.” He continually condemned the strike as a revolutionary act and he allowed his friends on the Committee of 1000 to run full- page ads at no cost.<sup>112</sup>

In terms of his envisioning himself and the values and ideals of his community, he remained constant with his prewar views in that he insisted that Canada was peculiarly

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<sup>109</sup>Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 105. See also G.V. Ferguson, *John W. Dafoe*, 59-60. Ferguson notes that during these years Dafoe frequented the Manitoba Club. Indeed, once a week he met prominent businessmen and politicians there to discuss political strategy. It is also worth noting that on his death, Dafoe had accumulated a fortune of approximately \$170,000. For a discussion of his estate see clipping dated 1 March 1944 in UMASC, *Winnipeg Tribune*, Personality File for J.W. Dafoe.

<sup>110</sup>UMASC, DP, Box 13, Folder 4, Sifton to Dafoe 12 May 1919; *Manitoba Free Press*, 16 May 1919.

<sup>111</sup>Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe and the Free Press*, 99; Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 102.

<sup>112</sup>Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe and the Free Press*, 100; Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 105.

suites to a liberal-capitalist politico-economic order, and Canadians were the “type” of people who accepted parliamentary democracy. The strike and the socialism that was associated with it were organisms of foreign birth. They were diseases with which “red agitators” – that is, a small group of “aliens” – had infected the nation’s “bonafide citizens.”<sup>113</sup>

The ability to sustain such a view was clearly impeded by the fact that literally thousands of men and women crowded into the streets in support of the strike. Unshaken in his convictions, Dafoe argued that these “thousands of people” were there “for no other reason than to share in the excitement of the moment.”<sup>114</sup> He reminded readers of the *Free Press* that it was “illegal for people to belong to tumultuous crowds. Further it [was] highly dangerous. In street affrays,” he warned, “it is often the on-lookers who suffered the most.” He warned the “well-meaning people who had no business to be on the street” to “keep away from the crowds.” Several days later he wrote of “Bloody Saturday” and complained that “despite the warnings in the press and in the proclamations of the mayor thousands of people flocked towards the Market Square on Saturday afternoon from no higher motive than idle curiosity.” Of these “idle sight-seers,” he recalled, a “very considerable proportion ... were women and girls.” He hoped

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<sup>113</sup>Donald Avery, “The Radical Alien and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919,” in Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook, eds., *The West and the Nation: Essays in Honour of W.L. Morton* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart), 220.

<sup>114</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 11 June 1919.

that the “experience of Saturday” would have “some influence upon these foolish thoughtless folks.”<sup>115</sup>

More narrowly, he could not help but notice that a prominent element in the “crowds” had been returned soldiers, the loyalty of whom was difficult to question. He reported that one such individual had contacted him and assured him that “he and his comrades had no connection with the strike movement.” Rather, their parades were an “independent effort on the part of a section of the returned soldiers to get a settlement of the strike by the enactment of a law making collective bargaining compulsory.” Yet, Dafoe observed, if these parades were independent, it was “rather surprising that they should be addressed in Victoria Park before they start out by strike leaders.” He warned that “these returned soldiers should take very serious consideration of their position for the purpose of deciding for themselves whether they have not been misled into a false position by a smooth line of talk.”<sup>116</sup>

This “smooth line of talk” was, he later explained, a “panacea” developed by theorist akin to and likely connected up with those living in Russia. The general strike was an example of a more general tendency wherein men and women attempted to “achieve social and economic freedom by a short cut,” as opposed to following the presumed “natural” path of liberal democracy. That is, by removing themselves from and attempting to supercede the natural evolutionary process they strayed from what he

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<sup>115</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 22 June 1919.

<sup>116</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 4 June 1919; see 6 June 1919 for similar.

called the “one path” to “progress.”<sup>117</sup> The struggle to obtain a “proletarian dictatorship” where the “proletariat would rule and the bourgeois and capitalist would become hewers of wood and drawers of water for the labor aristocracy” would, if left unchecked, have similar results as that in Russia -- namely, “civil war, bloodshed and anarchy.” The “anarchistic socialists” were bent on creating “theories which human nature is, now, at any rate, quite unfitted to put into practice.” Workers must, he furthered, apply to these doctrines “the tests which knowledge and past experience alone can supply before following them further.” Though he suggested that workers were generally capable of testing the propositions that the “agitators put forth,” he reminded them that there were “agencies which [were] ready and eager to assist [them] in their search after the truth in economics, in social science and in politics.” The only problems were the “barriers of distrust and suspicion” that had been reinforced by the rhetoric of ultra-socialist demagogues.” If left to itself, he felt confident, “Canadian labor,” which had “the traditional regard of the Britisher for the courts and constituted government” would adopt a more reasonable course.<sup>118</sup>

Dafoe’s views on this question mirrored those of many of his counterparts. Often historians have explained the rather highly charged manner of speaking about, as well as

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<sup>117</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 28 May 1919.

<sup>118</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 19 June 1919.

acting in response to, the wartime conditions and the strike as resultant of “hysteria.”<sup>119</sup> Generally speaking, it is not clear that this formulation is particularly useful in explaining so much as it is helpful for explaining particular modes of thought and behaviour away. By accrediting what were unquestionably highly charged ways of speaking and often overtly oppressive measures to a temporary insanity of sorts, it is possible to pass the era off as an anomalous blip on Canada’s otherwise “orderly and moderate political culture.”<sup>120</sup> The actual behaviour of elites in the war and postwar years are not readily explained as resultant of a collective seizure. Rather, as Tom Mitchell has shown, the immediate response to the strike involved much planning and contemplation not only in making sure that anti-strike efforts would have the most effect, but also in engineering legislation to broaden the capabilities of the business-government coalition which eventually crippled the strike to do so most thoroughly and with lasting effect.<sup>121</sup>

A sounder understanding of Dafoe’s response to the strike emerges when it is viewed in terms of the more general view of the world that he held. As has been noted, labour unrest was far from limited to Winnipeg – or, for that matter, Canada – in the postwar years. The direct action that workers undertook in the “economic realm” to

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<sup>119</sup>See, for example, Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe and the Free Press*, 99-102; Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 102-105.

<sup>120</sup>A. Ross McCormack, *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries*, 171.

<sup>121</sup>Tom Mitchell, “‘To Reach the Leadership of This Revolutionary Movement’: A.J. Andrews, the Canadian State and the Suppression of the Winnipeg General Strike,” *Prairie Forum*, 18 (Spring 1993), 239-253; and his “‘Repressive Measures’: A.J. Andrews, the Committee of 1000 and the Campaign Against Radicalism After the Winnipeg General Strike,” *Left History*, 3-4 (Winter 1995/Spring 1996), 133-167.

instate the socialist future that many of them envisioned was anathema to the quasi-democratic liberal political order that existed, just as it was, therefore, to any such future state of affairs. For Dafoe, who believed that liberal democracy was itself peculiarly suited to the presumed nature of human beings and, indeed, was written into the laws of nature itself, the postwar upheaval and the ideals and envisioned future that working-class men and women developed were deeply unsettling.

Only in viewing Dafoe as one who truly viewed the strike as a danger can we understand his oft-stated belief that the upheaval was not a passing anomaly. As he explained to leading Winnipeg businessman J.W. Stewart approximately a month after the strike, “those who think that our present industrial and social unrest are a mere afterclap of the war which will, in time, pass away, are allowing their hopes to run away with their judgement.” The tumult of the war and immediate postwar era constituted, he thought, nothing less than “the opening of a new phase of a new stage in the development of the social system under which we live.”<sup>122</sup>

In economic terms, he believed that the most startling development in what he termed the “new order” was “indicated by the declaration by the Peace Conference in the labor charter that henceforth labor is not to be regarded as a commodity.” “The implications of that new doctrine,” he noted were

essentially revolutionary; for it reverses the theory upon which our present industrial and commercial systems rest, that the human

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<sup>122</sup>UMASC, MSS 3, box 5, folder 12, DP, Dafoe to Stewart, 12 August 1919.

factor in trade and industry must adjust itself to the iron laws of business necessity. It proposes to make business considerations subordinate to human necessities; and whether this can be done or not must be established by experimentation.... There are two roads to the future, and we are perhaps nearer to the bifurcation of the path than we think. One is to communism with its necessary drastic regimentation of society, which must mean disaster because it outrages all the deepest instincts of the human heart; the other is to a vast modification of our existing individual system by which all permanent workers in an industry will become both wage earners and profit sharers. Men of affairs in business, in finance and in politics should co-operate in forwarding these modifications with such speed as the times will permit; because only by these means can disaster be avoided.<sup>123</sup>

Moreover, though these “strange doctrines” were unsettling, the “new order” was also clearly evidenced in the political realm. In the past, he reflected, “the governing powers of the country have been those of property, finance and industry; and these influences operated naturally through parliament which took its color and direction from them.” Parliament, he continued, was an arena

in which highly trained and strictly disciplined forces jostled for the pleasure and encouragement of the people of Canada who divided in two camps, looked on and applauded.... Victory then meant that Parliament would become for its terms the registering body for the wishes, the policies and the decrees of the leader of the victorious party and his immediate coterie of advisers.<sup>124</sup>

After the war everything was changed. “A new and mighty power” had now “arisen in the community, that of labor.” What was most troubling, he persisted, were the “short-

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<sup>123</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, Box 5 Folder 2, Dafoe to Stewart 12 August 1919.

<sup>124</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, Box 16 Folder 4, John W. Dafoe, “Pressing Questions of the Day: An Address Given to the Canadian Chartered Accountants’ Convention January 1920.”

cuts” that labour attempted to take in realizing “its ends.” The “attempt to attain national or political ends by direct action” Dafoe explained, was “simply revolution in disguise.” If that means of initiating change persisted it would “lead [the] country into successive disasters.” Indeed, those who held doggedly to an optimistic view, needed to familiarize themselves with history which would demonstrate that “civilizations have been shaken to ruin by subterranean uprisings.”<sup>125</sup>

He did not, however, view straying from the “steady process of evolution” as the only option. Rather, what was necessary was to abandon the position that “all is well with the world and that everything works for the best,” and to recognize and deal with facts as they stood. Though the “strange doctrines” which said that labour was no longer a commodity seemed “uneconomic and impossible,” the principle was becoming “in reality a governing fundamental condition of the situation in which the world [found] itself.”<sup>126</sup> In the past, he noted,

business was governed by two factors -- capital and management. In those days labor constituted no problem. It was a commodity easily obtainable in the world’s market; and it was strictly disciplined by the fear of unemployment. Under these conditions the industrial system of England developed; and from England it was imported into Canada.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>UMASC. DP, Mss 3, Box 16 Folder 4, John W. Dafoe. “Pressing Questions of the Day: An Address Given to the Canadian Chartered Accountants’ Convention January 1920.”

<sup>126</sup>UMASC. DP, Mss 3, Box 16 Folder 4, John W. Dafoe. “Pressing Questions of the Day: An Address Given to the Canadian Chartered Accountants’ Convention January 1920.”

<sup>127</sup>UMASC. DP, Mss 3, Box 16 Folder 4, John W. Dafoe. “Pressing Questions of the Day: An Address Given to the Canadian Chartered Accountants’ Convention January 1920.”

These conditions, however, no longer obtained and labor had “to be secured on a wholesale basis as the result of negotiations and contracts.” These changed circumstances resulted, Dafoe thought, in two options. If labour “was not to be a commodity, it must be the master of industry (which it cannot be, in fact) or it must be a partner of industry.” It was along this latter line, he believed, that “we must look for an escape from our present danger,” for it was “becoming increasingly clear that the unrest in the world cannot be quieted by wage increases, nor will wages call forth a maximum of output.”<sup>128</sup>

Thus every effort, including those carried out through Gordon’s Joint Council of Industry,<sup>129</sup> he believed, must be made to rid the nation’s industry of strife by fostering a cooperative relationship between capital and labour wherein “direct action methods” would be discouraged and both parties “recogniz[ed] the realities of the situation and accept its consequences.” The consequences were that

They must learn that their duties and interests are reciprocal. Labor in particular must be brought to a realization of certain elementary things in industry; the first of which is that more cannot be taken out of a business than is put in. Limitation of output; reduction of hours of labour to an undue degree; a sullen refusal to co-operate --

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<sup>128</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, Box 16, Folder 4, “John W. Dafoe, “Pressing Questions of the Day: An Address given to the Canadian Chartered Accountants’ Convention January 1920.”

<sup>129</sup>Dafoe came to believe that the Joint Council of Industry was a positive good. Henry Trachtenberg has noted as much in his study of the Joint Council of Industry. See, PAM, RG 14 D1, “A Preliminary Investigation into Labour-Government-Management Relations in Manitoba: The Joint Council of Industry,” unpublished paper, 27. For examples of Dafoe’s own commentary see, *Manitoba Free Press*, 24 April 1920; 30 September 1920; 27 November 1920; 14 December 1920.

all of these things tend to restrict the fund out of which profits and wages are paid.<sup>130</sup>

He concluded that once labour depressed “the productive power of business to a certain point,” the business was “destroyed and both capital and labor suffer[ed].”<sup>131</sup>

Despite the fact that he nervously eyed municipal elections in Winnipeg, and particularly labour candidate, later mayor of Winnipeg, S.J. Farmer, a “dangerous man” in Dafoe’s view, he persisted in believing that a central means of safeguarding against “labor’s excesses” was through enforcing “the authority of the state.”<sup>132</sup> In “reasserting the ancient power of parliament,” however, he believed that it was important to recognize that the machinery of government itself had “to be remodelled and modernized.” A fact that must be recognized was that of the “end of the two party system.” “Group politics,” he noted, was “inescapable; and since it [would] tend to lessen pressure on the social system” which came “from universal discontent, the sooner it [came] the better for all.” He conceived of the system of “group politics” as catering not only to labour, but also to

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<sup>130</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, Box 16 Folder 4, John W. Dafoe, “Pressing Questions of the Day: An Address Given to the Canadian Chartered Accountants’ Convention January 1920.”

<sup>131</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, Box 16 Folder 4, John W. Dafoe, “Pressing Questions of the Day: An Address Given to the Canadian Chartered Accountants’ Convention January 1920.”

<sup>132</sup>For Dafoe’s commentary on Farmer see UMASC, DP, Mss 3 Dafoe Papers Box 4, Folder 4, Dafoe to Sifton 10 November 1920; 19 November 1920. S.J. Farmer had a long career in labour politics in Manitoba. He was a key figure in the organization of the Independent Labour Party the impetus for which resulted from disagreements between left-wing and conservative labour. He along with several other left-wing allies headed up the ILP. For further information see Donald Masters, *The Winnipeg General Strike* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1950), 144-146; Allen Mills, “Single Tax, Socialism, and the Independent Labour Party of Manitoba: The Political Ideals of F.J. Dixon and S.J. Farmer,” *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 5 (Spring 1980), 33-56; UMASC, Research Papers in Manitoba History, MSS 72, A. Pittet, “Seymour James Farmer: Mayor of Winnipeg, 1923-1924.” 8 December 1977.

farmers and other “sectional interests.” He argued that incorporating these groups into a liberal, representative governmental system would serve to temper the more radical critics -- particularly “those who dream[ed] of the red dawn of revolution.”<sup>133</sup> In persuading them to “resort to political action,” they would have to

accept the great convention by which the British system of government lives -- that their reforms, their innovations, must endure the scrutiny of parliament and receive the endorsement of a majority of the people. By their course they accept the view that the future, whatever it may be, must be derived from the past -- that there must be no complete break in the process of development.<sup>134</sup>

Fostering this “bond of agreement” meant that they, “in common with the Conservative element,” accepted “political action as the method of achieving their objectives.”

Achieving the end of having them conceive of economics and politics as distinct was “far more significant than the fact they [did] not agree on the objectives to be attained by political action.”<sup>135</sup>

Alongside this effort to incorporate the “radical” and “sectional” elements into mainstream, liberal democratic politics, he also argued that it was vital to promote “a devotion to our common country.” The root cause of the danger that he and his counterparts faced, he explained, was that they lacked “in that implicit sense of a

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<sup>133</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, Box 16, Folder 4, John W. Dafoe, “Canadian National Unity and the New Order” address to the Montréal Canadian Club April 1922.”

<sup>134</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, Box 16, Folder 4, John W. Dafoe, “Canadian National Unity and the New Order” address to the Montréal Canadian Club April 1922.”

<sup>135</sup>UMASC, DP, Mss 3, Box 16, Folder 4, John W. Dafoe, “Canadian National Unity and the New Order” address to the Montréal Canadian Club April 1922.”

common fate, a common direction, and a common destiny which underlies and inspires all national feeling.” What Canadians needed most of all, he continued, was “a vivid, vitalizing, burning spirit of nationality which by its universal presence will check the excess of faction and set bounds to the egotism of interests and sections.” He believed that Canada would have a “guarantee of national security and of assured greatness” if every Canadian “however devoted to his own particular interest, will feel in his heart, even though he may not say it: ‘First of all I am a Canadian.’”<sup>136</sup>

In thinking about Dafoe’s perspective and the direction of his efforts over the course of the first decades of the twentieth century, it becomes evident that, as his biographers have suggested, he was a nationalist. It is equally clear, however, that his nationalism was not fixed, nor did it refer only to the evolution of legislation that led to Canada’s status as an independent nation. Rather, while, as they suggest, these narrowly conceived political and legal battles did concern him, his nationalism was a central means by which he understood himself, the community of which he was a part, and “others” to whom he defined himself and his community in distinction. In considering his view of the nation in the earliest years of the century, it is evident that he was optimistic about his own future, the future of his community, and the future of humanity in general. That optimism was based on the view that the history of northern North America would allow for the development and sustenance of an egalitarian, individualistic, agriculturally-

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<sup>136</sup>UMASC. DP, Mss 3. Box 16. Folder 4. John W. Dafoe. “Canadian National Unity and the New Order” address to the Montréal Canadian Club April 1922.”

oriented society. A society wherein men and women could achieve social rewards in proportion to the extent to which their individual efforts merited it. Dafoe's view was directly in opposition to deeply rooted historical processes, processes in accordance with which he himself acted despite the fact that in doing so, whether he was conscious of it or not, he helped to ensure that his utopia remained a fiction.

Nevertheless, irrelevant as much of Dafoe's early social vision may have been, in considering it, it is possible to discern that in his view, the liberal-capitalist society was not only one among several affable possibilities, but, rather, the only "natural" way for human beings to interact with one another and with the wider world. When a host of men and women put forth a vision of the future which differed significantly from his own, Dafoe threw all of his energy into ensuring its defeat and into developing and supporting strategies geared toward preserving, if in a modified form, the Canadian liberal-capitalist social order. The shift away from the confidence which characterized his mode of expression in the prewar years and toward the more defensive posture he assumed after 1919, moreover, was not, as Donnelly has suggested, "only an interruption in the campaign for Canadian autonomy that Dafoe was waging."<sup>137</sup> Rather, it signalled a shift in the direction of his energies that persisted into the anti-communist, anti-fascist struggles with which he concerned himself with for the rest of his life.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>137</sup>Donnelly, *Dafoe of the Free Press*, 105.

<sup>138</sup>For evidence of this continued concern see editorials in W.L. Morton, ed., *The Voice of Dafoe: A Selection of Editorials on Collective Security, 1931-1944* (Toronto: MacMillan 1945). See also, UMASC, DP, MSS 3. John W. Dafoe, "The Challenge to Democracy," 1933; UMASC, DP, MSS 3,

## Chapter 5: Minnie J.B. Campbell and Maternal Imperialism

While Gordon and Dafoe embraced perspectives in which they naturalized – even deified – the liberal order, it is important to consider, as has been suggested in the opening pages of this thesis, some of the ways in which women figured into early twentieth-century Canadian liberalism. While clearly some aspects of the gendered nature of that order were evidenced in Dafoe’s, and particularly in Gordon’s, respective means of conceptualization, it is instructive to explore these themes in greater depth and to do so through considering some of those who were, as women, excluded from the “public” world of “individual rights.” The subsequent chapters, centred on, first, M.J.B. Campbell, and, second, on Francis Marion Beynon, are geared toward exploring those aspects of early twentieth-century Canadian liberalism.

One of the most frequently recurring elements manifested in the articles, reports, and addresses that M.J.B. Campbell wrote and delivered are references to British or imperial “tradition.” She saw herself as a member of a select group descended from British subjects, the United Empire Loyalists (UEL). To her mind, the Loyalists’ devotion to the crown was so great that they unflinchingly faced the considerable suffering and privation that was the result of their decision to leave their homes in the

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“Conference on Canadian American Affairs.” 21 June 1935. In all of these articles he expresses his concerns with challenges – both from the right and the left – to liberalism in Canada and abroad.

newly born American Republic for the wilderness of British North America.<sup>1</sup> Campbell delighted in recounting her family history, and particularly in relating the tales of woe surrounding her ancestors' exodus.<sup>2</sup> In her view, however, her genealogy was more than an interesting story. She believed that she was the proud inheritor of traditions of strength, perseverance, committedness to principle, loyalty, and devotion to the British crown that her ancestors had implanted in Canada approximately a century before her birth.<sup>3</sup> These traditions were, she thought, at the core of "Canadian-ness." If Canadians acted in accordance with them, they would find themselves rewarded in the future just as "the founders" had been rewarded in the past.<sup>4</sup> She viewed her own efforts as in accordance with, and conceived to build on the hard-won gains that she believed were her inheritance by extending and expanding them through fostering an "imperial spirit" in

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<sup>1</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 15, "The Supremacy of the Flag," 2.

<sup>2</sup>See, for example. PAM, CP, P 2505, folder 2, "A Daughter of Empire," *Winnipeg Once A Week*, c. 1911, 3; PAM, CP, P5145, folder 2, "51 Years in Winnipeg," 1935.

<sup>3</sup>Other historians have noted that these views were widespread among elites, particularly those in Ontario, in the last years of the nineteenth and first years of the twentieth century. They also note, not surprisingly considering that the status of "UEL" was conferred on those with a particular family history, that there was also an intense interest in genealogy. See, for example, Norman Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists: The Ontario Loyalist Tradition and the Creation of Usable Pasts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997). See also Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1970), esp. 78-108.

<sup>4</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 15, "The Supremacy of the Flag," 2.

Canada and, more generally speaking, a closely-knit imperial federation throughout the world.<sup>5</sup>

Broadly speaking, then, the means by which she conceived of the world was, as was the case with Dafoe and Gordon, based on and reflective of the patterns of transnational domination of the period. What is interesting about Campbell's positioning within that state of affairs, however, is that she existed as a subordinated member of both a superordinate class and society. Through examining efforts that she conceived as in accordance with tradition, and in considering her views of the "traditions" with which she identified, what becomes clear is that her life was in many respects an expression of the tensions arising from these conflicting facets of her existence. On the one hand, she was a member of a privileged minority who sought to live up to the ideals of bourgeois womanhood which entailed that she accept her own subordination. On the other hand, she aimed to play a prominent social role which entailed a rejection of it. As such, her case reveals two central points. First, in examining Campbell's views and the initiatives and campaigns in which she worked it is apparent that she reflected, reinforced, and simultaneously challenged both gender norms and central precepts of the liberal order. Her case is also suggestive of the all encompassing nature of liberal modes of understanding human potentialities. That is, while she may have had close ties with the

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<sup>5</sup>PAM, CP, P2503, folder 15, "The Supremacy of the Flag," 2. Other scholars have noted that this was a more general late nineteenth and early twentieth-century phenomenon. See, for example, Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood," *History Workshop*, 5(Spring 1978), 14-15; Julia Bush, *Edwardian Ladies and Imperial Power* (London: Leicester University Press 2000), 36-70.

Conservative party, and while she may have undertaken causes that are often identified with “conservatism,” her conception and presentation of herself and the prescriptions she explicitly and implicitly put forth indicate that her Conservatism was essentially liberal.

Before proceeding to consider Campbell’s life and thought, however, for the sake of clarity it is instructive to note at the outset that the approach that underlies this chapter is conceived in light of, though is not intended as a contribution to debates about, the nature of tradition. Numerous scholars have examined tradition.<sup>6</sup> Generally speaking they concur that ritual, ceremony, and symbolic forms were the nexus of institution and agency which stood as the palpable basis of tradition. They also generally agree that many of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century manifestations of these rituals, practices, and so forth were not timeless, unified, coherent inheritances. Rather, they agree that they were comparatively new. Finally, they suggest that the meanings and prescriptions associated with them were not necessary or obvious. Rather, they posit that “invented traditions” stood as nuclei of struggle wherein a range of contenders — classes

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<sup>6</sup>See, for example, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (London: Cambridge University Press 1983). For a discussion of Canadian invented traditions that are particularly relevant to Campbell’s case, see Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*. Though the literature centred on examining tradition is vast, John Bodnar provides a cogent analysis in his *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1992), as does David Lowenthal in his *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1985); H. V. Nelles, *The Art of Nation Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec’s Tercentenary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1999); Colin Coates and Cecilia Morgan, *Heroines and History: Representations of Madeleine de Verchereres and Laura Secord* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2001); Ian Radforth, “Performance, Politics, and Representation: Aboriginal People at the 1860 Royal Tour of Canada,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 84(March 2003), 1-32.

or “interests” depending on the scholar — sought to imbue the ritual, symbols, and ceremony with meanings that served to further their aims.

