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“Our Cherished Purpose”: Liberal Nationalism and the Literary in the *Canadian
Methodist Magazine (CMM)*, 1875-1888

Laura Dunbar

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Advisors: Professor J. Henderson and Professor J. Mason

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Abstract

“Our Cherished Purpose”: Liberal Nationalism and the Literary in the Canadian Methodist Magazine (CMM), 1875-1888

This thesis examines the ways that the Canadian Methodist Magazine exemplified the Canadian Methodist Church’s theory of native literature from 1875-1888. The significance and function of this vision of national literature are examined in the context of the church’s social vision as it is defined by central tenets of Canadian liberal Protestantism. The main elements of the analysis focus on the periodical’s use of literary genre and form in the formulation and promotion of an ideal Canadian character in the years immediately after Confederation. Also considered is the periodical’s attempt to regulate evangelical enthusiasm and develop a moral standard for and through popular literature in the manner of traditional British values. The work was inspired by historian Ian McKay’s call for a new approach to investigations of Canada’s liberal order tradition, and contributes to current scholarship in nineteenth-century Canadian literature and history by exploring the complicated relationship that existed between individualism and the collective good in an influential religious institution.

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“Our Cherished Purpose”: Liberal Nationalism and the Literary in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine (CMM)*, 1875-1888

Introduction

Innovative investigations of the origins of Canada’s socialist traditions are increasingly being called upon to provide some context for the continuation of specific values in contemporary Canadian society (McKay, “Rebels” 82). In order to understand how the “process” called Canada evolved from the multiple discourses that prized the three main liberal order principles—liberty, equality, and property—it is necessary to expand the focus of historical analysis to include less-traditional historiographies. As Ian McKay reminds us, the origins of the liberal order in Canada are found in diverse social, political, and economic contexts, or “matrix-events” that reshape “hegemony at both its profoundest structural levels and its conscious levels” (“Rebels” 95). The fifty years between 1840 and 1890 are especially significant for this kind of historiographic exploration because they are key decades spanning the transition from British North America as an imperialist colony to the birth of the nation called Canada, one that sought to establish itself as a new kind of democratic liberal society (McKay, “Rebels” 51).

As a study of one of the many structural sources influencing that society, ““Our Cherished Purpose”: Liberal Nationalism and the Literary in the *Canadian Methodist Magazine (CMM)*, 1875-1888” focuses on the nineteenth-century Canadian Methodist church’s literary vision of an essential Canadian identity after Confederation. This thesis attempts to show how nineteenth-century Methodism connected literature to the liberal order values that were so intrinsically bound up with the country’s development, and how the concepts of literature, nationalism, and the individual evolved within the discourse of

church and state. In exploring the relationship that grew between literature and character formation, and the ways that the Methodist theory of literature became part of a larger project to formulate an ontological guide for Canada's future, I introduce the Methodist discourse as a facet of liberalism with implications that are perhaps underemphasized in current scholarship. Because it discourages easy binaries, the *CMM* is evidence of a more nuanced and complicated relationship between individualist liberal order values and the collective good than is suggested in McKay's reading.

As an example of the intersection of religion, reading culture, and colonial mentality, the publication that is the subject of this thesis arose from a unique set of conditions at the time of Confederation. Though the magazine was published from 1875-1906 under various titles,¹ I confine my focus to the periodical's initial thirteen years, from 1875-1888. In that period, the ferment of nationalism in the pages of this religious periodical was matched by a set of secular and religious events that together created a uniquely stimulating set of conditions in the conception of the value and purpose of a native Canadian literature. These "matrix-events" (McKay, "Rebels" 95) include not just the symbolic watershed of Confederation, and the amalgamation of Methodist churches in 1874, but the Canada First (1868) and Young Canada (1880-4) movements that were influenced by the British North America Act and Irish nationalist movements; the American Civil War (1861-5); the Red River Rebellion (1869-70); the North West Rebellion (1885); the first Canadian National Policy Act (1876-9); the rise of the

¹ From 1875-88, it was the *Canadian Methodist Magazine*; from 1888-98, the *Methodist Magazine*; and from 1896-1906, the *Methodist Magazine and Review* (under the auspices of William Briggs Methodist Book and Publishing House of Toronto).

