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**Nation's Mothers, Empire's Daughters:  
The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1920-1930**

by

**Lisa Gaudet, B.A.**

**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of  
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts**

**Department of History  
Carleton University  
Ottawa, Ontario  
August 1993**

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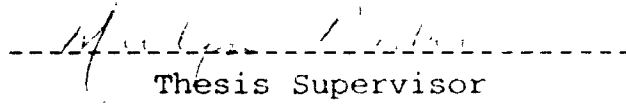
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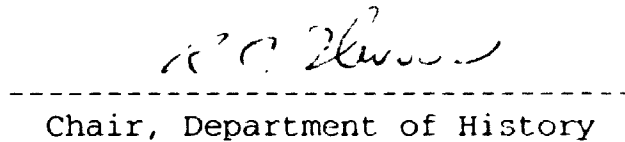
"NATION'S MOTHEPS, EMPIRE'S DAUGHTERS: THE IMPERIAL  
ORDER DAUGHTERS OF THE EMPIRE, 1920-1930"

submitted by

Lisa S. Gaudet, B.A. Honours,

in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts

  
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Thesis Supervisor

  
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Chair, Department of History

Carleton University

9 September 1993

## ABSTRACT

As a patriotic women's organization that thrived in periods of war, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire faced structural and ideological challenges in the 1920s. Peace took its toll on the Order's membership, and the general shift from imperialism to nationalism forced the Daughters of the Empire to rethink their imperial agenda. They adjusted to pacifist, isolationist, and nationalistic sensibilities by supporting the League of Nations and by encouraging the development of Canadian economy, art, and scholarship. But, like many imperialists, they believed that Canada's true destiny as a nation lay in its enduring connection to Great Britain.

The nature of the social reform movement in Canada in the interwar period enabled the IODE to apply its patriotism to the campaign for child welfare, progressive education, and the Canadianization of immigrants. The Order's maternalist rationale for its public activities was reinforced by the concept of imperial motherhood. As members of a superior race, and as the embodiment of respectable womanhood, the Daughters of the Empire were able to claim a role of national significance. They assumed the responsibility for the transmission of cultural values and claimed an elevated status as the progenitors of the imperial race.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It is with satisfaction and great relief that I greet this final task of acknowledging my debts for the completion of this thesis. I am especially grateful to Marilyn Barber, my thesis supervisor, for her thorough advice, clear insight, and steady support over the past year. I am also indebted to Margaret Conrad of Acadia University, whose passion for history has long been a source of inspiration. To Jennifer Mueller, Robert and Karla Vigneault, and Wendy Hubley I extend my deepest thanks for their friendship and encouragement. And, as always, my love and appreciation go to my parents and to Gareth, whose good humour and commitment to my happiness has enabled me to persevere.

Lisa Gaudet  
August 1993



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**The Cradle and the Hearth are mightier  
than either the pen or the sword in the ultimate  
creation of nationality, for from them  
alone do wise and courageous men descend and on  
them alone can greatness be built.**

**Echoes (March 1921), 12**

## INTRODUCTION

If ever the time comes when women work together  
simply and solely for the benefit of mankind,  
it will be a power such as the world has never known.<sup>1</sup>

The history of women and imperialism has long been neglected in Canadian historiography. Uncomfortable with the intersection of ideological categories once considered to be mutually exclusive, feminist scholars and historians of empire have, with few exceptions, been reluctant to acknowledge their common ground. In general, theories of imperialism have featured its essentially "masculine" components of territorial expansion, cultural domination, and hierarchical systems of power. By virtue of this emphasis, women have been either excluded or marginalized by scholars of imperial history. Likewise, women's historians, informed by a feminist perspective which has highlighted the progressive struggle for gender equality, have been hesitant to acknowledge the collaboration of women in reaffirming a patriarchal social order. By examining the patriotic agenda of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire (IODE) in the 1920s, this thesis will contribute insights into the ideology and social context that legitimized women's place in the empire, indeed making them central to its existence. It will contend that, by exploiting assumptions about women's superior moral character, Daughters of the Empire were able to empower themselves in the public sphere

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<sup>1</sup>National Archives of Canada, [hereafter NAC], MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 13, Rebecca Church, Facts Concerning the Work of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Children of the Empire (Junior Branch) (May 1929), 3.

as conservators of the race and as purveyors of true womanhood.

Scholarly interest in imperialism, although it dates back to the beginning of the century, has been most recognized in Canada in the 1970 work of Carl Berger, The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914.<sup>2</sup> While those scholars who previously queried Canada's historical relationship to the empire commonly chose a diplomatic and military focus,<sup>3</sup> Berger deals effectively with the ideological underpinnings of Canadian imperialism "rather than its workings at the political level."<sup>4</sup> He focuses primarily on the imperial sentiments of George Denison, George Grant, and George Parkin, men who cared less about the actual mechanics of imperialism than the spectre of its traditions, power, and history. Berger argues that the imperial vision promoted by these men—and indeed by many other turn-of-the-century Canadians—embodied the embracement, rather than rejection, of Canadian nationalism.

As the only semi-comprehensive study of the ideas of Canadian imperialism, The Sense of Power is valuable for its clear interpretation of the intellectual context for Canada's enduring attachment to Great Britain. Like other historians on this subject—who also present imperialism as an exclusively male preserve—Berger chose to end his study with the close of the First World War, which, he

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<sup>2</sup>Carl Berger, The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914 (Toronto, 1970).

<sup>3</sup>These earlier works include D.M.L. Farr, The Colonial Office and Canada, 1867-1887 (Toronto, 1965); D.C. Gordon, The Dominion Partnership in Imperial Defense, 1870-1914 (Baltimore, 1965); and R. Preston, Canada and "Imperial Defense:" A study of the origins of the British Commonwealth's defense organization, 1867-1919 (Toronto, 1967).

<sup>4</sup>Berger, 10.

claims, effectively "killed" the appeal of imperialism in Canada.<sup>5</sup> The common reluctance to consider the persistence of an intellectual imperialist ambience in Canada beyond 1920 combined with the chronic oversight of the role of women in the promulgation of patriotic and imperialistic ideas poses a challenge to historians of both women and imperialism.

Notwithstanding the arousal of nationalistic sentiments, along with the escalation of Canada's autonomy on the international stage, and the increasing appeal of anti-imperialism in French Canada in the "Age of Mackenzie King," the profoundly British nature of Canada's population ensured that the last vestiges of the imperial connection outlived their political demise.<sup>6</sup> "Despite the nationalists' loud protestations of autonomy and the many claims that Canada had become a North American nation," John H. Thompson has pointed out, "it was English Canada's sentimental attachment to the mother country that placed the country at Britain's side in 1939, not a revulsion against international fascism."<sup>7</sup> As a national organization of patriotic women whose commitment to both Canada and the mother country remained resonant well after the close of the

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<sup>5</sup>Berger, 264. The other works include Douglas L. Cole, "Canada's 'nationalistic' imperialists," in Journal of Canadian Studies V:3 (August 1970), 201-224; Robert Page, "Canada and the imperial idea in the Boer years," Journal of Canadian Studies V:1 (February 1970), 33-49; Robert Craig Brown, "Sir Robert Borden, the Great War, and Anglo-Canadian Relations," in John S. Moir, ed., Character and Circumstance: Essays in Honour of Donald Creighton (Toronto, 1970), 201-224; Robert Page, "Carl Berger and the intellectual origins of Canadian imperialist thought, 1867-1914," Journal of Canadian Studies V:3 (August 1970), 39-43; and Robert Page, Imperialism and Canada, 1895-1903 (Toronto, 1972)

<sup>6</sup>Although being transformed by immigration, Canada's population was still more than 50 percent British. John Herd Thompson and Allen Seager, Canada 1922-1939: Decades of Discord (Toronto, 1985), 43.

<sup>7</sup>Thompson and Seager, 332.

First World War, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire exemplifies the complex web of change and continuity referred to by Thompson. Perhaps of greater significance—for this thesis at least—is the undeniable influence of the Daughters of the Empire as women in the process of patriotic education in the schools and the inculcation of Anglo-Saxon values among immigrants, endeavours which they considered to be central to the continuance of national unity and imperial allegiance in the 1920s.

Just as the interwar period continues to be an historiographical wasteland for those in search of the remnants of imperialist ideologies in Canada, until recently its yields in English-Canadian feminist scholarship have been equally discouraging.<sup>8</sup> The traditional preoccupation of historians with national and political events has only in recent years begun to be challenged.<sup>9</sup> As an outgrowth of both the renewal of the feminist movement<sup>10</sup> and the increased

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<sup>8</sup>For an overview of the historiography on Canadian women see Beth Light and Veronica Strong-Boag, "Introduction," in True Daughters of the North: Canadian Women's History. An Annotated Bibliography (Toronto, 1980); Margaret W. Andrews, "Review Article: Attitudes in Canadian Women's History, 1945-1975," Journal of Canadian Studies (Summer 1977), 69-78; Veronica Strong-Boag, "Raising Clio's Consciousness: Women's History and Archives in Canada," Archivaria (Summer 1978), 70-82; and Elaine Silverman, "Writing Canadian Women's History 1970-1982: An Historiographical Analysis," Canadian Historical Review (December 1982), 513-33.

<sup>9</sup>Susan Mann Trofimenkoff discusses this tendency towards a political or national focus in Canadian historiography in "Nationalism, Feminism and Canadian Intellectual History," Canadian Literature 83 (Winter 1979), 7-20. Edgar McInnis, Canada: A Political and Social History (Toronto, 1982) is an example of the pitiful amount of space accorded to women in traditional historical accounts. McInnis does not even refer to women until page 488 where he mentions the Wartime Elections Act. Thereafter, women merit only several sentences in the remaining 300-odd pages.

<sup>10</sup>There has been some debate in recent years over the concept of two "waves" of feminism which intimates a void of feminist thinking in the interwar period. Nancy Cott points out that indeed the word "feminism" only came into usage in the 1910s and that perhaps there was more continuity between the "waves" than was previously thought. See The Grounding of Modern Feminism (New Haven, 1987), especially the introduction and chapter one.

diversion from political to social history, the revival of an interest in women's history in the early 1970s inspired a re-evaluation of conventional historiographical priorities. But feminist scholars, who were themselves immersed in a discourse on sexual liberation and gender equality, looked to the woman movement of the turn of the century for the roots of their own activism.<sup>11</sup> For them, the history of women's experience was inevitably bound to their progressive resistance to oppression which ultimately culminated in the hard-fought achievement of woman suffrage. The result was the invention of a women's movement that had but one voice. Those women who championed the cause—Nellie McClung, Edith Archibald, Agnes McPhail, to name a few—were heralded as women worthies. Those whose class, region, religion, or ethnicity rendered them either oblivious, indifferent, or resistant to the pursuit of equality became the persona non grata of Canadian women's history.<sup>12</sup>

Such a whiggish approach meant that the majority of histories of women ended conveniently in 1918.<sup>13</sup> Thus the assumption of contemporary writers that,

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<sup>11</sup>Judy Allen, "Contextualizing Late-Nineteenth-Century Feminism: Problems and Comparisons," Canadian Historical Association Journal 1 (1990), 17-36; Ellen Dubois, "The Radicalism of the Woman Suffrage Movement: Notes Toward the Reconstruction of Late-Nineteenth-Century Feminism," Feminist Studies 3, 1 (Fall 1975), 63-71.

<sup>12</sup>The most obvious example is Catherine Cleverdon, The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada (Toronto, 1950).

<sup>13</sup>See Cleverdon, The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada; and Carol Bacchi, Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918 (Toronto, 1983). Many early women's historians in the United States were guilty of the same oversight: Aileen Kraditor, The Ideas of the Woman Suffrage Movement, 1890-1920 (New York, 1965); Eleanor Flexnor, Century of Struggle: The Woman's Rights Movement in the United States (Cambridge, 1959); and Andrew Sinclair, The Emancipation of the American Woman (New York, 1965). Veronica Strong-Boag's The Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada 1893-1929 (Ottawa, 1976) stands out as an exception in the Canadian women's historiography

thereafter, political emancipation translated to equality in the boardroom, the bedroom, and the classroom was left largely unchallenged.<sup>14</sup> A perceived revolution in manners and sexual norms led to the curious metamorphosis of the "new woman" into the "flapper."<sup>15</sup> In her survey of American historiography on the 1920s, Estelle Freedman argues that this standard image of the post-suffrage woman was cultivated by an unquestioning acceptance of contemporary anti-feminist literature. She points out that,

historians have repeated these descriptions not because research and analysis have confirmed their validity, but because no new questions have been asked about women in the 1920s since the initial impressionistic observations were made.<sup>16</sup>

With the increased incorporation during the late 1980s of women into mainstream Canadian historiography, researchers have begun to recognize the failings of the turn-of-the-century women's movement and the fractious elements of feminism and reform that lingered beyond the campaign for suffrage.<sup>17</sup>

Now wary of convenient generalizations and suspicious stereotypes, postmodern feminist writers are rethinking the post-suffrage era through analyses

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of the period.

<sup>14</sup>Estelle B. Freedman, "The New Woman: Changing Views of Women in the 1920s," in Lois Scharf and Joan M. Jensen, eds., Decades of Discontent: The Women's Movement, 1920-1940 (Westport, Conn., 1983), 23-24.

<sup>15</sup>Mary Vipond, "The Image of Women in Mass Circulation Magazines in the 1920s," in Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice, eds., The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History, Vol. 1 (Toronto, 1977), 116-114, 180-84.

<sup>16</sup>Freedman, 22.

<sup>17</sup>Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, and John English, Canada 1900-1945 (Toronto, 1987); and Thompson and Seager, Canada 1922-1939.



of women's paid and unpaid work, women's culture, women's reform organizations, and the variable importance of class, gender, and ethnicity in determining female experience.<sup>18</sup> They are finding that just as Canada was a land divided by its "limited identities,"<sup>19</sup> so too was the reality of women's lives. Histories of women's life course, like Veronica Strong-Boag's The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939 and Beth Light and Ruth Roach Pierson's No Easy Road: Women in Canada 1920s to 1960s, have enriched our understanding of the common bond among women during this period: the persistence of "motherhood" as the fount and essence of their domestic and political endeavours.

The prevalence of a maternalist rationale for women's public activities has been studied primarily through the involvement of women's national organizations in social reform. Inspired by the idea of Christian stewardship in the preachings of the social gospel, organizations like the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the National Council of Women justified their political activities in terms of their role as guardians of the home and as the moral

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<sup>18</sup>See Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "Postmodern Patchwork: Some Recent Trends in the Writing of Women's History in Canada," Canadian Historical Review 72:4 (December 1991), 441-470. These recent works include Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice, eds., The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History, Vol. 2 (Toronto, 1985); Veronica Strong-Boag, The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939 (Toronto, 1988); Beth Light and Ruth Roach Pierson, eds., No Easy Road: Women in Canada 1920s to 1960s (Toronto, 1990); Veronica Strong-Boag, "Canadian Feminism in the 1920s: The Case of Nellie McClung," Journal of Canadian Studies 12:4 (Summer 1977), 58-68; Veronica Strong-Boag, "Pulling the Double Harness or Hauling the Double Load: Women, Work and Feminism on the Canadian Prairie," Journal of Canadian Studies 21:3 (Fall, 1986), 32-52.

<sup>19</sup>J.M.S. Careless, "'Limited Identities' in Canada," Canadian Historical Review 1 (March 1969), 1-10.

housekeepers of a society that was becoming increasingly corrupted by urbanization and crime. Veronica Strong-Boag's The Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada, 1893-1929 and various articles on the WCTU and the YWCA by Nancy Sheehan and Diana Pedersen have effectively placed women's corporate activities within the movements of feminism and reform.<sup>20</sup>

Far from being the quintessential women's organization of the progressive era, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire has received comparatively little attention from historians of Canadian women. Bound by the traditional emphasis on the feminist movement, historians have been disinclined to concede women's power beyond the struggle for equal rights. They have chosen to study women's organizations--the WCTU, the YWCA, the National Council of Women--whose fundamental ideology and agenda fit into the model of maternal feminism.

As a patriotic organization that had neither feminism nor urban reform as its primary mandate, the IODE has been more difficult to characterize. Nancy Sheehan has made several efforts to distinguish and clarify the Order's structure, membership, and educational activities. She points out that the IODE was similar to other women's groups in its membership--it was comprised primarily of women from Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, middle- and upper-class backgrounds--and

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<sup>20</sup>These include Nancy Sheehan, "Temperance, Education and the WCTU in Alberta, 1905-1930," Journal of Educational Thought 14 (August 1980), 108-24; "The WCTU and Educational Strategies on the Canadian Prairie," History of Education Quarterly 24 (Spring 1984), 101-119; "Women Helping Women: The WCTU and the Foreign Population in the West, 1905-1930," International Journal of Women's Studies 6 (1983), 395-411; and Diana Pedersen, "Building Today for the Womanhood of Tomorrow: Businessmen, Boosters, and the YWCA, 1890-1930," Urban History Review 15:3 (February 1987), 225-240.

in the hierarchical nature of its national, provincial, municipal, and local structure.<sup>21</sup> As Marcel Dirk has noted, however, the IODE was unique in its relatively late formation (1900), in its vision of an empire-wide association, and in its staunch commitment to the support of imperialism.<sup>22</sup> Dirk's thesis, "The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and the First World War," has done much to further our understanding of the IODE in wartime: in both the Boer War and First World War Daughters of the Empire provided hospital supplies, socks, sweaters, and other field comforts for the soldiers; they raised funds for soldiers' and nurses' clubs as well as for ambulances, hospital wings, and relief shelters; and they rendered assistance in the care of soldiers' widows and orphans. Dirk argues that, by supporting the war through such activities, Daughters of the Empire were able to express their patriotism in ways that were suitably feminine.

By tracing the activities of the IODE from its inception in 1900 until the end of the war in 1918 Dirk had the luxury of dealing with a period which saw the zenith of an imperialistic fervour in Canada. The practical application of the IODE's penchant for patriotism, which was easily explainable during a period of war, enabled Dirk to avoid the real question of where women fit into the concept of empire and how they rationalized their participation in sustaining it.

In studying the IODE in the 1920s, a period when Daughters of the Empire

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<sup>21</sup>Nancy Sheehan, "Women's Organizations and Educational Issues, 1900-1930," Canadian Women's Studies/Les cahiers de la Femme 7:3 (Fall 1986), 90-94. See also "The IODE, the Schools, and World War I," History of Education Review 13:1 (1984), 29-44; and "Philosophy, Pedagogy, and Practice: The IODE and the Schools in Canada, 1900-1945," History of Education Review 2:2 (1990), 307-321.

<sup>22</sup>Marcel Dirk, "The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and the First World War," M.A. Thesis, Carleton University, 1988, 15-16.

were no longer able to look directly to the war for patriotic inspiration and justification for their activities, it is necessary to ponder the link between the IODE's affirmation of the racial, class, and gender hierarchies of imperialism and its own empowerment as an organization of women. It is somewhat less difficult to explain the increased involvement of women in the pacifist movement in Canada during this period. The supposedly natural propensity of women as nurturers and conciliators to promote peace has facilitated the analyses of a growing number of publications on the subject.<sup>23</sup> The connection between women and imperialism, however, which in many respects embodies the antithesis of pacifist doctrine, is complicated by its association with war, racism, and sexism.

In fact, recent literature on gender and race in the colonial context has pointed out that, generally, women have been blamed for reinforcing the racial and class hierarchies associated with imperialism. As Helen Callaway writes: "Women of the Empire...were all too often reincarnated as representations of the worst side of the ruling group--its racism, its petty snobbishness and pervading aura of superiority."<sup>24</sup> Although the Canadian context in the 1920s was far removed from colonial circumstances, the same questions may be applied to the relationship between the Daughters of the Empire and those who were on the receiving end of their philanthropy--chiefly immigrants and the working class. Did the

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<sup>23</sup>See, for example, Ruth Roach Pierson, ed., Women and Peace: Theoretical, Historical and Practical Perspectives (New York, 1987); and Beverly Boutilier, "Educating for Peace and Co-operation: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in Canada, 1919-1929," M.A. Thesis, Carleton University, 1988.

<sup>24</sup>Helen Callaway, Gender, Culture and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria (London, 1987), 3.

Daughters play a significant role in the perpetuation of racial and class antagonisms? Or did they merely draw upon an imperialist dialogue that they had no part in creating?

With limited sources on women and imperialism in the Canadian context, it has been necessary to draw primarily upon British and American literature to establish the theoretical basis for this study. The growing interest in colonialism in recent years has produced numerous books and articles which explore the shaping of gender ideology by the imperial agenda.<sup>25</sup> Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel have very recently compiled a collection of essays, Western Women and Imperialism, which challenges the traditional belief among imperialists that colonies were "no place for a white woman." They write:

The study of western women in colonial settings is but the most recent reconstruction of now fast-changing imperial history, one that rejects the notion of empire solely as male space...or even of imperial history as solely constituted by what the policy makers in London or in other Western capitals attempted to achieve.<sup>26</sup>

Although this thesis deals less with the concept of colonial domination than with the ancillary ideas of imperialism, many of the arguments that are presented in Western Women and Imperialism can enrich our understanding of the theoretical

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<sup>25</sup>These include Jane Haggis, "Gendering Colonialism or Colonializing Gender? Recent Women's Studies Approaches to White Women and the History of British Colonialism," Women's Studies International Forum 13 (1990), 105-15; Margaret Strobel, "Gender and Race in the Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Empire," in Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, eds., Becoming Visible: Women in European History Second Edition (Boston, 1987), 375-398; and Vron Ware, Beyond the Pale: A History of Women and Racism (London, 1992).

<sup>26</sup>Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel, eds., Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1992), 4.

basis of the IODE in Canada. In the same way that British women in India used the concept of empire to test their capabilities in the public sphere, so too did the IODE in Canada. In the 1920s it was able to capitalize on the rise of a social consciousness in matters of public health, child welfare, education, and immigration to exert its public influence in the name of imperial motherhood.

The lack of secondary literature on the IODE, particularly in the 1920s, is compensated by a substantial array of primary documents housed in the National Archives of Canada. The IODE National Executive Minutes, along with various constitutional reports, resolutions, and amendments, provide an understanding of the IODE's structure and order of business. As well, a number of historical pamphlets compiled by the Order outline its activities and give some insight into the ideals that stimulated its creation.

By far the most significant source of information for an analysis of the IODE is the organization's magazine. Published on a quarterly basis, Echoes became for the Order an outlet for its ideas and aspirations as well as a medium for its patriotic propaganda. "We have no hesitation in pronouncing Echoes the cheapest and best publication issued in Canada today," the editor exclaimed in 1928, "and if every member of the Order, professing allegiance to its aims and ideals, recognized that it was her duty and privilege to subscribe, we should enter on an era of a great awakening of opportunity."<sup>27</sup> An annual subscription fee of a mere fifty cents meant that Echoes enjoyed relatively wide circulation, at least among

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<sup>27</sup>Church, Facts Concerning Work..., 7.

the members of the Order. Every issue acknowledged those chapters achieving a subscription rate of 100 percent and encouraged others to strive for the same. Certainly, the content of the magazine would have appealed to the class of the Order's membership. Its fashion and culinary sections as well as its advertisements were obviously directed at high-income readers. Along with its editorials and chapter reports, Echoes is valuable for the variety of articles it printed. Essays on child welfare, immigration, education, and other national and imperial topics help to clarify the Order's ideology and to illuminate the ways the IODE was able to rationalize its existence.<sup>28</sup>

Without question, the most difficult task in dealing with a patriotic organization like the IODE is to calculate the degree of feminist consciousness that stimulated its agenda. It would be easy to dismiss the Daughters of the Empire as being conservative, non-feminist, or anti-feminist—indeed, there were several members of the Opponents of Women's Suffrage organization among them. The IODE was careful to present itself as a non-political organization that avoided association with controversial matters, including those that affected the status of women. American historian Antoinette Burton has made a point, however, that is central to this thesis: "Historians must not lose sight of the fact that feminism(s)

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<sup>28</sup>The excerpts from Echoes that are used in this thesis represent ideas that appear to be typical of the IODE. For most of the examples provided there are many other articles which convey similar opinions. Always wary of controversial issues, the Echoes Committee carefully screened all of the work to be printed to ensure that it represented the views of the Order.

are and always will be as much quests for power as they are battles for rights."<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the Daughters of the Empire sought and derived power and influence by adhering to society's conception of true womanhood. They deliberately claimed the notion of women's moral superiority to legitimize their public activities and their exalted position as the "mothers of the race."

Such premises are consistent with the basic tenets of maternal feminism. Like the IODE, most English-Canadian feminist reformers of the early-twentieth century believed in the virtues of Anglo-Saxon hegemony. Nellie McClung, an active member of the temperance movement and an advocate of female suffrage, based much of her feminist ideology on racist assumptions. Mariana Valverde writes:

Feminism, Christian chauvinism, and ethnocentrism were for McClung and her fellow feminists a unified whole: the superiority of the Anglo culture is not an incidental belief that could be excised, leaving a pure feminism behind. Rather the very origins, as well as the form, of McClung's feminism are shaped by ethnocentric ideas about sexuality and civilization shared by non-feminist moral reformers.<sup>30</sup>

It was typical for feminist reformers to embrace rather than reject Victorian notions that women were morally superior by virtue of their supposedly inherent qualities of mothering, nurturing, and purity. They argued that such attributes were needed for the improvement of society. Combined with assumptions about imperial supremacy, this belief meant that the Anglo-Saxon woman was regarded,

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<sup>29</sup>Antoinette Burton, "The White Woman's Burden: British Feminists and 'the Indian Woman,' 1865-1915," in Chaudhuri and Strobel, Western Women and Imperialism, 152.

<sup>30</sup>Mariana Valverde, The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925 (Toronto, 1991), 120.



as Burton argues, "as the saviour of her race, not to mention the highest female type."<sup>11</sup> Recognition of the ideological similarities between the IODE and other women's organizations, then, helps to strip the Order of many of the conservative labels it has incurred. Although its chief purpose of stimulating patriotism made it distinct from other national groups that were committed to more material aspects of social reform, it expressed a similar racist and maternalist rationale.

This thesis is not a comprehensive examination of the IODE in the 1920s. While the Order also established chapters in India, the Bahamas, Bermuda, Newfoundland, and the United States, only its organization in Canada will be considered here. Moreover, the IODE's vast membership and the complexity and breadth of its activities have prescribed the cursory nature of this study. It relies primarily on the records of the organization's elite, for the most part leaving a local analysis of the organization to future scholarship. Such an approach, however, necessitates a preliminary qualification of the findings of this thesis, and places limits on the tenacity of its conclusions.

Perhaps most significantly, the point must be made that the criteria of imperialism, nationalism, womanhood, and motherhood were flexible categories. To provide a precise definition of such terminology on behalf of the IODE would be to impose artificial limits on the historical data. Influenced by a membership which was to varying degrees involved in other organizations representing women, children, temperance, and urban reform, the shaping of the IODE's

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<sup>11</sup>Burton, 138.

ideology was neither unambiguous nor one-dimensional. Although its policies were articulated effectively by the Order's executive, the IODE did not operate in a social vacuum. Its members lived, worked, and raised their families in the world outside the offices, meeting rooms, and convention centres of the IODE. In a continuous exchange, they would have received as well as contributed ideas about the meaning and purpose of a commitment to the Order.

The best one can expect to extract from the IODE's records is a semi-comprehensive view of the Order's aims and principles, for the most part as cultivated and articulated by the those in the upper echelons of the organization: those who served on the committees, presided over meetings, wrote articles and reports for the IODE's magazine, orchestrated programmes and activities, and generally represented and accounted for the reputation and integrity of the organization. That is to say that the motivation that lay behind an IODE councillor who served on the national executive may well have been far removed from what inspired a member of a local chapter to carry out her duties in her rural community. It is possible that the grandiose conceptions of empire and human progress that guided the IODE's leaders and spokeswomen played little part in the work of the Daughters of the Empire at lower levels.

It is the intention of this study, then, to suggest general conclusions as to how the IODE was able to combine Victorian notions about women's moral character with the ideas of racial hegemony central to imperialism to derive empowerment as an organization of women. Chapter one will briefly outline structure and

membership patterns, explain the Order's ideology, and deliberate the ways in which the IODE was able to rationalize its existence. Chapters two, three, and four will be devoted to the themes of child welfare, patriotic education, and the Canadianization of immigrants, the three key areas of concern for the Order during the decade following the war. By placing the IODE within the context of the 1920s, a period of social reform, experimentation in state welfare, and conversion from imperialism to nationalism, this thesis will provide insights to the governing ideas of the Order and how they were reconciled with Canadian society in a decade of transition.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Continuity and Change: The IODE's Response to a Decade of Peace

We have smiled at the old adage: "The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world," but when that hand also holds the ballot paper we must confess it truth.<sup>1</sup>

Addressing the Women's Section of the Grain Growers Convention in January 1920, Mrs. C.C. Hearn, a member of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, stressed the magnitude of the power that had been placed in the hands of women at the close of the previous decade. This power, she claimed, brought with it "the gravest responsibility, especially to the women of large and powerful organizations such as yours." Concluding with a call for peacetime reconstruction, Hearn noted that Canada stood "at the parting of the ways" and that the following ten years would decide its destiny as a nation. "We sent our splendid men overseas to fight for us and for our country," she declared patriotically, "and surely now ours is the great response of preserving and building up for them the land for which they made such supreme sacrifices."<sup>2</sup>

As the IODE embarked upon its patriotic mission of reconstruction following the war, it faced a decade of both change and continuity in the ideological tides

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<sup>1</sup>"Report of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," *Echoes* (June 1924), 38.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. C.C. Hearn, "The Education of the New Canadian," *Echoes* (March 1920), 33.

of imperialism and nationalism and in notions about women's roles in society. The imperialistic fervour, which had reached its zenith during the Boer and the First World Wars, was beginning to wane by the early 1920s.<sup>3</sup> Disillusioned by the horrors of European conflict and the entanglements of an imperialistic foreign policy, many Canadians began to give credence to the emerging principles of pacifism, isolationism, and nationalism. The ardent support of war which had sustained the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire during its founding decade was no longer palatable to a country wary of military dissonance. Throughout the 1920s, the Order's patronage shifted to the collective security of the League of Nations; it upheld the British Empire as a model of order and harmony, and demonstrated a binding faith in Canada's role in ensuring international good will. Under the wing of a mighty and beneficent mother country, Canada would grow to its full stature as a nation. Women were to have a critical role in this process: their "natural" moral qualities as the progenitors of the race would ensure the purity of Canada's blood stream and the loyalty of its citizens.

At the same time, political, social, and technological realities had begun to transform the lives of middle-class women. The vote, of course, brought to women a newfound sense of equality which carried with it the responsibility of becoming educated and worthy citizens. A decline in fertility rates meant that

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<sup>3</sup> See Carl Berger, The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914 (Toronto, 1970). See also his Imperialism and Nationalism, 1884-1914: A Conflict in Canadian Thought (Toronto, 1969); and Robert J.D. Page, "Carl Berger and the Intellectual Origins of Canadian Imperialist Thought, 1867-1914," Journal of Canadian Studies V:3 (August 1970), 39-43.

women had fewer children at home to care for. Sexual liberation, a longer life span, and access to higher education brought a better quality of living. A revolution in household management with the introduction of gas stoves, sewing machines, and factory-made textiles began to simplify home production; and, with the progression of the decade, women's economic role as consumer rather than producer was consolidated.<sup>4</sup>

Notwithstanding these changes, however, the image of ideal womanhood remained largely unaltered.<sup>5</sup> If anything, the feature of the image least compatible with the new realities of women's lives was strengthened. The ideological consecration of motherhood as the essence of female nature became more persuasive with rising standards of child care and home management. Rooted in the Victorian middle-class construction of "separate spheres," post-war assumptions about biological and psychological differences between the sexes cast a role for the New Woman that merged the economic and social advances achieved by the woman movement with the primacy of women's maternal and domestic function.

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<sup>4</sup>General references are Veronica Strong-Boag, The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English Canada, 1919-1939 (Toronto, 1988); Carl Degler, At Odds: Women and the Family: in America from the Revolution to the Present (New York, 1980); and Angus McLaren and Arlene Tigar McLaren, The Bedroom and the State: The Changing Practices and Politics of Contraception and Abortion in Canada, 1880-1980 (Toronto, 1986).

<sup>5</sup>Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History," Journal of American History 75 (June 1988), 9-39; Linda Kealey, ed., A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s (Toronto, 1979), Introduction; and Ruth Schwartz Cowan, "Two Washes in the Morning and a Bridge Party at Night: The American Housewife between the Wars," in Lois Scharf and Joan M. Jensen, eds., Decades of Discontent: The Women's Movement 1920-1940 (Westport, Conn., 1983), 177-198.

But the continued appraisal of women's value according to the ostensibly feminine characteristics of nurturing and purity endowed women with a morally superior status that served as a rationale for the abrogation of their public marginality. Convinced of the threat to the home and family by the social ills of crime, prostitution, and poverty, society accepted women in the public sphere as moral keepers so long as their professed concern was securing the sanctity of the home. This rationale, usually referred to as maternal feminism, formed the basis of the women's reform movement from the 1880s to the 1920s.<sup>6</sup> Women's denominational missionary societies, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Young Women's Christian Association, the Dominion Women's Enfranchisement Association, and the National Council of Women were a few of the many national women's organizations established during this period. Their public credibility in issues of temperance, urban reform, public health, and female suffrage was expedited by the maternalism of their focus.<sup>7</sup>

It was in this context of female "institution building"<sup>8</sup> that the Imperial Order

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<sup>6</sup>Wayne Roberts, "Rocking the Cradle for the World: The New Woman and Maternal Feminism, Toronto, 1877-1914," in Linda Kealey, ed., A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s (Toronto, 1979), 15-45.

<sup>7</sup>Veronica Strong-Boag, "Setting the Stage: National Organization and the Women's Movement in the Late 19th Century," in Susan Mann Trofimenkoff and Alison Prentice, eds., The Neglected Majority (Toronto, 1977), 87-103. See also Veronica Strong-Boag, The Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada, 1893-1929, Chs. 1, 2, and 3 (Ottawa, 1976); and Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "Organizations in Canada: The English Protestant Tradition," in Paula Bourne, ed., Women's Paid and Unpaid Work: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives (Toronto, 1985), 79-95.

<sup>8</sup>Estelle Freedman discusses how, during the years spanning the turn of the twentieth century, women united as a strategy for power and action in "Separatism as Strategy: Female Institution Building and American Feminism, 1870-1930," Feminist Studies (1979), 512-529.

Daughters of the Empire came into being in 1900. As moral guardians of imperialism, however, Daughters of the Empire had aims that were somewhat removed from those of other women's organizations of the period. Whereas the YWCA and the WCTU concerned themselves primarily with social housekeeping activities, and woman suffrage groups crusaded for equal rights, the IODE had neither feminism nor urban reform as its principal mandate.<sup>9</sup> Created, rather, through a vision of patriotism and a spirit of service, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire stood for a resounding faith in British ideals, British justice, and British traditions. The Order's mission, the stimulation of loyalty to "One Flag, One Throne, One Empire," encompassed a myriad of aims and ideals which served to inspire its members throughout the decades following its inception:

- To encourage and develop the spirit of patriotism.
- To furnish a bond of union amongst the women and children of the Empire.
- To strengthen ties between the Dominion and the Motherland.
- To provide an organization ready for national emergencies.
- To care for the dependents of our soldiers and sailors.
- To keep alive the memory of brave and heroic deeds.
- To promote a higher citizenship amongst all our citizens-British and foreign-born.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>See Diana Pedersen, "Building Today for the Womanhood of Tomorrow': Businessmen, Boosters, and the YWCA, 1890-1930," Urban History Review 15:3 (February 1987), 225-243; and Nancy Sheehan, "Women Helping Women': The WCTU and the Foreign Population in the West, 1905-1930," International Journal of Women's Studies 6 (November-December 1983), 71-86.

