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CANADA IN THE MAKING

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Preface

Canada has come to nationhood by a process characteristic but unique. On the one hand she has, like all her American neighbours, felt the full impact of the American environment, and with them has shared the experience of evolving her own institutions and ways of life and thought out of the background of her European and American origins. On the other hand she has come to political maturity by a process unique in the American hemisphere and unprecedented elsewhere. Alone among the twenty-two American nations, she has gained independence by evolution within the framework of an Empire broadening into a Commonwealth, in which the forces of constructive nationalism have had full play.

This experience within the Commonwealth Canada has shared with her Commonwealth partners, each of which has had its own particular combination of historical and geographic circumstance. In this evolution of the Commonwealth, Canada has at many points, often intuitively, led the way in a determination to reach national maturity without breaking historic associations which have been based not less on interest than on sentiment. This determination, which Canadians found it difficult to rationalize for themselves and much more difficult to explain to others, has had its full justification in our own day. It is not a mere accident of contemporary history that Canada should have taken a more than sympathetic interest in that remarkable series of decisions which brought India, Pakistan, and Ceylon into full Commonwealth membership, a development the incalculable effects of which are still beyond estimation; and, more particularly, it is not an accident that Canada should have played a leading part in initiating the North Atlantic Treaty Organization which confirms her historic conviction, held often in the face of prevailing opinion in the

American hemisphere, that the North Atlantic is bridged by interests and relations which must not be broken. In a world beset by rampant nationalisms, and too small for its outmoded concept of sovereignty, the process by which the Commonwealth has evolved, and is evolving, assumes an importance impossible for those who laid its foundations to foresee.

Historical process has been as significant in Canada's internal development as in her external relations. In recent years Canada has shown clear indications of a cultural maturity which to many Canadians had seemed blocked by endless delays and frustrations. Even less than political maturity, however, cultural maturity could not have been gained overnight. In the petty beginnings of institutions and attitudes a century and more ago essential foundations were being laid. To later historians the 1940's may well appear to be the threshold to a more mature cultural development, just as the 1840's were to a more mature political development following Lord Durham's famous *Report* and the recognition of the principle of Responsible Government.

The pages which follow are concerned with these developments, internal and external, which have been so important a part of Canada's history. The general theme is stated in the first section which also provides the title. The following sections are particular illustrations of, and comments on, the general theme. No one will be more aware of their fragmentary nature than their author. They will serve their purpose, however, if they help to make clear something of the essential characteristics and tendencies of Canadian history. These tendencies, it is now apparent, have been distinctive, persistent, and stubbornly directed toward aims which, if not always understood fully even by Canadians themselves, are in the light of past and contemporary events now clearly discernible.

Finally, it seems not inappropriate that these papers should be brought together in a Coronation year, when the nature of the Commonwealth and Canada's place in it are more clearly appreciated than at any previous time.

George W. Brown

Toronto,
April, 1953

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Canada in the Making

IN A MOMENT OF EXUBERANT INTROSPECTION ABOUT THE AMERICAN temperament and the temperament of New York in particular, the *New Yorker* of April 3, 1943 made the following remarks:

“One thing we know—there will be no token bombing of New York. An air raid or two, yes, probably, but whether Hitler’s intention is to bomb us or just to prove that he *can* bomb us, we New Yorkers will make of the occasion something too stupendous to be dismissed with the feeble adjective ‘token.’ If even one German plane flies over and drops one bomb, vast and unpredictable upheavals will take place. We may all plunge into whichever river is handier, like lemmings, or we may equally well embark on a bender, or *kermesse héroïque*, with record throngs in Times Square and the velvet rope up at all the night clubs. We aren’t Londoners, and it’s no use pretending we are. You can’t get a preview of the New York raid by reading ‘Digging for Mrs. Miller.’ (We’d get Mrs. Miller out of the rubble all right, but not without holding a monster Mrs. Miller Benefit at Madison Square Garden.)”

Canadians also indulge in introspection. Indeed they seem in recent years almost addicted to it if one may judge from a stream of books, articles, public opinion polls, and radio discussions. On the whole, however, it is a gloomy business; there

is no exuberance in it, certainly no exhilaration. "Sometimes," writes a Canadian novelist, "I think a Canadian is like a man wandering around a big city feeling very insecure because he has not been able to get a card of identity from the police. At any moment he is apt to be picked up by the cocksure and hard-faced people who run the world and be compelled to tell who he is and what he is doing on the earth, and he'll have to explain that he has lost his papers. In his heart he'll know that his inquisitors don't believe him; they'll see clearly that he's bluffing; they'll see that he simply lacked the confidence to go around to the proper authorities, and demand a card of identity." *

At best it appears from such efforts in self-analysis that we have developed, or have gone far toward developing, a kind of type, which on examination turns out to be a dull, though worthy, combination of virtues and frustrations. Canadians, we are told, are industrious, thrifty, and reliable, but cold, cautious, conservative, and lacking in initiative and imagination. Carrying around a terrific load of inhibitions, they are, compared with their American neighbours, less sentimental and spontaneous, perhaps more dependable, but nevertheless wanting in power of decision and magnetism of personality.

When we turn to Canada, rather than Canadians, we get the same impressions of uncertainty. No question is more persistently perplexing to Canadians than Canada itself. For three-quarters of a century Canada has been an expression on the map, a half continent stretching from sea to sea. But what, if anything, has it been more than that? Has it as a nation achieved anything distinctive in personality or culture, or is it no more than a sort of artificial political contrivance, as Goldwin Smith argued, put together in defiance of geography and economic interest and kept together merely by the perverse stupidity of people who refuse to recognize realities? "Caught in the swirl of this vibrant epoch of history," writes a Canadian journalist, "we find ourselves dull and lacking in pride and confidence. Perhaps we are not a nation. Perhaps we are merely a series of communities stretched across a vast continent, like a

*Morley Callaghan, "What It Means to Be a Canadian", *Chatelaine*, July, 1943.

lot of black specks, struggling but static, on a field of fly paper." The language may change from one decade to another, but the mood continues, an apparently ineradicable element in Canadian thought.

Canada, indeed, seems to show an extraordinary reluctance to grow up, a kind of incurable adolescence which drags on from one generation into another. Judged by some of the most commonly accepted standards of nationalism, we have deficiencies which seem to outsiders, even those who know us best, inexplicable. We lack, through our own inhibition, some of the conventional marks of nationhood, such as the technical right to amend our constitution. We make the mystery of symbolism doubly mysterious by refusing, in such matters as that of a flag, to reach clear-cut decisions which would bring symbolism into line with reality. We have a genius for indirection, for refusing to let our right hand know what our left hand is doing, or at least for refusing to let them both get out into the open at once. Unlike other nations, moreover, we draw little inspiration from either ideology or national tradition.

In contrast with our American neighbours, we have little faith in abstract statements of rights or in written guarantees of our liberties and ways of life. So little, on the other hand, do we regard history as an inspiration of national thought and action that we display an almost total disregard of it in any national sense. History is still commonly thought of in Canada as the preserve of the antiquarian, as a proper ornament or decoration for a respectable society, but with little practical consequence in revealing the realities or direction of national development.

These are but a few illustrations of Canada's apparent failure to reach a maturity which is satisfying to her people. Always she seems on the threshold of something which she never quite reaches. Always she seems entangled by the same confusion of spirit, the same hesitation and uncertainty, the same pre-occupation with her deficiencies. On the verge of growing up, she seems unable to shake off the last vestiges of adolescence and insists on carrying about with her the adolescent's qualms as to the present and fears as to the future.

Is this, however, the whole story? Surely to state the case in its extreme form is to deny its validity, for have we not at the very least a paradox of frustration and accomplishment? If we insist on the one we cannot close our eyes to the other. Canadians may take a certain gloomy satisfaction in "getting out their souls, propping them on their knees and staring into them to discover what's the matter with them," but the fact of Canada remains, and a very considerable fact it is. A people of scarcely as many as four millions at Confederation, Canadians have spanned a continent and flung a network of highways and institutions across it. To ask us now to believe that Canadian history has no distinctive quality or meaning, that it has no definable lines of direction, that it begins nowhere and ends nowhere except as the tag end of someone else's story is to ask us to deny the plain evidence before our eyes. The great mass of Canadians have taken no such view. Whatever difficulties they may have had in defining or rationalizing themselves, they have very clearly been proceeding on the simple assumption that they could create a Canada, and that in fact they were doing so.

It is this persistence of purpose which demands explanation. Canada, we may remind ourselves, is the only country in the American hemisphere which has not in the last hundred years had a violent change in government or a civil war. The frustrations which have disturbed the Canadian spirit might have been predicted by anyone looking at the British North America of a century ago. The fundamental causes of them were obvious in the geography and history of its divided fragments. But who could have predicted with any assurance the persistent tendency toward nationhood? Durham, it is true, suggested the possibility of a united British North America, and other traces of similar sentiment can be found in the historical sources of a century ago. But against the background of division, misunderstanding, and bitterness of the 1830's and 1840's these suggestions seemed no better than romantic bits of wishful thinking.

Nationalism, in spite of our familiarity with it, still defies exact explanation. It is a strange complex of variables, of ideas, attitudes, emotions, and interests which baffles the analyst.

But, whatever one may say of it, one thing is certain. The nation must be something greater than the sum of its parts. If it is not so, it ceases to exist, it has lost the will to continue. By this elusive yet valid test, the Canadian people have created and are creating a nation. One cannot cross the boundary anywhere between Halifax and Vancouver without a consciousness that one has stepped into another environment of ideas, problems, and practices. These differences and distinctions stem back into the beginnings of Canadian history. They have been created by forces which run deep in Canadian experience, and there seems no probability of their disappearance in the near future. Canadians assume now more than they have ever done that Canada is taking her place among the nations of the world. They may differ as to the precise nature of her role. They may differ as to means and immediate objectives, but they take it for granted that she has, like other nations, her own part to play, and there is no evidence that they will voluntarily abandon that view.

Where then shall we find the distinctive elements, the permanent lines of direction, in Canadian development? It seems to me that they are to be found chiefly in the creation of Canadian institutions and attitudes, and in the course of Canada's external relations.

The creation of attitudes and of the institutions through which they are preserved and expressed is the most familiar and pervasive, yet most elusive, process in the life of any people. "To understand in the best sense," wrote Mahan, "it is necessary not only to recognize the interests of a nation, but to enter as well into its feelings; tracing them where possible to the historic origin which once occasioned, and may still account for them." This is cultural history in its truest and broadest meaning, and it is only by a study of it that we shall explain those patterns of thought and action which are the most tenacious and characteristic elements in a nation's life and which largely determine the course of its development.

From the beginnings of the first settlements, this process of creating attitudes and institutions can be seen working itself

out in the Canadian environment. Men and women brought with them not only their material possessions, but their ways of life, their practices, prejudices, and ambitions, and here under the relentless pressure of geography and circumstance they moulded them into new patterns of thought and action. This is the process which has run through the whole of American history, and which has created with their similarities and differences all the varied societies of the New World. Canada has shared fully in this common experience. From her own background of European and American origins she has, like every other American nation created in her own environment, institutions fitted to her own needs and purposes.

So familiar are we, however, with this process that we take it for granted and underestimate the significance of results which seem commonplace to us. Thus, our political development has been a distinctive welding of British and American precedents. Its central element, the parliamentary principle, we have drawn from Britain, but into it we have of necessity moulded much that is American, until the product is *sui generis*. We have, for instance, been forced to adapt the parliamentary principle to the compelling pressures of federalism. In doing so we have rejected, in its typically American sense, the device of a written constitution based on theoretical concepts of the limitations of government and the division of powers, and have adhered rather to the concept of parliamentary sovereignty. Yet we have at the same time been forced in response to our own needs to accept a written constitution for the purely practical purpose of embodying the compromises on which Canadian federalism rests.

Our approach to constitutional questions has been a pragmatic, not a theoretical, one. It has been one of ingenious adaptations hammered out under the pressure of necessity—not an heroic process certainly, but one whose results have on the whole served us well. Had it been the product of theory as seems to have been the case with the constitutions of some other nations, we might conceivably have gotten a great deal more emotional satisfaction out of it. But we seem not to be cast in that mould. By the same pragmatic token we have not carried constitution-making into the provincial field, unlike

our neighbours of the United States, whose inalienable rights and privileges are buttressed by written state constitutions, varying in length and in definition of the citizen's fundamental rights but all revealing an unwavering adherence to the same patterns of political thought.

The parliamentary principle shows in Canada the effects of its environment, however—the almost invariable practice of choosing representatives who are residents of their constituencies is but one of many examples. In this, as in a multitude of other cases, the Canadian point of view lies between that of the United States and Britain. Parliament in Canada does not occupy the eminence in the public regard that it does in the British Isles. Membership in it has seldom been thought of as a career, certainly not as a career comparable in significance to that of success in business. Nevertheless Parliament is the centre of public life in a sense that Congress can never be in the United States, where the citizen is taught to put his faith in the written constitution rather than in elected representatives. The perversity and inherent disposition of elected representatives to betray the public interest are indeed almost assumed in the United States as a constitutional principle.

This very real distinction between the Canadian and American points of view is intensified by the difference between the principle of cabinet responsibility and the principle of the division of powers. The one assumes the necessity of concentration of authority, the other the necessity of the conflict between executive and legislature. The one emphasizes the responsibility of the elected representatives, the other disperses responsibility so that in effect it lies nowhere except in the inevitable frictions of a complicated machine. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the United States much more faith has been put in the possibility of curing the ills of democracy by tinkering with the machine than has been the case in Canada. Devices like the initiative, the referendum, and the recall, have had little if any appeal in Canada, while the primary election and the problem of the long ballot are unknown.

Distinctions such as these might be followed through a score of familiar examples. Canadian political parties, for instance,

in contrast with those in Britain, show the sharp and constant effects of sectionalism. Like those in the United States, they must try to be all things to all sections, until differences in principle are often whittled to the point of disappearance. They have, however, a continuity in leadership and a direct relation to government which are impossible in the American system, and are much more akin to English practice. A party once in power has a control of policy which no President even with a nominally favourable Congress enjoys. These distinctions and many others are worn deep in Canadian thought and practice.

Canadian economic development shows the effects of the same historic process, the mingling of forces running East-West and North-South, and working themselves out in the Canadian environment. Canada's economy is meshed in with that of this continent, but it is no less dependent on the markets of a wider world, and this is but the modern manifestation of long-established tendencies.

The notion that Canadian interests all run North-South while only sentiments run East-West is a fallacy which contradicts the obvious facts of Canadian history. These divergent and balanced interests are, in fact, the framework within which the Canadian economy has been developed. It is no easy framework but without it there would have been no Canadian economy, and Canadians have adapted themselves to both its limitations and opportunities with the same persistent ingenuity which they have shown in their political difficulties. This is not to say that they have solved their problem.

Geography, and its problem child, sectionalism, we have always with us. We never have had, certainly we have not now, an integrated and harmonious economy, and I am fully aware that academic realism is thought to lie in a diagnosis of aches and pains rather than in a record of accomplishments. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Canadians have created an economy of distinctive quality, that they have developed the institutions and attitudes necessary to maintain it; and that at no critical point have they shown a willingness to abandon these purposes.

Canadian economic, no less than political, institutions are

the product of hard compromise. They spring from individual initiative and enterprise not less than in the United States. But individualism in Canada always had a narrower stage than it had in the United States in the lush days of American expansion. Constantly it faced the pressures of a relentless American competition, even the dangers of complete absorption, and so was forced into the necessity not only of larger integrations but of close relations with government. From the days of the fur-trading companies and the first St. Lawrence canals to those of the Wheat Pools, the Bank of Canada, and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, the history of Canadian transportation, finance, and business is studded with illustrations of this process. Canadian economic institutions are a strange and at times annoying mixture of private enterprise and public policy, but they are a very Canadian mixture, and they have shown themselves equal to tremendous strains in the past twenty-five years. In this respect the Canadian economy can bear comparison with that of any American country. Canadians, moreover, may remind themselves that they are not the only ones who have had to face the question of combining public and private interest. It is one of the central problems of our age, and Canada has, perhaps, in her own fashion gotten farther with it than Canadians realize. She has, under the unprecedented pressures of recent years, shown no small evidence of self-discipline, of ingenuity, and of willingness to support far-reaching measures necessary to the maintenance of her economic structure.

When we turn to other types of institutions, religious, educational, professional, we touch upon a field which has been largely neglected in comparison to the attention given to Canadian political and economic history, and in recent times even to the discussion of whether Canada has produced a distinctive art and literature. This neglect has obscured from consideration a network of institutions and relationships which has been woven inextricably into the Canadian fabric, and which exerts a continuous and increasingly powerful influence.

Canadian churches, universities, professional and other organizations, are a product of the same process which has produced Canadian political and economic institutions. They are a Canadian amalgam of ideas and practices drawn into the Cana-

dian environment and adapted to its needs. In some cases their development is recent and immature, in others far advanced. In the case of the churches, it stems back into the pioneer beginnings of the country: in French Canada to the days of Champlain and the earliest missionaries; in English Canada to the establishment of the first settlements at various points. Proportionately the churches in Canada have played a much greater part than in the United States, and they provide one of the best examples of the process which we have been describing.

Canadian Methodism, for instance, drawing divergent and conflicting elements from the United States, England, and Ireland, amalgamated them first into several Canadian Methodist churches, and then into a single, nationally organized church, which in turn under the pressure of Canadian conditions became part of a still larger United Church of Canada. In Upper Canada, where Methodism became peculiarly entangled in all the stress and bitterness of the Rebellion years, its largest and most characteristically Canadian branch organized its own college, its own publishing house, and its own form of church government, and these were among the central institutions around which Canadian Methodism was later developed.

Canadian Presbyterianism followed the same patterns with characteristic infusions, as one would expect, of Scottish inflexibility, and even the Church of England, commonly thought to be much less amenable to Canadian influences, exhibits unmistakably the force of the same tendencies. No better proof of this can be found than the career of Bishop John Strachan himself, who turns out on examination to be a very Canadian figure indeed, prejudices and all. His innovation of the synod as an essential part of the governing machinery of the church is only one illustration of his willingness to make bold adaptations to the Canadian scene.

Canadian universities and Canadian education in general, while not easily defined or described in a few words, are equally the products of their environment. Drawing heavily, especially in their early stages, from the British Isles, from France, and the United States, they are none the less Canadian, and have reached the point where they are taking their place in the fraternity of scholarship in their own right. The contrast in the

position of the liberal arts in Canada and the United States during the war years, for instance, has been by no means fortuitous. It is true that the difference is not to be explained solely in terms of a Canadian love for higher learning, but the significant fact remains that the liberal arts have been recognized in Canada as essential elements of war-time education, and the view has prevailed that we could not afford to throw them overboard in times of crisis.

Canadian education, while deeply marked by influences which have affected education in the United States, shows like many other things Canadian, far less disposition to extremes. It is characteristic also of Canadian patterns that in recent years there has been a marked tendency, while preserving distinctive points of view and provincial differences, to develop organizations which are national in scope for the consideration of common problems. The Canadian Universities Conference, the Canadian Association for Adult Education, the Historical and Political Science Associations, the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, are among the bodies which provide channels of discussion cutting across geographical and sectional barriers. A limited population has paradoxically enough been not entirely a disadvantage in this respect, since, once initial obstacles have been overcome, it has been one of the factors tending to discourage the creation of too many regional and over-specialized organizations, and to encourage the bringing together from all parts of the country of individuals and groups representing widely varied opinions and interests. In a period when the central problem is increasingly one of harmonizing conflicting interests this is a fact of no small consequence.

What has been said about Canadian churches and education could be applied still more widely to the whole network of Canadian institutions and attitudes. Here a subject, which has only been touched, awaits thorough investigation. In its details we still know little of the process which has woven these essential elements into the Canadian scene, for it is not to be studied merely in great affairs or in the lives of national leaders. In the history of every local community we can see it going on as under a microscope—people of little consequence outside their own circle and beyond their own generation laying down pat-

terns of thought and action, establishing practices of local government, attitudes to law and order, and the thousand and one other elements that enter into the fabric of every society.

Who were these people, and especially the leaders among them, the doctors, clergymen, school teachers, and holders of public office; whence did they come; where were they educated; what did they bring with them of traditions and loyalties; how were they influenced, and what did they preserve in their Canadian environment? Some of the intangibles in this fascinating pattern of cultural history will always elude us. But we could know much, certainly far more than we do, and certainly enough to show why Canadian society, though it is woven of many threads and though it is incomplete at many points, is still a tough and resistant fabric. Perhaps we would then accept the essential Canada which we see before our eyes, and would cease being repeatedly surprised by the emergence of the same characteristics in one generation after another. Of Canada's history it is also true, *Plus ça change, plus ça reste la même chose!*

No pattern in Canadian history is more persistent than the survival within the Canadian framework of two cultures, French and English, and in no other respect is Canada more clearly distinguished from her American neighbours. Especially is this so in comparison with the United States, whose nationalism and democracy, in spite of an emphasis on individualism, are marked by concepts of standardization sharply different from those in Canada. It is true that the union of French and English-speaking Canada is a marriage of convenience and always has been, but if it has lacked the glow of romantic attachment, it is none the less valid. The balance of interests which holds it together may be precarious, but it has nevertheless withstood repeated and severe strains. The parties may not even know precisely what they have in common, but whatever it is, they have never been willing to give it up, and however little their satisfaction has been in living together they have shown even less disposition to live separately. Extremism in French-English relations we have always with us, and periodically it emerges in acute form, but no less persistently have Canadians refused to accept the ex-

tremist solutions either of separation on the one hand or of standardization in a single cultural pattern on the other.

These are facts, proven first in the days of the American Revolution and at point after point since that time, which Canadians should keep in mind when they consider their so-called racial problem (which is in reality not a racial problem at all), for on reflection it is not the disunity of Canada which impresses us, but the persistence of a determination to work within the Canadian framework. The marriage is indeed one not merely of convenience but of necessity. English, not less than French, Canada has had the determination to survive, the will to resist absorption, and only through this union could each achieve its purpose. At every crisis the intuition that this was so has prevailed, and no central fact in Canadian history has been more commonly overlooked. Is this to belittle the union? Surely not, for Canada's experience is not unique. It is but the Canadian version of a problem which forces itself relentlessly and increasingly on the modern world, the problem of harmonizing the particular and the general, of finding means for the preservation of special loyalties and interests within a framework of wider co-operation. Human relations are not mathematical formulæ to be worked out neatly and put on the shelf until needed. We do not solve them in any literal sense of the term, we live through them. By dint of effort and good will, we may even live through them constructively, and on the record, when all the evidence is in, Canadians may justly claim to have made no small progress in that direction.

If some sense of direction, some emergence of national purpose, are to be found in Canada's internal institutions, they are to be seen even more clearly in the history of her external relations. Yet here too we have had much confusion of thought, based on a failure to recognize obvious facts in Canadian history. Since Canadians have never, until recent years, thought of themselves as having a foreign policy, they have successfully concealed from themselves the fact that they have had in reality a policy of external relations whose essential principles have never varied. Those essential principles can be seen emerging

even with the American Revolution, for the bits of British North America which were left swinging like fragments between the two great segments of the English-speaking world exhibited even in that period a determination to live their own lives, by refusing to be swept into the orbit of American nationalism on the one hand, and by reaching out towards the beginnings of self-government on the other. They were determined to find a place for themselves between Britain and the United States, and this they could only do in the long run by rejecting the extremes both of colonialism and continentalism. For more than a century and a half the rejection of these extremes has run like a red thread through Canadian history. It is the balance which has determined at every stage the character of Canada's external policy, and only by maintaining this balance has her growth to nationhood been possible.

Canada has of necessity, then, belonged to both the British and American worlds, and it was inevitable that if she were to grow to maturity she could do so only as part of an evolving empire. It is not by chance that at many points and in many ways Canada has been a bridgehead across the Atlantic from the days of Cunard to the days of the ferry command. This dualism is of the very essence of her history, an unavoidable quality in her development. Canada has never been an interpreter between Britain and the United States in any literal sense of that term, but she has occupied continuously an intermediary position, and that position she has never been willing to abandon.

No more striking illustration can be brought forward than that of Canada's adherence to the British Commonwealth in the face of a second world war. In 1940-1, during the darkest months of the struggle, Canada's stand was without question one of the determining influences in British-American relations, thus exerting an incalculable effect on the course of world events. Canada has indeed, at times, been a conditioning element in the relations of Britain and the United States. The situation has never been easy but neither has it been lacking in advantages and possibilities, and today the proof of that fact is Canada's distinctive place in the international scene.

The process by which Canada moved toward self-government within a changing empire was incapable of defence by

any system of legalistic logic. It was not theoretical but pragmatic and intuitive and from the days of Durham was the work of leaders on both sides of the Atlantic whose understanding of the forces with which they were dealing transcended legalism. Indeed the process is still incapable of legalistic defence, and the growth of responsible government which is a commonplace of Canadian history remains a mystery to those who have had no practical knowledge of it.

No fundamental difference in political thinking marks Canada off so sharply from her American neighbours as this absence of the revolutionary tradition. To them, revolution and the assertion at one stroke of national sovereignty were the essential prerequisites of political growth, and the development of self-government without the revolutionary tradition is well-nigh incomprehensible. For Canada, the changing empire of the nineteenth century was a framework within which the forces for nationalism were able to work toward fruition. No one will underestimate the strength of those forces, but it can scarcely be contended that they would have succeeded alone.

Confederation itself was made possible by an Imperial Act, which the Fathers of Confederation, using a technique¹ that was unprecedented, were themselves able to frame for submission to the British Parliament, and the full weight of British policy was thrown not only behind its acceptance but behind that remarkable series of decisions and accomplishments which within a generation carried the bounds of the new nation west and north to the Pacific and the Arctic. Canada gained self-government and an empire because she was herself part of an empire, and this astonishing paradox Canadians took for granted as if it belonged to the natural order. Almost invariably, in fact, they talked about relations with Britain as if they rested on sentiment alone, a distortion the unfortunate effects of which can be traced even to the present.

Nor have Canadians ever fully realized the importance of the part which they have played in the transformation of the empire. That transformation from the mercantilism of the early nineteenth century to the free association of our own day has

¹See Notes

been one of the central facts in the history of the modern world, and at every stage of it Canada's influence has been a powerful, sometimes a decisive, factor. Responsible government which transformed the empire of the nineteenth century was in a very real sense a Canadian creation, and in the sweeping changes ushered in by the War of 1914-18, Canada's role and responsibility have been equally important.² In the light of these considerations the significance of Canada's influence has gone far beyond her own borders or the limits of her own history.

The empire in which Canada grew toward nationhood was, however, not merely an empire. It was, with British sea power and finance, the centre of the internationalism of the nineteenth century which has been well named the Pax Britannica. The empire was, moreover, as the twentieth century opened, itself taking on the aspect of an international system within a wider world order in which there was a nearer approach to national self-determination and freedom of trade than at any other point in modern history. Canada grew therefore toward maturity not within the confines of a narrow imperialism but in reality within a world order in which she had a vital stake. Already, even before 1914, she was, within the empire and in her association with the United States, moving toward a practical internationalism based on the principles of mutual respect and co-operation, and this favourable development was not only a justification of her historic policy but was essential to her interest.

Canada's interests are still fundamentally the same, and two world wars have served but to intensify and enlarge them. They are based on no narrow or theoretical concept of national sovereignty, they are opposed as they have always been to the triumph of regionalism, and they can realize themselves fully only in the creation of a genuine internationalism. By moving toward such a world order in association with other members of the Commonwealth, Canada will only be carrying to their logical conclusion tendencies which have run consistently throughout her history.

Such are the persistent patterns which run through Canadian history. But it is not merely their persistence which is

needed to explain the Canada which we know—it is also the fact that they have been woven together in a complex relation both of conflict and interdependence. Canada is a product of the delicate balancing of diverse forces and problems. She has had to face at one and the same time the baffling difficulties of geography and sectionalism, the necessity of developing and harmonizing two types of culture, and the problem of reaching political maturity within a complex and rapidly changing network of external relations. Few countries have had to face so tangled a pattern and few countries have had so convincing a record of achievement. When Canadians exhort themselves, as they sometimes do, to be themselves, the answer is that that is precisely what they have been doing throughout their history with the utmost persistence and with no small result, and that there is no prospect whatever of them abandoning the habit.

Today, however, the stage has suddenly widened. Canada has been swept as never before into the centre of the international scene, and she finds that her problems are more and more those of the world at large. Both geography and history have given her a place of significance. She has come to nationhood at a moment when the groundswell of vast changes is felt throughout the world, and she will if she follows her true intuition and interest play a distinctive role in creating that community of nations whose existence is essential to any hope of ensuring international prosperity and peace.

The Formative Period of the Canadian Protestant Churches

THE EXPLANATION OF CANADA'S NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS TO be found not only in its political or constitutional history—important as these are—but also in the growth of institutions and attitudes of mind which are distinctively Canadian, even although they may be compounded of elements drawn originally from beyond the borders of the Dominion. The question has often been asked as to whether Canada has as yet anything that may be properly termed a national culture, and there is usually a disposition to look for the answer rather narrowly in an examination of Canadian literature or art. This is unfortunate; for much as we may welcome evidences of growth in these directions, it should not be forgotten that a literature and art of high and distinctive quality are manifestations of the creative genius of a mature society.

The Canadian mind has of necessity been turned, for the most part, to the creation of a Canadian economy with the physical means essential for its integration, and to the moulding and adaptation of institutions to the Canadian environment. No apology is needed for the preoccupation with these matters; the record of accomplishment in the face of adverse conditions makes it clear that there has been no lack of creative genius in Canada, and it is a mistake to assume that, in developing institutions essential to the national life and characteristic of it, nothing has been contributed to the creation of a national culture in the wide sense of the term.