Confederation Poets (1880); and the creation of the Canadian Pacific Railway (1871-85) (Bentley 16).

A central feature of this thesis is the role that Methodism, and the Methodist press specifically, played in the development of a distinctive form of Canadian nationalism after Confederation. Methodist patriotism can be distinguished from secular variations because it promoted nationalism as a theologically based principle, and because it was bound up in conceptions of individualism, progress, and duty that never lost their connection to the creation of a perfect Christian society. Along with a commitment to teaching that patriotism was a moral virtue essential for the success of Canadian society, the Methodist press undertook a mission to guard the public against those influences and ideas that the church believed would breed the wrong kind of citizen, and thus corrupt the possibility of a new utopia.

As its special project, the magazine was to develop, through literature, a form of patriotism that was distinctly Methodist in view and practice, but one that would incorporate the crest of nationalist sentiment that was reflected in both secular and other religious presses. In its pages, the *CMM* repeatedly emphasizes ideal Canadianism as a natural outgrowth of the three central Protestant virtues (industry, modesty, and sobriety) combined with the liberal belief in the sanctity of the individual's right to property—beginning with the individual's right to effect his or her own salvation. In this thesis I suggest, in agreement with Bruce Curtis's claims about liberalism and the social good generally, that the particularities of the relation between Methodism's possessive individualism and nineteenth-century liberal philosophy have special relevance in Canadian contexts. As well, the magazine is evidence, in a major nineteenth-century

cultural institution, of evolving notions of civic duty and responsibility within private and public spheres that were predicated on the act of reading.

The reading act is itself another area of focus for this study. The *CMM* signals the advent of an important phase in the evolution of what had been—in the pews of Methodist British North America—chiefly an oral culture, to one that promoted advanced reading and writing skills as the norm for Canadian parishioners. As such, the Methodist project for literary nationalism, and nationalist literature, is an interesting study in doctrinal evolution within the specific context of the church. Beyond that, the *CMM*'s literary undertaking carries important implications for the history and development of liberalism and socialism in the codified institutions and cultural practices that were to shape Canadian society well beyond the nineteenth century.

Little work presently exists that addresses the impact mid-century Methodist print culture was to have on formulations of nationalism that were equally dedicated to individual and social salvation through literature. The body of the thesis is divided into seven sections. The first, “Church Origins,” provides a general overview of Methodist history and theology. The second, “Canadian Methodism and Print Culture,” is further broken down into four short subsections. The first of these subsections contextualizes the *CMM* within the history of the Methodist Book and Publishing House in Canada and introduces the mission statement that appeared in the first issue and served as the magazine's conceptual framework, while the next three focus on explications of particular aspects of that statement. Following this are four major sections in which I examine the specific genres that together comprise the heart of the *CMM*: “Writing History and Discovery Narratives”; “Biography”; “Travel Writing”; and “From the Parishioner to the

Reader: Literature in the *CMM*.” This section is subdivided into poetry and fiction segments, and for organizational purposes the travel section is divided into subheadings as well. The seventh and last section before conclusion examines regular features, like the editorials and current events sections, that fall outside of the *CMM*’s “literature.” In each section, I have tried to contextualize primary source material to provide a sense of the patterns informing the secular and religious thinking of the day, and to analyze the subject matter in relation to the Methodist conception of Canadian literature, nationalism, and morality. In doing so, it has become evident to me that Methodist liberalism in the decade and a half after Confederation resists easy definition.

Like the church itself, the development of the ideal Canadian through print practices is fraught with conflict, tension, and ambiguity. Of particular interest to me was the realization that although the *CMM* was steeped in the ideology of property, liberty and freedom, it was equally committed to social improvement, national well-being, and egalitarianism. Against McKay’s liberalism, that as Curtis points out in “After ‘Canada’: Liberalisms, Social Theory, and Historical Analysis” tends to juxtapose the former set of values as discrete and poised against the latter, liberty, freedom and property in the *CMM* connect the individual and society in ways that are diffuse and subtle. Paralleling this duality is the uneasy coexistence of enthusiasm and discipline in a dialectic that negotiates the magazine’s approach to the formulation of an essential Canadian character through literature.