While understanding that Campbell was part of a more general wave of such efforts is important, the nature of source materials makes discerning the meanings and prescriptions expressed through the traditions that she sought to develop difficult.<sup>7</sup> Campbell’s records reveal much about the activities that she believed accorded with the “traditions” with which she identified. They also reveal much about the campaigns that she undertook to celebrate those traditions. They do not, however, provide detailed information about the particulars of the actual symbols, rituals, and ceremonies themselves. Thus, while an analysis of the particulars of the practices and symbols she sought to create is difficult if not impossible, exploring what her views and activities reveal in the campaigns geared toward creating these traditions is more feasible.

Historiographically, then, the discussion is more closely linked with historical writing about the history of women and gender during the first decades of the twentieth

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<sup>7</sup>The more general phenomenon of tradition building efforts is evidenced in a host of nations. The French, for example, began celebrating Bastille Day in 1880 and commemorating the revolution in 1889. In Germany a host of municipalities erected almost 500 Bismark columns in the year following his death. In the United States the daily ritual of requiring school children to worship the American flag began in the 1880s as did both the Sons and the Daughters of the American Revolution (1889 and 1890 respectively). In terms of British imperial “traditions,” the monarchy became an object of reverence rather than one worthy of primarily the attention of those intent on satirizing or exposing the transgressions of particular members of the royal family. The image was altered thoroughly enough that such a large scale celebration as a Royal Jubilee could be pulled off with success by 1887. Indeed, the 1887 Jubilee proved so successful that organizers were able to arrange an even more audacious ceremony ten years later, one that Campbell, as well as a host of her counterparts from various parts of the empire, attended *en masse*. Information on the origins of these practices can be found in Knowles, *Inventing the Loyalists*, 7; Eric Hobsbawm, “Mass Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914,” in Hobsbawm and Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition*, 264, 271, 280, 281; Berger, *The Sense of Power*, 85.

century. Seemingly there have been two central modes of understanding the history of prairie women. From some of the earliest accounts of women's history, scholars have understood prairie women as having had the good fortune of existing in a region characterized by supposed democratic impulses born of the frontier. As early as 1950 Catherine Cleverdon adopted this view and explained that because of the egalitarianism of the frontier in the prairies "it was only necessary to arouse enough general interest in the issue to ask for and receive the franchise."<sup>8</sup> This view was subsequently reiterated by Ramsay Cook in his introduction to a reissue of Cleverdon's *The Woman's Suffrage Movement in Canada*, and Carol Bacchi has expanded it to encompass socio-economic and moral reform objectives.<sup>9</sup>

The other central mode of analyzing the history of prairie women is related to a different argument originally articulated by Carol Bacchi. In her study of English Canadian suffragists she set out by determining what constituted a feminist or a feminist organization and proceeded to argue that all but a handful of "radicals" among early twentieth century reformers fell woefully short of being "real" feminists.<sup>10</sup> Subsequently scholars interested in western Canadian history have examined particular women as well

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<sup>8</sup>Catherine L. Cleverdon, *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1974 [1950]), 46.

<sup>9</sup>See, Ramsay Cook, "Introduction," in Catherine Cleverdon, *The Woman's Suffrage Movement in Canada*, xvi; Carol Bacchi, "Divided Allegiances: The Response of Farm and Labour Women to Suffrage," in Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s - 1920s* (Toronto: Women's Educational Press 1979), 89-108.

<sup>10</sup>For a synopsis of her argument, see her *Liberation Deferred*, vi-ix.

as women's organizations in the region and have, on constructing their own criteria of feminism, found that the individuals and organizations that they have concentrated on were feminists or, with regard to organizations, were geared toward obtaining feminist goals.<sup>11</sup>

The current study follows neither of these interpretive frameworks for several reasons. The first is that the frontier democracy thesis does not account for urban women, of which Campbell was an example, and is also based on assumptions about frontier society that seemingly do not hold up to scrutiny. In particular, it is evident that the political and legal frameworks that characterized the prairies in the early twentieth century were not egalitarian, but, rather, were similar to those of eastern provinces. Indeed, in addition to being disenfranchised, Manitoba women did not hold the right to own the property which was central to their obtaining the standing of "self-possessed" individuals. The politico-legal framework on the prairies, thus, was seemingly even more inequitable than were those of eastern provinces like Ontario. While Ontario women could hold and dispose of property after the passage of the Married Women's Property Act of 1884, in Manitoba marriage continued to amount to "civil death" for women until

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<sup>11</sup>See, for example, Mary Kinnear, *Margaret MacWilliams: An Interwar Feminist* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1991).

after the turn of the century.<sup>12</sup> The connection between frontier society and a greater degree of equity between men and women, hence, did not obviously exist.<sup>13</sup>

As for the debates about whether or not some women or groups were “really” feminists or feminist in nature, the answer depends on the trans-historical standard of gender morality against which a scholar measures individuals and organizations. While insightful accounts of individuals and organizations have resulted from efforts to answer this type of question, they also reveal more about whether or not historical subjects lived up to present day expectations than they do about the significance of particular modes of understanding, acting, and interacting in a particular historical setting. They are, therefore, ahistorical. To the degree that it is possible, it is more revealing to assess actions, views, and so forth in relation to the social setting in which they arose.

Generally speaking, then, these frames of analysis suffer from a failure to come to terms with the context of early twentieth-century Canadian society. That is, scholars have either tended to project particular qualities onto prairie society for which there is little evidence, or they have paid insufficient attention to contextualizing individuals and

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<sup>12</sup>This useful means of describing women’s status comes from Chambers, *Married Women’s Property Law*, 1.

<sup>13</sup>For information on Manitoba Legislation see, Department of Justice, *Women’s Rights*. On Ontario Property Law see, Chambers, *Married Women and Property Law*, esp. 137-147. On Alberta see, Catherine Cavanaugh, “The Limitations of the Pioneering Partnership: The Alberta Campaign for Homestead Dower, 1909-1925,” in Catherine Cavanaugh and Jeremy Mouat, eds., *Making Western Canada: Essays on European Colonization and Settlement* (Toronto: Garamond Press 1996), 186-214. Philip Girard and Rebecca Veinott have explored these issues in a Nova Scotia context in their “Married Women’s Property Law in Nova Scotia, 1850-1910,” in Janet Guildford and Suzanne Morton, eds., *Separate Spheres: Women’s Worlds in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Maritimes* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press 1994), 67-91.

groups in discussing their feminism or lack thereof. To understand who Campbell was and to come to grips with central facets of the significance of her mode of understanding and acting in early twentieth-century Canada, it is necessary to come to grips with the social order of which she was a part. To introduce Campbell and to provide insight into her positioning within the early twentieth-century Canadian social order, it is instructive to consider at least generally speaking, the broad contours of her life prior to and just after the turn of the century.

Minnie Julia Beatrice Campbell was born in Palermo, Ontario in 1862 to Anson Buck and Keturah Adelaide Howell.<sup>14</sup> Though Campbell revealed little about her mother, she rarely missed an opportunity to discuss her father, a physician and municipal politician in Ontario, who, according to Campbell, was of a “progressive” mind set.<sup>15</sup> He

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<sup>14</sup>Provincial Archives of Manitoba (hereafter PAM), Minnie J.B. Campbell papers (hereafter CP), P 2497, folder 10, draft copy of entry for “Who’s Who and Why,” 994.

<sup>15</sup>Anson Buck’s life is memorialized in several articles and interviews with Campbell. See, for example, PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 2, “A Daughter of Empire,” *Winnipeg Once a Week*, c. 1911, 3; PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 2, “Review of the Life of Anson Buck,” *Oakville Star*, 25 August 1933; PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 2, “Mrs. Colin H. Campbell, OBE, Wears Honors of Two Nations,” *Brantford Expositor*, 23 July 1936. After his death in 1919, she hired a biographer — a Dr. Corrigan of Lampman, Saskatchewan — to provide a record of her father’s life. Buck ran a medical practice in Palermo for almost 50 years. He received three medical degrees during his lifetime. The first, granted in 1852, was from Jefferson College in Philadelphia where he studied for a year. The second he received the following year after several months of training at Guy’s Hospital in London where he was made a Member of the Royal Society of Surgeons of England (8). His final degree came from the University of Victoria College in Toronto after he paid a “graduating fee” and endured two months of study under Drs. Bovell and Hodder — the latter holding the dubious distinction of being the “first to do Intravenous Transfusions of cow’s milk in cases of severe hemorrhage” (10). Despite his induction into the Royal Society of Surgeons of England in 1853, he had apparently undergone no surgical training, for after graduating from Victoria College, he traveled to the United States in early 1865 to obtain experience by serving as a field physician under General U.S. Grant (17). See, PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 6, S.H. Corrigan, “Anson Buck, M.D., M.R.C.S. Eng. 1833-1919.”

strongly believed, Campbell related, that “girls could do anything boys could.” However, when Campbell decided that she would like to follow in her father’s footsteps by becoming a medical missionary, she clearly tested the bounds of his progressivism. Rather than attending medical school at Toronto University, she “was sent ... to the Wesleyan Female College” in Hamilton.<sup>16</sup> She remained there for three years studying classics, science, mathematics, art, and music. On graduating in 1880 as a Mistress of English Literature she taught in the Primary Department of the Ottawa Ladies College before marrying and moving to Winnipeg with up-and-coming lawyer Colin H. Campbell in 1884.<sup>17</sup>

Colin Campbell, also from Ontario, was, at the time, a rising legal, business, and political figure.<sup>18</sup> After graduating from an Oakville, Ontario highschool, he studied law at Osgoode Hall in Toronto. On completing his degree in 1881, he worked for a short

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<sup>16</sup>PAM, CP, P 2497, folder 10, “Mrs. Colin H. Campbell Fifty Years in Winnipeg: Daughter of the Late Anson Buck and Former Resident of Palermo,” [1934].

<sup>17</sup>PAM, CP, P 5145, folder 2, “Sixty One Years in Winnipeg: Mrs. Colin Campbell, U.E., O.B.E., Winnipeg, Manitoba, 1884-1945,” [1945].

<sup>18</sup>While most biographical accounts of Colin Campbell emphasize his legal career, only one appears to shed light on his extensive activities as a businessman. In addition to heading up one of Manitoba’s most successful law firms, and on top of his political commitments, he was also president of the Equitable Trust Company, The Winnipeg Investment Company, the Mercantile Investment Company, The Investors limited, Columbia Coal and Coke Company, The Scottish Investment Company, the Ontario, Manitoba and Western Land Company, and the Chandler Fisher Company. He was also a director for the Alloway and Champion Banking Company, the Houghton land Company, Lethbridge Collieries Limited, The Peoples’ Investment Company, the Crown Securities Company, the Real Estate Investment Company, the Canadian Provinces Investment company, and the Bank of Hamilton. He belonged to such elite social clubs as the Manitoba Club, the St. Charles Country Club, the Adanac Club, the Grosvenor Club, London, England, and the Albany Club of Toronto. This information comes from Edwin McCormick, ed., *The Leading Financial, Business, and Professional Men of Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: Stark [c. 1912]).

time in the office of Colonel George Taylor Denison and later entered into practice with John Billings.<sup>19</sup> In 1882, he traveled to Winnipeg where he first practiced in the firm of Aiken, Culver, and Hamilton. For the next twenty years or so he formed a host of partnerships. From 1903 until 1914 he was senior partner in the firm of Campbell, Pitblado, Hoskin, Grundy, Bennet, Haig, Drummond-Hay, Montague, and Gauld.<sup>20</sup> He entered public office in 1899 when, after his election to the Provincial Legislature, he served as Minister without portfolio in the government of Sir Hugh John Macdonald. During the years from 1900-1914, he served in the government of Rodmond Roblin as Minister of Education, Minister of Public Works, and Attorney General.<sup>21</sup>

For Minnie marriage to Colin Campbell signaled the end of her paid working life, though it by no means indicated an end to an active life. Rather, she began her involvement in the charitable societies and women's organizations that would hold her attention for much of her lifetime. In 1885, one year after her arrival in Winnipeg, she was elected a member of the Board of the Women's Home, an organization geared toward helping destitute women, "the unmarried mother in particular."<sup>22</sup> She helped to

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<sup>19</sup>Charles G.D. Roberts and Arthur L. Tunnell, eds., *A Standard Dictionary of Canadian Biography: The Canadian Who Was Who* (Toronto: Trans-Canada Press 1934), 85.

<sup>20</sup>For a listing of these partnerships see, PAM, CP, P 5145, folder 2, "Honourable Colin H. Campbell, K.C., F.R.C.I., 1859-1914" undated.

<sup>21</sup>PAM, CP, P 5145, folder 2, "Honourable Colin H. Campbell, K.C., F.R.C.I., 1859-1914," undated. See also, *Manitoba Pictorial and Biographical, Deluxe Supplement II* (Winnipeg: S.J. Clarke Publishing 1913), 75-77.

<sup>22</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 10, "Fifty Years in Winnipeg: Some Data re. Mrs. Colin H. Campbell's Work." [1934].

organize an Auxiliary of the Women's Foreign Missionary Society in the same year.<sup>23</sup> In the 1890s she continued her involvement in these organizations and took up work in the Christian Endeavor Movement, under the auspices of which she helped to develop the first social survey of Winnipeg.<sup>24</sup> She also helped to introduce the study of domestic science to Winnipeg and the West by recruiting Bessie Livingstone, a Canadian graduate of the Boston School of Domestic Science, to serve as instructor in a Winnipeg school.<sup>25</sup>

In considering the broad pattern of and central influences in Campbell's early life, it is clear that male authority figures determined its shape to a considerable degree. Her father chose her course of study and, as a result, her occupation. That the training he chose was at a "female college," and that the occupation was one wherein she acted as a maternal figure for primary school children seemingly reflects that however "progressive" her father may have been, he did not contest late nineteenth and early twentieth-century social mores.<sup>26</sup> As important was that when Campbell married, she exchanged whatever financial independence that her teaching position had afforded her for the unpaid work of

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<sup>23</sup>PAM, CP, P 2497, folder 10, "Fifty Years in Winnipeg: Some Data re. Mrs. Colin H. Campbell's Work." [1934].

<sup>24</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 9, "The First Social Survey of Winnipeg — 1893 — By Mrs. Colin H. Campbell." [c. 1894].

<sup>25</sup>PAM, CP, P 2497, folder 10, "Mrs. Colin H. Campbell Fifty Years in Winnipeg: Daughter of Late Dr. Anson Buck and Former Resident of Palermo," [1934].

<sup>26</sup>In her study of "professional" women, Mary Kinnear has noted that throughout much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century women not only were barred from administrative positions within the school system, but also were often confined to lower paid primary teaching positions. See Mary Kinnear, *In Subordination: Professional Women, 1870-1970* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1995), 123-151.

the "private sphere" or in organizational work which was in some sense an extension of domestically-oriented roles for which she and other women of the period were thought most suited.

While noting as much is significant to understanding ideals and beliefs which prevailed in this period, it is also to provide little insight beyond what historians of women and gender have long demonstrated. Beyond reaffirming that Campbell existed in a patriarchal society, and beyond indicating that she, like a host of other late nineteenth and early twentieth-century men and women, lived in a politico-economic system that was shaped by views about the propensities and predispositions entailed by "maleness" and "femaleness," what is central in conceptualizing Campbell's life is understanding, at least in a general sense, the relationship between these views and liberalism. What becomes clear in considering the broad history of liberalism is that it was, not surprisingly, thoroughly gendered. Indeed, a central assumption among liberals during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, albeit one that was increasingly coming under attack, was that the self-possessed individuals who presumably stood as the atoms of societies were male.

As intellectual historians have noted, prior to 1900 or so it is difficult to find much mention of women in the systematic expositions of social philosophers who either worked in the liberal tradition or who, even if their conclusions were illiberal, shared

much conceptual common ground.<sup>27</sup> Similarly, historians of women and gender have been particularly attuned to the fact that key actors in leading roles in a host of organizations, businesses, and governmental institutions accepted and developed policies and strategies that reflected and reinforced these assumptions.<sup>28</sup> While the particulars of these organizations, institutions, policies and so forth cannot be considered here, the mention of these points is intended to draw attention to the fact that the subordination of women did not represent an anomaly or inconsistency in a politico-economic system presumably based on the freedom and equality of all “individuals.” Rather, the exclusion

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<sup>27</sup>In his examination of liberalism from the eighteenth century onward Anthony Arblaster observes that while “the concept of ‘the individual’ is asexual ... it is extraordinary how few of the liberal champions of the rights of man have also been champions of the rights of women.” He further notes that in his research he found that “John Stuart Mill stands out as an honourably consistent exception to the general rule” in this regard. See his *The Rise and Decline of Western Liberalism* (New York: Blackwell Publishers 1984), 91. J.S. Mill himself evidenced the pervasiveness of these views when he wrote in the opening lines of a tract on the issue that he was confronting an “almost universal opinion.” See J.S. Mill, *The Subjection of Women* (New York: Dover Publications 1997 [1869]), 2.

<sup>28</sup>The number of studies aimed directly at considering women and liberalism and studies geared toward providing an understanding of women’s subordination during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries is too large to allow for citation here. For an early example of the latter type of study, see Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s* (Toronto: Women’s Educational Press 1977). See also Carol Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred?: The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1983). Linda Kealey and Joan Sangster have provided a useful collection of essays entitled *Beyond the Vote: Canadian Women and Politics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1989). Mercedes Steedman has also provided an insightful discussion of these issues as they relate to gender and labour bureaucracy in her *Angels of the Workplace: Women and the Construction of Gender Relations in the Canadian Clothing Industry, 1890-1940* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1997). For examples of studies geared toward exploring the gendered nature of liberalism more explicitly, see, for example, Lykke De La Cour, Cecilia Morgan, and Mariana Valverde, “Gender Regulation and State Formation in Nineteenth-Century Canada,” in Alan Greer and Ian Radforth, eds., *Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1992), 163-191; Lori Chambers, *Married Women and Property Law in Victorian Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997). For cogent, explicitly theoretical discussions see Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Feminist Critique of Liberalism* (Kansas 1997). See also Mary Dietz, “Context Is All: Feminism and Theories of Citizenship,” in Chantal Mouffe, ed., *Dimensions of Radical Democracy: Pluralism, Citizenship, Community* (London: Verso 1995), 63-85.

of women — and, less rigidly, other social groups — from the status of full personhood underscores the fact that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries liberal-capitalism was, as it had been for most of its history, a mode of political and economic organization designed to benefit a minority of men.<sup>29</sup>

With these general factors in mind, it is clear that in some sense Campbell was a liberal among liberals. That is, to a large degree she accepted this state of affairs as is evidenced by the fact that she clearly placed herself in opposition to some movements organized to provide women with a greater degree of recognition as “individuals” in their own right. When asked about her views on what Mary Kinnear has termed the “single unifying aim” of nineteenth and early twentieth century feminism – female enfranchisement – she stated flatly that she, as a “respectable woman,” was “not a

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<sup>29</sup>It is worth emphasizing here that what is of concern is not party policy. Rather, it is, as mentioned in the introduction, the diffuse philosophical position that grew up alongside and that prevailed in most capitalist societies from the seventeenth century up through to the twentieth century that is of interest. As such, it is the fact that this perspective involved a conceptualization of the meaning of “maleness” and “femaleness” that is of interest and that makes Campbell a liberal who happened to have ties to a political party which functioned in a liberal political system but was, nevertheless, named the Conservative Party of Canada. As MacPherson notes, liberal government is that “whereby the government was in a sort of market situation. The government was treated as the supplier of certain political goods – not just the political good of law and order in general, but the specific political goods demanded by those who had the upper hand in running that particular kind of society. What was needed [when liberal governments first arose] was the kind of laws and regulations, and tax structure, that would make market society work....” In liberal societies, he further notes, these “goods” were delivered by putting “government power into the hands of men who were made subject to periodic elections at which there was a choice of candidates and parties.” See, C.B. MacPherson, *The Real World of Democracy* (Toronto: Hunter Rose 1965). 8. It is this system, or a version of it, that Campbell was associated with. It is her embracing of a version of this system that made her a liberal who also was a Conservative.

suffragette.”<sup>30</sup> Indeed, she further expressed both a degree of acceptance of her own exclusion from the formal political realm and the patriarchal nature of the society in which she lived when she further related her belief that “if the laws of the land need[ed] righting, men [were] quite able to look after them,” and that women would “be able to get what they want[ed] by going to men and asking them for it.”<sup>31</sup>

Campbell’s view of women’s exclusion from the political realm and the criteria by which she judged “respectability” were connected with the fact that she adopted a more general, liberal mode of conceptualizing human activities — namely, she, like Gordon, conceived of roles and duties as either male and “public” or female and “private.” Legally women and other “dependents” were absorbed into the personage of the male head of the household. Conceptually this translated into a well known doctrine of “separate spheres.” In this mode of understanding, men by definition existed in and presumably were particularly suited to the “public world of contractual agreements and individual rights,” while the primary orientation of women and other dependents was

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<sup>30</sup>Mary Kinnear has provided a study of a woman similar to Minnie Campbell named Margaret MacWilliams. This quote comes from her *Margaret MacWilliams: An Interwar Feminist* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1996), 9. Campbell discussed her views about women’s “proper” place with an interviewer in 1912. See, *The Winnipeg Telegram*, 14 September 1912. It is worth noting that in comparing Campbell to Dafoe and Gordon, it is evident that, ironically, both men were more willing to part company with these liberal precepts than was Campbell.

<sup>31</sup>*Winnipeg Telegram*, 14 September 1912. There is also evidence to suggest that Campbell did not significantly alter her position in the ensuing years. In the last months of World War I, even after Manitoba women had obtained the right to vote, she persisted in imploring her counterparts in the Order to remain committed to distancing themselves from the political realm. For her views see, PAM, CP, P 2500, folder 4, “Impressions of the Eighteenth Annual Meeting of the Canadian National Chapter of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Children of the Empire, May 27-31st, 1918,” 2.

toward the “supplementary” duties that they carried out in the “private” realm of “family, home, and comfort.”<sup>32</sup> So, in Campbell’s view women need not concern themselves with the “public” world since their “best and truest work” was to be done in their own “great sphere.”<sup>33</sup>

These explicit pronouncements, moreover, were more than baseless utterances. Though records for some of the organizations with which Campbell was involved during the first decade of the century are sparse, all that do exist indicate that her activities during the first decades of the century were linked with her view of women’s proper roles as being those of domestically-oriented nurturer and care-giver.<sup>34</sup> In 1908, for example, she organized the Winnipeg portion of a broader campaign to provide assistance to destitute women — or, as she termed them, “female sufferers” — and their children by collecting clothes, money, and food.<sup>35</sup> In April 1908, similarly, in her capacity as a member of the Women’s Canadian Club, she worked closely with the school board. Part

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<sup>32</sup>Nussbaum, *The Feminist Critique of Liberalism*, 13.

<sup>33</sup>*Winnipeg Telegram*, 14 September 1912.

<sup>34</sup>Campbell was involved with numerous organizations. She was a member of the Women’s Art Association, a member of the Art Gallery Association, a charter member of the Aberdeen Association, a member of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, and a member of the first Board of Management of the Margaret Scott Nursing Mission. She was a life Covenor of the Winnipeg General Hospital, and was on the Board of the Children’s Home of Winnipeg. For a listing of all of her organizational affiliations see PAM, CP, P 5145, folder 2, “51 Years in Winnipeg — 1884-1935,” [1935].