Of this, the history of Canadian business, of the professions in Canada, of educational institutions, the churches and many other organizations will furnish rich illustration. Their growth has been profoundly affected by the rise of a national spirit whose characteristics, however incompletely defined and harmonized, are nevertheless unmistakable. In their turn they have contributed to that national spirit much of its distinctive qualities. No adequate examination from the point of view here suggested has as yet been given the churches, but, with the broadening of historical scholarship in the Dominion, we may expect that they will be studied with the purpose of indicating clearly their historic relation to the development of a national culture.

Historians of the United States have during recent years given a growing attention to their cultural history, and, in the broader interpretations of national development which have resulted, religion and the churches have been accorded a place of increasing importance. The importance of religious motives in the founding of certain of the colonies is well known, but recent authoritative works have added much to this commonplace of American history.

Religion played an essential part in the transplanting of European ideas and institutions not only in New England but in all the colonies. Religious organizations widely varied in character were brought from the continent of Europe as well as from the British Isles, but they all faced a common necessity of adapting themselves to the American environment. Much more than religious practices was involved—as for example architecture, language, education—and the evolution of concepts as well as ecclesiastical organizations began as soon as the force of circumstance was felt in the new world. As Professor T. J. Wertenbaker has made abundantly clear in his study of the middle colonies, *The Founding of American Civilization: The Middle Colonies*, the processes and results which make up this evolution lie at the very centre of much that is important in the origins of American culture.

By the revolutionary period the churches were as definitely 'Americanized' as any institution in the Thirteen Colonies. They had played an important part in creating the national

feeling which showed itself unmistakably if at times uncertainly before 1776; and with the end of the war they were able, in spite of the divisions which had appeared during the conflict, to face effectively the problems of independence. During the years when a new national constitution was in the making, the important Protestant churches reorganized themselves along national lines. Even the Anglican Church, which had been especially identified with British and official interests and which between 1701 and 1785 received more than three hundred missionaries from the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, now cut its ties with the mother land and achieved a national union with a new constitution in 1789.

The first three decades of the nineteenth century were marked by a rapidly rising national feeling and by the growth of national church enterprises which paralleled the lines of development in the country's economic and political life, and which were stimulated in particular by the needs of a frontier expanding with unprecedented swiftness. In the 1830's and 1840's this spirit of nationalism gave way to a growing sectionalism. The slavery issue which the churches regarded as fundamentally religious and moral was added to doctrinal and other causes of dispute. The resulting division and controversy in the churches were powerful elements among the forces which undermined the national unity and persuaded great numbers to accept the view that the sectional conflict was irreconcilable. The war with its bitter aftermath of reconstruction deepened the lines of cleavage and left on the churches an almost indelible impression.

Since the Civil War the churches have been affected as profoundly as other national institutions by the far-reaching social and economic changes of the period. Immigration, urbanization, the rise of industry and science are but a few of the developments which have been interwoven with rationalist and secularizing tendencies. Balances have been shifted; habits of daily living and thinking have been altered and the churches have found themselves faced with a frontier of new problems wider if anything in scope, certainly more baffling in complexity, than those of the frontier of a century ago.

A moment's reflection on the foregoing sketch will suggest points of comparison and contrast with the Canadian Protestant churches. The differences are, on the whole, more illuminating than the similarities, for while there has been the same process of adaptation of diverse elements to the local environment and while much in both organization and methods has been drawn from the United States, the Canadian churches have followed lines which are as widely different from those of the United States as are the lines of political development in the two countries. In Canada, to take only one illustration, national organization in the churches as in the political field has been achieved through a slow process, colonialism merging gradually into autonomy and union; in the United States, national organization came speedily as part of the revolutionary movement which brought sharp social and economic adjustments as well as political independence.

The Canadian Protestant churches have passed through three clearly discernible though overlapping periods of development. The first, to which the material in this essay is almost entirely confined, was a period of transplanting and early adaptation to the British North American environment. The second, extending from about 1840 to Confederation, was a period of integration in regional groupings; the third, one of union and organization along national lines. In the United States the spirit of rising nationalism, which in the first three decades of the nineteenth century was dominant in the churches as well as in the political and economic life of the country, gave way to an increasingly bitter sectional strife. Whether the economic and political sectionalism which has made itself apparent in the Dominion during the past two decades goes deep enough to affect every aspect of the national life, including the churches, it is still too soon to determine. If it does, the churches have already entered on a fourth period in their development.

With the significant exception of the Church of England, the Protestant denominations which have taken a prominent place in Canadian development trace their origin to churches in both the United States and the British Isles; and—again with the exception of the Church of England—they were in each case begun at several different points in British North America

by groups so widely separated in attitude that, in their relations with one another, differences seemed often to count more heavily than a common principle or a common name such as Presbyterian, Methodist, or Baptist.

Perhaps the most prominent feature in the early history of Canadian Presbyterianism was the transplanting of the various types of Presbyterianism which had developed in Scotland, and the gradual demonstration that the conflicts of the Old World largely lost their meaning in the new environment. A series of secessions from the Church of Scotland marked the history of Presbyterianism in Scotland during the eighteenth century, and it was the secessionist churches which first felt a responsibility for Presbyterian settlers in British North America. The presbytery of Truro, formed in 1786, the first in British North America, was of the Burgher branch of the secessionist churches, while the presbytery of Pictou formed in 1795 was Anti-Burgher. They were united in 1817, three years before a union of some of the Burgher and Anti-Burgher churches in Scotland.

In Canada a congregation was organized in Montreal in 1786 by the Rev. John Bethune, who soon removed to the county of Glengarry. From this time on congregations were formed at various points by ministers representing secessionist churches, the first permanent presbytery in Canada being formed among these ministers in 1818. The Church of Scotland did not, however, leave the field to the secessionists. A rising missionary impulse was given to its work by the formation of the Glasgow Colonial Society in 1825, and the work in British North America grew sufficiently rapidly for synods to be formed by Church of Scotland ministers in Upper Canada in 1831 and in Nova Scotia in 1833.

Meanwhile, it must not be forgotten that other elements than those from Scotland were being woven into Canadian Presbyterianism. There began in the first decades of the nineteenth century an infusion from Irish Presbyterianism which was destined to have a prominent place in the Canadian church. Brought up as they had been in an atmosphere of acrimonious controversy its representatives were inclined to be tenaciously

conservative, positive in their loyalties, and not easily disposed to compromise. Presbyterian influences came also from the United States, and were particularly strong in the Niagara peninsula and the western part of Upper Canada. The first presbytery in the western part of the province, the Niagara Presbytery formed in 1833, was made up of ministers from New York. The ministers of the Stamford Presbytery, formed in 1836, also had American affiliations.

A most interesting description of the diversity of Presbyterian interests in Upper Canada and of the beginnings of social and cultural integration in the province is to be found in the diary of the Rev. William Proudfoot³ who was pastor of a congregation in London from 1834 to 1851. In 1832 the United Associate Synod of the Secession Church in Scotland decided to send missionaries to Canada. Proudfoot had been educated in Edinburgh, and, in addition to his pastoral work, had for seventeen years carried on a classical and mathematical academy in Perthshire. He was a man of keen intellectual interests, of balanced judgment although conservative in instinct, and of strong religious zeal. "There is a band for conducting the Psalmody of the church," he remarked at Brockville, where he stopped on his way from Quebec to the Western settlements. "The music is very good; but here as in every place where there is a band the congregation do not sing. The music is very dearly bought when it is at the expense of the praise of God."

Proudfoot, who had come resolved to make his home in the colony, was a keen observer and soon realized how different were the conditions from those which he had left in Scotland. He found to his disappointment that he met hardly anyone who was interested in the latest issue of the *Edinburgh Review*. He heard everywhere that there was great need of preaching, but he had extreme difficulty in finding a community which would provide him with the nucleus of a congregation:

"There seems, as far as I have travelled, to be fully as many preachers as the people are able to support. Ministers must either be supported from other sources or they must undergo a very great deal of fatigue in preaching to different little churches to

raise as much as will support them. From anything I have seen I am not the sort of person that ought to have come out. The Canadian minister ought to come out without a family, and to be a man who can endure hardness. So far as I have seen, it will be difficult for me to get into a place where there is a congregation, and I must for a long time be a pensioner upon the bounty of the Synod at times. Scattered as the population is, the people are rendered more destitute of religious institutions, in consequence of their being split into so many sects, whereby no sect is able to support a teacher by itself. There seems to be no way of remedying this evil. The people could not bear an established church which might go far to cure it; and there is no class of society which possesses such influence as to draw the rest after it. The only way to cure the evil (as far as I see) is to educate a race of ministers so far above the common level, as that they shall give a tone to the public mind and thus by the goodness of the article, beat out of the field all half bred adventurers. The Methodists will be the prevailing party till the people become enlightened."

Proudfoot came at the moment when a union was being negotiated between the Synod of the Church of Scotland ministers in Canada and the independently formed United Synod of Upper Canada, most of whose ministers, he remarked, were from Ireland, though some were from the United States. Partisan feelings were bitter. The Church of Scotland or Kirk ministers were inclined to carry things with a high hand, and were insisting on terms of union which humiliated their secession brethren by implying that they were of "an inferior grade". The Kirk ministers had no objection to the principle of establishment and believed themselves entitled to a share in the clergy reserves.⁴ Most of the secessionists on the other hand opposed state support and upheld the voluntary principle. In York one of the elders of the Rev. Mr. Harris told Proudfoot that they were so determined to have no connection with an established church that if Mr. Harris consented to the union

on the proposed terms they would request him never again to enter their pulpit. "This will fix him at least."

"All churches contain very incongruous material", Proudfoot observed. Certainly he found it so in London where some were determined to have a 'Kirkman', others were equally determined against it; some could understand nothing but Gaelic and insisted on a preacher who could speak it. A layman who considered himself to be of much importance in the petty round of local church politics proved to be "a most violent kirkman, who will give no encouragement to a man who is not a kirkman, and speaks Gaelic; and the minister he will encourage must be one who will hold or express no opinion unfavourable to the government of this country. In fact, I never met with such a real, red Tory. The veriest head of the most rotten borough is nothing to him."

"It occurred to me," Proudfoot remarked, "that it would not be easy to form a Christian church composed of such materials." To Proudfoot's great surprise, at the end of his first service, a man stood up who announced that he would preach in the afternoon as he had come to London with the intention of forming a Presbyterian congregation. He turned out to be an Irishman who did not propose to let his Scottish brother's priority of appearance stand in his way. "Here my scheme of a church in London is dashed", Proudfoot wrote, but as things turned out his fears were premature. The Irishman left the field after a few weeks and Proudfoot was called back to begin his seventeen years of service.

Proudfoot's diary gives us vivid suggestions of the adjustments which were forced on individuals and groups in the first formative stages of one Canadian church. Wherever the historical materials are available, a similar process might be observed in the early history not only of the churches but of other Canadian institutions. Under the pressure of the new environment, practices, prejudices, and principles, some of them long since forgotten, have been forced into a Canadian mould, and in the history of this process, if it were traced with accuracy and imagination from the beginnings of settlement in every province, there would be revealed much of the record of Canadian cultural development. Proudfoot's misgivings as to his

fitness for life on the Canadian frontier were without foundation. He brought to his new work a well-trained mind and keen intellectual interests, but he was determined to accept frontier life on its own terms and to make the best compromise he could with it. The first Methodist sermon he heard he thought to be "loose, extempore, vapid, but well delivered". But he was forced to take stock of his own preaching too: "There is a simplicity in teaching here required more than at home, and I wish to give my services less of a literary and more of a plain cast in the hope that they may be more useful, for I do wish to be useful."

Proudfoot may be allowed, for the purposes of this essay, to represent the army of well-trained men who have come from overseas to play a prominent part in the moulding of Canadian institutions. Most of them like him were not men of eminence, and the cultural historian will in the future have no small difficulty in assessing their influence. That they have had a profound effect in every part of Canada, especially in the early stages of cultural development, cannot be denied. From the days of the Recollet and Jesuit missionaries, who left in their writings a monument of scholarship as well as of devotion, they have been numerous in every province in its pioneer and even later stages of development, and in this one fact may be found at least part of the reason for the differences in the history of the frontier of Canada as compared with that of the United States.

In the colonial period men of the type we have in mind were prominent in political and administrative posts, and a few like Dalhousie have had their contributions recognized by historians. Dalhousie not only contributed to the founding of Dalhousie University, but was instrumental in establishing the Quebec Literary and Historical Society in 1824, the first learned Society in Canada. But far more important in its total effect has been the influence of the undistinguished numbers who came to reside permanently and who left a deep and often unrecorded impression in the churches, in the universities and schools, in journalism, and to a lesser extent perhaps in the other professions.⁵ For French Canada the Conquest marked the virtual end of the migration of intellectual and cultural leaders

from France. For English Canada historians may find that the First World War was in this respect a similar though less drastic period of transition.

The early history of the Methodist Church presents a variation of the same processes as we have observed at work in Presbyterianism. There was, however, a fundamental difference in organization which had far-reaching effects. Among the Baptists and Presbyterians the unit was the virtually autonomous congregation. The Presbyterians did not carry the principle to the same extremes as did the Baptists. Among the Methodists, owing largely to the influence of Wesley, there was a very strong "connexional" tie which held the ministers, and through them the churches, more closely together.

The American Revolution brought a friendly separation into two great branches of Wesleyan Methodism, one in England governed by conferences of the ministers, the other in the United States in which the system of conferences was combined with an episcopal control. The bitter animosity which among the Presbyterians divided the Church of Scotland from the secessionist churches was absent, and in the years immediately following the revolution it seemed reasonable to both English and American Methodists that they should extend their missionary activities to the British American provinces. As events were to prove, however, a combination of British and American efforts was impossible. In Nova Scotia where Methodism had been brought in at different points by immigrants from both countries, the effort to find a balance of British and American interests was solved peaceably.

William Black, who more than anyone else planted Methodism in the Maritime Provinces, was the son of Yorkshire immigrants, but he received ordination from the Methodist Conference at Philadelphia. In 1788 Wesley appointed an English preacher to superintend the work in the Maritime Provinces, but he found that he could not accustom himself to the methods of the new world. On his recall the native-born Black was put in charge by the American Methodist Church. It soon became clear, however, that association with the United

States was inadequate and open to criticism, and in 1799 Black went to England for help just at a time of rapidly rising missionary enthusiasm in the British Wesleyan Church. The organic connection which resulted from his visit lasted for over half a century, and made British Wesleyanism and English-trained ministers a very powerful influence in moulding the character of Methodism in the Maritime Provinces.

A marked contrast is presented by the course of events in Upper and Lower Canada.* Here Methodism was almost entirely American in origin, and, although the Loyalist element was strong, the churches before the War of 1812 were almost all connected with conferences in New York. Before the end of the war, however, and in response first of all to an invitation from some of the Methodists in Montreal, the British Wesleyans took over the work in the lower province as a missionary enterprise, and followed this by extending their efforts westward on the ground that they had the right and duty of providing missionary assistance to citizens of British colonies who requested it.

Four years of increasingly bitter and open rivalry were ended in 1820 by an agreement that the British Conference would confine itself to Lower Canada, the American Conference at the same time putting itself on record that its connection with the upper province had no political implications. According to John Carroll, in his *Case and his Contemporaries, or the Canadian Itinerants' Memorial*, Kingston was made an exception "because it was a military post, and it was thought that a British preacher was more likely to benefit British officers and soldiers than one of another origin." Such an arrangement could not last in a province where political animosities were rising and a strong tide of immigration was setting in from the British Isles.

The Upper Canadian Methodists were virtually independent of American control, but they could not afford to give even the slightest encouragement to the unjustified attacks on their loyalty. Their case for independence was urged with determination and in 1828 the American Conference granted it. The

*See *The Early Methodist Church and the Canadian Point of View*, pp. 41 to 66.

same year brought a vindication of their loyalty and of their opposition to inequalities of privilege from both the local assembly and a committee of the House of Commons, and it seemed as if Upper Canadian Methodism was fully justified in the claim that it now enjoyed equality of status with the other two great branches of Methodism in America and Britain, even if it was unequal to them in numbers and responsibility.

The prospect of maintaining an independent organization and developing it along Canadian lines seemed bright. The Methodist methods and doctrine were peculiarly suited to the Upper Canadian scene. The combination of self-supporting lay or 'located' preachers with itinerant ministers who shared equally the small salaries provided by the conference relieved congregations of the problems of ministerial support to which Proudfoot referred, and enabled the Methodists to cover an immense territory. The 'located' minister was one who had left the itinerant work and taken a settled residence, but who like the lay preacher carried on in the intervals between the itinerant's visits. The 1820's brought for the first time young and vigorous Canadian leaders like the Ryerson brothers into positions of responsibility. A mission to the Indians was started. The *Christian Guardian*, soon the most widely circulated paper in the province, was begun. Plans for an academy (later Victoria University), were pushed forward. An independent publishing house was set up, the American Conference consenting to a division of money with their New York publishing house in which the Canadians had previously shared.

The hope of maintaining independence was, however, soon proven to be premature. The British Wesleyans immediately extended their work again into Upper Canada on the ground that the independence of the Upper Canadian Church now relieved them of their agreement of 1820 with the American Conference. The move was welcomed by some English Wesleyans in the province, and scarcely less openly favoured by the Government which was influenced by the fact that the Methodists were overwhelmingly supporters of Mackenzie and the Radical movement. In this situation it appeared that open warfare with the Wesleyans would be ruinous, and in 1832-33 with much misgiving in the Canadian Conference a union was

effected. When union was followed in the latter year by the dramatic open break between Mackenzie and Egerton Ryerson, the editor of the *Guardian* and the leading spirit in the union negotiations, it was clear that there had been a real parting of the ways.

This was true not merely in respect of politics. A close study would show, what is even more important from the point of view of the history of the Methodist Church as a Canadian institution, that the union brought into the church changes in organization and additions of English-trained ministers which profoundly affected every aspect of its activities. It was through the fusion of American and British practices and attitudes under the pressure of the necessities of the local environment that a church distinctively Canadian in type was eventually developed.

The process began immediately in 1833. The idea of appointing a bishop in the American manner, which the Constitution of 1828 had included although an appointment had not been made, was now dropped, and the conference, with a president sent from England, as well as the government of the local churches, was patterned on the British Wesleyan model. The missions were taken over by the British Missionary Society, and the first head of the academy in Cobourg was an English minister. A significant point, however, in which the Canadian Church led the way as compared with the British Wesleyans or American Methodist Churches, was in the admission of laymen into the councils of the church. This grew out of the political strife of the 1830's, for it was essential that in the midst of controversy laymen and ministers should not become separated.

The change was begun in the conference of 1832 which considered the union. A number of laymen who had heard reports of the proposal and had arrived "were allowed to be present in the Conference-room and to listen to the deliberations, which had not before been usual. Had they demurred to what was going forward, they might have applied an outside pressure, which would have gone far to arrest or modify the proceedings."*

*Carroll, *Case and His Contemporaries*, III, 356.

The union brought in many ways an increased efficiency in organization and activity, but in the introduction of British practices and influence a balance had to be struck, and the process of finding it was a painful one. A secession, led chiefly by disgruntled lay preachers and members, resulted in the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada in 1834. During the following decade other branches of British Methodism—the Methodist New Connexion, the Bible Christians, and the Primitive Methodists—established themselves firmly, though in small numbers, in the province, while within the newly formed united church itself serious division soon made its appearance between the British Wesleyan and the Canadian points of view. It was brought to a head over the clergy reserves issue.

The British Wesleyans were the most conservative branch of Methodism in the mother country. They favoured the establishment of the Church of England in the old land, and, while they were at first prepared to accept the policy of their Canadian brethren on the clergy reserves, they were not prepared to carry on the struggle with the bitterness and determination which were engendered by the crisis immediately following the Rebellion of 1837.* Open schism came with the conference of 1840, but the effects were inexcusably injurious to both parties and reunion was seen to be essential. When it came, as it did in 1847, it was brought about with mutual good-will but through Canadian initiative, and with the tacit if unexpressed admission that Canadian leadership was to be dominant. The union of 1847 may, therefore, be regarded as evidence that Canadian Methodism had passed through its first stage of development as a Canadian institution.

The foregoing sketches must be allowed to suggest the nature of the process through which, with much variation in circumstance, the other non-Anglican churches passed in the same period. In the Maritime Provinces, the Baptists and Congregationalists drew much of their original impulse from New England, and both their fortunes and influence were entangled

*See *The Durham Report and the Upper Canadian Scene*, pp. 93 to 123.

with the political and social disturbances arising from the American Revolution.* Henry Alline, who as a boy had accompanied his family to Nova Scotia from Rhode Island, was nominally a Congregationalist, but his 'New Light' preaching, 1776-1784, split the Congregational churches at the very moment when they were torn by the open sympathy of many of the members for the revolutionary cause.

The 'New Light' churches became the nucleus of the first Baptist convention in the colony, and by 1800 all but four of the Congregational churches had disappeared. In the Canadas, Baptist influences from the United States were felt most strongly and permanently in the western part of Upper Canada—this being the point where, as in the case of the Presbyterians, the missionary impulse from the United States projected itself most effectively across the border. In the Ottawa valley and Montreal the Baptist congregations were Scottish in origin, and the Ottawa Association formed in 1836 sought aid and maintained close associations in the British Isles. It is little wonder that the process of integration among the Baptists was slow. To differences in origin were added the division between 'Free' and 'Regular' churches, and an extreme emphasis on the principle of congregational autonomy.

The Congregational churches in the Maritime Provinces had, as we have seen, suffered from the effects of the American Revolution. They might perhaps have recovered, and certainly they would have been planted more numerous in the Canadas, if they had benefited more largely through the immigration from the British Isles after 1815 or if they had received strong outside missionary support. Congregational churches in limited numbers did, however, adapt themselves to the Canadian scene and contributed to the United Church in 1925 certain distinctive elements whose importance outweighed the small size of the membership.

It is clear from what has been said that a combination of elements was necessary to ensure the successful transplanting of a religious denomination in British North America. The importance of immigration in its relation to the growth of re-

*See T. F. Mackinnon, *Settlements and Churches in Nova Scotia, 1749-1776*, (Montreal, 1930).

ligious groups is of course obvious, although there has as yet been no close study of the effects of immigration in Canadian social and cultural history. A scarcely less important element was the influence of the missionary societies, which brought into British North America enormous contributions in men and money from the United States and, far more, from the British Isles. Important contributions were also made by individuals to schools, colleges and other church enterprises.

As the chief Protestant churches became in the period following Confederation more effectively organized on a national scale, these contributions declined in amount and importance but they were by no means negligible even in the present century.⁶ Beginning with the first modest grant of £10 a year for a school-master in Nova Scotia in 1728, the S.P.G. (the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel) over a period of two centuries employed 2,136 missionaries within the present bounds of Canada and expended no less than £2,286,128. The S.P.C.K. (the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge) between 1820 and 1920, sent more than 200 missionaries and spent over \$1,000,000. The Church of England also could supply other important examples. The British Wesleyan Missionary Society and the Glasgow Colonial Society have already been mentioned, and there were many others, some of them obscure and short-lived.⁷

Every religious group in seeking to establish itself firmly began as soon as it was able a school or journal, or both, and outside assistance was almost invariably sought even when the initiative came from within the colony. This was less true of the journals where capital investment was small and the enterprise of one or two individuals could accomplish something. It would be difficult to over-estimate the importance of these enterprises in the cultural history of the Dominion, even although only a small proportion of them achieved permanent success.

Political loyalties provided another factor which powerfully influenced the fortunes of religious groups. The American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Rebellions of 1837 came within a period of sixty years. The Maritime Provinces and,

even more critically, Upper Canada, were salients in the frontier line which was expanding with terrific force south of the boundary. It is little wonder that Canadian and British religious, as well as commercial and political, leaders were convinced that the frontier settlements of these colonies could only be held by the most vigilant efforts. The activities of the British missionary societies were in a very real, if limited, sense the counterpart of the expenditures of men and money which were thrown by Britain into Canadian defence, and from the point of view of Canadian cultural history they were probably the more important in the long run.

The frontiers of the Maritime Provinces and of Upper Canada were sharply restricted in area as compared with the vast American frontier west of the Alleghanies. The Loyalist descendants and the immigrants from the British Isles, among them many ex-army officers and men, became increasingly influential especially after 1815. Practically every local community had a sprinkling, if it did not have a preponderance, of these stalwart defenders of 'loyalty', and the churches which were recognized as unquestionably Canadian, or which had British connections, had an enormous advantage over those which could be suspected, even unjustly, of having republican leanings. The history of the smaller denominations will reveal the force of the general considerations suggested above, even more sharply in some cases than that of the churches which proved more successful in winning numerical support.⁸ In the period of the 1830's and 1840's when new sects were springing up in the United States almost none were originated in Canada, and those which attempted to transplant themselves from the United States met with very scant permanent success. American influences in all the churches are to be found wherever one looks into their history, but the restricted extent of the frontier, the increasing communication with the British Isles, the rise of schools, the growing resources of the stronger churches, and other factors which might be mentioned were combining to set the patterns of Canadian society definitely along lines which distinguished it clearly from the American frontier society south of the lakes.

Any study of the Protestant churches in Canada must give a place of first-rate importance to the Church of England. It has here been left to the last because in many respects by comparison with the others its position was unique. It alone among the churches in British North America suffered from no tendencies to division as a result of the American Revolution. It appeared in fact to be aided by the very forces which the Revolution let loose and which made the position of the Church in the Thirteen Colonies one of peculiar difficulty. Its close association with official and military interests was in British North America an asset rather than a disadvantage. It could claim more than any other to be the guardian of loyalty and the upholder of British institutions, and there seemed to its supporters to be unanswerable arguments for the endowments and special privileges of establishment which were provided to guard its position.

The assistance in men and money—notably that of the S.P.G.—which had previously gone to the Thirteen Colonies was now devoted to those which had remained loyal, and leadership in the colonies was provided in place of the remote control from London by the appointments of the first North American bishops—Inglis, a Loyalist from New York in Nova Scotia in 1787, and Mountain in Quebec in 1793. Special privilege and the association with government had, however, disadvantages which seriously offset the benefits: Anglicanism was strongly tinged with conservatism; the clergy looked to the Government for their support; there was no encouragement to voluntary giving; and the Church became a special object of attack by the rapidly rising forces of democracy and frontier discontent. When in the 1820's and 1830's the determination to maintain the endowments and special privileges began to waver in England, the position of the colonial church became precarious in the extreme.

All this has in part become familiar in Canadian historical writing, but unfortunately the story of the clergy reserves issue in Upper Canada has tended to create a distorted view of the Church of England and its leaders—that they were blind reactionaries, utterly unaware that there were any fundamental differences between life in the British Isles and in America,

and determined to realize the impossible ambition of creating a little England replete with all social and religious distinctions in every British North American colony.

Few commonly held views on Canadian history are more seriously in need of revision, and few important Canadians have more need of a competent and discerning biographer than Bishop Strachan, who is usually regarded as the principal exponent of reactionary Anglican opinion.

However different the Church of England was from the other Protestant churches in British North America, it had one point of similarity in the necessity of finding a solution for the problems which faced it in a new environment, and no one was more keenly alive to this than Strachan. He realized that the clergy to succeed must understand and accommodate themselves to conditions in the province. In a report on religion and education in the province drawn up in 1815, he wrote:

“As the people have little conception of religious order and are not accustomed to the forms so long established and known in every English Parish, a clergyman from England will have many difficulties to encounter. His learning may be more profound and extensive, but as his manners and habits will not easily accommodate themselves to those of his Parishioners he will feel uncomfortable and consequently less useful . . .

“If brought up and educated in this Province the Clergy will be more useful among the people, and more happy themselves; and care may be taken that they be equally loyal, and attached to the Mother Country.”⁹

In the same memorandum he urged that “It is expedient to extend the benefits of a common education throughout the whole province”, and he made some shrewd observations on university teaching:

“I prefer the form of the Scotch and German universities to the English or rather a mixture of both plans because much more may be done at one-fourth of the Expense. . . The great opulence of Cambridge and Oxford is far beyond our reach, and altho I

should be sorry ever to see them lose a shilling for I think them wisely adapted to so rich and populous and learned a country as England I think them unfit for this country . . .

“I must further add, on the subject of finding Professors, that Gentlemen newly from England accustomed to the wealthy Universities of that country may not always possess the qualities necessary to make them useful in this projected Seminary. Learning they may have had in abundance, but the industry, the labour (I may say drudgery) and accommodation to circumstances cannot be expected from them.”

In Strachan's view the Church was essential as a stabilizing political and social influence. He did not believe that voluntary support could be made equal to its expanding needs in the colony; and he denied that the American tendency to destroy all public support for religion ought to prevail in a British possession. The length of the struggle over the church endowments and the compromise nature of the final settlement are an indication of the strength of the forces which supported this view. To say this is far from implying that Strachan and his associates made no mistakes. Their errors in tactics and in estimating the forces arrayed against them have been pointed out repeatedly, but any balanced judgment must recognize that a century ago there was some ground for a conviction that the Canadian solution for the problem of the relation of Church and State need not follow exactly the lines laid down in the United States.

More positive if less familiar evidence that Church of England leaders, and Strachan in particular, were not blind to the necessity of adapting themselves to the Canadian environment is provided by innovations in methods and organization beginning notably in the 1830's, and copied from American examples wherever it seemed desirable. The most significant of these innovations was the introduction of synods with lay representation. Although the first did not meet until 1851 Strachan wrote as far back as 1832:

“I am quite convinced that we shall never gain much ground in the Province, or obtain that influ-

ence on public opinion or with the Government, or with the Bishop himself, that we ought to possess, till we have frequent convocations, composed of the clergy and members of their several congregations. To such assemblies the Episcopal Church in the United States owes almost everything and from the want of public meetings of the clergy and laity the Church of England is losing weight with the people, and influence with the Government.”*

The example of 1851 was later extended to the whole Canadian Church, to the Anglican Church in the other Dominions, and ultimately to the mother country itself. The decade of the 1850's showed clearly that the Church of England in British North America was entering on a new period of development. The final settlement of the clergy reserves issue, the establishment of Trinity University, the introduction of synods, of lay representation, and the election of bishops, were among the proofs that the Church had passed through the first period of its growth as a Canadian institution.