In thinking about the material, it became clear that to reduce the magazine to McKay’s rather rigid interpretation of liberalism would be to do it a disservice. Discussing the ways that McKay’s paradigm might lead to the belief that liberalism is

diametrically opposed to the social good, Curtis states that “when liberalism is presented as having no internal dynamic, no inherent developmental tensions, and no conception of the public good” all that is left is the conception of a liberal evolution that has “Thatcherism” as its end result (180). Instead of insight into the “little-explored realities” (“Reds” 83)—to use McKay’s own term—of the delicate origins and intricate connections that underlie Canadian political and social structures, an approach that views liberalism as inherently opposed to the collective welfare succeeds only in reducing “reconnaissance” to rhetoric.

With that in mind, I tried to understand the complicated internal dynamic of this periodical within the needs and influences of its own time, both as a flagship publication of a successful capitalist printing house and as a spiritual counterpoint to nineteenth-century middle-class anxieties about rampant materialism and immorality in a period of unprecedented colonial upheaval. The growing suspicion with which the emotional appeal of revivalism was viewed resulted in an interest in social regulation, moral decorum, and measured sobriety in deed and thought in order that the gains made in the direction of national independence were not jeopardized. Instead of allowing modern theoretical sensibilities to overwhelm the research and result in over-simplifications that are as inaccurate as they are misleading, in the conclusion I try to understand the reasons behind this ideological shift and explore, rather than resolve, the attendant ambiguities of middle-class Methodist respectability and Canadian liberalism.

I. Church Origins

Before tackling a discussion of the Methodist literary and nationalist vision in Canada after 1867, it seems appropriate to provide a summary of Methodist history and doctrine up to that point. I would not presume to provide a definitive history—there are already many excellent sources²—rather, my goal is only to provide the information necessary to contextualize a specific aspect of that enormous history. In doing so, I have sometimes reduced to précis form some critical elements of Methodist doctrine and evolution; other aspects have been left out altogether if they were not essential for this context.

In May of 1738, John Wesley, a young Anglican minister in Aldersgate, London, experienced an epiphany that was to transform religion. Dissatisfied with what he saw as the divide between the Church of England's theological bureaucracy and the practical religious needs of the common people, Wesley had for some time been on a quest to reinvigorate religion within the experience of individual salvation.³ In the early eighteenth century, Protestant morale was at an ebb, negatively affected by perceptions about the general immorality of the age, the encroachment of rationalism on faith, and the rise of godless industrialism (Hempton 13). An ardent supporter of organization and an advocate for authority who regarded the nascent democratic processes of the seventeenth century warily, Wesley, like many of his peers, nonetheless felt that Anglican Protestantism had

² See Neil Semple's *The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism*, David Hempton's *Methodism: Empire of the Spirit*, Anthony Armstrong's *The Church of England, the Methodists and Society 1700-1850*, and S.D. Clark's *Church and Sect in Canada*.

³ David Hempton warns against the common mistake of seeing in John Wesley "the lonesome genius" of Methodism, when the evidence suggests he borrowed heavily from the ideas of Moravians, Quakers, and other intellectual contemporaries in the style of a theological bricoleur (16).

begun to fail the very people for whom it had been created. His solution, a religion focused on personal redemption through experience and reason, led to the founding of the Methodist Church (Semple 9).