<sup>10</sup>NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 33, Doc. 25, Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire What it is and What it Does, n.p., n.d.



The war years enabled Daughters of the Empire to articulate their loyalty through their tremendous contributions to the war effort; in the 1920s, the IODE signified its reverence for King and country through a commitment to peacetime reconstruction which focused on the purification of Canada's blood stream and the political socialization of its youth.

Despite differences in ideology, the IODE did share a number of features with its contemporaries. Open to girls and women who were British subjects, the Order drew its membership from women of Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, middle- and upper-class backgrounds, many of whom belonged to more than one organization at a time. Like other club women, the typical Daughter of the Empire,

is married...middle-aged...with household occupations and yet with some leisure...[whose] children are wholly or half-way grown up and [thus] she is able to undertake some work outside.... The need of this middle-aged married woman for work and social cooperation, her impulses to help others and accomplish something worth doing in the world outside, are the forces which have created women's organizations.<sup>11</sup>

While membership was not officially restricted by class or income, the social nature of the Order's programmes and proceedings encouraged women of the "leisure class" to become active. "It was a pleasant era of social life for the Daughters," Mrs. Helen Yeo of the Charlottetown chapter recalled, "afternoon teas, the tables decorated with the symbolic violets; "At Homes" for naval officers; bridge parties at Government House, guests of the Chatelaine; a Fancy Calico and

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<sup>11</sup>Marjory MacMurchy, *The Woman—Bless Her*, quoted in Ramsay Cook and Wendy Mitchinson, eds., *The Proper Sphere: Woman's Place in Canadian Society* (Toronto, 1976), 218-19.

Dress Ball; entertainments in the opera house...."<sup>12</sup> Moreover, the IODE's class status was reinforced by a roster of honorary members and sponsors that included prime ministers, premiers, lieutenant governors, and the wives of governor generals.<sup>13</sup>

As Gillian Weiss discovered in her study of Vancouver clubwomen, those women who served on the committees and executives of national organizations were not necessarily representative of the rank and file of the membership. Along with the middle-class majority, and a number of women "from the highest level of society," there was a small body of working-class women that also participated at lower levels.<sup>14</sup> The same is likely true for the IODE. Although the records provide little information about the backgrounds of local chapter members, it does appear that the social profile of the Order changed somewhat as it expanded into rural areas during the war. Caught up in the patriotic mood of service, women of ethnic, religious, and class circumstances who had hitherto been alienated by the IODE, formed their own chapters so they could participate in the war effort. As Marcel Dirk discovered in his examination of the IODE in wartime, this period saw the formation of chapters comprised of women of

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<sup>12</sup>Helen M. Yeo, An Era of Change: A Historical Narrative--1901-1976, The Royal Edward Chapter IODE (n.p., 1976), 2 (located in the National Library of Canada).

<sup>13</sup>Nancy Sheehan, "The IODE, the Schools and World War I," History of Education Review 13:1 (1984), 31.

<sup>14</sup>Gillian Weiss, "The Brightest Women of Our Land: Vancouver Clubwomen 1910-1928," in Barbara K. Latham and Robert J. Pazdro, eds., Not Just Pin Money (Victoria, 1984), 199-209.

French, Icelandic, Jewish, and working-class backgrounds.<sup>15</sup> When the war ended, however, it is likely that most of these chapters disbanded: it was in the rural areas where most of the losses in membership occurred. Indeed, the IODE's organizing reports in the 1920s make very few references to chapters of non-Anglo-Protestant affiliation.<sup>16</sup> At the regular monthly meeting in March 1920, the national executive acknowledged a letter received by the Order's founder, Margaret Polson Murray, concerning the forming of chapters "composed of colored women." The executive committee decided that it would reply only after it had discussed the issue in depth, as it was a matter "requiring grave consideration."<sup>17</sup> As a perusal of the minutes of subsequent meetings would indicate, no ruling was made with regard to this particular question.

It appears that the various ethnic, religious, and class groups that were permitted to join the Order, rather than being integrated, were merely tolerated as segregated chapters. As a result, members of non-Anglo-Protestant origins were isolated from the mainstream of IODE activity and often operated out of a blind sense of service. The Nimpkish Chapter of Alert Bay, for instance, composed primarily of "our Indian sisters," was oblivious to the purpose of much of its fund raising. At the provincial annual meeting of the IODE in British Columbia, Mrs. Cooke, the representative for the Nimpkish Chapter was asked

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<sup>15</sup>Marcel Dirk, "Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and the First World War," M.A. Thesis, Carleton University, 1988, 58-60.

<sup>16</sup>It appears, though, that many of the chapters comprised of French-Canadian women remained intact. In fact, in 1924 a provincial chapter was even formed in Quebec. There is very little indication in the national chapter records of the motivation of French women, besides a penchant for service, in their commitment to an imperialist organization.

<sup>17</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, March 1920, 219.

the opinion of the native women on the Order's War Memorial Scheme. "Our members do not understand it," she replied. "They have sent me here to learn about it, but we said if the Provincial Chapter passed it, it must be all right and we will support it."<sup>18</sup>

Moved by a sharp sense of "noblesse oblige,"<sup>19</sup> the Daughters of the Empire were always conscious of maintaining the Order's image of respectability.<sup>20</sup> By virtue of their leisure, breeding, and education, these women felt that they possessed the superiority of race and class that deemed them worthy of their mission. Their sense of moral responsibility to socialize, uplift, and redeem those of lesser circumstances was realized through a hierarchical and custodial relationship which depended on the implicit inferiority of their clients. Moreover, to have openly welcomed women of varying social backgrounds and ethnicities would have detracted from the particular rhetoric of sisterhood used by the Order to inspire the level of activity it needed. Its aim from the outset was to foster a bond of union among daughters of the mother country whose personal commitment to their race and heritage would ensure the stimulation of patriotism and a true love for the empire. The Order's papers, reports, and magazine articles

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<sup>18</sup>Echoes (October-November 1920), 53.

<sup>19</sup>Marjory MacMurchy, "Citizenship," Echoes (October 1922), 23.

<sup>20</sup>Kathleen McCarthy discusses this attitude of "noblesse oblige" among women's philanthropic organizations in Noblesse Oblige: Charity and Cultural Philanthropy in Chicago, 1849-1929 (Fredericton, 1990). See also, by the same author, "Parallel Power Structure: Women and the Voluntary Sphere," in Lady Bountiful Revisited: Women, Philanthropy, and Power (London, 1990), 1-31.

are steeped in the symbolism of female unity. They promote a "great assembly of women united in a common cause," stirred by "a sense of kinship" and "inspired by a common mission...upheld by the selfsame ideals."<sup>21</sup> Of course, the theme of sisterhood was not unique to the IODE during this period: bound together by shared experiences of male domination, many women drew confidence from solidarity.<sup>22</sup> The IODE's conception of female unity, however, was not designed for the purpose of serving a sense of feminist consciousness, nor did it extend across lines of class or ethnicity. It was used, rather, to unify women of a particular class whose values and ideals were suited to the imperialistic cause the Order was designed to serve.

By and large, then, Daughters of the Empire were Anglo-Protestant social elites: the wives of men who were pillars of their communities. Catharine Welland Merritt, who was for several years an outstanding figure in the councils of the IODE as national organizing secretary, was the wife of Major General Sir Henry Pellatt, CVO. Of United Empire Loyalist stock, she was the granddaughter of Honourable William Hamilton Merritt who built the Welland Canal and to whose memory a monument was erected in St. Catharines.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Minnie

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<sup>21</sup>Rosa Shaw, "An Account of the Thirtieth Annual Meeting of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," Echoes (June 1930), 6.

<sup>22</sup>For more information on the phenomenon of sisterhood see Nancy Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood: 'Woman's Sphere' in New England, 1780-1935 (New Haven, 1979); Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth Century America," Signs 1:1 (Fall 1975); Martha Vicinus, Independent Women: Work and Community for Single Women, 1850-1920 (London, 1985).

<sup>23</sup>"William Hamilton Merritt," in Jesse Elgar Middleton and W. Scott Downs, eds., National Encyclopedia of Canadian Biography (Toronto, 1935), 151-52.

Julia Beatrice Campbell, regent of the Fort Garry Chapter, was the daughter of a doctor and the wife of Colin H. Campbell, a prominent lawyer and statesman. Besides holding the position of Attorney General, her husband served on the Winnipeg City Council, held a seat in the Manitoba Government, and acted as president of various organizations including the YMCA.<sup>24</sup> Mary Gooderham, who served as the Order's national president during the war, was the wife of Englishman Lt. Col. Albert Edward Gooderham, a director of the Bank of Toronto, President of the Dominion of Canada Guarantee and Accident Insurance Company, and rated as a millionaire by Saturday Night.<sup>25</sup> The IODE's president in the early 1920s, Mrs. P.E. Doolittle, was married to a prestigious physician who assisted in the formation of the Toronto Automobile Club and the Canadian Wheelman's Association.<sup>26</sup> Social status was not monopolized by the IODE's national executive, however. Even the Sir Robert Borden Chapter of the small village of Wolfville, Nova Scotia represented the business and political elite. Among its founding members were the wives of the mayor, the president of Acadia University, the owner of the local newspaper, the Presbyterian minister, the school principal, along with prominent physicians, businessmen, and

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<sup>24</sup>"Campbell, Colin H.," in Henry James Morgan, ed., Canadian Men and Women of the Time, Second Edition (Toronto, 1912), 190.

<sup>25</sup>"Gooderham, A.E.," Canadian Men and Women of the Time, 453.

<sup>26</sup>"Doolittle, P.E.," Canadian Men and Women of the Time, 336.

industrialists.<sup>27</sup>

Cross-membership was another feature that linked the IODE with other national women's organizations. Mrs. C.T. Campbell, for example, the first treasurer of the municipal chapter of London, Ontario, a position she held for over twenty years, demonstrated her penchant for charity and reform work by her involvement in several organizations. The wife of Dr. Cl. T. Campbell, former mayor of the city of London, she was treasurer of the A.R. Memorial Children's Hospital, honorary regent of the Sir George Ross Chapter, honorary vice-regent of the Trafalgar and the 7th Regiment Chapters, and a charter member of the Lord Elgin Chapter. She was also a member of the Local Council of Women, the Sanatorium Aid, the Victorian Order of Nurses, the Child Welfare Association, and the London Historical Society of which her husband was a founder.<sup>28</sup> Thus, while the Daughters were largely united by class affiliations, their cross-membership would have precluded a homogeneous ideology. Obviously in agreement regarding the Order's fundamental premise of imperial unity, nonetheless, individual members would have brought to the IODE varying opinions on other peripheral issues based on their outside interests and connections. The influence of the social gospel, feminism, and reform would have intersected the Order's imperial convictions at various points.

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<sup>27</sup>Lorraine Coops, "So Long as the British Empire Lives: Patterns of Continuity and Change Within the Sir Robert Borden Chapter Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1915-1965," Honours Thesis, Acadia University, 1991, 33-34.

<sup>28</sup>"Obituary," *Echoes* (December 1930), 18.

Charlotte Whitton, one of the Order's most notable members, is likely the best example of the myriad of interests that would have influenced the discourse of IODE meetings. Throughout the period during which she acted as convenor of the Order's child welfare and immigration committees, Whitton was also organizing national conferences for the Canadian Council on Child Welfare, attending League of Nations sessions in Europe, serving on the Social Services Council of Canada, supervising provincial surveys on immigration, heading committees of the National Council of Women, attending meetings of the Queen's Trustees in Kingston, performing duties as historian for the Canadian Women's Press Club, and giving frequent public addresses on the problems of immigration and child welfare.<sup>29</sup> Whitton was an exception among IODE women, though, in that she remained unmarried. In the years from 1920 to 1930, less than nine percent of national executive councillors were single.<sup>30</sup> At a time when women faced an often difficult choice between a career and marriage, Whitton decided to devote her life to a vocation she viewed as a calling. Her passion for service, instilled by both the traditions of Queen's, which urged its students to serve the nation, and a wartime ethos that evoked a fierce pride in the British Empire, was shared by other IODE members.

Structurally, like many other national women's organizations, the IODE

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<sup>29</sup>P.T. Rooke, and R.L. Schnell, No Bleeding Heart: Charlotte Whitton, a Feminist on the Right (Vancouver, 1987), chapters 2 and 3.

<sup>30</sup>This figure is based on lists of national executive councillors printed in each issue of Echoes.



endorsed a hierarchical system of ranked order and power. In cities where three or more primary, or local, chapters were active, municipal chapters were created to act as intermediaries between the provincial and local branches. Legislative power was entrusted to the women serving on the chapters' executives and to those officers who represented their branches at higher levels. Operational control over the various IODE chapters lay with elected councillors who supervised programs and activities as part of national chapter committees. These national committees, such as the Education, Immigration, Navy League, Child Welfare, Press, Distinguished Visitors, and Work in India, were comprised of members elected by provincial chapters who were also convenors of similar sub-committees at the provincial level. Reports of their local departments' activities were made at the provincial meetings and then were sent to the national convenor, who combined them in her statement to the national executive. When passed by the executive, these reports were presented to the national chapter at the annual meeting after which they were made available to the provincial branches. There were also those committees which might be termed personal to the national executive, such as the finance and constitution committees, whose findings went directly to the national executive. The members of these committees, whether appointed by the provinces or elected by the national executive had no provincial status by virtue of membership on these national sub-

committees.<sup>31</sup>

One significant distinction for the IODE was its ultimate goal of an empire-wide association. It succeeded in establishing national chapters in Canada, Newfoundland, Bermuda, and the Bahamas, as well as an Imperial Order Daughters of the British Empire in the United States which, by 1930, had 140 chapters in 17 states, with a membership of 4,000.<sup>32</sup> The Order even had a small chapter in Poona, India, which, led by its ambitious regent, Miss Sorabji, remained dedicated to spreading the gospel of imperial sisterhood throughout this remote region of the empire. Difficulties caused by distance and inefficient communication, however, prevented the IODE from creating the vast organization it had envisioned. Moreover, the terms of its affiliation with the Victoria League in England, an empire association with very similar patriotic principles, stipulated that no organization would occur in parts of the empire where the other was already established.<sup>33</sup> But, indeed, during the period after the war, IODE organizing secretaries found that maintaining enthusiasm for an imperialist order in Canada alone was an enormous task.

At the height of patriotic zeal, the period from 1914 to 1918, the IODE had enjoyed its most substantial growth. Its membership had expanded from 75

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<sup>31</sup>See NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 5, Amendments to 1918 Constitution, 1920, and Resolutions 1920, Amendments to 1920 Constitution, 1921, and Resolutions 1921, and Report of Committee on Amendments to Redraft the Constitution, 1920.

<sup>32</sup>Mrs. J.M.C. Muir, "Report on Child Welfare," *Echoes* (June 1930), 9.

<sup>33</sup>*Minutes*, Executive Meeting, 14 June 1921, 45; *Minutes*, Executive Meeting, 6 July 1921, 53.

chapters with 4,000 members in 1903 to 750 chapters with 50,000 members in 1918.<sup>34</sup> An atmosphere rife with patriotism and the tremendous need for material aid during the war served as a powerful impetus for the Order's growth and morale. Indeed, the IODE's response to the empire's cause was remarkable. Plugging into a war relief network formed by the Canadian Red Cross Society, the Canadian War Contingent Association, and the Canadian Field Comforts Commission, the IODE had access to valuable information which allowed it to optimize its efforts during the conflict. Countless teas, bake sales, and pageants, the maintenance of overseas hospitals and clubs, the production of hospital supplies and comforts, the support of wartime funds, and the assistance of mothers, wives, and children of soldiers comprised the focus of Daughters of the Empire's lives from 1914 until 1918.<sup>35</sup>

The IODE's extraordinary support of Canadian and British soldiers overseas allowed its members to demonstrate their concern for the empire by combining imperialism with the cult of true womanhood. Without the impetus of war, however, patriotic activities became increasingly difficult to justify. As overseas war work shut down, and soldiers returned home, many women felt their services were no longer needed. Inevitably, for an organization which derived its vision from patriotism, peace took its toll on membership. By 1925, the

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<sup>34</sup> *Dirk*, 38, 52.

<sup>35</sup> See *Dirk*, chapters 2, 3, and 4; Ira Beattie, "The IODE in Canada, 1900-1964," *Atlantic Advocate* (May 1964), 64-66; W.A. Craik, "A Noble Order—and the War," *Maclean's Magazine* (June 1915), 28-30, 78-79; *Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1900-1925* (Toronto, 1925); *IODE in Wartime: A Record of Women's Work for King and Empire* (Toronto, 1920).

number of chapters was reduced from 750 to 685;<sup>36</sup> by 1929, the number of Daughters in Canada had plummeted to 20,355.<sup>37</sup> At the annual meeting of the national executive in 1930, the organizing secretary, Mrs. Heber Vroom, complained that, "it is not easy in these days of peace to arouse enthusiasm in people and to enlist their interest in work that is surely, greatly needed."<sup>38</sup>

The opening of the decade had created false hopes for the growth of the IODE. With the formation of a provincial chapter in Nova Scotia in November of 1920, Mrs. Stewart, the national organizing secretary, exclaimed that 1920 stood "as the most important year in the whole history of the Order in the work of completed organization."<sup>39</sup> Nova Scotia was the third province to establish a provincial chapter that year, following Ontario and Alberta. Once the provincial chapter in Quebec was formed in 1924, the organizational hierarchy was practically complete, with the exception of Prince Edward Island where Daughters of the Empire encountered difficulties in sustaining even their local chapters.<sup>40</sup> In February 1925, for example, the national executive received a request for the disbandment of the Active Service Chapter of Alberton, Prince Edward Island.

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<sup>36</sup>Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1900-1925, 6.

<sup>37</sup>NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 13, Rebecca M. Church, Facts Concerning the Work of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Children of the Empire (Junior Branch) (1929), 3.

<sup>38</sup>Mrs. Heber Vroom, "An Account of the Thirtieth Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," Echoes (June 1930), 7.

<sup>39</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, 10 November 1920, 121.

<sup>40</sup>Provincial Chapters had been previously organized in all of the other provinces.

Urged to remain active for the sake of the Order, the chapter responded with a somewhat desperate plea:

Owing the decrease in our membership resulting from death, from removal to other towns and from fearful overlapping of 13 other organizations in our wee village with but 625 of a population, therefore be it resolved wholeheartedly that the National Chapter, Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, Head Office, be urgently requested to dissolve the "Active Service" Chapter, Alberton, P.E.I.<sup>41</sup>

Similar circumstances in other regions were exacerbated by the economic decline of the early 1920s.<sup>42</sup> Particularly in Alberta, Daughters of the Empire struggled to keep chapters intact at a time when their members were facing heavy taxation, repeated crop failures, and other economic hardships. Many chapters, especially in the outlying districts, were hard pressed to raise the necessary fees for the administration of the Order.<sup>43</sup>

Desperate for new blood, the Daughters of the Empire promoted the expansion of their junior chapters and encouraged the creation of IODE Girl Guide Companies, an experiment which began early in the decade. Members were hopeful that this scheme would draw "the girl life of the country" within the influence of the Order, thus creating potential prosperity for the Order and for the

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<sup>41</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, 4 February 1925, 173.

<sup>42</sup>Economic context is provided in John Herd Thompson and Allen Seager, "The New Economic Era," Canada, 1922-1939: Decades of Discord (Toronto, 1985), 76-103.

<sup>43</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, 7 February 1922, 160. These difficulties indicate that not all of the IODE's members were of wealthy means.

nation and empire.<sup>44</sup> Appointed by the national executive in 1923, the director of the IODE Girl Guide Companies served as a medium of communication between the Order and the headquarters of the Canadian Girl Guide Council. Since they were not considered as junior chapters, IODE Girl Guide Companies were not required to pay membership fees, and they maintained strict conformity to the rules and constitution of the Canadian Girl Guides.<sup>45</sup> The British origins of the Guides, as well as its purpose of stimulating loyalty to God, King, and country, made it a more suitable affiliate than the Canadian Girls in Training which was gaining popularity in the 1920s.

The success of this experiment of drawing youth into the Order is difficult to assess without an investigation of the junior and Girl Guide members themselves and their involvement in the IODE in subsequent decades. There is surprisingly scant information on either of these children's branches in any of the Order's national reports. It was not until 1930 that the recommendation was made to include junior and Girl Guide reports in Echoes.<sup>46</sup> Throughout the twenties, executive minutes documented the existence and purpose of junior chapters and Girl Guide Companies, but their activities and achievements were left, for the most part, to the imagination. Their numbers, however, provide some indication of their increasing significance within the Order. By 1929, there were 26 junior

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<sup>44</sup>Echoes (October 1923), 5.

<sup>45</sup>Church, Facts Concerning Work..., 8-9.

<sup>46</sup>Echoes (June 1930), 31.

chapters across the country;<sup>47</sup> enjoying considerably more growth, the IODE Girl Guides grew from nine companies in June 1925,<sup>48</sup> to 44 in October 1927,<sup>49</sup> to 80 in October 1929.<sup>50</sup>

Given the political and ideological transformations of the 1920s, the decline of the IODE's morale and membership is hardly surprising. The defeat of the Union Government in December 1921 was one of the first political expressions of changing attitudes toward imperial ties to Great Britain. French Canadians, organized farmers, and others who objected to a common imperial foreign policy found in MacKenzie King a Prime Minister who made national, rather than imperial, unity his primary objective. Much to the consternation of the Daughters of the Empire, King's distaste for war and all things associated with it led to a reduction in military expenditures. The Royal Canadian Navy, which for the IODE represented Canada's contribution to the empire's control of the seas, received the most drastic cuts.<sup>51</sup> A diminished military commitment to Great Britain was also signified by King's reaction to the Chanak Crisis of September

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<sup>47</sup>Church, Facts Concerning the Work..., 14.

<sup>48</sup>Echoes (March 1925), 33.

<sup>49</sup>Echoes (October 1927), 6.

<sup>50</sup>Echoes (October 1929), 10. The organizing secretary, Mrs. Malcolmson, pointed out that the formation of Children's Chapters was rather discouraging because the Red Cross had already established many junior branches. Minutes, Executive Meeting, 7 February 1922, 160.

<sup>51</sup>Once the reductions were made, Canada was disbursing \$1.46 per capita which was one-fifth of the military expenditures in the United States. The navy, with most of its ships having been sold, was reduced to "a reserve nucleus, upon which a navy could be constructed if war made one necessary." Thompson and Seager, 42.

1922. When Turkey threatened the British garrison at Chanak, a small town on the Asian side of the route that connects the Mediterranean to the Black Sea, Britain's appeal to the dominions for help was met with a characteristic non-committal response from King.<sup>52</sup> The disintegration of the British Empire was further induced by the Imperial Conferences of 1923 and 1926, at which King was persistent in his demand for Canadian autonomy, and was completed in 1931 by the Statute of Westminster. Effectively, what had transpired throughout the 1920s was the transformation of the British Empire into a looser commonwealth of nations. The concession to the dominions of autonomy in external policies and the right to establish their own diplomatic legations abroad were merely the outward signs of an emotional separation that had begun more than a decade earlier.<sup>53</sup>

Despite the growing appeal of nationalism and isolationism that led to the Statute of Westminster, many Canadians still held fast to the imperial connection as part of a unique heritage. The profoundly British nature of Canada's population meant that the primary tenets of imperialism—"a loyalist view of Canada, a whig notion of Canadian politics, an agricultural ideal of rural life, a conservative antipathy to industrial society, an evident delight in militarism, and a moralist's disdain for American and British decadence"<sup>54</sup>—remained popular

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<sup>52</sup>David J. Bercuson and J.L. Granatstein, The Collins Dictionary of Canadian History, 1867 to the Present (Toronto, 1988), 41.

<sup>53</sup>Thompson and Seager, especially 38-49.

<sup>54</sup>Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, "Nationalism, Feminism, and Canadian Intellectual History," Canadian Literature 83 (Winter 1979), 10.



ideologies in some circles.<sup>55</sup> As Carl Berger has clearly established, the concepts of imperialism and nationalism were not necessarily mutually exclusive. Many Canadians believed that the fulfilment of Canada's true destiny as a nation lay in its commitment to the imperial tie.<sup>56</sup>

The activities and agenda of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire in the 1920s are testimony to the persistence of imperial sensibilities beyond the close of the First World War. An unwavering belief in the destiny of the British Empire as the almighty guardian of democracy, truth, freedom, and justice formed the primary motivation for the Order's service in a decade of peace. It was this heritage, won by the blood and toil of the Anglo-Saxon race, that placed the empire in the vanguard of human progress. Moreover, the Daughters of the Empire believed that the key lesson of the war was to overcome personal and sectional allegiances through a spirit of cooperation. "Shall it be, through a narrow nationalism, through faltering faith, through unworthy suspicion, through a restricted horizon," the IODE national president warned, "we shall go on magnifying technicalities, accentuating difficulties to the end that we shall destroy cooperation, place ourselves in futile isolation, and pull down the mightiest fabric in history?"<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>Still over half of the Canadian population was of British descent. Thompson and Seager, 40.

<sup>56</sup>Carl Berger, The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914 (Toronto, 1970), 9.

<sup>57</sup>"Report of the Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," Echoes (October 1926), 4.

This was not to say that the development of a Canadian national spirit did not have a place in the IODE's imperial vision. Indeed, the Order professed dual loyalty, honouring the mother country while also cherishing a profound affection for the Dominion:

We are none the less ardent Canadians because we are Imperialists, having before us and embodied in our aims and ideals the true modern conception of Imperial—Imperial means beneficent, and strength to service bowed.<sup>58</sup>

Partially out of their own reasoning and partially out of expedience at a time when nationalistic sentiments were running high, the Daughters of the Empire shifted their focus in the twenties to accommodate the inevitability of Canada's national development. As the following chapters will illustrate, they promoted the "made in Canada" movement, encouraged the advancement of Canadian artistic enterprises, and adopted more of a Canadian emphasis in their educational work in the schools and with immigrants. But, for the IODE, national growth was contingent upon Canada's relationship to Great Britain.<sup>59</sup> Canada was chosen by Providence to be part of a Christian civilization that spread not only "the Gospel" but also "liberty" and "progress." As the "brightest jewel in the British crown," and as the beneficiary of a mighty destiny, Canada had an

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<sup>58</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1928), Presidential Address, 9.

<sup>59</sup>"Someone has said the twentieth century belongs to Canada," the Order's president noted in her presidential address in 1928. "There is a special duty, privilege, and responsibility devolving upon each one of us, on every Britisher, to devote every power of his being to the ideals of British citizenship, to hold fast to that heritage, those traditions and national virtues which have made the dear old Empire a model to the world." Ibid.

obligation to remain true to its ideals, its traditions, and its history.<sup>40</sup>

The IODE's resistance to the disintegration of imperial unity was expressed unequivocally on various occasions throughout the decade. The following declaration, submitted to the Prime Minister prior to the Imperial Conference of 1923, outlined the Order's perception of the vast implications of a weakened empire:

That the Order is of the opinion that the future of western civilization depends on the continued unity and power of Great Britain and her overseas Dominions, and that no time in her history have the special interests of Canada pointed more directly to the necessity of making strong and secure the bonds that unite her to the British sisterhood of nations. That the Order is of the opinion minor considerations of so-called Canadian autonomy are entirely subordinate to the supreme object of making the British Empire a powerful working unit in the ordering of world affairs.<sup>41</sup>

The Order was particularly concerned about the termination of appeals to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, one of the last palpable remnants of the imperial tie.<sup>42</sup> It was military preparedness, however, that seemed to be equated most often with a strong imperial connection. The Daughters' militarism was expressed by their affiliation with the Navy League,<sup>43</sup> by their protest of

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<sup>40</sup>These ideas pervade many of the reports and papers of the IODE. See, for example, "Report of the Twenty-Second Annual Meeting IODE--Presidential Address," Echoes (June 1922), 12; "Report of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Meeting IODE," Echoes (October 1927), 6; Minutes, Executive Meeting, 29 May 1922, 15; Echoes (June 1924), 5.

<sup>41</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1921), Report of the Resolutions Committee, 87.

<sup>42</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1921), Report of the Resolutions Committee, 93; Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1926), Presidential Address, 11.

<sup>43</sup>The IODE had a Navy League Committee which raised funds for navy league cadets, wrote articles in support of naval defence for the League's magazine, The Sailor, and endeavoured to promote "the ideals of the Navy League of Canada to: Awaken the

reductions in Canada's defence,<sup>64</sup> and by their firm support of cadet training in the schools. "The Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire endorses cadet training in schools as one of the finest movements that has ever been launched for the training of boys in discipline, patriotism, self-control, initiative, alertness, neatness and smartness in dress," a resolution passed by the national executive read. "It may be very properly called a wonderful (sic) training in citizenship."<sup>65</sup> Although the Daughters did not articulate an explicit social Darwinist view of the inevitability of war, militarism was certainly an inextricable part of their imperialist outlook. Just as war was the ultimate test of the survival of the fittest, the martial spirit was a measure of a nation's virility, fortitude, and order. Also, given the Dominion's unique position as part of a superior civilization, it bore the responsibility of contributing to the expansion of the boundaries of liberty and to the Empire's rule of the high seas.

It would seem that the Daughters' penchant for militarism would have been incompatible with prevailing notions about women's supposedly natural

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seaconscious spirit in our people; train our sea cadets in either branch; Care for the sailors ashore and in our Institutes; Care for the sailors' dependents." *Echoes* (October 1926), 4; *Minutes*, Executive Meeting, 13 September 1922, 55; *Echoes* (June 1922), 14.

<sup>64</sup>Many resolutions were passed during the twenties objecting strenuously to King's disregard for the significance of military preparedness. Given the importance of naval strength to Britain, the Order expressed the most concern over reductions in Canada's navy. Referring to this issue, one IODE member exclaimed that, "the Prime Minister has said it should not be a matter of politics, and pray god, imperial matters may never be brought into party politics." *Echoes* (June 1922), 14. The Victoria Municipal Chapter passed a resolution in 1926 regarding "the importance of the return to the pre-war military discipline in the training of the youth of Canada as a strong factor for national success and peace." *Echoes* (October 1926), 4.

<sup>65</sup>*Minutes*, Annual Meeting (May 1930), Report of the Resolutions Committee, 135.

propensity as mothers for conciliation, charity, and peace."<sup>6</sup> Moreover, pacifist groups such as the Canadian Branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom were by the early twenties giving organized expression to an increasingly popular call for total disarmament. But, the IODE's promotion of a martial spirit was not entirely synonymous with the promotion of war. The rhetoric of peace was used consistently by the Daughters throughout the twenties, and the IODE's membership in the League of Nations Society was a tangible demonstration of its commitment to "international good will."<sup>7</sup> Peace at any price, however, was rejected as a utopian abstraction. War was considered a necessary element of social evolution, not as an expression of belligerence, but as an instrument of progress. Ultimately, the IODE's belief in the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race and of the traditions, institutions, and ideals that were ostensibly British combined with a sense of Christian idealism to create a civilizing mission which rationalized the use of force.

The IODE's concept of imperialism, however, was more symbolic than political, military, or economic. The Daughters were not great thinkers of

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<sup>6</sup>Beverly Boutilier, "Educating For Peace and Co-operation: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in Canada, 1919-1929," M.A. Thesis, Carleton University, 1988, introduction and chapter one.

<sup>7</sup>In 1925 the League of Nations convenor reported that 25 chapters had become corporate members of the Society, but the number of chapters that joined subsequently is not clearly indicated. Associate membership in the Society which cost \$1 per year brought a monthly pamphlet, Interdependence, which summarized the most significant efforts of the League of Nations. Ironically, the IODE used Canada's status in the League of Nations to promote an increase in Canada's defence. "Canada, being one of the League of Nations will lose her well-earned position in the Empire, if it is understood by the other British Nations that she wishes to rely upon them for sea protection." Minutes, Executive Meeting, 29 May 1922, 15. See also, Echoes (June 1925), 5; Church, Facts Concerning Work..., 12.

imperialism; they were merely supporters of it. "The Daughters of the Empire do not stand for any old-fashioned sentimental imperialism," the IODE national president proclaimed at the annual meeting in 1921, "but we stand for a live national sentiment—a realization that the greatest good for our country lies in the path that has been marked out for her in the British Empire."<sup>64</sup> Rather than concentrating on diplomatic issues or on imperial trade policy, the Daughters spoke in terms of a spirit of empire, a Christian sense of service, and the patriotic bond of union between Canada and the mother country. They channelled their imperial proclivities into the awakening of citizenship and the preservation of those symbols—primarily the British anthem and the Union Jack—which signified allegiance to the Crown.<sup>65</sup>

The non-partisan focus of the Daughters' agenda was expedient to their public credibility as an organization of women:

An organization such as ours, which is non-political and concerned with national well-being, occupies a position of unusual strength; our strength is our loyalty, and desire for service. No government, no matter what its political complexion, could afford to ignore or treat lightly, the

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<sup>64</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1921), Presidential Address, 12.

<sup>65</sup>The increasing popularity of O'Canada as a national anthem was disconcerting to the Daughters of the Empire who passed several resolutions vociferating their preference for "God Save the King." See, for instance, "IODE National Executive Meetings," Echoes (March 1924), 30. A similar reaction was invoked by proposals for a distinctive Canadian flag. "Our motto calls for 'one flag, one throne, one empire,'" the IODE national president insisted, "and that...one flag is the Union Jack." Minutes, Executive Meeting, 1 December 1921, 165; Minutes, Annual Meeting (May 1929), 130. The IODE's struggle to preserve the symbolic connections to Great Britain went beyond the national anthem and the flag. On at least one occasion, the Order passed a resolution objecting to the sitting of the Federal Government on Victoria Day. Another protested the removal of the letters G.R. (Georgius Rex) from mail wagons and requested the repeal of the words in the Revised Post Office Act, "Canada's Mail," and the replacement of the words, "His Majesty's Mail." Minutes, Executive Meeting, 1 June 1925, 239.

massed demand of sincere women, backing an obviously good cause, intent on righting glaring and obvious wrongs. There is strength in non-partisanship which even the narrowest type of politician cannot afford to ignore. There in the social field woman can do her true work, and certainly the reward is great and immediate.<sup>70</sup>

The Daughters acted as the personification of imperial beneficence. Their sense of service and self-sacrifice was constantly expressed in their papers and was evident in the chapters' mottos: "Always Ready," "For Others," "We Aim to Do Good," "Be Not Weary in Welldoing," "Be Ready for Every S.O.S."<sup>71</sup>

The nature of social reform in the 1920s enabled the IODE to continue its commitment to service beyond the war and to apply its patriotic ideals to the crusades for child health, education, and the Canadianization of immigrants. The social gospel and social purity movements, which reached their height in the early twentieth century, were by this time giving way to experimentation in state welfare.<sup>72</sup> Immigration, the casualties incurred in the First World War, and more adequate data on the state of Canada's population prompted more government involvement in enforcing standards of public health and education and raised concerns about the character of the nation. The extension of health care, public schooling, and welfare programmes beyond Canada's urban centres required the

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<sup>70</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1928), 98.

<sup>71</sup>"Histories of Chapter Names," Echoes (June 1930), 12.