The later phases of the development of the Protestant churches as national institutions must be omitted from consideration here. By the middle of the nineteenth century tendencies toward what might be termed regional unions were clearly making their appearance. In the 1840's and 1850's also the churches extended their missionary efforts west of the lakes into the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company. They anticipated the later westward expansion of the Dominion, and were a powerful influence in preparing public opinion for it at a time when political and commercial ties were so slight as to be negligible. Confederation made possible and indeed demanded wider unions. The needs of an expanding frontier were insistent, and could only be met by concerted efforts organized along national lines.

A series of unions, culminating in the establishment of a nationally organized church, was completed by the Presbyterians in 1875, and by the Methodists in 1874 and 1883. The tendency toward national organization brought extensive changes in the Anglican, Baptist, and Congregational churches

*Vernon, *The Old Church in the New Dominion*, 104.

in the early years of this century, and reached its highest point in the formation of the United Church in 1925.

“Confederation widened the horizon and fired the hearts of our young men,” wrote Principal Grant of Queen’s University; and again in characteristic fashion—“A nation is saved by ideas; inspiring and formative ideas.” Grant was probably the most dynamic and influential figure among the Protestant clergy during the first generation of the young Dominion’s history, and in the expression of such views he undoubtedly represented truly, if vividly, the hopes and purposes of the rank and file of his fellow churchmen. Like himself, they saw in the development of the Canadian churches one of the sure signs of the growth of a Canadian national consciousness and culture.

The Early Methodist Church and the Canadian Point of View

WHATEVER MAY HAVE BEEN THE NATURE OR EXPLANATION OF THE conversion of John Wesley, historians seem agreed as to the profound effect of the influences which were let loose in English life by Wesley's career from that moment. Halévy, the brilliant French historian and observer of English life, whose work gives Methodism a place of central importance in nineteenth-century England, says, for example:

“To this movement in combination on the one hand with the old Whig political traditions, on the other with the new *ethos* produced by the industrial revolution, British Liberalism of the opening of the Nineteenth Century owed its distinctive character. We shall witness Methodism bring under its influence first the dissenting sects, then the establishment, finally secular opinion. We shall attempt to find here the key to the problem whose solution has hitherto escaped us; for we shall explain by this movement the extraordinary stability which English society was destined to enjoy throughout a period of revolutions and crises; what we may truly term the miracle of modern England, anarchist but orderly, practical and businesslike, but religious and even pietist.”*

*Elie Halévy, *A History of the English People in 1815* (London, 1924), 339. The views of historians such as Lecky and G. M. Trevelyan on the importance of the influence of Methodism are well known. See also: W. J. Warner, *The Wesleyan Movement in the Industrial Revolution* (London, 1930); E. R. Taylor, *Methodism and Politics* (Cambridge, 1935); Maximin Piette, *John Wesley in the Evolution of Protestantism* (London, 1937).

The influence of Methodism in English life has been matched, in part at least, by its influence in the English-speaking communities overseas. In the United States, in Canada, and elsewhere there have been established independent Methodist churches adapted to their particular environments and moulded along distinctive lines by the history, the economic, social, and political characteristics of their communities. The churches in their turn have had a powerful influence in their respective communities, not only on religious thought and attitudes but on social and economic development. They have exerted a very strong, if at times not easily estimated, pressure on public policy and have frequently had a large part in determining sectional or national points of view.

In the United States the Methodist church became an independent body as a result of the revolution. John Wesley, in spite of his opposition to the American cause, was wise enough to see that American Methodism could not be kept under British tutelage, and in 1784 he appointed two agents—one the famous Asbury—to direct affairs in America. The Methodist ministers in conference adopted the name of Methodist Episcopal Church and proceeded from that time to control their polity and economy in accordance with the needs of the American environment. They introduced, for example, a form of episcopal government which Wesley considered impossible in England due to the peculiar relation of Methodism to the Church of England.* At the same time they adhered to the essential elements in Wesley's doctrine and practice.

In contrast with this course of events in the United States, the process of developing in British North America a united self-governing Methodist church with its own distinctive characteristics was long drawn out, uncertain, and full of stress; and, like the development of self-government in the political sphere, it also came to fulfilment in the end only through a combination of influences which were in part indigenous and which in part emanated from Britain and from the United States. There is an evident parallelism between the achievement of self-government and dominion-wide union in the Canadian Methodist

*See J. M. Buckley, *Constitutional and Parliamentary History of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York, 1912).

church and the achievements of responsible government, union, and expansion which culminated in Confederation and the years immediately following it. The parallelism, which is not the result of mere coincidence, becomes more striking on a close examination.

Methodism came to British North America in the last years of the eighteenth century at several different points and from several sources. In the Maritime Provinces there was for a time a close relation with the United States and Wesley appears to have thought that this would continue. About the turn of the century it became clear, however, that the association with the United States was inadequate and open to criticism and that help might better be obtained from the British Wesleyan church where there was a rapidly rising missionary enthusiasm. With the journey to England in 1799 of William Black, the greatest figure in the early Methodism of Nova Scotia, there began an organic connection of over half a century between the Methodism of the Maritime Provinces and the British Wesleyan church. The relationship was that of a colonial dependency to an imperial government, the function of colonial office being performed by the powerful Missionary Society of the British church. Occasionally Nova Scotian Methodists felt that they were chastened unduly by the bureaucracy of Hatton Garden, the headquarters in London of the British Wesleyan Missionary Society, but the relationship, like the political history of Nova Scotia, was on the whole a peaceable one and continued until the 'Maritime union' of Methodism was brought about in 1855.

In Upper Canada the career of Methodism was in striking contrast to that in Nova Scotia. Here, in an environment of social and political animosities so relentless as to lead frequently to turbulence and finally to armed rebellion, the frontiers of British and American Methodism overlapped. The inevitable conflict was sharp and long continued and Methodism, to save itself, had to find some compromise. Under the pressure of bitter circumstance it gathered elements from both British and American sources, and during the difficult decades of the 1830's and 1840's brought them into fusion. The story reminds one of much that is characteristic of Canadian history. By the

middle of the century the Wesleyan Methodist church in Upper Canada was strong, independent, and distinctively Canadian. In the process of amalgamation which in the following generation united all the Methodist groups in British North America and extended their labours westward to the Pacific it was the Methodism of Upper Canada which became the keystone of the arch.

Methodism was first established in Upper and Lower Canada by impulses from the United States in which the Loyalist element had an important but by no means exclusive part. By 1812, societies were established in Quebec, in Montreal, at Stanstead and Durham near the American border of Lower Canada, and in Upper Canada in the Bay of Quinte and St. Lawrence region and in the Niagara Peninsula. These societies were connected with Methodist conferences in New York, but there was already recognition of their distinctive character in the sending to them of ministers who were known to be acceptable north of the border and in organizing them into Canadian districts.

The War of 1812 not only revealed clearly the tendencies toward separation but intensified and enlarged them. Ministers of American citizenship assigned to the Canadian work in 1812 did not enter the colony, others already north of the border returned to the United States; the Canadian ministers held their own informal conference during the war; and Methodists loyally supported the British cause. The Methodism of Lower Canada showed, however, in its reaction to the war a striking difference from that of Upper Canada, and in this lay the prophecy of the separation and misunderstanding which was to mark most of the period until the regional union of 1855 brought a friendly and organically satisfactory settlement.

Among Upper Canadian Methodists the war was for the most part regarded as an unfortunate if unavoidable interlude which, once disposed of, should be prevented from unduly interfering with the friendly associations stretching across the border. Indeed the maintenance of these associations seemed essential if the work in Upper Canada's pioneer districts was to be pushed forward with true Methodist zeal. In Quebec and Montreal the situation soon proved to be very different. In

Quebec the work had to be abandoned during the war. In Montreal the society was split between those who desired to maintain the American connection and those who wished to establish one with the Wesleyan Methodism of England.

I shall not here hazard a guess as to the reason for this yearning towards England—perhaps Canada's little metropolitan centre was showing a tender budding of sophistication. In any case, three months before the war commenced the British group in the Montreal society sent an appeal for a minister to the British Wesleyan conference in which they complained that the American preachers came irregularly and reluctantly; that the appointee on his arrival presented "a long account of his travels, a long string of expenses, and a long face"; and that moreover, this connection with the United States brought Canadian Methodists into odium:

"We are stigmatized as a set of Jacobins, when in fact only our spiritual guides are so. . . . We are supposed to be corrupted in the Serbonian bog of democracy, which we abhor! On these accounts we have long wished and most affectionately desired a union with you, who dwell in a country we are united to by every tie of sacred love and gratitude."*

The appeal from Montreal proved as irresistible as if it had come from Macedonia. The British Wesleyan conference in response sent two men in 1814 and there began the long conflict between British and American Methodism in Upper Canada out of which was to emerge a Canadian church.

The appeal was in fact opportune for more reasons than one. The British Wesleyan Missionary Society had just been formed—one of several English missionary societies whose establishment in the first years of the century is significant evidence of a rising national and evangelical fervour. The Wesleyan society was in its first flush of enthusiasm. It was being urged forward by a laity rapidly growing in wealth, and felt a special obligation to support missionary enterprises in British possessions. Little wonder that the Canadas presented an intriguing problem on both religious and political grounds.

*Findlay and Holdsworth, *Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, I, 377.

The Methodist societies of Upper Canada and the leaders of the Methodist Episcopal Church were, however, alarmed at the prospect of schism, and the General Conference at Baltimore in 1816 discussed the matter fully. It is not without interest that the case for intervention in Canada by the British conference was presented by two delegates from Nova Scotia, one the veteran Black. A letter from the Wesleyan society to the conference expressed a wish for peaceful settlement but asserted the right and duty of providing missionary assistance to citizens of British colonies who requested it. So the issue was joined—partly without doubt because of antipathies revealed by the recent war—and there ensued between 1816 and 1820 four years of increasingly bitter and open rivalry. Local invitations brought Wesleyan missionaries into circuits already occupied by Methodist Episcopal ministers and several important societies were split.

It became increasingly clear that the rivalry could not continue without serious loss on both sides. The matter was again debated seriously at the General Conference of 1820 in Baltimore and an emissary was sent to England to urge a settlement. The American church protested against the imputation of political motives in connection with its work in Canada, and placed in its discipline a clause prescribing it as the duty of Christians and especially of ministers to be subject to the political authority of the country of their residence. In conclusion, the American Conference suggested a compromise, that it should withdraw from Lower Canada and the British church from Upper Canada. The arrangement was one which seemed on the whole to fit in with the nature of the work and the wishes of the majority of Methodist adherents in the two provinces and the British conference agreed to it. Resolutions were passed and letters of instruction and admonition urging the acceptance of the arrangement were sent from both mother conferences.

“We have recognized the principle [wrote the British conference], that the Methodist body is one throughout the world and that therefore its members are bound to cordial affection and brotherly union. . . . We know that political reasons exist in many

minds for supplying even Upper Canada as far as possible, with British missionaries; and however natural this feeling may be to Englishmen, and even praiseworthy when not carried too far, it will be obvious to you that this is a ground on which, as a Missionary Society, and especially as a society under the direction of a Committee which recognizes as one with itself the American Methodists, we cannot act. . . . Feel that you are one with your American brethren, embarked in the same great cause, and eminently of the same religious family, and the little difficulties of arrangement will be easily surmounted; and if any warm spirits (which is probable) rise up to trouble you, remember that you are to act upon the great principle sanctioned by the Conference, and not upon local prejudices.”*

Truly a pious and well-meant admonition but neither writers nor readers understood what was tied up in it. Canadian Methodism was destined to be a Canadian institution and not a colonial appendage of either American or British Methodism, but it was to take thirty-five years to solve ‘the little difficulties of arrangement’ and there were to be ‘warm spirits’ and ‘local’ and other prejudices aplenty.

The formal tie of union with the American church was soon to be broken, and indeed the demand for separation was already apparent in 1820. Methodists in Upper Canada could not hope for relief from legal disabilities which pressed upon them, or from the imputation, however unjust, of disloyalty while the American connection remained.

Restlessness showed itself within the societies and worst of all was stirred up and organized by Henry Ryan, the veteran leader who in 1805 had come with William Case from the United States. Since then they had shared the distinction and burden of Methodist leadership in the province. Ryan was an Irishman of great physical strength, boundless energy, and considerable mental agility. He had been a famous fighter in his unregenerate days, and indeed his prowess had been by no

*Ryerson, *Canadian Methodism; Its Epochs and Characteristics*, 301-3.

means a handicap in carrying the glad tidings of salvation up and down the frontier of Upper Canada. Ryan now took advantage of the growing desire for independence and, appealing to the laity and local preachers in particular, claimed that the Canadian Ministers and American General Conference could not be trusted to bring about separation.

The episode of the Ryan schism is petty if colourful, but it has significance both as an illustration of the possibilities of division which for a generation were never far from the surface and as a prophecy of the increasing importance of lay influence which during the difficulties of the next two decades was to become a distinctive development in Canadian Methodism.

The union with American Methodism was dissolved at the General Conference of 1828 with mutual goodwill but only after the strongest pressure from the Canadian delegates, and the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada was organized as an independent body. Its discipline and organization remained essentially those of the American church, but changes were made which showed that the Canadian church would follow its own interest in meeting the needs of the Canadian environment.

In the transition years between 1820 and 1828 the Ryan episode should not be over-emphasized. Its importance was indeed symptomatic rather than real. The truth was that Methodism in Upper Canada was beginning to find itself and in this it was exhibiting tendencies similar to those which can be seen in almost every other aspect of the colony's life.

The 1820's have perhaps never had their due from Canadian historians as a decade in which beginnings were made and lines of future development laid down. In trade, transportation, internal improvements, settlement, the professions, journalism, one feels that the province was emerging from its infancy and becoming at least a husky toddler. In this characteristic development Upper Canadian Methodism, as was frequently the case at later dates, increasingly anticipated rather than followed the trend of the times. In the early years of the decade there came into its ministry the notable group of young men such as Anson Green, James Richardson, Franklin Metcalf, and the Ryerson brothers, who were to carry the burden of the next thirty years.

Able, devoted, familiar with the Canadian scene and determined to yield to no one in their loyalty to it—they were the first proof that Upper Canadian Methodism could produce for itself leadership of no mean order. The sudden development of a mission to the Indians of the province was further evidence of the rise of distinctive Canadian interests.

The period was one of great missionary enthusiasm in the United States and England, and Canadian Methodists seized eagerly on their own opportunity, formed their own society, and quickly developed a proprietary interest in their own problem. But it was in the arena of public debate that the new spirit and leadership won their most spectacular success. Archdeacon Strachan's famous attack in his memorial sermon to Bishop Mountain and the still more famous reply of the twenty-three-year-old Egerton Ryerson came in 1826.¹⁰ They were followed by Strachan's journey to England to obtain a charter for a university with exclusive features, and by the circulation, while he was there, of his Ecclesiastical Chart whose erroneous statements and partisan spirit mark it as perhaps the least defensible detail of Strachan's long and distinguished career.

The charges against the Methodists, and in particular the charges of disloyalty, could not be disregarded. Investigation was demanded and speedily obtained. A petition with some 5,700 signatures resulted in the appointment in 1828 of a select committee of the House of Assembly which examined fifty-two witnesses and brought in a sweeping report vindicating the loyalty of the Methodists and condemning special privileges to any one religious body. Equally gratifying was the condemnation of special privileges by the committee appointed by the House of Commons in 1828 to investigate Canadian affairs.

George Ryerson, then in England, had appeared before the committee and Lord Stanley, one of its members, had warned in a speech in the House of Lords against allowing "the evils which religious dissensions have already produced in this country and in Ireland" to creep into Canada. "It is important," he urged, "that His Majesty's Canadian subjects should not have occasion to look across the narrow boundary that separates them from the United States and see anything there to envy."

The year 1828 was one of notable success for Upper Cana-

dian Methodism but it was clear that the real struggle was merely beginning. Powerful influences were moulding thought and shaping action throughout the English-speaking world and in Canada as in other places, new democratic impulses were bound to clash with conservative concepts of education, rank, and property, of accepted privilege and constituted authority. The scenery, the action, were different—the drama was essentially the same as that which was being played elsewhere on larger stages and with more pomp and circumstance but with perhaps after all not much more of dignity and restraint.

Conservative interests were strongly entrenched in the province. They were sure to be stoutly, even bitterly, defended, and not least in matters of education and religion where the Tory view had no less a champion than the Reverend Archdeacon Strachan. Strachan believed that society should be organized on conservative lines, and that education and religion should be so controlled and directed by a privileged group as to ensure the stability of the whole social and political order. He suspected the republican and levelling tendencies of the American environment and he was determined to defend the rights and privileges of the Church of England not only for the sake of religion but on the broader ground of what he considered to be the public good.

We can now see that the tide of liberalizing tendencies was running strongly against him—more strongly than either he or his opponents could realize—and his task was doubly difficult because of weaknesses in his position of which he was without doubt fully aware—in particular the ambiguous nature of the clergy reserves grant of 1791, and the uncertainty of essential support from England through the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Notice was given in 1832 that the grants from the S.P.G. were to be discontinued. Doubtless it was the realization of such weaknesses which accounted in part for Strachan's aggressive and inflexible attitude and which led him on a few but notable occasions to overreach himself.

But if, through the perspective of a hundred years, we may view the prospects and the opposing groups of 1828 with philosophic calm, that is more than could be expected of the Methodists of Upper Canada. With evangelical intensity they were

determined to have a church that was not merely technically independent but truly Canadian, and equal in zeal and effectiveness to the growing needs of the colony. Its leaders must be defended against the still-repeated insinuations that they were little better than disloyal and ignorant ranters; its convictions not only on religion but on equality of civil privilege must be forcibly explained and disseminated; and its youth who were crossing to American seminaries in increasing numbers must be given the opportunity for a Canadian education.¹¹

So it was that the conference of 1829 determined to establish a newspaper and if possible an institution of learning. The newspaper was an immediate necessity. The slender purses of the ministers yielded a cash subscription. Egerton Ryerson was appointed editor and on November 21, 1829, there appeared the first number of the *Christian Guardian*, which was destined, during the following decade, to be the most influential and widely circulated newspaper in Upper Canada.

During the most bitterly controversial decade of Canadian history Ryerson achieved a reputation as a master of controversy, but one cannot believe after reading his editorials and personal letters that he delighted in it. He had strong vibrant qualities, intellectual and emotional, in unusual combination, and with all the warmth of an intense nature he defended those institutions and causes to which he gave his devotion. He seldom opened a controversy and indeed often restrained himself under great provocation, but if once convinced that a matter was one of essential justice or of high public policy his effort was unsparing. His invariable practice was to gather every relevant document or other bit of evidence, to master the facts, however tangled and voluminous, before making a pronouncement, and then to marshal them in a smashing statement designed to bear down his opponent by the very weight of unassailable information. He seldom gave his enemies the hostage of a mis-statement.

His errors—and there were few which he had cause to regret—were those rather of judgment and arose from warmth of conviction. Personal animosities and contention for their own sake he detested. Perhaps he was at times too prone to attribute to his opponents no higher motive than party prejudice, but

he made few returns in kind for the personal abuse and misrepresentation which were heaped upon him. More than once he publicly regretted that his intensity had led him too far and urged that interest in a cause should transcend personal bitterness. He harboured no resentment where the clash was one of principle but he had a relentless scorn for the opponent for whom he had lost respect. His contempt showed itself not in vituperation but in a damning analysis of words, events, and personal relationships. Governor Head at the very moment of his counter-revolutionary triumph in March, 1838, was the most illustrious victim of such a flaying.

In the long run Ryerson must be judged, however, not by his polemical encounters but by his accomplishments and fundamental concepts. In the course of his long public career he left a profound impression on Canadian education both higher and elementary; he was the most powerful personality in the formative period of the Methodist church, and he was a brilliant editor with few equals in the early days of Canadian journalism. Perhaps no other single individual made so varied and permanent a contribution to the development of Canadian institutions and attitudes.

In temper and purpose Ryerson was essentially the builder and for him the inevitability of social progress and the doctrine of perfectability for the individual were matters of unwavering faith. It was a faith which blended the attitudes of Methodism with impulses that were running strongly in the contemporary philosophy and politics of both America and England. Ryerson was indeed a true son of the generation in which may be seen the first glow of enthusiasm and certainty which marked the dawn of the Victorian age.

In his first editorial Ryerson prophesied that the colony was on the threshold of momentous developments:

“The present is a most eventful period. . . . The nature of our depending relations, the principles of our foreign intercourse, the complexion of our internal regulations, and the aspect of our literary and religious institutions are about taking the hue of a permanent character.”

Could he have seen in advance the events of the next two

decades during which, for Canadian Methodism at least, the truth of his prophecy was to be fully vindicated, his feelings would have been even more mixed than they undoubtedly were in 1829. The Methodism of Upper Canada could, he hoped, be kept one in spirit and co-operation with the two great senior branches of Methodism in England and the United States, but it must have freedom to face its own difficulties and opportunities in its own way.

This problem of the mingling of diverse elements in the Canadian environment was to be the central problem in every aspect of Canadian development during the nineteenth century, and no institution was thrown against it so violently as was the Upper Canadian Methodist Church in the 1830's and 1840's. Ryerson in his editorials returned repeatedly to the double theme of the oneness of Methodism throughout the world and the distinctive characteristics and needs of Methodism in Upper Canada—what, for example, was its attitude on the episcopal form of church government in which the Methodism of Britain differed from that of the United States—and, in particular, why did Canadian Methodism oppose church establishment and endowment when Wesleyan Methodism in England tolerated, perhaps favoured, them?

Methodism in Upper Canada had, it appeared, a great opportunity. Its methods, its lack of emphasis on contentious points of doctrine, its vivid appeal for the regeneration of the individual, its organization in societies with local preachers but with, at the same time, a very strong connexional tie—all these characteristics made it adaptable to Canadian conditions, and in particular to the needs of the frontier. If it could defend its views on clergy reserves and education while avoiding the pitfalls of political controversy—if it could be free of division within its own ranks—better still if it could get some assistance from England for its missions and its academy, it might preserve its identity. But the 'ifs' were too great and within five years the first attempt at independence was to come to an end.

The British Wesleyan leaders had never been content with the arrangement of 1820 excluding them from Upper Canada. They considered that the separation of the Canadian and American churches in 1828 had released them from their bargain.

They had funds for the Indian mission,¹² they were being urged to look after the interests of British Wesleyans emigrating to Canada, and were given to understand that their return to Upper Canada would be by no means unwelcome from a political point of view in official quarters. In fact, it appears that the *Anschluss* had been in contemplation even before 1828. An interesting opinion was expressed in 1826 by James Knowlan, a Wesleyan in Upper Canada, to the effect that if the Canadian Methodists were under the British Wesleyan conference, the confidence of the government in Upper Canada would be obtained. Finally, in the spring of 1832, after a letter of announcement, the *Anschluss* arrived in person—the Reverend Robert Alder with three prospective missionaries.

Warfare seemed inevitable, until John Ryerson in walking up Toronto's Bay Street got the sudden inspiration that it would be better to try the almost equally grim alternative of marriage. There were no other possibilities and so the union of 1833 was brought about. The details cannot concern us here although they had in them the seeds of later difficulty. The Canadian conference was to retain control of its own affairs except the missions but was to adopt the Wesleyan name and, so far as possible, the Wesleyan organization. It was to have a presiding officer appointed by the British conference and it was to contribute to the British Missionary Society which in turn would control and finance the missions in Canada.

'The Wesleyan Methodist Church in British North America' thus included the two Canadas, the Maritime Provinces, and Newfoundland, Upper Canada being continued as a separate conference. It must be remembered that the term Methodists, as used here, does not include the other groups of Methodists in the province which were active although much smaller in numbers. The Ryanite group continued as an independent body for some years under the name of 'The Canadian Wesleyan Methodist Church'. In the 1840's it was united with the Methodist New Connexion. 'The Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada' was organized in 1834 by a group who were displeased with the union with the British Wesleyans. The Methodist New Connexion, the Bible Christians, and the Primitive

Methodists were extensions of the English bodies of the same names.

Egerton Ryerson had shared with others, like his brother George, the fear of the control of 'despotic' Englishmen over the Canadian church, but once convinced of the necessity of union, he threw his influence and the influence of the *Guardian* unreservedly into it. It was a practical measure in which the gains, he concluded, far outweighed the losses, and which must be put through without wavering even if some members and adherents fell by the wayside. He was convinced that liberalizing tendencies were rising rapidly in England. He had just watched with keenest interest the struggle over the Reform Bill, and its passing was, he believed, a triumph for those forces which would ensure justice and material progress in the colonies. That the monarchy had come out decisively on the side of reform was the final answer to those who charged that the struggle against exclusive privilege in Upper Canada was disloyal.

Ryerson had gone to England in the spring of 1833 to conclude negotiations for the union and had carried with him a petition with twenty thousand names asking the British government for the redress of grievances. In a confidential interview he had been able to discuss the whole Canadian situation with Lord Stanley, the colonial under-secretary, and he was certain that once misrepresentations and misunderstandings were cleared away public men could be relied on to show goodwill towards the elements seeking reasonable and peaceful reform. He had been fascinated by what he saw of English public life and of Wesleyans—their efficiency, resources, and zeal. Union with so influential a body could not fail to produce solid advantages.

In the long run, however, the results of the union would largely depend on the impression which it created in the province. Everyone knew that it was inextricably bound up with the political as well as the religious situation. Governor Colborne's well-known attack on the Methodists with the insinuations that they were under control from the United States and that they opposed British influences in the province was made at the end of 1831. The *Christian Guardian* of December 21 contains Ryerson's rejoinder. But few could have suspected

a demonstration of the fact so immediate and decisive as that which came with the open break between Mackenzie and Ryerson.

In October, 1833, the very month in which the Canadian conference ratified the articles of union, Ryerson published in the *Guardian* the first of his famous *Impressions of England*. The description of the English parties to which he devoted the entire article was kind and tolerant to all except the Radicals.

“Radicalism in England”, he wrote, “appeared to us to be but another name for Republicanism, with the name of King instead of President . . . Perhaps one of the most formidable obstacles to a wise, safe and effectual reform of political, ecclesiastical, and religious abuses in England, is the notorious want of religious virtue or integrity in many of the leading politicians who have lamentably succeeded in getting their names identified with *reform*.”

And Hume, the English ally of Mackenzie, he condemned by name in a stinging paragraph. The reply of Mackenzie, a classic of Canadian political vituperation, was as nearly instantaneous as the printing press of a century ago could make it.

“The *Christian Guardian* . . . has gone over to the enemy, press, types and all, and hoisted the colours of a cruel vindictive Tory priesthood. . . . The contents of the *Guardian* of tonight tell us in language too plain, too intelligible to be misunderstood, that a deadly blow has been struck in England at the liberties of the people of Upper Canada. . . . The Americans had their Arnold and the Canadians have their Ryerson. . . . I was the dupe of a Jesuit in the garb of a Methodist Preacher, and believed Egerton that I had been in error in opposing the Union . . . but he and his new allies, the church and state gentry, shall now have me on their rear.”

So began a relentless warfare of over four years.

The interest of these events lies not merely in their dramatic quality but in their significance which has not always

been fully appreciated. It is impossible to believe that Ryerson wrote his *Impressions* simply to give a traveller's account. He appeared even in his confidential correspondence to be surprised at the storm raised by them, but the weight of every presumption is that their publication was as calculated as any move he ever made. From the point of view of the welfare of Methodism, he seemed to be quite right. If the union were to be preserved, and its preservation was essential to Canadian Methodism at the moment, a wedge had to be driven between the Methodists and the Anglo-Canadian radical alliance of Mackenzie and Hume. No shrewder or more successful means could have been found than the publication of the *Impressions*. Association with Hume was distasteful to Ryerson personally and would be a serious weakness to Canadian Methodist interests in England where Hume was cordially disliked by the Wesleyans. Ryerson's meetings with political, religious, and commercial leaders in England, had confirmed his conviction that the one thing most likely to prevent the redress of grievances was the belief in high circles that Upper Canadian Methodists were associated with republican agitation.

Mackenzie's smashing rejoinder was perhaps as instinctive as Ryerson's course of action was calculated, but he undoubtedly sensed as clearly as did Ryerson the dangerous possibilities of recent events for the cause which he had at heart. Mackenzie was the leader of a frontier democracy that was growing increasingly conscious of its interests but was difficult to hold together and organize. The strength of his support was due largely, as various writers have made clear,¹³ to economic grievances against the monopoly of a commercial and landholding privileged class. The fact must, however, not be allowed to obscure another of scarcely less significance—the strength of the forces which in the 1830's cut across the lines of economic conflict—and, among these forces, no single agency was to be more powerful in the next few years than the Methodist church.

Methodism made its greatest appeal to the very constituency that Mackenzie was cultivating and no opposition could be more serious to him than that of Methodism. Ryerson, it should be observed had, since he began his term as editor, been careful in the *Guardian* not to commit himself to support of Mac-

kenzie except in matters of mutual concern, but, in the popular mind, the unity of the Methodists with Mackenzie's party had been taken for granted, and the rupture created consternation in Reform ranks from one end of the province to the other.

A point of comparison between Methodism in Upper Canada and in England is, perhaps, worthy of note here. Methodism in England had promoted a spirit of harmony between the labouring and artisan classes and the rapidly growing class of commercial and industrial magnates, large numbers of whom were themselves Methodists. The Wesleyan connexion, the strongest and most conservative body of Methodists, had on this account won the special animosity of the organizers of working-class movements.