Despite the appearance of spontaneity, the sources for the Wesleys' revelatory visions (his younger brother Charles soon underwent a similar inspiration) were diverse and cumulative. In the immediate foreground, there is the influence of their widowed mother, Anne.⁴ Through her efforts, both John and Charles acquired university educations and were instrumental in forming the "Holy Club" while at Cambridge. In addition, both Wesleys were mentored by William Law, the famous Anglican nonjuror, Cambridge tutor, and prolific writer and critic whose *A Practical Treatise Upon Christian Perfection* (1726) was enormously influential in the British evangelical movement that characterized the 1730s and 40s. In it, Law emphasized the development of inward holiness nurtured through rigorous self-discipline and practical good works in the world. Besides Law, John Wesley for a time studied with the Moravians, but ultimately found their introspection too narrow in scope to support his burgeoning belief in the necessity of worldly engagement (Semple 10-11).⁵ In the later church, Wesley's scholarly affect and reputation for stern sobriety were mitigated, especially in North America, by the passion and fervour of George Whitefield, whose enormously popular style increasingly emphasized the importance of nationalism (Semple 14).

⁴ Intelligent, resourceful, and hard-working, "the mother of Methodism" (Semple 9) was a formidable leader in the family's home life and played a major role in her sons' religious development throughout their lives. A strict disciplinarian, she instilled the principles of self-discipline, divine purpose, and religious mission in both of her sons although they were particularly manifested in John.

⁵ In particular, the issue of the taking of sacrament by those without any professed faith led to a divide between the traditionally minded Moravians and Wesley, who believed sacrament offered a means to grace for anyone who participated (Hempton 14).

Thus, from this mix of temperaments and circumstance Methodist doctrine emerged. In short, it sought to develop a path to salvation that relied on the individual developing an inner holiness as a direct result of Christian acts performed in the world. Methodism was a conflation of meditative and experiential spirituality that was enormously effective in producing a concept of a holistic individual. Good works included welcoming new converts to an ever-expanding brotherhood of believers, missionary work among “primitive” societies, and the ascension of the believer to a state of holy perfection on earth. One of the signal precepts of the church was its refusal to set its members apart from the world by dress, language or custom; another was its willingness to take all comers, in the hopes that the inevitable loss of those who did not sustain their conversion commitment would be balanced by the slow but steady gain of those who did (Semple 15).

Combined with these elements, the Wesleyan belief in the possibility of Christian perfectionism on earth led to the development of an energetic spiritual activism with implications beyond personal salvation. David Hempton writes that:

Spreading scriptural holiness throughout the land, and indeed the world, was the task; outdoor and itinerant preaching, societary association, and connectionalism were the means; individual assurance, communal discipline and national regeneration were the ends. (14)

The Wesleyans continued to follow the basic tenets of high Anglicanism and believed in most of that church’s essentialisms (humanity had fallen in Eden and was therefore basically sinful and in need of redemption), but they were flexible in their approach to doctrine. Determined to reinvigorate the people’s belief in the possibility of real salvation

in life, the Methodists were less concerned, in the beginning, with establishing a comprehensive theological system (Semple 10), a point with substantial implications for this thesis. This concentration on the end at the expense of the means resulted in contradictions that opened the church to criticism on the grounds that salvation built on a foundation of momentary transformative experience was not stable enough, theoretically, to withstand the trials and stresses of time and intellectual criticism (Semple 15). In many ways, the *CMM*'s project was an effort to overcome this unfavourable perception in the church's Canadian context.

It was no easy task, for indeed there were areas of significant ambivalence in Methodist thought and practice. Though the church was formed in dissent partly against the episcopalianism of the Anglicans, and advocated a path to salvation for the individual that claimed to elide class and social standing, John Wesley was an autocrat who brooked little or no criticism within the church's upper ranks, and the organization of church elders continued in a hierarchical system of episcopacy. The maintenance of social order was profoundly important to Wesley, who was, like many of his educated contemporaries, a strong believer in common sense, natural law, and the tenets of civil society that revolved around the right to property, beginning with the individual's right to control the self (Semple 11). Thus, the concept of "good works" extended only to those acts that were acceptable within the jurisdiction of *existing* civic law, a premise that limits the principles of radical social reform. The universe was ordered, as were all of its elements and inhabitants, and "freedom" was a concept predicated on obedience to the law.