<sup>72</sup>The social gospel was promoted primarily by Presbyterian and Methodist reformers who endeavoured to Christianize or humanize the political economy of urban-industrial capitalism. They embarked upon extensive reform programs to improve living conditions in working-class and immigrant neighbourhoods. The complexities of this movement are dealt with most effectively by Richard Allen in The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-28 (Toronto, 1973), especially 3, 4, 16, 352-4. Social purity, although similar in ideology, emphasized the moral and sexual decline of Canada's urban centres. See Mariana Valverde, The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925 (Toronto, 1991), especially 15-33.

services of volunteer organizations who still enjoyed a measure of influence as lobby groups and as support for a state welfare system that was still in its infancy.<sup>73</sup>

The IODE's patriotic agenda fit in well with public concerns about the health and character of Canada's citizens. Nation-building was a popular pre-occupation in the 1920s: out of an amalgam of patriotic, scientific, and reform interests there emerged a powerful discourse on moral and racial degeneracy. Rearing healthy children, especially Anglo-Saxon children, became a matter of national significance, and motherhood was reinforced as women's primary function.<sup>74</sup>

The IODE accepted the constraints of maternalism quite readily. Like other women's organizations of the day, the Daughters legitimized their public activities by referring to society as an extension of the home. "Even housekeeping need no longer be confined to private life," the editor of Echoes wrote, "but a particular gift for it can be used in a broad way to benefit the community.... Municipal government, after all, is only a huge house keeping proposition, and the Council but a committee of citizens elected to supervise the household."<sup>75</sup> The IODE further avoided jeopardizing its status by disassociating itself from the campaign for female suffrage and other controversial feminist reforms.<sup>76</sup> The Daughters

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<sup>73</sup>Valverde, 51-2.

<sup>74</sup>Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood," History Workshop 5 (Spring 1978), 12.

<sup>75</sup>"Municipal Housekeeping," Echoes (June 1921), 33.

<sup>76</sup>Since a number of Daughters of the Empire in fact belonged to the Opponents of Woman's Suffrage organization, voicing a particular stand on the issue would have also created a schism within the ranks of the Order, thus hindering the promotion of its patriotic interests.



were aware of the feminist debates on the issue of equality versus protection;<sup>77</sup> they even commented regularly on the status of women in Canada and in various other countries,<sup>78</sup> and heralded women's achievements in the professions, in science, and in academia.<sup>79</sup> But feminism was subordinate to the IODE's imperialism, and the Daughters accepted the limits of their prescribed maternal role to increase their effectiveness on behalf of the empire.

In fact, in an interesting twist of reasoning, the Daughters' concept of imperial motherhood became the principal source of their public power. By championing the imperial bond, and the British institutions, traditions, and ideals that went with it, the IODE was, of course, serving its own interests as a group of Anglo-Protestant women. At the same time, the elevation of motherhood as woman's national function accented the "feminine" virtues of morality and purity, qualities that suited women as keepers of race and culture. The IODE adhered to such a role in its patriotic programmes throughout the 1920s. In child welfare, education, and the Canadianization of immigrants, the Daughters worked with women and children, and affirmed the role of mothers in the transmission of values. As members of a superior race, and as the embodiment of respectable womanhood, the Daughters of the Empire assumed the responsibility of

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<sup>77</sup>"Welfare Legislation Needs Watching," Echoes (October 1920), 27.

<sup>78</sup>Echoes (June 1922), 10-11; "Empire News and Views," Echoes (March 1924), 24; Echoes (March 1929), 20.

<sup>79</sup>"Sixty Years of Progress," Echoes (December 1926), 14; "Empire and Other Notes," Echoes (December 1923), 38; "Empire News and Views," Echoes (June 1924), 27.

developing a sound and noble citizenship. Thus, they were able to rationalize their privileged position in the empire by their vital function as the conservators of the imperial race.

## CHAPTER TWO

### "Little Torch Carriers of the Race:" The IODE and Child Welfare in the 1920s

The child is the nation's greatest asset,  
and the function of the nation is to see that the child  
shall receive its proper heritage.<sup>1</sup>

In 1921, when members of the Gonzales Chapter of the IODE in British Columbia presented their prizes to the finalists in their first annual "Best Baby Show," they had more in mind than showing off the cute smiles and frilly dresses of local tots.<sup>2</sup> Rearing healthy and happy babies had become serious business in the 1920s, a national preoccupation that was made obvious by a burgeoning network of pre-natal centres, baby clinics, and children's hospitals, by the increased control over child-rearing practices by a growing medical establishment, and by experimentation in state welfare programmes designed to reinforce women's traditional role as mothers. Just as the child was viewed as the nation's greatest asset, motherhood was venerated as the highest service to the state.

Rather than rejecting what some may have argued was a circumscribed role for women, the Daughters of the Empire embraced the concept of motherhood as the basis of their patriotic agenda in the period of reconstruction. Victorian notions of women's moral superiority were fused with beliefs about the

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<sup>1</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1922), Child Welfare Report, 17.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 21.

supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race to create a powerful public niche for the Daughters of the Empire. At a time when racial purity, eugenics, and nation-building were popular concerns, the IODE's involvement in child welfare for the purpose of bolstering the imperial race would have blended well with the dominant ideologies of the day. As middle-class Anglo-Saxon women, they shared with the social elite, the public health workers, and the policy makers a concept of family that informed their attempt to transform working-class women into the consummate bearers of the next generation of citizens.<sup>3</sup> Not only was child welfare a cause that was suitably feminine, but it allowed the Daughters of the Empire to capitalize on their status as symbols of respectable womanhood to adopt a sense of authority on an issue of national significance.

From its inception in 1900, the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire assumed special responsibility for the education and physical well-being of children. Particularly concerned about the threat of tuberculosis to the prosperity of the nation's youth, Daughters of the Empire worked in earnest to ensure the health of the empire's future citizens through the creation of preventoria, fresh air camps, and youth homes. In the schools, the Daughters urged the remoulding of curricula to embrace the patriotic principles they felt were necessary for national and imperial unity and strength in the face of war. The stimulation of a spirit of empire among students and teachers along with the supply of patriotic books and

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<sup>3</sup>The IODE's work in child welfare, particularly its education of mothers, was referred to in terms of class more than race. But it may be assumed, in light of their involvement with immigrant women (discussed in chapter four) that the Daughters applied their child welfare message to mothers in immigrant families as well.

materials allowed the Order to play a significant role in the process of political socialization.<sup>4</sup> In concerning themselves with child welfare and education, an association that was publicly acceptable for women, Daughters of the Empire soon learned that they were able to extend their influence to the public sphere without damaging their image of Victorian respectability.

The tremendous need for comforts and other aid during the First World War shifted the attention of the IODE from the needs of the child at home to the urgent plight of the soldier overseas. In a supporting role that utilized the ostensibly feminine skills of sewing, knitting, and fund raising, the Daughters of the Empire found an acceptable public niche in the "male" world of imperialism, diplomacy, and war. Throughout the 1920s, without the opportunities and distractions of wartime service, the IODE renewed its commitment to the welfare of the child. Inspiring a passionate response from Daughters of the Empire, the call for reconstruction shifted their focus from the charity and fund raising that had occupied much of their energy in previous decades to a more definite patriotic agenda based on the protection and political socialization of Canada's youth. "Now that we are enfranchised citizens," an IODE member claimed, "our hands are stronger and they will become more skilful in our tender nurture of the young."<sup>5</sup> The vote, it seemed, had instilled great confidence in the Daughters of

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<sup>4</sup>For more information on these programmes see Marcel Dirk, "Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and the First World War," M.A. Thesis, Carleton University, 1988, chapter 5; and Nancy Sheehan, "The IODE, the Schools, and World War One," History of Education Review 13:1 (1984), 29-44.

<sup>5</sup>Marjorie, MacMurchy, "Citizenship," Echoes (October 1922), 23.

the Empire, legitimizing their place in the public forum and enabling them to influence public policy concerning children. For this role held a significance far greater than just fulfilling a motherly duty. By improving and protecting the child life of the country, the Daughters of the Empire believed they were rendering the highest possible service to Canada and to the empire by assuring a sound and healthy population for the future.

Society's conception of the child had undergone a gradual transformation beginning around the turn of the century that changed the fundamental relationship of children to the family, to the workplace, and to the state. Marked in 1920 by the creation of both the Child Welfare Division of the new Dominion Department of National Health and the Canadian Council on Child Welfare, the shift in attitudes towards Canada's youth meant that it was no longer acceptable to exploit children as labourers, to neglect their intellectual, physical, and social development, and to regard them merely as "little adults."<sup>6</sup> Rather, as part of a family unit, children were to be nurtured and stimulated and sheltered from the evils of an increasingly industrial and urban society.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>The Canadian Council on Child Welfare changed its name in 1929 to the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare, and again in 1937 to the Canadian Welfare Council marking the gradual increase in the scope of both the council and the concept of the welfare state. See Patricia Rooke and R.L. Schnell, Discarding the Asylum: From Child Rescue to the Welfare State in English-Canada (1800-1950) (New York, 1983), 401. For more information on the CCCW see, by the same authors, "Making the Way More Comfortable: Charlotte Whitton's Child Welfare Career, 1920-48," Journal of Canadian Studies 17 (Winter 1982-83), 33-45.

<sup>7</sup>It is not within the scope of this study to outline in detail the development of the child welfare infrastructure in Canada. Although the brief overview provided here creates the impression that the lobby on behalf of the child was a story of gradual progress, it must be remembered that such a whiggish view of any social development fails to recognize the

Such a transition from a repressive to a more positive perception of the protection of the child became manifest in the move from institutional to foster care for dependent children along with the advent of professional agencies and family case workers, and it reflected the growing confidence of child welfare proponents in their capacity to shape human values and behaviour. In turn, a great deal of stress was placed on mothers who were both considered responsible for the proper socialization of their young and blamed for any unfavourable results. By the 1920s, of course, women were having fewer children, but they spent an increasing amount of time and energy absorbing and applying new psychological theories about appropriate child rearing practices as they strove to perfect the art of mothering.

As an intermediate stage in the evolution of the child-care infrastructure in Canada, the 1920s allowed the IODE along with a host of other women's, religious, and professional groups, to play a role in child health and education as part of the fragile balance between government intervention and funding, and voluntary participation. Once almost solely the domain of Children's Aid Societies, charitable organizations, and religious groups, the care of children by the 1920s had become increasingly thrust upon the state. As Canada emerged from the First World War, an increased awareness of the significance of child welfare as a national issue prompted provincial and federal governments to take a more active part in extending and standardizing child health measures across

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complex synthesis of successes, failures, and paradoxes. For a thorough examination of the subject see Rooke and Schnell, *Discarding the Asylum*, chapters 6, 7, and 8.

the country. The tremendous efforts to amass and disseminate information by the Child Welfare Division of the newly-created Federal Department of Health led by Dr. Helen MacMurchy, together with the Federal Department of Agriculture's provision of milk supplies and the Dominion Bureau of Statistics' compilation of far more accurate data on births and deaths set the 1920s apart from previous decades.<sup>8</sup> Yet the precarious nature of the system of national child welfare during this period meant that, while federal and provincial governments provided a legislative and financial foundation for municipal and health reform, the services of national organizations like the Victorian Order of Nurses, the Canadian Red Cross, and the Canadian Public Health Association along with the IODE and other women's groups were needed to support, extend, and supplement official efforts to improve the health of children in Canada.

Much of the success of the child welfare lobby in the early twentieth century can be attributed to the efforts of women's organizations. The NCW, the YMCA, the Canadian Women's Club, the Women's Institutes, the WCTU, along with the IODE actively pursued matters regarding the dissemination of impure literature, infant mortality, and legislation for the protection of women and children.<sup>9</sup> Of no small significance to these endeavours in the 1920s was the influence of Charlotte Whitton, whose name throughout the twenties and thirties

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<sup>8</sup>Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus (Toronto, 1976), 64-86.

<sup>9</sup>Susann Buckley, "Efforts to Reduce Infant and Maternal Mortality in Canada Between the Two World Wars," Atlantis (Spring 1979), 76-84.



became synonymous with the child welfare lobby. As an active member and often executive officer of several of these women's groups, including the IODE, the NCW, the Women's Institutes, and the Canadian Women's Club, Whitton undoubtedly exerted considerable influence in shaping the social concerns of middle-class women.<sup>10</sup>

After a brief sojourn with the Social Service Council of Canada, Charlotte Whitton moved from Toronto to Ottawa in 1920 where she joined the newly-formed Canadian Council on Child Welfare (CCCW), thus beginning her long and distinguished career as Canada's foremost proponent of child and family welfare. Occupying the CCCW's chief executive positions from honorary secretary in 1922, to executive secretary in 1926, to executive director from 1929 until 1941, Whitton shaped and articulated its views, policies, and agenda. With an annual federal grant and as a quasi-public agency, the CCCW had as its principle aim the creation of uniform standards of child care in Canada. Under Whitton's leadership, the agency functioned by conducting surveys of child care practices in each of the provinces, by designing child-care programs, by reforming welfare policy, and by producing and distributing literature on the subjects of child labour, hygiene, education, and the care of dependent children.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>For complete biographical information on Charlotte Whitton including her social welfare career see P.T. Rooke and R.L. Schnell, No Bleeding Heart: Charlotte Whitton A Feminist on the Right (Vancouver, 1987). By the same authors, Discarding the Asylum places Whitton effectively within the context of child reform in the 1920s, 30s, and 40s. See also their article, "Making the Way More Comfortable...."

<sup>11</sup>Rooke and Schnell, "Making the Way More Comfortable....," 34.

In her capacity as the convenor of the IODE's child welfare committee from 1922 until 1927 and of its immigration committee beginning in 1928, Charlotte Whitton found in the Daughters of the Empire a receptive audience for her views on child labour, juvenile immigration, infant mortality, and feeble-mindedness. The hope for reconstruction, which was inextricably linked to the improvement of the Anglo-Saxon race, the Order believed, depended on the development and socialization of the child. Whitton's successor as head of the IODE's child welfare committee, Mrs. John Stewart, expressed succinctly the Order's perception of the matter:

If we are to build up a great, safe and free commonwealth under the flag we adore in Canada; if Britain is to continue as a great Empire, founded on faith and freedom, then, those in whose hands lies the future of our race must receive what is their due—clean and beautiful surroundings, sound bodies, educated minds, and the widest opportunity to better their material condition.<sup>12</sup>

The proper rearing, health care, and protection of the nation's progeny was at the root of the Order's patriotic agenda throughout the decade.

In the years immediately following the war, the IODE was very attentive to the needs of returning soldiers, to the victims of the Halifax explosion, and to the desperate circumstances of the dependents of men killed overseas. The Widows and Orphans Fund was established in 1918 to provide essential aid to these women and children, and, well into the following decade, the IODE continued to

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<sup>12</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1928), Report of the Child Welfare Committee, 94.

assist soldiers' families in need as an expression of gratitude for war service.<sup>13</sup> Normally, relief work was denounced by the Order's executive who felt that such activities should be left to church mission groups, children's aid societies, and other charitable bodies. The IODE was not merely a philanthropic organization, and the executive feared that time and energy spent on charity could be better utilized in the propagation of the Order's patriotic principles. During the war, the IODE had been able to justify its relief efforts quite easily as comprising an important patriotic contribution to its country and empire. Similarly, the Order regarded its assistance of widows and orphans as an imperial rather than a humanitarian endeavour. During the 1920s, as the Daughters of the Empire espoused a myriad of causes involving children, its continued repugnance of activities that may have been considered as charity impelled them to stress the larger, political significance of their work.

Commenting on the importance of national health to the defence and prosperity of the empire, the editor of Echoes pointed out that, "As a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, so may the mental, moral, and physical advancement of any nation be more or less accurately gauged by the average health of its peoples." She quoted David Lloyd George in his great "Health Speech" delivered in Manchester in 1918 to emphasize the imperial consequences of the Order's preoccupation with child health and welfare:

If the State had properly looked after the fitness of the people for the past twenty years, England would have had

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<sup>13</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, 12 October 1918, 95.

- one million more fighting men at the front and the Germans would never have reached Amiens. In fact, everywhere, a virile race has been wasted by neglect and want of thought for it. It is a danger to the state and to the Empire, and unless this lesson is learned the war will have been in vain.<sup>14</sup>

As the cultural agents of imperialism, then, the Daughters of the Empire were not pursuing child welfare for the sake of immediate results; rather they sought, through the improved health and intellectual development of the child, to build a stronger race and a new environment of order and prosperity.

In the post-war years, public health researchers were able to marshal more accurate and more complete data on the state of Canada's population. In 1918, the federal government established the Dominion Bureau of Statistics which published its first national figures on birth and death registration in 1921.<sup>15</sup> Combined with the casualties incurred in the war, the grim statistics regarding infant mortality were unsettling to those concerned about the future of nation.<sup>16</sup>

As head of the Child Welfare Division of the newly-formed Dominion Department of Health, Dr. Helen MacMurchy played a significant role in garnering public attention regarding the seriousness to the state of the rampant loss of babies. Her 1920 address to the American Child Hygiene Association, in which she bluntly stated the magnitude of the problem, was printed in Echoes:

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<sup>14</sup>"Our National Health: A Summary of the Work of the Department of Health of Canada," Echoes (March 1924), 7.

<sup>15</sup>John H. Thompson and Allen Seager, Canada 1922-1939: Decades of Discord (Toronto, 1985), chapter one, "Canada Counts Noses," 1-13.

<sup>16</sup>The number of infant deaths in Canada in 1921 was 26,280 or 102 per 1,000 live births. Canada Year Book, 1931, 164.

Two large, hard facts—namely, first, the low and fast decreasing birth-rate, especially among those of whom we often speak as "good citizens"—those, who, from their industry, intelligence, integrity and devotion to the common good, are best fitted for parenthood—and second, the high and slowly decreasing infant mortality rate.... These two serious conditions may imperil national safety—even national existence. The State cannot survive without the baby. All those who love their country love the baby, for the baby is the hope of the country.<sup>17</sup>

Given the IODE's penchant for empire-building, it is not surprising that such propaganda struck a responsive chord among Daughters of the Empire at all levels. Once Charlotte Whitton took her position at the head of the IODE's child welfare committee in 1923, the Order began seriously to examine the problem of infant mortality and to participate readily in a growing national system of pre-natal and infant care.

Canada's rate of infant and maternal death, which surpassed that of most other civilized nations, was increasingly viewed as unacceptable.<sup>18</sup> The pure milk campaigns of the previous decade had begun, by the early 1920s, to reduce cholera infantum, the disease thought to be responsible for many infant deaths, and public health researchers began increasingly to consider the mother's health

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<sup>17</sup>Helen, MacMurchy, "Help in the Home for the Mother," presented at the Tenth Annual Meeting of the American Hygiene Association, November 1919, Asheville, N.C., printed in Echoes (March 1920), 21.

<sup>18</sup>In 1925, compared to 13 other countries, Canada's rate of infant death, 92 per 1,000 live births, was surpassed only by Spain (137), Italy (119), Germany (105), Belgium (100), and France (95). According to the figures of 19 countries for that year, Canada's maternal mortality rate of 5.6 per 1,000 live births was exceeded only by the United States (6.6), Scotland (6.2), and Belgium (5.8). Susan Buckley, "Ladies or Midwives? Efforts to Reduce Infant and Maternal Mortality," in Kealey, A Not Unreasonable Claim, 134-5.

as a significant factor in the continued loss of newborns.<sup>19</sup> Arousing concern among child health advocates, maternal death statistics were increasing almost steadily throughout the 1920s, and many health reformers began to consider more closely the protection of expectant mothers and their immediate care following birth. "To the extension of prenatal and maternal care, Canada must now look for any further substantial reduction in her maternal or infant death rate," Charlotte Whitton pointed out in her child welfare report for 1927. "Our stillborn rate is high and our maternal mortality one of the highest in the world."<sup>20</sup>

Maternal Deaths in Canada, 1921-1929<sup>21</sup>

	Maternal Deaths	Rate per 1,000 living births
1921	868	5.1
1922	907	5.5
1923	849	5.4
1924	945	6.0
1925	873	5.6
1926	1,317	5.7
1927	1,300	5.6
1928	1,331	5.6
1929	1,337	5.7

With varying combinations of public and private support, milk depots and

<sup>19</sup>Dianne Dodd has pointed out that, while the male-dominated medical establishment focused almost exclusively on infants in the campaign against infant mortality, feminist reformers emphasized the health of mothers as an important factor as well. "Advice to Parents: The Blue Books, Helen MacMurchy, MD, and the Federal Department of Health, 1920-1934," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 8:2 (1991).

<sup>20</sup>Charlotte Whitton, "Report of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire—Report on Child Welfare," *Echoes* (October 1927), 6.

<sup>21</sup>From *Canada Year Book*, 1931, Maternal Deaths in each Province by Age Groups, 1929, with Totals for 1921-1929, 171.

baby welfare clinics had been set up in the early 1900s to educate mothers about their own health and to instruct them in proper infant care.<sup>22</sup> By the 1920s, the focus on the responsibilities of the mother became even more intense as health reformers continued largely to ignore the realities of working-class life. Maternal ignorance was generally associated with working-class women, who, as Anna Davin notes in her study of British motherhood,

must by definition be ignorant, or at the very least irresponsible, since it was taken for granted that if you knew what you should be doing you would do it, and if in spite of that knowledge you didn't, it must be from fecklessness.<sup>24</sup>

MacMurchy, Whitton, and others in the movement identified a long list of causes responsible for infant death, including poor living conditions, low wages, poor drainage, inadequate medical attention at birth, and the employment of mothers.<sup>24</sup> Rather than confronting the social roots of the problem, the IODE and other women's and health organizations continued to embrace the education of mothers as the most effective panacea. "Most [infant] deaths are preventable by proper knowledge and care," Mrs. J.E. Ruby, one of the Order's child welfare convenors wrote.<sup>25</sup> Generally, this involved "social mothering schemes" designed to condition the working class to the reformers' concept of normal family life.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Buckley, "Ladies or Midwives...", 131-143.

<sup>24</sup>Anna Davin, "Imperialism and Motherhood," *History Workshop* 5 (Spring 1978), 14.

<sup>25</sup>"Annual Child Welfare Report," *Echoes* (October 1923), 15.

<sup>26</sup>*Minutes*, Annual Meeting (June 1931), Report of Child Welfare, 54.

<sup>28</sup>Buckley, 136.

Through a constant educational exchange between mothers, health reformers, and a growing, male-dominated medical establishment, the care of mothers and babies was drawn increasingly away from the home and the midwife into hospitals and clinics controlled by physicians intent upon elevating their status.<sup>27</sup>

The IODE was one of many women's organizations, including the National Council of Women, the Women's Institutes, and the YWCA, that participated in the education of mothers for "better babies" throughout the 1920s. The Daughters of the Empire completely subscribed to the view that the mother's health and her knowledge of proper child-care methods would play a crucial role in the survival and development of the child. Weakness and feminine fragility were no longer the desired traits in women: their strength and robust health, the IODE believed, were vital to their role as progenitors of the race. "Among women, the Victorian idea that to be considered 'delicate' was desirable, is gone," wrote an IODE member. It was now accepted, she went on to note, that "the health and vigour of the mother determine the strength of the child."<sup>28</sup>

The Child Welfare Circle of the Sir Henry Pellatt Chapter published a magazine, The Canadian Child, which provided mothers with detailed schedules for everything from eating and sleeping to bathing and bowel movements. An article entitled "The Child at Home: A Child's Everyday Education Makes or Mars

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<sup>27</sup>Nora L. Lewis, "Reducing Maternal Mortality in British Columbia: An Educational Process," in Barbara K. Latham and Roberta J. Pazdro, eds., Not Just Pin Money (Victoria, 1984), 339-46.

<sup>28</sup>Edna M. Poole, "What Canada Has Done for the Health of Her Women and Children." Echoes (March 1927), 11.



His Future," clearly depicted the Daughters' idea of what a good mother should expect of herself:

If I want [my baby] to be strong, alert, wise and good I must begin at the beginning and 'carry on'; I must learn from the best authorities how to care for his precious body; I must take counsel with experts in child training for the sake of his opening mind; I must talk to him, walk with him, play with him, read to him; I must provide for him place in which to play as well as to eat and sleep; I must see that he has playmates; I must teach him to play alone; to entertain himself; he must learn to love to work, first by helping me and later by having set tasks; I must know where he is and what he is doing all the time and we two must be loving, sympathetic, intimate friends.<sup>29</sup>

Obviously envisioned from a middle-class perspective, this image of motherhood would have been unrealistic for working-class women who lacked the time, domestic help, or living environment of mothers in more comfortable circumstances. Nonetheless, the IODE urged all women to view mothercraft as their full-time and only occupation, and to enjoy their supposedly elevated status as the guardians of the greatest of all human assets, the child.

The dissemination of the IODE's message on child and infant care occurred primarily in a growing number of "well baby" clinics and milk depots set up by ICDE chapters across the country. A notable example was the St. Ronauld Chapter in Quebec. Despite both a small membership of a mere seventeen women and great opposition in the community, this chapter established in 1926 what came to be regarded as a reputable baby clinic. Mothers from the

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<sup>29</sup>NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 33, Doc., 12, The Canadian Child Published in the Interests of Child Welfare, published by the Child Welfare Circle of the Sir Henry Pellatt Chapter, IODE, n.d. It is unclear whether this magazine was published on a regular basis or if only one issue was produced.

surrounding area brought their babies for free medical aid, milk, violet ray treatment, and diphtheria inoculations. As in other IODE clinics, the mothers who came to St. Ronauld were urged to breast feed their babies, to eat a balanced diet, and to consult regularly their family physicians. They were also given advice about personal hygiene, the preparation of layettes, and how to recognize the symptoms of illness in infants. By 1930, the chapter was proud to report that, as a result of this endeavour, infant deaths in the parish decreased to such an extent that it ranked first in the province for low infant mortality. That year the clinic reported having treated ninety babies, all of which survived beyond their first year. The initial opposition to the clinic, the reason for which is not clear, changed to gratitude, and the Cure publicly thanked the chapter from the pulpit for its admirable work.<sup>30</sup>

The Petawawa Chapter in Pembroke, Ontario provided a similar service, what it called a mother's conference, where mothers brought their babies to be weighed and were provided with advice on breast feeding and proper infant care. This chapter, however, made its programme even more complete by employing a VON nurse in the fall of 1920 and providing her with a "Ford car" so she could make home visits to these mothers until their children turned a year old. It also formed a local branch of the VON comprised entirely of Daughters of the Empire. The fees collected through this branch covered the salary of the nurse, and her

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<sup>30</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May 1930), Annual Report of the Committee on Child Welfare, 92; and Minutes, Annual Meeting (May 1931), 55. Opposition to the Order's clinic was likely part of the tension between secular and religious social services in Quebec, although no explanation is provided in the reports.

supplies, transportation and other expenses were covered by proceeds from an annual door-to-door canvass.<sup>31</sup>

Notwithstanding the Daughters' success in instituting their own clinics, much of their energy was directed towards existing child welfare agencies. The Order's child welfare convenors stated repeatedly that the IODE would best serve the needs of the child by acting as auxiliary support for official social services which possessed the expertise to deal effectively with the matter.<sup>32</sup> Along with thousands of dollars worth of special donations to children's hospitals and infant homes, the IODE distributed hundreds of Helen MacMurchy's 'Little Blue Books,' pamphlets on home and family life that were considered an indispensable part of a new mother's kit.<sup>33</sup> It also cooperated with local Boards of Health and Boards of Education, offering their services for classes on health and hygiene for New Canadian mothers.<sup>34</sup> Layettes, milk, and cod liver oil were supplied by many chapters for baby clinics established by the VON and other agencies. And in most provinces, the IODE supported, either partially or fully, VON and public health nurses for home visits to expectant and nursing mothers. The John Stewart Chapter in Halifax met socially one afternoon every month to sew garments and

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<sup>31</sup>"Chapter Notes," Echoes (March 1923), 43.

<sup>32</sup>See, for example, "Child Welfare," Echoes (October 1923), 15; and Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1928), Report of the Child Welfare Committee, 94. This is another indication of the shift from voluntary to professional child care, and the growing respect for the expertise of the medical establishment.

<sup>33</sup>Dodd, "Advice to Parents...."

<sup>34</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1922), Education Report, 53.

layettes for the local Infants' Home with material purchased with funds raised at street fairs. Notified by the VON of expectant mothers in need of assistance, this chapter also devised diets for these mothers during their period of confinement.<sup>35</sup>

Concomitant with the IODE's material contributions to the reduction of infant mortality was its support of legislative measures that reinforced its concept of the family and the mother's role within it. Revered as the cornerstone of society, the family unit was, ideally, self-sufficient enough so that mothers could remain at home to care for their children. A comfortable, stimulating, and nurturing home environment would increase the chances of producing healthy and happy babies who would survive to adulthood. For single or widowed mothers, state aid in the form of mothers' pensions came to be viewed as a legitimate substitute for the primary family income. Between 1920 and 1930, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia implemented mothers' pensions in one form or another. As Megan Davies has noted in her study of mothers' pensions in British Columbia, the payment of women to raise their children at home recognized the important service mothers were rendering for the nation, but it also initiated the greater participation of the state "in the private domain of home and family" and reinforced the traditional role of women in capitalist society.<sup>36</sup>

According to Davies, the IODE was vociferous in its promotion of mothers'

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<sup>35</sup>"Provincial Chapter Notes," *Excuses* (March 1925), 42.

<sup>36</sup>Megan J. Davies, "Services Rendered, Rearing Children For The State: Mothers' Pensions in British Columbia, 1919-1931," in Latham and Pazdro, *Not Just Pin Money*, 249-263.

pensions in British Columbia throughout the legislative hearings. She suggests that other patriotic groups were supportive of the bill because they believed that many of the beneficiaries would be war widows; that the pensions would in fact recognize the sacrifices these families had made for the empire.<sup>37</sup> This would have been a likely motivation for the IODE as well, although its records are vague in regards to this issue. It is clear by their reports and discussions that the Daughters were in favour of the pensions, so that families could remain intact, but there is no evidence in the national chapter records of any resolutions passed in direct support of them.<sup>38</sup>

The IODE viewed state welfare of this kind more as a national safeguard than as a tribute to women's usually unpaid work in the home. Similarly, the Order's support of legislation to protect working women appeared to be quite simply a matter of the protection of the race. As increasing numbers of women were entering the business and industrial world, Daughters of the Empire were troubled that such physical and mental strain would be detrimental to future generations of Anglo-Saxons. In an article printed in Echoes, Edna Poole suggested that women were physically weaker than men and exhibited "less resistance to the strain of industrial work."

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<sup>37</sup>Davies, "Services Rendered...", 250.

<sup>38</sup>See, for example, Charlotte Whitton's first IODE child welfare report in which she states: "Of all the social legislation passed by the present Provincial government, none has had greater effect on the promotion of child welfare than the Mother's Allowance Act of 1920. As a result of this in more than 3,350 homes the mother is caring for the family and the children--10,500 of them--are living in the environment in which God meant them to be--the home." Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1923), Child Welfare Report, 55.

Motherhood is still the highest function of woman and there are certain types of work she should not attempt for the sake of the race. With the present day cry of "equal opportunities for women" even the most ardent advocate realizes that long hours, unhealthy working conditions and certain types of work have a more serious effect on women workers than men.<sup>39</sup>

The IODE argued that if women were going to be employed outside the home, then it would be the responsibility of the state at least to ensure the protection of mothers immediately before, during, and after childbirth. The IODE was in favour of recommendations by the International Labour Conferences which advocated the protection of women wage earners in agricultural, industrial, and commercial undertakings before and after birth. Such provisions meant that women would be prohibited to work six weeks preceding and six weeks following childbirth, during which time they would be entitled to maternity benefits sufficient for their maintenance.<sup>40</sup>

The ardour with which the IODE confronted the nation's population problem was not applied universally. Although the health of all children was considered to be in the nation's interest, only those people deemed socially, mentally, and physically fit were encouraged to reproduce. A national preoccupation with racial degeneration and eugenics led health researchers to identify feeble-mindedness as the root cause of delinquency, pauperism, prostitution, and crime. Bringing together various patriotic, scientific, and humanitarian interests, the Canadian

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<sup>39</sup>Edna Poole, "What Canada Has Done..." 11.

<sup>40</sup>"Recommendations and Conventions of the International Labour Conferences which have been popularly phrased the 'Child Welfare Conventions,'" *Echoes* (December 1926), 12.

National Committee for Mental Hygiene was formed in 1918 and proceeded throughout the following decade to articulate its views on racial decline in the Canadian Journal of Mental Hygiene. Headed by Dr. C.K. Clarke, Dean of Medicine at the University of Toronto, the Committee drew attention to hereditary over environmental factors in the causes of feeble-mindedness and mental illness. It was able to manipulate the intelligence testing devised by Alfred Binet in 1910 to make hasty judgements about the mental capacity of children and to create labels that would stigmatize and alienate. Supported by Helen MacMurchy and others in the child welfare movement, the CNCMH's policy of segregating and eliminating insanity and feeble-mindedness by genetic controls formed the basis for the general treatment of children who exhibited any kind of deviant behaviour.<sup>41</sup>

The alarmist tone of the Order's preoccupation with feeble-mindedness was indicative of the influence of the mental hygiene and eugenics experts throughout the 1920s. By this time, a decline in an extreme emphasis on heredity softened some of the drastic demands for exclusion and genetic control, but the IODE, the National Council of Women, and other national organizations continued to use the florid rhetoric of racial degeneration.<sup>42</sup> The Order's first two child welfare convenors, Emily Doolittle and Charlotte Whitton, were particularly vociferous

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<sup>41</sup>Neil Sutherland points out that, "while the organizers of Montreal's first child welfare exhibit in 1912 would not permit the Local Council of Women to mount a eugenics display, their booths on the matter were an important part of the exhibits of 1918, 1919, and 1920." See Children in English-Canadian Society, 76.

<sup>42</sup>Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society, 71-78.

in the matter of feeble-mindedness, repeatedly describing the problem in terms of "race," "blood," "poison," and "moral decay."<sup>43</sup> They strongly urged other IODE members to rouse public opinion in support of proposed legislation which would prohibit the marriage of the feeble-minded.<sup>44</sup> Particularly concerned about mentally defective females of child-bearing age, Doolittle summarized the fears that prompted the Order's endorsement of such drastic measures:

Possessed of the physique, appetites, and passions of adults without the mental power enabling them to foresee the consequences of their actions or conduct and without the moral power of self-control of their appetites and passions, they become the source at once of gross immorality, of the spread of venereal disease, and of the multiplying of their kind, ordinarily twice as fast as normal people, and quite regardless of whether they are married or unmarried.<sup>45</sup>

The segregation, training, and permanent custodial care of these girls was the Order's answer to the threat of unwanted reproduction.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>See, for instance, Charlotte Whitton, "The Social Background in Canada," *Social Welfare* 7:4 (January 1925), 72. Here, Whitton notes that, "Canada is making a determined effort to rid her youthful blood of this poison of mental deficiency with its attendant social evils, and to this end is making every precaution against its national reproduction."

<sup>44</sup>Legislation for the sterilization of the feeble-minded was actually implemented in Alberta and British Columbia. Although the Order supported such measures rhetorically, there was no evidence of any resolutions by the national chapter in this matter. It appears as though the IODE focused more specifically on the segregation of the feeble-minded rather than the actual genetic control of their reproduction.

<sup>45</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1922), *Child Welfare Report*, 20.

<sup>46</sup>In her child welfare report for 1923, Charlotte Whitton succinctly summarized her reasoning in this matter: "There is no need at this time to discuss again in detail the question of the feeble-minded. Canada has today between 140,000 and 170,000 of such in her population and it can only be urged again that the chapters use every means in their power to rouse public opinion to the nature and extent of the menace. Adequate provincial legislation, providing for survey, registration, segregation, education and supervision of the subnormal in our population alone gives any hope of getting the problem within bounds--attempted treatment of a subnormal problem, with means designed for the normal can only continue to be fraught with failure." See "Child Welfare," *Echoes* (October 1923), 16.