Methodism in Upper Canada was, in a sense, to play the Canadian counterpart of this English role. This, indeed, was a significant point in its importance for the political and economic life of the province during the next decade. It was to be the largest, the most skilfully directed, and the most influential element among that large mass of people who wished to find a place between the extremes of High Church Toryism on the one hand and radicalism drifting into rebellion on the other; and after the Rebellion, because it occupied this middle ground, Methodism was to be an important influence in supporting the policy of Durham and his successors. The middle ground is never an enviable position in a period of crisis and violence, and it is not surprising that Upper Canadian Methodists and, in particular, their most conspicuous leader, were to find themselves in the 1830's laid open to attack from both sides and to repeated and bitter charges of inconsistency.

The Methodist societies were severely shaken by the feud between Ryerson and Mackenzie, but, once it had come, nothing was to be lost by either party, and much might be gained, by digging the breach as wide and deep as possible. In this one matter at least there was no noticeable lack of mutual assistance. Both sides set to with a right goodwill, but on January 8, 1834, Ryerson published an editorial entitled, "Clergy Reserves—Government Pledges—Revolutionary Symptoms", which undoubtedly forced the issue. Ryerson had a few editorials which seemed to him like milestones and to which he referred repeat-

edly on later occasions. This was one of them. No action by the government, he asserted, could have so great an effect in allaying the dangerous discontent in the province as a settlement of the clergy reserves question on principles of religious and civil equality, and he pointed to the royal dispatch of November 8, 1832, as proof of the liberal attitude of the British government.

The Radical party had been silent on the clergy reserves during recent months because, he charged, they knew that a reasonable settlement would destroy the effectiveness of their attempts to arouse ill will against the government. He made a lengthy analysis of the beginnings of Radical agitation in the Thirteen Colonies before the American Revolution. "In New England, the malcontents said they aimed at nothing more than the preservation of their liberty", and yet they committed themselves to courses which soon led them to open revolution. Sinister evidence, pointing in the same direction, could be seen, Ryerson believed, in recent events and expressions of opinion in Upper Canada and, citing chapter and verse, he declared that there was apparent a tendency, "at least in the avowal of sentiment", away from constitutional reform towards revolution. "We believe for many reasons that affairs in this Province are approaching a crisis which will require skill in the helmsman to keep the ship from foundering, and watchfulness on the part of the Christian lest he perish in the whirlpool of party spirit."

It was during these months that Ryerson put forth his most conservative views as a political theorist. He was forced by the crisis to face questions as to the nature of the authority of the state, and, in particular, as to the limits of the Christian citizen's obligation to be bound in loyalty to an existing government. Ryerson was not by temperament a theorist and he made no contribution to the solution of these perennial problems, but his opinions had influence in the province and their origin and relation to English thought in particular is a matter of some interest and importance.

Damning proof, in Ryerson's opinion, of the truth of his suspicions came a few weeks later in the well-known 'Baneful Domination' letter addressed by Hume to Mackenzie (see *Christian Guardian*, May 28, 1834). Hume spoke of a "crisis

which is fast approaching in the affairs of the Canadas and which will terminate in independence and freedom from the baneful domination of the mother country. . . . The proceedings between 1772 and 1782 in America ought not to be forgotten; and to the honour of the Americans and for the interests of the civilized world let their conduct and the Result be ever in View." Ryerson seized on the tactical advantage which this astonishing indiscretion gave him and in one of his typical long editorials he hurled a defiance at those 'Reformers' who were recalling with admiration the precedents of the American Revolution (*Christian Guardian*, June 4, 1834):

"Lately the King's ministers were respected and honoured; now they are insulted and abused. Lately attachment and loyalty to the British Government were professed; now *Independence* from its 'baneful domination' is recommended as the motto and watchword of *reformers*. . . . In the politics and contests of party "let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth"; but in so grave a question as whether a country shall remain a monarchy or become a republic—whether it shall remain an appendage of Great Britain or become an American state—every Christian and patriot has a duty to discharge. . . . If a Wesley and a Fletcher wrote to *suppress* a revolution in America, never will I hesitate, with a zealous and devoted band of labourers, to aid zealously though feebly to *prevent* the revolution in Canada."

During these months the counter-attacks by Mackenzie and his followers were equally determined and relentless and certainly more maliciously personal. They almost brought the enterprise of the Upper Canada Academy to a standstill.* They tried to incite the Methodist laity against what was represented as the dictation of the conference, and they culminated in the 'Seventh Report on Grievances' which charged the Methodists with the hypocrisy of receiving state aid contrary to their principles, because government grants for the Indian mission had been accepted on several occasions by the British Wesleyan

*The difficulties in establishing the academy and their relation with the politics of the period are treated in "The Founding of Victoria College", see pp. 67-91.

Missionary Society. Conspicuous in the attacks were former prominent Methodists, in particular Peter Perry and Dr. T. D. Morrison. So it was that Upper Canadian Methodism drifted into the year of the Rebellion bitterly contesting with the radical party on the one hand but with no assurance of the redress of their grievances on the other. Policy and inclination forced them in the face of a threat to the British connection to associate themselves with High Church Toryism. The alliance was in the very nature of things bound to be temporary.

It was the proud boast of Ryerson that not a Wesleyan Methodist could be found in the ranks of the rebels. This was perhaps a pardonable exaggeration. Doubtless, however, most of the Wesleyan Methodists who favoured the radicals to the point of participating in the Rebellion had left the church during the bitter controversy with the radicals since 1833. The situation in the other Methodist bodies, especially the Methodist Episcopal church, was different. Ryerson himself had been in England for a year and a half before the Rebellion but had returned in June, 1837, in time to be threatened by the rebels, so it was said, that, if caught, he would be hanged to the nearest tree. He was in Cobourg on his way to Toronto when Governor Head was in his ridiculous fashion defending his beleaguered capital.

Brother William was in Toronto, however, and wrote to say that early on the morning of December 5, after a night of alarms, he went to the market-place and found large numbers of people serving out arms to large numbers of other people. There were Chief Justice Robinson, Judges Macaulay, Jones, and McLean, the attorney-general, and solicitor-general, with their muskets, cartridge boxes, and bayonets, all standing in the ranks with the commonality; and, as a final demonstration of the perilous urgency of the hour, the lieutenant-governor, "in his everyday suit", was there like a small walking arsenal in a state of complete preparedness "with one double-barrelled gun in his hand, another leaning against his breast, and a brace of pistols in his leather belt". It was an awe-inspiring sight. No wonder William wrote that it was impossible for him to describe his feelings.*

If the events leading up to the Rebellion were an embarrass-

*Ryerson, *The Story of My Life*, 177.

ment for the Methodists its aftermath was a calamity. The backwash of the Tory counter-revolution caught them with its full force. In particular, it revealed in unavoidable form the difference of opinion between British Wesleyan leaders and the leaders of Canadian Methodism on the question of participation in politics. Ryerson had explained the clergy reserves issue to the British Wesleyan Conference in 1833 and had declared that the Canadian church had no intention of touching politics except on one issue—threatened monopoly by one church in such matters as the clergy reserves and state support of education.

This understanding had been heartily endorsed by the British conference and since then, although there had been occasional questionings as to the warmth of his arguments, Ryerson had always succeeded in carrying the Canadian conference, including its British members, with him. It was in the three years following the Rebellion that there appeared differences of opinion so irreconcilable as to force by 1840 the dissolution of the union. These were the most critical years of Canadian Methodism and, probably, of Ryerson's own career.

The early months of 1838 were marked by events of the most distressing character. The treason trials, with their savage and vindictive sentences, appalled and alarmed all but the ultra-Tories who, at the moment, were riding high in control. In particular, the Methodists quickly found themselves at odds with the government and beset once more by insinuations of disloyalty. In March a complete victory over Governor Head (who tried to withhold the grant arranged through the Colonial Office for the Methodist Academy), gave a brief satisfaction, but in May came Ryerson's generous defence of Bidwell which was used outrageously as a proof that he sympathized with the rebels. Worst of all, it appeared that advantage was being taken of the reactionary panic in the public mind to push through a solution of the clergy reserves question entirely opposed to the principles for which the Methodists had fought with all their might for over a decade.

For weeks Methodist leaders were depressed by the problem as to whether they should accept defeat in silence or should attack the scheme and give renewed impetus to the charges of

disloyalty. Finally it was decided by a small group that a stand must be made and as usual Ryerson's pen was to be the spear-point of the counter-attack. He was induced to resume, in June, 1838, the editorship of the *Guardian* and he began an unrelenting campaign on the clergy reserves issue.

It was this campaign which, as the event proved, led directly to the disruption of the union with the British Wesleyans for it soon became clear that the leaders of the Missionary Society in London were not averse to a settlement along the very lines that Ryerson was opposing. To Ryerson, this attitude seemed an unpardonable breach of faith at the very moment of the Canadian church's greatest need. To the Wesleyans, Ryerson seemed to be giving final proof of his incurable determination to embroil his church in politics. Ryerson won a sweeping vote of confidence from the conference of 1839, but he was depressed by the unceasing party strife and thought seriously at one point of leaving the province. As the months passed, the British Wesleyan leaders became convinced that Ryerson was the chief obstacle to an acceptance of their policy by the Canadian church and that he must be got out of the way. The particular incidents, through which they were able to bring against him charges of exceeding his authority and misusing his editorial powers, need not concern us here. It is sufficient to say that the conference which met in Toronto in June, 1840, found itself faced with what was in effect an ultimatum from the British conference that Ryerson should be dismissed as editor and his policy rejected. It was the ultimatum of men who lived three thousand miles from the Canadian scene and who failed to appreciate the Canadian problem.

The conference was dismayed but it refused to capitulate, and Egerton with his brother William was delegated to go to England in the hope of making satisfactory explanations. Their mission is a story in itself but the result can be stated in a word. The British conference, so ran a sentence from its resolutions, "cannot safely be identified in views and responsibility with any body, however respected, over whose public proceedings it is denied the right and power of exerting any efficient influences". Such was the message which the returned delegates brought back to a conference specially summoned in October—

a message addressed by implication not to a partner but to a colonial inferior. The alternatives were clear—surrender or defiance of the threat that the union would be broken.

By a large majority, but more in regret than resentment, the Canadian conference determined to go its own way. Egerton made on this occasion perhaps the greatest forensic effort of his long career. In a speech of over five hours he not only defended the policy pursued by himself and the conference but in closing urged the right of Canadians to settle their own problems in their own way. His words were at once a notable appeal for unity in a province torn by dissension and an illuminating comment—one of the most striking in the historical sources of the period—on the Canadian attitude towards the British connection (*Christian Guardian*, November 11, 1840):

“The state of society in this Province is known to consist of a population congregated from various parts of the British Empire, and to a limited extent, in some places, of natives of the United States, who have preferred this country to the neighbouring republic. The use of the word *British* in a local and restricted sense as applying almost exclusively to natives of Great Britain is as untrue and as antipatriotic as it is unchristian to attempt to excite the sectional feelings which such an illegitimate use of the term is intended and calculated to create. Can any Christian English settler in this Province be a party to or countenance the inculcation of a feeling which will *brand* his own Canadian-born children? Is not a person born in Canada as much a British-born subject as a person born in any other part of the British Empire? And is not a Conference of British subjects assembled in Canada as much a British Conference as one assembled in England? From whatever part of Great Britain or Ireland a man may emigrate, when he settles in Canada, are not all his interests Canadian? Is it not in Canada, then, that his all becomes invested and involved? And is it in Canada or in Hatton Garden that his interests are likely to be most deeply felt and best consulted? It is a matter of thankfulness to

know that the great majority of the old country members of this Conference, and the old country members of our Church generally, judge and feel as rational men and as Christians on this subject. *CANADA* is their *HOME* in whatever part of the world they may have been born; and any attempt to excite feelings from the *place of their birth* against those who have been born in the *place of their adopted residence*, is unpatriotic, unchristian and unnatural."

Ryerson in 1837 had been damned by the rebels as an ultra-imperialist, and in 1838 by the Tories as a potential rebel. It was not by chance that in 1840 he described so vividly what I have chosen to call the Canadian point of view. It was a point of view that has since then become a commonplace of Canadian thought.

After two decades of growth and turmoil, during which it had found subservience to the United States, subservience to England, and independence all impossible, Upper Canadian Methodism was in 1840 once more started on an independent course. It was, without question, in a far stronger position than that of a decade earlier. Its loyalty and its claim to a place of respect as a Canadian institution could no longer be questioned. The work of Durham which had been a rebuke to extremists, both Tory and Radical, had in a very real sense been a vindication of the Methodist attitude. Sydenham had been quick to see the significance of Methodist support for his plea that there should be cessation of party strife and promotion of constructive effort. He treated Ryerson with special marks of confidence and on the day before his death, as one of his last official acts, he signed the bill which gave to the Methodist Academy its new charter and its new name of Victoria University.

Upper Canadian Methodism had good reason to face the future with confidence, but the renewed rivalry in the province with the British Wesleyans was none the less deplorable. Union on terms of British coercion was not to be endured but, in the interest of both parties, union on terms of self-respecting partnership was essential. There was indeed much in the situation which suggests the problem of imperial relations and responsible government faced by Elgin with brilliant insight at the

end of the decade. It is to the credit of John Ryerson and one or two others that they saw the necessity of reconciliation almost from the beginning. They worked for it with determination and in 1847 gained their end. The reunion was, however, more than a mere reconciliation.

The leaders of the British conference were generous enough to admit the error of their attempted domination in 1840, and the change in 1847 was in reality, therefore, an admission by the British conference of the principle of responsible government for the Canadian church—an admission which, like its counterpart in the political field, came not through a change in form—for the articles of union were much what they had been previously—but through the more significant change of a new spirit and emphasis.

The union of 1847 was a prelude to wider developments. The British conference was, by this time, finding its obligations in British North America too onerous, not only in the Maritime Provinces and Lower Canada, but in the Hudson Bay territory where it had undertaken missionary work a few years earlier. By the beginning of the 1850's British Wesleyan leaders were growing increasingly anxious to be relieved of their burdens, but this could only be accomplished if Methodism in British North America could be made to stand on its own feet. So it was that in 1855 two regional unions were effected, the one in the Maritime Provinces, the other in the Canadas. They were initiated by the British Wesleyan leaders and their completion, like the accomplishment of Confederation in 1867, was due in no small measure to pressure exerted from England. In 1855, also, the Canadian church took over the mission in the Hudson Bay territory and, in 1859, began work on the Pacific coast.

Thus the tendency towards amalgamation and expansion which was soon to show itself in the emergence of the Canadian Dominion, was already in the 1850's plainly evident in the Methodist church. By the end of the decade there could be seen clearly in prospect a united Methodism which within a generation was to include in the scope of its efforts the entire area of British North America.¹⁴

The Founding of Victoria College

THE 1820'S WERE YEARS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FERMENT, which to any man of really conservative temperament must have presented a truly alarming prospect. Eighteenth-century concepts of education, rank, and property, of accepted privilege and constituted authority, were on trial and in many quarters were obviously fighting a losing battle. By the end of the decade England had repealed the Test and Corporation Acts, time-worn bulwarks of political stability, and was moving towards the cataclysm of the Reform Bill. In the United States the inauguration of Andrew Jackson as president, on March 4, 1829, seemed to one conservative observer "like the inundation of the northern barbarians into Rome". 'Jacksonian democracy', which certainly Old Hickory himself understood only in part, was in fact already well advanced towards a complete and exuberant triumph over aristocratic privilege. In education, no less clearly than in politics, democracy was having its way in the establishment of seminaries, state universities, and new systems of publicly supported schools. An unquestioning confidence in the inevitability of material and social progress was in the air, and with it went the gospel of self-improvement for the individual which has never in America lacked a variety of manifestations and prophets.

Upper Canada could not, if it had wished, have escaped the influences which were remoulding thought and shaping action elsewhere in the English-speaking world. Here too, eighteenth-century concepts of progress and privilege were on trial,

but, in sharp contrast with the United States, they were strongly entrenched.

The public life of the province, with all that that involved of material advantage, social prestige, and political power, was in the control of the minority which history has come to know as the family compact. With the ruling group in alliance with the Governor, conservative interests were, if anything, in a more secure position in the colony than in the mother land. There were, it is true, circumstances which in the long run would weigh heavily against them. The tide of immigration was rising and the influence of the frontier was bound to generate disruptive forces against minority control. But the scales were shrewdly balanced, and, in a province so diverse in population and in economic interests, the struggle was bound to be a bitter one.

In this struggle, education and religion would obviously play a great part, the more so as the Tory view was upheld by so determined and powerful a champion as the Rev. John Strachan. Strachan held sincerely that the place of religion in society must be guarded by a state church, fortified against successful attack or against indifference by ample endowment and by the official recognition of establishment. Higher education went, of necessity, hand in hand with religion; leaders in church and state must be trained even before the pressing problems of general education were solved.

In 1827, therefore, a charter was obtained for King's College; it was richly endowed and, although it was to be free from some of the exclusive restrictions of Oxford and Cambridge, the charter provided for effective control by the Church of England, both in teaching and administration. The genius of America seemed, it was true, to be against special privilege, but the reliance on voluntary effort Strachan believed was the weakness of religion in America, and that condition need not necessarily prevail in Canada. Had not the Canada Act of 1791 set aside a magnificent endowment in lands for the support of the Protestant Clergy? The term 'Protestant Clergy' was, unfortunately, ambiguous, but that difficulty might be swept away by determined action, to the great advantage of both the university and the Church of England.

In any clash between the concepts of men like Strachan and impulses springing from the Canadian environment, Methodism was certain to play a leading role. With other nonconformist groups it was subjected to disabilities and inequalities of privilege which were no less potent than economic and political grievances in stimulating the strength and bitterness of the reform movement. Methodism was by all odds the largest religious body in the province, having, in 1830, over 11,300 members and exerting a direct influence on perhaps one quarter of the entire population. It was spread throughout the province, was receiving large accessions of strength through immigration, and its camp-meetings and circuit-riders provided it with methods peculiarly adapted to the widening of its influence. Its zeal and numbers forced it into the forefront of political and religious discussion, but in some respects it was peculiarly vulnerable. It had come into the province from the United States, and until 1824 was under the New York Conference.

In 1828 the Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church became an independent body, but still the charge could be made, even if unjustly, that it was little better than republican and disloyal and was led by ranters of ignorant and undisciplined mind. Some defence, it is true, had been made by 1829. Three years earlier the twenty-three-year-old Egerton Ryerson had written his famous vindication against Archdeacon Strachan. Evidence in its favour had been presented to the imperial commission investigating the affairs of the Canadas in 1828 and had been embodied in the commission's monumental report. In 1829, however, the prospect of successfully establishing what Methodists felt to be their just claims to equality of treatment looked dark indeed.

Little wonder, then, that the conference of that year, feeling that nothing but courageous and even audacious action would suffice, made two momentous decisions: that it would, if possible, found an institution of learning, and that it would establish a newspaper for the defence and dissemination of its principles. Of these, the establishment of the journal was the more feasible and immediately necessary. The slender purses of the members of conference yielded a cash subscription. Egerton Ryerson was appointed editor, and on November 21, 1829,

there was presented to the public the first number of *The Christian Guardian*, which was destined, during the following decade, to be the most widely-circulated newspaper in Upper Canada.

The *Guardian* could be made, and was made, a success by one man of brilliant abilities, but the institution of learning was a problem of infinitely greater complexity and difficulty. The conference of 1829 felt itself unequal to the task. Yet if it could be managed, the establishment of such an institution would be a master-stroke, perhaps in the long run more potent in its permeating influence than even the *Guardian* itself. It would train leaders and teachers; it would provide a Canadian alternative to those who were being forced to seek an education in the United States; and in doing these things it would be an unanswerable argument against those detractors of Methodism who threw at its people and ministers charges of ignorance, republicanism, and disloyalty.

No question ever appealed more to Ryerson's enthusiasm and imagination than the problem of education. "*Religion, Education and Freedom* stand or fall together." "God stamped upon popular ignorance the seal of reprobation." With such sentiments he repeatedly came back to it and he was determined to make it an issue of supreme importance. "Education", he declared in his first editorial, "in every point of view must be considered of the highest importance . . . Like the Christian religion of which it is the handmaid it is designed for every human being"; and under the title 'The Evils of Ignorance' he quoted in the same first issue a description of the destiny towards which the human race seemed inevitably to be moving:

"In the representation of that glorious period, usually styled the Millennium, when religion shall universally prevail, it is mentioned as a conspicuous feature that *men shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased* . . . Every useful talent will be cultivated, . . . learning will amass her stores and genius emit her splendour."

Such Ryerson felt must be the faith of every forward-looking man; horizons were being pushed back in every direction, and a promised land of enlightenment and material progress was,

it seemed, about to break on the enraptured vision. Like multitudes of others, he responded with all the warmth of his sanguine nature. But he was no dreamer. Even if Upper Canada bristled with difficulties, Jerusalem must be builded there. In his second issue, he tells us of his visit to the semi-annual examinations of the Methodist Academy at Cazenovia, N.Y., and quotes in full an essay on the Greek Revolution by a fourteen-year-old student which "shows what the youthful mind is capable of when brought into judicious exercise". That twenty Canadian students were already there "speaks not much in favour of our present literary institutions in this province". Through the early months of 1830 in one leader after another he drove home the importance of education in its various aspects, its depressed condition in the province, and the need of capable teachers and of a thorough revision and extension of the whole system.

Already the question of forming a comprehensive policy was seriously before the public. In January, 1830, Upper Canada College opened its doors, and the Governor, in his speech from the throne, stressed its special importance, with the observation that in so widely scattered a population as that of Upper Canada, "a general efficiency in common schools cannot be expected". With this the Assembly agreed, but it declared, notwithstanding, that "while we are willing to support a college for instruction in the professions and in the higher branches of science, we feel it to be a primary and more imperative duty to provide for the general extension of the means of education among the people of every township". Of what kind, then, should the schools in the province be? What should be their aims? Whom should they serve? How should they be supported? Obviously these questions must be faced and, in a masterly editorial analysis, Ryerson outlined the principles on which Methodists proposed to stand. Upper Canada must mould its literary institutions not from examples either outworn or unsuited to the Canadian scene, but "in accordance with the local circumstances of its inhabitants". Education for Upper Canada "should be popular; it should not countenance any sectarian exclusion or supremacy". In the control of general schools there should not, as at present, be "a strong political bias . . . created

by an ecclesiastical dominancy", nor should there be discrimination in government support of schools created by religious denominations. "A partial distribution of public favours has long been the curse of some older countries." "Perhaps", wrote Ryerson, "there is no question pending before our Provincial Legislature and the Imperial Government on which so intense a feeling swells the bosoms of our fellow-subjects, as this."

By the spring of 1830, it was clear to Methodist leaders that the establishment of an academy must no longer be postponed, and the conference of that year set its hand to the task. A committee was appointed to choose a location and a constitution was drawn up. "This shall be purely a literary institution", it began, "no system of divinity shall be taught therein, but all students shall be free to embrace and pursue any religious creed and attend any place of worship which their parents or guardians may direct." On such broad nonsectarian principles an appeal was to be made not only to Methodists but to every friend of liberal views, and by November the subscription forms were on their way. Success was province-wide.

Among the most prized possessions of Victoria University are the original shabby little subscription books with their signatures of hundreds of people, all the way from the Ottawa to the Detroit River. Among the gifts were nine hundred acres of land. Comparatively few subscribed more than £10; only two as much as £100; the great majority gave small amounts, down even to 6d. and 3d. Town and country and the membership of every religious denomination were included, but the lists represented, more than anything else, the yeomanry of the province.

By September, 1831, it was reported to the conference that £4,000 had been promised. No other voluntary effort of the decade matched this first campaign for Upper Canada Academy in enthusiasm and effectiveness. On February 5, 1831, Cobourg, "one of the most beautiful, healthy, and flourishing villages in Upper Canada" was chosen as the location. By April, a site was donated by a resident of Cobourg, Mr. George Spencer, and in October the building committee, relying "on the honour and influence of the conference and the patronage of the public", contracted on its own responsibility for the erection of a building at an estimated cost of £4,000 to £5,000. When com-

pleted, it was the finest public building erected up to that time in the province.

The Governor and his allies offered little but cold silence, but even this had its value in strengthening the determination of voluntary effort.

“The clergy”, remarked the *Guardian*, “who would now monopolize the whole control of education, religion, and the legislature, did very little in respect to religion or education except to teach some District schools and preach in a few old settlements, for all which they were abundantly paid by the Government. . . . Such is the state of things . . . that if any except one denomination undertakes the noble task of diffusing education . . . they must compete with the Local Government itself, with all the weight of its influence and wealth . . . Is there equity, is there civil liberty in such a policy?”

But, it concluded, “solid and elevated literature will yet combine with pure and undefiled religion in this land, and honoured of God will be that people which shall first effect the combination”. In 1831 the Methodists seemed well on the road to achieving that distinction.

Meantime, however, behind the scenes, decisions were in the making which were to sweep the Methodists into the full current of a political and religious controversy, more bitter even than that through which they had been passing, and which were to bring the Academy, on more than one occasion during the next few years, within a hair's breadth of complete ruin. The first of these decisions was that which, in the summer of 1832, initiated a union with the British Wesleyan Methodists and the changing of the name Methodist Episcopal for the name Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada.

The British Wesleyan Connexion was probably the most conservative nonconformist body in England. Under the presiding genius of the Reverend Jabez Bunting, who at this time and for over a generation dominated its councils, it was ruled by a conference from which lay influence was excluded; it eschewed politics, taking a stand only on such matters as the abolition of slavery, accepted the establishment of the Church of

England quite willingly, and was looked on with favour by the ruling elements in Church and State as a wholesome influence against radicalism. Its missionary society was wealthy and zealous, and among its fields of action was Canada. In 1820 it had agreed with the Upper Canadian Methodists to confine its efforts to Lower Canada and, except for a chapel at Kingston, had withdrawn from the province.

Nothing more than a hint can here be given of the tangled negotiations and motives which led up to the momentous decision for union. In many respects there was little in common between the two brands of Methodism, the one with its camp-meeting methods and zeal, the other zealous too, in its own way, but perhaps a little mildewed with respectability. The arguments for the union were, however, solid and irresistible. The British Wesleyans had determined to enlarge their Canadian work and, in particular, to interest themselves in the Indian missions. Moreover, the authorities in Canada and Britain had requested this extension of their efforts to the upper province; they would be the best counterweight against the political radicalism of the Episcopal Methodists. Governor Colborne publicly made clear his views on this point at the end of 1831.

Early in 1832, also, the British Government gave the British Wesleyan Missionary committee £900 to be applied to the Indian mission, a subsidy which the Ryersons and their colleagues were to find a Pandora's box of troubles indeed. The Canadian Methodists did not, in 1831 and 1832, know all that had gone on behind the scenes, but they knew enough to realize that, if union were refused, bitter strife and the disruption of the Methodist societies in Upper Canada would almost certainly ensue. Moreover, there were in the union prospects of real advantage. It would, doubtless, bring sorely-needed support to missionary and educational enterprises, would make possible a more effective appeal to the rapidly growing numbers of British immigrants, and would be a final refutation of the charges of republicanism and disloyalty.

George Ryerson, it is true, had written from England, in 1831, a strong warning against entanglements with the British Wesleyans: "What Pope said of churchmen ('Is he a churchman; then he's fond of power') may also be literally applied to

Wesleyan ministers, and, I may add, to Englishmen generally—and our brethren cannot with pleasure see us exist in a *British Colony* independent of their control. My prayer is ‘May the Lord continue to save us from the government of an European priesthood!’ I have reason to know that they would gladly govern us, and for that purpose would not hesitate to afford pecuniary aid, but I still most heartily pray ‘*Good Lord deliver us!*’ ” In 1832, however, there was for the Canadian conference no alternative but to agree to the marriage and hope for the best.

The union shook the loyalty to their church of the Methodist laity throughout the province and indeed of some of the ministers. Few could know fully the compelling reasons which lay behind what looked like a *volte-face*. The British Wesleyans were certain to be anything but a strong influence in the cause of reform, and up to that time Canadian Methodism and reform had seemed nearly synonymous. True, every reformer in Upper Canada was not a Methodist, but certainly every Episcopal Methodist was a reformer.

The Methodists had taken the lead in the spring months of 1832 in circulating petitions to His Majesty against the monopoly of the clergy reserves by the Church of England and other pretensions, as the *Guardian* called them, to the position of a dominant and established church. Governor Colborne himself had singled out the Methodists as leaders in the reform camp in his famous and unjustifiable attack of December, 1831:

“A very unfavourable impression has been made from one end of the province to the other as regards an imputed secular interference on the part of your Preachers . . . Your Preachers, w h e t h e r they are brought from the United States, or any other foreign country, will, I hope, experience, while they act honestly and respect British institutions, the same protection and encouragement and freedom which all Americans enjoy who have found an asylum among us . . . The system of education which has produced the best and ablest men in the United Kingdom will not be abandoned here, to suit the limited views of the leaders of societies who perhaps have neither ex-

perience nor judgment to appreciate the value or advantages of a liberal education."

Ryerson had replied in the *Guardian* with a signed letter which, even if carefully reasoned, was none the less a slashing counter-attack, and to friends and supporters it seemed strange that he should now make common cause with a body whose conservatism was so notorious.

We cannot know fully what Ryerson's thoughts were in the critical days of 1832. The union was a necessity, that was clear. Clearly, too, there must be no compromise on the principles of religious and educational equality, but the numerous indications of growing violence and disorder throughout the province depressed him. For the ultraists, as he called them, of either side he had as always a profound distrust. He was convinced, too, that the tide of reform was swelling in England, and that Canadian Toryism could be defeated by a determined moderation and an unwavering insistence on justice which would appeal to liberal statesmanship in the old land. The King himself was, he declared, an ally of liberal statesmanship and an opponent of Toryism such as that which boasted its loyalty in Canada. In a lighter moment he quoted a contemporary who wondered whether His Majesty read the *Guardian*.