Moreover, the union of experience and reason was often an uneasy one. Though based in the rationalist belief that logic and reason were the proofs of experience (Semple

16), the experience that framed Methodist philosophy was in continual danger of devaluing intellectualism in favour of emotion. Too often, the idea that reason was reflected in experience was lost in the heat of evangelicalism, a problem of which Wesley was not unaware and one he attempted to correct by making literature's disciplined intellectual activity a primary element of Methodist practice. Still, as Hempton notes, it was a movement that thrived on the "dialectical friction ... of discipline and sobriety, but also ... ecstasy and enthusiasm" (Hempton 7). Not infrequently, this dialectic produced literature, and especially hymns, that were fairly lurid variations of passionate Christian fervour, and that were perceived by some critics within the church as compounding the problem. In nineteenth-century British North America, Methodist elders like Egerton Ryerson began to worry about the effects ungoverned and thus potentially ungovernable passions would have at a sensitive time in the establishment of a new nation, and the church's official stance began to favour subdued decorum over zealous enthusiasm. The sobering benefits of education became the church's counterpoint to irrational fervour, and the newspaper and periodical the workhorse of the church's revisionist plan.

The process by which Methodism effected salvation was twofold. Conversion was the first step, followed by a period much like a spiritual apprenticeship that had as its ultimate goal the perfection of the Christian on earth. During this initial period of conversion, new members were required to break all previous ties with the world that might threaten the sympathetic conformity so important to the maintenance of Methodist faith communities (Semple 55-6). Itinerant preachers spread the word, and informal gatherings sprang up, where music and testimonial appeals resulted in noisy, fervently enthusiastic crowds. Advertised in pamphlets, the spectacle of the Methodist "love-feast"

drew the curious as well as the converted. Rural areas, especially, were rich grounds for Methodist conversion in eighteenth-century Britain, and continued to be in North America.

By the nineteenth century, Methodism had a firm foothold in British North America and the United States. In British North America, the church enjoyed a particularly strong presence in Nova Scotia and Upper Canada, in harmony with the proliferation of pamphlet and press culture that characterized the highly charged political life in those colonies. The appeal of Methodism was multidimensional. Environmental conditions faced by the pioneers often left them feeling isolated and insignificant in the wilderness, and Methodism was equally effective in alleviating loneliness as it was in establishing a moral system in what was often an unrestrained and therefore “unwholesome spiritual environment” (Semple 54).⁶

Establishing wholesome values in the wilderness could only be achieved with the presence of a scrutinizing authoritative eye, one that would weed out indifference and impiety before it could become firmly entrenched in the garden of the new society. Religion faced practical difficulties in the colonies that were related to the short supply of ministers and places of worship, the lack of organized or effective communication, and the distance between neighbours, but Methodism, particularly, seemed ably equipped to deal with these obstacles in British North America. Despite its requirement for the relinquishment of worldly luxuries, the early church in British North America provided a warm community of emotional and moral support to all who sought it. As well, the

⁶ Semple quotes Bishop Mountain’s observations about Upper Canada: “Living without restraint, and without the eye of those whom they respect, a sense of decency and religion frequently disappear [resulting in ...] a total estrangement from God” (55).

demonstrative aspect of worship, the encouragement of the development of itinerant preachers from within local communities after 1827, and the church's continued and increasing reliance on the efficacy of the printed word bolstered connexional membership at a time when more traditional Protestant religions were undergoing a period of weakness in the colonies. As a result, the "unceasing spiritual and moral vigil" Methodism had sustained in early settler communities that brought comfort and guidance to colonists "deeply in need of spiritual comfort and social regeneration" (Semple 180) created a vital, well-organized church that was well prepared to meet the needs of Victorian Canada.

Methodist patriotism in the British North American colonies arose from traditions of itinerant preaching and revivalism encouraged by Wesley in the eighteenth century that gained widespread support for their informality and inclusiveness, and garnered an equal amount of criticism for their perceived lack of discipline and intellectualism. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Methodist Church in Canada was well established and evolving from a frontier church to one that enjoyed the support of middle-class Canada. Indeed, until the twentieth century, the Methodist church was the largest Protestant denomination in Canada, and Ontario was its spiritual and physical centre (Semple 183).