While the IODE's primary function in this matter lay in arousing public opinion for the provision of adequate provincial programmes, auxiliary classes, and institutional care for the feeble-minded,<sup>47</sup> its most obvious contribution was the IODE Home for the Feeble-minded in Halifax. Opened in July 1918, the home cared for girls between the ages of ten and nineteen. A specialist in mental hygiene, along with a graduate nurse, gave instruction in the three Rs and simple housework, as well as special sense training including buttoning, braiding, lacing, sewing, weaving, and work with reed and raffia. The convenor reported that the girls showed "only marked improvement in health, neatness and deportment, and the quality of work they are able to do, but they are happy and contented."<sup>48</sup> So long as society was safeguarded from the multiplication of these "degenerates," the IODE asked for little more than their peaceful confinement. A lack of funds forced the closure of the IODE's Home for the Feeble-minded in 1926. The provincial convenor expressed satisfaction, however, that the Order's "pioneer work in this field" contributed to the founding of the Provincial Training School for the Feeble-minded as well as the "enactment of Nova Scotia's new measures in this field of care."<sup>49</sup>

The expansion of juvenile immigration from Britain in the early 1920s underlined the IODE's already increasing concern about the threat posed by the

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<sup>47</sup>See, for example, Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1928), Report of the Child Welfare Committee, 94.

<sup>48</sup>"A General Review of the Child Welfare Work of the IODE," Echoes (March 1921), 12.

<sup>49</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1926), Child Welfare Report, 114.

"feeble-minded," the "moral degenerate," and the "genetically criminal" to the well-being of Canadian society.<sup>50</sup> During the first two decades of the century, 32,820 British children between the ages of twenty months and eighteen years had emigrated to Canada. Averaging about 1,700 juveniles per year, this number dropped considerably along with the total number of immigrants during the years from 1916 to 1920, reaching a low of zero in both 1918 and 1919. By 1921, as restrictions were relaxed, the number of juveniles being sent to the Dominion from Britain increased dramatically, reaching a high of 3,036 and 4,281 in 1929 and 1930, respectively. Therefore, the twenties presented a renewed problem of juvenile immigration for the IODE to incorporate into its imperial agenda.<sup>51</sup>

British Juvenile Immigrants  
Fiscal Years Ended 1901-1930<sup>52</sup>

Fiscal Year	Juvenile Immigrants	Fiscal Year	Juvenile Immigrants
1901.....	977	1916.....	821
1902.....	1,540	1917.....	251
1903.....	1,979	1918.....	--
1904.....	2,212	1919.....	--
1905.....	2,814	1920.....	155
1906.....	3,258	1921.....	1,426

<sup>50</sup>For more information on juvenile immigration in Canada see Joy Parr, Labouring Children: British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924 (Montreal, 1980). See also Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society, 3-10, 28-36.

<sup>51</sup>Calculated from Canada Year Book, 1931, British Juvenile Immigrants, fiscal years ended 1901-1930, 184. See also Charlotte Whitton, "Report on Child Welfare," Echoes (October 1924), 7. That, by 1924, the number of unaccompanied British juveniles entering Canada had increased substantially is reflected in the IODE's records which really only begin to focus on the issue in that year. The Order continued to emphasize the matter in its reports for the remainder of the decade as the steady flow of juveniles continued unabated.

<sup>52</sup>Canada Year Book, 1931, British Juvenile Immigration, fiscal years ended 1901-1930, 184.

1907*.....	1,455	1922.....	1,211
1908.....	2,375	1923.....	1,184
1909.....	2,424	1924.....	2,080
1910.....	2,422	1925.....	2,000
1911.....	2,524	1926.....	1,862
1912.....	2,689	1927.....	1,741
1913.....	2,642	1928.....	2,070
1914.....	2,318	1929.....	3,036
1915.....	1,899	1930.....	4,281

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\*Nine months

Primarily from institutions or destitute families, many of these children were brought to Canada through the Empire Settlement Act which required that the Canadian and British governments each contribute forty dollars per child to any recognized society to assist in the passage of children to Canada. Such an arrangement meant that Britain found an outlet for destitute, institutionalized, and other dependent juveniles, while Canadian farms in need of hands and middle-class homes requiring domestic service were supplied with cheap labour.

In an intellectual climate that encouraged the reproduction of the hereditarily superior and suppressed that of the inferior, it is not surprising that the IODE judged potential juvenile immigrants according to their class and race as well as their general health and character. Like the CCCW, NCW, and other opponents of juvenile immigration, the IODE's most persistent charge was that, by and large, the British children who were being sent to the Dominion, by virtue of their social class, were products of a physically, morally, and socially degenerate population and thus posed a threat to the well-being of Canadian society. Encouraging a high standard in Canada's juvenile immigrant admission procedures, "if anything

more stringent than that set up for adult immigration,"<sup>53</sup> the IODE also passed resolutions on several occasions, beginning in 1924 when juvenile immigration increased substantially, in protest of the Government's policy of bringing unaccompanied children to Canada.<sup>54</sup>

Being graced by the services of Charlotte Whitton meant that Daughters of the Empire were in no short supply of information and statistics to heighten their paranoia about the effects of juvenile immigration on social and racial degeneration. Under the auspices of the CCCW, Whitton searched the records of asylums, reformatories, and hospitals for evidence that these young Britons were overrepresented in the ranks of Canada's feeble-minded, criminal, illegitimate, sexually deviant population. In one of her IODE child welfare reports in 1924, for example, Whitton noted that a survey of 269 unmarried mothers in the Grace and Misericordia hospitals during the previous year showed that British women represented 44.23 percent of the total, while Canadians made up only 25.75 percent.<sup>55</sup> Her CCCW survey of 1928, *Several Years After*, which examined the impact of child immigration, utilized such figures to support the belief that British youths were, indeed, undesirable.<sup>56</sup> Emphasizing repeatedly the link between feeble-mindedness, which was thought to be far more prevalent among

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<sup>53</sup>Charlotte Whitton, "Report on Child Welfare," *Echoes* (October 1924), 7.

<sup>54</sup>See, for example, Report of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, *Echoes* (June 1924), 23; and *Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1926), Annual Report of the Child Welfare Committee*, 122-23.

<sup>55</sup>Charlotte Whitton, "Report on Child Welfare," *Echoes* (October 1924), 7.

<sup>56</sup>For more details on the nature of this report see Rooke and Schnell, "British Children for Rural and Domestic Service: The Canadian Response," in *Discarding the Asylum*, 223-271; and "Making the Way More Comfortable..." 40.

immigrants, and deviant sexual and social behaviour, such reports placed heavy blame on juvenile immigrants for encumbering Canada with a host of social problems. Apart from what was perceived to be an increased threat of crime, prostitution, vagrancy, and illegitimacy, opponents of juvenile immigration also feared that "imported" children would move to the cities upon the completion of their indentures in agricultural or domestic service, competing for scarce employment and contributing to the already increasing urban drift.

The IODE's preoccupation with juvenile immigration was not entirely motivated by national self-interest. By the 1920s, the displacement of youngsters for the purpose of child labour was increasingly viewed as anachronistic, especially given the advances in other areas of child health and welfare. As a relentless advocate of child protection, Charlotte Whitton expressed on many occasions her abhorrence of "Canada's nation-building on the backs of these children."<sup>57</sup> On behalf of the IODE she called for more thorough inspection procedures, at a time when the placement of juveniles by child emigration agencies was largely unsupervised by the Dominion Department of Immigration and Colonization. Her most persistent objection was the ineffectiveness of the federal-provincial division of responsibilities. Whereas the federal government was in charge of immigration and was actively pursuing the migration of young workers, the provincial governments had no control over the placement of juvenile immigrants in their territory yet were responsible for the care of

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<sup>57</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1924), Report of the Child Welfare Committee, 52. In Whitton's report in *Echoes* (October 1924), 39, she refers to the demand for cheap labour as being "perilously near a form of slavery."

dependent children. The IODE's concern was that while there were already many placeable children in Canadian institutions, federal juvenile immigration officials were seeking young immigrants for employment in homes under conditions which the provincial authorities would not accept for Canadian children.<sup>58</sup> The general change in sensibilities led to a ruling by the Dominion Immigration Branch in March 1925 that unaccompanied children under fourteen years of age would be prohibited from entering Canada for the next three years. During this time the IODE joined the Canadian Council on Child Welfare, the Social Service Council of Canada, and other national organizations in a powerful lobby which led in 1928 to the permanent ban of the immigration of children of school age.<sup>59</sup>

By investigating the deficient precautions and the problems surrounding juvenile immigrants, the IODE, with Whitton at the forefront, was able to draw attention indirectly to similar procedures and abuses in the treatment of domestic children especially with regard to child labour. Whitton's sensational denunciation of British child rescue agencies such as the famous Barnado's Homes shed light upon assumptions about children and their exploitation as labour in Canada.<sup>60</sup> Representing Canada as a delegate at the International Labour Conventions sponsored by the League of Nations from 1926 to 1933, Whitton made frequent reference in her IODE reports to their recommendations. Popularly phrased the "Child Welfare Conventions," the primary aims proposed

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<sup>58</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1924), Report of the Child Welfare Committee, 50.

<sup>59</sup>Parr, Labouring Children, 153.

<sup>60</sup>For more information on Barnado's Homes and other British child rescue agencies see Rooke and Schnell, Discarding the Asylum, 227-28, 236, 241-42, 249-50, 285.

at these conferences included the prohibition of children under fourteen in industrial employment; the forbiddance of the employment of young persons under eighteen years of age at night in any industrial undertaking; as well as special provisions for children working on ships and on family farms.<sup>61</sup>

The challenge for Canada, it seemed, was to devise a uniform structure of laws and enforcement in all of the provinces. Insisting that chapters of the Order could do much to arouse public opinion, Whitton made repeated pleas to other IODE members to recognize their responsibility as women to take charge of this "abhorrent" situation.<sup>62</sup> By establishing a "scout" system, the Daughters of the Empire were encouraged to investigate the factory and school attendance laws in each of the provinces, to report violations, and to work in cooperation with recognized social agencies to ensure uniform standards of child care across the country.<sup>63</sup> Unfortunately, it is difficult to discern from its records the nature of the IODE's involvement with other agencies and the extent to which it was able to affect public practice and policy in this matter. Although the issue of child labour was raised on many occasions, the records indicate only the actions that were proposed. Whether or not these suggestions were carried out or if any results were realized is unclear. In her IODE child welfare report discussed at the annual meeting of 1925, for instance, Whitton was pleased to report that, in

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<sup>61</sup>Echoes (December 1926), 12.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>Echoes (March 1924), 5.

conjunction with other chapters and social agencies, the primary chapters of the Order had made "very definite progress" in their humanitarian endeavours on behalf of children.<sup>64</sup> The vagueness of such reports, however, make it difficult to gauge the impact of the IODE in its pressure of governments to change policy and on prevailing attitudes and practices concerning child labour.

A more obvious measure of the IODE's devotion to the welfare of children was the impressive financial and personal contributions made by the national chapter's child welfare committee along with the individual provincial, municipal, and primary chapters to the treatment and prevention of disease. The crusade against tuberculosis had been avidly supported by the IODE in its pre-war years, and in the 1920s it continued to capture the Order's attention as part of the wider issue of child health. Chapters in London, Ontario raised funds for and built the Sick Children's Hospital of London where disabled and tubercular children were treated, while Hamilton chapters furnished wings and rooms in the Hamilton Sanatorium and provided all of the linen needed for its operation. Likewise, Daughters of the Empire in Saskatchewan, at a cost of \$45,000, built and equipped the Children's Pavilion at the Fort Qu'Appelle Tuberculosis Sanatorium and contributed annually a large sum in support of children treated there.

While the treatment of tuberculosis through the creation and support of sanatoria occupied much of the Daughters' energy and funds both before and after the war, by the 1920s they became increasingly preoccupied with its

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<sup>64</sup>Charlotte Whitton, "Report of the Silver Anniversary of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," *Echoes* (June 1925), 7.



prevention. Like diphtheria, scarlet fever, and other communicable diseases, tuberculosis was considered to pose a threat to the survival of Canada's youth and therefore to the future well-being of the race. Since 1912, the IODE boasted the only preventorium for this disease in Canada. Donated to the Toronto municipal chapter by former IODE president, Mrs. A.E. Gooderham, and her husband Colonel Gooderham, the preventorium was supported through municipal and provincial grants. During the next five years, the chapter raised \$60,000 for an endowment fund, the interest from which was used for maintenance, repairs, and unexpected costs. In 1920 a Babies' Pavilion was added to the building where 102 cots were available so that babies could be "scientifically cared for and given every chance for life and a healthy childhood." In observation wards, the youngsters were watched for signs of infectious diseases, and then were allowed to play in a supervised area outside or, on stormy days, in a large indoor playroom.<sup>65</sup>

Many IODE chapters across the country became involved in the prevention of tuberculosis and other communicable diseases through the creation of youth homes and fresh air camps where children could play and interact in healthy surroundings.<sup>66</sup> Quebec City chapters, for example, operated a fresh air clinic during three months of the year for boys ages six to ten and girls from six to fourteen. In 1921, for instance, the clinic benefitted 120 children at a total cost of \$2,300. Primarily for children whose parents could not afford to send them to the

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<sup>65</sup>"The IODE Preventorium in Toronto," *Echoes* (December 1920), 30.

<sup>66</sup>There is evidence that IODE fresh air camps were organized at least in Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

country, the camp provided each child with a balanced diet, outdoor activities, and a quart of milk every day. The matron instructed the children in the value of personal cleanliness through toothbrush brigades and regular bathing, along with how to make their beds, mop the floors, and wash their dishes. In addition to the camp's original eight acres, four acres were added in 1926 for playgrounds and a new dormitory of twelve beds.<sup>67</sup>

Likewise, the summer camps organized by the Calgary municipal chapter illustrate the kind of routine that was employed in the Order's fresh air clinics across the country. The Calgary chapter was able to acquire a permanent home for its summer camps through the purchase of a cottage and grounds at Sylvan Lake, about one hundred miles from the city. In the summer of 1923, for example, 139 children were entertained and cared for here throughout July and August. During these two months, members of local IODE chapters, assisted by school nurses, served 4,800 meals along with 900 quarts of milk. Fresh air, good food, swimming, and bonfires seemed to have a healthy effect on the children's bodies; and their minds were nourished, likewise, with occasional talks about the importance of patriotic reverence for God, King, and country.<sup>68</sup>

The IODE's efforts to promote a healthy environment for children who otherwise were exposed to poor living conditions were part of a gradually increasing tendency in Canada to emphasize disease prevention and improved

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<sup>67</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1922), 21; Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1926), 114.

<sup>68</sup>Echoes (December 1923), 42.

general health. In previous years, health care workers had set up clinics and school inspections only in times of health emergencies, but following the First World War, health education and a more universal availability of medical care meant that people could look forward to enjoying a longer and better life. "The very word health has taken on a new meaning...", an article in Echoes pointed out. "It no longer means simply absence of disease, it has become a more positive thing, implying a well-balanced physique, a fitness for life."<sup>69</sup> For the IODE, disease prevention and an enhanced quality of living fit in well with its designs for a stronger race and reaffirmed its belief in the inevitable progress of the empire.

The vast and varied nature of the IODE's contributions to the general health of children in the 1920s makes any account of their work seem cursory. By the end of the decade, the IODE in every province except for Prince Edward Island had a child welfare convenor. And in every province, the Daughters of the Empire hailed their work with children as the primary focus of their patriotic agenda. Chapters in Alberta, Ontario, and British Columbia spent no less than \$43,196, collectively, in one year alone in the provision of baby clinics, health nurses, playgrounds, milk, and summer camps.<sup>70</sup> Chapters in the Maritimes, Quebec, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan also joined the campaign, generously

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<sup>69</sup>Edna Poole, "What Canada Has Done...", 11.

<sup>70</sup>NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 13, Rebecca M. Church, Facts Concerning the Work of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Children of the Empire (Junior Branch) (1929), 6.

donating gifts of clothing, linen, and furnishings to nurseries, infants' homes, and shelters; providing milk and eggs for undernourished children; and contributing layettes, stockings, shoes, and clothing to needy mothers and their children. Even in the Yukon, Daughters of the Empire donated clothing, milk, and other supplies to children in their area, and they raised money to send ailing youngsters south to receive proper medical care.<sup>71</sup>

One chapter in Ontario supplied toothbrushes for all of the school children in its area; another paid the dental expenses for needy children; others donated or maintained playgrounds, tennis courts, or rinks. A town chapter paid the salary of a housekeeper for a family of eight children while the mother was in the hospital, while another covered the cost of \$2,000 for X-ray equipment at the local children's hospital.<sup>72</sup> In 1926 alone, the Toronto municipal chapter disbursed \$30,677.90 in contributions to the Girl Guides, health nurses, sanatoria, children's hospitals, family relief, summer camps, and milk funds. The 32,940 quarts of milk that were donated by this chapter to schools and needy families that year had actually dropped from the 60,000 quarts they had come up with in the previous year.<sup>73</sup>

Daughters of the Empire in other provinces were equally as active. In Saskatchewan, along with the usual donations of clothing and milk, and the

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<sup>71</sup>"Retrospection--Being a Brief History of the Work of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire sent in by the Provincial Chapters," *Echoes* (June 1925), 11.

<sup>72</sup>*Minutes*, Annual Meeting (June 1926), Child Welfare Report, 174.

<sup>73</sup>*Minutes*, Annual Meeting (May-June 1928), 98.

maintenance of the Children's Pavilion, one chapter equipped the local schools with fire extinguishers and was instrumental in implementing regular fire drills.<sup>74</sup> A Montreal chapter covered the expenses for the placement of caution signs at schools and the employment of a traffic officer who supervised school corners before and after school. And in Nova Scotia, the Daughters provided clothing for blind children, milk for undernourished children, and paid for the rental of a room for a baby clinic where almost 4,000 quarts of milk were provided by several chapters.<sup>75</sup>

Most of the money for this work came from the IODE's usual fund raising events: bazaars, teas, bake sales, canvassing, socials, and fairs. By meeting regularly to sew and knit the garments they donated, members of many chapters were able to enjoy their work in a casual, social setting. Some chapters chose more innovative approaches to raising their resources. A chapter in the west adopted a "One Egg" Campaign in which 186 dozen eggs were contributed by school children who each brought in one egg. Some of the eggs were donated to local children's shelters and to the Convalescent Home maintained by the chapter, while the rest were sold and the proceeds given to French War Relief.<sup>76</sup> In British Columbia, the Robert Valentine Harvey Chapter supplied milk for school children

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<sup>74</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1925), Child Welfare Report, 69.

<sup>75</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May 1930). Annual Report of the Committee on Child Welfare, 92.

<sup>76</sup>Mary L. Bollert, "A General Review of the Child Welfare Work of the IODE," Echoes (March 1921), 12.

by placing miniature milk cans in offices, banks, and restaurants as collection boxes. Painted white with the name of the chapter in red, the cans were inscribed with the slogan: "By building up the children, we build up the Empire."<sup>77</sup>

This motto likely was not far from the Daughters' minds as they worked earnestly to secure the safety of every child. After all, their charitable acts were part of a larger vision which placed the security of the empire in the hands of Canada's youth. The necessity of material contributions to child welfare meant that the IODE was forced to take on the philanthropic role it consistently tried to avoid. But, through health education, which comprised a large part of the Order's work in this field, the Daughters were able to emphasize their greater function as patriotic rather than merely benevolent agents. Many chapters organized child welfare exhibitions where mothers and their children were provided with information on health and hygiene and were offered the services and advice of doctors and nurses.<sup>78</sup> After consulting the local school boards, IODE chapters in Montreal organized a health week in the schools during which the "Jolly Jester" and the "Health Fairy" demonstrated various health lessons to the students. The IODE donated forty prizes for a poster competition in which the children drew pictures of what they learned.<sup>79</sup>

Given the IODE's view of women as the centre of the home, it is not

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<sup>77</sup>"Chapter Notes," Echoes (March 1920), 63.

<sup>78</sup>See, for example, Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1921), 97.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid.

surprising that most of its educational work was directed towards young girls. In Quebec, for example, the IODE organized a short course in domestic science for the Junior chapters by securing a lecturer from MacDonald College. The young Daughters of the Empire were instructed in food values and were encouraged to make more generous use of milk and milk soups, to use cocoa instead of tea or coffee, and to eat plenty of fruit and cereals. Despite the voluntary nature of the course, the average attendance was forty, and the Order was pleased to see that the girls were eager to become knowledgeable homemakers.<sup>80</sup>

Although many similar educational programmes were organized by chapters in every province, the IODE considered its most fruitful effort to be its development of a network of IODE Girl Guide companies. Begun in 1923, the IODE Girl Guides extended their influence over many impressionable young women as the number of companies grew from nine in June 1925,<sup>81</sup> to 44 in October 1927,<sup>82</sup> to 80 in October 1929.<sup>83</sup> Through training in health, hygiene, homemaking, and citizenship, the object of the Girl Guide movement was to "uplift the character among girls of the 'teen age' in our country and to make better homes."<sup>84</sup>

Mothers who were at first inclined to be suspicious that

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<sup>80</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1922), Child Welfare Report, 21.

<sup>81</sup>Echoes (March 1925), 33.

<sup>82</sup>Echoes (October 1927), 6.

<sup>83</sup>Echoes (October 1929), 10.

<sup>84</sup> Minutes, Executive Meeting, 1 December 1920, 141.

Guiding would turn their girls into tomboys...and 'spoil them as girls,' soon realize that the Guide training is essentially womanly.... A girl of fourteen is not always pleased at being asked to wash the dishes...but if she is a Guide, washing the dishes takes on an entirely new meaning as...part of the training for her domestic service badge; minding a baby is a privilege to a Guide who is working for a child nurse badge. A small child who might ordinarily grumble at having to set the table, is proud to demonstrate her skill if she has learned at her Brownie Pack meeting just how it is done correctly.<sup>85</sup>

The IODE Girl Guide organizers had a higher purpose, however, than the creation of good and happy homemakers. Emphasizing the development of the mental, physical, and spiritual capacities of the young women of Canada, they hoped that creative achievement, patriotic expression, and the practical demonstration of the ideals of citizenship and service would ultimately create a finer race of people. The young Guides were given instruction in handicrafts, in the value of thrift, and in the care of the home. They enjoyed outdoor recreational activities, songs, and recitations. Through the idea of service, the Order hoped they would develop a sense of sisterhood, a sense of being a unit in the community, in the nation, and in the empire. Above all, they were taught a love for Canada, loyalty to Great Britain, and reverence for the Creator in the hope that they would pass on these values to their future children.<sup>86</sup>

The IODE's involvement in child welfare in the 1920s, then, encompassed much more than just the provision of layettes, milk, eggs, and linen for needy

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<sup>85</sup>"Girl Guides," Echoes (December 1923), 11.

<sup>86</sup>References to the IODE Girl Guides are numerous in the Order's records. See, for example, Church, Facts Concerning the Work..., 8; "Girl Guides," Echoes (December 1923), 11; and Minutes, Executive Meeting, 7 March 1923, 191.

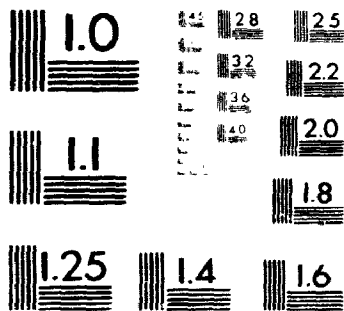


families, and the donation of funds to hospitals, children's shelters, and infants' homes. The youngsters who won prizes in the IODE's "Best Baby" shows were products of an extensive system of prenatal and infant care that combined the expertise of a growing medical community with the energy and zeal of voluntary groups. By the end of the 1920s, public health and child care workers had extended their services beyond the urban school system to the rural communities. Mothers and their children increasingly enjoyed the benefits of purer milk, more rigorous and frequent medical examinations, and dramatic bacteriological discoveries which helped to control communicable diseases such as small pox, scarlet fever, diphtheria, ring worm, and measles.

The nature of the child welfare cause in the interwar period—the growing influence of medical experts who dictated health practices—meant that much of the IODE's work in this area consisted of practical and material contributions: sanatoria and preventoria for the treatment and prevention of tuberculosis along with the equipment for their operation; fresh supplies of milk and the provision of baby clinics, layettes, and clothing to help mothers produce healthy babies; and the creation of youth homes and fresh air camps to ensure a better quality of life for children while at the same time preventing the spread of harmful diseases. In the name of service to the nation and to the empire, the IODE responded with enthusiasm to these needs. Just as they had provided comforts and aid for soldiers during the war, Daughters of the Empire contributed financially and materially to the improvement of child health as part of a larger vision of a strong

and healthy nation worthy of its place within the empire.

# 2



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS  
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1919A  
ANSI AND ISO TEST CHART No. 2

## CHAPTER THREE

### "Sowing the Seeds of Allegiance, Unity, and Service:" The IODE and the Education of Canadians

The function of education in a democracy is to develop  
the highest potentialities of the individual.<sup>1</sup>

In a brief history of the work of the IODE in the schools, a Daughter of the Empire defined education as being, "the act or art of developing and cultivating the physical, intellectual, aesthetic and moral faculties." She went on to add that, "if we have accomplished this development in all the students we have helped, then Canada will have a great number of good living boys and girls, with well-trained minds and healthy bodies, to help mould her future."<sup>2</sup> These comments are clearly indicative of the educational climate of the 1920s and of how the IODE attempted to use the new emphasis on the development of the whole child to further its patriotic agenda in the period of reconstruction. In keeping with the IODE's efforts to ensure a strong and loyal population, the public school system became for the Order an important instrument of political socialization. Through it, the Daughters could shape young, plastic minds according to their own moral and patriotic ideals while enjoying continued support as workers in a field that was suitably feminine. A persistent emphasis on the imperial connection and on

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<sup>1</sup>NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 19, Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire Brief Outline of History, 1900-1960, n.d., 6-7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

the British ideals of democracy, liberty, and freedom in their educational work reinforced the Daughters' own superior status as Anglo-Saxon women and legitimized their role in the transmission of cultural values.

Many of the same social changes that affected assumptions about the welfare of the child throughout the interwar period were responsible for dramatic transformations in Canada's system of education. The idea that, in order to grow into healthy and decent citizens, children would have to be nurtured and stimulated as individuals was transferred to the schools where, by the 1920s, children were spending a larger proportion of their time. Influenced in large measure by progressive ideas that were gaining popularity in the western world, particularly in the United States, teachers, school inspectors, and school trustees tried to improve the effectiveness of the schools through the creation of a stimulating learning environment. Along with the traditional subjects of reading, writing, and arithmetic, students were increasingly given the opportunity to pursue their interests and to develop social and artistic skills in programs of domestic science, music, art, nature study, and physical education.<sup>3</sup>

As an integral part of the IODE's focus on child welfare, the education of young Canadians was the primary medium through which Daughters of the Empire spread their patriotic ideals and endeavoured to create a sound population. Since its inception, the Order clearly perceived the importance of the

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<sup>3</sup>For a discussion of the "new education movement," see R.S. Patterson, "The Canadian Experience With Progressive Education," in E. Brian Tittley, ed., Canadian Education: Historical Themes and Contemporary Issues (Calgary, 1990), 95-110; and Nancy Sheehan, "Women's Organizations and Educational Issues, 1900-1930," Women's Studies 7:3 (Fall 1986), 90-94.

schools in inculcating in children an awareness of the British connection and of the patriotic principles that would serve to strengthen it. It supplied teachers with the appropriate materials for such a task: patriotic books, pins, pictures, and Union Jacks. It encouraged correspondence among Canadian and British students to promote an exchange of imperial ideas. And Empire Day, a semi-official celebration in the schools each 24th of May, was instigated by a long-time Daughter of the Empire, Clementina Fessenden, who insisted that one day each year be set aside for patriotic exercises in commemoration of the imperial tie.<sup>4</sup>

As the cultural agents of imperialism, Daughters of the Empire continued their educational work with renewed fervour in the 1920s. A love of empire continued to enliven their work in the schools, but the emerging sense of nationalism in Canada forced the IODE to shift its focus to expressing the importance of Canada to the empire. In accordance with the intellectual atmosphere of the 20s, their concept of imperialism became a form of Canadian nationalism as they promoted a greater importance for the country within the context of a continuing relationship with Great Britain.<sup>5</sup> Whereas in earlier years the IODE had tried to inspire patriotic support for the war effort in service of the empire, in the 1920s

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<sup>4</sup>For more information on the IODE's educational activities in the pre-war period see Marcel Dirk, "Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and the First World War," M.A. Thesis, Carleton University, 1988, 173-201.

<sup>5</sup>The idea that imperialism and nationalism were indeed one and the same is discussed in great detail in Carl Berger, The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism 1867-1914 (Toronto, 1970). Berger's time period, however, does not extend beyond World War One and he fails to mention the role of women in the stimulation of patriotism in Canada. See also Douglas Cole, "Canada's 'Nationalistic' Imperialists," in Journal of Canadian Studies V:3 (August 1970), 44-49; and Robert Page, "Carl Berger and the Intellectual Origins of Canadian Imperialist Thought, 1867-1914," in Journal of Canadian Studies V:3 (August 1970), 39-43.

its aim was the stimulation of the values needed to build the kind of nation they hoped Canada would become in the ensuing decades.

Conditions in the period following the First World War were ideal for the IODE's continued efforts to reach Canada's youth through the educational system. The "new education movement" along with increased attendance in the schools meant that the IODE could influence more students than ever before while taking advantage of new, more child-centred methods of teaching. Compared to the previous decade, by 1921 a larger percentage of children went to school, attended on a regular basis, and completed more grades.<sup>6</sup> Those who attended could expect to be taught by teachers--increasingly female--who were better educated and better trained than their predecessors.<sup>7</sup> Provincial governments opened more schools in rural areas, thus reaching a larger proportion of children of foreign

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<sup>6</sup>Between 1911 and 1921 the increase in overall attendance was as follows: 7 year olds, from 80.0% to 84.2%; 9 year olds, from 88.7% to 91.3%; 11 year olds, from 90.0% to 92.0%; and 13 year olds, from 87.6% to 91.0%. Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus (Toronto, 1976), 166. The number of students enrolled in secondary grades in Ontario, for example increased from 22,523 in 1901 to 32,612 in 1910, to 38,162 in 1920, to 66,953 in 1929. Taken from Canada Year Book, 1931, Provincially-Controlled Schools in Canada: Comparative Numbers of Boys and Girls Doing Work of Secondary Grade in each of Seven Provinces, 1901-1929, 968.

<sup>7</sup>For example, while the number of teachers in Ontario grew from 8,394 to 14,829 between 1890 and 1920, the proportion of those who had not completed junior matriculation dropped from over half to less than 10%. At the same time, those with junior matriculation and a year of professional training rose from under 10% to over 80% of the teaching force. Sutherland, Children In English-Canadian Society, 167. For a good discussion of the feminization of teaching in Canada refer to Alison Prentice, "The Feminization of Teaching," in Alison Prentice and Susan Mann Trofimenkoff, eds., The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History Vol 1 (Toronto, 1977), 49-65.

ancestry, and they enforced more effectively school attendance legislation.<sup>8</sup> The increased regulation of the employment of children on farms and in mines, shops, and factories created more time for education.<sup>9</sup> For many families, a rising standard of living diminished the need for their children's labour at home, and a more general positive attitude towards education in Canada influenced many parents to make a more serious commitment to the education of their children.

To complement the structural changes that were occurring in Canada's system of education, by the early 1920s, school reformers had presented Canadians with a new plan for education based on a complex dialogue that had begun thirty years earlier. Culminating in the implementation of ideas tendered in such blueprints as British Columbia's Putnam Weir Report of 1924, this process combined child-centred and work-centred educational movements to promote such fundamental elements of the "new education" as vocational and technical education, manual training, domestic science, and physical education.<sup>10</sup> Many schools experimented with more individualized learning approaches that highlighted project-oriented work; and teachers were encouraged to use more innovative techniques such as games, visuals, and music in their classrooms.

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<sup>8</sup>F. Henry Johnson discusses legislative efforts to enforce school attendance in British Columbia in *A History of Public Education in British Columbia* (Vancouver, 1964), 55-6. For more information on this subject and on other aspects of increasing enrolment in Canadian schools, see C.E. Phillips, *The Development of Education in Canada* (Toronto, 1957), 179-90.

<sup>9</sup>In 1891, 13.8% of all Canadian children between the ages of 10 and 14 were gainfully employed. By 1921, this percentage had dropped to 3.2. Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society*, 165.

<sup>10</sup>R.S. Patterson discusses the Putnam Weir Report in "Canadian Experience..." 98-100.



Like their counterparts in child welfare, Canadian educators believed they had assembled a curriculum that would help children confront the societal problems and changes of a new era. The "red scare" impelled educational reformers to consider the type of education appropriate for the growth of democracy. They justified new curriculum reforms as helping Canada's youth to develop character and citizenship and as instilling in them an appreciation of democratic institutions.<sup>11</sup>

The educational practices that gained popularity in the 1920s and 30s, however, were by no means universally accepted. Hardly substitutes for traditional modes of education, the methods and ideas associated with progressive or child-centred learning were largely applied in combination with the familiar subjects of english, math, and history. Canadians were initially receptive to the new emphasis on individualism, but came to regard such an approach as undermining the mastery of practical skills and knowledge. Indeed, most teachers and many school inspectors and administrators did not fully grasp the principles behind the "new education" and failed to implement them effectively. By and large, Canadian educators employed a middle-of-the-road approach to education in the 1920s. They tried to maintain a reasonable balance between individual project work complemented by a more stimulating learning environment and the traditional instruction in "skills" and "drills".<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid, 105.

<sup>12</sup>Patterson, "Canadian Experience...", 108-9.

Although the term "new education" did not appear in its records, the IODE's educational work in the 1920s reflected many of the philosophical and practical changes that were occurring in the schools.<sup>13</sup> Through the encouragement of pageantry, pictures, and plays, along with essay writing and good books, Daughters of the Empire were able to spread their patriotic message in ways that captured students' interest. Empire Day celebrations continued after the war, and their emphasis on patriotic songs such as "God Save the King," "Rule Britannia," and "Land of Our Birth," prizes of Empire pins or British history books, readings, classroom displays, sports, and parades fit in well with the "new education" theme.<sup>14</sup> Like many educators of the period, however, Daughters of the Empire combined innovative and traditional approaches to education: they provided a variety of resources to teach the whole child, yet they continued to emphasize such pre-war activities as military drill and patriotic recitations.

Prior to World War One, Empire Day was the most prominent school activity in which the IODE took an interest. In the decade that followed, however, Daughters of the Empire made a serious commitment to help reform society through the schools by sponsoring scholarships, supplying schools with patriotic materials and books, and taking a hand in the Canadianization of immigrants.

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<sup>13</sup>Nancy Sheehan discusses the link between the IODE's educational work and the "new education" movement in "Philosophy, Pedagogy, and Practice: the IODE and the Schools in Canada, 1900-1945," *History of Education Review* 2:2 (1990), 307-321. See also "The IODE, the Schools and World War I," in *History of Education Review* 13:1 (1984), 29-44.

<sup>14</sup>See Robert M. Stamp, "Empire Day in the Schools of Ontario: The Training of Young Imperialists," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 7:3 (August 1973), 32-42.

At the IODE's annual meeting in 1930, the president of the national executive commented on the national significance of the Order's educational work:

In a democracy, the entire fabric of the national well-being is dependent almost entirely upon the intelligence and honesty of the great mass of the electorate and there is little work in which the Order can more directly serve Canada and the Empire than by assuring to those who might otherwise be deprived of it, the elements of a sound education. For democracy, deprived of an intelligent electorate, will run into mob rule. Every boy and girl advanced by our efforts to intelligent citizenship, becomes a guardian of our traditions or ordered methods of constitutional government.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, the Daughters' primary aim was to develop in Canadians a love and reverence for the British Empire and an understanding of Canada's role within it. An awareness of its history and significance, they believed, would arouse an appreciation of democratic values and institutions and build a population of loyal and patriotic citizens.