True, on the very day that the *Guardian* described the laying of the corner-stone in Cobourg, it carried also the news of the defeat of the Reform Bill in the House of Lords. "To what a deplorable condition will High Church Tory policy reduce a people! May its flood of evils be averted from Canada!" But his confidence was not shaken. The "pruning knife of reform" was cutting away the accumulated abuses of centuries, he declared, and within a month he could announce that the "Reform Bill may now be considered as part and parcel of the laws of England. That these great and progressive changes at home will exert a direct influence upon the institutions and popular interests of the colonies, Upper Canada in particular, does not admit of a moment's doubt. . . . The streams of uncorrupted truth and unrestricted education will yet flow through our land."

It was in this spirit, ready to hope for the best from the British Government as well as from the British Wesleyans, that

Ryerson embarked on his first mission to England in the spring of 1833. His aims were both ecclesiastical and political: to conclude arrangements with regard to the union; to commend the reform petition with its twenty thousand names to the British Government; and to promote the interests of the Academy by whatever means he found available. The English scene made a profound impression on him. Bunting and his colleagues were zealous and efficient. Towards Canada and the union they had no lack of kindly expressions of opinion at least. In the mercantile community there was an influential group with a keen interest in Canadian affairs, most conspicuous among them being the Honourable Edward Ellice, a prominent figure in the Hudson's Bay and Canada Companies and secretary for war in the British ministry. Ellice gave him £50 for the Academy and valuable introductions to the Colonial Office. Lord Goderich, the colonial secretary, and Lord Stanley, his successor, received him in a friendly manner. He was appalled, however, by the impressions about Canadian Methodism and the aims of Canadian reformers which he found in the Colonial Office and among Englishmen in general.

Scarcely less positive, and as the future was to show, no less important was the unfavourable opinion he speedily formed of Joseph Hume, M.P. Hume was the confidant of William Lyon Mackenzie, and the chief channel for the presentation of the Canadian reformers' arguments and claims to the English government and public. To the British Wesleyans his views on religion and slavery made him suspect, nor did it require much insight on Ryerson's part to discern that he was not highly regarded by men like Stanley and Ellice. In Ryerson's first interview with Stanley he not only corrected Stanley's mistaken impression as to the Methodists, but he made it clear that he had no intimate connection with Hume. His interview with Stanley was typical of the success with which he then and later approached men of affairs. It could scarcely be otherwise when to determination, tact, and shrewdness was added the mastery of the relevant documents with which he invariably armed himself.

Ryerson had barely returned from England when his break with the radical wing of the reform party was made complete.

As to whether he intended it so, opinions might differ. As to the fact and its consequences for Methodism and the Academy, there can be no question. The same month, October, 1833, which saw the formal ratification by the Methodist Conference of the articles of union, brought in the *Guardian* the first of Ryerson's 'Impressions' of England, with its sledge-hammer attack on English Radicals, and Hume in particular. Scarcely was the ink on the *Guardian* presses dry when Mackenzie, in a white-hot editorial, branded Ryerson as an apostate and a traitor.

These editorial thunder-claps reverberated from one end of the province to the other and in a month the reform party was irretrievably split into two bitterly warring camps. By January the *Guardian* was charging the Mackenzie radicals with revolutionary intentions, and when in May it published Hume's 'baneful domination letter', addressed to Mackenzie, it was able to use Hume's words as an open invitation to rebellion. Immediately Ryerson saw his advantage. Hume might, he wrote, be sincere but he misjudged completely the temper of the Canadian people, and neither he nor his friends had a right to advocate sedition. Throughout the summer of 1834 and the following winter the struggle went on with ever increasing bitterness. During these months Methodism was shaken to its foundations. Among the radical leaders were former prominent Methodist laymen, and from the ministers, beset on every side by questioning congregations, Ryerson during the first half of 1834 received a barrage of criticism, including that of his own brother William. He faced the storm with typical determination and in the *Guardian*, which lost in a few months nearly two hundred subscribers, and in private letters, he defended the consistency of his principles and actions.

In June he won a vindication from the conference, although only after a bitter debate. Gradually, in spite of some serious defections, the Methodist ranks were closed behind him. By July, 1834, also, the breach with Colborne had been healed and the Methodists as a body were committed to that uncomfortable position midway between ultra-Radicals and ultra-Tories which, in spite of some fluctuations, they were destined to hold during the next few troubled years.

On the Academy, more than on any other Methodist interest, fell the full weight of embarrassment and loss. "What," asked the *Cobourg Reformer*, "is to become of the Cobourg Seminary which from corner to top-stone was built with the money of the reformers?" Unfortunately, the money of the reformers was by no means all paid. In May, 1834, the *Guardian* announced that the building was to be ready in the autumn. By December it was to be in a few months, unless operations were forced to cease from lack of funds. Some slight encouragement there might be from new-found friends; Colborne, for example gave £10 and Strachan £5. But the enthusiasm of voluntary effort had spent itself and something more was needed. In March, 1835, a petition to the Assembly for incorporation and aid was heavily defeated. The real answer to the petition was the famous radical manifesto, the 'Seventh Report on Grievances', which added insult to injury by attacking the Methodists as a state-supported church because they had received the grant of £900 in 1832. At the moment it helped little to point out that the grant was given to the British Wesleyan Missionary Committee by the British Government for the Indian work and that the Canadian ministers had nothing to do with either getting it or spending it.

If the Academy was to be completed, nothing remained but to secure a charter and financial aid from the British Government. Colborne himself favoured this step and offered to support a petition to the King on behalf of his loyal and sorely beset Methodist subjects in Upper Canada. The situation was, in fact, desperate; the deficit was stated to be over £2,000, actually it soon proved to be over £4,000. Everything must be staked on the appeal to the throne and the English public. Only one man had much chance of success in such a venture and so, in November, 1835, Ryerson reluctantly, yet recognizing the necessity of the case, set out on his second mission to England. He was, as it proved, to be absent for over eighteen months and when he returned in June, 1837, it was to find the province on the verge of the rebellion against which he had sounded a warning.

Ryerson's activities in England present for a paper such as this an embarrassment of riches. His intimate conferences with

public and commercial leaders, such as Glenelg, Gladstone, and Ellice, and his analysis of Canadian affairs in the columns of *The Times*, which was reprinted and distributed to a wide circle, including every member of both Houses of Parliament, give the story a place of central importance in the Canadian political history of the period. It is to the Academy, however, that attention must be confined, and even here little more than a hurried summary can be given.

A distressing delay of almost a month in gaining a hearing from Glenelg was finally rewarded by a friendly reception. Ryerson also soon found two staunch allies in positions of influence, Ellice, to whom he appealed with warm thanks for his assistance three years earlier, and Sir George Grey, Glenelg's under-secretary, whose interest in the Indian missions gave Ryerson an important point of contact. At Grey's suggestion, on February 12 he presented to Glenelg in writing his request for a royal charter, a grant of £4,000, an endowment of lands, and an annual grant of £300 for five or six years.

His memorandum of over three thousand words contained all of persuasion and argument that he could put into it. He reviewed the aims and character of the Academy, the exertions of its supporters, the embarrassments of its trustees, and the encouragement that had been received from men like Lord Goderich, Colborne, and Ellice. Upper Canada College, he pointed out, had been amply endowed, but while it served the "professions and higher classes" it conferred "no immediate benefit upon the youth of the common classes", two hundred of whom, he stated, had gone in the past eight years to seminaries in the United States.

He urged the hopelessness of appealing at the moment to the legislature of the province, and shrewdly suggested that assistance to the Academy would win a wide-spread approval which might not be without its value in view of "the comparative powerlessness of His Majesty's Government of Upper Canada in respect to means of popular influence." Against the financial appeal Glenelg was adamant. Warmly as he approved of the Academy, and on this he left no doubt, he would not in view of the political situation in the colony interfere with the

considered policy of the government against making appropriation from the funds of the Crown without the approval of the provincial legislature. Even when Ryerson, at the suggestion and with the strong support of Ellice, urgently reopened the question three weeks later, the reply was the same.

The charter, however, was a different matter. Glenelg apparently did favour it and referred Ryerson's draft to the law officers of the Crown. Here there were the inevitable delays of legal negotiation, all the more irritating since a loan could not be raised without the charter as evidence of the government's approval. But eventually, on April 13, an opinion was received favourable on all but two points; that the trustees were not named and that the Canadian Methodist conference, as a body, was not recognized in law as having any separate existence.

This brought from Ryerson another of what one might term his state papers. In a closely knit legal argument, with the citation of imperial and provincial statutes and other evidence, he demonstrated that His Majesty's law officers were, in fact, mistaken as to the legal status of the Methodist church, and suggested alterations in wording to meet the objections which had been raised. In some ways this was one of the most remarkable, if least noticed, of his many triumphs. Ryerson had just passed his thirty-third birthday, and he had had little of formal education. His argument was written in the midst of worry and pressing responsibilities and he had to rely largely on his memory for some essential points, the documents on which were unobtainable. With the law officers he insisted successfully also on the use of the phrase, 'Methodist Church', rather than 'Methodist Connexion', the term commonly applied to the Methodists in England.

The point was significant for more reasons than he cared to reveal. The charge that the Ryersons had 'sold out' to the British Wesleyans had gone from one end of the province to the other in 1832-33, and the use of 'connexion' rather than church would still have the most unfortunate implications. Policy not less than his own inclinations demanded that he should guard at every point the distinctive qualities and rights of Canadian Methodism, even though a union had been made with the British Conference.

It is interesting to note that in the draft of the charter, the proposed name is not Upper Canada Academy, but Upper Canada Wesleyan Academy. There is no record of any discussion on this point even in Ryerson's marginal comments, but without doubt he opposed it because such an alteration in the name adopted by the Conference in 1830 would have had disastrous results.

The discussion of legal details consumed many weeks. On June 3, the draft, approaching at last its final form, was sent to Glenelg, accompanied by another long and urgent but fruitless request for financial aid, and on July 12, Ryerson was informed that the royal assent had been given and that the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Francis Head, was to be directed to pass the charter as approved, "under the public seal of the province of Upper Canada". The letters patent formally granting the charter, as finally promulgated, bore the date of October 12, 1836.

The obtaining of the charter, important as it was, did little, however, to relieve the financial difficulty. The true state of affairs was, in fact, much worse than Ryerson had understood when he came to England. For almost a year every letter from Canada was to bring embarrassing revelations and distressing appeals.

"Everything," wrote his brother John, in May, 1836, less than two months before the opening of the Academy, "depends on your success. £4,000 is the least that will answer . . . O!! How awfully we have got involved in this most painful and protracted business. O! if you can help us out of this mire, the Lord reward you." Worst of all there had been serious extravagance and lack of judgment. For this the Rev. William Lord was primarily responsible. Lord had come from England in 1834 to be president of the conference and as such had great influence in the management of the Academy enterprise. He was energetic and well-intentioned but prone to assume the grand manner, and against the advice and remonstrances of his committee he had exceeded the appropriations of the conference, declaring that he would, if necessary beg the money in England and that "John Bull never stopped when he commenced a thing". From Canada, and later from England, Lord

proceeded to write letters intended, if in a somewhat peculiar way, to sustain Ryerson's spirits.

On February 1, 1836, he wrote from Montreal, "It is now sink or swim," but added, "Let nothing discourage you." By August, with the Academy already opened in the midst of its embarrassments, he was in England. "Do not borrow, if possible," he wrote, "beg, beg, beg it all." And a little later when the Canadian committee drew on him and Ryerson for £600, he explained that he "cannot join in the responsibility of the bills, as to do so after what has taken place would completely ruin my character in the estimation of my brethren . . . You must, however, be encouraged and be resolved to get the money."

Obviously, the Rev. Mr. Lord was muddling through, but scarcely with the equanimity for which John Bull is commonly supposed to be distinguished. Little wonder that John Ryerson, commenting upon the disappointments arising out of the union, and in particular upon Mr. Lord, wrote to Egerton on January 2, 1837, "Be sure to bring no more English preachers with you."

The months of collecting, with their constant round of interviews, meetings, and the sending of letters and circulars, were a nightmare to Ryerson, as his diary repeatedly shows: "Bradford, October 10—The time I am here appears very dreary. . . . I have collected £83 last week and for much of it I have begged very hard—though some think that I do not beg hard enough. It is, however, only one who has been a stranger and has had to beg who can appreciate the feelings and embarrassments of a stranger in such circumstances."

He got, at any rate, a liberal education in the English scene—Birmingham, Sheffield, Wakefield, and so forth—and some insight into the habits and attitudes of various classes of English society. Aristocrats he found were often out. Churchmen and public men he usually found wary. Sir Robert Peel pleaded in excuse his "non-connection with Upper Canada". The Wesleyan leaders were full of good wishes and some of them gave him something. The Rev. Jabez Bunting delicately expressed his solicitude in guineas rather than pounds, but the number was only one. From Thomas Farmer, lay treasurer of the Wes-

leyan Missionary Society, Ryerson got at a critical moment a most welcome loan of £800. Occasionally, there were gleams of encouragement. From the Duchess of Kent he received £10 and a cordial letter.

From the merchants interested in Canada he got more than from any other group. They warmly appreciated his letters to *The Times*, and seemed often to have a breadth of view lacking in other quarters. "Education", remarked a gentleman of the house of Thomas Wilson and Company, with his gift of 10 guineas, "was the same thing throughout the world, and that was the light in which this institution should be viewed." The Canada Company, the Barings, and other names familiar to students of Canadian history appear on the list of contributors. Sometimes, apparently, he got advice as well as help. "Above all things," warned Mr. A. Gillespie, Jr., handing him £10 and a list of names of merchants engaged in trade with the Canadas, "keep out Socinianism." Try as he would, the results seemed but a drop in the bucket. The net total for over a year of unceasing effort was in fact just under £600.

As the winter of 1836-7 wore on, it seemed that there might at last, with Glenelg's warm recommendation to the Governor, be hope of obtaining something from the Canadian legislature. The attempt was being made by the radicals to discourage the payment of subscriptions on the ground that the Academy had been changed to a religious institution, operated in the interests of the Wesleyan Methodists alone. Strong support both in and out of the Assembly could, however, be counted on. A petition for aid was presented and referred to a select committee of three, two of whom, William H. Draper and Henry Ruttan, were members of the Church of England. Nothing could have been more favourable than the report of this committee submitted to the Assembly on February 9. Reviewing the history and aims of the enterprise and the character and courses of instruction, it recommended a generous grant, and declared that the erection of the seminary was "the greatest undertaking hitherto successfully prosecuted in Upper Canada by voluntary contributions alone".

A week of bitter debate ensued, the radical opposition being led by two former Methodists, Parke and Morrison. Using

what the *Guardian* called "the envenomed shafts of slander and wilful misrepresentation", they charged the Academy with sectarianism, and brought up once more the £900 grant for missionary purposes in 1832 as proof that the Methodist Conference was a state-subsidized body. Their amendments were defeated by large majorities but they did succeed in having the proposed grant changed to a loan to be amply secured and repaid in ten years. The decision was a bitter disappointment and certainly less than generous, but the *Guardian* and its readers were wholly unprepared for the sequel. The partisan Legislative Council, in the face of Glenelg's recommendation and the opinion of the chief justice, John Beverley Robinson, so amended the bill as to render the immediate provision even for a loan impossible.

Once more the Methodists and their Academy were caught in the cross-fire between ultra-Tories and ultra-Radicals. The only compensation for this bitter disappointment was that a wave of indignation throughout the province gave new life to the campaign for subscriptions. A circular addressed to the superintendents of circuits urged that they should, if possible, obtain an average of 2/6 from each member. Letters poured into the *Guardian* and once again the lists of contributors began to appear in its columns. And yet, however welcome this enthusiasm was, it could not meet the situation. Something more was needed.

The news of the bill's defeat reached Ryerson when he was at last on the point of leaving for Canada. No expedient was now left except a final appeal to Glenelg to reverse his twice-repeated refusal. On April 18, Ryerson wrote his letter to the colonial secretary, on the 20th he had his interview, and on the 28th he left for Canada, a written assurance of £4,100 from the provincial treasury in his pocket.

For the moment, the financial crisis was passed; but one more episode was still to be written into the long catalogue of financial misadventures. None of the money was obtained until November, and then only one half was paid over. In December, Receiver-General Dunn lent £1,200 from his own pocket on John Ryerson's personal receipt, with the remark

that he could place no dependence upon the word of the Governor in the matter.

Soon, indeed, it became plain that Sir Francis was by no means unwilling to embarrass the Academy still further if he could. For reasons which need not here be elaborated, Ryerson, in spite of his remarkable services to the cause of loyalty, had gained the Governor's enmity. The rebellion had just been crushed and Sir Francis was riding on the crest of the wave. In January, 1838, when pressed for the remainder of the money, he finally declared that he had been misled by Ryerson into thinking that the money was intended as a grant; that he now believed it was to be a loan and that he could do nothing further than place the entire matter before the legislature. Probably no colonial governor ever received a more scorching criticism than was contained in Ryerson's reply to this astonishing pronouncement. Nothing, he wrote to a friend, had so agitated him in years.

On February 21, the matter came before the Assembly and in spite of its Tory character, "not a man in the Assembly would risk his reputation in defence of the conduct of the Governor in this affair." The twenty-four hour rule was laid aside so that Ryerson's petition and statement might be immediately received; two hundred copies of it were ordered printed, and on the following day an address to the Governor requested that the money be paid. The victory was sensational but the episode had been a nasty one. "Tories, Radicals, and the Governor", Ryerson wrote, "have each had their turn at us. I hope we may now be allowed to live in peace."

Meanwhile, on Saturday, June 18, 1836, while to use the *Guardian's* phrase, "nature seemed to smile propitiously", the opening ceremonies of the Academy had taken place "in the presence of a large and respectable audience." The keys were handed over by the architect, Mr. Crane, to the Rev. Anson Green, chairman of the district; the principal, the Rev. Matthew Richey, was formally invested and delivered an address which for "correctness of sentiment, chasteness of style, elegance of diction, and gracefulness of delivery, has, we venture to say, never been excelled, perhaps not equalled, in the province." "Some appropriate pieces of sacred harmony were most admir-

ably performed" by Mr. Mark Burnham and his choir from Port Hope, and to this accompaniment of music and oratory the Academy was launched upon "its career of anticipated usefulness".

Many a Victoria graduate has read with amusement the 'bye-laws' which had been drawn up for the regulation of conduct. They were no laughing matter in 1836. To bed at 9, up at 5, in winter an hour later. Unseemly conduct in many specified forms such as "loud speaking, whistling or laughing within doors" is forbidden; fighting or wrestling being among the "grosser violations of this law". "Permission will be very rarely granted to any to spend the evening out" and "none without permission are at liberty to go to the village or take excursions in the neighbourhood". "The front of the edifice is appropriated as a place of exercise for the females—the rear and playground for the males. And more effectively to preclude all inter-communication between the sexes, their corresponding, conversing, or, in any way associating together, save in the case of brothers and sisters, (and that by permission of the principal or preceptress) is expressly interdicted." High thinking, plain living, and a due regard for the proprieties were clearly to be the order of the day, not least in the 'female department' under the experienced eye of the preceptress, Mrs. Smith.

"I was highly pleased," wrote an observer to the *Guardian*, "with the order and regularity observable in the dining-hall . . . It is furnished with two long ranges of tables, one for the gentlemen, the other for the young ladies. When the appointed hour of meals arrives, at the ringing of the bell the young ladies proceed, accompanied by their teachers, to the table, after which another bell calls together the young gentlemen. After grace has been said, one of the young gentlemen is employed in reading aloud from some useful history or other interesting work. After thanks have been returned, the young ladies retire to their apartments, and then the gentlemen." Little wonder that the president of conference, the Rev. Mr. Harvard, was able to report that "in going through the premises . . . it has been truly gladdening to behold so many cheerful yet chastened countenances". Other days, other ways; and doubtless to both

students and teachers, a century ago, it all seemed natural enough.

In June, 1837, and again in 1838, we read that the public examinations had passed off most creditably. In the approved manner of the day, classes which "elicited ample evidence of respectable proficiency" were conducted morning and afternoon before admiring visitors and friends, and in the evening a feast of orations which would dismay the less resolute audiences of our day was consumed "with unmingled satisfaction" by "the respectable assemblage". The class in astronomy "was listened to with indications of peculiar interest and satisfaction; the young ladies"—for apparently astronomy was considered a subject especially suited to the 'female department'—"evinced that they had applied themselves with more than ordinary assiduity and enthusiasm to the cultivation of a science, which, from the grandeur of the ideas which it unfolds, is so eminently fitted to enlarge the faculties of the mind. Nor could anyone be surprised to hear the principal intimate, as this interesting class retired, that the young ladies were frequently taken from their books on fine evenings to decipher the same lessons emblazoned in the volume of nature."

In spite of many reasons for encouragement, things were not, however, going well. The government grant had been swallowed up by debts. Upper Canada College and King's College had been given generous public aid, but the Academy, as one writer put it, himself braving the perils of the mixed metaphor, "has been left unaided to buffet the waves of mountainous difficulties and discouragements." Withdrawal of students and other misfortunes had resulted from the severe economic depression and from the Rebellion, which, as the Managing Committee stated in its first report, had "produced . . . a paralysis in the public mind." Little else could be expected, the *Guardian* observed, "as long as the inquiries continue, 'What will be the result of past disturbances? What will be done for the country? How will our institutions be settled? Will we again enjoy peace and prosperity?'" But it had hopes of better things. Lord Durham, it announced in the next column, was already in Upper Canada.

Internal difficulties in the Academy's administration also

became acute in 1837 and 1838. The principal, the Rev. Matthew Richey, one of the British Wesleyan group, was a sincere and well-intentioned man, noted for a flowery kind of eloquence, but his lack of tact and his inflated ideas on some matters made it difficult for him to adjust himself. "Richey", John Ryerson wrote, in his explosive, highly-coloured style, "flounces at some of our rules for the Academy, especially that he is not to have the handling of the money and that no servant is allowed him extra. I very much wish Richey out of the institution; if he is not, I am quite satisfied that he will ruin the institution or else ruin us . . . Nothing is more evident than that Richey looks down upon the board and conference with contempt, and he is not backward to let them know it."

Finally, it appears that the riot act had to be read to the principal, for in March, 1838, the Rev. Anson Green, the treasurer, wrote to Ryerson that "there is a wonderful change in Mr. Richey. He is as tame as a lamb and is really bringing up his end wonderfully. Had he done so from the commencement, he would have saved us at least £1,000 . . . Indeed, I think he now does the very best he can. He sees we can do without him and fears the consequences of a dismissal under such circumstances." By the spring of 1840 conditions were somewhat improved, attendance had increased, and there was an atmosphere of hope. Indeed, the acting principal, Jesse Hurlburt, drew an idyllic picture of the student body: "All are peacefully and diligently pursuing their various studies with the ardour and innocent mirth so natural to the youthful mind, when first exercised on new and engaging subjects."

By that time, however, a new era had opened in the province and it was apparent that something more than an academy was needed to meet the challenge of a rapidly widening opportunity. In November, 1839, the newly appointed Governor-General, Charles Poulett Thomson, later Lord Sydenham, arrived from England, and the province turned from the bitter memories of 1837 and 1838 with a new spirit which was nowhere more apparent than in the field of education. After years of acrimonious debate, university instruction was, in fact, about to begin. King's College, with its endowments, its council, its president, and its spacious pleasure grounds, needed, the *Guard-*

ian remarked, but three things, professors, students and buildings. But its charter, granted in 1827, had been amended in 1837 and its long period of, shall we say, incubation, was now drawing to a close. Queen's University was being launched with vigour. Still without buildings or students, it was, according to announcement in November, 1839, soon to have two professors. The Roman Catholics also had obtained a charter for a college.

If Upper Canada Academy was to hold the place to which its endeavours thus far entitled it, it must secure an amended charter, and the public aid which alone could enable it to acquire the equipment and staff necessary for an advanced curriculum. Someone must also be placed in control who could be counted on to impart fresh energy and commend the institution to the government and the public.

As usual, the conference turned to Ryerson, and in the session of 1840 he was appointed principal. Over a year of uncertainty was to elapse, however, before he could take over his duties. In 1838, he passed through the bitterest period of political controversy in his entire career. For many weeks he seriously contemplated leaving Upper Canada permanently. Only the impending disruption of the union with the British Wesleyans and the new spirit of hope in the province deterred him. The union issue, with all that it involved, he felt it his duty to see through to its conclusion, and with that he was occupied for over a year. With Sydenham, who had been warned by his predecessor that Ryerson was a 'dangerous man', he was soon on terms of confidence, and the Governor gave his whole-hearted support to the plans for the transformation of the Academy. On August 27, 1841, after passing both Houses un-animously, the bill amending the charter became law and on September 18, as one of his last public acts only a day before his death, the Governor signed the order for the payment of the grant which had been voted from the public funds.

To Ryerson the college presented a challenge. His imagination was stirred by its opportunity for exerting a far-reaching influence and by the need of working out methods and aims adapted distinctively to the Canadian environment. With his customary energy and enthusiasm, he seized upon the task, and

on June 21, 1842, he set forth his views in an inaugural address which was one of the finest pronouncements on the problems of higher education ever presented to the Canadian public. And so after more than a decade of vicissitudes truly characteristic of the Canadian scene, we may perhaps conclude that the foundations of Victoria College had been well and truly laid.

The Durham Report and the Upper Canadian Scene

“THE INHABITANTS OF UPPER CANADA,” WROTE LORD DURHAM, “have apparently no unity of interest or opinion.” This observation, ordinary enough at first glance, reveals one of those flashes of insight which in Durham’s characteristic fashion redeem his *Report* from much that is open to question. In every community there must be developed in the long run some commonly understood ‘rules-of-the-game’, some recognized elements of cohesion. In looking at Upper Canada in the 1830’s one feels that here as yet there had scarcely been developed even those mutual assumptions which are necessary to make opponents understandable to each other. Durham attributed this condition chiefly to geography and lack of communications. The population, strung out in irregular settlements from the Ottawa to the Detroit river was, as he said, “scattered along an extensive frontier”.

“The Province has no great centre with which all the separate parts are connected, and which they are accustomed to follow in sentiment and action; nor is there that habitual intercourse between the inhabitants of different parts of the country, which, by diffusing through all a knowledge of the opinions and interests of each, makes a people one and united, in spite of extent of territory and dispersion of population. Instead of this, there are many petty local cen-

tres, the sentiments and the interests (or at least what are fancied to be so) of which, are distinct and perhaps opposed."

To lack of geographical unity there had been added the serious effects of an extreme diversity in the origins and characteristics of the pioneer settlers. The early loyalist groups had been followed into the province before 1812 by thousands of eager landseekers who formed part of the westward movement flooding through upper New York and the Ohio country. They came into Upper Canada mainly for the purpose of securing cheap, good land, and they were apparently quite willing to make any political affiliation, monarchical or republican, which seemed necessary to that end. By 1812 they bade fair to change the character, perhaps even the allegiance, of the province.

Following the peace in 1815 there was some reversal of these alarming Americanizing tendencies. Americans still continued to come in, but there began to appear in larger numbers individuals and groups who were the forerunners of the later swarm of immigrants coming direct from the British Isles. In spite of common geographic origin and citizenship, they were a variegated lot, all the way from the half-pay officer with his Tory and military tradition to the low-born and impecunious labourer. By 1830 the province was a veritable patch-work of settlements with little intercourse and, more important, with little that was common in points of view or attitudes of mind. The first five years of the decade intensified this condition of diversity by a sharp rise in immigration. The population which by official returns (certainly an under-estimate) in 1830 was 211,567, increased by over 130,000 in five years.

In several districts, and these incidentally among the most turbulent in the rebellion period, the increase was over, or almost, one hundred per cent. Among the newcomers the Irish appeared in considerable numbers and their presence, to say the least, did little to promote an atmosphere of sweet tranquility. Differences were sharpened not only by the rapid increase in population but by a no less rapid development of the agencies for organizing and arousing public opinion—the churches, newspapers, and not least the Orange Order which established itself as a powerful influence in the politics of the

province during these years.¹⁵ Rhode Island has been called by American historians the colony of the otherwise minded. Certainly none among the provinces of British North America could claim, in the 1830's, the dubious distinction of having more varieties of otherwise-minded people than Upper Canada.

In the best of circumstances this raw frontier province, and such it was at the beginning of the decade, would have suffered some pains in digesting an over-ambitious meal of incompatible elements, but the difficulties were immeasurably increased by acute economic and religious conflicts which revealed themselves in an increasingly bitter political strife. In none of these aspects, economic, religious, or political was the situation in the province a simple one. In the economic sphere we are reminded of the conflicts during the same years in the United States.

In Upper Canadian controversies over land, internal improvements, tariffs, credit and banking, there were strong evidences of a surging agrarian discontent against the forces of monopoly, strikingly similar to the discontent which provided so much of the driving power behind Jacksonian democracy in the United States. The average settler in Upper Canada was faced from the moment he entered the province not only with the comparatively high price of land but with red-tape and favouritism rampant in high quarters; in short, with all the evils of a defective land policy and administration.

Once on his land the settler found himself with little that he could market, and that little weighed down by costs of transportation and the profits exacted by a rising and ambitious commercial and financial interest. But the forces of agrarianism were divided. What those in one place wanted was not necessarily a matter of concern to those even a short distance away. Indeed, the individual settler might be divided in his own views. He wanted a route to tidewater and the oversea market, for example; but he also wanted a road to his door, and he was often ready to suspect those who would, in the name of the public interest, tie up the resources of the province in gigantic enterprises such as the building of canals which could only too easily be made the means of fattening the pocket-books of politicians, contractors, and middle men. So the province was economically not divided with complete clarity either by sectional or class

interests. This confusion of cross-currents was intensified by the uncertainties of a colonial system approaching its collapse and by the devastating effects of the depression of 1836-7.