<sup>35</sup>The report of her efforts with “female sufferers” appeared in the *Manitoba Free Press*, 10 August 1908.

of her efforts in this regard appears to have been that of clearing the way for and organizing fund raising campaigns among school children.<sup>36</sup>

The extent of her adherence to this ideology, however, becomes particularly clear in examining some of her activities in the Imperial Order Daughters of Empire (IODE). A Montréaler named Mrs. Clark Murray reportedly founded the Order in 1900 as a response to the outbreak of the Boer war. Murray, who was in England when the war began, related that she “met many women who were anxious to help on the home front but who were handicapped by a lack of channels through which to work.” As a result, on her return to Canada she “resolved to form an organization based on the foundations of patriotism, loyalty, and service.”<sup>37</sup> These rather vague organizational precepts translated into, among other things, a program of promoting

in the Motherland and in the colonies the study of the history of the Empire and of current Imperial question; to celebrate patriotic anniversaries; to cherish the memory of brave and heroic deeds and the last resting places of our heroes and heroines, especially such as are in distant and solitary places; to erect memorial stones on spots that have become sacred ... either through great struggles for freedom, battles against ignorance, or events of heroic and patriotic self-sacrifice.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Campbell was a founding member of the Women’s Canadian Club of Winnipeg. For information on her early efforts with school children see PAM, Women’s Canadian Club of Winnipeg, P 4811, folder 6, “Minute Book for 1907-1908,” 63-72.

<sup>37</sup>Imperial Order Daughters of Empire, *The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, Golden Jubilee, 1900-1950* (Toronto: Imperial Order Daughters of Empire 1950), I.

<sup>38</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 5, “The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Children of the Empire Founded February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1900, by Mrs. Clark Murray of Montréal: Provincial Chapter of Manitoba. A Brief Historical Sketch by Minnie J.B. Campbell” [hereafter IODE: Brief Historical Sketch], 1929, 2.

Initial organizing efforts resulted in the establishment of chapters in Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick. Within two years of its founding, members of the IODE had established chapters in the Bahamas, Bermuda, and in the United States where the organization was known by the exceedingly prolonged title “the Daughters of the British Empire in the United States of America.”<sup>39</sup>

Despite efforts to develop international chapters, attempts to extend the organization in Canada were negligible.<sup>40</sup> In 1909, however, the attention of the executive of the National Chapter shifted to expanding the organization’s base within Canada. Part of the resulting organizing effort included attempts to establish chapters in Manitoba. Many Manitoba women apparently received the Order’s representatives warmly, for the organizers were able to establish five new chapters — including the Fort Garry, Prairie Gateway, Brandon, Lord Selkirk, and Earl Grey chapters.<sup>41</sup> Campbell served as the regent of the Fort Garry Chapter for 13 years, as president of Manitoba’s Provincial Chapter for 14 years, and as a councillor on the National Executive from 1911 until at least the 1930s.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>PAM, CP, P2503, folder 5, “IODE: Brief Historical Sketch,” 2.

<sup>40</sup>PAM, CP, P2503, folder 5, “IODE: Brief Historical Sketch,” 2.

<sup>41</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 5, “IODE: Brief Historical Sketch,” 3. Four other chapters — including the Prairie Gateway, Brandon, Lord Selkirk, and Earl Grey chapters — were established in Manitoba at approximately the same time

<sup>42</sup>PAM, CP, P 5145, folder 2, “51 Years in Winnipeg — 1884-1935.” Campbell was the subject of a number of articles listing her organizational affiliations and work throughout her life in Winnipeg. Seemingly these articles were part of a more general phenomenon of commemorating the lives of Winnipeg pioneers. When this article appeared in 1935 Campbell still served as a councillor of the National

Throughout the first decades of the twentieth century, Campbell undertook a range of projects to further the “traditions” associated with her heritage. Whether developing hospitals, attending to children, or in some way comforting others, an examination of some of the plethora of initiatives with which she involved herself reveals that she combined the commemorative function of the order with efforts to serve as a selfless, maternal figure which accorded with liberal ideals of womanhood. In 1912, for example, she undertook an initiative to build and equip a care-giving institution, a sanitarium, at Ninette Manitoba “as a memorial to the late King” — King Edward VII.<sup>43</sup> True to the “separate spheres” ideals to which she subscribed, she and her fellow Daughters of Empire took charge of raising funds, furnishing, and decorating. She did not view control over the expenditure of funds and roles centred on the design and construction of the facility as properly hers. As a result, a building committee comprised of several prominent businessmen — including Edward Brown, A.M. Nanton, J.T. Gordon, R.T. Riley, G.R. Crowe, and Campbell’s own husband — took on such tasks (See Appendix A).<sup>44</sup>

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Executive. She also held a variety of honorary posts — including, Honorary National Vice President, Honorary Regent of the Fort Garry Chapter, and Honorary Provincial Vice President — from 1926 presumably until her death.

<sup>43</sup>PAM. CP, P 2496, folder 11, “The Fort Garry Chapter Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1909-1923.” 1923, 11.

<sup>44</sup>PAM. CP, P 2499, folder 4, “Report Prepared for Municipal Meeting.” 1912, 1.

Similarly, while Dafoe and Gordon both discussed the necessity of public schooling, it was seemingly women like Campbell who actually took it upon themselves to contact the school board and to carry out campaigns of fostering a “proper attitude” among school children. In particular, she thought it important to imbue children with a recognition of symbols of empire and a feeling of belonging to what Benedict Anderson has aptly termed an “imagined community.”<sup>45</sup> Toward this end, she helped to inaugurate a number of programs that the Order continued throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. In 1910, for example, she helped to begin a program of distributing “handsomely framed” pictures of those individuals and events that she and several other Daughters of Empire identified as great imperial figures and pivotal events which were responsible for the civilization of which the children were supposedly parts. To reinforce the meaning of these figures and supposed defining moments in which they demonstrated their “grandeur,” Campbell and a host of other Daughters of Empire arranged and provided a series of informational presentations which they repeated annually in commemoration of Empire day.<sup>46</sup> In addition to pictures and lectures, Campbell helped to carry out the Winnipeg portion of an essay writing competition that involved children from across the country. Students wrote essays on topics ranging from “King Edward and

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<sup>45</sup>See, Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso 1991 [1983]). As is implied in the title of this work, Anderson uses the term “imagined communities” in regard to nations and national feeling. As will become more clear, though Campbell was a nationalist, her aims were primarily those geared toward fostering a feeling of belonging to a community of men and women that was transnational.

<sup>46</sup>PAM, IODE, P 5491. “Minute Book for December 1912 - April 1915,” 1912, 46.

his Reign” to “Lord Selkirk and his Colony of Settlers,” to “The Debt Canada Owes to Great Britain.”<sup>47</sup> Those essays deemed the best received prizes including more “handsomely framed” pictures for the winners’ schools, books, and gold, silver, and bronze medals depending on the age category into which a particular winner fell.<sup>48</sup> Finally, Campbell helped to engineer an inter-imperial correspondence scheme wherein she and her counterparts put school children in Manitoba in contact with their counterparts around the empire.<sup>49</sup>

During the years of World War I her efforts remained similarly directed if somewhat more intensive. For a brief period after the outbreak of hostilities Campbell devoted her attention to her ailing husband who died on 28 October 1914. After his death she threw herself into “war work.” She saw the war as a test of her commitment to her “heritage.” As she explained to her IODE chapter in 1915,

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<sup>47</sup>Other possible topics included, “The Early Days of the Hudson’s Bay Company,” “The British Constitution and its Administration, and Where it Differs With the Constitutions of France and Germany,” and, finally, “The History of the Principal Events of the Last Century Which Have Brought About the Present Status of the Dominion in the Empire.” See, PAM, CP, P2496, folder 11, “Fort Garry Chapter of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1909-1923,” 2 February 1923; PAM, CP, P 2498, folder 2, “IODE Notebook, 1909-1914,” 3-4.

<sup>48</sup>More precisely, there were 28 picture prizes. The pictures for the 1912 competition were facsimile copies of Queen Alexandra’s message to the people on the death of King Edward VII. They were illustrated by Raphael Tuck and “suitably framed in dark oak.” Each picture cost the Order over one hundred dollars. Students were divided into three groups — primary, junior, and senior. The pictures went to the winners of the primary division. Though the exact nature of the subject matter of the books is not clear, they were prizes for the winners of the Junior Division. Finally, senior students (i.e. highschool students) received medals.

<sup>49</sup>PAM, CP, P 2499, folder 4, “Annual Report — Provincial Chapter of Manitoba,” 2 April 1913; PAM, CP, P 2496, folder 11, “Fort Garry Chapter Imperial Order Daughters of Empire, 1909-1923,” 1923, 9.

now is the time to be truly British. 'What we have we hold,' says the British bulldog. Hold fast our heritage, for the British Crown, our token! These are critical days — with fast changing opportunities for service, a wide field is ours.<sup>50</sup>

As such, she committed herself and encouraged others to pledge themselves to working to strengthen the empire in the battle against "hunnish tyranny." One of the earliest commitments with which she was involved was the passing of a resolution which required all IODE women in Manitoba to produce one knitted item per week to send overseas.<sup>51</sup> In addition to this seemingly symbolic expression of patriotism, however, she worked in three central, more substantive ways to produce, raise money with which to purchase, and to collect goods that would bolster the allied cause.

She engaged in general and sustained efforts which involved continuous efforts to collect a host of items for which there was a constant demand. Among the items for which there was an ongoing campaign to collect, make, and produce were tobacco, candy, various articles of clothing, and other "field comforts," as well as a host of medical supplies. Though the exact number of these goods that Campbell and her counterparts contributed is unclear, judging from scattered reports it is evident that she was part of an intensive and successful campaign. In the span of a few months in the fall of 1915, for example, IODE women in Manitoba collected, among other things, 8588 pairs of socks,

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<sup>50</sup>PAM, Imperial Order Daughters of Empire (hereafter IODE), P 4911, "Minute Book for December 1912 - April 1915," 122.

<sup>51</sup>PAM, CP, P 2498, folder 2, "Notebook Re. IODE Fort Garry Chapter," 78.

122 scarfs, 506 dozen handkerchiefs, 2252 packages of cigarettes, 17 pounds of other tobacco products, 4474 wash cloths, 48,067 surgical wipes, and 593 surgical dressings.<sup>52</sup> That the actual amount of money raised in the campaigns was an astounding five million dollars, and that she placed the estimated value of the total number of items collected in Manitoba at approximately the same amount is also suggestive.<sup>53</sup>

In addition to these sustained efforts geared toward comforting and healing sick or injured soldiers, she undertook crisis or issue-oriented efforts as well. At the outset of the war, for example, though still at her husband's side, Campbell supported efforts among her counterparts in the Order in their campaign to raise 100,000 dollars with which to build and equip a hospital ship.<sup>54</sup> Later in 1914, after Colin's death, the commander of Canadian forces "made a special appeal for blankets during the dearth in 1914." In response, Campbell and her counterparts collected 1200 pairs and put "over \$1500.00 in a blanket fund."<sup>55</sup> In the ensuing years she and her counterparts worked to satisfy additional calls for particular needs. In 1915, for example, there was need of a field

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<sup>52</sup>This information comes from a report that Campbell delivered to the Manitoba Provincial Chapter of the IODE in 1915. See, PAM, CP, P 2499, folder 6, "Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Prov. Chapter I.O.D.E.," [1915], 3-5. For similar reports see, PAM, CP, P 2498, folder 2, "Notebook Re. IODE Fort Garry Chapter," 109-116.

<sup>53</sup>These statistics are found in PAM, CP, P 2502, "Prospect and Retrospect I.O.D.E.," 10 August 1920, 3.

<sup>54</sup>PAM, CP, P 2498, folder 2, "IODE Notebook," 109-110.

<sup>55</sup>M.J.B. Campbell, "Historical Sketch of Provincial Chapter, Manitoba," in *Imperial Order Daughters of Empire, Imperial Order Daughters of Empire, Manitoba: Souvenir, 1916* (Winnipeg: Bulman Bros. 1916), 31.

kitchen which Campbell and her IODE counterparts in Manitoba met. Later in the same year calls went out for an ambulance. Again, Campbell and her sister Daughters of Empire undertook a campaign to raise funds with which to purchase the vehicle.<sup>56</sup>

Also, she devoted considerable energy toward meeting needs in Canada — particularly as they arose in Winnipeg — that related to the war. In the winter of 1915, for example, the 28th Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force was in Winnipeg. Campbell thought it important to provide these and other soldiers who passed through the city with wholesome entertainment. Toward this end she “opened her home as a Night Club.”<sup>57</sup> What seems to have been more central than entertaining, however, was frequent outbreaks of communicable diseases. Likely owing to the fact that large numbers of soldiers passed through the city, and to the fact that their barracks consisted of a drafty, earthen-floor show horse building, periodic influenza epidemics that swept through the city “hit soldiers particularly hard.” In the initial outbreak Campbell and her co-volunteers set about attending to and providing meals, beds, pillows, and blankets for sick soldiers. After it became evident that this problem, as well as the task of attending to soldiers stricken with other illnesses or injuries, would be ongoing, she organized and carried out a campaign to open a soldier’s convalescent home which she named in honour of Minister of the Militia Sam Hughes. The hospital started out as a nineteen-bed facility

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<sup>56</sup>PAM, (hereafter IODE), P 4911, “Minute Book for December 1912 - April 1915,” 164.

<sup>57</sup>M.J.B. Campbell, “Historical Sketch of Provincial Chapter, Manitoba,” 26.

and was enlarged three times during the course of the war. At its height it could accommodate 325 soldiers at once.<sup>58</sup>

In her postwar work, she continued on with the maternal imperialist emphasis of the war and prewar years. In addition to continuing to care for wounded and sick soldiers through the convalescent home and a newly-instituted soldier's civil-reestablishment home, she helped to care for the dependents — i.e. women and children — of soldiers who had either been maimed or killed in the war.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, she was particularly proud of the fact that in the convalescent home in October 1919 alone “8965 meals were served at a cost of 10 ½ cents a meal, which demonstrated good housekeeping and thrift.”<sup>60</sup> She also directed her attention to a different sort of battle — namely, that against disease. She was committed to dealing with the Winnipeg and Manitoba portions of the postwar influenza pandemic.<sup>61</sup> Just as she had worked to restore soldiers to a battle-ready condition during the war, she helped to care for ill men, women, and children by providing meals, beds, and blankets. Reportedly, she and her counterparts in the Order served some 45,000 people in Manitoba.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>M.J.B. Campbell, “Historical Sketch of Provincial Chapter, Manitoba.” 30.

<sup>59</sup>PAM, IODE, P 5501, “Scrapbook #1, 1916-1922,” 227.

<sup>60</sup>PAM, CP, P 2500, folder 3, “Report on Military Convalescent Home Board.” 1919, 15.

<sup>61</sup>PAM, CP, P 2501, folder 1, “Account of the Seventh Annual Meeting of the Provincial Chapter of Manitoba Imperial Order Daughters of Empire, April Third, Fourth, and Fifth, Nineteen Nineteen,” 1919, 13.

<sup>62</sup>PAM, CP, P 2499, folder 4, “Our Duty.” 1920.

Beyond the maternal nature of much of Campbell's work, the ways in which she carried out these efforts reveals that not only was the direction of her efforts reflective of her liberalism, but also that the process through which she carried out her work accorded with the fact that men held the authoritative social roles of the public sphere, and that to a great degree she was accepting of that fact. With the King Edward VII sanitarium, for example, her view that men ought to take responsibility for the expenditure of funds and tasks relating to the construction of the building did not translate into their actually building the hospital. Rather, it was they who hired and directed both an architect and the workers who actually designed and constructed the facility.<sup>63</sup> Similarly in her war work, virtually all of the issue or crisis-centred efforts resulted from the calls of male authority figures or were carried out only after she received the sanction of her male counterparts. In 1915, for example, prior to the first outbreak of influenza, Campbell decided that laying a plank floor in the show horse building that served as a makeshift barracks would make it a more comfortable facility. On asking Sam Steele, the commanding officer for Military District 10, however, she found that he refused to allow the project to proceed because he "wished to harden his men, they were soldiers." The barracks remained unchanged until after the first wave of influenza swept through the city.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup>PAM, CP, P 2490, folder 4, "Report on Campaign to build King Edward VII Memorial Cottage, Ninette Tuberculosis Sanitarium," 1913.

<sup>64</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 5, "The IODE: Brief Historical Sketch," 12.

It is important to note that despite the fact that she sought to work in ways that accorded to some degree with these “separate spheres” ideals, to understand her existence in the liberal order it is necessary to note that the dichotomy implied by that mode of conceptualization, however suited to a patriarchal liberal order, did not exist in reality. Rather, Campbell was part of a more general web of social relationships which were not characterized by the dichotomy that is implied in that ideology. Evidence for this general connectedness and the significance thereof is particularly apparent in considering her efforts to develop and to foster an understanding of the significance of the ritual and ceremony that were the physical expression of the traditions with which she identified. To understand the nature and functioning of these social relationships, therefore, it is instructive to consider some of her explicitly commemorative and tradition-building efforts.

In addition to the aforementioned sanitarium at Ninette, Campbell’s IODE efforts also included more broadly-based appeals geared toward delineating and instilling the populace with a reverence for symbols of “Britishness.” Among the first of such efforts was that of sanctifying and attempting to impose a system of ritual around the symbols that they believed were central to their organization and to imperial tradition. Perhaps not surprisingly, one of the first symbols that they sought to elevate and around which they sought to develop a code of conduct was the Union Jack. Campbell later recalled that when the first Manitoba chapters of the IODE were organized there was “little general knowledge” of the history and significance of the British flag. To her dismay, it

was often “used as a mere decoration when a touch of colour was needed, anywhere at any time.”<sup>65</sup> In addition to its rather arbitrary use, it was, she recounted, often denied a privileged place over the flags of other countries and was improperly displayed or used for the “wrong” purposes.<sup>66</sup>

As a result, she and several other IODE members undertook to educate fellow Manitobans by distributing thousands of miniature flags and flag cards, both of which were accompanied by a history of the flag and the message “This Flag Keeps You, Keep it.”<sup>67</sup> With regard to developing a regimen of ritual and ceremony around the flag, she made public appeals asking men and women generally speaking “not to use it as a mere decoration and to fly it right side up.”<sup>68</sup> She also pursued a more formal course of action by protesting to “Civic Fathers.” She supported requests that implored city officials to take action to end the practice of “the display of the U.S.A. flag in our theaters by visiting companies.” Additionally, she supported any measure that would “prevent its misuse by auctioneers to signify a sale” and that would serve to mitigate “against its being misplaced in theatres, movies and motors where flags of foreign countries were shown.” She was among those who “made protests to Governing Bodies against the way the Union

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<sup>65</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503. folder 5, “The IODE: A Brief Historical Sketch,” 2.

<sup>66</sup>PAM, CP, P 2496. folder 11, “Historical Sketch of the Fort Garry Chapter of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1910-1923,” 1923, 10; PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 5, “IODE: Brief Historical Sketch.” 4.

<sup>67</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503. folder 5, “IODE: Brief Historical Sketch,” 5.

<sup>68</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503. folder 5, “IODE: Brief Historical Sketch,” 5.

Jack was miscarried by May Day and Labour Day paraders.” Finally, she helped to develop a formal request that “was sent to the Railways of Canada asking them to display the Flag on their stations, that those arriving might early become familiar with their new county’s flag, and show it respect.” The primary benefit of highly visible symbols would be to “mutely teach the first great lesson in patriotism” — namely, that the “country and flag [were] one.”<sup>69</sup>

Two central points become clear in considering these efforts. The first is that these initiatives involved considerable expenditures of money. The final cost of the Ninette sanitarium alone was 16,500 dollars,<sup>70</sup> the cost of a single framed picture came in at over 100 dollars, and, though it is not clear exactly what they cost, the Order distributed 5000 flag cards, presented 17 libraries to schools, and purchased an undetermined number of miniature flags.<sup>71</sup> Though in some instances it is not clear how the women raised the funds with which they purchased these items, the practice of asking Winnipeg businessmen for contributions seems to have been common and lucrative. The

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<sup>69</sup>PAM. IODE. P 5491, “Provincial Chapter — Minutes, December 1912 - April 1915,” 12 December 1912, 15.

<sup>70</sup>PAM. CP. P 2490, folder 4, “Report on Campaign to Build King Edward VII Memorial Cottage, Ninette Tuberculosis Sanitarium.” 1913. Campbell and her counterparts raised \$11,261.80 in their four day campaign. Interestingly, she excluded member of the Earl Grey and Lord Selkirk chapters of the IODE because their membership was “largely composed of young [unmarried] ladies.” For reasons that are not clear, she determined that it was unacceptable for such women to undertake a “canvas of business places.”

<sup>71</sup>PAM. CP, P 2496, folder 11, “Historical Sketch of the Fort Garry Chapter of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1910-1923,” 1923, 10; PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 5, “IODE: Brief Historical Sketch,” 4.

reason that such was the case appears to have been linked with Campbell's close connections with these men and their wives in other capacities.

The nature of this interconnectedness is clearly evidenced in her efforts to build the Ninette sanitarium. As has been noted, the final cost of building the facility was approximately 16,500 dollars. Campbell and several other IODE women raised over 11,200 dollars in four days by canvassing Winnipeg businessmen and through holding a charitable ball called the Rose Ball.<sup>72</sup> While in theory the two modes of collecting funds may appear distinct, in reality many of the city's most prominent businessmen — at least one of whom, G.R. Crowe, served on the building committee — attended the ball. In addition to Crowe, the guest list included such prominent figures as Peter Campbell MacIntyre, Dr. Samuel Pope, Robert Campbell, John Botterell, John S. Turner, Andrew Wilson Smith, and William Whyte (See Appendix A).<sup>73</sup> What is significant about their attendance at this function is that not only did these men and their wives attend this function, but they also attended literally dozens of other functions that Campbell organized or attended. The level of familiarity that Campbell enjoyed with these men as a result of the fact that she regularly dined, danced, and sipped tea with them and their

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<sup>72</sup>PAM, CP, P 2490, folder 4, "Report on Campaign to Build King Edward VII Memorial Cottage, Ninette Tuberculosis Sanitarium," 1913. Campbell and her counterparts raised \$11,261.80 in their four day campaign. Interestingly, she excluded members of the Earl Grey and Lord Selkirk chapters of the IODE because their membership was "largely composed of young [unmarried] ladies." For reasons that are not clear, she determined that it was unacceptable for such women to undertake a "canvas of business places."

<sup>73</sup>A list of who attended the function appeared in the "society" section of *Winnipeg Town Topics*, 17 February 1912.

wives seemingly did not harm her efforts to enlist their support to serve on committees geared toward carrying out the “manly” duties of hiring and directing workers. It also likely did not hinder her efforts to procure some of the enormous wealth that they collectively controlled to purchase labour and materials with which to build the sanitarium, as well as to buy framed pictures, flags, flag cards, and libraries. Indeed, if she did not have access to that wealth, at least indirectly, it is difficult to understand how she could have raised the considerable sums required for carrying out her aims in such brief spans of time.

What is also noteworthy is that, though often leading business figures as well, the host of men and women with whom she regularly socialized also included prominent political figures and their wives.<sup>74</sup> At the Rose Ball, for example, in addition to her own husband who was the Attorney General at the time, Lieutenant Governor Cameron, Manitoba Premier Rodmund Roblin, Chief Justice T.G. Mathers, Dr. Fred Young, David McFadden, and Winnipeg Mayor Richard Waugh all were in attendance (see Appendix A).<sup>75</sup> Her appeals to “civic fathers” to provide a “properly privileged” status for the symbols with which she identified were, like her efforts at fund raising, not harmed by her close connection with these men and women.

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<sup>74</sup>See, for examples, *Winnipeg Town Topics*, 26 November 1910; 3 December 1910; 31 December 1910; 3 February 1911; 25 February 1912; 30 September 1911; 4 November 1911; 11 November 1911; 18 November 1911; 2 December 1911; 16 December 1911; 23 December 1911.

<sup>75</sup>*Winnipeg Town Topics*, 17 February 1912.

Besides indicating that Campbell could muster considerable politico-economic force in attempting to obtain her own ends, these instances are also suggestive of the significance of the separate spheres ideology that constituted a central facet of Campbell's mode of understanding and identifying herself. While she accepted and sought in some respects to conform to liberal ideals of respectable womanhood in maintaining a maternal imperialist focus, she simultaneously undermined those ideals by providing a definition of what was "private" that allowed Campbell and her counterparts to play a prominent social role. What is suggested by the work that she saw as in accordance with her "heritage," moreover, is not so much a contradiction as a duality, one that pervaded both the ways that she related with her elite counterparts and with members of the working class as well.