Convinced that the fate of the empire depended upon the education of its youth, the IODE launched a major educational project in 1919 which occupied much of its energy throughout the following decade. The War Memorial Scheme, as it came to be called, was devised to perpetuate the memory of "Canadian men and women" who gave their lives in the defence of the empire during the First World War. The Daughters firmly believed that a living memorial, one which would result in the education of soldiers' children, would be the most effective means of honouring those who gave of themselves the ultimate in patriotic

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<sup>15</sup>Mrs. Stewart, "An Account of the Thirtieth Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," *Echoes* (June 1930), 6.

service. At the same time, by providing students with educational opportunities that otherwise may not have been accessible to them, Daughters of the Empire were promoting the creation of an intelligent electorate that venerated the democratic principles the empire stood for.

Through the War Memorial, the IODE's aims were threefold: to provide post-graduate overseas scholarships valued at \$1,400 each which would allow Canadian students the opportunity to study in the mother country at Oxford, London, or Edinburgh; to grant bursaries of \$1,200 each to Canadian university students;<sup>16</sup> and to distribute War Memorial pictures, books, calendars, and other patriotic material throughout every school in the Dominion.<sup>17</sup> Candidates for the scholarships and bursaries had to be British subjects with at least five years residency in Canada; overseas scholars were required to hold a degree from a recognized college or university. Eligibility was limited to sons and daughters of Canadian soldiers, between the ages of fifteen and twenty-seven years so long as they were unmarried. Selection was based on literary and scholastic attainments, personal characteristics, physical fitness, and qualities of leadership.<sup>18</sup>

The various provincial selection committees did not appear to discriminate overtly according to gender: of those who were successful candidates for the bursaries, more than half were women, while women comprised seventeen

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<sup>16</sup>This sum was divided into 4 yearly instalments of \$300 each.

<sup>17</sup>Constance Laing, "Report of the National War Memorial Committee," *Echoes* (June 1922), 31.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

percent of the recipients of Post-Graduate Scholarships.<sup>19</sup> The Order attributed the larger overall number of male recipients to the greater likelihood that they had served in the war which would have increased their chances of selection. Its definition of service, however, seemed to exclude the many women who supported the empire's cause as nurses and as providers of practical aid. Just as the IODE's work for the war effort had focused on the support and encouragement of men—the soldiers and military officers—it continued in the years that followed to express its concept of the war as having been, for the most part, a male endeavour.

Daughters of the Empire were pleased to point out, however, that, unlike the Rhodes Scholarship, the IODE War Memorial Scheme did admit women into the fold. Considering the comparatively low percentage of women in the 1920s who furthered their education beyond the secondary level, the proportion of female students selected to receive financial assistance from the IODE appears to be reasonable. Since the late 1800s, women had gained access to institutions of higher learning, but their numbers in colleges and universities in the 1920s still fell far behind those of men.<sup>21</sup> Society continued to question the legitimacy and

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<sup>19</sup>NAC, MG 28, 1 17, Vol. 33, Docs. 35 and 36, Record of Post-Graduate Scholarship Holders 1920-1940 (1949); Record of Bursary Holders 1920-1940 (1951).

<sup>20</sup>Margaret Gillett's We Walked Very Warily: A History of Women at McGill (Montreal, 1981) discusses some of the problems women faced as increasing numbers of them entered university. An article in Echoes reviews the advances made by women in education. See "Sixty Years of Progress," Echoes (December 1926), 14.

consequences of their attendance.<sup>21</sup> Marriage remained the ultimate career for women, and any education or employment they received before they married was justified only in that it would make them into more knowledgeable and efficient homemakers.<sup>22</sup>

According to Miss Monk, an IODE student who studied at Oxford, life for female overseas scholars was often difficult. "The woman student did not have life made as easy to her within the college halls as did the man," she reported, "and as a consequence, she worked harder and became very fit mentally; in fact the amazing ability of the college women which was fostered by necessity, rather discouraged a newcomer."<sup>23</sup> The obstacles Monk faced as a female scholar began prior to her trials in Oxford. After receiving a B.A. and the Governor General's medal from McGill and an M.A. at Harvard, she enrolled in the Faculty of Law at McGill where she earned first class honours as well as the highest standing in her class. She would have received the Faculty's Macdonald Scholarship, awarded to the most outstanding student each year, had she not been a woman.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>By 1928-29 women still represented only 38% of total enrolment in Canadian Universities even though they comprised 55% of the total population in secondary schools. Thirty percent of bachelor degrees, 11% of Masters degrees, and 5% of Doctorate degrees conferred in that year were earned by women, and women made up only 12.6% of the total teaching staff in Canadian Universities. Calculated from Canada Year Book, 1931, 968, 978, 980, and 982.

<sup>22</sup>For more information on the choice women faced in the 1920s between career and marriage see Veronica Strong-Boag, The New Day Recalled: Lives of Girls and Women in English-Canada, 1919-1939 (Toronto, 1988), particularly the chapter on "Courting, Marrying, and Other Adventures," 81-112.

<sup>23</sup>"Report of the War Memorial Committee," Echoes (June 1925), 18.

<sup>24</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1923), War Memorial Report, 69.

Such remarkable talents were just what the IODE hoped to cultivate through their War Memorial Scheme. Given the Order's goal of building an intelligent electorate at home, it is not surprising that the overseas scholars were requested to return to Canada upon the completion of their studies abroad. It was not uncommon for Canadian graduate and post-graduate students to study either in the United States or in Great Britain: they graced the classrooms of Chicago, Harvard, and Oxford in search of a quality of graduate education that could not yet be found in many Canadian universities. The IODE did not want their overseas scholars to contribute to the "brain drain" that Canada was trying to avoid. "I feel quite sure that all the varied experiences of their year abroad and the influence of the traditions and atmosphere of these noble institutions around which so much of the history of the Empire is woven," wrote the national educational convenor, Constance Laing, "will be of incalculable benefit to these young people."<sup>25</sup> Their talents, skills, and patriotic bond with the mother country were just the qualities that Canada would require in its future leadership.

Of all those who held IODE scholarships in the 1920s, only six were employed outside of Canada upon the completion of their studies. George Myers, for instance, one of the early post-graduate scholars, first taught in the United States and then continued his career in Cuba.<sup>26</sup> Likewise, Albert Rive and Morley Scott,

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<sup>25</sup>Constance Laing, "Report of the National War Memorial Committee," Echoes (June 1922), 32.

<sup>26</sup>Annual Report of the National War Memorial Committee, 1926-27," Echoes (October 1927), 29.

both native of New Brunswick and IODE scholarship recipients, sought work in the United States once they returned to North America, Rive at Yale, and Scott at the University of Michigan.<sup>27</sup> It appears by their letters to the IODE that many award holders were very conscious of the role that was expected of them through the opportunities provided by the Order. One overseas scholar, Mrs. Campbell, wrote of her certainty that all recipients would,

Not only do all they can to advance the course and prominence of the Order, but in whatever line of work they may hear the call to serve their country and humanity, will feel the responsibility laid upon them by these opportunities and endeavour to the best of their abilities to keep before them the highest and noblest in British thought and tradition and thus do their part in making and keeping Canada true to British ideals and British connection.<sup>28</sup>

The Order made a concerted effort to keep in touch with its scholars and bursary holders and was proud of those who contributed to Canada's academic and social development. Of those IODE overseas scholars for the 1920s who returned to Canada, eight taught in Canadian universities, and the remainder was comprised of three lawyers, three clergymen, one journalist, three businessmen, four school teachers, and two in "Government scientific positions."<sup>29</sup>

Watson Kirkconnell, the first IODE overseas scholar for Ontario in 1921, was

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<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1923), War Memorial Report, 72.

<sup>29</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May 1930), War Memorial Report, 59; Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1925), War Memorial Report, 101.



highly regarded by the Order as an exemplary recipient.<sup>30</sup> Born of Scottish stock in Port Hope, Ontario in 1895, Kirkconnell received an M.A. from Queen's and served as an army officer during World War One. Following his selection as an IODE scholar, he studied at Lincoln College in Oxford where he received a B.Litt. degree in economics and then dutifully returned to Canada where he "is doing magnificent work as an intellectual trainer in the field of literature" at Wesley College in Winnipeg.<sup>31</sup>

Canada became indebted to Watson Kirkconnell for his contributions to the history of multiculturalism. Possessing amazing linguistic talents, he translated and recorded thousands of books, newspapers, and magazines of various origins, documenting the history of New Canadians and their rich contributions to Canadian heritage. During the Second World War, Kirkconnell became a fearless protestor of communism as well as of German expansionism. His many scholarly and administrative accomplishments throughout his life, which included being president of Acadia University, joint founder of the Federal Citizenship Branch in 1940, of the Humanities Research Council of Canada in 1943, and of the Baptist Federation of Canada in 1944, fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and of various other learned societies, recipient of thirteen honorary degrees and many other honours including knighthoods from both Poland and Iceland, and author

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<sup>30</sup>For the IODE's 75th Anniversary in 1975, Watson Kirkconnell presented the organization with a rose bush that he had developed in his garden in Wolfville, Nova Scotia in gratitude for the opportunity given to him through the War Memorial Scholarship.

<sup>31</sup>"An IODE Overseas Scholar Wins Fame," *Echoes* (March 1929), 35.

of countless volumes of prose and poetry, fulfilled more than the highest expectations of the IODE when it chose him as its first Ontario overseas scholar.<sup>32</sup>

In order to activate the Scheme in its entirety, the IODE's financial goal was to raise \$500,000.<sup>33</sup> The Daughters realized the magnitude of such an undertaking, but they had confidence in the project which, they boasted, was "truly statesmanlike in its inception and scope."<sup>34</sup> In fact, to ensure that it was orchestrated effectively, the Order called upon an advisory committee comprised of prominent men. The Right Honourable Arthur Meighan, Sir Robert Falconer, George Parkin and others graced the committee list, agreeing to lend their names to the project and to give advice as well as financial support.<sup>35</sup> Consulting men on important IODE matters, while inhibiting their independence as a women's organization, served to further legitimize their public activities and to enhance the Order's non-threatening image.<sup>36</sup>

The original resolution for the War Memorial provided for the awarding of one bursary of \$1,000 in each province every year which was divided into four

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<sup>32</sup>J.R.C. Perkin and James B. Snelson, Morning in his Heart: The Life and Writings of Watson Kirkconnell (Acadia University, 1986).

<sup>33</sup>Constance Laing, "Report of the National War Memorial Committee," Echoes (June 1922), 31.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>"Montreal Municipal Chapter War Memorial Campaign," Echoes (March 1920), 48.

<sup>36</sup>Nancy Sheehan points out that the IODE's inclusion of ministers of education, university presidents, professors, and military officials ensured that "the activity it promoted would receive a warm welcome from the ministries of education, school boards, principals, and teachers across the country." See "Philosophy, Pedagogy, and Practice," 317.

yearly instalments of \$250 each.<sup>37</sup> Since both the principal and the interest on the sum of \$100,000 set aside for this purpose was used, the bursary section of the scheme was available for only seventeen years. The post-graduate scholarships, however, were drawn only from the interest of their fund, which represented the permanent War Memorial of the Order. Thus, it would have taken \$230,000 to provide one scholarship for every province.<sup>38</sup> As only the interest on \$100,000 was available at that time, the committee decided to award four scholarships in 1921 and five in 1922.<sup>39</sup> By this arrangement, the nine provinces were to be covered in two years instead of one, and it was not until 1927 that nine overseas scholars began their work in the same year.<sup>40</sup> By 1921, the committee was able to report that nine bursary holders were finishing their first year in Canadian universities, and four scholars had been selected to go to England for post-graduate study.<sup>41</sup>

In June 1924, the National War Memorial Committee reported that provincial contributions, together with \$117.52 from the United States, odd donations amounting to \$55.26, as well interest brought the fund up to \$386,151.99.<sup>42</sup> This

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<sup>37</sup>This award was soon after increased to \$1,200.

<sup>38</sup>Constance Laing, "Report of the National War Memorial Committee," *Echoes* (June 1922), 31.

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

<sup>40</sup>*Minutes*, Annual Meeting (May 1930), War Memorial Report, 48.

<sup>41</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup>"Report of the IODE National War Memorial Committee," *Echoes* (June 1924), 8.

amount, of course, still left \$113,848.01 to be raised in order to reach the initial goal of \$500,000. As a gift to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the national chapter, the IODE hoped to complete the War Memorial Fund by the following year. An ambitious fund raising campaign was initiated with emphasis on educating new and remote chapters as to the significance of this educational scheme to the future of the nation.<sup>43</sup> The national educational committee insisted that the War Memorial embraced the most vital and essential principles of the Order: the veneration of heroic deeds and the education of the empire's youth. It enabled Daughters of the Empire to combine these aims most effectively through the education of sons and daughters of soldiers and sailors. These children would be not only taught the skills for livelihood, but also instilled with the spirit of patriotic allegiance that would help them lead the Dominion and empire to further greatness.

Despite numerous lectures and speeches designed to rouse interest in the scheme, the anniversary of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire passed without its promised gift. In December 1925, the educational secretary regretted that the Order was still \$73,000 away from its goal.<sup>44</sup> By 1926, the bursaries and pictures sections of the Scheme were fully provided for, but the scholarship fund remained incomplete.<sup>45</sup> Various donations and fund raising events had brought

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<sup>43</sup>"Suggestions From the National Executive Re Completion of the War Memorial Fund," Echoes (December 1924), 26.

<sup>44</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1925), War Memorial Report, 97.

<sup>45</sup>"War Memorial Fund," Echoes (March 1926), 33.

the remaining sum considered necessary to establish the War Memorial firmly down to \$55,000.<sup>46</sup> This amount was apportioned among each of the provinces according to membership, with Ontario shouldering the largest responsibility of \$28,140.00 and Manitoba, with the smallest membership except for Prince Edward Island, being expected to raise \$2,144.00.<sup>47</sup> Teas, bake sales, and pageants produced much of the money raised for the campaign. As well, many chapters requested donations of anywhere from one dollar to three dollars from each of their members. Special canvassing campaigns collected money from individuals outside the Order, and on the odd occasion, prominent men like the Hon. R.B. Bennett and Mr. Nichol, the former Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, contributed to the cause.<sup>48</sup> Although many Daughters of the Empire were earnest in their fund raising ventures, only one-third of the amount needed was collected that year.<sup>49</sup>

It was not until 1930 that the allotment of funds by the provinces for the post-graduate scholarships reached completion.<sup>50</sup> At this time the War Memorial Fund was reinvested at a more favourable rate of interest which provided that the sum of \$126,879.10 be set aside for bursaries, one in each province annually, and that

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<sup>46</sup>"Annual Report of the National War Memorial Committee, 1926-27," Echoes (October 1927), 15.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>"Notes on the Education Work of the Order," Echoes (October 1927), 11.

<sup>50</sup>Echoes (June 1930), 7.

a total of \$315,000 be allotted to overseas post-graduate scholarships which were raised from \$1,400 to \$1,600 each.<sup>51</sup> Five hundred dollars was to be taken out of the latter fund and used to cover the cost of railway journeys of scholars from the four western provinces to the port of embarkation. Administrative expenses which included salaries, postage, filing cabinets, printing, and the publication in Echoes of photographs of scholars and bursary holders were to be defrayed from the interest on \$20,000 set aside for this purpose.<sup>52</sup>

Along with the Canadian bursaries and post-graduate overseas scholarships, the War Memorial pictures section was considered to be an equally important part of the Scheme. Reminding children of the importance of Canada in the empire through visual memorials became the rationale for the Daughters' involvement in such a program, and it was a means of teaching that was appropriate in the "new education." It was their hope that pictures depicting Canada's heroic contributions to the war would arouse a national pride that would help to build a better country in the new era.

In 1919, the committee allotted \$40,000 for the purchase of the pictures;<sup>53</sup> and, by the end of 1922, a collection of eighteen pictures painted by artists engaged by a committee chaired by Lord Beaverbrook had been distributed to one thousand

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid.

<sup>53</sup>Constance Laing, "Report of the National War Memorial Committee," Echoes (June 1922), 31.

schools throughout the country.<sup>54</sup> Selected by the provincial committees of the Order, with the cooperation of the Departments of Education, the schools received allotments based on the number of children and schools in each province. The pictures were framed by IODE chapters, by teachers, and by local school boards. In Nova Scotia, the Department of Education defrayed the entire cost of distributing the collection, while the provincial government of Ontario very generously assumed the responsibility for the cost of framing as well as distributing the province's allotment of 315 sets of pictures, along with an additional 100 sets acquired from the province of Quebec.<sup>55</sup>

The War Memorial pictures were meant to be hung together in sequence, to tell the story of Canada's role in the conflict. In scenes such as "Canada's Great Armada Leaving Gaspé Bay," "Canadians Arriving on the Rhine," and "Canadians in Paris After the Armistice," the pictures, by the IODE's own admission, depicted little of the grisly realities of the war.<sup>56</sup> Rather, they illustrated the work of the doctors, the care for wounded horses, and the landing of Canadians in France. "There is little or nothing, either of the 'pomp and circumstance of glorious war' or of its grim horrors," wrote the national educational secretary. "The pictures

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<sup>54</sup>Ibid, 105. The sets of pictures were distributed as follows: Ontario, 315; Quebec, 250; Manitoba, 75; Saskatchewan, 95; Alberta, 80; New Brunswick, 45; Nova Scotia, 65; British Columbia, 60; Prince Edward Island, 10; Yukon, 3. See "Notes on the Educational Work of the Order," *Echoes* (December 1926), 9.

<sup>55</sup>Constance B. Laing, "Notes on the Educational Work of the Order—A Valuable National Possession," *Echoes* (December 1926), 9. There is no explanation provided for the transfer of War Memorial Pictures from Quebec to Ontario. It is likely an indication, however, of the French-English conflict during World War One and of Quebec's rejection of Canada's part in it.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

help those who see them to realize the service which Canadians were able to give in the war; of this service we cannot be too proud, and it is well that the children growing up in our schools should know it."<sup>57</sup>

It was typical for the IODE to emphasize the gallant sacrifices made by Canadians in the war and the valour of their service. Their appeals for child welfare, education, and the Canadianization of immigrants in the 1920s were intimately linked to such rhetoric. Canadian soldiers had given their lives for the principles of justice, liberty, and democracy, and the Order made a plea to its fellow citizens to uphold these values as their contribution to the welfare of the nation. Only by developing the finest qualities of the race would Canada become worthy of the sacrifices of the war. The remark about the War Memorial Pictures made by a school trustee near the American border, himself the father of several of the pupils, expressed this idea succinctly. "Those pictures are making the children much fonder of their home," he claimed. "They say that if those men could fight like that to defend Canada it must be pretty well worth fighting for."<sup>58</sup>

The nostalgic message presented in the IODE's War Memorial pictures ran counter to the pacifist sentiments that were gaining popularity in the 1920s. Not only did Daughters of the Empire base the vast majority of their work on the

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<sup>57</sup>"Report on National War Memorial and Educational Work," *Echoes* (March 1924), 6. "In the plastic mind of childhood it is well to surround it with pictures that elevate rather than debase and coarsen," an IODE member wrote, "and scenes depicting valor, endurance, discipline, will have a compelling and abiding influence, and in the historic and artistic pictures of the War Memorial Scheme...the Sacrifice of the men of Canada, the cream of its youth, will be perpetuated for all time." NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 9, *Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire, 1900-1925* (n.d.), 22.

<sup>58</sup>*Minutes*, Annual Meeting (June 1925), War Memorial Report, 103.



principles that Canadian soldiers had defended, but they fiercely attacked pacifist philosophies calling for disarmament as being a guise for communism and anarchy. "Beneath the cloak of Christianity and good fellowship is being spread insidious propaganda," an Echoes article quoted an investigator of communist literature as saying.<sup>59</sup> The IODE was convinced that the pacifist movement, led by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), was advocating the overthrow of the government, the promotion of "red" doctrines, and the conversion of America into a nation of "slackers." The so-called "slacker's" oath of the WILPF represented the antithesis of everything the IODE based its very existence upon:

I affirm it is my intention never to aid in or sanction war, offensive or defensive, international or civil, in any way, whether by making or handling munitions, subscribing to war loans, using my labour for the purpose of setting others free for war service, helping by money or working for any relief organization which supports or condones war.<sup>60</sup>

This is not to say that the Daughters of the Empire were not among the many voices that called for peace in the period of reconstruction. As an avid member of the League of Nations Society, the Order made clear its goal of universal peace by passing several resolutions urging the settlement of international differences.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Lucy S. Doyle, "Misled Women Again Imperil Land by Pacifism: Investigators show how the so-called Peace Societies are Serving Moscow Today as the Aided German Cause During War," Echoes (June 1924), 10.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>For examples of these resolutions see Minutes, Executive Meeting, 2 November 1921. 137-38.

Far from advocating war, the Order did, however, glorify past conflicts that vindicated the principle of free human government. Unlike the WILPF, whose fusion of the perspectives of radical democratic socialism and feminist pacifism distinguished itself from the general movement for peace,<sup>62</sup> the IODE was not concerned about the removal of the root causes of war. While the WILPF promoted the concept of freedom and liberty through the elimination of exploitive social and economic conditions, including imperialism, the Daughters of the Empire adhered to the view that freedom—which for them was embodied in British democratic institutions—must at times be imposed by force on "inferior" peoples for the benefit of human progress.<sup>63</sup>

Since war was considered to be an inevitable part of social evolution, the Daughters believed that military preparedness and the development of a martial spirit were matters of national and human interest. Thus, while the IODE advocated international peace, it viewed pacifism, or total disarmament, as idealistic. The Daughters' militarism was expressed primarily through its championing of military drill in the schools. While pacifist groups like the WILPF viewed cadet training as "the most insidious example of the perpetuation of the

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<sup>62</sup>Beverly Boutilier, "Educating for Peace and Co-operation: The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in Canada, 1919-1929," M.A. Thesis, Carleton University, 1988, 154.

<sup>63</sup>This contradiction is consistent throughout the IODE's ideology. Its emphasis on freedom and liberty, which it associated with the extension of the British Empire, was, of course, at odds with the fundamental nature of imperialism which abrogated human rights and exploited supposedly-inferior races.

war spirit in Canadian society,"<sup>64</sup> the IODE saw it as serving the purpose of both encouraging discipline in the classrooms and creating a population of young Canadians who would be at least somewhat prepared for any future military threat.<sup>65</sup> The Order also promoted national defence by giving considerable support to the Navy League. Its national Navy League Committee contributed articles for the League's Sailor magazine, provided summer camps, awards, prizes, and military equipment for its sea cadets, and cared for wounded sailors and their dependents with the purpose of raising a sea conscious spirit among Canadians.<sup>66</sup> The change in the status of Canada since 1918 and its obligations as part of the League of Nations meant that it would have to play a role in the sea defence that had been so significant during the First World War. "During the Great War," an IODE resolution read, "Victoria and Vancouver would probably have been assailed by enemy ships had not Japan, our ally, been in the offing and we do not think it desirable that dependence should again be made probable or possible."<sup>67</sup> On several occasions, the Daughters passed resolutions, voicing to the government their commitment to the continued operation of naval colleges and

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<sup>64</sup>Boutilier, 128.

<sup>65</sup>Even as late as 1930, the IODE continued to endorse cadet training in the schools as "one of the finest movements for training in citizenship." See the resolution pertaining to this matter in "An Account of the Thirtieth Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," Echoes (June 1930), 6.

<sup>66</sup>Mention of the IODE's connection to the Navy League is made in Echoes (June 1922), 14; Echoes (June 1924), 5; and Echoes (October 1926), 4.

<sup>67</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, 29 May 1922, 15.

to the prosperity of the Canadian navy.<sup>68</sup> They believed strongly that a rejection of the defence of the sea not only would be a rejection of the link to the mother country, but would also be further hindrance to the independence of Canada as a maritime nation.

As part of this military emphasis, Daughters of the Empire felt they had a duty to ensure that the events significant to the growth and defence of the empire were remembered and honoured appropriately. The observation of patriotic anniversaries was an important part of their efforts to foster an awareness of British heritage, to strengthen Canada's bond with the Empire, and to recognize heroic deeds. Most chapters focused on Empire Day, when Daughters flocked to the schools, supervising patriotic programmes, giving lectures, and awarding prizes for patriotism. The municipal chapter in Victoria held its annual Empire Day children's service in parliament square where over 1,000 children would gather for a flag-waving procession to a statue of Victoria where they placed flowers and reaffirmed their humble loyalty to the Empire.<sup>69</sup> IODE members became highly visible again on St. George's Day, Trafalgar Day, and Armistice Day when they held services at the cenotaph, laying wreaths, and delivering emotional addresses.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>See, for example, Minutes, Executive Meeting, 29 May 1922, 15; "National Executive Committee Report," Echoes (December 1924), 41; and "Report of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," Echoes (October 1927), 6.

<sup>69</sup>"Report of the IODE National Educational Secretary," Echoes (June 1930), 18.

<sup>70</sup>"Editorial," Echoes (March 1927), 6.

Soldiers' children were given special attention by the IODE in their contributions to education in Canada. The most appropriate way to honour the sacrifices of those who had served in the war, it seemed, was to ensure that their children would be taught the principles for which they had fought. Apart from the huge contributions the Order made to this cause through the War Memorial Scheme, through varied efforts, Daughters of the Empire in local chapters also helped soldiers' children attain the secondary education they deserved.

Introduced by the Laurentian Chapter of Ottawa in 1919, this line of educational work was soon endorsed wholeheartedly by the national chapter. Its primary purpose was to help widows of men killed overseas to send promising children to secondary schools, institutes, and academies instead of allowing them to seek work at an early age in occupations which led nowhere. This program of work was not included in the War Memorial Scheme as the executive felt it could be better carried out at the local level; indeed, the personal knowledge of the children and their mothers on the part of the individual chapters proved to be an advantage to this program of assistance. In some areas, primary chapters looked after individual cases and reported their work to the municipal chapter, while, in others, primary chapters contributed to a community fund, the proceeds from which were distributed at the municipal level. In New Brunswick, the provincial chapter made a careful preliminary survey through the aid of pensions lists before it sent out primary branch committees to visit the families in need of

assistance.<sup>71</sup> Whatever the case, after a year or two, it was found that the average amount given to a child was one hundred dollars a year which enabled a mother to keep the child in school.<sup>72</sup>

In Alberta, for example, throughout the 1920s, two chapters reported helping fourteen soldiers' children to attend high school, Business College, or Technical School by paying for their books, equipment, and examination fees.<sup>73</sup> Similarly, in Quebec, fifty children of soldiers were sent to high schools at a cost of \$1,137.83, ten to Business College at a cost of \$505.95, two to Shawbridge Farm at a cost of \$252.00, and seven to various schools at a cost varying from \$5.00 to \$130 each. Altogether, 72 sons and daughters were assisted by the IODE in this province at a total expense of \$2,247.83.<sup>74</sup> In British Columbia, fifteen children received one hundred dollars a year for their secondary education; and, in Ontario, the Toronto and Hamilton chapters led the programme in this province, assisting 49 and 18 children, respectively.<sup>75</sup> A \$7,000 endowment fund for a scholarship at the Royal Military College, to be competed for by the sons of men killed or totally disabled in the Great War, was the gift of an Ottawa chapter to the cause.<sup>76</sup> Chapters in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and New Brunswick also

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<sup>71</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1927), 34.

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

<sup>73</sup>"Report of the IODE National Educational Secretary, 1929-30," *Echoes* (June 1930), 18.

<sup>74</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1927), 34.

<sup>76</sup>"History of the Order in Ontario," *Echoes* (June 1925), 11.

provided books and clothing for these children, while Saskatchewan focused its assistance on the provision of scholarships at both the high school and university level.<sup>77</sup>

Constantly referring to uneducated youths as a "waste of human material,"<sup>78</sup> the Order had much faith in its power to shape children into loyal and decent Canadians. "The Order is not simply one out of the many philanthropic organizations," the national educational secretary insisted. "It is unique in Canada in seeking to develop and stimulate intelligent and devoted service to Canada as part of the Empire and we cannot begin too early nor continue too constantly to rouse in Canadian children an interest in all that is finest in the traditions which we have inherited."<sup>79</sup> Of course, faith in education as an instrument of social change was not particular to the IODE: those who had any reform agenda, from progressive educators in Canada to Germany's Third Reich, called upon the powers of education as a vehicle for the transmission of their particular values.

The IODE did, however, use its role in the schools to distinguish itself as a patriotic rather than a charitable organization. Indeed, the Order's educational work throughout the twenties went far beyond the objectives of the War Memorial Scheme and the assistance of soldiers' children. Through pictures, illustrated lectures, pageantry, and stories, the Order hoped to impress upon

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<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Echoes (March 1926), 7.

<sup>79</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," Echoes (October 1927), 34.

young minds the value of citizenship within a benevolent and democratic society. Speeches on subjects such as "Life in Roman Britain," "Canadian Birds," and "The Importance of Teaching the Greatness of our Empire" were organized in the province of Quebec. Likewise, in Saskatchewan, papers were given frequently on the "League of Nations," the "Emblem of the Order," "Canadian Poets," and "Disarmament." In every province, such lectures given by university professors, businessmen, and Canadian and British authors were designed to educate children about their heritage as Canadians and to propagate the ideals of citizenship for which the IODE so strongly stood.<sup>80</sup>

Given the IODE's confidence in the school as an instrument of patriotism, it is not surprising that it encouraged dedication and discipline in the classroom. Giving students medals, silver cups, Maple Leaf pins, and small Union Jacks as prizes, the IODE was generous in its rewards for proficiency in school work. Many award categories were created including public speaking, citizenship, music, and agriculture. Awards were also given for British and Canadian history and literature, for drawing and colouring the Union Jack, and for essays on patriotic subjects such as "Why I am Proud to Be Canadian," "The British Empire," and "The Debt that Canada Owes to Great Britain."<sup>81</sup>

Flourishing, well-equipped schools meant a sound foundation for the future of the nation; and Daughters of the Empire went to great lengths to ensure that

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<sup>80</sup>"Report of the IODE National Educational Secretary," Echoes (June 1930), 18.

<sup>81</sup>Echoes (March 1920), 51.



the schools of Canada had the supplies necessary to carry on their patriotic education. Gifts of flags, flag poles, and flag charts, along with placards, "How to Honour the Flag," baseball and basketball outfits, trophies for sports and shooting, Canadian and British magazines, bookcases, gramophones, records, and domestic science equipment helped schools to develop the whole child, physically, mentally, and spiritually. Many chapters adopted a school and took a personal interest in its growth and success. One chapter provided its adopted school with material for a Halloween party; another paid the expenses of school children competing in a music festival.<sup>62</sup> In Alberta, the Sir Robert Borden Keyes Chapter completely furnished a new school house when the old one burned down. Another chapter provided a school with a piano, and another donated a viola to a school orchestra.<sup>63</sup>

While the IODE considered the awarding of prizes and the supplying of equipment to be important means of stimulating enthusiasm and hard work in the schools, good books became by far the most significant medium through which the Order promoted its agenda of patriotic education throughout the 1920s. The national education secretary, Constance Laing, stressed the importance of reading to the development of a strong character:

Let the boy roam with Hiawatha, sail the seas with Sinbad,  
 build stockades with Crusoe, fight dragons with Jason, let  
 him place at quoits with Odysseus and at football with  
 Tom Brown. These playmates will never quarrel with him

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<sup>62</sup>"Report of the National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1925), 6.

<sup>63</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1927), 34.

or bully him, but from whom he will learn to be brave, self-reliant, manly, thoughtful of others, straightforward, with his face toward the light.<sup>84</sup>

The reading material distributed to children by the IODE as essay prizes and in libraries consisted primarily of British history and geography as well as literary selections by British and male authors. Except for L.M. Montgomery's novels, the heroes who were glorified in these works were, of course, men. As Nancy Sheehan has noted in her work on the educational work of Daughters of the Empire, the IODE Catalogue of Library Books clearly indicated a middle- and upper-class social bias that was not only imperialistic, but also racist and sexist.<sup>85</sup>

Certainly, in devising lists of books considered suitable for children, the national educational committee was careful to relegate boys and girls to their separate literary spheres. The suggested reading on the children's page in the December 1923 issue of Echoes is one of many illustrations of this tendency. The book recommended for girls was Camp Ken-Jockey by Ethel Hume Bennett. In this story, a rich American girl is forced to attend a Georgian Bay camp, but finds that her companionship and experiences there develop her into a "much finer girl than she had been when the summer began." For boys, on the other hand, the Committee found the exciting tales of encounters with stormy seas and icebergs

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<sup>84</sup>NAC, MG 28, 1 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 6, History of the IODE (n.p., n.d.), 24. (pamphlet)

<sup>85</sup>Sheehan, "Philosophy, Pedagogy, and Practice...", 313. The following is a sample of the books listed in the IODE Book Catalogue in 1924: HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY: Sir Isaac Brock, The Life of Nelson, In the Time of Alfred; STORIES OF TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE: Round the World With Father, Heroes by Land and Sea; FICTION: Stories from Robin Hood, Captains Courageous, Robinson Crusoe; POETRY: The Great War in Prose and Verse, In Flanders Fields; PRIZE BOOKS: Sam Slick, Land and Sea Tales, Emily of New Moon. See "War Memorial and Educational Work," Echoes (December 1924), 8.

and creatures of the deep in The Adventure of Billy Topsail by Norman Duncan to be appropriate.<sup>66</sup> A suggested reading in the "Book Market" section of Echoes is further indication of this attitude. Frederick Niven's book, The Wolfer, the reviewer insisted, "is hardly the type of story that a woman can intelligently review."

Full of fancy shooting, deadly battles where no one but the villains get badly hurt, gangs of rum runners, men who are 'quick on the draw' but otherwise gentle as women, and of course the beautiful daughter of a hotel keeper who is sweet and brave and fine..., it is without a doubt a man's book or as someone has described it a 'he-man's book.'<sup>67</sup>

Impressed by the importance of good books in the moulding of plastic minds, the national educational department encouraged chapters to donate libraries of various sizes to schools in their areas. Provincial educational secretaries busied themselves procuring from school inspectors and other provincial officials lists of schools in need of libraries; and once they were received, the books were warmly appreciated by pupils and teachers alike. One teacher reported that patriotic plays, taken from these books, were acted out by her students. "The children are as happy as if Christmas had come," wrote another grateful teacher in Saskatchewan.<sup>68</sup>

Initially, many chapters subscribed to the practice of donating libraries to

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<sup>66</sup>"Children's Page," Echoes (December 1923), 12-13.

<sup>67</sup>"The Book Market," Echoes (June 1923), 27. There are many examples in Echoes of this 'separate-spheres' attitude with regard to books. See, for example, the review for "A Dealer in Sunshine," by Dora Olive Thompson in Echoes (December 1926), 7.

<sup>68</sup>"Report of the IODE National Educational Secretary, 1929-30," Echoes (June 1930), 18.

schools wholeheartedly: in 1921, Daughters of the Empire provided 154 libraries to schools nationwide.<sup>89</sup> By the middle of the decade, however, hopes of completing the War Memorial Fund diverted attention from other educational activities and the yearly number of donated libraries fell to 85.<sup>90</sup> At the annual meeting of the IODE in Saint John in 1926, the national chapter urged each primary chapter to send at least one library to a school that year.<sup>91</sup> Even a five-dollar library, containing twelve or thirteen books from ten cents to seventy-five cents each consisting of illustrated stories, plays, and poetry from British and Canadian history would have been a much-needed contribution to any school.<sup>92</sup> With ninety-nine chapters participating in this scheme during the following year, the response was encouraging. Although most chapters ordered only the required one library, others were more generous. The largest investment was made by the Samuel de Champlain chapter of North Bay, Ontario, having ordered two twenty-five dollar libraries.<sup>93</sup> In various provinces, chapters donated libraries not only to schools, but to hospitals, public libraries, and children's shelters as well.<sup>94</sup>

By the end of the decade, the national educational secretary lamented the fact that the Order was still far from reaching the goal of one library per chapter.