The religious scene was no less marked by ferment and division than was the economic.¹⁶ Several new groups were added during the early years of the decade so that the province by 1835 had the Church of England and Roman Catholic groups, four brands of Presbyterians, two from Scotland and two from the United States, four of Methodists, also with affiliations American and British, two of Baptists, as well as Quakers, Congregationalists, Universalists, and Tunkers. Competition for members in the rapidly growing population was intense and effort was unremitting; the Methodist saddle-bag preacher has, with good reason, become almost a symbol of the zeal of the period but his enthusiasm was catching, and by the middle of the decade even the Church of England was adapting itself to the Canadian scene by modifying its methods. The society of Upper Canada was at the moment in a fluid condition, as intelligent leaders both in church and state could see; and, when it set, the rewards would surely be to those who had earned them by energy and determination.

This diversity of religious groups was destined to be of great importance in the cultural development of the province, but the immediate implications of the situation were almost more important politically than culturally. Nowhere, was there a sharper conflict between British and American influences than in the field of religion, and added to this was the complicating element of that apple of discord, the clergy reserves.

Had some evil genius attempted to produce a device calculated to bedevil every contentious issue in the province he could scarcely have done better than the clergy reserves. They touched economic questions in their relation to land, taxation, and roads; they complicated the thorny set of problems which centred around the question of education, and which would have been difficult enough in any case. They elicited a flood of arguments over the relative merits of the principle of state support of religion on the one hand which was damned by its opponents as a most potent means of devitalizing and enslaving true religion, and the voluntary principle on the other, which

was damned by its opponents as an American device for promoting infidelity and materialism. The clergy reserves were probably the most bitter, certainly the most continuous, cause of dispute in the politics of the decade.

The political scene must, of necessity, be suggested even more briefly than the economic and religious. Here we have the spectacle, by no means an unfamiliar one in the story of British colonial America, of the dominance of a minority precariously maintained through a working alliance with the governors who followed each other through the little provincial cock-pit. The family compact, as it came to be known in the early 1830's, was not so closely knit either in personnel or common interest as the name suggests, but it did nevertheless maintain a clearly discernible position of special privilege, economic and social, while politically it was powerful enough to maintain not only an undisputed monopoly of the executive and legislative councils but also a majority or a very powerful opposition in the elected assembly. Political and constitutional practices and machinery thus lent strong aid to the conservative interests entrenched in Upper Canada in 1830.

But, it may be fairly asked at this point, was there anything really distinctive about the situation in Upper Canada in the early 1830's? All the elements may, broadly speaking, be duplicated by looking at other English-speaking communities in North America, either in the 1830's or in a not very remote prior period. The effects of rapid growth, and much diversity in racial and religious groups, can, for example, be seen in the American states, and in particular in the new frontier states. Agrarian discontent, economic depression, and demands for an adequate system of public education were far from unknown elsewhere than in Upper Canada.

As for religious establishment or special privilege, several of the American colonies had had it and in New England a shadow of it persisted to this very period. The attack on minority rule was even more common. The growing pains accompanying the early development of democracy were being felt with varying degrees of severity on both sides of the Atlantic—in the American states, in Nova Scotia and other British colonies, and even in the United Kingdom itself. What then, if anything, was

unusual about the situation in Upper Canada? The answer is that perhaps no other American community had so many elements of difficulty concentrated with such intensity in a short period. Here, if anywhere, is to be found the unique quality in the Upper Canadian scene. Let me make one or two further suggestions with regard to it.

In the new western states which had the problems of a frontier society and rapidly growing population, the attack on special privilege was not on a class established within the state, but on the west as a section, against the east. The individual western state lacked, therefore, the turbulence resulting from serious internal class conflict. In the older eastern states where the struggle against minority privilege did appear during these years the issue was comparatively a simpler one than in Upper Canada, lacking, in particular, a complicating element as difficult as the clergy reserves and centring around such questions as the revision of the state constitution or the elimination of property qualifications for voting or holding office.

Moreover, the conflict was not confined within a short space of time as in Upper Canada. The first stage of the battle had, in fact, in these states, been won in the days of the American Revolution when extensive internal reform accompanied the struggle for independence. The conflicts following 1815 were, therefore, essentially rear-guard actions. The conservatives in the eastern states, in sharp contrast to those in Upper Canada, were also by implication put on the defensive by the philosophy of the Declaration of Independence, and the bills of rights in the various constitutions—a philosophy firmly embedded in the American mind and forming a common pattern for political thinking throughout the Union.

The family compact in Upper Canada was, on the other hand, certainly fighting no rear-guard action. We have been too much accustomed to think that by the 1820's the privileges, position, and personnel of the family compact were clearly defined and that reformers then began attacks on a system which was firmly established. The fact is that the period after 1815 was marked by the extension rather than the mere defence of special privilege. Various illustrations might be found, but the most important lay in the field of religious rivalry, and espe-

cially in the determined plans of the colony's ablest politician, the Reverend John Strachan.

In spite of weaknesses in his own position, Strachan's aim was nothing less than to make the Church of England the most powerful influence in the political, religious, and cultural life of the province by insisting on the full recognition of the Church of England's priority and privilege at a time when opposition to exclusive privileges was rising even in England. From Strachan's point of view the privileges claimed were expressly stated or clearly implied in the Constitutional Act and in the example of English society. They had never been fully defined or enjoyed, but the fact that they had, to a great extent, lain dormant for thirty years or more was no argument against their validity. It was, on the contrary, the most compelling proof of the necessity of unremitting action.

To transplant a system of ecclesiastical privilege at so late a date when all the tendencies of the American environment had for years been flooding in the opposite direction was an utter impossibility, but no suspicion of failure daunted Strachan. A greatly increased and amply endowed clergy, a carefully controlled university, and no less carefully controlled district school system extended in answer to the growing need for lower education, a dominating influence in the executive and legislative councils through friends and former pupils, a powerful pressure through Church of England influence on the colonial office and parliament in England¹⁷—these were the means which he felt could be, and which indeed in part, were, fitted together into a system of practical politics as cleverly conceived and tenaciously pursued as any in the history of colonial America.

The measure of Strachan's ability is not his failure, but the record of his years of struggle and the indelible impression which he left on the province through the religious and educational institutions for whose growth he was chiefly responsible. It is little wonder that his aims and actions aroused extraordinary bitterness in the 1830's. He did not have for so extreme a programme even the support of all members and adherents of the Church of England; as for his opponents, he differed from them utterly in his fundamental assumptions on the rights of the Church of England and the application of English prece-

dents to the Canadian scene. In their eyes his action and policy were not defensive, but were defiantly aggressive attacks to create what they claimed the province had never had—an ecclesiastical domination.

The religious struggle, and through it the whole struggle over minority rights and privileges in Upper Canada, was thus embittered by uncertainties. It was not the struggle of a new conception of society against one which had been accepted. It was a struggle between opposing groups, each trying desperately to fortify and defend a contention which had never been clearly established in the province.

At this point it is well to remember another and most important element in the Upper Canadian scene—the divisions in the so-called Reform party. This consideration has also been too much neglected in traditional views of the period, although it is fundamental to an understanding of what happened. So divided were the opponents of the family compact after 1833 that it is almost a misnomer to speak of the Reform party. Of these divisions the split between Mackenzie and the Methodists was by all odds the most important example. Radical and reform groups have an unhappy way of falling out with one another but there is no more extreme example in the history of British colonial America than the bitter quarrel between Mackenzie, and the Methodists led by Egerton Ryerson.

Up to 1833 the reform forces must have appeared to most of the rank and file fairly clearly united both in principle and action. When, therefore, Ryerson published, in October, 1833, the first of his "Impressions made by our late visit to England", with its bitter attack on Hume, who was Mackenzie's main support in the British parliament and was regarded as the chief representative of the reform cause of Upper Canada in the mother country, the shock came like a thunderbolt on the whole Reform party in the colony. From that moment until the rebellion the enmity between Conservatives and Reformers was if anything outmatched by the bitterness between Mackenzie and the Wesleyan Methodists.

Ryerson did not reveal fully his reasons for precipitating the quarrel in 1833, but there can be little question as to his underlying motives. Hume was disliked and mistrusted by the Wes-

leyan connection in England, with whom the Methodists in Upper Canada had just united. In view of the rapidly rising immigration from England, as well as the recent association with the American Methodists which brought oft-repeated charges of disloyalty, the Methodists of Upper Canada had far more to gain than to lose by a clear break with so dubious an ally as Hume. Ryerson, like a number of other acute observers, believed that with the passing of the Reform Bill in England the tide was running irresistibly in the direction of a more liberal colonial policy, and he was convinced that the destiny of Canada lay with the solid men of liberal views who were rising to power in England.

Nothing could be more certain—and Durham's contribution to the Canadian problem provides a striking proof of the correctness of the view—than that the cause of Canadian reform, if it ever was to succeed, had to rise above the level set for it in English public life by second-rate men like Hume and Roebuck. The splitting of the Reform party in 1833 is thus understandable on the basis of principle and broad considerations of public policy, even though all the implications may not have been clear at the moment.

Among conservatives also there was by no means complete unity in policy and action, but the divisions in the Reform party were chiefly responsible for the complexity in the political scene which certainly, if one may judge by his description of the parties in Upper Canada, Lord Durham himself was far from understanding. In every period of crisis, the great body of those holding 'middle-of-the-road' views are forced at last if the issue reaches an impasse, to choose between one or other of the extremes, not because they agree at all points with the allies forced on them by circumstance, but because their choice is the lesser of two evils. So it was in Upper Canada in the period just before and during the rebellion, and to this 'middle-of-the-road' group must go the credit in the long run for saving the situation.

When every just tribute has been paid to Mackenzie's broad human sympathies and his fearless disregard of his own personal interests in the cause which he believed right, it still remains true that he contributed little that was constructive to the solu-

tion of the Canadian problem. Among Canadian historical legends few die harder than that which suggests that Mackenzie and his followers alone stood for the cause of reform. A failure to understand and make clear the animosities within the reform movement is largely responsible for this misconception.

With acute divisions of opinion and with a faulty political and administrative system operating in the special interest of a minority, it is little wonder that some observers felt a spirit of frustration and bitterness pervading the province. Upper Canada, an "unhappy and mismanaged but most magnificent country," wrote Mrs. Jameson in describing the province just before the rebellion, "appeared to me loyal in spirit but resentful and repining under the sense of injury."

"There is among all parties a general tone of complaint and discontent, a mutual distrust, a languor and supineness, the cause of which I cannot, as yet, understand. Even those who are enthusiastically British . . . are as discontented as the rest.

"Toronto is like a fourth or fifth-rate provincial town, with the pretensions of a capital city. We have here a petty colonial oligarchy, a self-constituted aristocracy, based upon nothing real nor upon anything imaginary, and we have all the mutual jealousy and fear and petty gossip, and mutual meddling and mean rivalry, which are common in a small society of which the members are well known to each other, a society composed, like all societies, of many heterogeneous particles, but as these circulate within very confined limits, there is no getting out of the way of what one most dislikes. . . . There reigns here a hateful, factious spirit in political matters, but, for the present, no public or patriotic feeling, no recognition of general or generous principles of policy; as yet I have met with none of these; Canada is a colony, not a *country*; it is not yet identified with the dearest affections and associations, remembrances and hopes of its inhabitants . . . but a few more generations must change all this."

In her reference to Canada's colonial status, Mrs. Jameson unquestionably put her finger on another, and one of the most potent, causes of difficulty and complication in the Canadian scene. Upper Canada was not, of course, unique in this matter, but in no colony was the question of loyalty to the British connection ever used with a more unscrupulous disregard of the principles of fair play and good policy than it was in Upper Canada in the 1830's. For this the family compact and Tory elements must bear the chief burden of odium. It was they who in season and out tried to establish the contention that loyalty and the maintenance of their own special interests were one and the same thing. They were indeed more loyal than the British government itself, for while they pounced on any criticism of the British government or British institutions by their opponents as scarcely less than treasonable, they reserved to themselves the right of free criticism, and even of committing lawless acts in the name of law and order, burnt British ministers in effigy on occasion, and even seemed to suggest at times that the occupant of the throne itself was not wholly above suspicion.

The history of the concept of loyalty would form one of the most important contributions to the story of the development of Canadian attitudes, for attempts to claim loyalty as the prerequisite of a particular group or set of individuals and to deny equal privilege of opinion to others have been known ever since the 1830's, and when that history comes to be written one important chapter at least will be given to Upper Canada one hundred years ago.

It has been remarked above that in Upper Canada there was no common political philosophy, or pattern of thought, such as was provided in the United States by well-known affirmations like those in the Declaration of Independence, the bills of rights, and Washington's Farewell Address. In one sense this generalization requires qualification, for the practices of British parliamentary government, the principles of British constitutional liberty, and the examples of British institutions formed a political creed to which everybody at one time or another gave at least lip service. But what were these practices, principles, and examples? With England herself going through a political

revolution the solid rock of British precedents became nothing more than shifting sand.

The problem of deciding what were British sentiments and British actions was, of course, simple for some. Sir Allan McNab, or a Church of England rector, for example, needed to do nothing more than be themselves. For others, the question was not so easy. Ryerson, for instance, and no one, not even Mackenzie, wrote more voluminously on the politics of the decade, wrestled with the problem of loyalty over and over again. He was concerned not merely with Canada's relation to the United Kingdom, but with the whole problem of the obligations of the citizen to both religion and the state, and with the constitutional rights of the British subject to freedom of speech and action. In his first editorial, that of October 8, 1831, his signed statement on Christian loyalty in May, 1838, and on numerous other critical occasions, he came back to the problem, citing references and opinions from Locke, Blackstone, Paley, Adam Clark, Richard Watson, John Wesley, and others.

Copious extracts from these writers seem like pretty strong meat for newspaper readers, but apparently subscribers to the *Christian Guardian* could 'take it'—in any case, they got it. That his authorities were almost exclusively British is a point of significance, for although it was tactically wise for him not to go to others he would probably not have done so in any case, and he had a powerful influence in shaping the tendencies of political thought in the province.

Nor can we afford in this connection to forget the trivialities. When Peter Jones, the famous Indian preacher, told an Upper Canadian missionary meeting how he had met the young queen and how graciously she had received him, and was greeted, as the report puts it, by deafening applause, it is quite clear that certain attitudes and emotions were being firmly embedded in the Upper Canadian mentality. Whether or not these processes of political education were the most desirable ones is beside the point. They went on just the same and with far-reaching results, for north of the lakes there were being created patterns of political thinking different from those of either England or the United States. They were the Canadian

amalgam of influences from both sides of the Atlantic and they are among the fundamental elements in the Canadian point of view to our own day.

Of all the complications rooted in the imperial connection none was more productive of animosity than the interminable process of appeal to England for the support of contending opinions, or for the settlement of thorny problems. The necessity of appeal to a distant third party is, of course, inseparable from any colonial system, but for Upper Canada the importance of these appeals was greatly increased by the even balance of forces in the province. Had the third party been His Majesty's government, one and indivisible, the situation would have been much simpler. As it was in the 1830's, however, any colonial leader, displeased with the British government, could console himself with the hope that His Majesty's ministers might be replaced tomorrow by men of sounder, that is more agreeable, views. And meanwhile there was the possibility of influencing members of parliament or individuals and groups of special importance.

So we see an unending procession of pushful individuals and bulging mail-bags trooping back and forth across the Atlantic—Strachan with his bishops and S.P.G.; Mackenzie with Hume and his Radicals; Ryerson with his new-found friends among the Evangelicals, both clerical and mercantile; Baldwin as always with a touch of aloof respectability seeing the right people; the governors and their staffs, and many others of lesser note, all enveloped in a kind of blizzard of innumerable official dispatches and private letters. Little wonder that decisions were delayed, hope was deferred when sometimes it should have been killed, lost causes were prolonged, and a resort to violence in the end was encouraged.

This is not to argue that the imperial connection should not have been there. To do so is as futile as to assert that a sick man should be well or a short one tall. Neither should it be implied that an enumeration of the difficulties inherent in the imperial connection should be allowed to pass as a fair estimate of it. But the fact remains that the problems of administration and the tangled concepts of loyalty which were

involved in them provided one of the most serious elements in the complications of the Canadian scene.

Into this situation of divided interests and conflicting aims there was already creeping in the early 1830's a spirit of violence that boded ill for the future. Elections were marked by ugly incidents of mob action, and the expulsions of Mackenzie from the legislature showed that essentially lawless attitudes utterly incompatible with the principles of British parliamentary government were actuating men who occupied positions of responsibility and should have known better. The Tories, who later heaped on Mackenzie all the odium of rebellion took an equal, if not indeed a major share, in initiating the appeal to violence. Men of moderate views, both conservative and liberal, many of them deeply convinced of the need of change, were profoundly alarmed. There was perhaps less open evidence of turbulence in the months immediately preceding the rebellion, but this was merely the calm before the storm.

So, with the elements of political, religious, and economic conflict balancing and counter-balancing uncertainly against each other, with an attitude of narrow inflexibility in high Tory circles, with a Reform party hopelessly divided, and with a governor whose genius in doing the wrong thing has been so often described that it needs no mention here, Upper Canada drifted into the rebellion. Traditional views seem often to have suggested that the rebellion was a complication following a situation which up to that time had been the comparatively simple one of a struggle between reform and reaction. The truth is almost exactly the reverse.

The outbreak of war always temporarily simplifies the issue and the rebellion cut like a knife through the confusion which had preceded it. Governor Head armed to the teeth and chasing a rather pathetic rag-tag army of farmers up Yonge Street may seem to us to have about him an irresistible touch of comic opera, but there was no such feeling in 1837. For the moment and for the first time since peace in 1815 had ended a three years' struggle against invasion and conquest, there seemed to be only one issue in Upper Canada and only two sides between which to choose.

The rebellion, however, settled none of the points of real conflict. The apparent clarifying of the issue was a deception and in this respect the only unusual thing about the crisis was the speed with which people woke up to that fact. The aftermath, like the conditions which preceded Head's dishonest and short-lived triumph, are therefore the points of real interest here, and in the aftermath the dominant and alarming tendency was the drift once more towards confusion and strife with the old complex lines of contention changed less than one might imagine, but with the spirit of bitterness immeasurably increased.

By January, 1839, on the eve of the publication of Durham's *Report* this process of degeneration was rapidly approaching the point of an impasse, if anything more serious than that which it had reached in 1837. The development of this disheartening condition cannot, of course, be examined here in detail, but its chief reasons may be suggested. They were, in addition to the effects of serious economic depression at least three in number: the reassertion of the principles and claims of the family compact and the re-emergence of opposition to them led this time not by extremists who had gone into rebellion, but by men who had loyally supported the government; the atmosphere of violence created by measures of repression, by sporadic acts of lawlessness committed by desperate enemies of the government, and by the threat of foreign invasion; and finally, the questioning and uncertainty throughout the province as to what the policy of the British government was to be.

The strife between reform and conservative elements made its re-emergence in confused if unmistakable fashion almost immediately. Head's egotism and vindictiveness in his hour of victory gave pause even to some of his conservative supporters. Within a few weeks he had lost the confidence of the great mass of moderate Reformers who had rallied around him. His recall came by March, but it made little difference, and by early spring the treason trials and executions had thrown a pall over the province. Tory papers were urging the death or deportation of everyone prominent in the rebellion; counter-revolu-

tion was in full swing and thousands were planning to leave the province.*

Any questioning of this policy of reaction to which the governor lent at least his passive support might be made the basis of a charge of disloyalty. With reckless self-confidence the Tories were prepared to repudiate those middle-of-the-road Reformers whose numbers and loyalty had alone made Mackenzie's defeat possible. By May, Ryerson, the most notable victim of this outrageously short-sighted ingratitude, was being called a sneaking Jesuit and a rebel.

To find a focus for the sense of bitter disillusionment, the latent resentment, spreading through the province was not easy. As before the rebellion, no one issue was broad enough to unite all reform elements, but as one might have predicted the issue of the clergy reserves and the fifty-seven rectories came nearest to it and the Tories themselves were responsible for initiating once more the bitter strife over religious privilege. The time seemed ripe at last for the settlement of the question to the advantage of the Church of England.

The method was made clear in February, when the proposal was made that the provincial legislature re-invest the lands in the Crown. This would remove the question from the province where, even in the period of reaction the issue would be in doubt, to the British parliament where it was expected that heavy pressure could be exerted by Tory influence. There were evidences of great activity behind the scenes—the preparation of petitions in England and Canada, and the influence of the bishops in the House of Lords, urging the protection of what was termed the established church in Upper Canada. The proposal for re-investment was cleverly designed to win for the Church of England all and perhaps more than it could hope for in any other way, while on the surface it had an appearance of impartiality which was almost certain to divide the opposition to Church of England claims.

This in fact is precisely what it did, especially in the Presbyterian and Wesleyan Methodist churches. Leaders in the

* A. S. Longley, "Emigration and the Crisis of 1837 in Upper Canada", *Canadian Historical Review*, XVII, March, 1936.

Methodist church viewed the situation with growing alarm. They felt themselves tied hand and foot by the certainty of charges of disloyalty, if they raised any question against official policy; and it appeared that a struggle which had been carried on by Reformers for years might be settled against them in the end without even a battle. The only hope was to get Ryerson back into the *Guardian* as editor, and to re-open the warfare of controversy whatever the consequences. A minority of conservative, and especially of English, elements in the Methodist conference, were against it but they were over-ridden.

On May 9 the *Guardian* published a slashing letter from Ryerson on Christian loyalty, defending the right of the citizen to free speech and constitutional opposition to government. It was the opening gun in a campaign that soon broadened through the province far beyond Methodist ranks and went on for months. In May also under the quickly penetrated disguise of "United Empire Loyalist" came Ryerson's courageous denunciation of Bidwell's expulsion from the province by Head. By June Ryerson was back in the *Guardian*, denouncing both Mackenzie and Head and trying as before the rebellion to hold the difficult middle ground of loyalty and moderate reform.

In issue after issue he fought the assertion that the church establishment was the truest bulwark against rebellion, American radical democracy, and other bogeys which Tory papers like the *Church* and the *Cobourg Star* were describing to their readers. In September he began his "Letters to Draper", which ran for weeks in a detailed argument of every aspect of the clergy reserves question.

It must not, however, be thought from these references to Ryerson that the Methodists alone agitated the question. The *Guardian* had strong allies in the press of the province. Other religious groups gave some support to the Church of England but for the most part they were overwhelmingly in opposition. By January of 1839 the province was torn with dissension over the clergy reserves question as bitterly as it had ever been and both sides were dangerously near the encouragement of violent measures.

Petitions and counter-petitions were being circulated and intimidation of individuals was being reported. The continued suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act still raised the question as to the legality of free discussion and the Church of England organ, the *Church*, charged its opponents with "fanning the flame of political excitement, undermining the principles of subordination, and seeking to confound all distinction and all order in the general calamity of revolution and anarchy." "The high principled, the religious, the Conservative people of England will soon testify that their transatlantic fellow-subjects and fellow Christians are not to be recklessly abandoned either to bandits and plunderers on the one hand, or to *Anabaptists* and *Infidels* on the other."

"This raising the torch of discord will have fatal consequences," declared Hincks's *Examiner*, condemning the Tory policy of reaction, and in a long editorial in the first issue of January, 1839, Ryerson drew a parallel between the situation in Upper Canada and the attempt of Charles I just two hundred years before to force an alien ecclesiastical system on the people of Scotland. The famous Covenant, he pointed out, had been maintained at the point of the sword.

"It is avowed as a principle of Scotch Presbyterianism" he wrote, quoting the *Presbyterian Christian Examiner*, "to employ the sword in the defence of the rights of conscience, as well as in the defence of the principles of constitutional liberty.

"In every contest which has ever taken place between tyranny and civil liberty, ecclesiastical state officers have been invariably, with some rare exceptions, arrayed on the side of despotism. Thus it was in the reign of Charles I—thus it is at this day. When public opinion is too strong to admit of the establishment and maintenance, in the ordinary exercise of Executive influence, of such an ecclesiastical regime, then either a military is called in to its aid—as has long been the case in Ireland— . . . or, the whole hierarchy and civil power are resisted and overthrown, as was the case in Scotland; and, as it has

been predicted these ten years will be the case in Canada."

The province was in fact, on the eve of the reception of Lord Durham's *Report*, as nearly in a state of deadlock over the religious issue as it could be. This was the chief focus for the struggle between reform and reaction and yet it was not, as I have suggested, a broad enough issue to rally around it all the forces for reform latent in the province. The balance was so even that an explosion, or at least a prolonged and bitter struggle, seemed inevitable.

During this time news and rumours of violence, bloodshed, and invasion from the United States were flying thick about the province. We have been too much inclined to overlook the fact that the outbreak in December of 1837 was only one of a series of risings, conspiracies, and lawless acts which kept the public mind of the province in a state of war-time alarm for months. The more closely one examines local history the clearer it becomes that during the whole rebellion period large parts of the province were seething with discontent and apprehension and that each area had its own special causes of disturbance, all of which merge into the general picture.

The risings near London and in the Shorthills district, the destruction of the *Caroline*, the burning of the *Sir Robert Peel*, the invasion at Prescott, the plots of Hunters' Lodges in New York, Ohio, and Michigan, the piratical career of the schooner *Ann* which was loaded with arms, apparently taken with official connivance out of an arsenal in Detroit, and which went up and down the Canadian shore firing pot-shots at Amherstburg until she was boarded by the loyal militia of Essex and Kent, who had rushed in to save the situation and for whom the ladies of the district immediately began embroidering flags—all these may look like petty episodes in our age of really effective destruction, but they were not petty episodes in 1838-9.

Texas, it was argued, had just been taken away from Mexico by methods which respectable people even in the United States denounced, and events seemed to point at Canada as the next victim. Reformer and conservative alike rallied to the support of the government in repelling invasion, and putting down

lawlessness. But the Tories as usual tried to turn the loyalty argument to their own advantage. Reform leaders were said to be plotting with the rebels in the United States. Radical reform democracy and all the evils of mob rule, according to papers like the *Patriot*, were threatening the peace of the world and it was clear that Canada stood, fortunately with the British navy behind her, in the very path of the monster. The red menace of American democracy must be crushed. To quote various issues of the Toronto *Patriot* of 1838:

“Let British Capitalists pause ere they slumber in the security of imagined wealth, invested in the chaotic abyss of MOB LAW. A long and dreary night of Egyptian darkness is coming over the Institutions of the United States. . . . Be assured our worthy countrymen that ‘*American Securities*’ ARE NO SECURITIES AT ALL. . . . Will England suffer herself to be cheated out of the Canadas as Mexico was bullied out of Texas. . . . We guess not.”

As for compensation for the *Caroline*, a stout-hearted correspondent wrote, “I’d see the Yankees hanged first! I’d see every mother’s son of them hanged as high as Haman first! I’d plumply tell them that.”

“WAR IS INEVITABLE: and Heaven forgive us! if we say wrong in saying that IT IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY TO THE FUTURE PEACE OF THE WORLD. . . . War is one of the greatest evils which ‘flesh is heir to’, but we consider it as wanting much of being the greatest evil, which horrid eminence we give to mob rule, or, as the ‘*starving thousands*’ of *sovereigns* would say, to ‘PURE DEMOCRACY’. To this Hydra must all the nations of the Earth bow, if Great Britain be not strong enough to lay it prostrate. We have therefore but the choice of two evils, WAR or SUBJUGATION TO THE MOB; what man of sense will not choose the *least*? The 11th, 72nd, 81st, and 93rd Regiments are all coming out immediately, besides others from the West Indies. They are all coming in ships of war. We shall lack neither armies nor navies to inflict

ample vengeance for any insults or injuries we may sustain from any quarter whatever. . . . By this time all necessary information is at home, and we hope Joseph Hume has been seized as a traitor."

Emotions were in fact too strong for mere prose, as some extracts from the *Patriot's* column headed 'Original Poetry' will make painfully clear:

Canadians lo! a pirate bark
 Her blood stain'd banner waves,
 The ruthless spoiler stalks from forth
 Yon Godless land of slaves.
 Brothers again the bugle horn
 Pours forth its startling glee—
 Again we rally round our Queen
 Fair Lady of the Sea.

Again the hour of peril comes—
 The booming gun is heard,
 The star of glory lights us on,
 Victoria is the word,
 We wear no chains but those of love,
 The fetters of the free—
 Hurra! for Britain's Queen of Hearts—
 Fair Lady of the Sea.

Now Uncle Jonathan be wise,
 And of yourself take care, Sir,
 For each Canadian loudly cries,
 Invade us if you dare, Sir.

Our flag has braved a thousand years,
 The breeze and battle too, Sir,
 It conquered on Trafalgar's wave
 And plains of Waterloo, Sir.

No slave shall ever breathe our air,
 No Lynch laws e'er shall bind us;
 So keep your Yankee mobs at home,
 For Britons still you'll find us.

Yet foes are around thee, Fair Maid of the Ocean!
 The Eagle's broad pinions expand;—
 Like a bird of ill omen, it aids the commotion
 Of Billows, that break on our strand.

Yes, attitudes were being formed in Upper Canada in the 1830's, and, in spite of changes, they still have here and there a startlingly familiar look.

Behind these exaggerated outbursts lay a wide-spread sense of bitterness, frustration, and hopelessness, and to this the questioning as to British policy added all that it could of complication and embarrassment. For a short time Durham's appointment and work in Canada appeared to offer a clue to the future, but Durham himself was deeply entangled in British politics and the uncertainties of his position were well known. Reformers of all groups naturally had hailed his appointment with enthusiasm and supported him loyally. His policy, they declared, would mean public improvements, revived prosperity, and reform.

The Tories showed at first some hesitation to criticize the Queen's representative but this soon wore off and with the announcement of Durham's policy of pardon their inhibitions completely disappeared.