In considering the ways in which Campbell related to the working class, it is evident that her means of conceiving of them were racially/ethnically conditioned. While there is no reason to doubt that she sought to strengthen recognition and understanding of "tradition" amongst her elite counterparts, and while, as is suggested in her criticisms of May Day and Labour Day paraders, she sought to address members of the working class who were aware of the symbols with which she identified, she also made particularly strident efforts to inform the consciousness and behaviour of the growing numbers of non-British, working-class immigrants in Winnipeg and elsewhere. In culturally diverse, early twentieth-century Winnipeg, it is perhaps not surprising that large segments of the population would not have had an extensive knowledge of or affinity for the Union Jack

and the supposed great men and events which Campbell viewed as central to the empire, the nation, and their histories. Indeed, social historians have long noted that many immigrants from southern and eastern Europe sought to maintain closely-knit communities and that often the organizations that they developed reflected both the class and ethnicity of those who founded them.<sup>76</sup> As is clear in my previous discussion of Dafoe and Gordon, and as is also evidenced by a host of contemporary accounts from other elites in Winnipeg and elsewhere, this phenomenon amongst many recently arrived immigrants did not go unnoticed.<sup>77</sup>

Campbell was no exception to the more general tendencies among elites. As she noted in 1911, “the city of Winnipeg, ... has doubled its population in ten years.” She further observed that in the city’s “public schools forty-five languages [were] spoken.” To her mind, this state of affairs presented “many opportunities for the Order to do its part in making British Canadians of the cosmopolitan population of the prairie city.”<sup>78</sup> In some sense, thus, her “tradition” making efforts were geared toward defining “Canadian-ness” as, generally and vaguely speaking, “British.” As a nation of immigrants, it is clear

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<sup>76</sup>A. Ross McCormack has examined the language locals of labour and socialist organizations in his *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement, 1899-1919* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1977). See especially pages 9-10, 65-67, 72-75. See also PAM, Alan Artibise Papers, P 2270, folder 10, Orest Martynowych, “The Ukrainian Socialist and Working-Class Movement in Manitoba, 1900-1918,” Unpublished Paper, March 1973.

<sup>77</sup>See, for example, G.F. Chipman, “Winnipeg the Melting Pot,” *Canadian Magazine*, 5(September 1909), 409-416; J.S. Woodsworth, *Strangers Within Our Gates* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972 [1908]); and his *My Neighbor: A Study of City Conditions. A Plea For Social Service* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1972 [1911]).

<sup>78</sup>*Manitoba Free Press*, 11 April 1911.

that there was no necessary reason that “official” accounts of “Canadian-ness” ought to have centred around Britain, the Empire, and the Union Jack, particularly as the proportion of the population that hailed from the British Isles declined. Seemingly, Campbell’s efforts, as well as those of a host of her counterparts, served to ensure that the identification of Canada with Britain would remain the “official” view. Part of the way in which she could help to secure that end was through appealing to her friends and acquaintances in positions of political and economic authority and having them to determine which symbols were “Canadian” and to ensure that these symbols would stand in a “properly privileged” relation to symbols deemed “other.”

What she deemed “other,” and what she viewed as “British” and, therefore, “Canadian,” however, was not merely flags and symbols, but also modes of behaviour and conditions of existence. To her mind, the often abhorrent conditions in which immigrants lived was contrary to the “British-Canadian” way. The means by which the immigrants’ condition might be ameliorated was not through addressing social or economic circumstances, but through instructing immigrants on the finer points of British “civilization” which included English speech, and the adopting of modes of existence like those to which Campbell aspired and revered. In particular, she saw women as properly set to domestically-oriented work of the “private sphere,” and believed that the degree to which they accepted “civilized” habits would be reflected in whether or not they kept

clean, tidy residences, the hallmark of a well managed home which was a central tenet of being a good “British-Canadian” woman.<sup>79</sup>

Her concern that immigrants might implant their own traditions in Canada, meaning that the populace at large might come to be characterized by the ignorance and filth that she projected onto the immigrant population, was significant. In addition to concerns with home and family, Campbell also addressed a seemingly more male-centred set of issues as well. In contrast to Dafoe and Gordon, Campbell rarely mentioned the General Strike in Winnipeg, after the postwar labour revolt, the likes of which had, in Campbell’s words, “upset everybody and everything.”<sup>80</sup> She did, however, mention the more general state of social crisis through which she lived, and just as she had identified the moral failings of immigrants as the roots of early twentieth-century Canadian social ills, she also pointed to non-British immigrant men as the source of the Bolshevism and

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<sup>79</sup>These attitudes underlay much of Campbell’s efforts. See, for example, PAM, CP, P 2501, folder 6, “Toronto Convention.” 1921.

<sup>80</sup>PAM, CP, P 2501, folder 4, “Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Children of the Empire.” 20 August 1919. 2. Though there were relatively few direct references to the strike, there is evidence to suggest that she was involved in suppressing the upheaval. There are, for example, copies of the organ of the Citizens’ Committee of 1000, *The Winnipeg Citizen*, in her papers. See, PAM, CP, P 2496, folder 7. Moreover, as Randy Rostecki has noted, elite women living in one exclusive Winnipeg housing development, Crescentwood, believed that “the north end would conquer [them].” As a result, “Crescentwood got organized.” It would be surprising to find that Campbell was not involved in such elite organizational efforts. For information on Crescentwood see, Randy Rostecki, *Crescentwood: A History* (Winnipeg: Crescentwood Home Owners’ Association 1993), 88.

communism that she saw as a threat to the “British Civilization” with which she identified.<sup>81</sup>

Thus, in addition to her rather condescending efforts to instruct recently arrived immigrants on the merits of personal hygiene and good housekeeping, she also partook in a two- pronged postwar struggle to preserve “civilization” in the face of the specter of a supposedly alien-led revolutionary movement, and against the economic havoc brought about by the war. With regard to postwar social upheaval, she also urged the government to continue wartime censorship practices by banning “seditious publications” like the *Ukrainian Voice*. She also thought that what would prove as effective in promoting social stability was the deportation of those who made “seditious utterances” in the first place. Thus, at a 1921 IODE convention she forwarded a resolution

that all foreign-born persons who gave utterance to ... seditious or treasonable utterances, should be immediately deported under the Immigration Act, and all seditious and treasonous utterances of other persons should be promptly punished in the ordinary manner provided by law, and we request in particular that those responsible for the writing and publication of the *Ukrainian Voice* be forthwith deported.<sup>82</sup>

The resolution was passed unanimously and Campbell sent it off to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Immigration and Colonization, and the Commissioner of Immigration at

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<sup>81</sup>PAM. CP, P 2501, folder 4, Clipping from the *Calgary Herald*, 25 May 1920. See also, University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections, MSS 72, Research Papers in Manitoba History, Deborah Welch. “Mrs. Campbell and the I.O.D.E., 1912-1922,” Unpublished Paper, 16-18.

<sup>82</sup>PAM. CP, P 2501, folder 3, “Minutes of the Toronto Convention, 1921,” 1921, 32.

Winnipeg with a “request for immediate action.”<sup>83</sup>

She also, however, thought that a means of dealing with both economic woes and dissent was to “conscript aliens.”<sup>84</sup> This latter strategy for dealing with postwar crisis was geared toward concentrating “aliens” in labour camps where she thought that they should be forced to wear “working uniforms” and “submit themselves to military discipline.” They would till fields, mine ore, and carry out whatever other labour was necessary for increasing food and goods necessary for the reconstruction process for “\$1.10 per day ... and rations the same as soldiers’.”<sup>85</sup> Forcing them to work to rebuild Canada and the empire was, to Campbell’s mind, fair considering that the “aliens” and their families lived in her “happy land.” Conscripting their labour power would make it possible for them to “continue to share with us the blessing of freedom and civilization.”<sup>86</sup>

These attitudes and efforts are important because they show that even though Campbell’s views were Politically conservative, she was also ideologically liberal. More specifically, Campbell dismissed concerns about Canadian autonomy as insignificant

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<sup>83</sup>PAM, CP, P 2501, folder 3, “Minutes of the Toronto Convention, 1921,” 1921, 32.

<sup>84</sup>PAM, CP, P 2498, folder 6, “Conscript Aliens for National Service,” 21 November 1921.

<sup>85</sup>Campbell’s proposal to build what were essentially forced labour camps were extreme. It is worth pointing out, however, that in many respects her suggestions were in keeping with what had been actual government policy throughout the war years. As Francis Swyrypa and John Herd Thompson have demonstrated, literally tens of thousands of Ukrainians and others deemed “alien enemies” were interned and forced to carry out unpaid labour. See their *Loyalties in Conflict: Ukrainians in Canada During the Great War* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies 1983).

<sup>86</sup>PAM, CP, P 2498, folder 6, “Conscript Aliens for National Service,” 21 November 1921.

when compared to the necessity of strengthening the British Empire.<sup>87</sup> This emphasis clearly distinguished her in some ways from Dafoe and Gordon who, like other Liberals, sought to foster national autonomy. Nevertheless, despite differences in conceptions of means, she shared considerable common ground in terms of ends. Broadly and vaguely speaking, Dafoe, Gordon, and Campbell all believed that Canada ought to be a “British” nation of some sort, thus seemingly all sharing in and reaffirming a notion that Canada was “British.” Despite her Conservative adulation of the imperial connection, she shared with Dafoe and Gordon a definition of “Britishness” that meant, among other things, the continuation, even if in a slightly altered form, of the liberal social order which had prevailed in Canada and throughout much of the capitalist world.

In understanding Campbell and gender in this state of affairs more generally speaking, her roles with immigrants were as ambiguous as those of the general campaigns that she undertook. On the one hand, she aspired to a domestically-oriented role that accorded with her “sphere” by instructing immigrant women on how to clean their houses and how to cook meals. In a slightly different vein, there was a sense that non-British immigrants as a whole constituted a child-like population who, when compared to

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<sup>87</sup>On Campbell’s views of the necessity of remaining focused on the strength of the empire see PAM. CP, P 2500, folder 4, “Toronto Convention, Morning Session,” 3 June 1921. There is also some evidence to suggest that the public debates in which Dafoe, Gordon, and men and women like Campbell and her husband engaged were somewhat overstated. In addition to the consensus over the “Britishness” and liberalism of Canada and Canadians, Liberal nationalists like Dafoe and his colleagues nevertheless regularly socialized with Conservative imperialists. Dafoe, Gordon, and/or their wives also regularly attended social functions that Campbell attended or organized. On the Rose Ball see *Winnipeg Town Topics*, 17 February 1912. Other gathers at which either Gordon or Dafoe or both attended see *Manitoba Free Press*, 11 January 1904; 4 January 1907; 3 January 1908; 11 May 1915. See *Winnipeg Town Topics*, 26 November 1910; 25 February 1911.

“British” ways, had to be trained. This mode of understanding obviously meshed with the notion that she act as care-giver and moral guide to the supposed children of humanity. Yet, she also took on the role of authority figure in instructing women and also in making some of the few blatantly political recommendations of her career. That is, in her advocating for the development of forced labour camps as a means of dealing with the “alien problem,” she actually took on the role of policy advisor — a role that she viewed as male and that she, as one who embraced a liberal conceptualization of gender roles, supposedly disavowed.

A similar duality was apparent in the way that Campbell presented herself and her activities in the IODE. To understand that manner of presentation, however, it is necessary to recall that militarism was central to the Order. As has been noted, a central part of the *raison d’être* of the IODE had to do with celebrating and commemorating military actions, “heroes,” and facets of the militarism surrounding imperial expansion in the early twentieth century, and more generally speaking throughout the history of Britain and its colonial conquest. In addition to the commemorative function, the Order was conceived, as is implied in the foregoing account of Campbell’s war work, as a means by which Campbell and her counterparts could live out the duties entailed by their heritage, including those of assisting their men folk through “prompt and unified action ... when such action may be desired” and “to care for the widows, orphans, and dependents of

British Sailors and soldiers during war, in time of peace, or under sickness, accident, or reverses of fortune.”<sup>88</sup>

Campbell’s personal reverence for the militaristic facets of imperialism seemingly went beyond that necessitated by her role as a Daughter of Empire as well. She attended several royal functions throughout her lifetime.<sup>89</sup> In the best documented instance, that of the 1911 coronation, her reverence for militarism is evident. In an address that she gave after her return to Canada, she described the troops who lined the procession route “whose brilliant uniforms with the wealth of color in the decorations, provided an unrivaled setting for the most magnificent of pageants” in considerable detail. Her feelings ran particularly high when she “recognized her own gallant Canadians at the lead of the magnificent procession.” Indeed, she was so taken with the Canadians forces, which she claimed could only be “distinguished from their counterparts by their good looks,” that she not only named the types of troop detachments and many of the commanding officers, but also, after the ceremonies, carried baskets of fruit, sandwiches, and biscuits to them.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 5, “IODE: Brief Historical Sketch,” 2.

<sup>89</sup>Among others, she attended King Edward VII’s coronation, she was at Court with the Prince and Princess of Wales in 1902. In addition to being presented at Court in 1911, she attended a Buckingham Palace Garden Party, a State Ball, and a Fete given to 100,000 British School Children by the royal family. For more on these and other meetings with prominent people, see PAM, CP, P 2497, folder 10, “Advance Press Service of Minnie Julia Beatrice Campbell, ‘Inverary,’ Winnipeg, Manitoba, for *Who’s Who and Why*,” c. 1918. For detailed accounts of her experiences and the Garden Party, the State Ball, and the Fete, see PAM, CP, P2494, folder 12, “Address to Woman’s Home Economic Association of Morris, Man., December 6<sup>th</sup>, 1911,” 1911.

<sup>90</sup>PAM, CP, P 2494, folder 12, “The Coronation of June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1911,” 1911, 2-4.

Clearly her role as an assistant to and celebrator of the military forces at royal events was not out of keeping with the ideals of liberal womanhood to which she aspired. As Mike O'Brien has perceptively noted, in early twentieth century Canada, warfare was, as was the case in many contexts, "seen as a quintessentially masculine activity."<sup>91</sup> Campbell's role as a cheering bystander and her efforts to provide food and encouragement to the troops, or at least to some of the commanding officers, not only suited the saintly womanhood to which she aspired, but also were seemingly the embodiment of the roles, duties, ideals, and expectations on which the quintessentially masculine military pomp and stance was predicated.

What is significant, however, is that while in some instances she accepted and carried out duties implied in her role as a maternal imperialist, in other instances she adopted the symbolism and ritual of the militarism that she revered in the ways that she presented herself and the activities of the order more generally speaking. A comparison of photographs reveals that in some instances, she presented herself as a pleasant woman whose centre was the home and her children. At other instances, however, she appeared as a proud, forthright, robust servant of empire who wore a stern expression and an array of medals, both of which were suggestive of a soldier-like demeanor.

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<sup>91</sup>Mike O'Brien, "Manhood and the Militia Myth: Masculinity, Class and Militarism in Ontario, 1902-1914," *Labour/Le Travail*, 42(Fall 1998), 115. Mark Moss has also provided a discussion of these issues in his *Manliness and Militarism: Educating Young Boys in Ontario for War* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 2001).

Her mode of describing the activities of the Order more generally speaking reveal a similar tension. At times, the women of the order, in Campbell's view, carried out their womanly duties with "total selfless devotion" that was part of their drawing "woman's influence to the bettering of all things."<sup>92</sup> At other times, she portrayed them as soldier-like women who carried out their "orders" with "military efficiency." Indeed, one account that is particularly striking in evidencing this "soldier-like" quality is that relating to what transpired between Campbell and several fellow Daughters of Empire and Minister of the Militia Sam Hughes in 1915 when the IODE sought permission to set up the soldiers' convalescent home. As she later recalled, she "marched up" to his desk. He reportedly exclaimed "my God Mrs. Campbell, is it you?" and asked her what she wanted. She replied that she and her counterparts had "many sick soldiers" and, as a result, were there to "request permission to start a Soldiers Convalescent Home." On brief reflection, Hughes granted permission and "with the wave of his hand he dismissed" Campbell and her counterparts.<sup>93</sup>

This conflicted position is also clearly seen in an address which was a reflection on the significance of the war work that in which she and her counterparts engaged. On the one hand, she noted that victory was to a great degree contingent on the efforts of women like herself. As she noted, "had the women failed in their duties, the month of November, 1918, would have told a different story." She followed up this rather

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<sup>92</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 13, "The Supremacy of the Flag," 1.

<sup>93</sup>PAM, CP, P 2503, folder 5, "IODE: Brief Historical Sketch," 16.

forthright statement with the more ambiguous assertion that what she intended was that “it may be said, without any undue exaltation, that the members of the IODE in Canada tried to play a supplementary part to the fighting men who saved the allies from the Hun.”<sup>94</sup>

The duality that defined the means by which Campbell presented herself and spoke about the organization was, like the duality which characterized the activities that she carried out in accordance with and in an effort to develop “tradition,” reflective of the tension that defined her existence. More specifically, she was a woman whose privileged position allowed her the time and resources to lead a fulfilling existence, which, to her mind, included playing a prominent social role through social welfare organizations and in organizations geared toward strengthening the bonds of empire. She also, however, lived in a setting wherein it was assumed and deemed “proper” or “respectable” for women like her to occupy themselves with “private” duties. Clearly “the private” was itself a contestable concept and, wittingly or not, she adopted a definition of the private which challenged women’s exclusion from playing a prominent, recognized social role.

In assessing her views and efforts, then, two central points become clear. First is that the distinction between “/iberalism” and “*Liberalism*” is apparent.<sup>95</sup> Campbell was closely connected with Conservative politicians and she sought to realize what are viewed

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<sup>94</sup>PAM, CP, P 2502, folder 5. “Prospect and Retrospect IODE,” 10 August 1920, 2.

<sup>95</sup>It is worth pointing out here that other scholars have also noted the similarities in the two political parties. For a similar perspective on a slightly earlier period, see, A.A. den Otter, *The Philosophy of Railways* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1997), especially 185-207.

as conservative causes like imperialism. It is clear that in terms of the particulars of the means by which she thought Canadians ought to obtain the goals of social change that she set out, she differed somewhat from Dafoe and Gordon. Nevertheless, her case also indicates that despite differences of opinion about the means by which men and women ought to obtain the end of sustaining a liberal society, it was an *essentially liberal* society that she envisioned as desirable. Indeed, in terms of conceptualizing human potentialities, she embraced wholeheartedly what had been, as feminist scholars have stressed, at the core of the diffuse perspective that is liberalism from the outset.

On a related note, it is clear that Campbell would not have considered herself a feminist. Indeed, she seems to have distanced herself from those who set out to challenge explicitly women's status as second class human beings in early twentieth-century Canadian liberal society. That is to say, what is clear in examining her activities and the ways that she presented herself and others in the Order is that she embraced central liberal modes of understanding and prescribing behaviour for women. Through infusing those facets of liberal modes of understanding with her own meanings, however, she worked to transform the liberal order by helping to carve out a broader latitude of action for her and her elite female counterparts. As is revealed particularly in her response to the postwar social upheaval, she did so in ways that served to mitigate against thoroughgoing social change of other types.

## Chapter 6: Francis Marion Beynon and the Struggle for Liberal Democracy

In contrast to those women like Minnie Campbell who, at least theoretically, were apologists for a social order based on the classical liberal model, there were also, as has been well documented, women who sought to challenge the gender inequities of nineteenth and twentieth-century liberal Canada more directly.<sup>1</sup> Prominent among these women was Francis Marion Beynon. Like a host of her counterparts during the first years of the twentieth century, Beynon set herself to obtaining a variety of social reforms including the franchise. She worked along side such central figures as Nellie McClung, as well as her sister, Lillian Beynon Thomas in the Political Equality League.<sup>2</sup> She stood on the opposition side in the famed “Women’s Parliament.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, it was she who, in the last hours before the passing of the bill which gave women in Manitoba the right to

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<sup>1</sup>For example, many of the articles in Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s* (Toronto: Women’s Educational Press 1979) relate to individuals and organizations that were connected with this movement. See also, Carol Bacchi, *Liberation Deferred: The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1983).

<sup>2</sup>Ramsay Cook, “Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism,” in Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook, eds., *The West and the Nation: Essays in Honour of W.L.Morton* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1976), 190.

<sup>3</sup>For a first-hand account of the “Women’s Parliament,” see Nellie McClung, *The Stream Runs Fast* (Toronto: Thomas Allen 1945), 111-122. Beynon’s role is mentioned on page 121.

vote, pressured Premier Norris to make last minute revisions so that it allowed women both to vote and to hold office.<sup>4</sup>

Despite her relatively prominent role in suffrage and reform circles, Beynon has received comparatively little scholarly attention. Ramsay Cook was the first historian to devote attention to Beynon, and his remains the only careful analysis centred solely on her life and thought. According to Cook, Beynon “formed her ideas in the last years of nineteenth century liberal optimism.”<sup>5</sup> She was, in his view, on the “left flank” of a more general reform movement supported by a broad collection of socially-oriented Christians like J.S. Woodsworth, C.W. Gordon, Fred Dixon, and George F. Chipman.<sup>6</sup> Cook argues that for Beynon World War I represented a profound crisis, one that the “bland reformism of the ‘social gospel’” ill-equipped her to deal with. The result for Beynon was that “she had little to fall back on, intellectually, except a set of precepts that pointed in the direction of political withdrawal.” Foreshadowing the argument that he would make in his survey of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century social reformers, he argues that Beynon’s case reveals the irony of social gospel reform in that while the

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<sup>4</sup>The initial legislation that the Norris government drew up did not allow for women to hold political office. Lillian, Francis’s sister, became aware of the details of the proposed enactment. She proceeded to call Francis who happened to be attending a convention of women grain growers. Francis, in turn, called a “liberal henchman” and delivered an ultimatum — either the legislation would be suitably altered, or Beynon would bring the matter before the convention. The legislation was amended. For the full account of this incident see, Provincial Archives of Manitoba (hereafter PAM), Lillian Beynon Thomas Papers, P 191, folder 1, “From Teaching to Writing,” *The Country Guide*, February 1953, 68.

<sup>5</sup>Cook, “Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism,” 204.

<sup>6</sup>Cook, “Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism,” 191.

“Christian libertarianism” that she eventually adopted “may have been personally consoling,” it was also “politically irrelevant.”<sup>7</sup>

Though Cook provides the only analysis centred on Beynon alone, she has figured into broader studies of aspects of women’s history. Barbara Roberts, for example, has examined Beynon in a study of pacifist feminists, while Linda Kealey has provided some discussion of Beynon in her more general study of women, labour, and the left in Canada.<sup>8</sup> In contrast to Cook, both Kealey and Roberts perceive a more ardently critical stance in Beynon’s articles and editorials and argue that though she never belonged to a socialist organization, she did embrace socialist feminist principles particularly as she became radicalized by her experiences during the war.<sup>9</sup> That is, as Kealey explains, her “views were radical in their condemnation of a system that exploited women’s labour in the home and in the workforce while amassing profits from war production.” Her

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<sup>7</sup>Cook, “Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism,” 204. The later survey mentioned above is Cook’s *The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1985).

<sup>8</sup>Barbara Roberts, “*Why do Women do Nothing to End the War?*”: *Canadian Feminist-Pacifists and the Great War* (Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women: Ottawa 1985), 9. For her views of Beynon’s career, see 6-15. She also provides a similar discussion in her, *A Reconstructed World: A Feminist Biography of Gertrude Richardson* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1996); and her, “Women Against War, 1914-1918: Francis Beynon and Laura Hughes,” in Janice Williamson and Deborah Gorham, eds., *Up and Doing: Canadian Women and Peace* (Toronto: Women’s Press 1988), 48-65.

<sup>9</sup>Linda Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890-1920* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998), 121.

“critique of capitalism,” Kealey contends, “was sharpened by the war experience, and her feminism was altered by that critique.”<sup>10</sup>

In examining Beynon’s editorials and articles, it becomes clear that though Roberts, Kealey, and Cook all touch on central elements of Beynon’s thought, as was the case with historiography pertinent to M.J.B. Campbell, there is a tendency to fail to understand her in the context of the changing nature of early twentieth century Canadian liberal society. The result is that scholars tend to focus attention on Beynon’s individualism or on her “radicalism” thereby leading to misunderstandings about the nature and significance of her view. In particular scholars themselves tend to employ dichotomous modes of conceptualization — for example liberal versus socialist and conservative versus radical — that, even though they are to some degree apt, do not capture the range of broad possibilities allowed for by the nature and dynamics of the early twentieth century Canadian social order. At base, Beynon was among those who supported, sought to think through the implications of, and who aimed to foster a democratized liberal order. Though she was in the process of developing this individualistic, egalitarian view prior to World War I, Beynon’s experiences after she publically embraced and argued a pacifist position by the middling years of that conflict led her to a clarification of that view which, even after she left Winnipeg in 1917, provided the basis for her political activities.