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<sup>89</sup>Constance Laing, "Educational Report," *Echoes* (June 1922), 20.

<sup>90</sup>"Report of the Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1926), 7.

<sup>91</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1927), 34.

<sup>92</sup>"Annual Report of the Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1926), 7.

<sup>93</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1927), 34.

<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*

Although 104 chapters participated in this work in 1930, the secretary noted that few chapters kept up the practice continuously. Of the thirty-four chapters in Ontario giving libraries in 1929, for example, only nine kept up this work the following year. Those chapters that were consistent in their contributions received high acclaim in the educational reports. In 1930, much praise went to the Border Chapter of Windsor with thirteen ten-dollar libraries, to the Princess Beatrice Chapter of Port Arthur with one twenty-five dollar library and eight ten dollars ones, and to the John Stewart Chapter with a contribution of nine ten dollar libraries.<sup>95</sup>

A special part of the Order's work in this field was the IODE travelling library. An experiment taken up by five of the provinces, the travelling library was transferred from school to school, providing students with new books to read. By the end of the decade, the national educational secretary was pleased to report that twenty of these libraries were travelling in the west and in the Maritime provinces: four in Alberta, four in British Columbia, four in New Brunswick, six in Nova Scotia, and two on Prince Edward Island. These libraries were so well known in Nova Scotia that teachers often sent special requests for them; the provincial educational secretary would then try to send a permanent library to these schools as a reward for their interest.<sup>96</sup>

Along with providing schools with collections of books, many chapters

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<sup>95</sup>"Report of the IODE National Educational Secretary, 1929-30," Echoes (June 1930), 18.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid.

became involved in the upkeep of local community libraries as well. The primary work of the Abegweit chapter on Prince Edward Island was the maintenance at a cost of \$300 a year of the public library where IODE Saturday story-telling hours for children were held.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, the Kerrobert Chapter in Saskatchewan spent the same amount on a community library which it founded; and the government granted to the Yukon chapter \$500 along with a building formerly the Whitehorse Hospital to be used for the maintenance of a public library. The building soon became an important centre for the community as well as for the Yukon chapter which held its meetings there.<sup>98</sup>

The national educational secretary also encouraged members to consider giving books rather than pins and medals as awards for excellence. The response by local chapters indicated a growing consensus that books were, indeed, the most appropriate medium for the Order's patriotic propaganda. For proficiency in class or drill, attendance, penmanship, spelling, manual training, as well as patriotic essays, students were increasingly awarded selections such as Heroes in British History, The Truth About the War, and My First Book of British History.<sup>99</sup> In 1926, while educational secretaries were decrying the decrease in the donation of libraries to schools, the number of prize books ordered through the national department had increased greatly. One of the most remarkable examples

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<sup>97</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," Echoes (October 1927), 34.

<sup>98</sup>"Report of the IODE National Educational Secretary, 1929-30," Echoes (June 1930), 18.

<sup>99</sup>Ibid.

was the Saint John Municipal Chapter which ordered prize books to the value of \$111.80.<sup>100</sup>

Besides donating books as part of libraries and as prizes, several chapters also furnished schools with valuable series such as the Encyclopedia Britannica. Among the most popular collections was Dent's Canadian History Readers which, the IODE felt, allowed children to discover the adventure and romance of Canadian history. The Bastion Chapter in British Columbia bought sets of these readers for local schools with the funds raised at a tea held to commemorate the bicentenary of the birth of Wolfe.<sup>101</sup> Many chapters also donated magazines such as The Illustrated London News, The Overseas Magazine, and, of course, Echoes, as well as gifts of books such as Canada and the Great War, and The Book of Knowledge. In 1929, over 2,000 copies of a popular selection, The Truth About the War, were distributed to rural schools throughout Nova Scotia.<sup>102</sup>

While Daughters of the Empire were active at the primary level, setting up scholarship funds for soldiers' children, delivering patriotic speeches, and donating gifts, prizes, libraries, and supplies to local schools, the complete network of communication and organization between the primary, municipal, provincial, and national chapters allowed the IODE to carry out its work in patriotic education most effectively. Provincial educational secretaries worked

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<sup>100</sup>"Notes on the Educational Work of the Order," Echoes (October 1926), 7.

<sup>101</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," Echoes (October 1927), 34.

<sup>102</sup>"Chapter Notes," Echoes (December 1929), 17.

indefatigably, writing and answering letters, distributing among the primary chapters various materials sent out by the national chapter, keeping in close touch with the provincial Departments of Education, and organizing the educational work of the Order in their provinces. The provincial chapter in Quebec was particularly active in developing work of its own; apart from putting together French libraries and arranging lectures, it awarded bursaries of \$200 each at Macdonald College and the French Agricultural College at Ste. Anne de la Pocatiere for the two Quebec students standing highest in the second year of the four-year course. It also established a special one-year overseas scholarship of the same value as the War Memorial Overseas Scholarship, and, in 1929, paid more than half the salaries of summer school teachers in Labrador.<sup>103</sup>

The extraordinary work undertaken by the national educational department was further testimony of the Order's untiring dedication to patriotic service. The detailed preparation and printing of library and prize book catalogues was an important part of the IODE's educational work at this level. When the Order began its work of placing books in schools, each book was inspected by each provincial Department of Education, and, for some time, this official scrutiny was very thorough. Eventually, however, the work of the Order so commended itself to the provincial authorities that the IODE national education department was permitted to add books to its lists without inspection, provided that a Daughters of the Empire label in each book guaranteed its approval by the IODE. The task

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<sup>103</sup>"Report of the IODE National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (June 1930), 18.



of finding new and appropriate books published in Great Britain and Canada, and of convincing the publishers to keep them in stock, was not an easy one. That the Daughters of the Empire purchased more books of one series than all other Canadians combined, however, did much to induce book companies to be more compliant with the Order's requests.

Throughout the decade, the national educational department diligently filled orders by provincial secretaries for books, calendars, pictures, and other patriotic materials, distributed samples of flag folders, new catalogues of library and prize books, forms for primary chapters to report their educational activities, information about rules and regulations for essay competitions, along with various circular letters providing news and suggestions for further work. Moreover, the national educational secretary produced an extensive amount of additional correspondence with schools, local and provincial chapters, publishers, as well as judges of school competitions. In 1927 alone, apart from the 390 letters written in connection with the War Memorial, the department yielded 1,066 letters relating to other educational matters.<sup>104</sup>

On the recommendation of the national educational committee, a patriotic calendar was put together in 1925, and, thereafter, was distributed extensively in communities throughout the nation.<sup>105</sup> Large enough for the figures to be seen across a room, the calendar had a sheet for each month displaying the Union Jack,

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<sup>104</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1927), 34.

<sup>105</sup>"Notes on the Educational Work of the Order," *Echoes* (December 1929), 6.

patriotic quotations, and patriotic anniversaries marked in red.<sup>116</sup> It served not only as yet another reminder of heroic deeds and imperial magnanimity, but also as a source of revenue for the national educational department which did a great deal of work with a very limited budget.<sup>117</sup> The calendars were not profitable for the first year because of the number of free samples that were sent out as advertisements, but they soon became a popular contribution by local chapters. In the year 1929 to 1930, the leading chapters in this work were the municipal chapter of Saskatchewan which bought 266 calendars, and the Jeffrey Hale Burland Chapter of Montreal ordering 157.<sup>118</sup> Besides being given to schools, these calendars were also placed in banks, hospitals, post offices, railway stations, and other public buildings. The Navy League Chapter even sent 45 calendars to every lighthouse on the coast of Nova Scotia.<sup>119</sup>

While it was hoped that the education of Canada's youth would lay a strong foundation for the nation in the decades to come, the IODE was also aware of the role school children could play in the continuation of imperial unity. Under the supervision of the assistant national educational secretary, a program of overseas correspondence gained popularity among students throughout the decade. The

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<sup>116</sup>"Notes on the Educational Work of the Order," *Echoes* (October 1925), 6.

<sup>117</sup>The year the idea for patriotic calendars was conceived, the deficit in the department was \$877.66. Postage charges for the distribution of Library Member Buttons accounted for part of the loss: sold for twenty cents each for orders of 1,000, profits on the sale of buttons did little to cover the costs for express since they were originally purchased for twenty cents. *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup>"Report of the IODE National Educational Secretary, 1929-30," *Echoes* (June 1930), 18.

<sup>119</sup>*Ibid.*

Victoria League in London, and its branches in Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, South Africa, and Jamaica cooperated enthusiastically, supplying names of children who were interested in corresponding. Canadian children, generally between the ages of twelve and eighteen, were eager to respond: in New Brunswick alone there were six hundred students participating in the letter-writing program in 1929. Through overseas correspondence with other children throughout the empire, the IODE was pleased that young Canadians could learn about their sister dominions while developing an emotional bond of kinship and affection that would strengthen imperial ties.<sup>110</sup>

For the IODE, the realization of such a connection was contingent on the development of a strong and united Canada. The cultural intrusion of the United States and the second wave of foreign immigration had begun to arouse concern in the 1920s, and nationalist sentiments prompted many Canadians to ponder their cultural identity. The Order was able to rationalize its accommodation of this shift in political sensibilities by asserting that, as a consequential ally of Great Britain, the Dominion would have to cultivate and protect a sense of national identity in order to be worthy of its power. For the most part, the IODE's educational work in this area went beyond the schools to include the political socialization of all Canadians. Generally, this meant the censorship of those ideas that the Order deemed incompatible with the growth of a national spirit and an

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<sup>110</sup>See NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 13, Rebecca M. Church, Facts Concerning the Work of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Children of the Empire (Junior Branch) (1929), 5.

appreciation of the British connection, and the promotion of those that were Empire-friendly. As cultural and moral watchdogs, the IODE tried to take a hand in the regulation of the patriotic behaviour of Canadians and of what they should and should not be exposed to.

The Empire Study Committee was in charge of educating chapters in matters of national and imperial importance so that they would be more effective in delivering their patriotic messages in the schools; and the Film Committee encouraged the showing of British rather than American films, establishing a fund for the showing of "The Royal Tour of South Africa" and "The Royal Wedding."<sup>111</sup> In 1920, the Ontario provincial chapter recommended to the Board of Censors of the province that the theatres be required to screen a request to their audiences to stand at attention during the playing of the National Anthem and to "defer putting on their wraps till the last bar is played."<sup>112</sup> The provincial chapter in Quebec complained in 1925 that the "sensational elaboration of crime reports" was morally detrimental to Canada's youth and resolved that the IODE use its influence to "cultivate public opinion against such reports."<sup>113</sup>

This moral and political regulation was even more persistent in the IODE's resistance to anti-British publications. Primarily a preoccupation of the early 1920s, when the animosities of the war were still strong, the fear of German

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<sup>111</sup>NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 10, Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire Brief Outline of History, 1900-1960 (n.d.).

<sup>112</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, 10 November 1920, 127.

<sup>113</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, January 1925, 152.

propaganda impelled the IODE to urge the government to take an adamant stand against such literature and to inundate Canadian schools and universities with convincing British propaganda to counteract these "corrupt influences."<sup>114</sup> "The task of educating the public has been a large one," one member expressed at a monthly meeting of the national executive; "if the endorsement of the Canadian public can be secured it will be a tremendous factor towards success."<sup>115</sup> Closely linked to this sentiment, of course, was the IODE's prompting of the government on several occasions to insist that a quota of all films shown in Canadian theatres be produced in Britain.<sup>116</sup> At the January meeting of the national executive in 1921, a member pointed out that only four percent of the films shown in Canada were British, and she moved that the provincial chapters be requested to obtain representation on the censor boards of their provinces "to be entirely to forward the aims of the Order."<sup>117</sup> Further perplexed by the vast amount of American literature that was flooding into Canada, the IODE heartily endorsed the efforts of the Canadian Magazine Association to have a duty imposed on magazines from the United States. It also made its mailing lists available to an agent for the London Times--a very rare concession--to help the campaign to push the sale of

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<sup>114</sup>See, for example, Minutes, Executive Meeting, 4 May 1921, 261-263.

<sup>115</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, 2 February 1921, 185.

<sup>116</sup>See, for example, the resolution made by the IODE in Manitoba to petition the government in this matter. "Report of the Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," Echoes (October 1926), 4. The IODE chapter in St. Catharines, Ontario organized a theatre night in their community which had an all-British programme. Minutes, Executive Meeting, 5 January 1921, 271.

<sup>117</sup> Minutes, Executive Meeting, 5 January 1921, 169.

British publications in Canada.<sup>118</sup>

Short Story and the One-Act Play Competitions were instituted by the IODE in 1920 to encourage creativity among Canadians. Open to competitors who were British subjects resident in Canada, these works were to consist of between 2,000 and 6,000 words, preferably on a subject relating to Canadian life. Mrs. R.W. Wood of Vancouver donated the \$200 prize for the winner of the Short Story Competition, and Mr. Preble MacIntosh of Montreal gave \$100 as the prize for the One-Act Play in memory of his wife.<sup>119</sup> Interest in these competitions remained strong throughout the decade: in 1930, there were 100 short story entries and 33 for the one-act play. Both competitions were judged by members of the Canadian Authors' Association along with a representative from the educational department of the Order.<sup>120</sup>

On the suggestion of the provincial chapter of Ontario, a Christmas Card Design Competition was organized by the IODE in 1926. With the intention of kindling an interest in Canadian artists, the Order was disappointed in the quality of work it received as entries. Judges for the 1927 competition did not feel justified in awarding the prize "as very few of the designs submitted were sufficiently well-drawn or original or interesting in subject matter or charming in

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<sup>118</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, 5 January 1921, 171; and 2 February 1921, 185.

<sup>119</sup>See "Conditions for the IODE Competitions," Echoes (December 1925), 25; and "Notes on the Educational Work of the Order," Echoes (October 1925), 6.

<sup>120</sup>Echoes (June 1930), 5.

colour to be seriously considered."<sup>121</sup> In 1930, the national educational secretary was again discouraged by the lack of promising entries for the subject of "A Canadian Historical Place." The prize for first place donated by the Chamberlain Chapter of Toronto was given to Rosalie Pottier of Halifax for her design of the Church of Notre-Dame des Victoires in Quebec. There were no entries, however, which merited the second and third prizes offered by the municipal chapter of Montreal.<sup>122</sup>

In the schools, the IODE played its part in developing Canadian culture through the organization of essay, short story, one-act play, and painting competitions. By developing the literary and artistic talents of students, the IODE believed it was making a cultural contribution to Canada while also helping to fulfil its aim of a country worthy of its prominent connection to Great Britain.<sup>123</sup> "We feel it our duty not only to stimulate patriotism, in its true sense," the Daughters of the Empire insisted, "but to arouse interest in the arts of our own country by supporting opera and drama festivals, by preserving our Canadian folklore...."<sup>124</sup>

The Sarah Maxwell Memorial Essay Competition was held by the IODE every

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<sup>121</sup>"Notes on the Educational Work of the Order," *Echoes* (March 1927), 28.

<sup>122</sup>*Echoes* (June 1930), 18.

<sup>123</sup>The IODE pledged through its educational work to "promote the well-being of Canada by building up in the minds of its people an intelligent patriotism thus insuring a sound Canadian citizenship within the Empire." NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 11, "IODE 'True Fairy Story:' Part I What it is and How it Started—History of the Order Prepared for IODE Girl Guide Company, (n.d.).

<sup>124</sup>Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire Brief Outline of History, 5.

year in memory of the heroism of a school teacher who lost her own life after saving 100 children from a fire in Hochelaga School in Montreal. Open to children ages twelve and thirteen in the public schools of the capital city of each province, the competition was based on the subject of heroism. Asked in 1927 to write about "My Favourite Canadian Hero," students composed essays on notable figures in Canadian history from Wolfe to Alan McLeod, V.C. At a time when school texts were inclined to romanticize Canadian history, it is not surprising that, with only one exception, the students chose fighters or explorers as their subjects rather than politicians or scholars.<sup>125</sup>

First prize in the competition was divided between Mary Enid Creed, of Fredericton, whose essay was on Joseph Brant, and Katherine McConechy of Regina, who wrote on Adam Daulac. Second prize went to an essay on Sir Isaac Brock by Anna Bennet of Charlottetown and one on Alan McLeod by Peggy MacDougall of Victoria. Third prize was divided among three essayists: Ronald Mullett of Edmonton, whose topic was Jacques Cartier, Eileen Benson of Toronto, who chose Sir Isaac Brock, and Gregory Murphy of Halifax, who made the mistake of writing about Madeleine de Vercheres, "not realizing that the word 'hero' means a man, not a woman."<sup>126</sup> In 1929 and 1930, however, the IODE did give students an opportunity to express their admiration for women. For the subjects of "My Favourite Canadian Heroine" and "My Favourite British Heroine"

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<sup>125</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1927), 34.

<sup>126</sup>*Ibid.*



students composed essays on Edith Cavell, Abigail Becker, and Laura Secord.<sup>17</sup>

The IODE organized other essay competitions throughout the decade, the most notable of which was the Confederation Essay Competition held in 1927. Many other organizations were offering prizes for essays on confederation in the year of the Diamond Jubilee, but the IODE liked to point out that it was the first to institute such a contest. The suggestion of Mrs. F.T. Ayscough of Saint Andrew's, New Brunswick, who generously donated the prizes of \$100 and \$40, the contest drew essays from high schools, academies, and collegiate institutes across the country. The best from each province were sent to the national educational secretary who narrowed the choice down to four essays which were then passed on to Lady Byng of Vimy who acted as the final judge.

The IODE's national educational department considered the contest to be of national significance and found in judging the entries that it was perplexing to choose between thoughtfully-prepared essays demonstrating knowledge and study and others "where the treatment was less systematic but where the writer's imagination had been stirred by the thought of the men of 60 years ago who dreamed dreams and saw visions which have today come true."<sup>18</sup> The winner, like almost all of the essayists, presented Confederation as being a positive occurrence. The national educational secretary pointed out, however, that the treatment of the contest "was not stereotyped:" an essay by a student in Nova

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<sup>17</sup>"Report of the IODE National Educational Secretary, 1929-30," *Echoes* (June 1930), 18.

<sup>18</sup>"Annual Report of the National Educational Secretary," *Echoes* (October 1927), 34.

Scotia which made a vigorous attack on confederation was not disqualified because of its viewpoint. But this essay, of course, was not among the finalists.<sup>129</sup>

It is clear that the IODE's educational work in the 1920s was orchestrated through a vision that transcended the classroom and encompassed more than just the immediate instruction of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Coinciding with an educational movement that encouraged the stimulation of the whole child and the development of the kind of character that would thrive in a democracy, the IODE's use of pictures, pageantry, and plays, its encouragement of artistic enterprises, and its instruction in the values of citizenship brought the organization into the mainstream of education in Canada.

The Depression in the thirties and then the outbreak of war in the forties prompted the disintegration of progressive education. The lack of materials needed for the new curriculum and the absence of many trained teachers during the war altered the discourse on the way instruction would occur in the classrooms. The actual change that took place, however, would have been cause for little note.<sup>130</sup> Although the new philosophy of teaching along with novel conceptions of the welfare of the child had created a system that promoted more child-centred learning, the experimentation that excited Canadian educators in the 1920s consisted primarily of progressive rhetoric and continued to include the

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<sup>129</sup>"Notes on the Educational Work of the Order," *Echoes* (June 1927), 6.

<sup>130</sup>For some provinces, however, the implementation of progressive educational techniques was only just beginning in the 1930s. H. Blair Neatby, *The Politics of Chaos: Canada in the Thirties* (Toronto, 1972), 13-17.

traditional methods of teaching. The educational work of the IODE was certainly a reflection of this pedagogical mixture. Its methods were in many ways progressive, but its continued accent on military training in the schools, its glorification of war, and its imperial message had the flavour of the old school of thought.

The shift in the intellectual and political climate from imperialism to nationalism that was characteristic of the 1920s impelled the IODE to make a commitment to building a better Canada. Whereas much of its patriotic work in the war years had been for the purpose of stimulating loyalty to Britain in defence of the Empire, in the period of reconstruction, the Order's aims were more long-term. The Daughters dedicated themselves to building resistance to any potential destruction by developing competent leaders for the future. Their continued emphasis on the British Empire as the ultimate model of order, harmony, and progress legitimized their own moral influence as the empire's daughters in the process of political socialization.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### "Making A Better Race:" The IODE and the Canadianization of Immigrants

To assist however humbly in creating from among the conflicting elements, represented by our foreign born population a prosperous and contented citizenship is the objective which we, as Daughters of the Empire have set before us.<sup>1</sup>

The IODE's interest in immigration was a reasonable extension of its endeavours through child welfare and education to improve and protect the moral, physical, and intellectual character of the Anglo-Saxon race. "It is only a logical development," the IODE national president pointed out, "that, having regard for our own young population, we should also give consideration to that other life stream shaping our future--the immigrant population which annually reaches a volume exceeding half our birth rate."<sup>2</sup> While the world war had been the all-absorbing focus of the Daughters of the Empire between 1914 and 1918, and the virtual cessation of immigration during this period redirected nativist sentiments toward those "radicals" and "enemy aliens" already in the country, the political, economic, and social developments of the 1920s renewed fears about Canada's growing foreign population. The IODE's response to immigration in the years between the Great War and the Great Depression both affected and drew

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<sup>1</sup>Mrs. Drummond, Alberta's Provincial Immigration Convenor, "Canadianization Work in Alberta," *Echoes* (March 1929), 7.

<sup>2</sup>Mrs. Stewart, "Presidential Address," *Minutes, Annual Meeting* (June 1930), 7.

upon prevailing assumptions and official policies regarding the acceptability of foreigners. Although they were motivated in part by a humanitarian concern for Canada's new settlers, the Daughters of the Empire took a vested interest in what they perceived as a threat to Anglo-Saxon traditions and institutions by the arrival of settlers from the "non-preferred" countries of eastern and central Europe.

As a pressure group for the regulation of immigration policy and as an influential agent in the political socialization of New Canadians, the IODE was able to adopt a role of national significance. The Order's power in this capacity, however, was at once elevated and constrained by its necessary involvement with immigrant women and children. As an acceptable realm of female public activity, the IODE's association with matters concerning the home and family—the basic units of the nation—would have been the only legitimate basis for its involvement with immigration as an issue of political and national concern. The Daughters' relationship to the women immigrants they sought to influence was informed less by a sense of sisterhood than by the class and racial hierarchies inherent in their imperialism. Their reinforcement of the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race, which was supported by popular eugenic ideas, combined with notions about the primacy of women's national function as mothers to create a significant role for the Daughters of the Empire in the civilizing process.

From the inception of its Canadianization programme, the IODE clearly enunciated its policy regarding immigration as being in favour of a

preponderance of "British stock" and a preference for quality rather than quantity.<sup>3</sup> The aggressive immigration campaign launched by Laurier's Liberal government had brought three million immigrants to Canada between 1896 and 1914, over 800,000 of whom were of non-Anglo-Saxon origin.<sup>4</sup> The need for agriculturalists and labourers to populate the western provinces, to stimulate the operation of the railways, and to meet the labour needs of commercial farming, mining, lumbering, and other labour-intensive industries, overshadowed growing Anglo-Canadian hostility towards "the foreigner." But the social uncertainties invoked by the war, the rise of labour radicalism, and the "red scare" effected a tacit abandonment of laissez-faire ideologies and renewed the demand for social accountability and control. The IODE joined other patriotic, nativist, and labour organizations in exhorting more stringent admission restrictions for those potential immigrants who would not be easily assimilated into Canadian society. Particularly concerned about the birth rate of foreign-born Canadians, the IODE was convinced that these immigrants married younger than the British and had considerably larger families.<sup>5</sup> Ultimately, then, the continued acceptance of people

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<sup>3</sup>See, for example, NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 13, Rebecca M. Church, Facts Concerning the Work of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire and Children of the Empire (Junior Branch) (1929), 6.

<sup>4</sup>Howard Palmer, ed., Immigration and the Rise of Multiculturalism (Toronto, 1975), 4-12.

<sup>5</sup>In fact, however, the number of births by parents of British origin still by far outnumbered those of any other group besides the French. In 1928, for example, 41% of births were to a father of British origin and 41% were to a mother of British origin. Those born to parents both of British origin represented almost 26% of the total births. By contrast, fewer than 21% of births were to fathers of origins other than British or French, fewer than 17% were to mothers of origins other than British or French, and fewer than 14% of births were to parents both of origins other than British or French. The remainder of births in each classification were to

from the non-preferred countries of eastern and central Europe meant that the strength and purity of "the race," that is the Anglo-Saxon race, faced a threat that required immediate attention and regulation.

Such fears were not uncommon. That Anglo-Saxons were racially superior to people of other origins was a commonly accepted assumption that was used to influence the nature of immigration policies throughout the twenties. Generally, immigrants from Britain and the United States were considered to be the most desirable, unless they were diseased, mentally defective, or of the lower class. Next in line were the northern and western Europeans, who were considered to be easily assimilable, then central and eastern Europeans, and lastly the Asians and blacks."

The comments of two politicians illustrate the general preference for northern Europeans, who were considered to be racially similar to the British, and the blatant rejection of Asian immigrants who were viewed as racially "distant." Speaking in the House of Commons in April 1925 about the idea of an open-door immigration policy, a Member of Parliament warned that "we would fill up the country with a class of people whom we do not desire at all, and we would be

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parents of French origin. Certainly these figures cannot be taken at face value since the percentage of the population comprised of people of British and French origin was much greater than the percentage of people of other origins. It is not surprising then that the number of total births would be higher for the former. These figures would, however, indicate that the fear on the part of the IODE that immigrants of undesirable origins were multiplying their numbers at a disturbing rate, was largely unfounded. Calculated from Canada Year Book, 1931, Number and Percentage of Births (exclusive of stillbirths) in Canada to Fathers and Mothers of Specified Origins, 1928, 146.

\*Angus McLaren, Our Own Master Race: Eugenics in Canada, 1895-1945 (Toronto, 1990) 47.

seriously increasing our unemployment." He went on to add, however, that if foreigners were to be allowed in, "we would like to secure Scandinavians.... They are hard workers, careful, and usually very thrifty."<sup>7</sup> During the same session of Parliament, another member took a very adamant stand against the arrival of Orientals in British Columbia. After a very lengthy and inflammatory speech about the dangers of creating a mongrel race if whites and Orientals were allowed to continue to mingle, he exclaimed that, "we have quite enough people of our own to run this country, and when the good Lord made the orientals and the white race he put the Pacific Ocean between them to keep them apart."<sup>8</sup>

Such an order of rank was closely linked to beliefs about the varying degrees of sexual morality among immigrant groups. The IODE's concern about the birthrate of "undesirable" settlers, however unfounded, was a manifestation of the view that the ability to control one's sexual needs was determined largely by racial origin (and by social class). Native peoples or people of colour, it was thought, were endowed with less capacity to restrain their sexual instincts, whereas white people, especially those of British descent, supposedly exhibited the most control and therefore were regarded as having a more civilized character.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Canada, House of Commons, Debates, Vol. 167, 4th Sess., 14th Parl., 28 April 1925, 2543.

<sup>8</sup>Canada, House of Commons, Debates, Vol. 166, 4th Sess., 14th Parl., 2 April 1925, 1815. In fact, public opinion of this nature had led to the passing of legislation for the total exclusion of Chinese immigrants two years previously.

<sup>9</sup>Mariana Valverde discusses this concept of sexual morality as it related to beliefs about race in "Racial Purity, Sexual Purity, and Immigration Policy," in The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925 (Toronto, 1991), 104-128.



As an energetic advocate of stricter controls on juvenile immigration in her capacity as convenor of the IODE's child welfare committee for most of the decade and as the Order's national immigration convenor after 1927, Charlotte Whitton undoubtedly wielded tremendous influence in shaping the ideas and agenda of the Order on the issue of immigration. During the first four years of her career (1918-1922), Whitton worked closely with Dr. J.A. Shearer as assistant secretary of the Social Service Council of Canada and as the assistant editor of Social Welfare.<sup>10</sup> She brought from this experience a background in the social gospel, a penchant for the ideas of industrial democracy,<sup>11</sup> and a proposal for a broad progressive programme of social welfare. The liberalism of such principles, however, was tempered by her racist views on immigration, and by her staunch acceptance of the precepts of the social purity movement which sought the restriction of what was considered to be deviant sexual behaviour. Committed to the link between rationality, intelligence, and sexual self-discipline, Whitton saw "the regulation and control of instinct and emotion as the basis of

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<sup>10</sup>Formerly the Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada, the SSCC was comprised of an alliance of church and labour groups which had secured the passage of the Lord's Day Act in 1906. Among other progressive proposals, the SSCC stood for a more enlightened programme of state care for the poor, dependent, and unemployed. It believed in a democracy in which there was no special privilege, no patronage, and no partisanship. Whitton's involvement in this branch of the social gospel illustrates the complexities of the IODE's membership. Many of her views regarding social privilege would have run counter to the vast majority of the Order's members who were the wives of prominent and wealthy men. For more information on the SSCC see Richard Allen, The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-28 (Toronto, 1973), especially 64-68.

<sup>11</sup>By industrial democracy, the SSCC meant the establishment of a democratic system of industrial organization in which labour would be a co-partner in management, risk, and profit. It also entailed the achievement of a decent wage as well as social insurance for accident and illness. See Allen, The Social Passion, 65, 73.

civilization."<sup>12</sup> This connection between moral decay, sexual excess, and the degeneration of the nation lay at the root of much of the debate in Canada over immigration and formed the basis of the IODE's policy in this matter throughout the decade.

Given such official discourse, the prevalence of racist attitudes in the dominant Anglo-Canadian culture during the twenties was neither incidental nor extraordinary. Such beliefs about a ranked order of racial desirability were generally accepted by liberals and conservatives alike, by feminists and non-feminists, by politicians, priests, and laypeople. Its proponents did not consider themselves as racists, especially since their ideology was given a scientific veneer by leading medical experts who supported such views with the principles of eugenics. Emphasizing hereditary over environmental factors, eugenicists were concerned that the supposed mental and physical deficiencies of certain immigrant groups would lead to racial and social degeneracy. Indeed, the Social Darwinism of the late-nineteenth century had relinquished much of its appeal by the 1920s.<sup>13</sup> In an atmosphere of preoccupation with racial inefficiency, social impurity, feeble-mindedness, pauperism, and ill health, the regulation and segregation of social "degenerates" made good sense to many Canadians.

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<sup>12</sup>Quoted in P.T. Rooke and R.L. Schnell, No Bleeding Heart: Charlotte Whitton a Feminist on the Right (Vancouver, 1987), 25.

<sup>13</sup>Social Darwinism, or, more appropriately, Biological Spencerism proposed that, by way of natural selection and "the survival of the fittest," the struggle of life would inevitably generate progress through the "diminution of the unfit and the preservation of the fit." Marvin Harris, The Rise of Anthropological Theory: A History of Theories of Culture (New York, 1968), 127.

Moreover, it was given a professional seal of approval by a medical community that served to gain from the need for scientific accuracy in the determination of hereditary defects. Eugenicists like Dr. Helen MacMurchy and Dr. C.K. Clarke found a public niche for their views through the newly-formed Department of Health (1919) and the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene (1918) and were able to provide scientific justification for racist immigration policies. The evils of biological solutions to social problems were revealed during World War Two. But as Angus McLaren points out, until then, the eugenics message appealed to "a desperate generation in search of scientific panaceas."<sup>14</sup>

Most Canadians, however, although influenced by the concept of biological determinism, adopted a middle-ground approach to the issue of racial acceptability. The growing popularity of anthropology in the 1910s and 20s brought with it a smattering of cultural appreciation and, in some circles, a gradual departure from the attribution of racial differences to heredity.<sup>15</sup> The concept of cultural relativity introduced a wider understanding of environmental factors in the origination of cultural difference. It made sense to advocates of the Canadianization of immigrants, whose efforts depended on the mutability of racial barriers.

The IODE could reasonably be associated with these middle-ground ideas. Like most Canadians, the Daughters of the Empire were supporters rather than

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<sup>14</sup>McLaren, Our Own Master Race, 10.

<sup>15</sup>Marlene Shore, "Unemployment, Immigration, and Assimilation," The Science of Social Redemption (Toronto, 1987), especially 246-253.

originators of racial ideologies. Except for Charlotte Whitton, whose public affiliations exposed her more directly to the link between science and race, the Daughters made no mention of specific eugenicist writers or concepts. It appears, rather, that they simply reflected the popular ideological climate and drew upon those vaguely understood concepts that reinforced their deep-seated racial and class assumptions. Undoubtedly, the notion of biological determinism (although the IODE would not have used such terminology) influenced the Order's endorsement of the hierarchy of racial desirability. Its incomplete commitment to such a concept, however, was demonstrated consistently by its faith in the political socialization of immigrants. Indeed, its confidence in the efficacy of Canadianization to at least cast a population of loyal citizens out of immigrant groups indicated that it did not endorse the hereditarian view of racial difference wholeheartedly.

Moreover, the Order's policy regarding immigration was further complicated by the interchangeability of the categories of race and class, and race and culture. Although the Daughters had as their primary concern the consolidation of the Anglo-Saxon race, it appears that they would not have welcomed a poor migrant worker or destitute woman or child from Great Britain into Canada as warmly as they would a wealthy agriculturalist from central Europe.<sup>16</sup> Also, their use of race in the biological sense to refer to ostensibly permanent features of ethnic groupings was often confused with cultural references to their preference for

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<sup>16</sup>See, for example, *Minutes*, Annual Meeting (June 1924), Annual Report of the Child Welfare Committee, 39-58.

British traditions and customs. Ultimately, then, the concept of "race" for the IODE, was not a purely biological construct. It carried with it different meanings derived from notions about class and culture and about the traditions the IODE considered as suitable standards of judgement for the character of potential Canadian citizens. Such a conception fit in well with the Order's programme of Canadianization. If race denoted a strictly genetic definition, then there would be little point in trying to convert immigrants to the Anglo-Protestant way of life.

Indeed, for the IODE, social class, race, sexuality, morality, and intelligence were closely associated in the determination of character. "Working class" was generally synonymous with "defective class;" and the defective class, like races at the low end of the hierarchy, was considered to contribute substantially to the social ills of vice, crime, illegitimacy, and pauperism. "Those familiar with social conditions among the defective classes," wrote Charlotte Whitton, "realize that the welfare of the nation is seriously threatened by the influx of undesirables"<sup>17</sup> In one instance, Whitton cited figures about the jail population in Manitoba to support her disapproval of the admission of "undesirable classes" of immigrants. Although the Canadian population comprised 46 percent of the whole, she claimed, only 23 percent of a sample of 400 consecutive admissions to jails were of Canadian birth, whereas "the Austrians, who should, under normal conditions, only number 8%, rise to 33% of the total; and the Russians, who should number 1%, contribute 11%." The IODE's misgivings about immigrants of the lower class

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

extended to the British as well. Thus, even their encouragement of British immigration was qualified by their preference for settlers of superior breeding and social status. Whitton's findings that 44.23 percent of unmarried mothers in a survey of two Canadian hospitals were of British origin as compared to 25.76 percent who were Canadian born supported the view that not all British settlers were desirable.<sup>18</sup>

Such generalizations were part of a larger national discourse led by Helen MacMurchy that associated immigrants with feeble-mindedness, the defect considered responsible for a host of Canada's social ills.<sup>19</sup> Whitton's frequent use of the "almighty statistic" in justifying ethnic and class prejudices was also reflective of the increased professionalization and bureaucratization of social services in the 1920s. The gathering of statistics, which was heavily influenced by Canada's national census in 1921, aroused fears about racial degeneracy while failing to consider the environmental and circumstantial reasons for such disproportionate figures among immigrants. It was easier to blame and exclude victims than to ameliorate the conditions that created them.