In 1874, the amalgamation of the various Methodists sects within Canada into a single church, the Methodist Church of Canada, resulted in the streamlining of the church's administrative body and a centralization of its considerable financial interests in urban centres like Toronto, Hamilton, Charlottetown, Belleville and St. Thomas (Semple 187).⁷ In March 1876 the *CMM* estimated world-wide church membership at between

⁷ The Methodist Church of Canada was comprised of the Wesleyan and New Connexion churches, and in 1875 had 104, 736 members. Other sects opted to remain independent, like the Bible Christians (5, 591 members in 1875), the Episcopal Methodists (23, 012

three and four million souls (3), a period of popularity that bred an almost limitless faith in Methodism's "increased facilities for carrying on aggressive warfare against ignorance and sin" (33).

members in 1875), and the Primitive Methodists (7, 145 members in 1875). Though the Methodist Church claimed 18, 962 Atlantic Canadian members, and the Bible Christians had a small but devoted PEI connexion, Ontario remained its base (Semple 184).

II. Canadian Methodism and Print Culture

i. The Methodist Book and Publishing House

By 1867, the Toronto-based Methodist Book and Publishing House was a major force in the Canadian book and periodical trade. Under the guidance of Egerton Ryerson the first efforts of the house were begun in 1829, and survived until well into the twentieth century. The many universities and colleges founded by Ryerson and the university that bears his name today attest to the commitment of its founder to education and literacy in public and post-secondary education in Canada.

Well before Confederation, in 1829 the Methodist Church in Upper Canada launched its signature newspaper, *The Christian Guardian*. In addition to the duties he undertook as the Book Steward of the church, Ryerson also assumed intermittent editorial responsibility for the *Guardian* until 1840 (Pierce 3-5). Notable because it was to become the voice of the church on almost every issue of the day, the *Guardian*'s importance is bound to the evidence it provides of the church's bureaucratic strength and business acumen. In circulation until 1925, the newspaper's success was due to its affordability, simplicity, and egalitarian middle-of-the-road approach to popular topics and contemporary issues.

Within nineteenth-century periodical culture, the *Guardian* exists as proof of the power of the religious press to disseminate information, opinion, and influence in spheres well beyond a "target" audience. Lorne Pierce, the Methodist Press's famous twentieth-century historian and biographer, quotes Ryerson's 1836 observation that "it was the most extensively circulated paper in either of the Canadas, paying nearly one-half more to the post office than any other publication" (7). The church's faith in the "efficacy of

the printed word” (Pierce 7) was limitless, a sentiment that was to become increasingly important as the House matured in the second half of the century.

From a community of believers struggling to establish their version of civilization in the British North American colony, the church was evolving into a multi-branched institution that was assuming an influential role in the future direction of the new country, leading at least one well-known historian to argue that “there are grounds for stating that the rise of Methodism was the most important Protestant religious development since the Reformation” (Hempton 2). Accordingly, the launch of a magazine that explicitly undertakes the twinned projects of native literature and the responsibility for a national character constitutes an important chapter, not just in the history of Canadian Methodist publishing, but also within the development of secular nationalism as a whole.

In January 1875, the first volume of the *Canadian Methodist Magazine, Devoted to Religion, Literature, and Social Progress* (CMM) was published in Toronto and Halifax. No crude pamphlet, from the start the magazine was substantial in content and sophisticated in design. Biannual volumes were broken down into numbered monthly issues that ran to an average of seventy-five pages each and were organized by an alphabetical table of contents. Included in the table of contents were lists of the numerous engravings that illustrated the first pages and leading articles of each issue. Regular features like “Our Sunday School Interests,” “Religious and Missionary Intelligence,” and the “Superannuated Ministers’ Fund” detail the immediate concerns of the church, while “Book Notices” and “Current Topics and Events” appear near the end of each issue. The body of the magazine’s material, however, is made up of a mix of biography, world and

Canadian history, short stories, poetry, and sermon-like editorials on almost any topic of relevance to Methodism.