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<sup>10</sup>Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause*, 198-199.

Born on 21 May 1884, Francis Marion Beynon was the youngest of James and Rebecca (Manning) Beynon's six children. She spent the first five years of her life in Streetsville, Ontario. In 1889, however, fifty-four-year-old James Beynon determined to try his hand at homesteading in western Canada. Thus, the family relocated to southwestern Manitoba where they rented a farm near the town of Hartney. After the death of Rebecca Beynon in 1898, Francis' eldest brother and sister, Manning and Lillian, saw to it that their four younger siblings, including Francis, earned their certification to teach.<sup>11</sup> In 1902 the Beynon Children moved their ailing father to Winnipeg, but Francis remained near Carman, Manitoba where she taught school for several years before she took up a position in the advertising department at the T. Eaton's department store and moved to Winnipeg.<sup>12</sup>

Though teaching and advertising provided her a means of supporting herself, she was enraptured with neither profession. Her real interest appears to have been in following her sister, Lillian, who worked for the *Manitoba Free Press*, into a career in journalism. Indeed, even as she worked in advertising, she helped to establish and regularly attended meetings of the short-lived Quill Club, an organization developed for

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<sup>11</sup>Anne Hicks. "Francis Beynon and *The Guide*," in Mary Kinnear, ed., *First Days Fighting Days: Women in Manitoba History* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center 1987), 46.

<sup>12</sup>Cook, "Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism," 190. According to C.W. Parker's biographical dictionary, Beynon was among the first women in western Canada to enter the advertising profession. See C.W. Parker, ed., *Who's Who in Western Canada* (Vancouver: Canadian Press Association 1911), 108-109.

the purposes of allowing writers to “talk shop.”<sup>13</sup> In particular, the club provided a forum in which to exchange information about how “to get into print and be paid for being there.”<sup>14</sup> Though Beynon may have benefitted from the advice of the established journalists with whom she regularly socialized, it is likely that the connections that she made through her activities in the club were more significant, for it was through the club that she met her future employer, George F. Chipman.

When Beynon made his acquaintance, Chipman, like Francis’s sister and several other members of the Quill Club, worked for the *Manitoba Free Press*.<sup>15</sup> From 1911 to 1936, however, he served as the editor of *The Grain Growers’ Guide*. Founded by E.A. Partridge in 1908, the journal began as the official organ of the Manitoba Grain Growers’ Association. Within a year of its founding, the Grain Growers’ Association of Saskatchewan and the United Farmers of Alberta both adopted *The Guide* thus helping to make it one of the most widely-read periodicals in the prairie West.<sup>16</sup> As the “voice from

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<sup>13</sup>PAM, MG 10 C3, The Quill Club, Minutes of Meetings, 14 November 1908. The Quill Club lasted for approximately a year after its founding on 14 November 1908.

<sup>14</sup>Cited in Cook, “Francis Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism,” 190.

<sup>15</sup>In addition to F.M. Beynon, the “ground floor members of the club” included, Lillian Beynon (later Lillian Beynon Thomas), who worked as editor of the woman’s page for *Free Press*, E. Cora Hind who was the agricultural expert for the same paper, and A.V. Thomas, Lillian Beynon’s future husband and a reporter for *The Free Press*. Also present at the first meeting of the club was Manitoba author H.J. Moorehouse, his wife, and a woman named F. Lediard. See, PAM, MG 10 C3, Quill Club, Minutes of Meetings, 14 November 1908.

<sup>16</sup>Barbara E. Kelcey and Angela E. Davis, eds., *A Great Movement Underway: The Grain Growers’ Guide, 1908-1928* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Record Society 1997), x-xi. Cook, “Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reform,” 193. On *The Guide*’s circulation, see, Brie McManus, “The Young Historian — Francis Marion Beynon: The Forgotten Suffragist,” *Manitoba History*, 28(Autumn 1994), 29. See also, Mary Kinnear, “‘Do you want your daughter to marry a farmer?’: Women’s Work on

the soil” the guide was geared toward providing discussion of an array of subjects including the merits of the Single Tax, the benefits of free trade, temperance, corrupt party politics, and the best way to deal with “the interests” — corporate magnates connected with eastern, primarily Ontario-based, manufacturing and financial institutions who farmers, to some degree aptly, surmised were reaping magnificent profits at their expense.<sup>17</sup> In addition to these reforms, the editors of *The Guide* and members of the farmers’ associations more generally speaking supported measures, including the suffrage movement, that would, in their view, contribute toward the development of a more equitable society.<sup>18</sup> To provide a forum for the discussion of issues and concerns relating to women’s day-to-day lives, including their subordination, *The Guide* carried a women’s section, the editorship of which Chipman offered to Beynon in 1912.

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the Farm. 1922.” in Donald H. Akenson, ed., *Canadian Papers in Rural History, Volume VI* (Gananoque: Langdale Press 1988). 147.

<sup>17</sup>The number of issues of *The Grain Growers’ Guide* that might be cited as evidence for this claim are too numerous to list. For an understanding of the flavour of these accounts see, “Protective Taffiff,” *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 18 September 1912, 3; “The C.P.R. Outwits the People,” *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 9 October 1912, 5.7; “The Financier’s Viewpoint,” *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 6 November 1912, 7; “Sifton’s Horse Deal,” *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 24 November 1915, 6. On tariff law see, “The Nigger in the Woodpile,” *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 6 March 1912. Sometimes a variety of these issues were considered by prominent reformers in special articles. See, for example, F.J. Dixon’s “Making Money Easily,” *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 2 May 1911, 7. For an excellent example of concerns about “the interests” see *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 25 June 1913. The entire issue was devoted to answering the question “Who Own’s Canada?” According to the editors, “42 men control \$ 4, 000, 000, 000 or more than one third of Canada’s total wealth in railways, banks, factories, mines, land, etc., etc.”

<sup>18</sup>Barbara Kelcey and Angela Davis have noted the political views of the editors of *The Guide*. See Kelcey and Davis, eds., *A Great Movement Underway*, xiii.

Despite the official stance of the papers' editors, Beynon's immediate predecessor, Mary Ford, devoted little attention to reform.<sup>19</sup> Rather, she used the woman's page, then entitled the "The Home," to providing tips about dress-making, baking, cooking, decorating, child-rearing, and beauty.<sup>20</sup> Beynon's first editorial appeared on 12 June 1912. In it she explained that she had changed the name of the page to the "The Country Homemakers," arranged to have the section moved closer to the front of the paper, and designed a "brand new heading free from all the fussy little curly wurlies with which it is commonly deemed necessary to ornament the heading of the woman's page."<sup>21</sup> The change in name, location, and appearance signaled a more substantive shift in emphasis as well, for while dress-making and cooking tips remained a part of the content of the page, Beynon did not view these topics as its proper core. As she explained to her readers several months after her arrival, "the proper sanitary care of ... homes and children, the intelligent up-bringing of the growing generation, and the

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<sup>19</sup>Angela Davis has noted that suffrage and women's rights were central facets of the political platform that *The Guide's* founder E.A. Partridge set out and that subsequent editors endorsed. See, her "Country Homemakers": *A selection of Letters and Editorials From the Woman's Page of The Grain Growers' Guide, 1908-1928* (Winnipeg: publisher unknown, 1989), 20. This collection appears to be an earlier, manuscript version of the volume that appeared as Kelcey and Davis, eds., *A Great Movement Underway*. The earlier draft is cited here because the information is not included in the later version.

<sup>20</sup>Kelcey and Davis note that the page under Ford included articles that were less politically engaging than were those that Beynon ran. See, *A Great Movement Underway*, xiii. Ford edited the woman's page for approximately nine months prior to Beynon's arrival. Her predecessor, Isobel Graham, was more inclined toward explicit political commentary, though often she provided little comment herself. Instead, she reprinted articles geared toward these issues that ran in other journals. For an example of Mary Ford's page see *The Grain Growers' Guide*, 3 April 1912, 27. The woman's page was called "Around the Fireside" while Isobel Graham served as editor. See, *The Grain Growers' Guide*, 5 July 1911, 17.

<sup>21</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 12 June 1912, 9.

women's right ... to have a voice in the affairs of the nation [had] crept into the woman's page and crowded the beauty notes nearly out of existence."<sup>22</sup> Though she thought this change promising, and though she believed that the falling away of "frivolous chatter" characterized what was happening with the "woman's page of today," she looked forward to a still different kind of woman's page, one "filled ... with broader questions including those which have no special relation to sex."<sup>23</sup>

Whatever her hopes for the future, Beynon's woman's page reflected the fact that she placed a great degree of importance on questions and issues related to the women's movement. Thus, in addition to a range of information about how to keep flies out of the home, children's education, clean milk, and sex education, a central function of the page under her editorship was to inform readers about the movement for women's rights in Canada and elsewhere through reporting or reprinting articles on organizations, legislation, and particular personalities.<sup>24</sup> On the local level, she used the page to draw attention to inequitable property laws, provincial politicians' views, to debate whether or

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<sup>22</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 25 December 1912, 10.

<sup>23</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 25 December 1912, 10.

<sup>24</sup>For example, on the ways to combat flies, see, *The Grain Growers' Guide*, 7 August 1912, 12; on sex education, see, 18 September 1912, 9 and 22 January 1913, 10; on education, see 20 May 1914, 10; on the clean milk campaign, see 28 June 1914, 10. For general information on the women's movement, see, for instance, 13 November 1912, 10.

not women ought to have the vote, and to test out opinions about and eventually to promote Fred W. Green's idea of creating Women's Grain Growers' Associations.<sup>25</sup>

Beyond providing a source of information for farm women, Beynon also did not shy away from making her own views on matters related to homemaking and women's rights known. As Ramsay Cook has astutely observed, a series of articles that Beynon wrote about Olive Schreiner's *Women and Labour* are suggestive of the nature of her view of Canadian society and the place of women therein in the past and present early in her tenure at *The Guide*.<sup>26</sup> In essence, Schreiner argued that human civilization had developed through a series of stages. She believed that from the earliest stages of human history when men and women existed as hunters and gatherers up through to the first grand ancient civilizations men and women had existed, albeit in different ways, as equals. When men began to bring slaves back as spoils of war, however, women found their valued work within the home usurped from them and they were, as Beynon noted, "left in idleness and gradually gave up all duties except that of child-bearing." This trend

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<sup>25</sup>Carol Bacchi has discussed Beynon's role in the development of these associations in her "Divided Allegiances: The Response of Farm and Labour Women to Suffrage," in Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s* (Toronto: Women's Educational Press 1979), esp. 99-107. For Beynon's early discussions of and solicitations of readers' opinions about Women's Grain Growers' Associations, see, *The Grain Growers' Guide*, 3 July 1912, 9; 24 July 1912, 10. Fred W. Green was from England. He homesteaded in Saskatchewan and was prominent in the Grain Growers' organization in that province from its earliest days. He was Secretary Treasurer and Managing Director of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association from 1909 to 1914. For information on Green see his obituary in *The Grain Growers' Guide*, 21 July 1915, 1.

<sup>26</sup>Olive Schreiner was a South African writer and feminist. For information about her see, Cherry Clayton, *Olive Schreiner* (New York: Twayne Publishers 1997). The book in question was Schreiner's *Woman and Labour* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes 1911). Anne Hicks notes Beynon's admiration for Schreiner's work, see her introduction to Beynon's novel entitled *Aleta Dey* (London: Virago Press 1988), v-xv.

persisted, Beynon explained, “until in the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome we have the women reclining indolently on their scented pillows.” Beynon held no small measure of disdain for this style of life partly because she believed that it turned the women into degenerates, though she thought that problems which manifested themselves in ensuing generations were of as great a concern not only to women but to the populace in general. To Beynon’s mind it was obvious that male children “were as much the sons of the indolent reclining motherhood of Greece and Rome as of its brilliant fatherhood.” As such, it was the case that whatever virility and strength these boys might have received from their active fathers was undermined by the degenerate qualities that they received from the slothful, leisurely women who were their mothers. As a result, they became “dandies and fops with scented hair and lily-like hands” and showed a “decided tendency to mental degeneration.”<sup>27</sup> Considering the nature of the “manhood” that came to characterize Greece and Rome, it was “little wonder that the Greek and Roman races were almost swept away by the strong men of the Gothic and Teutonic races whose mothers accompanied them to battle.”<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 10 June 1912. It is worth noting that Beynon appears to have drawn on, but not to have replicated Schreiner’s analysis of the affects of presumed indolence on the “race.” In Schreiner’s account, for example, it is not the mothers’ degeneracy that results in feminine male children who fall in the battle against virile Teutons and Goths. Rather, it is the fact that with men taking on intellectual tasks, and with slaves carrying out the duties that women once performed, Greek and Roman women, in Schreiner’s view, “sank passively backward and lower in scale of life” making them unappealing to men. In the absence of suitable female partners, men opted for “the abnormal institution of avowed inter-male sexual relations.” In Schreiner’s view, it was homosexuality itself which “rotted the heart” of these two great civilizations. See, Olive Schreiner, *Woman and Labor*, 84-85.

<sup>28</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 10 June 1912, 9.

Schreiner further argued, and Beynon agreed, that the modern era was characterized by a similar tendency as had resulted in the downfall of the great civilizations in Greece and Rome. The threat in the early twentieth century came not from slaves, however, but, rather, from machinery. According to Beynon, as “machinery came into play ... first the making of cloth and then the shaping of garments was transplanted from the home to the factory, where a single machine would often do the work of twenty people.”<sup>29</sup> In a similar fashion, “one by one such occupations as the curing of meats and fruits, the knitting of hose and the making of beverages had been largely swept away from woman’s realm to the factories where, very often, man [was] the presiding genius.” These developments all threatened, she thought, to make women redundant.

Though she believed that there was “still one function which belong[ed] to women constitutionally — the bearing of children,” she, following Schreiner, believed that the infrequency of wars, improved medical knowledge, and the decreased need for human labour meant that it was unnecessary for all women to bear children “in order that population and civilization may hold their own.” Having, to her mind, proven that a “race thrives only when it has a hard working womanhood,” the question became that of what should be done to ensure that women did not become indolent and the source of yet another catastrophe.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 17 July 1912, 10.

<sup>30</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 17 July 1912, 10.

The answer to this question was relatively straightforward. She detested the notion that women ought to “fritter away their lives at bridge parties and pink teas and shopping and gossiping because men [stood] at the break in the hedge of convention.” Rather, they ought “to have work to do — useful work — work that [would] count in the sum total of the world’s productiveness.”<sup>31</sup> What this translated into, as Cook has observed, was a means of justifying women’s greater involvement outside of the home. As Beynon herself later noted in a discussion of the “qualifications for wifehood,” few women made “their husband’s shirts or their own underwear” and almost “all the outer garments [were] bought ready made or [were] made in dressmaking establishments or tailor shops.” As such, what was more important than a woman being able to sew was that she know how to “buy things that had been made under clean and safe conditions and that will give the maximum of value for the investment.” Similarly with the preparation of food, she suggested that it was a “good thing to be able to cook,” but that “day by day the cooking [was] going out of the home into the bread, biscuit, pickle, vinegar and breakfast food factory, into the chocolate, cocoa and sugar factory, into the coffee, tea and canned soup factory.” It was, thus, important “to know ... about the conditions under which these things [were] produced” and to know which foods were “adulterated and which were pure,” which regions had “pure food laws” and how well they were enforced.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 17 July 1912, 10.

<sup>32</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 13 May 1914, 9.

While Cook captures part of Beynon's view, however, there is considerably more at play than just a rationalization for women to acquire knowledge of and an ability to act as mothers to the nation. In comparing Beynon's view to those of Dafoe, Gordon, and Campbell, and in considering her view in light of other studies of late nineteenth and early twentieth century cultural history, it is evident that she, like a considerable number of her counterparts, embraced a positivistic, antimodern view.<sup>33</sup> That is, Beynon, like many of her elite counterparts, viewed history as conforming to a logic wherein a particular behavior, mode of believing, mode of social organization, or type of social interaction was responsible for the end of a great civilization in the past. Invariably, early twentieth century antimodernists argued that a situation analogous to that which had brought down the earlier civilization was beginning to materialize in their own present. The implication was that if the behavior or mode of social organization — in Beynon's view, the possibility that women would come to find themselves without meaningful life pursuits as a result of the changing nature of modern society — were not changed, the future of the "civilized" world was imperiled.

If her adoption of central facets of Schreiner's view of the broad sweep of human history amounted to her involvement in a more general cultural phenomenon, the particulars of the version that she adopted suggest an interesting departure. Schreiner's

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<sup>33</sup>For insightful accounts of late nineteenth and early twentieth century antimodernism, see, T.J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York: Pantheon 1981); Ian MacKay, *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth Century Nova Scotia* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press).

account amounted in some respects to a feminized version of that familiar pattern. That is, in the account that Beynon adopted, it was not the strength and virility of men as distinct from women that threatened “civilized life.” Rather, as has been seen, Schreiner emphasized, as did Beynon, that women were central to the furtherance or decline of “civilization.” Thus, in a general sense, Beynon’s view is indicative of a seemingly diffuse, tacit uncertainty among elites in Canada and elsewhere. More narrowly, it also demonstrates the depth of Beynon’s feminism in that she not only sought to contest women’s exclusion in the present, but also aimed to recast prevalent modes of conceptualization so as to include women as important agents who affected the shape of the human civilization past and present.<sup>34</sup>

While Beynon, thus, sought to challenge the notion that women had been or were insignificant, the ways that she sought to include them into the past and to carve out a more equitable status for them in her present nevertheless revealed the degree to which the subordination implied in the liberal doctrine of separate spheres informed her perspective. In Greece and Rome it was, in her view, women’s contribution toward the development of men who were “dandies and fops” which led to the downfall of civilizations. The implication, then, was that women served as an important part of the making of men who would lead or who, if not “manly” enough, would fail to do so to the

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<sup>34</sup>It is worth emphasizing that it is obviously not the veracity of the account that is its strength. As was the case with Gordon’s similar view, aspects of Beynon’s means of understanding appear in some ways as bizarre mythologies. Even if taken as a mythology, however, surely the ways in which its author constructed it are significant.

peril of other “civilized” people. That men would ultimately remain in positions of authority, however, seems to have been assumed.

Moreover, Beynon’s entire mode of understanding women and their position within society and, in particular, their relationship to men, was predicated on a host of elitist assumptions which reflected her class standing. While a central rationale for her sketch of human history was to demonstrate that women ought to have access to fulfilling life pursuits, and that they ought to be educated about and ensured a means by which to act in the wider world, her assumption that women would be made obsolete as the number of textile and canned food factories increased is revealing. Though the women who provided a significant proportion of the labour force for textile production may not have found their work fulfilling, clearly the risk of their becoming mental degenerates as a result of a life of constant tea parties, card games, and mindless gossip was negligible.<sup>35</sup> Those to whom Beynon’s analysis appealed, and the social strata on whose life pattern her analysis was predicated were seemingly a group that included men whose incomes were sufficiently large that some members of the household conceivably could be unproductive. That is, she based her analysis on, and developed a critique that would

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<sup>35</sup>Mercedes Steedman has noted that with regard to mass produced clothing, for example, by the 1920s women “dominated the workforce in much of the Canadian industry” (1). More generally speaking, she notes that of women who were paid employees, over 19 per cent worked in industrial occupations by 1891 (13). Put differently, as Linda Kealey has observed, by 1891 just over 12 per cent (one out of every eight workers) of the waged workforce was made up of women. See, Mercedes Steedman, *Angels of the Workplace: Women and the Construction of Gender Relations in the Canadian Clothing Industry, 1896-1940* (Toronto: Oxford University Press 1997); Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause*, 15.

have seemed reasonable to a relatively small number of comparatively wealthy men and women.

Other than under-appreciating the complexity of Beynon's view and both the depth and narrowness of her feminist critique, what is also apparent is that Cook does not allow for the fact that Beynon's feminism was, like the rest of her outlook, dynamic. That is, while he provides important insights into Beynon's feminist perspective and her social analysis shortly after she arrived at *The Guide*, and while he provides a careful assessment of her transition from a "liberal optimist" view to what he terms a "Christian libertarianism," Cook does not mention whether this general shift in perspective was significant for her feminism, nor does he consider if and how her feminism might have figured into her later view.

The editorials that she penned during her first years at *The Guide* do not evidence an abrupt shift away from the elitist perspective that she articulated in her rendering of Olive Schreiner's book. Indeed, a considerable number of articles evidence that to some degree she did not appreciate just how meager an existence many of her readers enjoyed. Late in 1912, for example, she acknowledged that few of them could decorate or redecorate their homes regularly.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, she routinely complained that farm families did not devote enough attention to fostering growth in the spiritual side of life. Their failure to surround themselves with a pleasant environment — meaning a well kept

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<sup>36</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 27 November 1912, 10.

yard and a clean, tidy, and carefully decorated home — resulted not from a lack of resources or time to devote to creating such an environment, but, rather, as she put it, from the fact that they had “forgotten how to play.”<sup>37</sup>

Her view of the place of children also evidences a persistent insensitivity to the demands of farm life. In particular, she seems to have often underestimated the degree to which the survival of the farm family depended on the exertions of all family members, including children. This quality of her view, as Linda Kealey has alluded, came through particularly clearly in her discussions of education.<sup>38</sup> More specifically, she routinely scolded parents for keeping “Jenny and Johnny and Tommy ... home today for threshing and tomorrow to pick potatoes and next week to run errands.”<sup>39</sup> These practices, she noted, resulted in their falling behind in their school work. More serious, however, was that doing so implied “that school is a rather unimportant thing to be set lightly aside.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 15 April 1914, 10. For similar commentary see, 23 October 1912, 10; 27 November 1912, 10; 29 April 1914, 9; 2 June 1915, 10; 2 February 1916, 10; 11 February 1916, 9. Sheila McManus has also identified these tensions in farm women in Alberta. See her, “Gender(ed) Tensions in the Work and Politics of Alberta Farm Women, 1905-29,” in Catherine Cavanaugh and Randi R. Warne, eds., *Telling Tales: Essays in Western Women's History* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 2000), 123-146.

<sup>38</sup>Kealey, *Enlisting Women For the Cause*, 145.

<sup>39</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 16 October 1912, 10.

<sup>40</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 20 May 1914, 8. See also, 28 August 1912, 9; 16 October 1912, 10; 15 January 1913, 10; 24 September 1913, 9; 20 May 1914, 8; 26 August 1914, 8; 21 April 1915, 10; 28 April 1915, 11; 16 February 1916, 10.

There seems to have been little recognition that it was not merely a convenience, but, rather, a necessity to have all available hands at work.<sup>41</sup>

Yet, of equal importance is that her experiences during her first years at *The Guide* also seem to have provided the impetus for the beginnings of significant alterations in her view as well. Some had little to do with the prairie West. In the summer of 1913, for example, she reported that nine men were “invading the women’s sphere” by entering the Domestic Science program at Cornell University. Despite the fact that women theoretically had a “natural and instinctive gift” for domestically-oriented duties, she reported, the men were “making good at it.” This gave rise, Beynon thought, to important questions. “Is the inference,” she asked, “that men are superior to women in every field of labour, even their own traditional occupation of domestic work, or is it that labour is sexless?”<sup>42</sup>

What this line of questioning represented was that, in contrast to Campbell who essentially redefined the meaning of what constituted “the private” so as to provide a basis for an expanded, acknowledged social role for herself and other women, Beynon was in the process of making a departure from that mode of conceptualization itself.

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<sup>41</sup>Though there has been no study comparable to Bettina Bradbury’s *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montréal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1993) done for rural prairie families. Mary Kinnear has noted the difficulty of homesteading and the necessity of having all family members work toward the sustenance of the family unit. See her. *A Female Economy: Women’s work in a Prairie Province, 1870-1970* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press 1998), 88. She also provides insights into these facets of prairie homesteading in her “Do you want your daughter to marry a farmer?: Women’s Work on the Farm, 1922.” 137-153.

<sup>42</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 20 August 1913, 9.