Notwithstanding the grand ideologies that inspired and sustained the Order's work with foreigners, it was on a practical level that the IODE first approached the problem of Canadian immigration in the twenties. Prior to the First World

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Agnes McPhail, for example, followed Whitton's argument in stating in the House of Commons that too many immigrants end up in Canada's "jails, asylums, and hospitals." Canada, House of Commons, Debates 7 June 1928, 3885; 27 May 1929, 2674.

War, the Order had incorporated the Canadianization and remedial assistance of foreigners who arrived in the first wave of immigration into its work in education and child welfare. It also had a representative on the Canadian Council of Immigration of Women for Household Service formed in 1919, taking a vested interest in the selection and placement of young domestics. It was not until 1920, however, that the Order deemed the problem of immigration worthy of the formation of a committee. At a regular monthly meeting of the IODE's national executive at the opening of the decade, a councillor spoke of the great need for rest rooms for women at various ports. Greatly sympathetic to this predicament, the Daughters of the Empire moved that, as an issue of national concern, immigration should comprise a larger part of their patriotic agenda. The immediate result was the creation of an Immigration and Canadianization Department at Head Office to coordinate the work of the chapters, the first step being a request to the government for rest rooms at the ports for women and children.<sup>31</sup>

Thereafter, the social and economic developments of the 1920s, which played a large role in prescribing federal immigration policy, also affected the scope and circumstances of the IODE's association with New Canadians. Restrictions on central European immigration at the close of the war, combined with the economic slump of the early part of the decade and Canada's acceptance of the Empire Settlement Act in 1923 which encouraged British settlers, meant that, until

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<sup>31</sup>Minutes, Executive Meeting, 6 October 1920, 97.

the Railways Agreement of 1925, the IODE's fledgling immigration committee had relatively little work to do among non-British immigrants. It was not really until the latter part of the decade that the committee and its various local branches became efficiently organized. By this time, Daughters of the Empire found themselves faced with the overwhelming task of transforming thousands of European immigrants into loyal and industrious citizens. The following table illustrates the impact of the Empire Settlement Act and the Railways Agreement on immigration from Britain and from "other" countries:

Immigration to Canada, 1920-1930<sup>21</sup>

	British Isles	U.S.	Other Countries	Total
1920	59,603	49,656	8,077	117,336
1921	74,262	48,059	26,156	148,477
1922	39,020	29,345	21,634	89,999
1923	34,508	22,007	16,372	72,887
1924	72,919	20,521	55,120	148,560
1925	53,178	15,818	42,366	111,362
1926	37,569	18,778	39,717	96,064
1927	50,378	21,025	72,588	143,991
1928	51,552	25,007	75,038	151,597
1929	59,497	30,560	77,665	167,722
1930	64,962	30,727	67,599	163,288

While the Daughters' perspective on immigration and their approach to Canadianization remained constant, their work as a pressure group evolved in response to these fluctuations in immigration throughout the decade. The spirited

<sup>21</sup>Canada, *Annual Departmental Reports*, Vol. II, 1929-30, Report of the Department of Immigration and Colonization for the Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 1930, 8.



national debates at the close of the war regarding "enemy aliens," the culmination of labour radicalism in the Winnipeg General Strike, and the association of foreigners with Bolshevism, led to the revising of federal immigration policy in an effort to re-establish and protect the Anglo-Saxon character of the country. Whereas the pre-war economic need for agriculturalists to populate the west, regardless of ethnic origin, eclipsed to some degree the nativist attitudes towards immigrants from "non-preferred countries," in the years immediately following the war the governing criteria became political and cultural acceptability. The IODE joined the chorus of a host of other women's, veterans', and labour organizations whose protest led to the restriction in 1919 of various European groups previously considered to be acceptable: Germans, Austrians, Ukrainians, Russians, and Finns for their wartime and socialist associations; and Doukhobors, Mennonites, and Hutterites because of their pacifism and communal customs.<sup>22</sup>

In 1922, the Order resolved that, in conjunction with the National Council of Women, it would urge the Dominion Government to develop a national immigration policy based on the economic needs of the country, the "adaptability of the immigrant," and a predominance of British settlers.<sup>23</sup> The "adaptability of the immigrant" was readily taken to mean the restriction of continental Europeans and the exclusion of Blacks and Asians. The pre-war argument that people of colour would be unlikely to adapt to the Canadian climate and conditions was

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<sup>22</sup>Donald Avery, "Dangerous Foreigners: European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada 1896-1932" (Toronto, 1980), 92.

<sup>23</sup>"Editorial," Echoes (March 1922), 9.

successful in keeping out large numbers of "undesirables."<sup>24</sup> In the 1920s, it was still commonly assumed that the darkness of a person's skin was a reliable indicator of the ability to become assimilated. An editorial in Echoes in 1922 encapsulated the IODE's views in this matter:

With the exception of the yellow races there would seem to be a possibility of creating British subjects at some future date out of the immigrant class of nearly all other foreigners. With regard to the Chinese and Japanese, however, it does seem that our government authorities should keep in view at all times the idea of citizenship of the immigrant and so legislate as to prevent any large influx into Canada of the yellow races which would be impossible of assimilation.<sup>25</sup>

Orders-in-Council passed in 1921 and 1923 established rigid occupational and financial immigration guidelines, allowing the Dominion government to stem the flow of central and eastern European immigrants to Canada.<sup>26</sup> Asiatics, who occupied the lowest rungs of the ethnic preference scale, continued to be severely restricted, and the Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 virtually eliminated all immigration of that origin.<sup>27</sup> These regulations were a clear indication that racist policies regarding the selection of settlers for Canada were not unique to the

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<sup>24</sup>Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta (Toronto, 1982), 35.

<sup>25</sup>"Editorial," Echoes (October 1922), 9.

<sup>26</sup>The Order-in-Council of 1921 stipulated that any immigrant arriving in Canada was required to have at least \$250. The second Order-in-Council allowed the entry of only those immigrants who were agriculturalists with sufficient means, farm labourers with assured employment, or British subjects with adequate means to live until employment was secured. See Avery, Dangerous Foreigners, 94.

<sup>27</sup>Valerie Knowles, Strangers at Our Gates Canadian Immigration Policy, 1540-1990 (Toronto, 1992), 100.

IODE, but were an accepted part of mainstream social ideology and practice.

The adaptability of immigrant groups was considered to depend in large measure on their willingness to be dispersed among Anglo-Canadian communities. It is not surprising, then, that the refusal of Western Mennonite sects to allow their children to receive a Canadian education, and the growing nationalistic movement among Ukrainians aroused fears that such closely-knit groups would resist the influence of Canadian institutions and ideals.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, it was thought that a lower standard of living among these colonies forced down the prices of local commodities and produced unfair competition for Canadian merchants. British Columbia's IODE immigration report for 1924 expressed a measure of hostility toward a colony of Doukhobors who had settled in Grand Forks some fourteen years earlier. Their communal system of living, which was self-sufficient, meant that the merchants of the community lost business and were faced with what they perceived as unfair competition by the lower rates established by the colony. As a result of such circumstances, the national chapter suggested to the government that it avoid the settlement of immigrants in bloc communities.<sup>29</sup>

Such concerns were intensified by the cancellation in 1922 of the 1919 Order-in-Council which had prohibited the entry of Hutterites, Doukhobors, and

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<sup>28</sup>Craw, "Is Naturalization the Remedy?" 44.

<sup>29</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1924), Report of the Committee on Immigration, 63-64.

Mennonites.<sup>30</sup> The IODE responded in 1924 by passing a resolution in opposition of the admission of all German immigrants, partially because of its resentment of German pacifist sects and partially because of lingering anti-alien sentiments.<sup>31</sup> Thus, it was loyalty rather than adaptability that became the governing criteria in these cases. Disturbed by the prevalence of non-English publications particularly in the West, the Order also passed a resolution regarding the dissemination of seditious and treasonous literature. It referred specifically to the Ukrainian Voice, a Ukrainian periodical that had been suspended during the war by the Chief Censor for its anti-British propaganda. The Order sent a copy of its resolution to both the Prime Minister and the Minister of Immigration and Colonization, requesting the deportation under the Immigration Act of "all foreign-born persons who give utterance to such sentiments or other seditious or treasonous utterances."<sup>32</sup> While the control and censorship of "dangerous foreigners" already in Canada was considered to be crucial to the maintenance of loyalty to the British connection, ultimately the IODE's primary concern was further regulation of those coming in. The national chapter agreed that there should be "no indiscriminate wholesale encouragement of immigration, no wide open door policy, until there is a re-adjustment of economic conditions."<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, 74.

<sup>31</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1924), 30.

<sup>32</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1921), Report of the Resolutions Committee, 91-92.

<sup>33</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1922), Report of the Committee on Immigration, 85.

Such an economic revival was beginning to occur by 1924. Along with it came renewed encouragement from railways, business, and mining companies for an open-door immigration policy to bring farmers, farm labourers, skilled and unskilled workers to Canada as replacements for those who were heading south to the United States. Even the IODE expressed on many occasions its understanding of the need for increased population in Canada, particularly in the West. "Immigration for Canada will soon be launched on a large scale," the national immigration convenor reported in 1921, "as our most urgent and essential need to-day is increase in population, not only to provide traffic for the railways, but also to help pay our enormous national indebtedness, and also to develop our natural resources."<sup>14</sup> Although immigrants continued to arrive throughout this period, the urbanization of native-Canadians was occurring at an accelerated rate, and Canadian employers and patriotic groups were alarmed by the thousands who were leaving Canada for the United States as a result of changes in American immigration policy.<sup>15</sup> Ontario's provincial IODE immigration convenor expressed concern over the situation that was developing in her province. "While the flow of immigration into the Province of Ontario keeps up steadily," she stated, "the emigration is very serious. It is stated that in 6 months of the year, 56,000 of our people have gone into the United States. These are not newcomers, but the best

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<sup>14</sup>*Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1921)*, 55; See also, Ethel D. Crow, "Is Naturalization the Remedy?" *Echoes* (Oct-Nov 1920), 44; and the Editorial section, *Echoes* (March 1922), 9.

<sup>15</sup>These changes, which occurred between 1921 and 1924, drastically diminished the number of immigrants allowed to enter the United States from continental Europe while placing no restrictions on immigration from Canada. See Avery, *Dangerous Foreigners*, 97.

of our manhood and womanhood."<sup>36</sup> Thus, the IODE was resigned to the fact that a certain degree of immigration would be necessary for the functioning of business and industry, for agricultural growth, for the maintenance of a rural-urban balance, and for the unification of the vast expanse of the country.

The King government responded to pressure from business and commercial interests by gradually repealing restrictions against large-scale European immigration.<sup>37</sup> The Railways Agreement of 1925 formally initiated the Dominion government's renewed commitment to meeting Canada's labour requirements by giving the Canadian National Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railway control over the recruitment of "bonafide" agriculturalists and the permission to recruit them from countries that were hitherto regarded as non-preferred. By 1931, at least 369,905 continental Europeans had entered the country under this agreement.<sup>38</sup>

The arrival of thousands of continental Europeans in the years from 1925 to 1930 had a considerable impact on the immigration work of the IODE. By the time the Order was confronted with this huge task of Canadianization, it was beginning to develop a more competent immigration committee and a more effective network of contacts with government agencies, volunteer immigration

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<sup>36</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1924), Report of the Committee on Immigration, 66.

<sup>37</sup>By 1923, the Dominion government repealed restrictions on German immigrants and their wartime allies. In 1924, it engaged in several agreements with the railway companies to recruit immigrants from this source. Avery, Dangerous Foreigners, 99.

<sup>38</sup>Avery, Dangerous Foreigners, 91.

associations, and overseas emigration societies such as the Society for the Overseas Settlement of British Women. Until the repeal of the Railways Agreement in 1930, the Order remained consistent in its public pressure for a policy of immigration that valued quality rather than quantity. Meanwhile, the IODE did all it could to assist the orientation and settlement of these foreigners and to facilitate their effective integration in Canadian society.

The IODE's vague and incomplete accounts of immigration work for the years 1920 to 1925 are reflective of restrictive policies and of the economic circumstances that precipitated them. The first and second annual reports of the national immigration committee convey little information about the specific work of individual chapters, the number of immigrants served by the IODE at the ports of arrival, or any plans for future work. In 1921 the national convenor distributed a questionnaire to each provincial IODE representative. But its questions, regarding services provided by each provincial government for the health, education, and employment of immigrants and suggestions as to how the IODE might supplement them, elicited an unenthusiastic response.<sup>39</sup>

The IODE's immigration work in the early part of the decade was also poorly recorded due to the inefficiency of the newly-formed committee. Until this point, there had been considerable overlapping among child welfare, education, and immigration, and many of the chapters continued to include their work with immigrants under these headings. Moreover, the restrictive nature of federal

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<sup>39</sup>Annual Report of the Convenor of the Committee on Immigration, *Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1923)*, 7.

immigration policy from 1919 until 1925 placated much of the hysteria concerning the "dangerous foreigner." Such uninspiring reports, however, did not mean that the Daughters of the Empire were completely neglecting their commitment to Canadianization. The restrictions on immigration, of course, did not stop the flow of immigrants from continental Europe entirely, and arrivals from Britain and the United States, although far below pre-war levels, continued at a rate of between 60,000 and 120,000 a year.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, the huge extent of immigration between 1896 and 1914, when some three million immigrants settled in Canada, meant that there were plenty of New Canadians already living in the country who would have to be assimilated.

The IODE's fundamental goal through their Canadianization efforts was to create a population of citizens who would not only adapt to the Anglo-Canadian way of life but also develop respect for British ideals and institutions. As agents of imperialism, and as staunch defenders of freedom and democracy, the Daughters of the Empire took an adamant stand against pacifists, "enemy aliens", and Bolshevists. For a brief period, the IODE even severed its affiliation with the National Council of Women because of its international association with "enemy" countries.<sup>41</sup> For the Daughters of the Empire, the assault on British institutions and democratic values by "insidious" ideologies was closely linked to the movement for Canadian independence from Great Britain. Believing that the

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<sup>40</sup>See the table of Immigration Statistics on page 149.

<sup>41</sup>Discussion of this matter is scattered throughout the Executive Minutes for 1919.



primary strength in combatting Bolshevism lay in the British connection, the IODE viewed the "Canada First" movement as actually weakening the country's defences against democratic disintegration. In her presidential address at the annual meeting of 1920, Helen Bruce pointed out what she perceived to be the real national menace that confronted the Daughters of the Empire:

Bolshevism is often mentioned as the great menace of the hour, but personally I have great faith in the sanity and the common sense of the Anglo-Saxon race.... English-speaking people will not throw aside in a violent moment a social and political system that is the result of centuries of evolution. No, it is not Bolshevism that we must watch, but we must guard against an insidious propaganda that is being carried on in many parts of the Dominion, having for its aim Canadian independence.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, by promoting patriotism and protecting British institutions and traditions, the Daughters of the Empire believed they were rendering the highest service to their country. This belief comprised the foundation of their work with immigrants. The Daughters' concept of Canadianization meant the inculcation of an affinity for the Dominion, a reverence for the Mother Country, and an emulation of the "British" values of democracy, industry, and thrift.

It appears, however, that the IODE's policy of Canadianization did not require that immigrants relinquish their cultural identity entirely.<sup>43</sup> Whereas in the pre-

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<sup>42</sup>Helen Bruce, "Presidential Address," Minutes, Annual Meeting (May 1929), 37.

<sup>43</sup>Examples of the IODE's increased inclination to try to understand and embrace cultural differences are plentiful. See, for example, "Provincial Chapter Reports—Manitoba," Echoes (October 1925), 42; In Echoes (March 1926), 19, an immigration convenor in Manitoba stated succinctly the Order's policy in this matter: "We are anxious to preserve the strong and fine qualities which our foreign-speaking people bring with them," she wrote, "but we must graft upon these, love for Canada, her institutions and her people."

war period Anglo-conformity would likely have been the goal of the Daughters of the Empire and others involved in the control of immigrants, by the twenties, social arguments about assimilation and the concept of the "melting pot" raised issues of culture and, in some circles, had the effect of softening expectations of Anglo-conformity. In the preamble to an article in Echoes called "How Ukrainians Keep Christmas," the editor reminded her readers that, "it is well to remember that their inspirations and ideals are equal to our own, and that while there is much that they may learn from us, there is also much that we may learn from them." The article, which encouraged an awareness of the perspective of the immigrant, was characteristic of the general tone assumed by the IODE in its relationship to New Canadians throughout the twenties:

And it is in their traditions, in their songs, that the soul of the Ukrainian is explained to those who will take the time to consider it. They come to us dumb, and we too often turn away from those who seem stolid and uncouth, from men and women who cannot express themselves except in their own way. But when they hear familiar music they will cry softly...in a corner...while the gay or plaintive music is played in the drawing room by one who in her heart prefers jazz.... But it may be realized that the Ukrainian, with exiles of other picturesque lands, misses much of which we have no conception. And he brings us gifts which we are too blind to take.<sup>44</sup>

Realizing both the futility of any attempt to iron out the culture of these settlers and the resentment such actions would create, the IODE chose to adopt a "sane and sympathetic approach,"<sup>45</sup> emphasizing that "absorption and not suppression"

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<sup>44</sup>"How Ukrainians Keep Christmas," Echoes (December 1920), 13, 65.

<sup>45</sup>"Canadianization Work in Alberta," Echoes (March 1929), 7.

should be the aim in dealing with Canada's newcomers.<sup>46</sup>

Such an approach involved a determined effort to reach out to and maintain contact with New Canadians, not only through the schools, but also through welcoming the immigrants as they arrived and through persistent interaction in their rural homes and communities once they were settled. The arrival of immigrants throughout the 1920s, however, did not affect all regions of Canada equally. The Maritimes, Quebec, and Ontario received a much larger proportion of British settlers, while the Western provinces were "burdened" with the majority of non-British immigrants.<sup>47</sup> The nature of the chapters' involvement in immigration, then, whether it was welcoming newcomers at the ports, providing remedial aid to immigrants in rural districts, or trying to assimilate the New Canadians through the schools, was determined to a large extent by the region in which they worked.

In Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Quebec, the IODE concentrated its

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<sup>46</sup>See, for example, the "Report of the Annual Meeting," *Echoes* (October 1926), 17. The IODE believed that an immigrant who was content would cause fewer problems. It even went so far as to eventually change the name of the Immigration Committee to the New Citizens Settlement Committee "as the word Immigration is one that the newcomer dislikes exceedingly." *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup>Between 1920 and 1930, approximately 47,069 immigrants arriving in Canada were destined for the whole of the Maritime Provinces as compared to 182,377 for Quebec, 500,721 for Ontario, 268,397 for Manitoba, 148,024 for Saskatchewan, 155,379 for Alberta, and 108,968 for British Columbia. See *Destinations of Immigrants into Canada by Provinces, fiscal years ended June 30, 1901-1906, and Mar. 31, 1907-1930, Canada Year Book, 1931, 181*. The IODE reported that during the year 1926-27, no less than 21,194 British immigrants settled in Ontario, while only 9,105 settled in the whole of the three western provinces. The number for Ontario represented half of the total immigration from Britain to Canada. The settlement of non-British immigrants in the western provinces would have been due largely to the terms of the Railways Agreement, discussed later. See "Report of the National Committee on Immigration," *Echoes* (October 1927), 15.

efforts primarily in the ports of Halifax, Saint John, Montreal, and Quebec City. Working in conjunction with other organizations including the Red Cross and the YWCA, Daughters of the Empire in these provinces made their mark in the lives of immigrants as soon as they disembarked. "This is such important work," Quebec's immigration convenor exclaimed, "as first impressions are so valuable."<sup>48</sup> Since the majority of immigrants, both British and non-British, moved westward to Ontario and the prairie provinces upon their arrival in Canada, IODE provincial immigration convenors in the Maritimes and in Quebec tried to link new settlers with chapters in the west to extend the IODE's influence beyond the immigrants' immediate arrival.

Since 1921, Red Cross Seaport Nurseries played a significant role in the IODE's immigrant orientation services. As a direct outgrowth of war work, these nurseries were established in 1919 in Saint John, Halifax, and Quebec when the Red Cross pledged to welcome back the dependents of Canadian soldiers. In Quebec, the most important part of the Order's work in this field took place in the Red Cross Nursery in the Immigration Building where mothers and children were welcomed as they disembarked from the ships. Between 1921 and 1927 a total of 84,463 infants and children were cared for in these depots.<sup>49</sup> Members from the Stadacona, Lord Reading, Baden-Powell, Courcellette, General Turner, and Laval

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<sup>48</sup>Mrs. W.H. Petry, Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1926), Report of the Committee on Immigration, 60-61.

<sup>49</sup>"What the Seaport Nurseries are Doing for Canada and New Canadians," Echos (March 1927), 25.

chapters took turns greeting the newcomers. They provided biscuits, tea, and milk, cared for babies, answered questions, helped with luggage, and provided guidance in the medical and civil examinations. The Order also furnished an important service at these stations by selling stamps, postcards, notepaper, and envelopes. Their post office served 124 ships in 1923, selling nearly \$1,000 worth of stamps and over 6,000 postcards.<sup>50</sup> By 1925, IODE workers in the nursery adopted special grey uniforms in preparation for the expected flood of immigrants through the Railways Agreement. In that year they met an average of six ships per week and continued their exclusive work among women and children by assisting the Red Cross in its care of 11,744 children, 1,314 infants, and 9,691 women. The usual provision of snacks and reading material was still supplemented by the IODE post office service which handled over 10,000 letters during that season of navigation.<sup>51</sup> By 1928, the Daughters stepped up their pace of work to accommodate the arrival of one ship a day during the navigational season, aiding in the care of 12,038 children and 870 infants. Volunteers from three of the Quebec chapters were on hand full-time to help mothers with their baggage and food purchases and to guide them to the nursery with their children. One chapter was responsible for ensuring a ready supply of reading material; another chapter replenished boxes of clothing; and another provided the nursery with a large Union Jack, signifying the ultimate purpose of the Order's work at

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<sup>50</sup>NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 8, "A Brief History of the Order," n.p., n.d., 2.

<sup>51</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1925), Report of the Committee on Immigration, 57.

the port. The IODE's postal service called for no less than 512 hours of work by individual members who sold nearly \$1,300 worth of stamps and forwarded over 21,000 letters, cards, and parcels.<sup>52</sup>

Similar services were provided by the IODE at the ports of Halifax and Saint John. Unfortunately, the number of immigrants served here as well as the nature of the Order's assistance here was poorly recorded. The provincial convenors only provided vague statements regarding the increase in immigration and the Order's active cooperation with the Red Cross and the YWCA in providing orientation services. For the IODE's orientation work at the Bonaventure Station in Montreal, however, the annual reports render a more complete picture of the kind of work that was carried on as well as the volume of newcomers that was served. Montreal's municipal chapter boasted an efficient immigration committee whose sub-committees assumed various responsibilities at the station. The Literature Committee kept a full supply of books and magazines at the immigration building, while the Comforts Committee provided nursery kits and hundreds of "comfort bags" with various necessities and placed first-aid kits in the immigration rooms. The Station Committee secured the services of a Czechoslovakian woman who spoke several languages. Employed and financed by the municipal chapter as the Order's matron, she enabled the Daughters to enjoy closer contact with the newcomers as they arrived. The work of this committee remained constant until 1929: in 1926, for example, it met 140 trains;

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<sup>52</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May 1929), Report of the Immigration Convenor, 66.

two years later it welcomed a similar number of trains carrying 19,490 passengers, most of whom were of non-British origin.<sup>53</sup>

It is interesting that in all of the discussions and reports on immigration, there is no mention of the IODE serving men at the ports of arrival. Although many unaccompanied women and children would have passed through the immigration buildings, undoubtedly there would have been men arriving with their families as well who would have needed assistance. That the Order did not associate themselves with men here as well as in most other aspects of their Canadianization efforts is indicative both of how their public role was circumscribed by their acceptable association with women and children, and of how they complied with such assumptions to capitalize on their superiority as educated, middle- and upper-class Anglo-Saxon women.

In the western provinces Daughters of the Empire could usually be found in the immigration halls welcoming newcomers and providing literature. Their work was not as extensive here as it was in the eastern distribution centres. Particularly at the new immigration building in Winnipeg, the orientation work was so well organized by the Dominion government that, upon careful investigation, the Order decided there was little need for its services.<sup>54</sup> In British Columbia most of the IODE's work in this capacity occurred in connection with

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<sup>53</sup>"Report of the National Committee on Immigration," *Echoes* (October 1927), 15; *Minutes, Annual Meeting* (May 1929), Report of the Immigration Convenor, 66.

<sup>54</sup>See, for example, the "Report of the National Committee on Immigration," *Echoes* (October 1927), 15.

the Travellers' Aid. Here, as well as in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, the Daughters of the Empire found a more suitable niche in follow-up work among New Canadians once they were settled into their homes. Many chapters not only sent parcels and Christmas hampers, but also wrote personal letters to the new settlers in isolated districts in an effort to relieve loneliness and to maintain the influence of British contact. The Governor Laird Chapter of North Battlefield, Saskatchewan welcomed 105 newcomers to its community in 1926, donating clothing, books, and magazines. It entertained the immigrants at a community fair, and provided financial assistance for their railroad fares and hotel bills.<sup>55</sup> In Alberta, the IODE employed a paid welfare worker to visit the foreign-born, particularly the women, whose comfort and education would supposedly be naturally transferred to the rest of the family.<sup>56</sup> The IODE was cautious, however, in maintaining its image of a patriotic, rather than a charitable, organization. Its remedial efforts to assist immigrants had a higher purpose than the immediate relief and comfort they provided. The Daughters' belief that a happy settler would be more easily integrated into Canadian society was the primary motivation for their furnishing of material aid.

Specific examples illustrate the extent and impact of the Order's assistance of these New Canadians. In a community near Calgary, the case of a needy family was investigated by a local IODE chapter. Employment was found for two

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<sup>55</sup>"Report of the National Committee on Immigration," *Echoes* (October 1927), 15.

<sup>56</sup>"Provincial Chapter Reports," *Echoes* (June 1926), 15.



members of the family, while the father, who was ill, was provided with medical attention at a hospital. To meet the immediate needs of the household, the chapter held a grocery shower where \$30 worth of groceries were received. A similar case in Winnipeg also caught the attention of the IODE. A family with six children became destitute after the father's place of work was permanently closed. Fearful of being deported for not being able to sustain themselves, the family was relieved to secure assistance from local Daughters of the Empire. The General Foch Chapter brought them several parcels of groceries as well as warm clothing for everyone. Ten new suits of underwear were donated by Daughters of the Fort Garry Chapter who also sent the family two Christmas hampers and took the children to a Christmas party where they received toys and other gifts. Since then, the Order was able to find employment for the father in the city, thus relieving the family of any further distress.<sup>57</sup>

Chapters in Ontario, Quebec, and the Maritimes also recognized the value of follow-up work among immigrants. In all of these regions, chapters were busy corresponding with new settlers, both British and non-British, sending out IODE calendars, visiting, and providing care packages and relief, especially at Christmas. A letter written to New Brunswick's immigration convenor, speaks with poignant clarity of the value of such service:

We received the parcel in good condition, and it came as a great surprise to us as a family, because we had been telling the children that there was no Father Christmas in this country.... Me and my wife used to talk about the

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<sup>57</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May 1930), Report of the Immigration Committee, 71.

children and Christmas in bed at nights till the wife would have a good cry and she would wake up out of her sleep and say, I am sure something will come for the children, and when she opened the parcel she fairly cried with joy to think some one had sent the children things for this Christmas.... I can assure you that we love this country very much, and now this great gift from you...will enlarge our hearts and our minds in the people of this country.<sup>58</sup>

Such a response embraced the ultimate goal of the Order through social work of this kind. The inculcation of a spirit of patriotism and an affinity for Canada and its people held primacy over any immediate charitable intentions.<sup>59</sup>

Certainly, the orientation and assistance of the newcomers, particularly the women and children, were viewed as important parts of the Order's work in building the foundation for a sound and loyal population. Time was also thought to be a great assimilator. But the IODE considered education to be by far the most potent factor in the Canadianization of immigrants. Working in connection with the provincial departments of education, the IODE ensured that teachers in rural schools, where the majority of foreign-born children were in attendance, were supplied with all of the patriotic books, historical pictures, and flags needed to instill in their students a sense of patriotic reverence for their new country and for its British institutions. A letter received by the IODE educational secretary for

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<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>On many occasions, the IODE reiterated its position as a patriotic rather than a charitable organization. At the annual meeting in 1925, the immigration convenor reminded the national chapter that, "whilst we devote ourselves and consider it a privilege to do this social work, yet at the same time we must not forget that we are not a charitable association, but primarily a patriotic Order and should bend all our efforts to upholding our King and Country and instilling and keeping alive to the best of our abilities the glorious traditions of the British Empire and her Dominions beyond the seas. Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1925), Report of the Committee on Immigration, 57.

the Devonshire Chapter in Regina from a teacher in Quinton, Saskatchewan illustrates the difficulties involved in educating New Canadians in the west. Responsible for a school comprised of Hungarian children, the teacher complained that most of the students could not speak, read, or write English. "But as long as I stay," she wrote, "I would like to give these girls and boys an idea of the splendid opportunities that are before them and of the great privilege that is theirs in being the future citizens of this great Dominion and Great Empire." The expenses incurred by building and furnishing her teacherage left little money for other much-needed supplies, and the teacher pleaded desperately to the IODE for assistance:

We are woefully in need of playthings, sporting goods, pictures and suitable books. The only plaything we have is the ball and bat you sent us last year.... And yet it is on the playground that the new-Canadians learn English best and quickest. May I ask you to send us a mask and perhaps some secondhand baseball gloves and mitts, so that I could form a team and play the neighbouring schools. You inquire about pictures. We have only two of the King and Queen, "God Bless Them!" Our walls are bare, as bare as a country school can be, and some beautiful pictures would be greatly appreciated.<sup>41</sup>

The IODE's response to such practical needs in the schools was extraordinary. Throughout the decade, the Daughters donated hundreds of books, flag charts, historical pictures, and sporting equipment to schools in the prairie provinces where most of the non-British immigrants were settling. Many chapters "adopted" schools and took a special interest in their development, contributing

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<sup>41</sup>"Our Canadianization Problem," *Echoes* (March 1925), 21.

teaching supplies and patriotic materials, and making visits to ensure that foreign-born students were, indeed, changing their ways. Even chapters in Nova Scotia, where few European immigrants settled, played their part in the effort by sponsoring needy schools in the west.

Most of this work was recorded in the reports of the national and provincial educational secretaries who also described other interesting educational work that was being done along Canadianization lines. Through Frontier College, chapters in Ontario sent books and magazines to men in outlying mining camps, most of whom were brought to Canada from continental Europe as cheap labour. The Princess of Wales Chapter in Kitchener, Ontario held regular classes where immigrants between the ages of fourteen and forty-five were taught the three Rs, along with the Lord's Prayer, patriotic songs, and household management.<sup>61</sup> At the end of the programme each year, all of the foreign pupils, who represented six or more nations, stood to make this declaration:

We are certainly glad we are Canadians and live in this big and wonderful Dominion of Canada. This is due to a few reasons which we shall mention. First, because Canada belongs to Great Britain and Great Britain is one of the finest countries in the world, and is mistress of the seas. She is spoken of as Christian because she keeps the Sabbath day holy and believes in the Bible and the Church. Canada contains over fifty nationalities, and all of these will join hands and sing "God Save the King."<sup>62</sup>

Whether or not the immigrants understood the true meaning of this recitation, the

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<sup>61</sup>NAC, MG 28, I 17, Vol. 19, Doc. 6, History of the IODE (pamphlet), n.p., n.d., 25

<sup>62</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1921), 13.

IODE often used such oaths and declarations in their education of foreigners to create a sense of ceremonial seriousness regarding their newfound citizenship.

Daughters of the Empire in Alberta led the way in the IODE's educational work with immigrants. The establishment of a prize fund for the stimulation of arts and crafts among the new settlers indicated a growing appreciation of cultural differences. But the primary goal through Canadianization was still the arousal of a spirit of allegiance to the Crown and an understanding of the democratic ideals for which it stood. The IODE awarded ten scholarships annually to assistant teachers in Alberta showing interest in work among foreign settlers. The scholarships allowed them to take a summer course at the University of Alberta with instruction in teaching English as a second language as well as in the history and culture of the New Canadians. Such efforts to understand the traditions brought to Canada by the immigrant likely served the purpose of bridging the cultural disparities that stood in the way of effective education. Three prizes of \$150 each were also awarded each year to the teachers rendering the greatest service in empire-building through Canadianization. A teacher in a Hutterite school in Alberta expressed her gratitude for the prize given to her and went on to explain the significance of her work. "Hutterite schools present a serious problem in the matter of Canadianization," she wrote, "and the solution lies almost wholly in the hands of the teacher, whose influence is the only outside one which weighs with the children."

The watchful teacher will find and embrace during a school day, many opportunities for giving lessons in citizenship.

Respect for the Flag and all that it stands for and pride in and love for, the great country of their adoption, should form daily lessons. These are bound to bear fruit, and a broad outlook in their attitude to things beyond their own immediate sphere must develop.<sup>63</sup>

Recognizing the magnitude of the task many such teachers faced, the IODE hoped that these prizes and scholarships would inspire them to continue making these important contributions to the welfare of the empire.

In other provinces, the Order's educational work with immigrants was somewhat less organized, but was far-reaching nonetheless. The Quebec provincial chapter arranged each year to send teachers to the coast of Labrador for summer work among settlers in remote areas. In British Columbia the Collison of Kincolith Chapter helped the Department of Education with the organization of night classes to help New Canadians learn English, while similar programmes that had been started in the early twenties by the Order in Ontario expanded to such an extent that they were taken over by the school boards. While the teachers were thereafter paid by the Department of Education, the IODE still provided the books, entertained classes with slides and pictures, and visited the women students in their homes.<sup>64</sup> Manitoba led the way in the distribution of books by placing over 300 libraries in New Canadian schools.<sup>65</sup> In Saskatchewan, the Lady Patricia Ramsay Chapter instructed Russian girls in Girl

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<sup>63</sup>"Canadianization Work in Alberta," *Echoes* (March 1929), 7.

<sup>64</sup>*Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1928), Report of the National Educational Secretary, 76-93.*

<sup>65</sup>"Provincial Chapter Reports," *Echoes* (June 1926), 19.

Guide work and placed libraries among Russian and Galician settlers. The H.M.S. Shannon Chapter in Nova Scotia became included in this work by sending four Ukrainian children from Saskatchewan for a two-week summer holiday each year to mingle with English-speaking children.<sup>66</sup> The municipal chapter in Calgary achieved the cooperation of the local school board in requiring that the pupils salute the Union Jack and make this declaration: "I pledge allegiance to our Flag and to the Empire for which it stands, one Empire, indivisible with liberty and justice for all."<sup>67</sup> Ultimately, this oath encapsulated the primary purpose of the IODE in all of these educational programmes among foreign-born Canadians: the creation of loyal and patriotic citizens.

Mrs. Brotherhood, the educational convenor for Manitoba, reported in 1921 that her provincial chapter started its work among the New Canadians by organizing a social on Empire Day. Foreign-born school children carrying Union Jacks were taught how to sing patriotic songs; and they gave little speeches, already prepared for them, as to the significance of the observance of Empire Day.

Mrs. Brotherhood described the unexpected success of the gathering:

Then they noticed a foreigner who wore a returned soldier's button, and they asked him to tell why he fought for Canada.... The foreign women on being asked to take part in the programme, were very nervous at first, but members had stood up with them, and...it was most interesting to see these women go up on the platform with a baby in arms and a few little ones clinging to their skirts.

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<sup>66</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1928), Report of the Educational Secretary, 76-93.

<sup>67</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1926), Report of the National Educational Secretary, 72-89.