From the start, the *CMM*'s intentions were clear:

One important object of our magazine shall be the development and fostering of a native literature. We could easily fill our pages with the best productions of the European press. But that would frustrate a cherished purpose which we have in view. We shall from time to time re-produce such papers, not only for their intrinsic excellence, but as models of style and of the treatment of the subjects discussed. But we wish most of our articles to have a distinctly national flavour--to be an indigenous growth and to be racy of the soil. (76)

The statement is a significant marker in the evolution of Methodist literature within the new matrix of Canadian-British relations. After three years of intermittent discussion in the Book Committee minutes, an adult periodical was finally realized by the Methodist Publishing House, one that would "respect their [Canadian] readership" (Friskney 73-4). In a larger context, just eight years earlier the reorganization of the provinces of Canada, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick under the terms of a federal constitution propelled the nation into a parallel and similarly new phase of maturity. Under the umbrella of the Methodist Publishing House and its affiliated organizations, the periodical was uniquely positioned to become the flagship of church doctrine, polity, and culture in a country that was adjusting to new systems of governance and self-representation nationally and internationally. The sense of potential accompanying the magazine's launch was matched only by its editors' expectations for the young country (Friskney 76), and in its call for a

“distinctly national flavour” the magazine envisions the right kind of literature as a harbinger of national success.

ii. A Native Literature

Stylistically, the “cherished purpose” of the opening passage conveys the confidence of a maturing publishing house, one with the time and financial resources to develop and carry out a long-term plan, the intellectual capital to develop its own aesthetic standard, and the moral right (and duty) to dictate the terms of that standard to its reading public. Besides assurance, the wording also gives a sense of the value the editors placed on the perceived functions of literature in forming human societies. Native literature seems to be both a prerequisite for and an indicator of community viability. Significantly, in keeping with its expansive notions of community, the church’s vision for a “native” literature is also “national.”

As the mission statement makes clear, the magazine conforms to the tradition of specific interest publishing in periodical literature. Given the lengthy extent of the Methodist Publishing House’s involvement with the book and newspaper trade in Canada by 1875 (Friskney 40), the launch of a periodical aimed at establishing their special aesthetic position in the public realm implies that the interests “devoted to religion and literature” controlling the House had sufficient reason to believe that the need for artistic regulation existed, and that a magazine was the best venue for its dissemination. Perhaps with a view to emulation in a religious context, the Methodist flagship newspaper, the *Christian Guardian*, had previously praised Montreal’s secular intellectual periodical *The Literary Garland* as a “periodical of high moral tone,” and the focus of Book Committee

meetings as evidenced by Methodist Conference minutes was an overarching concern with the production and dissemination of “wholesome reading” (Friskney 78).

A young Methodist pastor with a literary background from Victoria College, the Reverend Doctor William Henry Withrow (1839-1908) was appointed editor, a position he held by election without interruption until his death. During the period of his tenure at the *CMM*, Withrow was awarded an honorary doctorate from Victoria College (1882) and elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada (1884). Though he also oversaw the House Sunday School publications, the *CMM* was to become the forum for his wide-ranging thoughts on literature, history, and architecture. The union of culture and piety was always at the heart of Withrow’s writing, and if he were occasionally anti-Catholic and typically anti-Darwinian, he tended toward moderate and intelligent debate rather than polemic. He was said to have helped many of the magazine’s readers develop a “reverent criticism” (French) of new scientific knowledge, albeit one that privileged faith over inquiry. Withrow shared editorial duties at the *CMM* with his able second, E.H. Dewart, another celebrated and prolific Methodist scholar and the former editor of the *Christian Guardian*. The direction and focus of the magazine, however, remained primarily Withrow’s project, and the importance of his literary viewpoint cannot be underestimated.

Not only a devout Methodist, Withrow was a zealous patriot and was fully committed to shepherding Canada to the fulfillment of its promise for greatness, as he makes clear in the pages of the magazine. He favoured didacticism over style, and neo-classical romance over realism, but tempered the church’s opposition to evolutionary theory by emphasizing a reasoned and careful counterargument, based on knowledge

infused with passion. These were traits consistent with his period, education and faith, but not always perfectly in line with his colleagues in the church's upper polity, who occasionally rejected literary submissions to the magazine against Withrow's personal judgment (Friskney 79).