Seemingly her movement away from the ideal of separate spheres was spurred on in part by her increasing familiarity with the concerns of farm women and, in a related vein, the functioning of the family farm. Later in 1913, for example, she challenged the notion that domestic work, because it was unpaid, was therefore unproductive or unimportant and the related view that the women who performed the bulk of those tasks were supported by their husbands. As she explained to her female counterparts “you who in the country work early and late are supporting yourselves right now and often without wages, except your board and clothes.” She furthered that she considered it “downright impertinence for a man on a farm to talk about supporting his wife. When she cooks his meals and sews and mends for him and his children from dawn till dark what is she doing if she is not supporting herself?”<sup>43</sup> What is more, she noted, “in most country homes the wife not only keeps herself but often contributes the family groceries the year round through raising fowl and making butter.”<sup>44</sup>

Though it is important to note that there was no point at which she ceased to discuss women’s duty to serve as mothers to the nation altogether, it is clear that as she reflected on these questions, she began to move away from the essentialism of separate spheres ideology and toward an analysis wherein the operation of the farm involved a series of ostensibly “sexless” tasks of equal importance. In an effort to move away from the connotations associated with the categories “public” and “private,” she conceived of

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<sup>43</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 17 December 1913, 10.

<sup>44</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 17 December 1913, 10.

work as “inside” and “outside” and argued that a smoothly operating farm involved the cooperation of “business partners,” including both a manager of outside and a manager of inside work.<sup>45</sup>

Her conception of farm work, and particularly her view that women, like other partners in business, undertook a range of equally significant tasks, led her to argue that the importance of those duties ought to be recognized in the treatment and status accorded to them. She, for example, argued that women’s work ought to be considered a “profession.”<sup>46</sup> She perceptively noted that carrying out the duties associated with “motherhood” — for example, rearing children, cooking, baking, and washing clothes — were not “instinctive,” but, rather, represented a specialized body of knowledge that had to be learned. Indeed, she not only asserted that the duties that women carried out amounted to an unrecognized profession, but also pushed to have that work “professionalized” by arguing with increasing adamance that women ought to receive training for housewifery.<sup>47</sup> She was particularly impressed with the programs offered at

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<sup>45</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 11 November 1914, 10.

<sup>46</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 18 February 1914, 5.

<sup>47</sup>Though she had indicated that homemaking ought to be considered a “science” from her first editorial onward, one of the more forthright examples of her belief that it was a “profession” came about in 1915. She explained that “some mothers [had] fads picked up from some quack which they inflict upon their innocent offspring to is everlasting hurt.” Alternatively, the untrained mother sometimes picked up some “ignorant old granny’s theory about babies that the young mother takes up and sticks to thru thick and thin. She may have lost a child or two over it, but it never shirks her faith in the theory.” See, *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 30 June 1915, 10. Beynon was impressed with the Home Economics program at the Agricultural College of Manitoba. Over the two-year program, women took classes centred on cooking, theory of foods, English, Mathematics, home management, physiology and hygiene, sanitation, home nursing, home planning, laundry, drawing and design, millinery, plain sewing and dressmaking, physical culture, dietetics, bacteriology, and chemistry. See, *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 31 March 1915,

the Agricultural College of Manitoba, the graduates of which stood as a testament to the fact that the day when it was “thought that any woman who could make a rich flaky pastry, cakes that were light and bread that rose high had nothing to learn about cooking” had passed. Similarly haphazard views about doing laundry and sewing were also going by the wayside. In the new era, it was, according to Beynon, “generally recognized” that a woman could produce good looking food and “yet feed her family badly.” The untrained housewife might “provide them [her family] one meal with food all of which provided heat for the body, and at the next with tissue-building food instead of mixing the two in a well balanced menu.” Laundry also was now a “science.” She thought it important that a housewife know “the history of textiles” and the processes involved in textile manufacture, so that they could decide “exactly what method of cleaning preserved best the colour and texture of the article to be renovated.”<sup>48</sup>

Beynon thought that the code of conduct surrounding women’s work ought to reflect a certain acknowledgment that it was indeed important and “productive.” Recognition of the importance and “professional” nature of women’s work could and should, in Beynon’s view, be recognized in two central ways. First, she thought that women themselves ought to study kitchens and have a hand in the construction and

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11. For insight into the structure of the program, offerings, and so forth, see, for example, *Manitoba Agricultural College Calender, 1911-1912*, 75-82.

<sup>48</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 31 March 1915, 10.

remodeling of the area that was to serve as their workshop.<sup>49</sup> Too often, she argued, kitchens were a “triumph of inconvenience” because, for example, pantry and storage areas were too far removed from areas where food was prepared. If properly trained professional homemakers had aided in the design of the facility, she believed that such problems could largely be avoided.<sup>50</sup> Just as a farmer in the field would not have the ways in which he carried out his work or the buildings in which he worked designed by someone with little understanding of the specifics of his occupation, neither should a woman have to suffer an “unnecessary martyrdom” at the hands of someone who did not fully appreciate the nature of her tasks.<sup>51</sup>

The other, related means of informally recognizing the significance of women’s work involved “labour saving machinery.” According to Beynon, one of the first things a man did when he started “out in any enterprise” was to “supply himself with the necessary equipment to carry on his work effectively.” In contrast to men, women had to contend with the fact that “the equipment of most homes for the business of housework [was] miserably antiquated and inadequate.”<sup>52</sup> She thought, for example, that the fact that many women worked without even a cistern underscored the fact that women’s work was unjustly assigned a secondary status. As professionals, women ought to be entitled to the

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<sup>49</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 30 July 1913, 8.

<sup>50</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 10 December 1913, 16.

<sup>51</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 30 July 1913, 8.

<sup>52</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 27 May 1914, 9.

same benefits as men. When extra money was available, a share, she believed, ought to go toward facilitating the “inside component of farm work.”<sup>53</sup>

The significance of her conceptualizing the farm as a business operation lays not in its novelty, for her male counterparts who wrote for *The Guide* routinely discussed farming as a business and farmers as professionals. What is significant about Beynon’s analysis is that just as she reformulated the general cultural modes associated with the broad sweep of human history, she also adopted the language and mode of understanding that her male counterparts used and refashioned them so as to challenge the liberal doctrine of separate spheres and to provide a basis from which to demand a more equitable status for women. In removing herself conceptually somewhat from classical liberal doctrine, Beynon developed an argument in support of legislative reforms that recognized that women were “individuals” in their own right. In addition to her efforts in the suffrage movement which have been considered elsewhere, she also agitated for revisions to provincial homestead laws. Though women in Manitoba had the right to hold and dispose of property separately from their husbands since 1900, they had been formally excluded from holding and were not entitled by law to the profits derived from or proceeds on the sale of the “free homesteads” that had been available in Manitoba and the prairie West more generally speaking after 1871.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 27 May 1914, 9.

<sup>54</sup>What is intended by “free homesteads” is the arrangement developed first in 1871 by orders in council wherein the Canadian government offered homesteads to prospective settlers for a fee of ten dollars. According to the 1871 orders in council, those claiming a homestead had to remain on the land for

Beynon strongly opposed these policies and the lack of recognition for the vital role that women played in the functioning of the “farm business” that they reflected. Just as she believed that women’s contribution ought to be acknowledged “in sentiment,” she also began to reason that if women worked as partners in the business of farming and thus “did add to the wealth of the nation,” they ought to be entitled to a portion of the profits that the farm made, ought to have a say in if the farm on which they worked ought to be sold, and they ought to have a share in the proceeds from the sale of the homestead that they had helped to improve and to bring into cultivation.<sup>55</sup> In an era in which the increasing number of people leaving the countryside was a cause of alarm for farmers, she argued that this exodus among women was in part a “farm girls’ strike.” The means by which to quell the outflow was to create conditions on the farm that made remaining there more appealing.<sup>56</sup>

Many of these issues and concerns remained central to Beynon throughout the ensuing years. Nevertheless, despite the fact that there is evidence to support the view

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a period of five years before they actually owned it. The Dominion Lands Act of 1872 provided for the same offer, though the residency requirement was reduced from five to three years. While the “free homestead” may have been the embodiment of the liberal ideal of the “self-possessed” individual in some respects, that this property was never intended for women reinforces how ingrained was the notion that “individuals” were male. Gerald Friesen has provided a discussion of some of the qualities of the legislation providing for “free homesteads.” See his, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987), 183. On women’s exclusion from being able to hold title to these lands, and the movement to institute reforms, see, Kinnear, *A Female Economy*, 86-89; and, Catherine Cavanaugh, “The Limitations of the Pioneering Partnership: The Alberta Campaign for Homestead Dower, 1909-1925,” in Catherine Cavanaugh and Jeremy Mouat, eds., *Making Western Canada: Essays on European Colonization and Settlement* (Toronto: Garamond Press 1996), 186-214.

<sup>55</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 3 September 1913, 9.

<sup>56</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 10 December 1913, 16, 36.

that Beynon's perspective was undergoing important changes during the two years prior to the outbreak of war, it is clear that other scholars have appropriately, if somewhat overzealously, regarded the war as a pivotal juncture in Beynon's life wherein her response to the war led her to a more critical stance generally speaking. It is important at the outset, however, to note that it is instructive to avoid the temptation to conflate Beynon's moderate prewar pacifism with the more aggressive stance she took in the later war years. That is, though Beynon is normally portrayed as a pacifist, it is clear in considering her editorials that she was not as unerring in her convictions as other scholars have indicated, and her transition to a highly critical stance was more gradual than they have suggested.<sup>57</sup>

Beynon's prewar pacifism was uncontroversial and, indeed, almost suggestive of the notion that peace was a given. As has been noted with regard to her account of Schreiner's view, she felt confident enough in the continuation of a basically peaceful existence that she thought it would have to be taken into account in developing programs of social reform. This facet of her outlook, as well as a more general belief that there was a "waning of the battle cry" is evidenced in her exploration of the question of whether or not the fact that "rank materialism stalked the land" meant that "the spirit of heroism was

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<sup>57</sup>Virtually anyone who has written about Beynon has noted her pacifism. See, Cook, "Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism," 197-200; Hicks, "Francis Beynon and *The Guide*," 48; Roberts, "'Why do Women do Nothing to End the War?'," 6-15; Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause*, 192-193. Tom Socknat has also provided some analysis of Beynon as a pacifist. See his *Witness Against the War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987), esp. 65-68.

departing” from modern life. She argued that such disasters as the sinking of the Titanic demonstrated that “heroes of peace” could and did exist. As evidence of this claim, she pointed to the “mere boy” who sat “alone at the wireless instrument ... giving his life in exchange for scores of others.” Or, similarly, the “husbands and fathers” who watched the last lifeboat slip away and “in the same instant ... said goodbye to their beloved ones and to all hope for life.” These men were more heroic than soldiers for there “were no flapping flags or blaring trumpets to urge them on,” and there were “no medals or promotions dangling before their eyes.” She concluded by asking the question of whether bravery and heroism “would die without war.” Both were safe, to her mind, so long as “men like these [could] look death out of countenance without a single strain of martial music to fire their blood.”<sup>58</sup>

When war broke out in 1914, Beynon was, thus, appalled and in a state of disbelief. As she commented, “it is unbelievable that a great European war can happen in this, the twentieth century. It is so illogical, so barbarous.” She further commented that,

in English speaking countries it is now forbidden by law to settle a dispute after this fashion, since it is obvious that no sword or pistol, however deftly handled, can influence the equity of a dispute. But in international disputes we are not so wise, and duels between nations continue, on the old barbarous supposition that might makes right. How utterly stupid!<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 21 January 1914, 12.

<sup>59</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 12 August 1914, 10.

The advent of such a state of affairs, moreover, demonstrated that it was imperative that women be granted full political rights. Were they with more influence, she thought, surely they would not bow to the will of the “great firms engaged in the manufacture of guns” who she suspected were a part of the cause of the war. She also thought that when women became legislators, they would “find a saner method of settling differences of opinion than by sending their sons to rot on the battlefield.”<sup>60</sup>

These critical views, however, soon gave way to a more moderate stance.

Approximately a month later, for example, she explained that “it seems like a horrible nightmare that we are picking out our big, stalwart young men and instructing them, hour after hour, in the ways of death.” She further noted, however, that

while in this instance war could not be avoided by our country without resort to cowardice, it is none the less a terrible calamity that has befallen the world, and one that must be a powerful sermon in the interests of peace.<sup>61</sup>

Similarly, in 1915 she noted the enormity of the financial and human costs of the war, and lamented that the resources being spent to bring about death and destruction were not used for more productive purposes. Though she hoped that as much money as had gone into destroying life and property would go into educating the world “into a spirit of peace and kindness after the war,” she nevertheless granted that the “war has been necessary,

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<sup>60</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 12 August 1914, 10.

<sup>61</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 9 September 1914, 8.

that it [was] the last titanic struggle between autocracy and democracy which had to be settled in blood.”<sup>62</sup>

It is not clear whether she privately disagreed with these statements or not. In the novel that she wrote during the last year of the war, Beynon frequently referred to the self-styled main character, Aleta Dey, as a “coward” and as having been “frightened into servility.”<sup>63</sup> More particularly, Aleta Dey was consistently one who was reluctant to express opinions that did not accord with the norm and that would, if she openly embraced them, serve to cause her to fall into disfavor with her friends.<sup>64</sup> Though some scholars have interpreted this as a call for others to come out in favor of what they felt was right in spite of what others might think of them, it is, in considering Beynon’s view, as likely that she was actually writing about her own hesitancy to challenge the *status quo*.<sup>65</sup>

In any event, the bulk of the evidence of her views during the war are the editorials that appeared in *The Guide*. With the exception of her first editorial after the

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<sup>62</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 3 March 1915, 8.

<sup>63</sup>Francis Marion Beynon, *Aleta Dey* (London: Virago Press 1988[1919]), 13. She not only mentions that the main character, Aleta Dey, was “born a coward” (13), but later, with regard to instances wherein she must make a decision between accepting mainstream views or following what she really believes, “being a coward” — i.e. being afraid to fall into disfavor with her friends — she fails to take the moral high ground (63).

<sup>64</sup>Beynon, *Aleta Dey*, 63.

<sup>65</sup>Hicks has been the most forthright proponent of the view that Beynon’s book was an effort to convince others to speak their true feelings about the war. See her, “Francis Beynon and *The Guide*,” 41. See also, Hicks’ introduction in Francis Marion Beynon, *Aleta Dey* (Virago Press 1988[1919]), v-xv.

outbreak of hostilities, they suggest that she was, grudgingly or not, supportive of the war until 1916. As the war dragged on, however, Beynon became increasingly bitter and less certain that there was any connection between the enormity of the war and its being the last example of such a conflict.<sup>66</sup> As she explained to her readers, she was coming to believe that the real issue was not, as others suggested, which tactics would bring about a victory for the allies so that the “war to end all wars” might come to a close. Rather, it was “whether militarism shall grow and prosper or whether it shall decline and fall.”<sup>67</sup> It seemed to her that those who argued that this war would be “the war to kill war,” were unjustifiably optimistic. Indeed, there was not only reason to believe that the war may not end all wars, but there were also “rather disquieting signs,” she noted prophetically, that World War I was “only a little preliminary scuffle” which would “be followed by wars of increasing frightfulness as the genius of man is bent more and more to the monstrous task of creating instruments of human slaughter.”<sup>68</sup>

The only means by which to ensure that no future war developed was, in her view, to make sure that conditions conducive to peace prevailed. She proceeded to provide an outline for the sustenance of peace which involved the imprisonment of newspaper editors who favoured war in peacetime, the confiscation of all private property in the

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<sup>66</sup>See, for example, *The Grain Growers' Guide*, 20 January 1917, 9 for a clear rejection of this view.

<sup>67</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 12 April 1916, 10.

<sup>68</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 19 April 1916, 10. For similar views see, *The Grain Growers' Guide*, 24 June 1916, 9; 25 October 1916, 9; 22 November 1916, 9.

event of war, and the holding of a referendum wherein all men would vote on whether war ought to be waged. She believed that none of these measures would be taken primarily as a result of linkages that she made between war profiteers and government officials. That is, she seems to have adopted the views of some of the agrarian populists with whom she associated in perceiving “the interests” as controlling government officials who in turn made policies.<sup>69</sup> She argued that it was as a result of the fact that this arrangement prevailed that peace-making measures, and therefore peace, did not prevail. As she bitterly explained, none of the “really reasonable things” that she and her counterparts suggested would be brought into effect “because there is no profit in it for those who grow fat out of the slaughter of human beings.”<sup>70</sup>

In considering the specifics of her late-war perspective, however, it is clear that though Beynon became more critical, she also, contrary to recent analyses, shunned socialist organizations and socialism. Some of the most straightforward evidence for this claim comes from the autobiographical novel that she wrote during the last year of the war. Toward the end of the novel the main character, Aleta Dey, and Ned, a socialist, considered whether socialism or a Christianity similar to the social gospel of C.W. Gordon would facilitate the efficacious reformation of society. Though she expressed no

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<sup>69</sup>For an aged though thoroughgoing examination of these views as expressed through the United Farmers of Alberta. see, C.B. MacPherson. *Democracy in Alberta: Social Credit and the Party System* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1953), esp. 3-90. Reformers, rebels, and revolutionaries ranging from socialists to Laurier liberals held similar views. See, for example, Cook, “Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reform,” 200.

<sup>70</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 20 June 1917, 9.

affinity for orthodox “churchianity,” Aleta also had no use for socialism. As she explained to Ned,

the matter is that you socialists have exactly the same sense of values as the Capitalist. You are looking for the panacea of human misery in material success. The difference is that you want it for the many while the Capitalist wants it for the few.<sup>71</sup>

She further explained that if Ned and his counterparts should found their “socialist commonwealth, ... in less than fifty years” it would “become a much greater tyranny than [the] present system.” The war had “thrown some light on the treatment majorities [would] give minorities when the whole of society can be organized by the government for their suppression.” She concluded by arguing that Ned’s socialist commonwealth would “be a new kind of hell for anyone who happen[ed] to have an original mind.”<sup>72</sup>

Despite her rather forthright renunciation of socialism and the fact that she never belonged to a socialist organization, it is, as Barbara Roberts has suggested, important to be aware of the fact that socialist principles are not necessarily associated with particular organizations, and it is possible that in her forthright rejection of socialism, what she was actually opposing was the socialism of “male adherents of the Second International.”<sup>73</sup>

Yet, while clearly there is the possibility that Beynon embraced socialist principles while rejecting some socialists and the doctrines they supported, in examining her views on

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<sup>71</sup>Beynon, *Aleta Dey*, 191.

<sup>72</sup>Beynon, *Aleta Dey*, 191-192. Beynon had expressed an almost identical view early in the war. See *The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 17 November 1915, 10.

<sup>73</sup>Roberts, ““Why Do Women Do Nothing To End The War,”” 9.

what became two key issues during the war, the “alien” question and conscription, as well as her more general criticisms of the social order, it becomes clear that she was not a socialist by association or principle.

With regard to her views of immigrants and immigration, Beynon had for some time held a more moderate view of “race” and related views of nationalism and imperialism than did many of her counterparts, including the subjects of the foregoing chapters. In early 1914, for example, she critiqued the commentary of an unidentified man who objected to the “portraits of two negresses” being allowed “to besmirch the walls” of the Winnipeg Art Gallery. His objection to the portraits resulted from his presumption that the women were “late attendants in disorderly houses.” Beynon found this “base innuendo” detestable. She angrily responded by noting that “because we of the Anglo-Saxon race have been able to bully less militant and oppressive peoples into handing over their territory to us is a poor basis for the assumption that we as a race are the anointed of God and the one and only righteous and virtuous people.”<sup>74</sup> Several months later she expressed similar views with respect to immigrants in western Canada. She reported having been “asked to harangue a company of poor defenseless school children on Empire Day in the subject of loyalty.” Seemingly this was the campaign of

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<sup>74</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 11 February 1914, 10. See also *The Grain Growers' Guide*, 14 May 1913, 9 for a similar view.

which M.J.B. Campbell had been a proponent. In contrast to Campbell, Beynon declined owing to the fact that she was “nauseated with all the babel of the grand old flag.”<sup>75</sup>

As nationalist sentiment and the related official and unofficial anti-immigrant practices grew during the war, she, unlike some of her suffrage counterparts, stuck by and developed a more clear exposition of her earlier views. As Wendy Lill has demonstrated in fictive form, and as other scholars have noted, Beynon’s refusal to accept the nativist views that underlay the Enfranchisement Act of 1917 led her into a conflict with other prominent reformers.<sup>76</sup> Some of her most harsh public criticisms were aimed at prominent suffragette Nellie McClung who accepted the exclusion of “foreign” women from the vote. She explained to her readers her hope that “the majority of the women who fought and won the suffrage fight on the ground that democracy [was] right still believ[ed] in democracy.” To her mind, if they held a political conviction that could not stand a crisis they should “rise up and take it out and bury it in a nice deep grave, and pray that it might have no resurrection day.” She further chided McClung for having “pointed out from a public platform, time and again the tyranny of unrepresentative government and the injustice of debarring any portion of the people from the franchise” and then acting to support measures that did precisely that.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 3 June 1914, 9.

<sup>76</sup>Wendy Lill has addressed the tensions that arose between Beynon and Nellie McClung in a play entitled *The Fighting Days* (Vancouver: Talonbooks 1985).

<sup>77</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 27 December 1916, 10.

Beynon's view was more than a vaguely and negatively defined anti-racism. Indeed, on further analysis it becomes clear that what she intended by "democratic principles" was something approaching a pluralist liberal democratic view, and her discontent with the bigotry of many of her counterparts resulted from their failure to live up to that ideal. As she explained, "race hatred" prevailed as a result of "the demand for uniformity." She further explained that many people thought that "their own way of thinking, acting and living [was] the only right way." Immigrants "with a different way of doing these things, [were] to be distrusted since being different," she sarcastically explained, was "of necessity a wrong way." This outlook, she continued, contained "the spirit that crucified Christ, and that would do it again if he were alive today and dared to preach his doctrine of peace and brotherhood of man." Someday, she hoped, this state of affairs would be superceded, but for the lifetime of her "generation, at least, there [was] not likely to be any appreciable change. The schools, churches, and society generally [would] continue to try to force everybody into the same mould and to persecute those who refuse[d] to be shaped after the regulation pattern."<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 7 May 1917, 10. For a similar view, see *The Grain Growers' Guide* 17 January 1917, 10; 6 June 1917, 9. Beynon carried her view to its logical conclusions internationally as well. In an article that appeared in *The Guide* on 14 February 1917, for example, she took note of Chinese efforts to rid themselves of the opium trade from which Europeans and some prominent Chinese people reaped handsome profits. She argued that the willingness of the Chinese to forgo material riches for the welfare of the populace at large was impressive, particularly when compared with efforts to instate prohibition in Canada. Considering the level of animosity toward Asian immigrants in Canada (in Manitoba legislators passed a law in 1913 which forbade any non-Asian woman to work for a person of Chinese decent), her willingness to argue that Chinese people in Canada ought to be treated as equals, and her willingness to elevate Chinese policy as an example to which Canadians ought to aspire is significant.

While these views are suggestive, what further evidences an ardent individualism, and what is as significant in understanding Beynon's critique of the social order is that when conscription became an issue in 1916, she, perhaps not surprisingly in light of her increasingly critical stance, objected to it. She opposed the policy for several reasons. First, she believed that the majority of Canadians opposed the policy and, thus, to implement it would be to violate the democratic principles that were supposedly central to the Canadian nation. She also suggested that part of the reason for the war was territorial aggrandizement and that until men could be guaranteed that this was not the cause that they were fighting for, they should not be forced to serve in the military.<sup>79</sup>

More central here, however, is that she objected to conscription as it would be imposed in Canada. To her mind, it was vitally important that men be treated as undifferentiated equals and that if one man were to be forced to make sacrifices, all, regardless of the particulars of chance circumstances ought to be forced to do the same. She believed that if conscription were implemented in Canada, it would almost assuredly be fashioned after the British model. What this meant was that single men would be called before married men. True to her convictions, she argued "that if the good of the individual [was] to be set aside at the demands of the country, then the rights of the

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<sup>79</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 30 May 1917, 10. She explained in this editorial that the British Parliament's refusal to pass a motion explicitly stating that imperialist expansion was not a part of their war aims led her to believe, reasonably enough, that it was a part of those aims.

individual ought to be completely disregarded, and those men, married or single, left at home who [were] of most benefit to the country.”<sup>80</sup>

Similarly, she thought that when it came to forgoing individual rights, all should contribute in every possible way. Thus, if by reason of age, infirmity, and so forth an individual was rendered incapable of serving in the military, he should, at minimum, be prevented from benefitting from the war. As Beynon explained, those who could not “fight should pay, and pay to the last penny of their possessions.” It was by this logic that she sought to justify the “conscription of wealth.”<sup>81</sup>

Her continuing objection to the war and to conscription is also significant not only in that the rationale behind it evidences what was essentially a liberal concern with individual liberties, but also because it was her take on these issues that led her to a more radical questioning of the society in which she lived. Like a considerable number of those who questioned the Borden government’s efforts to mobilize for war, she could not help but become aware of the formally and informally imposed restrictiveness of Canada’s increasingly oppressive political atmosphere. Informally, there were, particularly toward the end of the war, numerous instances of verbal and physical assaults on dissenters. In Beynon’s immediate circle of acquaintances F.J. Dixon who she

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<sup>80</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 30 May 1917, 10.