"Whatever the Tories may have lost, [declared the *Patriot*, August 31, 1838], it is plain THEY HAVE NOT LOST THEIR HONOUR. We wish England may be able to say as much when she loses her North American Colonies. . . . We would be glad if Her Majesty would be graciously pleased to send some of her steam-ships to convey away her friends that they may at least be out of the reach of the rifles, daggers, and bowie-knives of the murderous lurking dogs that are turned loose upon them. . . . Indeed every horrid villain that has best helped to stain and pollute with deadliest crime our little historic page is SAFE.—Safe quotha—ay HONoured. . . . All we call for now is plenty of steam-ships to carry away the friends of Queen Victoria and of her toppling Crown to some *terra incognita*, whence, when Melbourne and Glen-

elg are thrown upon the shelf, they may be brought back to resuscitate her honour, re-fix her topsy-turvy throne, put a strait-jacket on Mercy-run-mad, reconstruct the defences of England's chief outwork, drive back the Yankee revolutionary Jacobins, re-establish order, maintain the last refuge of civil and religious liberty, and perpetuate the renown of the British Empire."

The cloud under which Durham departed added to the feelings of confidence on the Tory side and the fears of defeat on the other, and brought a dangerous flareup of animosities. The Tory press was jubilant and members of the British Whig ministry were burned in effigy in Toronto. Durham's arrival in England and his treatment by friend and foe were followed in detail, each party trying to read into the story what assurance it could. The *Church* quoted *The Times* epithet, "The Lord High Seditious", and predicted Durham's ruin. "This arrogant and shallow nobleman will only be remembered by future generations in Canada for the mischief he has done."

All this bitterness, uncertainty, and confusion of thought was at its height when Durham's *Report* was on the high seas one hundred years ago. It reached Upper Canada, as it did the English public, through the press. A London newspaper *via* New York was handed immediately on its arrival in Toronto to Ryerson by a friend, and on April 6, just over two months after the *Report* had been signed, the *Christian Guardian* scored a 'hot scoop' by presenting to its readers the first extracts under the heading, "Late and Important News from London." These extracts were, it is perhaps needless to remark, on Governor Head, the treatment of the reformers since the rebellion and the clergy reserves.

"For simple elegance of style [wrote Ryerson], clearness of statement, lucidness of exposition, cogency of argument, and comprehensiveness of investigation, this Report far exceeds any document of the kind that we ever read. It will form a new era in British Colonial government, and will doubtless become a text book of colonial polity both at home and throughout these provinces, if not in all the depend-

encies of Great Britain. It is all that the most enthusiastic friend of the Canadas could desire, and more than we had ventured to anticipate. . . .”

What had happened was clear—the issue had at last arrived on which every Reformer in the province could be united. What the clergy reserves, the grievances over land and education, the conflicts about loyalty, and all the other issues over which Reformers and Tories had argued at cross-purposes for years had been unable to do, the *Report* did at one stroke. Like the rebellion, it cut for the moment through confusion and uncertainty and forced men to take sides on what seemed like a clear question.

Tribute has been paid to Baldwin and rightly so, for his priority in urging responsible government and to Durham for his magnificent contribution in making Canadian reform an issue of high public policy in both Britain and Canada, but too little attention has been given to the rank and file of reform groups who with their leaders had been fighting in the trenches of bitter controversy for years, each defending its own little segment and sometimes firing at other Reformers as furiously as at opponents. Their united support was now as decisive as it had been two years before. They had shown that without their aid rebellion could not be forced successfully on the province in 1837. And it was equally clear that without them reform could not have been carried in the province in 1839, even had the English government desired to make the attempt.

As fast as the means of communication could accomplish it, the issue was placed before the province. In the assembly, a motion commending the *Report* was lost, 12-23, and a detailed attack on the *Report* was drawn up by Attorney-General Hagerman.

“Is not the *Report*,” he asked in the house, “repugnant to the feelings of the people of this Province, and particularly to every loyal man who is determined to see our connection with the parent State cemented. Are they to say that the members of this house were elected by corruption? If the matter in his Lordship’s Report is correct, they were. . . . No man who has a spark of honour within his

breast, but would declare that the charges relating to the late election, as contained in the Report, are as false and as slanderous as the Report itself. . . . If his Lordship's Report were true, then he would say that this was a country in which no honest man could reside, a country in which no emigrant would settle. Is it true, what his Lordship said, that the people of Upper Canada are mean and despicable; that they live in log huts; that the members of this house were returned by the corrupt influence of the Government. No; no man would say it was true; and the house, instead of sanctioning such falsehoods, ought to shudder at the bare contemplation of them. The Report does not contain ten lines of truth. With regard to the responsible government, if it were to be conducted in the way proposed by his Lordship, what kind of justice could we expect?"

He viewed the Report as a deliberate and sweeping denunciation against every man in the country. Within a month the papers throughout the province were clearly taking sides:*

"The general test" [the *British Colonist* declared of the next election], "will be the principles laid down in Lord Durham's Report. . . . The tide has already flown so much in favour of the Report, that no effort, no matter by whom made, will induce the people to relinquish the idea of supporting it."

"Lord Durham's plan" [said the *Kingston Upper Canada Herald*], "is *English*, and directly tends to raise a nation of equal and prosperous freemen; the plan of his opponents is *Russian*, and directly tends to produce a few arrogant, insufferable nobles, and a multitude of wretched, insulted slaves. People of Upper Canada, which do you choose?"

"Lord Durham's report" [wrote Ryerson, in the

* The quotations from provincial papers on this and the following pages are taken from issues of the *Christian Guardian* between May 29 and August 21, 1839. The *Guardian* for many months printed a valuable column of press opinions from papers of varying views.

Guardian of July 17], "forms a rallying point for hitherto differing parties—a centre of attraction for the collection and adhesion of scattered and otherwise uncongenial particles. . . . Divisions and party spirit have been the bane of the province—are the source of our weakness, and the prelude of greater evils if not arrested. Lord Durham's report presents a British constitutional monarchy, even in a colony, in an aspect so inviting as to captivate the affections of the dissatisfied republican—to revive the desponding hopes of the loyalist (whether merchant, farmer or tradesman, whose business has declined and property depreciated fifty or an hundred per cent in value under the present withering system)—to lower the tone of the 'irresponsible' and tyrannical incumbent of office, and humble the pretensions of the haughty aristocrat, and restore confidence to the community at large . . . thus producing, in a few short months, an unanimity of opinion and feeling to a greater extent throughout the province than has existed for many years, or than now exists either in England or in the United States on any great public question. Such was the avowed intention and such are the effects of Lord Durham's lucid expositions and irresistible reasoning."

By June the Durham meetings were beginning and they continued up to the arrival of Poulett Thomson, the new governor, early in November. The Reformers began to plan for organized demonstrations throughout the province in order to stiffen support of Durham's policy in England.

"Lord Durham has done his part . . ." [urged the *Hamilton Journal*]. "It is the active support of the people of Upper Canada which is now required, to enable the ministry to act. On the one side of the minister's table is Lord Durham's report—on the other, are the impudent documents, said to be the Reports of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly—in front, *sits His Honour the Chief Justice*—and see, there enters, with pompous stride, *the new*

made Bishop; the mitre is lowered and, with well directed bows, the *Ex-Archdeacon* takes his seat—these are the Representatives of the ‘compact system’! WHO REPRESENTS THE PEOPLE? *Who?* an echo answers *Who!* People of Upper Canada! represent yourselves . . . rally in support of your principles, . . . assure the Imperial Government that you are ready to accept in sincerity and faithfulness a British Government, on British principles. . . .”

Tory extremists displayed no less violent emotion. The *Church* warned that carrying out Durham’s recommendations on responsible government “cannot but end in Rebellion.” The ‘Durham flag’, with the words ‘Lord Durham’ on one side and ‘4th of July’ on the other was being hoisted, it was rumoured, at reform meetings. Sheriffs in some places tried to deny the right of assembly, and in other cases men, even in official position, participated in violent measures to break up reform demonstrations. The *Cobourg Star*, whose editor was a captain of militia and a magistrate, wrote with regard to the Cobourg meeting which was broken up and ended in a riot:

“Should any more of these *Durham* flags be hoisted in any other quarter of the Province,—we trust there are British arms enough to level them to the ground and to drive the rebels from the field. Men may talk as they please about constitutional rights and the liberty of the subject, and say it is better to treat such demonstrations of disloyalty with silent contempt. We hold a different opinion. . . . It is the duty of the Sheriff, with the *posse comitatus* of the District, to put down these *Durham* meetings: and even the people themselves to do so without any warrant from the authorities—for rebellion must not be allowed to show itself unresisted for a moment.”

Governor Arthur, who was in a difficult position, adopted the anomalous policy of deploring agitation while at the same time leaving unpunished those who committed lawless acts in the name of the preservation of order and established institutions. By autumn the situation was rapidly getting out of hand and in fact the most disgraceful scene of violence, resulting in

the death of one and the injury of a number, was a meeting just outside Toronto on the eve of Thomson's arrival. The tide was, however, swinging definitely in favour of reform during the summer and autumn. One of the most interesting and significant decisions was that of the Grand Lodge of the Orange Order of British North America which at its annual meeting in July voted unanimously for responsible government. In October the *Christian Guardian* published a list of newspapers showing sixteen for the *Report*, ten against, and four as yet undecided. Except in the period of rebellion so clear cut a division of opinion was unprecedented.

During these months the words 'responsible government' became a battle cry. "How ridiculous," some cynic may be tempted to remark, "nobody knew its meaning." Of course not. The full implications of a revolution can never be known at the moment but the central point was clear enough in 1839 for any voter in the province. Durham's recommendations meant a liberalizing of colonial policy and an end of family compact domination within the colony. Exactly what they meant beyond that the future would determine. Newspaper editors, who always seem to feel under some necessity of appearing omniscient, explained 'responsible government' of course with a great show of precision. To the Peterborough *Backwoodsman*, for example, the thing was as plain as a pike staff:

"The Ultra Tories advocate the 'Canadian' constitution as trumped up, explained, perverted, and executed by themselves with all the arbitrary tyranny and Star Chamber power which characterized the house of Stuart and government of England previous to the Revolution [of 1688], while the friends of Responsible Government advocate the 'British' Constitution, taking for their basis the people's interest as declared in the Bill of Rights and secured by the act of settlement."

English constitutional history became in fact for a moment a most popular subject. The Toronto *Examiner* affirmed that:

"Before the Revolution of 1688, . . . the country [England] was almost constantly in a state of anarchy, with little if any security either for life or property.

. . . Since the revolution, the government has been worked in perfect harmony, and there have been few instances of impeachment, none of the execution of ministers. To what is this different state of things to be ascribed? We answer,—since the revolution the Crown has selected advisers acceptable to the representatives of the people.”

Tory papers tried to embarrass Reformers by demanding that they be explicit. How, asked the *Quebec Gazette*, could Egerton Ryerson explain his support of responsible government now and his opposition to it only three years earlier? It was obvious that the *Quebec Gazette* did not know either responsible government or Ryerson, for he rounded that corner, if one may use the vernacular, on two wheels and without turning a hair. In fact, he really did better than that for he proved that there was no corner at all and never had been one. American and radical examples, he declared that he had always abhorred and that his record proved it, but:

“We never did oppose the ‘responsible government’ we now advocate. . . . What does his Lordship propose then? Lord Durham, except in the case of the union of the Canadas, proposes not the alteration of a single letter of the established Constitution; he proposes nothing more or less than that the people of Upper Canada, within the defined and secure limits of local legislation and government, should be governed, as in England, by the *men*, as well as *institutions*, of their choice. Hence, the *Quebec Gazette*, and all others whom it may concern, will not find it difficult to understand how the Editor of the *Guardian* and thousands of the staunchest constitutionalists in Upper Canada could oppose the ‘responsible government’ of Mackenzie, Papineau, and their associates, in 1835 and 1836, and can, without any change of political principles, advocate Lord Durham’s ‘responsible government’ of 1839.” [*Christian Guardian*, June 5, 1839]

Thus, when Poulett Thomson came to Upper Canada in November of 1839, the ranks of Reformers were closed as they

had not been in the history of the province, certainly as they had not been since 1832. To the usual welcoming addresses presented along the way, some of which made pointed references to responsible government, Thomson gave appreciative but vague replies. "We learn," said the Tory *Patriot* of Toronto "that the Responsibilities, headed by Messrs. Hincks and company, are already in ecstasies at what they call the promising tone of His Excellency's reply to the Corporation Address. For our part we see nothing in the reply calculated to alarm the Conservative public."

The Reformers were on the whole confident. Thomson's close relations with Durham were well known as were his knowledge of commerce and his advocacy of the civil and religious privileges of dissenting groups in England. Some misgivings there were. Union with Lower Canada was an unwelcome necessity which promised no great good to the reform cause and Thomson himself was an unknown quantity. A lengthy discussion of Poulett Thomson and his views was quoted from the *London Colonial Gazette* by the *Christian Guardian* of Oct. 16, 1839. "Wise purposes may be acquired from others; decision of purpose is an inherent quality. In that quality poor Pow is known to be most deficient."

But the Reformers of Upper Canada had staked their all on the *Report*, and the new governor was its embodiment. The *Montreal Courier* had remarked that it understood "the Thomsonian resolutions were bolted by the Special Commissioners [of Lower Canada] as a boa-constrictor swallows a deer—hair, horns, and all. That's as it ought to be—there is no use in making two bites of a cherry."

The Reformers of Upper Canada were prepared to act in the same spirit, and as the event proved their confident expectation of an alliance with the governor was not misplaced. Thomson in implementing Durham's *Report* needed the great body of those who favoured moderate reform throughout the province no less than they needed him, and when the legislature met this became clear:

"The position of the parties" [wrote Ryerson in the *Guardian* of December 18, 1839], "is novel, and somewhat amusing. Messrs. Merritt, Aikman, Thorburn,

Parke, &c., headed by the Solicitor General are the Government party; and Messrs. G. S. Boulton, Rutan, Murney, Gamble, Cartwright, &c., are in opposition—making frequent attacks upon Her Majesty's Government and the Governor General; and some of them hinting strongly about separation from the Mother Country being better than such a policy of government. The Governor General is both hated and feared by members of the ultra church party. The Despatch of Lord John Russell on the Tenure of Public Offices, and the presence of the Governor General, have produced some of the best effects of 'responsible government' in the tone and spirit of the debates."

What if Thomson, or should we now call him Sydenham, did, to use a phrase once applied to Mr. Asquith, envelope 'responsible government' in a 'lucid fog'? Some will say that is a mark of statesmanship. In any case the significant point was that the alignment of parties now gave visible proof that in effect a revolution had taken place.

It was, then, not the rebellion which marked the end of one chapter and the beginning of another. The rebellion determined only that Upper Canada would not tolerate reform through violence and separation from Britain. The end of the chapter was to be found in Sydenham's accomplishment during his first months in Canada. His success, like the passing of the Reform Bill in Britain and the election of Andrew Jackson in the United States, marked the acceptance in principle of the democratic revolution. To Elgin, Peel, Lincoln, and a multitude of lesser men there remained the challenge of wrestling with democracy's meaning and baffling problems.

Have the Americas a Common History? A Canadian View*

IN A DISCUSSION SO BROAD AS THAT SUGGESTED IN OUR TOPIC IT is inevitable—and desirable—that the papers should suggest different approaches to the theme. One approach is that which compares the cultural developments of various parts of the Americas in an attempt to determine whether from a variety of European origins there is being created some common type or pattern. Coming as I do from a country where two cultural strains have been intermingled for one hundred and eighty years and where others in lesser proportion have been added by later immigration, I would be one of the last to minimize the importance of this approach. Indeed it should not be forgotten that Latin American culture is not wholly confined to the region south of the Rio Grande. A segment of it with a history stretching back over three centuries is found on the lower St. Lawrence.

I have chosen, however, another approach than the cultural in the short time at my disposal. It seems to me to have significance at the present time. The paper which I am about to read was written in September. The events of the past three weeks have not disposed me to alter it.

* This paper was read in a symposium on the subject "Have the Americas a Common History?" at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago on December 29, 1941, some three weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor. The other contributors were Professor William C. Binkley of Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee; Professor Edmundo O'Gorman, the University of Mexico, Mexico City, Mexico; Señor German Arciniegas, Ministro de Educacion, Ministerio de Educacion Nacional, Bogotá, Colombia.

The continent is 'indissoluble' wrote Whitman as he ranged through the vast stretch of rivers and lakes, forests, farm lands and prairies from the Saguenay to the Rockies. Sixty years later the historian cannot but underwrite the essential truth of that poetic judgment. North America—the Americas—*have* a common history. But how then shall we explain and interpret its apparent anomalies? How shall we sift out its essentials?

For Canada these anomalies run like a red thread through the very texture of the last hundred and fifty years. Canada has come to nationhood by a process which seems to mark her off in sharp contrast from her American neighbours. They won independence through revolution, casting off at a stroke European control, monarchy, and the shackles of mercantilism. Their national traditions have centred around these triumphant struggles for freedom. Canada's tradition contains no such struggle; she has gained nationhood through a century of evolution and at times it seems to have been not so much won as thrust upon her. Mercantilism in the first decades of the nineteenth century was for her not a chafing burden but a stimulus and a bond of empire—a 'hot-bed' to use Burke's phrase for the staples on which her prosperity rested.

The first long step towards autonomy—the winning of responsible government as it is termed in Canadian history—far from being a repudiation of British practices was an admission in colonial government of the principles of the cabinet system, the most distinctively British device in the whole range of constitutional government. The winning of responsible government a century ago was neither a colonial victory nor a British defeat. It was the triumph of both British and colonial reformers over conservatism, reaction, and timidity on both sides of the Atlantic. It marked the passing of the old colonial system, and looked forward not to separation but to an empire infused with a new spirit and held together by a new principle.

The acceptance of responsible government was essentially an act of faith on the part of that small minority who really believed in it, for they staked everything on the assumption that the real bonds between British America and Britain were not those relations which could be defined within the covers of a statute book, but were the intangibles and imponderables of

common interests, economic, political, and cultural, which could not be weighed and measured.

“These are the ties [said Burke] which, though light as air, are as strong as links of iron. Let the colonies always keep the idea of their civil rights associated with your government; they will cling and grapple to you. . . . Slavery they can have anywhere. It is a weed that grows in every soil. They may have it from Spain, they may have it from Prussia. . . . Freedom they can have from none but you. . . . Do not entertain so weak an imagination, as that your registers and your bonds, your affidavits and your sufferances, your cockets and your clearances, are what form the great securities of your commerce. Do not dream that your letters of office, and your instructions, and your suspending clauses, are the things that hold together the great contexture of this mysterious whole. These things do not make your government. Dead instruments, passive tools as they are. . . .

“All this, I know well enough, will sound wild and chimerical to the profane herd of those vulgar and mechanical politicians, who have no place among us; a sort of people who think that nothing exists but what is gross and material; and who therefore, far from being qualified to be directors of the great movement of empire, are not fit to turn a wheel in the machine. But to men truly initiated and rightly taught, these ruling and master principles, which, in the opinion of such men as I have mentioned, have no substantial existence, are in truth everything, and all in all. Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom; and a great empire and little minds go ill together.”

Burke's faith, affirmed in these immortal words, was the faith of those who believed that responsible government was a cementing, not a disrupting, principle. Working itself out through all the variations of economic and political change, the spirit and practice of responsible government transformed the empire. Autonomy through co-operation, freedom through

evolution—these became the pole-stars of imperial policy at its best, and in spite of backslidings and inconsistencies the course of the empire's development followed them. So the ancient British principle of respect for the rights of the individual as an individual was by inexorable logic extended into respect for the rights of the colonies as colonies.

These cementing principles, to use again Burke's phrase, are to be seen in the central episode of Canada's national development — the Confederation of 1867. Confederation was achieved, not in opposition to British policy but in the end with the aid of British policy and through a combination of forces running strongly on both sides of the Atlantic. So too with the extension of the Dominion westward to the Pacific. Canada gained a western empire—the vast domain of the Hudson's Bay Company—because she herself was part of an empire.

This is the paradox of Canadian history—nationhood emerging not through revolution and separation but through the mingling of two opposing elements—autonomy and co-operation. Its supreme illustration may, in the judgment of the future, be Canada's entrance into the war in 1939. Without hesitation she ranged herself at Britain's side in a deadly struggle whose immediate origins were European, but her manner of doing so was an affirmation—the clearest in her history—that she had attained the stature of nationhood and assumed its full responsibilities.

The decision to declare war was made on September 9, 1939, by the Parliament of Canada, and on the following day, precisely one week after Britain's entry into the conflict, King George VI as King of Canada, acting on the advice of his Canadian ministers, announced that Canada was at war. This historic decision, the most momentous it may be in Canada's history, marked the culmination of a process which had spanned a century.

To emphasize this paradox of autonomy coupled with imperial co-operation is not to deny that there have been cross-currents of friction and misunderstanding. Canadian historians have traced them with minute care in following the growth of autonomy, but as yet they have largely neglected the more baffling and more comprehensive task of trying to understand the

compelling tendencies toward co-operation which have dominated Canadian policy at every period of real crisis. No, the paradox is not an anomaly. It is the very stuff of which Canadian history is made.

But if we accept this paradox, with all its implications—a paradox which seems to contradict the pattern of national growth in every other American country—how shall we accept the affirmation with which this paper began, that the Americas have a common history? It is not enough to say that Canadian culture, institutions, and habits of living have American elements. No one would deny that. But today another standard of judgment forces itself upon us. Every great age in history has its central issue. Ours is the problem of a world order, and that problem is the touchstone to which at this moment every consideration must be brought.

Canada in entering the war responded to forces that have flowed deeply through her history. Are these forces alien to the rest of America or are they not?—that is the question. It is my deep conviction that they are not. "Canada," said Premier King, speaking in the heart of war-scarred London, "is a nation of the new world." It was as a nation of the New World that she threw down the gage of battle. She was never more American than when she did so, and two years of war have confirmed her in that belief.

What then are the forces which run so deeply through the history of the Americas that they resolve the paradox which seems to separate Canada and her neighbours? They are the common interests which the American nations north and south have in the Atlantic world. For over three hundred years the Americas have shared in its creation. It is the framework within which by varying processes and at different times we have all grown from colonialism to maturity. It has been an essential element in our history, and yet for the most part we have ignored the fact of its existence.

The Atlantic unites, it does not merely divide, and from the beginnings of our colonial development this has been so. No fallacy in our thinking has been more appalling in its consequences than our failure to assess the implications of this truism. The revolutions which broke political ties with Europe pro-

foundly affected, but did not destroy, the infinite network of relationships, economic and cultural, which made the Atlantic world. Always, therefore, running through American history, there have been the contradictory elements of separation from, and association with, Europe. Canada's paradox of autonomy and co-operation is not un-American; it is the American experience in a unique form.

But why are we only now becoming conscious of the Atlantic world? Precisely because it is passing through a revolutionary change. The Atlantic world of the nineteenth century is disappearing, has disappeared—a new order is in the making, and whether we like it or not we of the Americas must have a share in determining its guiding principles.

We had a share in the old order, though we scarcely knew it—our responsibilities were so light that we had no sense of compulsion. That order of the nineteenth century was the Pax Britannica, and though it was neither a Pax, nor Britannica, it was a reality. It stretched beyond the Atlantic basin and in a sense embraced the world.

Let me quote an American definition and description of it. Harold and Margaret Sprout write in their book, *Toward a New Order of Sea Power* (Princeton, 1940): This Pax Britannica, "fostered and was then [in 1890] still supporting a world economy that approached the dimensions of political sovereignty and a world order." And again, "London became the business and financial centre of an economic community which eventually embraced not only the British Empire but also many politically independent countries in several continents. . . . The combined power of fleets and finance enabled British statesmen to wield an influence abroad which approached, though it never quite attained, the dimensions of sovereignty and a world order."

The 'stupid' Englishman, with that inspired stupidity which enrages his enemies and baffles his friends, seemed never quite to understand the order which he did so much to create. He issued no blueprints of it, never attempted to force on the world a regimented acceptance of it, and never even worked out its principles to a logical conclusion. True to its character, it was full of inconsistencies: freedom of trade it had, but not

full free trade; parliamentary government, but applied by each nation in its own way; respect for the rights of nations as nations, but never a fully organized system of international cooperation based on the principles of national sovereignty.

This was the order in which we of the Americas grew to national maturity. It was a kindly order, and as we look back on it we can see that with all its anomalies it went far in its time toward a solution of that age-old problem which has vexed mankind in so many forms—the harmonizing of liberty and law.

What were the sanctions of the Pax Britannica?—for every political order, even a quasi-one, must have its sanctions. Characteristically they were tangled and pragmatic, not systematized and formal. Nevertheless they were there, and chief among them was the British Navy's command of the seas. This was, to quote Mr. and Mrs. Sprout once more, "the historic balance wheel of the vast, intricate, and swiftly moving machinery of that advantageous world economic community and quasi-political order which British sea power had fostered and supported."

For the Americas the British Navy was a guarantee of stability in the Atlantic world—a first line of defence against any European threat which would menace the integrity or freedom of American nations. Such was the meaning of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823—it was in essence bilateral, Britain and the United States guaranteeing the permanence of the American revolutions in the face of reactionary Europe. Through the Monroe Doctrine the young American nations got essentially the same protection which Canada had through her connection with the empire. Let it not be thought that I am suggesting that Britain was moved by some kind of doctrinaire altruism. Far from it—doctrinaire altruism does no one good in the long run. She was acting in her own interest, but it was by and large in the interest also of the Americas.

This fundamental identity of British and American interests in maintaining control of the Atlantic against the threat of any hostile power, while often obscured by superficial differences, has never been far below the surface. "The day that France takes possession of New Orleans," wrote Jefferson in an

oft-quoted pronouncement, "fixes the sentence which is to restrain her forever within her low water mark. It seals the union of two nations who in conjunction can maintain exclusive possession of the ocean. From that moment we must marry ourselves to the British fleet and nation." "With the British Navy combined with our own," wrote Madison, "we have nothing to fear from the rest of the world; and in the great struggle of the epoch between liberty and despotism, we owe it to ourselves to sustain the former, in this hemisphere at least."

"To Great Britain and the United States [wrote Mahan], if they rightly estimate the part they may play in the great drama of human progress, is entrusted a maritime interest, in the broadest sense of the word, which demands as one of the conditions of its exercise and its safety, the organized force adequate to control the general course of events at sea; to maintain, if necessity arise, not arbitrarily but as between those in whom interest and power alike justify the claim to do so, the laws that shall regulate maritime warfare. This is no mere speculation, resting upon a course of specious reasoning, but is based on the teaching of the past."

It was this fundamental identity of interests—the necessity with Britain of controlling the Atlantic and the destiny of the Atlantic world—that brought the United States and the Americas into the war of 1914-18. The obscuring of this fact—the failure to recognize its implications—was one of the appalling misfortunes of the postwar period.

Today the same fundamental identity of interests is teaching its unanswerable lesson. When France collapsed and the eastern bastions of the Atlantic world as we had known it seemed crumbling beyond repair, when invasion of Britain and the destruction or capture of the British fleet were stark possibilities, an intuitive realization of common danger swept over the people of these continents. For the first time since 1823 we are literally threatened with the danger described in Monroe's message—the danger that a hostile system will be extended to this hemisphere. The Battle of the Atlantic, and the Atlantic Declaration, are answers to that threat just as were the union of British and

American interests when Monroe issued his historic pronouncement a century and a quarter ago.

The first of Mahan's books on the influence of sea power, published in 1890, appeared, as great books have a way of doing, at a turning point in history. The peculiar set of circumstances which had made possible Britain's unrivalled naval power was on the eve of change. The creation of navies elsewhere, inventions and changes in warfare such as the submarine and the aeroplane—these and other circumstances marked, as we can see in retrospect, the end of one epoch, the beginning of another—the epoch in which we live.

The Pax Britannica was destined to pass but what was to replace it? Could its essential principles be merged and projected into a new world order—a world order still preserving that balance between law and liberty which marked the Pax Britannica at its best, and still affirming that respect for the right of the individual nation which at bottom rests on respect for the right of the individual man? Or would it give way to a Pax Germanica based on fallacious theories of blood and race, and exalting brute force to the level of a moral principle? Or were we to have hemispheres organizing and regimenting themselves in preparation for conflict on a scale which baffles our imagination? Fifty years and more after such questions began to pose themselves, we still face the problems of world order unavoidably. The twentieth century demands that they be answered. In relation to them the Americas *have* a common history—a history which challenges them to a common responsibility.

Canada in the Commonwealth and the International Order

CANADA'S RELATION TO THE COMMONWEALTH CANNOT BE SEPARATED from her relation to the international scene as a whole. What, then, are the fundamentals of Canada's national policy? First, and it includes in a sense all the others, is her need of an effective world order based on the principle of collaboration. This is not merely a Canadian interest, but for Canada it transcends and includes every other consideration. Unlike many of the lesser countries, Canada has no special fear of conquest or oppression, but she needs, as vitally as they, a world settlement that will offer some prospect of permanent peace, freedom of trade, and respect for the rights of the smaller nations.

This, of course, has always been Canada's need, and her present policy is simply an extension of her historic attitude. Canadians would do well to recognize this fact. In the British Empire before 1914, which was in fact becoming an international system within the limits of a wider internationalism, Canada expanded on the assumptions that the markets of the world would be open to her, and that she would have freedom to develop to maturity in her own way. The rushing events of recent years have intensified these interests. Canada has been pushed into the centre of world affairs in unprecedented fashion, and her problems of trade and defence in the postwar world are of acute concern to her.

Canada's economy has been built on exports. She has become one of the greatest trading nations in the world, with a

standard of living geared to that fact. She would have no chance to maintain herself on this basis in a world dominated by theories of self-sufficient nationalism. But the pressures are not merely economic. Canada's East-West lines of safety and interest no longer run merely across the Atlantic; they run across the Pacific. Her North-South lines are no longer concerned only with the United States; they look also towards the Arctic and along the global trunk lines of aviation. With the rise of the Orient, Russia, and the new era of air power, Canada is at the crossroads of the world. She occupies a strategic position which geography and history have thrust upon her; a position of opportunity but, in the next world crisis, of acute danger.