One sang without accompaniment, which is something a great many of us...could not do. Another foreign lady brought a beautiful cake, iced, and decorated just as nicely as we would do it.<sup>68</sup>

The comparisons made between the "foreign woman" and the Anglo-Saxon woman--the oft-repeated phrase "as nicely as we would do it"--were implicit in the Daughters' perception of themselves as "civilizers" and thus of their relationship to the immigrant women they sought to "civilize." Like their occupation with the orientation of immigrants, much of the IODE's specifically educational Canadianization work was directed at the female settler. The Daughters believed that successful colonizing was largely dependent on the comfort and education of women pioneers and their children. "After all, home life is the basis of all national life," the Order insisted, "and home life is a poor affair without the right sort of woman."<sup>69</sup>

Given the IODE's views about the role of women as cultural progenitors, as the natural custodians of morality, and as the mothers of the nation, it is not surprising that the IODE's concern with racial degeneracy and with the threat posed to Anglo-Saxon traditions by immigration from continental Europe reinforced its commitment to the socialization of women. The complex mixture of the elements of race, class, gender, and imperialism, however, complicates an analysis of the IODE's association with non-British women, and will be given only

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<sup>68</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1921), Annual Educational Report, 81.

<sup>69</sup>"Women Settlers in Canada" Epoch (October 1925), 9.



initial consideration in this study.<sup>70</sup> It appears that in the IODE's associations with foreigners the category of gender alleviated to some extent the tensions of race and class: the Daughters were able to sympathize with the oppression of immigrant women because of the universality of this type of feminine experience. "We must show our foreign-born sister that we are interested in her and sympathize with her," exclaimed the IODE immigration convenor for a Brandon, Manitoba chapter, "and how far-reaching sympathy is!"<sup>71</sup> For the IODE, however, the bond between women across racial lines was weaker than the Order's commitment to imperialism. As Vron Ware points out in her study of British women in the colonial context:

For imperialists the qualities shared by women could only be skin deep; developing theories of racial difference and eugenics contradicted any notion of equality or even similarity by claiming that the English were a superior race, which gave them the authority to hold their Empire together through force of both character and culture.<sup>72</sup>

Thus, the IODE's relationship to the non-British women (and children) it attempted to Canadianize, although maternal and protective, was essentially hierarchical and custodial. As the pure embodiment of white womanhood, the

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<sup>70</sup>Recent literature has begun to probe the connection between race, class, gender, and imperialism in a colonial setting. The theoretical basis for such a connection, however, is transferable to the Canadian context only to a certain degree and requires further study before any definite conclusions can be drawn. Examples of recent works that consider these ideas are Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel, Western Women and Imperialism Complicity and Resistance (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1992); and Vron Ware, Beyond the Pale White Women Racism and History (New York, 1992), especially part three, "Britannia's Other Daughters Feminism in the Age of Imperialism," 117-166.

<sup>71</sup>Mrs C.C. Hearn, "The Education of the New Canadian," Echoes (March 1920), 33.

<sup>72</sup>Vron Ware, Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism, and History (New York, 1992), 160-61.

Daughters of the Empire felt they had a moral responsibility on behalf of the empire to elevate non-white women to their own standards of respectability.<sup>73</sup>

Moreover, the construction of the "foreign woman" as an oppressed victim of her culture provided the Daughters with a gauge against which they could measure their own progress. It gave the Daughters the added superiority of their status as women in what they considered to be a progressive society. Referring to non-British women in western Canada, Mrs. C.C. Hearn claimed that,

These women must necessarily lead bare and isolated lives, on account of their ignorance of our language and viewpoint. Their lives to us seem to be largely dominated by their men. The girls are faced, we are told, to marry very young, men chosen by their fathers.<sup>74</sup>

The Daughters' perception of the status of women from non-preferred countries also reinforced the IODE's racism: the Daughters considered female status to be a revealing indication of a nation's racial purity and strength. As one turn-of-the-century writer put it:

All history teaches us that the welfare and very life of a nation is determined by moral causes; and that it is the pure races—the races that respect their women and guard them jealously from defilement—they are the tough, prolific, ascendant races, the noblest in type, the most enduring in progress, and the most fruitful in propagating themselves.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>Although many European immigrants were indeed Caucasian, the construction of "whiteness" reinforced British superiority.

<sup>74</sup>Mrs C.C. Hearn, "The Education of the New Canadian," 33.

<sup>75</sup>Ellice Hopkins, extracted in The Storm Bell, April 1900, quoted in Vron Ware, Beyond the Pale, 150.

The IODE's feminist consciousness, then, although it intersected the humanitarian side of their association with immigrants, was overshadowed by the differences of class and race. The primary motivation of the Daughters' Canadianization efforts among immigrant women and children was what they perceived as the "white woman's burden" to civilize the less fortunate and to create sound families that could be easily integrated into national life. "We women of Canada are the best housekeepers in the world to-day," wrote Ontario's IODE immigration convenor, "and a word to the mother of these families regarding our Canadian homes will often help."<sup>76</sup>

Such a task was approached through various educational means. In Manitoba, one IODE chapter held a party for New Canadians where each woman was presented with a cook book prepared by members of the Order. The recipes were simple and were in a language that was easy to understand. Another chapter in this province made scrap books for New Canadian schools, showing page by page, the articles necessary to furnish the rooms of a house. It also listed the names of articles of clothing, furniture, pots, pans, and dishes. In a small town in British Columbia where there was a large foreign population an IODE chapter invited the senior girls of the public schools for dinner and entertainment, providing a lecture on "Good Citizenship and the Franchise."<sup>77</sup> In Quebec City, chapters gave instruction in domestic science on Saturday mornings to nearly 300

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<sup>76</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May 1930), Report of the Immigration Committee, 80.

<sup>77</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1923), Report of the Educational Secretary, 80.

children who learned about proper nutrition and sanitation.<sup>78</sup> Chapters in St. Catharines, Ontario also took up this work, holding classes in cooking and household management for foreign women who, the members claimed, were "most anxious to learn our ways and language."<sup>79</sup> In Alberta, the IODE gave special attention to foreign-born mothers by donating two honoraria of \$200 each to local school teachers willing to teach these women how to speak English and to understand Canadian traditions.<sup>80</sup>

The Order considered its most fruitful effort along Canadianization lines to be the creation of social clubs for new-Canadian girls. Under the supervision of IODE chapters, the nation's future mothers met to enjoy music, reading, and sewing, along with patriotic talks on the significance of their moral obligation to contribute peaceful and industrious families to their new country. The club in Brandon, Manitoba was comprised of fifty members who were being taught, along with English and sewing, to play tennis and basketball. As one of the leaders of the club remarked, "they are being taught to live."<sup>81</sup> Close relations with the Young Women's Christian Association allowed the IODE to further extend its influence over young women and to guide them away from the temptations of vice. Over twenty IODE chapters throughout Canada acted as corresponding

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<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

<sup>79</sup>Minutes, National Executive Meeting, 5 January 1921, 191.

<sup>80</sup>"Report of the Twenty-Seventh Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," Echoes (October 1927), 6.

<sup>81</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1921), Educational Report, 76.

members of the YWCA, locating and keeping in touch with the association's clientele. In 1926, the Order was pleased to report that a total of 146 YWCA women and girls had been assisted by IODE chapters.<sup>82</sup>

Although European immigrants, particularly those from the eastern and southern parts of the continent, were considered to be the primary targets for Canadianization, the IODE also took an interest in the immigration of British settlers who were brought to Canada under the Empire Settlement Act of 1923. Designed to encourage a heavy flow of selected British settlers, the agreement provided financial assistance by the Canadian and British governments to married agriculturalists, single farm labourers, domestics, and juveniles.<sup>83</sup> It was the outcome of much debate between the business and railways lobby which wanted cheap labour and railway traffic, and veterans', labour, and patriotic groups who were concerned about employment competition during the economic recession as well as the protection of the British element in Canada's population. By petitions to the government and through the press, the Daughters of the Empire contributed to this dialogue. They seized every opportunity to present publicly their views regarding immigration as being in favour of restrictions for continental European immigrants, especially those from central and eastern Europe, and the careful selection of potential settlers from the British Isles. While British immigrants were preferred, the Daughters' policy in this matter was

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<sup>82</sup>"Report on the Committee of Immigration, 1925-26," *Echoes* (December 1926), 29.

<sup>83</sup>Canada, *Annual Departmental Reports*, Vol. III, 1924-25, Report of the Department of Immigration and Colonization, 23.

governed by assumptions of class as well as race. Just as the Order objected to juvenile immigration from Britain because of its lower-class origins, the acceptance of other British immigrants also depended on their social acceptability.

By 1931, about 127,654 had come to Canada under the Empire Settlement Act, including approximately 22,960 British girls who were assisted for domestic work.<sup>84</sup> One of the products of the act was the "3,000 Families Scheme" which provided for the settlement in Canada over a period of three years of 3,000 British families.<sup>85</sup> The initial group began to arrive in 1925, eliciting throughout the remainder of the decade an active response by the Daughters of the Empire, who served many of these settlers at the ports and maintained contact with them through letters, visits, and donations of magazines, clothing, and Christmas cheer. Although immigrants from the British Isles were considered to be easily assimilable by virtue of their race and culture, nonetheless, Daughters of the Empire wanted to help them adjust to their surroundings and to expedite the development of a patriotic bond with their new country.

The IODE immigration reports suggest that the bulk of the work accomplished in service of these British settlers occurred in the eastern ports and in the communities of New Brunswick and Ontario. In Carleton County, New

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<sup>84</sup>Avery, *Dangerous Foreigners*, 97; Canada, *Annual Departmental Reports*, Vol. II, 1929-30, Report of the Department of Immigration and Colonization, 7.

<sup>85</sup>These settlers were guaranteed funding from the British government towards acquiring farm equipment and were promised aid from the Canadian government in the form of placements on farms, financial assistance for farm equipment, and practical training in agriculture. See Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 101-102.

Brunswick, members of the IODE and the Women's Institutes enthusiastically assisted the Home Service Land Settlement Branch of the Department of Immigration and Colonization in July 1929 in its organization of a picnic for 600 British settlers in that area, most of whom had immigrated through an assisted passage agreement between the New Brunswick and British governments late in the decade. Following a generous dinner with speeches by prominent men who extended warm greetings to the immigrants, prizes of a practical nature ranging from sacks of flour to babies' booties were distributed, and the newcomers were given the opportunity to contribute songs and special dances to the occasion.<sup>66</sup> The IODE was very hopeful that such efforts would reach the hearts of lonely immigrants and introduce them to the great privilege that was theirs through Canadian citizenship.

The terms of the Railways Agreement, which placed the majority of European immigrants in the rural areas of the west, and the tendency for British immigrants to settle in the more urbanized eastern centres meant that IODE chapters in the prairie provinces, as a general rule, dealt with few British settlers in their Canadianization activities. In 1925, for instance, Saskatchewan received only 2,358 British settlers out of a total of 12,347 immigrants. Alberta's convenor, however, reported that year that her province was fortunate in receiving a large percentage of British families "under the new British Assisted Settlement scheme." At Christmas many chapters in the province sent out care packages along with IODE

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<sup>66</sup>"A Picnic for Newcomers to Canada," *Echoes* (October 1929), 6.

calendars and greeting cards to a large number of these New Canadians. Several chapters also sent magazines and other reading material to British families every month, and one chapter "adopted" a family with ten children that was in need of remedial aid.<sup>87</sup>

As a logical extension of its goal of preserving the Anglo-Saxon race, the IODE's most consistent preoccupation regarding British immigration was the recruitment of domestic servants. As the cornerstone of Canadian society, the home required the help of pure and virtuous women who would perpetuate the British character of the nation.<sup>88</sup> The demand for domestic servants for middle-class homes remained high in the 1920s, particularly after the overall lapse in immigration and the opportunities for war work during the war produced a scarcity of women applicants for household service.<sup>89</sup> Noting continually the "very limited supply of houseworkers" and the "inexperienced material available," the Daughters stressed the need for training facilities for this purpose as well as the need for the careful selection of British women for Canadian homes.<sup>90</sup>

By the 1920s the selection, transportation, protection, and supervision of young female domestics was in the process of being transferred from private agencies and societies to public control. Along with many other reform and

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<sup>87</sup>Ibid.

<sup>88</sup>Of course, the Daughters' desire for suitable domestic servants for their own homes would have been a practical influence on their policy on British household workers.

<sup>89</sup>Roberts, "A Work of Empire," 198.

<sup>90</sup>See, for example, Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1921), 55.



women's organizations, the IODE participated in the immigration process as a lobby and supervisory group through a network of hostels and other receiving facilities that were by this time beginning to receive government support. Since 1919 the Canadian Council of Immigration of Women for Household Service supervised the immigration of domestics to Canada. It consisted of representatives from the provincial government, church groups, hostels, and various women's organizations including the WCTU, the YWCA, the National Council of Women, the Women's Institutes, and the IODE.<sup>91</sup> The imperial motivations of many of these groups were expressed in the Council's concern about the selection of British women of high moral character, and in the repeated emphasis that the stability of the nation depended on the quality of its homes.

Barbara Roberts has suggested in her study of British female immigration to Canada between the 1880s and the 1920s that control over these young women in the interests of nation-building took precedence over their freedom and independence. She writes:

The reformers' imperative to build the nation upon culturally imperial lines—their patriotism—was far stronger than their commitment to the development of women's independence and autonomy—their feminism. The reformers' class position combined with their imperialism to give their maternal bent this rather authoritarian edge.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>In 1921, the administrative function of the Council was merged into the Women's Branch of the Department of Immigration and Colonization. The scope of the Council was widened to include all women immigrants, although the selection of domestic workers remained the principal part of its advisory role.

<sup>92</sup>Barbara Roberts, "A Work of Empire: Canadian Reformers and British Female Immigration," in Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s* (Toronto, 1979), 194.

Indeed, the IODE endorsed a comprehensive immigration procedure of close surveillance for unaccompanied women. It was not enough, of course, that these women were British; their working-class background meant that they would have to be controlled and supervised in much the same manner as the Daughters' regulation of the behaviour of foreign women. The white slavery panic and the lack of confidence in young female immigrants to choose a morally acceptable path impelled the Order to pressure the government on various occasions for more effective supervision of unaccompanied women on transportation vessels. It also participated in the guidance of these young women and girls once they arrived in Canada by providing services at various hostels and welcome homes which functioned as employment agencies as well as temporary shelters. The Order held representation on the committee for the Canadian Women's Hostel in Toronto, an important receiving and distribution centre for Ontario and the west. It was also involved in the receiving and registration of these immigrants at distribution centres in Montreal, Winnipeg, Calgary, Regina, Edmonton, and Vancouver, usually in connection with the YWCA or the Travellers' Aid.

The IODE expressed particular concern about the heavy migration of unaccompanied foreign-born women who were arriving under the bulk nomination system of the Railways Agreement. Between 1926 and 1930 the number of household workers coming from continental Europe to Canada surpassed the number from the British Isles.<sup>91</sup> As Marilyn Barber has noted, "few

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<sup>91</sup>Marilyn Barber, "The Servant Problem in Manitoba, 1896-1930," in Mary Kinnear, ed., *First Days, Fighting Days Women in Manitoba History* (Winnipeg, 1987), 109.

of those recruited had domestic training or any knowledge of the kind of equipment in Canadian middle-class homes."<sup>94</sup> Fear of the disintegration of the middle-class home, which relied on such domestic help, prompted the Daughters of the Empire to demand the termination of the bulk migration of unaccompanied women from non-preferred countries, warning that "this particular movement is fraught with far-reaching possibilities in reference to the whole future population and character of this country."<sup>95</sup>

The urgent need for British gentlewomen, who, by virtue of their breeding and socialization, would create little concern regarding their potential as mothers, was the focus of much discussion at the IODE's annual meetings. By 1928, the Order had established regular contact with the Society for the Overseas Settlement of British Women, the acting agent for advising the Overseas Settlement Department of the British government in all matters affecting the settlement of British women and children.

Along with their interest in recruiting domestic servants, the Daughters of the Empire were anxious to investigate the available opportunities in Canada for "women of education and breeding," British women who were trained in such callings as teaching, nursing, millinery, dressmaking, and stenography.<sup>96</sup> Despite the reduced passage fare for domestic servants under the Empire Settlement Act,

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<sup>94</sup>*Ibid.*, 108.

<sup>95</sup>*Minutes*, Annual Meeting (May 1930), Report of the Immigration Committee, 88-9.

<sup>96</sup>"Women Settlers in Canada," *Echoes* (October 1925), 9.

the SOSBW's suggestion that these women might engage in domestic work until they found the employment opportunity they sought was discounted by the Daughters of the Empire. Such women, they believed, stood a better chance of success if they engaged immediately in the career they intended to pursue. Upon the examination of a survey conducted by the IODE in each of the provinces, however, the Order concluded that in fact many of such positions could be filled by Canada's own population. It did decide that women with capital at least would have the avenue of taking up land upon their arrival if the homesteading laws were changed. On several occasions the IODE passed resolutions urging,

the removal of the unfair discriminations against women in the present homesteading regulations or special settlement schemes of various provinces which are equally irksome and handicapping to both Canadian and overseas British women.<sup>97</sup>

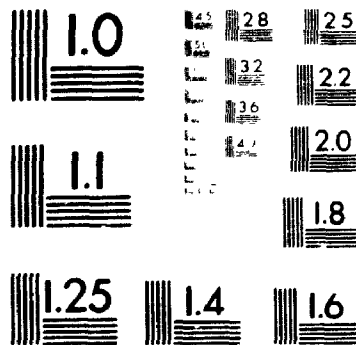
The encouragement of educated British women to pursue professional positions and the request that they receive equal treatment regarding land ownership, however, was likely motivated less by feminist concerns than by the desire to recruit respectable women who, by their breeding, experience, and strength of character, would help to build a morally sound nation and to weld the union of the Anglo-Saxon race.

In the end, it was this ultimate goal, the preservation of the Anglo-Saxon race, that formed the basis for the IODE's steadfast disapproval of the Railways Agreement. Notwithstanding the various schemes of the Empire Settlement Act

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<sup>97</sup>*Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1926)*, Immigration Report, 131; See also, "Report of the National Committee on Immigration," *Echoes* (October 1927), 15.

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MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS  
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a  
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

to supplement the British population in the Dominion, the flow of British settlers to Canada after 1926 was surpassed by that of immigrants from "other" countries.\* In spite of mounting hostility towards the placement of cheap immigrant labour in resource industries and also increasingly in the manufacturing sector, the Dominion government renewed the Railways Agreement in September 1928 for an additional two years.\*\*

In February 1928, the Council on the Immigration of Women, previously the Canadian Council on the Immigration of Women for Household Service, was convened for the first time since 1922. Representing the Dominion government, along with fifteen organizations including the Trades and Labour Council and the YWCA Migration Services, the Council passed a set of twelve recommendations to the Department of Immigration and Colonization, all of which were endorsed by the national chapter of the IODE at its annual meeting later that year. The recommendations embraced a wide range of interests, all of which converged on the point of resistance to the continuation of an unbridled admission of immigrants, especially those from continental Europe. Particularly troubled by the permit system, which brought thousands of immigrant workers to Canada often for only seasonal or temporary employment, the Council urged that the government be given the power to make a more thorough survey of definite employment before prospective immigrants were issued work permits. Such

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\*Canada, Annual Departmental Reports, Vol II, 1929-30, Report of the Department of Immigration and Colonization for the Fiscal Year Ended March 31, 1930, 8.

\*\*Avery, Dangerous Foreigners, 105.

regulation, it was hoped, would diminish the number of destitute and unemployed immigrants who were drifting to urban centres and becoming dependent on municipal charity. Among others, the Council made recommendations for closer cooperation between the federal and provincial governments regarding immigration and settlement, the development of more training programmes in farming for juveniles, both Canadian and British, and the permanent prohibition of the immigration of unaccompanied children under school age.<sup>100</sup> The sense of urgency regarding the need for a larger proportion of settlers from the British Isles was evident in the Council's suggestion--and the Order's support of it--that the Immigration Department consider lowering ocean transportation rates for all classes of potential British immigrants.<sup>101</sup>

Following the discussion and endorsement of the Council's proposals at the annual meeting, the Daughters of the Empire formulated their own particular recommendations which underlined the Order's patriotic interests. Along with the maintenance of an acceptable balance between agricultural and industrial, rural and urban, life, as well as of a more moderate flow of immigrants to Canada, the national chapter held fast to its demand for "the maintenance in preponderance of population and influence of the basic stocks of this country" and the expansion of national life in the flexible mould of British traditions and

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<sup>100</sup>In March 1925 the Dominion Immigration Branch prohibited the immigration of unaccompanied children under 14 years of age for the next three years. Joy Parr, Labouring Children British Immigrant Apprentices to Canada, 1869-1924 (Montreal, 1980), 153.

<sup>101</sup>All of the Council's recommendations are discussed in Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1928), Immigration Report, 123-26.

constitutional structures and practices."<sup>102</sup>

By 1929, as the economy began to deteriorate, the nativist campaign against such an open immigration policy intensified across the country, especially in the west where the Native Sons of Canada and the newly-formed locals of the Ku Klux Klan represented the movement at its extreme. By this time, Charlotte Whitton was at the helm of the IODE's immigration committee as national convenor. Through her leadership, the IODE articulated its frustration with open-door immigration practices through a series of resolutions. The IODE's recommendation for the "immediate cancellation" of the Railways Agreement "as a measure that is necessary in the national interest," reflected the general social climate as Canada entered the Great Depression.<sup>103</sup>

Under such pressure from the IODE and other patriotic and nativist groups and facing the dire constraints of a sinking economy, R.B. Bennett's new Conservative government cancelled the Railways Agreement in the fall of 1930.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup>Ibid.

<sup>103</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (May-June 1929), Report of the Immigration Convenor, 72. In this report, the national convenor stated that "the difficulty in recruiting British migration should not be accepted as an argument for the present undue preponderance of foreign-born from non-preferred countries and from the United States." The Order's position did not mean the complete cessation of immigration from these sources, however. It proposed a population movement from non-preferred countries that would be limited to a quota of the British settlers coming to Canada which would be regionally distributed. Preference was to be given to immediate relatives of settlers already in the country.

<sup>104</sup>The Order-in-Council passed in August 1930 prohibited immigration from Europe, except for those agriculturalists who would be self-sufficient, and the immediate families of settlers already in Canada. The Order-in-Council of March 1931 was much more restrictive, permitting only the following categories: British subject and American citizens with sufficient means to sustain themselves until they found employment; agriculturalists with enough capital to farm independently; labourers in the farming, lumbering or mining industry who had definite employment; and immediate families of adult males already resident in Canada. Knowles,



As a result of renewed restrictions against European settlers, the number of immigrants entering Canada plunged from 1,166,000 between 1921 and 1931 to about 140,000 in the following decade.<sup>105</sup> At the close of the 1920s, however, while the last flood of immigrants made their way through the ports of entry and the distribution centres of the west, the Daughters of the Empire were in their usual places, performing their usual orientation rituals. In 1930, while only 40 out of the 185 ships arriving in the port of Quebec carried enough passengers to warrant the Daughters' orientation services, the Order's postal booth continued its operation for all of the 185 dockings. Providing 307 hours of service, local Daughters of the Empire handled 6,317 letters, parcels, and postcards during the season of navigation. They also kept their usual ready supply of magazines, clothing, and layettes, and even participated in a "dock wedding," providing the wedding present for a young Polish couple who were reunited upon the immigration of the bride. The work of the Montreal chapters also continued at the Bonaventure station with 192 trains carrying 21,667 immigrants being met that year.<sup>106</sup>

Despite the reduced number of immigrants in need of assistance at the ports

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Strangers at Our Gates, 108.

<sup>105</sup>Ibid.

<sup>106</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1931), Report of the Immigration Convenor, 97. There is no mention in the Order's reports of any welcoming work being carried out in Halifax or in Saint John in 1930. The convenor noted that including the 40 ships met at Quebec and the 192 trains received in Montreal the IODE provided services for a total of about 28,000 immigrants that year. This would indicate that the number of newcomers met by the Order in the Maritime provinces was negligible.

by 1931, the Daughters of the Empire were faced with the special burden of assisting those New Canadians who lacked the friends, social connections, and resources to cope with the hardships of the Depression. "It has never been the policy of the Immigration Committee to operate relief services," Charlotte Whitton, as national immigration convenor wrote in her report for 1931, "but the experiences of the past two years have required that the chapters should consider every case on its merits, and exercise a degree of common sense and flexibility in their decision."<sup>107</sup> In many cases, the IODE referred requests for material assistance to organized social service agencies, where those existed. Where they could, however, local chapters across the country donated clothing, groceries, and Christmas hampers, and continued to send correspondence and literature to New Canadian families. In December 1930, New Brunswick chapters sent out 90 baskets of Christmas cheer with gifts for a total of 552 people. "The gifts were exceptional this year," the report read. They consisted of subscriptions to *Farmer's Advocate Magazine*, IODE calendars, wool blankets, quilts, scarfs, wool caps, overshoes, stockings, mittens, candy, fruit, cigars, beads, and dolls' dishes.<sup>108</sup>

Thus, the IODE had come full circle in its response to immigration in the decade between the Great War and the Great Depression. Holding fast to a patriotic ideal, to a particular public agenda that defended the Anglo-Saxon race and the institutions, values, and traditions of Canada's British heritage, the IODE

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<sup>107</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1931), Report of the Immigration Committee, 95.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., 97.

was faced throughout the 1920s, with the constraints of economic uncertainty and the official policies that served it. Coming out of the war and into an economic recession, Canadians were presented with an immigration policy that was shaped by hostility towards enemy aliens, the association of foreigners with Bolshevism, and the fear of competition for precious jobs. Restraints on European immigration in the first half of the decade meant that the IODE's fledgling immigration committee focused most of its Canadianization efforts on those settlers who had arrived in the pre-war immigration boom. Raised hopes for increased immigration from the British Isles through the Empire Settlement Act of 1923 were dashed as an upturn in the economy and pressure from business interests brought large numbers of immigrants from non-preferred countries to Canada between 1925 and 1930. The IODE responded to the huge task of Canadianization indirectly through the orientation and assistance of immigrants as they arrived, and directly through the creation of educational programmes for New Canadians and the support of rural schools where their children were in attendance. By the close of the decade, the Order adjusted its activities once again, as the cancellation of the Railways Agreement brought a drastic decline in immigration to Canada, and the circumstances of the Depression diverted the Order's attention from the patriotic education of New Canadians to the provision of much-needed relief.

In spite of fluctuating circumstances, the IODE was consistent in its pressure for a predominance of British settlers and in its claim that continued central

European immigration would seriously threaten the Anglo-Saxon character of the country. By upholding the Anglo-Saxon race and the traditions, institutions, and values of Great Britain, the Daughters of the Empire were protecting their own status and heritage. Their views blended unobtrusively with the dominant ideas of the day as an increasingly professional medical community gave credence to the racial hierarchy that placed Anglo-Saxons at the pinnacle of human progress. Moreover, the Daughters' association with immigrant women and children at the ports and in most of their Canadianization programmes, although necessitated by its public suitability, gave them an added sense of superiority as the incarnation of white womanhood. The combination of the Order's acceptance of women's role as mothers of the nation and its belief in the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race justified the Daughters' unique and elevated position as civilizers of the "lesser races" through the political socialization of their women and children.

## CONCLUSION

Largely in our hands rests the responsibility  
for the success of the moral union of the Anglo-Saxon  
race, and, through it, the security of the world.<sup>1</sup>

In many ways, the 1920s was a decade of transition. Emerging from the furore of the First World War, Canadians reassessed their position within the British Empire, their relationship to the United States, and their status on the international stage. Out of a growing sense of nationalism, and through the leadership of a new Prime Minister, Canada achieved, by 1931, political autonomy as part of the Commonwealth of Nations. In the same period, social, demographic, and economic changes initiated a process that would transfigure Canadian society significantly. Immigration, which dramatically altered the country's racial and ethnic composition, combined with the cultural invasion by the United States through popular media to resurrect concerns about Canada's cultural identity. For the first time, more Canadians lived in urban than in rural areas.<sup>2</sup> Punctuated by the recessions of 1920 and 1923, Canada's economy was gradually shifting from the resource and manufacturing sectors toward the service industry; and the growth of corporate capitalism and the emergence of the

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<sup>1</sup>Echoes (June 1920), 14.

<sup>2</sup>Of course, the national average of 51 townspeople to 49 country dwellers obscured the vast differences in rural-urban percentages among the provinces. John H. Thompson and Allen Seager, Canada 1922-1939: Decades of Discord (Toronto, 1985), 3-4. Nonetheless, Canada's urban population had increased dramatically: from 1.1 million in 1881 to 4.3 million in 1921. Mariana Valverde, The Age of Light, Soap, and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925 (Toronto, 1991), 131.

welfare state signified the increasing intervention of business and government into the lives of "ordinary" Canadians. Once the backbone of public relief and of the moral regulation of society, the social reform movement began to decline in the 1920s, giving way to the professionalization of social services and the rise of state welfare.

As an organization that thrived on imperialism and on a voluntary spirit of reform, the IODE faced many structural and ideological challenges in the 1920s. A substantial decline in membership—a problem shared by the NCW and other national women's organizations<sup>3</sup>—coincided with a re-evaluation of the Order's patriotic principles. Its survival hinged on the Daughters' willingness to adapt both to peace and to shifting sensibilities regarding Canada's connection to Great Britain. The IODE's corporate membership in the League of Nations Society, its support of the Made in Canada movement, its promotion of Canadian artistic enterprises, and its increased focus on the country's importance within the British Empire, demonstrated the Order's recognition of Canada's developing national stature. But while these adjustments helped the IODE to maintain its public credibility and thus its continuance as an organization, the Daughters of the Empire still held fast to those ideals that for them represented stability and order in an era of rapid change. The IODE's militarism, its rural idealism (demonstrated, for example, by the Order's focus on fresh air vacations for urban children), and its emphasis on morality and service over materialism, were

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<sup>3</sup>Veronica Strong-Boag, *The Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada, 1893-1929* (Ottawa, 1976), n.p.

attempts to recapture the romanticized social order of the empire's halcyon days.<sup>4</sup>

Whereas the IODE's principal focus in previous years had been the stimulation of patriotism in the support of war, in the 1920s, the symbiotic relationship between philanthropy and the state allowed the Order to express its loyalty through nation-building. The need for voluntary support for the extension of child welfare, medical services, and education beyond Canada's urban centres enabled the Order to combine social activism with its belief that, "the strength of the Empire is to be found in the highest functioning and fullest development of each of its members."<sup>5</sup> By participating in the development of child care services through the creation of pre-natal and "well baby" clinics, by supplying schools with patriotic books and materials, by establishing scholarships for young Canadians, and by assisting in the Canadianization of immigrants, the IODE was contributing to the physical, intellectual, and cultural development of the empire's citizens.

The outward signs of the IODE's imperialism are less difficult to dissect than the rationale that inspired them. The promotion of a social order that was fundamentally racist and sexist by an organization of women seeking power in the public sphere appears to be a contradiction. It is likely this discrepancy which

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<sup>4</sup>The Order's repugnance of materialism was implicit in its persistent emphasis on morality, service, and sacrifice. "The test of success in life is not the worldly idea of the accumulation of wealth, social eminence, intellectual superiority," the IODE national president proclaimed, "but rather that loyal, unselfish service for the welfare of others and the seeds sown in this work are ever bearing fruit in the lives of those for whom our efforts were made." "Report of the Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," *Echoes* (October 1926), 4.

<sup>5</sup>"Report of the Twenty-Fourth Annual Meeting Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," *Echoes* (June 1924), 5.

has impelled historians of women's organizations to avoid an analysis of the IODE, especially in peace time, in preference for other groups that fit more conveniently into the maternal feminist model. But at a time when racial hierarchies were legitimized by "Science;" and when women's proper place was reinforced by tradition, religion, and lore, the prevalence of race and gender hierarchies was not unique to imperialist ideology. Although women had attained the right to vote, and had become increasingly visible in politics, academia, and the professions, their roles were still defined and restricted by a patriarchal and capitalistic society. Their primary function as mothers was increasingly reinforced by rising standards of child care and home management, and their public activities were constrained by the necessity of a maternal rationale.<sup>6</sup>

Caught in a discourse they did not create, the Daughters of the Empire promoted imperialism as part of their heritage and adopted maternalism as the only legitimate source of public power for women in the early twentieth century. The conflation of these perspectives enabled the Daughters to capitalize on their position as part of the Anglo-Saxon social elite, and to exploit popular notions about women's moral superiority for the extension of their own influence. Indeed, much of the Order's success was derived from the virtues of imperial motherhood. Just as the war underscored women's maternal role as the producers of the empire's front line, the period of reconstruction highlighted the

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<sup>6</sup>Beth Light and Ruth Roach Pierson, eds., *No Easy Road: Women in Canada 1920s to 1960s* (Toronto, 1990), 17.



need for strong and healthy citizens to ensure unity, order, and progress in the future. Barbara Ramusak's label, "maternal imperialists," to describe the British women activists in colonial India could reasonably be applied to the Daughters of the Empire in Canada.<sup>7</sup> They contributed to the elevation of motherhood in their imperial rhetoric and in their education of mothers for "better babies." Their faith in mothers as the agents of socialization was demonstrated consistently by their education of young girls in junior chapters and in IODF Girl Guide Companies, by their work with immigrant women and girls, and by their concern about the recruitment of respectable British women for service in Canadian homes. Women were entrusted with the transmission of the values needed to build a nation worthy of its prominent connection to the empire. As the IODE national president pointed out in her address at the annual meeting at the close of the decade, "the mother as the centre of the family must do her part in teaching her children British traditions and ideals."<sup>8</sup>

The reinforcement, by a blend of social Darwinism and eugenics, of hierarchies of class and race endowed the Daughters of the Empire with a privileged position. They were able to derive a sense of power from their status as Anglo-Saxon women, and as the wives of prominent men. Their authority over the women and children they served, whether real or perceived, was

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<sup>7</sup>Barbara Ramusak, "Cultural Missionaries, Maternal Imperialists, Feminist Allies: British Women Activists in India, 1865-1945," in Nupur Chaudhuri and Margaret Strobel, eds., Western Women and Imperialism (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1992), 119-136.

<sup>8</sup>Minutes, Annual Meeting (June 1931), Presidential Address, 10.

inextricably linked to their personification of ideal womanhood. In his address at the IODE's silver anniversary meeting, Arthur Meighen reinforced the Order's rationale by stating that he considered the Daughters of the Empire to be "emblematic of the motherhood of Canada."<sup>9</sup> But the question of the IODE's responsibility for the perpetuation of social distance between classes and races, charges that have been commonly laid against British women in the colonial context,<sup>10</sup> is answered by recognizing the obvious limitations of the IODE's power. As this study has shown, it was necessary for the Daughters to accept maternalism as a narrowly defined role and as a familiar social construct to legitimize their public activities. Moreover, their credibility was generally dependent on the social status of their husbands and on the sponsorship of prominent public men. Already subordinated by a gendered social order, the Daughters of the Empire drew upon those imperial ideas already in existence to create a sense of power based on their class and race.

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<sup>9</sup>"Report of the Silver Anniversary of the Imperial Order Daughters of the Empire," *Echoes* (June 1925), 7.

<sup>10</sup>See Helen Callaway, Gender, Culture and Empire: European Women in Colonial Nigeria (London, 1987), especially 3-45, and 227-244; Susan Blake, "A Woman's Trek: What Difference Does Gender Make?" in Chaudhuri and Strobel, Western Women and Imperialism, 19-34; and Margaret Strobel, "Gender and Race in the Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century British Empire," in Renate Bridenthal, Claudia Koonz, and Susan Stuard, eds., Becoming Visible: Women in European History Second Edition (Boston, 1987), 375-396.

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