<sup>81</sup>*The Grain Growers’ Guide*, 11 July 1917, 9.

admired personally and politically was severely beaten at an antiwar rally.<sup>82</sup> Additionally, J.W. Dafoe fired Beynon's brother-in-law, A.V. Thomas, from his position at the *Free Press* when he publically and approvingly shook hands with Dixon after the latter delivered an antiwar address.<sup>83</sup>

More formally, as Gregory Kealey has noted, the Borden government's wartime policies were aimed at meeting the "twin crises" of "orchestrating the grim organization of the nation for war" and the "defense of the country's capitalist system against the connected threats of labour militancy and socialism."<sup>84</sup> Part of the effort involved the passage of the War Measures Act which gave the government "almost unlimited powers." In Beynon's case, the allowance of press censorship was particularly pertinent, for there is evidence to suggest that either she or her editor, George Chipman, was contacted by the press censor as she persisted in criticizing government policy.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>82</sup>Beynon wholeheartedly supported Dixon's election campaign as an independent in 1914. She believed that he, as a proponent of the Single Tax and direct legislation, and as a "young man of sterling character" was the kind of politician that was needed. See *The Grain Growers' Guide*, 22 July 1914, 8. For a contemporaneous account of the attack see, *The Voice*, 8 June 1917. Cook mentions the assault on F.J. Dixon. See, "Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism," 200. David Bercuson also draws attention to the incident and provides some discussion of several similar instances of informal oppression in his, *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1974), 42-43.

<sup>83</sup>Cook, "Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism," 198.

<sup>84</sup>Gregory S. Kealey, "State Repression of Labour and the Left in Canada, 1914-1920: The Impact of the First World War," *Canadian Historical Review*, 3(Spring 1992), 282.

<sup>85</sup>Kealey provides some discussion of the War Measures Act and press censorship in "State Repression of Labour and the Left in Canada," 285. Cook mentions the possibility that the censor may have contacted either Beynon or Chipman. See his, "Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism," 200. Beynon herself also related that she was suspicious of being under surveillance. See, Beynon, *Aleta Dey*, 216-217.

As the government put in place or more rigorously enforced oppressive measures, and as she and her friends and relatives fell victim to the informal abuses of some of their counterparts, Beynon became more critical. As she became more critical, she became more aware of the restrictions of individual liberties that resulted from the draconian measures that “patriotic citizens” and the government implemented. Generally speaking, it was not as a result of concerns related to class exploitation, the nature of capitalism, or an interest in building a socialist society of any sort that she grew increasingly disconcerted. Rather, it was, as was evidenced by her commentary on the bigoted and patriotic views of many of her counterparts, the fact that she feared that Canadian society generally speaking was decidedly illiberal that became central. While the war itself, as was implied in her initial response to it, stood as a serious challenge to anyone who hoped to maintain a faith in the triumph of “reason” and “progress,” so too did the domestic political situation. While clearly the oppressive measures about which Gregory Kealey has written were an integral part of that state of affairs, so too were more diffuse, unofficial tendencies such as what Beynon perceived to be an increasing emphasis on jingoistic appeals to ill defined concepts.

As has been noted in the previous chapter, people like M.J.B. Campbell sought to elevate particular symbols and to foster a connection between them and modes of thinking and feeling among a broad swath of the population. Beynon found these efforts, particularly as she found herself among the minority who opposed facets of the “common

sense” that elites like Campbell, Dafoe, and Gordon sought to instill into the popular mind, deeply troubling. As she explained to her readers in January 1917,

Canada’s greatest need today is a thinking electorate. A large body of public opinion is made up of those who only feel about things, who, in fact, are convinced that it is wicked and unpatriotic to apply common sense to certain matters of our daily life.<sup>86</sup>

To her mind, emotion was “too unstable a quality to make a sound basis for good government.” Emotional rule was, in short, “mob rule, uninformed, unintelligent yielding to primitive passions.” The “crying need of the day” she thought, was “for people who [were] dominated by reason rather than passion” to prevail. She further explained that she hoped that the people of Canada would outgrow their “political childishness some day and demand ... sound constructive policies.” Surely the day would come when she hoped in particular that “the stupid cry, ‘The grand old flag,’ will not sweep them off their feet.”<sup>87</sup>

Eventually, she came to question not only if Canadian society was one wherein individual liberties were disregarded during the war, but, rather, if there had ever been an effort to live in accordance with the ideals of freedom and equality to which much lip service was paid. As she put it, she and others like her had

been wondering whether the liberty we believed we had in Canada was real or imaginary. There is no liberty at all in being allowed to express sentiments with which the great majority of people agree

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<sup>86</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 31 January 1917, 10.

<sup>87</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 31 January 1917, 10. For a virtually identical view, see 25 April 1917, 10.

or to which they are indifferent. The real test of liberty is whether the minority opinion is allowed to find expression when there is strong opposition to it.<sup>88</sup>

Undoubtedly she persisted in believing that these doubts were merited, for a short time after she wrote these lines, her refusal to moderate her criticisms led to a parting of ways between she and her editor, George Chipman, and to her having to leave her position at *The Grain Growers' Guide*.

Almost exactly five years after having taken up her post at *The Guide*, Beynon penned her farewell editorial. In it she explained to her readers that by the time they read her goodbye, she would already have relocated to her new home in “that Mecca of all writers on this continent, the city of New York.”<sup>89</sup> It is at this point that Beynon’s views and activities become somewhat more difficult to determine. It is also at this point that she becomes less significant for understanding facets of Canadian history, for she remained in New York from 1917 until shortly before her death in 1951.<sup>90</sup> The central reason for considering her experiences in New York has to do with Cook’s thesis. While his interpretation of her as a “Christian libertarian” may provide some insight into the nature of her thought, the other central element of his view, namely that her embracing this position signaled the beginning of her political irrelevancy, is dubious. Clearly

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<sup>88</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 20 June 1917, 9.

<sup>89</sup>*The Grain Growers' Guide*, 27 June 1917, 9.

<sup>90</sup>Beynon’s return to Winnipeg is noted in her obituary which appeared in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, 6 October 1951.

before she left Winnipeg, and even shortly after she arrived in New York, whatever the nature of her social criticism, her involvement with the anti-conscription campaign constituted political engagement.<sup>91</sup> Though Cook provides little discussion of her post-Winnipeg life, it is, thus, reasonable to presume that evidence of her becoming politically disengaged must have been generated at that time.

From what evidence exists, it is possible to determine that the months immediately following her relocation to New York appear to have been relatively quiet. It was in the last year of the World War I that she wrote *Aleta Dey* and it was also during this period, as she later revealed, that she was hospitalized for a considerable duration.<sup>92</sup> There is further evidence to suggest that after she was well and after she completed her novel that she also remained somewhat detached, though her isolation seems to have resulted less from the social critique that she developed and more from the fact that she was a new arrival to a large city. That is, despite the romanticism of her last editorial to *The Guide*, in New York she found herself “starting out with no background and no reputation.” Indeed, the realization that “all that [she] had stood for” in Canada “was scrapped” was, in her words, “a bitter pill to swallow.”<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>After she traveled to New York she wrote at least one anti-conscription article. See, *The Voice*, 7 December 1917.

<sup>92</sup>Beynon related some information about her first year or so in New York in an article that she wrote under the pen name “Ginty Beynon” for *The Independent*. See, Ginty Beynon, “Overselling the Alien on the Promised Land,” *The Independent*, 20 February 1926, 212.

<sup>93</sup>Beynon, “Overselling the Alien on the Promised Land,” 212.

Despite the social isolation of her first year or so in New York, she soon became involved in similarly directed organizations as those that she had been involved with in Canada. After holding a job as a sales manager with a Brooklyn manufacturer for a brief period, she began working in the Ways and Means Department of the Seamen's Church Institute, a Mission for sailors where her sister Lillian had worked since 1918.<sup>94</sup> After Lillian and her husband, Vernon Thomas returned to Winnipeg in 1922, Francis also took over Lillian's position as editor of *The Lookout*, the mission's monthly magazine.<sup>95</sup>

In addition to her work with the institute, she carried out an independent writing career. She wrote stories, short pieces, poems, and commentary for such magazines as *McCall's*, *Colliers*, *Munsey's*, and *Liberty*.<sup>96</sup> She also provided explicitly politically oriented articles for *The Independent*, a periodical that ran articles by such "progressives" as Samuel Gompers of the American Federation of Labor, renowned labour economist John R. Commons, and political figures like Attorney General, A. Mitchell Palmer.<sup>97</sup> The content of the article that appeared in *The Independent* evidences a considerable degree of

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<sup>94</sup>Hicks, "Francis Beynon and *The Guide*," 48.

<sup>95</sup>Hicks, "Francis Beynon and *The Guide*," 48.

<sup>96</sup>Legislative Library of Manitoba, Biographical Vertical File for Francis Marion Beynon.

<sup>97</sup>These men seem to have been frequent contributors in the immediate postwar years. For examples of their articles, see, *The Independent*, 10 April 1920; 1 May 1920; 22 May 1922; 5 June 1920; 3 July 1920. It is worth pointing out that though Beynon viewed the United States as being more democratic and tolerant than Canada, career witch hunters like A. Mitchell Palmer — who orchestrated the series of raids on the homes of particular socialists as well as on a host of left wing organizations (the "Palmer Raids") — stand as evidence that state initiated and state sanctioned oppression was obviously not particular to Canada.

continuity with the articles that Beynon wrote as editor of *The Guide*.<sup>98</sup> She appealed to Americans — “particularly the members of Americanization societies” — as a “silver spoon immigrant to the United States.”<sup>99</sup> In essence, she praised what she believed was the highly democratic character of the Republic and related how pleasant her own early experiences in New York had been. She, however, also noted the less than hospitable reception that other immigrants — particularly southern and eastern European immigrants — received.<sup>100</sup> She took the opportunity to express her disdain for those who “constantly poked” newly arrived immigrants and specifically “the type of people who belong[ed] to the Daughters of the British Empire.” To Beynon’s mind, if differences between men and women were tolerated, and if immigrants were allowed to enjoy the spirit of democracy that presumably underlay American society, the American people would win the immigrants’ hearts.<sup>101</sup>

For the present purposes, however, the subject matter is less significant than is the fact that she was still engaged with reform organizations and was still writing politically-oriented articles well after the war when Cook posits that she had become a politically irrelevant “Christian libertarian.” To note that Beynon was not a socialist, to note that there is little evidence to suggest that her social critique inevitably led to her political

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<sup>98</sup>See, Beynon, “Overselling the Alien on the Promised Land,” 210-212.

<sup>99</sup>Beynon, “Overselling the Alien on the Promised Land,” 210.

<sup>100</sup>Beynon, “Overselling the Alien on the Promised Land,” 210-211.

<sup>101</sup>Beynon, “Overselling the Alien on the Promised Land,” 211-212.

withdrawal, and, finally, to note that Beynon's view was more complex and the transformations therein more nuanced than other scholars have allowed is still not to come to grips with what her case reveals. Thus, by way of conclusion, it is instructive to consider the more general significance of her case for understanding and conceptualizing early twentieth century Canadian history.

Though in different ways, Beynon, like Campbell, represented a departure from the notion that the "individuals" who were full-fledged members of liberal societies were male. While Campbell's efforts rarely were explicitly geared toward critiquing or changing the social order, Beynon helped to mount a concerted and ultimately successful attack on the exclusion of women from the formal political realm. What is more significant than her role as a suffragette, however, is what that position represented. As she became acquainted with and provided a perceptive analysis of the lives of the "ordinary" farm women who provided the bulk of her readership, and as she dealt with the crisis of the war and the oppressive political atmosphere associated with it, she moved closer to developing something approaching a democratic liberal view.

That is to say, she developed something approaching a view wherein "individuals" were conceived as undifferentiated entities, one wherein the "differences" of "sex" and "race," to use her phraseology, were not indicative of propensities and predispositions that affected if or how an "individual" could participate in society. The implication of this view was that what was constant in human existence, what mattered in considering the organization of human society, was simply that a particular individual

was human. Many of the “differences” that men and women like Dafoe, Gordon, and Campbell had interpreted and portrayed as indicative of a more general spiritual or moral condition did not figure prominently in Beynon’s view, particularly as she came to clarify it toward the end of World War I.

As noted above, there was nothing to indicate that this perspective was a socialist one. Indeed, one of the more striking absences in Beynon’s analysis, one that seemingly would have been a part of a socialist view, was the lack of any concerted effort to consider the significance of the increasing class conflict and the growing disparities of wealth that were central to the early twentieth century. Yet, whatever its strengths and weaknesses, and whether worthy of praise or condemnation, what is most significant in coming to grips with Beynon’s case is revealed in the response that she and her like-minded counterparts received. In particular, the outright rejection of and formal and informal oppression that both government officials and private citizens perpetrated against Beynon, as well as men and women like F.J. Dixon, her sister, Lillian Beynon Thomas, and her brother-in-law A.V. Thomas, in their seeking to formulate, to give voice to, and to seek to foster the growth of a society that accorded with a democratic liberal view testifies to just how radical democratic liberalism was in early twentieth century Canada.

The fact that Beynon could be both a liberal and a radical is – taken in combination with the foregoing chapters centred Gordon, Dafoe, and Campbell – significant. In understanding the particulars of and transformations within early

twentieth-century Canadian liberalism, it is apparent that her case reveals the great degree to which a variety of perspectives could exist within the broad conceptual bounds of liberal ideology. It is to underscore the fact that while elites could develop a broad range of different aims and through they could preoccupy themselves with a host of diverse concerns with which they were presented as a result of their position within and experience of the social order, they could, nevertheless, remain accepting of a broadly similar end.

## Chapter 7: Conclusion

As has been noted in the opening lines of this thesis, those living in northern North America during the first two decades of the twentieth century, including the subjects of this study, bore witness to, were shaped by, and enacted and shaped a range of social transformations. In considering something of the particulars of the lives and thoughts of the subjects of this study, as well as assessing the broad commonalities in the positioning of they and their associates within the social order, it is possible to provide insight into this state of affairs. The aim here is to determine and to relate explicitly central insights that these component parts of the study provide either separately or together about the nature of these transformations and, thus, about early twentieth-century Canadian history. In considering the subjects of this study in relation to the social reality of which they were parts, it is evident that their lives and thoughts are revelatory of a range of disparate power relations – for example, those along lines of gender and race – which prevailed during the period under review. It is also clear, however, that the subjectivities revealed by the utterances of each person were facets of at least a tacitly coherent, overarching liberal perspective. The significance of acknowledging that there was a logic to the perspectives of the men and women at the core of this study lies in the fact that discerning and analysing it allows for insights into the relationships between modes of consciousness and shifting material realities with which they were connected. It

also lies in the fact that the views themselves represent not just the reflection of a host of relationships – be they material or otherwise – but also efforts to determine the goals of social change. It is through comparing the social visions and the state of affairs that came to exist that it is possible to discern central insights about early twentieth century Canadian history.

In terms of qualities of the social order that are revealed through considering the views of the subjects at hand, it is apparent that they expressed a range of such relational identities as gender, race, and ethnicity. Though Dafoe rarely considered the respective qualities and supposed propensities and predispositions entailed by being male or female, Gordon, Campbell, and Beynon provide evidence for a range of views and for the fact that the early twentieth-century Canadian liberal social order was a patriarchal one. Gordon, for example, viewed the ways that human beings could serve out God's will in their efforts to realize the "Christian democracy" as contingent upon the presumed maternal, nurturing qualities, and the supposed capacity for assuming roles of authority which, he posited, were "natural" to womanliness and manliness respectively. Similarly, Campbell portrayed and sought to carry out duties that she presumed to accord with her own maternal imperialist "heritage" in a manner that accorded with a criteria for "respectability" that reflected the fact that the "self-possessed" individuals in liberal theory and in nineteenth century liberal society were male. Beynon, finally, set out with the aim of implicitly challenging women's subordinate status and, in a broad sense, provides evidence that such a state of affairs existed and that some men and women did

not accept some of the assumptions and beliefs that underpinned it. In a general sense, these inequities are important for understanding the lives and the conditions in which early twentieth-century Canadians lived. That is, they are important as evidence of central aspects of the social order that men and women living in early 20<sup>th</sup> century Canada had inherited.

With regard to race-ethnicity, it is apparent that the language and means of conceptualization that the subjects of this study used reflected and reinforced inequitable relationships between them and those defined “like them” and those defined as “other.” Dafoe’s entire means of understanding human beings and human relationships was centred on the assumption that men and women were of superior and inferior “races.” While the others may not have been as centred on race and “racial development,” they too either incorporated similar constructs in their views, or sought to develop others that would serve as correctives to them. Gordon, for example, assumed that southern and eastern Europeans immigrants were racially distinct. Though to his mind they were necessary for the development of a strong capitalist economy in Canada, he believed that they had yet to mature spiritually. Similarly, Campbell understood herself as defined in distinction to eastern European and other immigrants and sought to help to instruct them in “proper” conduct. That is, she, like Gordon, thought that immigrants’ debased existence were rooted in their own moral and spiritual failings and from resulting, problematic practices. She sought to address the sometimes miserable situations in which immigrants lived through acting as a guide to women who, she posited, needed

instruction on the finer points of housewifery. Beynon, conversely, adopted a view of ethnic-racial qualities that was more accepting of “difference,” yet in engaging her counterparts she, as was the case with her efforts to address the subordination of women, evidenced that the elites with whom she associated accepted chauvinistic views like those to which she made reference in her editorials on the nature of the Winnipeg Art Gallery exhibit focussed on African women and in her exchanges with Nellie McClung.

The point here is not to reiterate the range of perspectives that are revealed through Gordon’s novels and sermons, Dafoe’s editorials, Campbell’s efforts to celebrate her “heritage,” or in Beynon’s commentary in the women’s page of the *Grain Growers’ Guide*. What is important, however, is to point out that while these facets of the social reality in which the subjects of this study existed are important and are evidenced in the form of their means of conceptualization, a great deal more is revealed when we recognize that men and women did not conceive of themselves, the world around them, and the relationship between the former and the latter only by way of a shifting collection of culturally conditioned, culturally constructed identities. The particulars of the cultural repertoire on which they drew undoubtedly informed the shape of their social visions to a considerable degree. It is also necessary to recognize, however, that the subjects at the core of this study exercised a measure of agency in determining the prescriptions they expressed through those identities in their efforts to determine the goals of social change.

Thus, it is worth reminding, Gordon was part of a more general ideological reorientation taking place in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in a host of

industrial nations. He developed a perspective centred on the notion of a “Christian democracy,” which he believed was the end toward which a divine plan that presumably guided human history tended. In this view, as we have seen, wrongly directed wills were those that did not accord with the divine plan and were the cause of “social evil,” while those which accorded with the plan and which evidenced salvation were in tune with it. To work in accordance with the divine plan and to foster the Christian democracy required that individuals understand that their self-interest was to come to understand their individual relationship with God. The evidence for their having done so was found in their actions which, broadly speaking, were such that the saved individual demonstrated self-mastery and sought to foster conditions in which others were likely to do the same. As we have seen, individuals could, according to Gordon, do so in different ways depending on their race, gender, ethnicity, and class. Nevertheless, liberalism and capitalism remained fundamental parts of the perspective that he developed.

Dafoe, similarly, viewed liberalism and capitalism as etched into the laws that presumably governed both the human and non-human worlds. Like Gordon, he believed that wealth and power were indicative of “success.” Unlike Gordon, he viewed particular races as having obtained societies that accorded most closely with natural law and who, hence, found themselves rewarded to a greater degree than others. Though some “races” – particularly the Anglo-Saxons – had been particularly successful, he believed that no race to date had come to exist in a manner that fully accorded with the laws which presumably informed the interaction between human beings. While problematic artifices

– for example, the aristocratic tradition in Britain – had gotten in the way in other locales, on the Canadian prairies, he believed, conditions could be different. In the prairie West, he posited, there could come to exist an agriculturally oriented, egalitarian society wherein individuals would achieve wealth and prestige in proportion to the efforts that they put forth.

While the source materials for Campbell are somewhat different than those that are available for the other subjects of this study, it is apparent that she viewed herself as working to celebrate and to live in accordance with the “traditions” of her “heritage.” Part of living in accordance with her “traditions” as a female British North American entailed the privileging of the symbols of empire with which she identified and the subordination of what she deemed as foreign symbols and traditions. Yet, her efforts to live in accordance with the meanings that she associated with “Britishness” indicate that she incorporated, even while she challenged, the inequitable relationships entailed by the liberal doctrine of separate spheres. Her general state of existence, moreover, both reflected and provided evidence for her efforts to transform the patriarchal nature of Canadian liberal society even while she sought to simultaneously defend it from those who sought to carry out a more thoroughgoing alteration of the social order.

Finally, while Beynon accepted the logic of “separate spheres” which had been central to liberalism early in her tenure as editor of the woman’s page of the *Grain Growers’ Guide*, she worked to challenge women’s subordination by seeking to gain recognition that women should be recognized formally and informally as individuals in

their own right. Moreover, she also, if haltingly, came to challenge more diffuse modes of subordination through questioning inequitable practices – for example, those involved with the running of the farm or the training of women for the work that they would carry out. More generally speaking, she eventually developed an ardently individualistic view wherein the criteria for being an “individual” was that one be an adult human being. In her view, thus, “differences” were not only tolerable, but, indeed, were not indicative of personal moral and spiritual qualities that would make or provide a basis for denying an individual his or her rights.

Thus, while each subject developed a perspective that was informed by the nature of the cultural repertoire – including conceptions of “difference” and the meaning thereof – that they had inherited, they also worked with what they had inherited in light of their own position within and experience of the social order. As has been noted implicitly and explicitly throughout this study, the social visions that the subjects at hand developed were linked with the liberal-capitalist politico-economic order in which they existed. To note as much is important for two central reasons. First, it is through examining the logic of their views that it is possible to understand something about the relationship between shifting material realities and their means of conceptualization. Gordon and Dafoe, for example, both adopted a conception of the frontier whereby it stood as a purifying or levelling force. It stood as a de-evolutionary force which stripped away problematic artifices to allow men and women and the society of which they were part to be made more “natural.” While they, thus adopted what was not an unusual mode of

conceptualization, it is important to note that the central problems that they sought to address, and which they sought to avoid in Canada, were those connected with the poverty and class polarization and strife which were a defining characteristic of the increasing concentration of ownership within Canadian (and, indeed, Western) capitalist society.<sup>1</sup>

Besides class polarization and poverty within industrial nations, acknowledging and examining the logic of their views also provides evidence that the relationships between the industrial and non-industrial world – more specifically, those captured by the term “new” imperialism – were central for their conceptions of themselves and their relationship with other men and women and the wider world. Again, these facets of the broad reality in which the subjects of this study stood as the facts of the matter which they incorporated to explain the world and themselves. Dafoe and Gordon, for example, developed views wherein wealth and power stood as signs of a more general, efficacious moral, spiritual, and/or racial standing. Each man also viewed the future of humanity as best connected with some element of the society tied up with the British empire or “Anglo-Saxondom.” The reason that they tied the future of humanity to what they identified as aspects of “Anglo-Saxon” or British society was that it was some people from those locales that were the most adept at overseas conquest. They were the nations

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<sup>1</sup>It is apparent that Dafoe and Gordon were not particularly unique in adopting this basic perspective. Noted American historian Frederick Jackson Turner who wrote at approximately the same time adopted a similar schema in his considerations of the significance of the frontier in American history. See his *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* (New York: Irvington 1993 [1893]).

whose citizens presumably had the efficacious qualities needed to bring about “success” more generally speaking.

Beynon and Campbell also developed views that were similar in form. Though the particulars of Campbell’s view are not as clear as Dafoe’s, Gordon’s, or Beynon’s, the centrality of the empire in her efforts to live in accordance with her “heritage” suggests that she adopted a complementary view. While Beynon criticized the bigotry of some imperialists, she too developed a means of conceiving which was similar to those of Gordon and Dafoe. As we have seen, she developed a view of the rise and fall of civilizations which she believed had relevance for her own time. Though she developed a view which emphasized the centrality of women, she adopted a form similar to Gordon’s and Dafoe’s – one that was contingent upon the prevailing late nineteenth and early twentieth century geopolitical realities – and used it to legitimate a different set of aims.