The achievement of an effective internationalism is Canada's central need, but comprehended within that and essential to it is her need for peace and co-operation between Britain and the United States. This also is an extension of her historic interest. For over a century and a half she has been developing in a balance between British and American pulls. In a real sense she is a product of that balance, for her development to nationhood has been made possible because of it. She has never been an interpreter between Britain and the United States in the literal meaning of the term, but British-American-Canadian relations have more often than not been triangular, and at many points Canada has been a conditioning element in these relations.

Canadians have some times been told that they would have to make up their minds between Britain and the United States. The remark only reveals a complete misunderstanding of the Canadian position—a position which Canadians have always understood intuitively even when they did not rationalize it clearly. No fallacy is more contrary to the plain facts of Canadian history and the events of recent years than the repeated statement that Canadian interests run North-South, while only sentiment runs East-West. Canada must continue to find her place in co-operation with both Britain and the United States. The confusion which results from a failure to understand this fundamental consideration is well illustrated by a Public Opinion Poll released in June, 1943, which asked the following questions:

Which of these things would you like to see Canada do after the war?

1. Continue as a member of the British Commonwealth as at present?
2. Leave the British Commonwealth and become part of the United States?
3. Leave the British Commonwealth and become a completely independent nation?

To which the replies in percentages were:

| | Commonwealth | U.S. | Independent | Undecided |
|-------------------------|--------------|------|-------------|-----------|
| National | 49 | 21 | 24 | 6 |
| <i>By racial origin</i> | | | | |
| British | 66 | 19 | 11 | 4 |
| French | 22 | 19 | 50 | 9 |
| Other | 34 | 37 | 18 | 11 |

Such a poll is extremely misleading and unsatisfactory, since the ideas clumsily suggested by the questions are not in the minds of most Canadians mutually exclusive, and terms such as 'independent' are variously defined by different people. For instance, the great majority of the 66 per cent who supported a Commonwealth policy would deny that Canada is not already independent; she can, like other comparable nations, fully determine her own policy as much as the general international situation will permit. The fact is that Canadians want all the things suggested by the questions; they want a policy which is truly Canadian and which at the same time will harmonize their relations with both Britain and the United States. They have wanted these things for a long time. It is their historic attitude, and on the whole they have managed very well to get them. To ask them to choose among such questions is merely to confuse the issue.

Canada's position may become much more understandable in the future than it has been in the past. Australia and New Zealand, as a result of the war, have found themselves much more balanced between Britain and the United States than was previously the case. Britain herself finds that she is balanced between the United States and Russia. If Canadians are told that they should make up their minds, their reply should be "Let others do the same". The truth is that we do not live

in a static world, but in one of increasingly powerful balanced and interlocking forces which no nation can escape.

To Canada's historic position between Britain and the United States must now be added her relation with Russia. In the postwar world of global communications Canada occupies a unique position: she is the only country in immediate proximity to all three of these Great Powers. The Canadian people have scarcely begun to weigh the implications of this fact, but they are of profound importance. Canadians cannot but view with alarm evidence of dangerous friction in the relations of Britain, the United States, and Russia; the vicious streams of misrepresentation and prejudice which seem calculated to create trouble rather than co-operation are a matter of grave concern and misgiving.

If the fundamental aims of Canada's national policy are those which have been outlined above, what is the chief danger which threatens them? It is the danger of moving towards a world order based on extreme regionalism. Whatever may be the form of our postwar world order, it seems clear that two broad tendencies will be mingled in its creation: the tendency towards an international system based on the collaboration of nations great and small, and the tendency towards regionalism.

These tendencies will be mingled because we cannot, in the present state of the world, have either to the complete exclusion of the other. Nevertheless, it will make a tremendous difference whether they are kept in balance—whether the forces for genuine collaboration are strong enough to prevent the triumph of the forces towards regionalism. We are bound to have regional arrangements of many kinds in the future, but the real question is, Will they be integrated into a genuine international system or will they develop into mutually exclusive and hostile blocs? If the forces towards extreme regionalism become dominant, it means eventual conflict on the basis of continental alignments which will be as bad as, or worse than, our conflicts on the basis of nationalism during the past three hundred years.

Regionalism in its extreme form would mean a kind of new super-imperialism based on all the resources of modern science. The super-state of the future which we have to fear is

not the super-state of a coercive world organization, which is nothing but a bogey raised by those who want to reduce international co-operation to the lowest possible point, but the super-national state organizing and regimenting its region, and reaching out in self-interest and fear until it comes into conflict with its rivals who are driven by the same motives. If the victorious nations lay the basis for a world order of this kind they surely are doing nothing but paving the way for another global war on a far more disastrous scale than the two through which this generation has passed. Canada's interest is to oppose, in whatever way she can, the triumph of regionalism in this extreme form, with all the evils into which it would eventually lead.

The British Commonwealth by its very nature cuts across these extreme regional tendencies. It stretches into the four corners of the globe and can survive only if the seaways and airways of the world are open. It must be indissolubly linked with internationalism. This is its virtue and its baffling problem, and this is the underlying consideration which gives Canada a fundamental interest in its survival. The interest of Canada—and of many other nations also—cannot be served by the reduction of Britain to a place of insignificance in the world. That would mean so fundamental a shift in world balances, so powerful an impetus to extreme regionalism, that the foundations on which Canada has developed as an independent nation would be undermined. This was for Canada the basic issue in the last war, as it has been in this one.

The Commonwealth must be made, and it can be made, a powerful instrument in the creation of a genuine internationalism. To apply this guiding and ruling principle to the staggering complexities of the postwar world, and in particular to its economic aspects which will be extremely difficult, is the most baffling problem ever faced by British statesmanship, but the cost of failure would be disastrous. The survival of the Commonwealth as an influence for peace and stability may well be the crucial test of the possibility of achieving the internationalism for which the world is striving. It was so during the course of this war. Had the Commonwealth been broken when it stood alone in 1940, the forces towards extreme regionalism

or towards world domination by a triumphant Germany would have been irresistible. The breaking of the Commonwealth in the postwar world would be equally decisive.

In the light of these basic considerations, what is the Commonwealth? It is, to follow the expression used in the historic declaration of the Imperial Conference of 1926, an 'association' of states of a distinctive kind evolved through a unique process, whose origins and characteristics stem back into the fundamentals of British history. Following the lines of development laid down in the old Empire, it has in effect become an international system within the limits of a wider internationalism. In its unprecedented transformation, which spanned a century from the days of Lord Durham, Canada played a vital and leading part, unconscious of the far-reaching significance of what she was doing. The practices and lessons of 'responsible government' which were worked out in Canada became precedents for the Empire as a whole. The process was one of organic growth, for the changes which transformed the Empire transcended legalism and were indeed carried through in the face of legalistic logic. In particular was this true of the changes which created the Commonwealth during and immediately following the First World War. They involved what may well prove to be the first historic break in the binding concept of sovereignty, for the British Dominions signed the Treaty and entered the League of Nations not only in their own right but as members of an associated group.¹⁸ The recognition of this principle of groups or associations for special purposes within the wider internationalism must be explored and extended if we are to modify the old rigid concept of national sovereignty and meet the irresistible demands of a changing world. We need associations of all kinds freely co-operating and overlapping in their activities if we are to create a genuine and flexible international order. The Commonwealth at its best is a pioneer experiment looking towards this world of the future.

The Commonwealth is, however, not only an association of states: it is an association of empires. That of the United Kingdom is of course the greatest, but Canada with her North West Territories and Arctic Islands, Australia, and South Africa, all have dependent areas under their control, and conceivably in

the future may have even more. Within all the areas under the British flag there are millions of politically backward and dependent people in all stages of advancement, and the true interest of the British people is to see to it that the old imperialism is transmuted and merged into something new. Given a world of peace and expanding trade this is possible, but even so, what is the method by which we are to bridge over from the exploiting imperialism of the nineteenth century to the new internationalism in which politically and culturally backward peoples shall have a chance for advancement? We cannot make this transition by a stroke of magic, and those who attack the old imperialism, as if its mere destruction without putting anything in its place would solve anything, are simply guilty of disseminating dangerous nonsense.

The world is going to have dependent peoples and areas for some considerable time, but on whom are they to be dependent and how are they to be brought along the path towards maturity? Those are questions on which we ought all to ponder since they are of the greatest international significance, and in particular they might well be given attention by critics of British imperialism whose comments are almost entirely lacking in any constructive contribution to this most difficult and pressing problem.

So far, at least, the British technique of extending representative and responsible government step by step is the most successful means yet devised by any nation for the development of self-government in dependent areas. To this political device are now being added measures and experiments concerned with economic and social welfare. The British Empire is at this moment dotted with examples of this process in all stages of evolution, and we are still only at the threshold of its possibilities. No other empire, ancient or modern, has ever thrown out so many experiments in the development of free government, and through them the British Commonwealth may make a contribution of the highest value to what is without doubt one of the most difficult of all international problems. Unfortunately the failure to recognize these facts or the determination to distort them is responsible outside the Commonwealth for misunderstandings of the most mischievous character.

Canadians might do much, individually and through their channels of public opinion, to ameliorate this condition. Since they have no imperialistic ambitions they are in a much better position to do so than are the people of the British Isles. Unfortunately Canadians have far too little appreciation of the essentials of this problem or of its urgency. There are dependent areas in proximity to Canada which will be of great strategic importance in the postwar period. It is a matter of the utmost consequence whether these eventually become meshed into genuine international, as well as regional, arrangements, or whether they become pawns in a dangerous game of regional rivalries.

We have said that the Commonwealth is an association, but what do we mean by that? Like any other voluntary association, an association of states is what its members make of it. It does not survive by wishful thinking or pious platitudes. It survives if its members explore every possibility of co-operation, agreeing, if they cannot find common ground, to disagree in a spirit of mutual respect and goodwill. With such a spirit prevailing the common ground in the Commonwealth will be found very extensive indeed.

By its very nature the Commonwealth cannot be a bloc in the literal sense of that term. It is impossible for its members, the United Kingdom no less than the others, to put themselves into such a strait jacket. Any attempt, moreover, to turn the Commonwealth into an exclusive bloc would seriously undermine its influence as an advocate of international co-operation. Previous efforts in favour of centralization through organic or constitutional changes, as for instance the proposal earlier in this century to create a central parliament, have failed of success both in Britain and Canada. The only basis on which the Commonwealth can continue to develop in the future as in the past is that of co-operation among its members. The real problem is whether that co-operation will be genuine and determined to overcome difficulties or grudging and restricted.

During the past year we have had a prolonged public debate on the question of whether the Commonwealth should be centralized. Since there was no possibility of centralization in the literal sense of the term, a great deal of it was sheer shadow boxing, in spite of which many of the participants, without

taking the trouble to define clearly what they were advocating or denouncing, succeeded in convincing themselves that they differed in principle from their opponents when in fact they differed only in emphasis. The most significant result of Lord Halifax's Toronto speech of January 24, around which the later phases of this debate centred, was, however, that it did *not* revive in a serious degree the old patterns of contentious discussion over imperial relations which had been all too familiar a feature of Canadian politics.

The truth is that there has been far more common agreement in Canada with regard to the Commonwealth than Canadians themselves have realized. The main point of difference, as has already been suggested, is not nearly so much one of principle as of emphasis. It is in reality a difference between those who view the Commonwealth as a possible aid and asset in achieving the kind of international order which Canada needs, and who approach Commonwealth relations with the determination to make them such, and those on the other hand who approach Commonwealth relations with reluctance or suspicion, believing that they are the remnants of an out-moded imperial tie, that they look to the past not the future, that they are at best a doubtful asset, at worst a positive disadvantage.

Under the wartime pressures of recent years the channels of discussion and co-operation within the Commonwealth have been enormously enlarged, and this without impairing the freedom of its members in their relations with other countries. It is of the utmost importance that we do not reverse this trend in the postwar period when the problems which we shall face will be no less urgent and the need of co-operation no less pressing. We have the means through rapid communication of making Commonwealth co-operation increasingly effective, and of meshing it in, as we are already doing, with international negotiations on the widest scale.

If the Commonwealth can be made an instrument for world peace and prosperity there will be no question of its survival or of Canadian attitudes towards it. Such a development is fundamental to every Canadian interest—to the maintenance of

the Canadian economy, to the achievement of Canada's international aims, and to the preservation of her national unity, since it offers the only basis on which the diverse elements of her population can be united in a common foreign policy.

1944

Canada and the Future of the Commonwealth

TODAY, AS PEOPLE EVERYWHERE FACE THE POSTWAR WORLD WITH mixed hope and anxiety, the future of the British Commonwealth as well as of the empire becomes once more an urgent question. Our legalists, economists and politicians can be counted on to take a leading part in the discussion; but history also has something to say which we shall overlook at our peril, and the first part of this article is therefore concerned with the historical approach to this subject.

We are now engaged in the fourth war within two centuries which has involved the balance of power in Europe and the control of the Atlantic. Each of these wars has been in its own time a world war, and each of the first three was followed not only by far-reaching readjustments in the international scene but by fundamental changes in relations within the British Empire. The fourth will inevitably have similar effects, and numerous signs already point to such a result.

The first of these world conflicts, the Seven Years' War, was followed by the most disastrous chapter in the history of the Empire. Within fifteen years after the Peace of Paris in 1763 the Thirteen Colonies were in rebellion and England found herself facing an almost solid phalanx of hostile European States. It is unnecessary to trace the events leading to this unique and acutely dangerous crisis which brought about the loss

of the Thirteen Colonies and embittered relations in the English-speaking world even to our own day. We need only observe that these events were marked by a complete failure in both England and America to reach constructive solutions of common problems. For this failure two groups were more than any others responsible: the extremists in England who would have imposed rigidities such as parliamentary taxation on the imperial relation, and the revolutionary radicals in the colonies who saw no value in that relation and set themselves to wipe it out. Between them these groups had nothing to offer except proposals which looked toward centralization on the one hand, or a continuation on the other of the old conflict of jurisdictions and particularisms which even the colonists admitted had broken down in the face of crisis. These warring extremists thus made the disruption of the Empire inevitable, by destroying the middle ground on which constructive compromise might have been found. Any solution would have been difficult, but no solution could have been more injurious than the war which actually came about.

In the events preceding the Revolution, there is no more significant figure than that of Franklin. For over twenty years he worked tirelessly for a reorganization of the empire which would express its true genius of freedom and co-operation and make it unique in the world's history, only to find his efforts ground out at last between the extremes of opposing prejudices and arguments. The lesson of the 1760's for our day is nowhere more vividly illustrated.

The wars with Napoleon and the United States, which ended in 1815, brought no such immediate demand for imperial reorganization as had the Seven Years' War, but they created conditions out of which reorganization inevitably came. Three of these conditions were of particular importance: the ascendancy of the British Navy, the greatest single stabilizing element in the world order of the nineteenth century, which has been well named the Pax Britannica; the enunciation of the Monroe Doctrine which asserted the right of the Americas to live their own life, and was in effect underwritten by British sea power; and the Industrial Revolution which before 1850 brought free trade

in England and the collapse of the old mercantilism. These and other conditions which were woven into the Pax Britannica encouraged national aspirations throughout the world and made the transformation of the empire inevitable.

This transformation took a direction exactly opposite to the developments which brought the American Revolution, and it began with two events which, we can now see, clearly indicated its character: the Rebellions of 1837 in Upper and Lower Canada, and the *Report* of Lord Durham. The Rebellions of 1837, though they had many cross-currents and much justification, made one point clear: their failure proved that the majority of Canadian people rejected revolutionary radicalism as a solution of their problems. Equally clear was Durham's rejection of the other extreme of reactionary imperialism. Durham defined in his great *Report* a middle ground of constructive reform which embodied nothing less than a new conception of empire relations.

The conception itself was simple, nothing more than that the British principle of the executive's responsibility to the elected House should be admitted in colonial government, but it was revolutionary in its implications, since it seemed to strike at unity of control in the empire by placing the Colonial Governor under two masters, the British Government and the Colonial Legislature. Such an arrangement was pronounced impossible by constitutional authorities and indeed it was incapable of justification by any process of legalistic logic. But it was a response to the organic growth of the empire which was breaking through outworn concepts of colonialism. Durham himself never attempted to work out fully its implications, but with intuitive political genius he did see that responsible government rightly used could be made not a disruptive, but, in Burke's great phrase—"a healing and cementing" principle in the empire.

The success of responsible government in the years that followed was the work of far-seeing and determined men on both sides of the Atlantic. It did not come easily, for the new principle was a faith, not a rule of thumb. Robert Baldwin of Upper Canada, who had first urged the idea on Durham, Louis

Lafontaine, Baldwin's loyal French-Canadian colleague, Joseph Howe of Nova Scotia, Lord Elgin, the greatest of Canadian Governors, and Lord Grey as Colonial Secretary, are high in the honour roll of those who staked their political reputations on it. From Canada and Nova Scotia it spread to other Provinces, then to Australia, New Zealand and distant parts of the empire. These simple facts, known to every Canadian school-boy, if seen in their true perspective, are among the most remarkable in modern history, for they record a transformation such as no other empire, ancient or modern, ever passed through.

The application of the principle of responsible government has been a continuing process, broadening out into ever more varied and complex relationships. Its story is not merely that of the growth of colonial autonomy. It has, rather, been one of the growth of new relations to replace the old ties of imperial domination and colonial subordination. Canadian Confederation in 1867 was one of its earliest and most remarkable manifestations. So accustomed are we to the historical fact of Confederation, and to later repetitions of it in Australia, and South Africa, that we overlook how astonishing an anomaly it was, for it was nothing less than a conscious attempt to build a nation within an empire. The framers of Confederation knew, however, perfectly well what they were doing, and they believed that it looked toward the strengthening, not the dissolution, of the Empire. "A different colonial system is being developed", said John A. MacDonald. "Instead of looking upon us as a merely dependent colony, England will have in us a friendly nation."

By 1914 the empire had moved far in its unprecedented course, resisting equally tendencies toward dissolution on the one hand and centralization on the other. Then came four years of war, and again the pressure generated in a world conflict forced changes of far-reaching character. It is true that they were a continuation of the tendencies already so well established, but in their recognition of the principle of nationality and self-government they went far beyond any point previously contemplated. The result was that the Second Empire,

as we have come to call it, was transformed into the Commonwealth.

This transformation had to wait for constitutional confirmation until after the war, but it was already substantially in effect by 1918. The Dominions, maturing rapidly under the burdens and responsibilities which they had assumed in the face of the common crisis, demanded that the inadequate machinery for consultation and even for the conveying of information from London to the Dominion capitals be improved.

"It can hardly be expected", wrote Sir Robert Borden, the Canadian Premier, to the British Government through the Canadian High Commissioner in London in 1916, "that we shall put 400,000 or 500,000 men in the field and willingly accept the position of having no more voice and receiving no more consideration than if we were toy automata. Any person cherishing such an expectation harbours an unfortunate and even dangerous delusion."

Like the beginnings of responsible government in the days of Durham, the steps taken to give effect to the new importance of the Dominions were the work of leaders both in Britain and overseas. In England credit goes in particular to Mr. Lloyd George, who insisted on cutting through the legalisms and inertia of those who declared change to be impracticable. Change went indeed to the length of setting up the Empire War Cabinet which was a powerful instrument in achieving victory, although it represented a degree of centralization acceptable only as a war-time necessity.

The development during the war years was carried forward and more clearly defined in the Peace Conference of 1919 and in the international settlement which emerged from it, and again the change, since accepted without full appreciation of its true significance, was a startling one. The Dominions demanded direct representation at the Peace Conference, while still remaining as "autonomous nations of an Imperial Commonwealth". Such a proposal, as the Dominion Premiers well knew, flew directly in the face of constitutional legalism and the assumptions of international law with regard to national

sovereignty. Nevertheless, it was urged at a meeting of the British Empire delegation in London on December 31, 1918. Borden, who acted as spokesman, supported his case by a recital of the services of Canadian troops in the field, and then*

“not as a threat but as a plain statement of fact, Sir Robert said that in view of conditions calling for their presence at home the Canadian Ministers would not attend the Conference if their duties were limited to sitting in an ante-room available for a call for consultation when needed. After Sir Robert had completed his statement, silence descended upon the delegation; but it was broken a moment later when Lloyd George said: ‘When Canada makes a request like that, there is only one answer: it must be yes.’ I do not vouch for the exact language, but I do for its purport, my information being beyond question. Thus in a moment a great stride in the evolution of the Commonwealth was taken.

“Sir Robert, by an understanding, had included the other Dominions in his advocacy of direct representation, and Lloyd George’s statement, of course, applied equally to them.”

This decision, with its implications, was carried into and through the Peace Conference. Both France and the United States, after first flatly opposing it, gave consent, and so there finally appeared among the signatories of the peace settlement and among the original members of the League of Nations a new kind of international entity—autonomous nations associated for common purposes under one Crown. The significance of this has been too much overlooked. The new conception of the Commonwealth was incapable of legalistic justification. Like Durham’s ‘responsible government’ it could be given substance only by constructive efforts of those who saw its possibilities. It was not a piece of constitutional machinery: it was rather a political hypothesis looking toward the future for substantiation.

*J. W. Dafoe, “Canada and the Peace Conference of 1919”, *Canadian Historical Review*, XXIV, Sept. 1943, pp. 237-8.

In the story of the twenty years following 1919, one point only need be stressed: it is the inseparable connection between Commonwealth relations and international relations. The Commonwealth cannot in the long run be maintained without an effective internationalism: an effective internationalism cannot be achieved unless the Commonwealth contributes fully to it. This conclusion seems inescapable, and those who tend to ignore either part of it should ponder upon it. No one can maintain that the nations of the Commonwealth, either singly or together, lived up to its implications in the 1920's and 1930's. Certainly no thoughtful Canadian would now maintain that Canada did so. But it should be pointed out that Canada and other members of the Commonwealth were not the only ones who showed reluctance to make commitments and take risks in the cause of peace. Particularisms and an emphasis on national rights, rather than responsibilities, sprang up around the globe among great powers as well as small. We can all see the effects of the collapse of internationalism, and we are all now facing the baffling problem of harmonizing conflicting national interests all over the world with the necessity for an effective world order. Can the principles of the Pax Britannica—its emphasis on freedom of trade and intercourse, on self-government and national aspirations—be carried forward into the post-war period? This is the question that demands an answer, that transcends all others in the politics of the twentieth century, and that faces the Commonwealth with special insistence.

The Commonwealth is in essence an entente cordiale—a family relationship—of a peculiarly tough and distinctive quality. Resisting equally the extremes of centralization and dissolution, it has defied the judgments of those who prophesied its disintegration and of those who demanded a more rigid organization. It has confounded legalism, following the impulses of its own organic growth, and weathered during the present war, when it stood alone, the greatest crisis to which any association of nations was ever subjected in the history of the modern world. These are the unequivocal answers to those who have asked whether it had a meaning or a future. It is, however, not exclusive or repellent. It is not an end in itself, and the last thing to be desired for it is that it

should be a bloc in a hostile world. It is indissolubly linked, as it always has been, with the need for a wider internationalism, and only by making itself a vital element in this wider internationalism can its true destiny be realized.

But how can this be done? No more important question was ever forced on the British peoples, and there can be no easy answer to it. Both history and sound judgment point, however, to a guiding principle. The Commonwealth is a community and its members must act as do the individual members of any real community—pursuing individual interests and disagreeing where necessary with mutual respect, but exploring common problems, co-operating in their solution, combating jealousy and suspicion, and keeping always alive and vital the community relationship. In this process the members of the Commonwealth will not only co-operate with each other but will according to circumstances make bilateral and multilateral arrangements with other nations, looking always toward the central aim of creating and strengthening a world community by throwing a network of co-operative activities around the globe.

All this may sound too general to those who, to use Burke's word, have a 'mechanical' approach to the problem; but is it in reality more general than any other fundamental principle of action, and is it beyond the wit of man to give practical expression to it? The method of functional organization is capable of the widest variation and application, and co-operation may be explored and achieved in many different fields. They will require an infinite amount of patience, determination and understanding. But the goal is clear—the establishment of effective co-operative action within the Commonwealth, looking toward the creation of an effective world order based on the principle of international collaboration. Can we, working with each other and with other nations, great and small, achieve it? This is the unavoidable problem of the postwar period. This is the wheel on which the Commonwealth will be moulded or broken. No greater challenge ever presented itself to the political genius of the British peoples.

Notes

¹It had however been suggested in the discussions of the Albany Conference in 1754 when prominent colonial leaders felt it would be the only means of getting organic union among the Thirteen Colonies. See L. H. Gipson, *The British Empire before the American Revolution* (5 vols., New York, 1942), V, 134-5.

²See J. W. Dafoe, "Canada and the Peace Conference of 1919", *Canadian Historical Review*, XXIV, Sept., 1943.

³Instalments have been published in the *Transactions of the London and Middlesex Historical Society*, 1915, 1917, 1922, and in the *Papers and Records of the Ontario Historical Society*, 1931, 1933, 1934, 1936. Also of interest is *The Diary of the Rev. William Fraser (1834-5)* with an introductory essay on *Early Presbyterianism in Western Ontario* by Harry E. Parker (*Transactions of the London and Middlesex Historical Society*), 1930. Fraser, Mr. Parker remarks, was "equally antipathetic toward Methodist religious enthusiasm and Kirk Eranianism. His is the stern, self-denying voluntarism of the Seceder, for whom to accept state support of religion is an unthinkable violation of principle."

⁴W. S. Reid, *The Church of Scotland in Lower Canada: Its Struggle for Establishment* (Toronto, 1936).

⁵More has been done on the universities than on the other points suggested, e.g., Sir Robert Falconer's articles on Scottish, English, Irish and American influence on higher education in Canada in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* for 1927, 1928, 1930, 1935; D. C. Harvey, *An Introduction to the History of Dalhousie University* (Halifax, 1938); W. S. Wallace, *A History of the University of Toronto, 1827-1927* (Toronto, 1927). An excellent paper, broad in scope, is Mr. Harvey's "The Intellectual Awakening of Nova Scotia" (*Dalhousie Review*, April, 1933). See also J. J. Talman, *Some Notes on the Clergy of the Church of England in Upper Canada Prior to 1840* (*Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, 1938).

⁶C. W. Vernon, *The Old Church in the New Dominion* (London, 1929), 201, states that from 1904 to the date of writing the Colonial and Continental Church Society sent nearly 400 young workers to Western Canada and spent over \$1,500,000.

⁷There has been no adequate treatment of these either individually or collectively. An admirable exception, although written from the point of view of England as centre, is the Canadian volume in G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society* (London, 1921).

⁸Most of the smaller religious groups have not been thoroughly studied. An exception is A. G. Dorland, *A History of the Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada* (Toronto, 1927). See also J. T. McNeill, *Religious and Moral Conditions Among the Canadian Pioneers* (American Society of Church History, *Papers*, 1928).

⁹This and the following quotations are from Strachan's letter books in the Ontario Archives. I am indebted to Mr. G. W. Spragge for drawing them to my attention.

¹⁰The sermon which had been preached on July 3, 1825, appeared in printed form in April, 1826. Ryerson's reply was in the *Colonial Advocate* of May 11, 1826.

¹¹Most of them went to Cazenovia Seminary, Cazenovia, N.Y.; see "Historical Note" in *On the Old Ontario Strand: Victoria's Hundred Years* (Toronto, 1936). An interesting item on American influences in early Canadian education is found in the relations of Upper Canadian Methodists and their academy with schools in the United States.

¹²A tremendous stimulus of missionary interest had resulted from the visit of Peter Jones who accompanied George Ryerson to England in 1831. Jones was the first Indian convert who had appeared before the English Methodist public, and his speeches excited great interest.

¹³For example Fred Landon, "The Common Man in the Era of the Rebellion in Upper Canada," *Canadian Historical Association Report*, 1937; D. G. Creighton, "The Economic background of the rebellions of 1837", *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, III, August, 1937. See also W. W. Baldwin's analysis of grievances in the *Durham papers* (Public Archives of Canada, *Report*, 1923, 184).

¹⁴There is a voluminous literature on the history of Canadian Methodism, of both sources and secondary works. The best collection is that of the library of Victoria University, Toronto. The following published works are useful: John Carroll, *Case and His Cotemporaries, or the Canadian Itinerants Memorial*, 5 vols. (Toronto, 1867-77); George F. Playter, *The History of Methodism in Canada* (Toronto, 1862); *The Life and Times of Anson Green Written by Himself* (Toronto, 1877); Egerton Ryerson, *Canadian Methodism, its Epochs and Characteristics* (Toronto, 1882), and *The Story of My Life, Being Reminiscences of Sixty Years Public Service in Canada*, edited by J. G. Hodgins (Toronto, 1883); J. E. Sanderson, *The First Century of Methodism in Canada* (Toronto, 1908-10); Alexander Sutherland, *Methodism in Canada* (London, 1903); G. G. Findlay and W. W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, 5 vols. (London, 1921); C. B. Sissons, *Egerton Ryerson: His Life and Letters*, I (Toronto, 1937).

¹⁵These were the years of the establishment of journalism as an important influence in the life of the province. See W. S. Wallace, "The periodical literature of Upper Canada," *Canadian Historical Review*, XII, March, 1931; J. J. Talman, "The Newspapers of Upper Canada a Century Ago," *Canadian Historical Review*, XIX, March, 1938.

¹⁶The *Christian Guardian* of Feb. 6, 1830, gives the following estimate: Methodists 38,000, Presbyterians 30,000, Church of England 16,500, Roman Catholics 15,000, Quakers 15,000, Mennonites and Tunkers 12,000, Baptists 16,500, English Wesleyan Methodist and Lutherans 10,000, no particular denomination 38,000, total 191,000.

¹⁷For an interesting early sidelight on Strachan's aims, see G. W. Spragge, "Dr. Strachan's motives for becoming a legislative councillor," *Canadian Historical Review*, XIX, Dec. 1938.

¹⁸For a description of the leading part taken by Canada in this development, see J. W. Daffoe, "Canada and the Peace Conference of 1919" (*Canadian Historical Review*, September, 1943).

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