While understanding the connections between the consciousness of the subjects at the core of this study and shifting politico-economic realities is important, examining the form of the views is significant for another reason as well. In particular, their views were not simply reflections of more general facets of the era in which they lived. Rather, their perspective also served a mobilizing function. That is, from their material and cultural context, they developed perspectives in light of their perceptions of a present state of affairs which stood as sketches of a desired future society. That is to say, while the component parts of the social visions themselves may have been tied up with the broad material conditions of the state of affairs and the disparate power relationships which

prevailed in the social reality in which the men and women at the centre of this study existed, it is important to note that they incorporated those “facts of the matter” to explain and to chart a course forward in Canada. To understand what Dafoe, Gordon, Campbell, and Beynon reveal about the dynamics of early twentieth century Canadian history, it is necessary to consider the social visions that they developed and the state of affairs that came to prevail at the end of the period under consideration.

In considering the particulars of the variety of envisioned futures that the men and women on whom the study is centred developed, and in considering the state of affairs that came to prevail at the end of the period under consideration, it is apparent that what is significant about them and their social visions is not that they served as architects of or blueprints for the particulars of that social reality. The carnage of World War I and the social crisis of the immediate postwar years, for example, were not in tune with the socially oriented Christian liberal view that Gordon talked about. They were also not in keeping with the prosperous, egalitarian, agrarian-centred society that Dafoe envisioned – a fact which, as we have seen, Dafoe recognized and attempted to compensate for in the postwar years. Moreover, it is apparent that the strength of the empire was not, as Campbell had hoped, on the rise. Finally, while many women were able to vote after the war, Beynon’s more general, democratic liberal society remained in the realm of imagination.

The fact that the particulars of the future that the subjects of this study envisioned remained unrealized, however, does not mean that they are without significance. Rather,

it is through considering central reasons that the particulars of their visions were not instated in reality that something of the nature of elite history, as well as Canadian history more generally speaking, becomes apparent. Part of the reason that the aims of the subjects at hand remained unrealized had to do with relations as between elites. The diversity of elite views, for example, likely served to delimit the possibility of the totality of any single view becoming actualized to any great degree. Each subject may have existed in relation to and, as a result, may have potentially been able to draw upon the social power resultant of their position within social relations of production. The diversity of aims, concerns, and perspectives amongst elites which is evidenced in considering the views of the subjects at the core of this study makes it reasonable to presume that part of the reason that no one view was entirely realized was because elites themselves could not concur to a great enough degree to bring the potential force enabled by their privileged standing within the social order to bear in realizing a particular view.

In some instances, it is also apparent that the possibilities afforded by the social reality itself did not accord with the visions that the men and women at the centre of this study developed. At the same time that Dafoe gave voice to a social vision wherein small holders played a prominent role, for example, the intensification of business consolidation and urbanization made the realization of that envisioning unlikely. Indeed, Dafoe's own efforts as a key figure in a business enterprise were those geared toward the shoring up of one of the corporate entities that were part of the early twentieth-century

Canadian social order which undermined the possibility of he and his counterparts achieving the kind of social order that he envisioned.

In addition to the limitations caused by the divergent direction toward which elites directed their energies, and to the fact that some of the conditions that the subjects of this study inherited – for example, the state of business concerns – made the realization of some visions unlikely, it is also important to acknowledge that in some instances the possibilities in the social reality have less to do with inherited structures and more to do with the non-compliance of human agents. That is, the prescriptions that some of the subjects of this study made were unlikely to find a warm reception amongst those whose cooperation their realization required. With immigrants, for example, it is unlikely that most would have accepted explanations for the poverty in which they lived on their lack of desire for comfortable residences or their presumed moral and spiritual failings. Thus, they also would not have accepted the prescribed courses of action for the remedying of the “problems” with which Gordon and Campbell were particularly preoccupied. Similarly, with such other identities as gender, it is apparent that the visions of men like Gordon were unrealistic because many women – for example, women like Beynon – found the social organization entailed by his assumptions and prescriptions unappealing. Other working-class women, whether they found his ideals appealing or not, likely found that the limitations that their material circumstances placed on the choices that they could reasonably make prevented them from obtaining the existence he prescribed. Other women, many of them immigrants, for example, also did not conceive of womanliness in

the same way that Gordon did and, therefore, did not aspire to or make a reality of his ideals.<sup>2</sup>

It is also of central significance to reiterate that an important reason that the men and women at the core of this study did not realize the particulars of their social visions is that a host of marginalised men and women on whose agency they depended for the realization of their envisioned futures did not accept elite ends as their own. The more and less thorough rejection of a liberal capitalist social vision, particularly by some working-class men and women, is evidenced across Canada and around the world during the first decades of the twentieth century. Though, as is evident in Gordon's case, there was some indication of dissatisfaction in Winnipeg and elsewhere in the West over the entire period, this rejection was particularly clearly expressed in the six-week-long Winnipeg general strike of 1919.

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<sup>2</sup>On working-class women who almost certainly would not have fit Gordon's ideal see, for example, Linda Kealey, *Enlisting Women for the Cause: Women, Labour, and the Left in Canada, 1890-1920* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1998). Janice Newton also provides a perceptive analysis of similar subject matter in her, *The Feminist Challenge to the Canadian Left, 1900-1918* (Montréal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press 1995). In addition, see Bettina Bradbury's *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1993). See also, Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "Weaving it Together: Life Cycle and the Industrial Experience of Female Cotton Workers in Quebec," in Alice Prentice and Susan Mann Trofinmenkoff, *The Neglected Majority, Volume II* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1985), 160-173. Carol Bacchi has provided a study of the interplay between various groups of women some who would have been more likely to endorse Gordon's view and others. — farm and labour women — who were less inclined to do so. See her, "Divided Allegiances: the Response of Farm and Labour Women to Suffrage," in Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s - 1920s* (Toronto: The Women's Press 1979), 89-108. Deborah Gorham's article in the same edited collection has provided a sketch of Flora MacDonald Denison. She finds that Denison was torn between the elitism of people who held views akin to Gordon's and her own more modest existence which entailed her working for a living. See, Gorham, "Flora MacDonald Denison: Canadian Feminist," 47-70.

What all of these instances of elite inabilities to realize their respective social visions point to is a facet of social change to which attention was directed in Chapter 2. In particular, it is indicative of the fact that to realize envisioned futures, elites had to convince, to persuade, or to coerce men and women whose own position within the reality that they inherited gave rise to a set of motivations and possibilities that were not necessarily conducive to the realization of elite goals. The inability on the part of elites to realize their respective social visions points to the limits of the social power that they enjoyed. On a related note, it is indicative of the fact that the direction of social change that did come to prevail to some degree was an expression of the fact that a host of men and women with diverse experiences of the social order sought to realize aims and to address concerns connected therewith. Thus, whether elites, members of the working class, immigrants, women, or some combination thereof, a plethora of interests, aims, biases, and concerns were, to a great extent, the determinants of the goals of social change.

To note as much, however, is not to suggest that the only thing that is revealed by considering Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon is that a plurality of interests – many of which were not in accordance with their own – underlay the direction of social change. Indeed, it is apparent that even though a host of contenders acted to determine the nature of the future, elites could act with a greater force than could their marginalised counterparts. With Gordon, Dafoe, and Beynon, it is evident that their relationship to wealth and their positions as figures who could determine the messages that were related

through mass media outlets and popular fiction, they could reach a considerable number of people. The connection between elite aims and their ability to bring considerable pressure to bear in realizing them is, however, particularly evident in Campbell's efforts to define "Canadian-ness" as "British" when, throughout the first decades of the twentieth century an increasingly large portion of the population was neither British, nor were they of British descent. As we have seen, she could both draw on the considerable wealth and political power of those with whom she regularly associated so as to ensure that the symbols with she identified stood in a "properly privileged" place with respect to "other" symbols. She could also draw on that wealth and political power in an effort to inform the populace of Winnipeg, the West, and Canada more generally speaking as to the "proper" meanings that ought to be associated with the symbols with which she identified.

In taking together the fact that the men and women at the core of this study were liberals, the fact that they could bring considerable pressure to bear in seeking to realize their social visions, and the fact that they existed in relation to and depended on other men and women for the realization of their aims that central dynamics of the early twentieth-century social order become apparent. As has been noted, the diverse and often conflicting aims of the men and women who lived in Canada in the early twentieth century precluded the realization of the particulars of the aims of the elites considered here. Indeed, elites themselves adopted divergent aims and preoccupied themselves with

different concerns which likely helped to ensure that no particular social vision became realized.

Yet, while they could not realize the aims that they held in all of their particulars, it is evident that the social reality that came to exist was, like those which they had envisaged, liberal and capitalist. Clearly the reason that the broad contours of that reality concurred with the social visions that the men and women at the centre of this study held had little to do with the fact their social visions were uncontested. Indeed, as has been noted periodically throughout the study, men and women challenged the particulars of social visions like those which Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon put forth explicitly and implicitly on a regular basis. It was during the immediate postwar years, however, that many working-class men and women not only challenged the particular prescriptions and aims that elites put forth, but, indeed, they launched concerted efforts to redefine the social order in fundamental ways.

It is also clear that the fact that the social order in the postwar years conformed in a broad sense to that which the elites at the core of this study envisioned has little to do with the fact that their visions were more “reasonable” than those of their working-class counterparts. Indeed, as we have noted, in light of the possibilities afforded by the social realities that prevailed in early twentieth-century Canada, elite views were often no less utopian than were those expressed through the millennial rhetoric of some working-class men and women.

What it is to suggest, however, is that while elites could disagree amongst themselves, the cases of Gordon, Dafoe, Campbell, and Beynon evidence that despite their differences, all concurred, or at least did not question, that in a broad sense the social reality that ought to prevail should be liberal and capitalist. Put differently, while all differed in their particulars, the social visions that the men and women at the core of this study developed served to affirm the basic form of social relationships that underlay their own privileged social standing as well as that of a host of those with whom they associated. In striving to obtain the diverse ideal futures, all pushed for the sustaining of the basic form of that social order, and all existed in relationships to wealth such that they and their associates could draw on the social power resultant therefrom. As is evidenced in considering Gordon's case and the Joint Council of Industry, they could draw on that power in efforts to adjust to the realities that emerged from the social transformations of which they were parts. They could also, as Tom Mitchell and Gregory Kealey have demonstrated, direct their collective energies toward defending against threats to the sustenance of the logic of rule that all of them accepted.<sup>3</sup> Thus, while the social reality that prevailed at the end of the period under review was not one that they aimed to

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<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Gregory Kealey, "State Repression of Labour and the Left in Canada, 1914-1921: The Impact of the First World War," *Canadian Historical Review*, 3 (September 1992), 281-314; and his, "The Surveillance State: The Origins of Domestic Intelligence and Counter-Subversion in Canada, 1914-1921," *Intelligence and National Security*, 3 (1992), 179-210. See also, Tom Mitchell, "'To Reach the Leadership of this Revolutionary Movement': A.J. Andrews, The Canadian State and the Suppression of the Winnipeg General Strike," *Prairie Forum*, 2 (Fall 1993), 239-55; and his "'Repressive Measures': A.J. Andrews, the Committee of 1000 and the Campaign Against Radicalism After the Winnipeg General Strike," *Left History*, 3-4 (Fall 1995-Spring 1996), 133-67.

achieve, and though it was not one that they anticipated, it was their utopias whose general, liberal-capitalist premises informed the overarching shape of social relationships in the post-World War I period in Canada.

## Appendix A

The following appendix provides information about some of the men in Campbell's social circle. Unless otherwise indicated the biographical information on these men comes from C.W. Parker, ed., *Who's Who in Western Canada* (Vancouver: Canadian Press 1911) and, by the same editor, *Who's Who and Why* (Vancouver; International Press 1913). The appendix is included for two reasons: first, it is intended as a complement to the discussion of Campbell's efforts to raise funds for the Ninette Sanitarium. The biographical sketches of the men below were some of those who donated to and sat on the building committee for the sanitarium. In considering them, something of the level wealth that Campbell was in a position to direct is apparent.

In addition to providing information about the men who Campbell worked with in this one instance, they were also those with whom she associated with regularly. As such, these brief biographical accounts are also useful as a supplement to the consideration of some of the broad commonalities of the community of men and women with whom the men and women with whom Campbell and the other subjects of this study were connected. Like the more general group considered in chapter 2, these men were primarily from Ontario, were relatively well educated, and were Anglo-Canadians. Most related to wealth in a manner conducive to "elite-ness" and most belonged to elite social clubs.

*John E. Botterell*

Born in Montréal, Quebec 1876, Botterell was educated at Manchester Castle School. He began his working life as an assistant manager for the Canadian Fairbanks Company in 1898. He moved to Winnipeg in 1906 as a representative of that firm. He belonged to the Manitoba and the St. Charles Country Club.

*Edward Brown*

Brown was born in St. Catharines, Ontario 23 May 1865. On completing highschool he traveled West to Portage La Prairie and founded Brown's Limited and J.E. Brown Departmental store. He ran unsuccessfully as a candidate for the Legislature for Portage la Prairie in 1904. In 1909 he relocated to Winnipeg where he became a Manitoba College Trustee, and vice-president of the Manitoba Sunday School Association. From 1906 onward he was the leader of the Liberal party in Manitoba. He belonged to the Manitoba and Liberal clubs and, like Campbell, resided on Roslyn Road. Brown was the President of Brown's Limited Real Estate and Financial Agents, Canada West Securities Corporation, British Northwestern Fire Insurance Co., and British Collieries. He was the vice-president of William Pearson Co. and a director of the Port Arthur Wagon Company.

*Colin H. Campbell,*

Campbell, husband of M.J.B. Campbell, was born in Oakville, Ontario on Christmas day 1859. After graduating from an Oakville, Ontario highschool, he studied law at Osgoode

Hall in Toronto. On completing his degree in 1881, he worked for a short time in the office of Colonel George Taylor Denison and later entered into practice with John Billings.<sup>1</sup> In 1882, he traveled to Winnipeg where he first practiced in the firm of Aiken, Culver, and Hamilton. For the next twenty years or so he formed a host of partnerships. From 1903 until 1914 he was senior partner in the firm of Campbell, Pitblado, Hoskin, Grundy, Bennet, Haig, Drummond-Hay, Montague, and Gauld. He entered public office in 1899 when, after his election to the Provincial Legislature, he served as Minister without portfolio in the government of Sir Hugh John Macdonald. During the years from 1900-1914, he served in the government of Rodmond Roblin as Minister of Education, Minister of Public Works, and Attorney General. In addition to heading up one of Manitoba's most successful law firms, and on top of his political commitments, he was also president of the Equitable Trust Company, The Winnipeg Investment Company, the Mercantile Investment Company, The Investors limited, Columbia Coal and Coke Company, The Scottish Investment Company, the Ontario, Manitoba and Western Land Company, and the Chandler Fisher Company. He was also a director for the Alloway and Champion Banking Company, the Houghton land Company, Lethbridge Collieries Limited, The Peoples' Investment Company, the Crown Securities Company, the Real Estate Investment Company, the Canadian Provinces Investment company, and the Bank of Hamilton. He belonged to such elite social clubs as the Manitoba Club, the St. Charles

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<sup>1</sup>Charles G.D. Roberts and Arthur L. Tunnell, eds., *A Standard Dictionary of Canadian Biography: The Canadian Who Was Who* (Toronto: Trans-Canada Press 1934), 85.

Country Club, the Adanac Club, the Grosvenor Club, London, England, and the Albany Club of Toronto. [This information comes from Edwin McCormick, ed., *The Leading Financial, Business, and Professional Men of Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: Stark [c. 1912]) and from, Charles G.D. Roberts and Arthur L. Tunnell, eds., *A Standard Dictionary of Canadian Biography: The Canadian Who was Who* (Toronto: Trans-Canada Press 1934), 85.]

### *Robert Campbell*

Campbell was born in Toronto on 5 April 1851. He moved to Winnipeg in 1881 to establish the firm of Sutherland and Campbell which existed until 1890. In that year he began the company with he was associated for the rest of his life — namely, the Campbell Bros. and Wilson Grocers, Limited. He was a Director of the Canadian Fire insurance Company, the Home Investment Company, and the Anchor Wire Fence Company. He belonged to the Commercial Travelers Club, the Canadian Club, and the Odd Fellows.

### *George Reading Crowe*

Reading was born in Truro, Nova Scotia 22 October 1852. He attended public schools and was later trained as an accountant. He arrived in Winnipeg in 1879 where he worked in railway construction until 1883. He started a lumber business in 1883 which he continued until 1890. In 1890 he established the British Empire Grain Company. He

belonged to the Manitoba, Carleton, and St. Charles Country clubs. In addition to his heading up the British Empire Grain Company, he was President of the Northern Elevator Company, the Northwest Fire Insurance Company, and was the vice president of the Northern Trust Company. He was a Director of the Royal Bank of Canada, the Great West Life Assurance company, the Canadian Fire Insurance Company, the Northern Mortgage Company, the St. Lawrence and Chicago Steam Navigation Company, and Royal Crown Soaps, Limited.

*James T. Gordon*

Born in Toronto in 1858, Gordon attended public school there before traveling West to try his hand at farming. It is not clear why, but he apparently gave up farming in 1879 when he entered into the employ of Dick, Banning and Company Lumber Merchants. He remained engaged with them until 1882 when he went into the lumber business for himself. Approximately a decade later he formed the firm of Gordon and Ironsides which in 1902 became Gordon, Ironsides, and Fares. By 1902 the firm had branches in Fort William, Port Arthur, Kenora, Rainy River, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie, Regina, Moose Jaw, and Saskatoon, and by 1906 it was the largest cattle exporting firm in North America.<sup>2</sup> In addition to his work with his own firm, Gordon served as President of Monarch Life Insurance Company, A. Carrothers and Company, the Standard Trust

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<sup>2</sup>See, Bellan, *Winnipeg First Century*, 61.

Company, and the Royal Securities Company. He was a Director for the Sterling Bank and also played a role in Provincial politics. He was elected to the Manitoba Legislature for South Winnipeg in 1901 and was reelected in the general elections of 1903 and 1907. He was a member of the Manitoba Club, the Carleton Club (Ottawa), and the St. Charles Country Club.

*Thomas G. Mathers*

Mathers was Born in Lucknow, Ontario in 1859. After completing highschool in Lucknow, he moved to Portage la Prairie, Manitoba in 1883 where he served as the editor of the *Manitoba Liberal*. He began studying law at Manitoba University in 1884 and was called to the Manitoba Bar in 1890. He entered into partnership with Joseph Martin and served as an alderman for Winnipeg from 1898-1899. After working in partnership with Joseph Martin for several years, he was appointed Puisne Judge of the Court of King's Bench for Manitoba in 1905. He was promoted to Chief Justice on 7 February 1910. He belonged to the St. Charles Country and Manitoba Clubs.

*Peter Campbell MacIntyre*

MacIntyre was born in Balderson, Ontario on 5 February 1854. He was educated in the public schools of Balderson as well as in a Collegiate Institute in the town. He taught highschool from 1872 to 1880. For the last two years of his teaching career he served in

Winnipeg schools. He seemingly gave up teaching so that he could devote his time to politics and administrative roles. He was elected to the Manitoba Legislature for North Winnipeg from 1892 to 1896. He was the Chairman of the Winnipeg Public School Board from 1885-1890, and served as Postmaster after 1901. He was the vice president of the Home Investment and Savings Association and a director for both the Great West Life Assurance Company and the Standard Trust Company.

*David Henry McFadden*

McFadden was born in Peterboro on 17 February 1856. He was educated there and at the Veterinary College of Guelph, Ontario. He moved to Emerson Manitoba in 1880 and served in the Manitoba Legislature for Emerson from the 1880s until 1907 and again from 1910 until 1915. He served as Provincial Secretary and Municipal Commissioner in the Roblin Government while he served in the legislature.

*Augustus M. Nanton*

Nanton was born in Toronto in 1860. He attended Toronto Model School before leaving for Winnipeg in 1883. He initially served as the receiver for Manitoba and Northwest Rye and later worked as a Promoter for Northwest Wire Company in 1892, for the Western Land Corporation in 1900, and for the Western Stockyards Company in 1903. He eventually became a partner in the firm of Osler, Hammond, and Nanton Financial Brokers. He was President of the Manitoba Cartage Company, Director of the General

Trusts Corporation, vice president of Great West Life Assurance Company, and Managing Director of Alberta Railway and Irrigation. He was a Director of the Dominion Bank, Winnipeg Electric Railway Company, Northern Trusts Company, and Manitoba Bridge and Iron Works. He served as a governor for the Winnipeg General Hospital, was the president of the Winnipeg Board of Trade in 1898. He was the president of the Winnipeg Stock Exchange 1912. He belonged to the Manitoba Club, the St. Charles Golf and Country Club, the Manitoba Jockey Club, the Rideau Club of Ottawa, and the Chinook Club of Lethbridge.

*Dr. Edwin Samuel Pope*

Pope was born in Ottawa, Ontario on 31 December 1856. He was educated at Victoria University and at the Manitoba University Medical College. He was a physician, a surgeon, and a member of the attending staff of the Winnipeg General Hospital. In addition to his efforts in the field of medicine, he was vice president of Great West Permanent Loan Company and Medical Director and Referee for the Monarch Life Assurance Company. He also was a Director for the Standard Trust Company and the Canadian National Fire Insurance Company.

*R. T. Riley*

Riley was born in Yorkshire England on 1 July 1851. He was educated in the St. Thomas Charterhouse of London, England. He worked for four years with the City of London Real Property Company and for two years with the Adjutant General's Department. He moved to Canada in 1873 and to Winnipeg in 1881 where he served as the Manager of the Manitoba Drainage Company and as the manager of the W.E. Sanford Manufacturing Company. Over the course of the last years of the nineteenth and first decades of the twentieth century he served as the manager of the Westbourne Cattle Company, was a manager of the Winnipeg Stock Exchange, and President of the Board of Trade for the year 1895-1896. He was an alderman, chairman of police commissioners, chairman of the Winnipeg Hospital Commission, and a promoter for the North Star Lumber Company. He belonged to the Manitoba Club.

*Andrew Wilson Smith*

Born in Quebec city in 1849, Smith worked in "commercial pursuits." He was sent to Winnipeg in 1892. No information about the firm that he represented is available. It is clear, however, that in 1902 he entered the storage and warehouse business. In 1905 he was appointed Clerk in Chambers and Deputy Accountant in the King's Bench. His wife, known only as Mrs. A. Wilson Smith, worked closely with Campbell in the IODE. [this information comes from Legislative Library of Manitoba, Manitoba Biographical Scrapbook 5, 9 May 1911 - 9 May 1914, 87].

*John S. Turner*

Though little about Turner's early life is known, he was the Manager of the Standard Bank in Chatham, Ontario and in Kingston, Ontario before traveling to Winnipeg. He went to Winnipeg to manage a branch of the same institution in 1909. He was a one time vice president of the Kingston Board of trade an active member of the Winnipeg Board of Trade. [This information comes from Legislative Library of Manitoba, Manitoba Biographical Scrapbook 4, 2 April 1909-8 May 1911, 65].

*Richard D. Waugh*

Waugh was born in Scotland on 23 March 1868. He was educated at Highfield Academy in Melrose. He came to Canada in 1883 and began a career with Glass and Glass Barristers in Winnipeg. He was the City Controller for Winnipeg from 1909-1911. In addition, he was the chairman of the Public Parks Board, President of the Board for the Royal Caledonian Curling Society, and was President of the Real Estate Exchange.

*William Whyte*

Whyte was born in Scotland on 15 September 1843. He was educated in the public schools of Charleston, Scotland and served as a clerk from 1860 to 1862. He entered the railway business as a station agent for the West of Fife Railway in May 1862. He came to Canada in July 1863. For approximately the next 20 years he worked for the Grand Trunk Railway. In 1883 he left the Grand Trunk Railway to become the superintendent

of the Credit Valley Railway. In 1884 he became the General Superintendent of the Ontario division of the Canadian Pacific Railway. He worked in a variety of Capacities for the CPR until 1904 when he was made second vice president with charge of the company's affairs between lake Superior and the West coast. He served as first vice president after 1910. In addition to his railway work, he was vice president of the Winnipeg Electric Railway Company and of the Standard Trusts company. He was a director of the Imperial Bank of Canada and the Confederation Life Assurance Company. He belonged to the Manitoba Club and the St. Charles Country club of Winnipeg. He also belonged to the Union and Victoria Clubs of Vancouver and the St. James Club of Montréal.

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