Withrow was a prolific writer. Besides the innumerable essays, poems, biographies and reviews he wrote for the *CMM*, he published several works outside of the periodical. These included histories of Rome, Canadian histories designed as educational texts, a study of Aboriginal peoples based on missionary reports, and a travelogue of his time in Europe, as well as didactic studies of religion in the nineteenth century.⁸ His writing is unerringly patriotic, pious, and sincere, and should be taken as metonymic of the church's attitude toward literature generally, rather than an individual predilection. He disliked "low" humour, satire, and colloquialism, and reserved his strongest critical opinions for poetry and prose. As editor, Withrow had veto power over everything published in the journal, and, through his friendships, was occasionally able to solicit unpaid work from several notable nineteenth-century Canadian authors. The aim of producing Canadian literature was one held near his heart, and few of the literary figures in the history of the Methodist imprint in Canada did as much to develop a set of standards and ideals for a native literature within one publication.

The codicil that should be borne in mind is that native literature, in this context, means English-Canadian native literature. Historically, the Methodists failed to form any

⁸ Some of Withrow's fourteen books include *The Catacombs of Rome and Their Testimony Relative to Primitive Christianity* (1874), *A History of Canada for the Use of Schools and General Readers* (1876), *The Native Races of North America* (1895), *Makers of Methodism* (1898) and *Religious Progress in the Nineteenth Century* (1900).

lasting connexional⁹ ties in Lower Canada, a situation exacerbated by their pervasive anti-Catholic and anti-French Canadian prejudices (Semple 291). Hence the Publishing House's concentration on English literature was not unusual, nor was its stated intention to use European authors as "models of style," given the contemporary and acceptable Canadian publishing custom of reprinting material from American and British sources (MacDonald 42).¹⁰ As well, periodicals seemed more generally popular in English Canada, though this is perhaps due to the sheer number of American periodicals available to Canadians that began to appear in the 1840s (MacDonald 45).

Despite the popularity of periodicals and the strength of the Methodist Publishing House there were still, as Carole Gerson notes, many risks associated with Canadian publishing, and even the Methodist House had to contend with "the country's pioneer and colonial condition, the difficulties imposed by copyright laws, and the cultural apathy due in part to a necessary preoccupation with material progress" (16). Over the course of the *CMM*'s thirty-one year run, the impressive authorial roster included Egerton Ryerson, Goldwin Smith, Egerton Ryerson Young, William Kirby, E.H. Dewart, James L. Hughes, Charles G.D. Roberts, Nellie McClung, Duncan Campbell Scott, and Archibald Lampman. Despite this, according to the complaint of the Book Committee, the *CMM* "never added to the profits of the publishing house" even when its chief editor was able to secure "reasonably good and occasionally superior contributors who were willing to write without payment" and the annual subscription rate was the not inconsiderable sum of two dollars (Friskney 77, 74). As with many of the magazine's statements about its

⁹ I borrow the word "connexion" from David Semple to refer to any community of Methodist believers, from the smallest parish to the movement as a whole.

¹⁰ Mary Lu MacDonald estimates that only 30% of the prose and poetry published in British North American periodicals in 1850 was natively authored.

profitability and membership, however, this assertion should be taken with caution, as many nineteenth-century periodicals issued financial statements to their readers that were at best inaccurate and at worst deliberately misleading (MacDonald 51).

Before 1850, those religious periodicals in Upper Canada that did publish their subscription figures claimed to have subscribers numbering from 750 to 1,500. Secular newspapers did much better, often ranging up to 2,000 subscribers, while literary periodicals fared much worse, at an average best of 200 to 300 (MacDonald 50-1). Even in 1875 there were no guarantees that a periodical of any kind would survive its first year, despite a population which had grown to 1,620,851 in 1871 from 952,004 twenty years earlier (Friskney 15). Other contemporary English-Canadian periodicals, like *The Literary Garland* and *The Nation*, to name two of the most distinguished ventures that were at least equal to this one in ambition, financial backing, and intellectual quality, could not match the *CMM* for durability in what was traditionally a tough market for “highbrow” cultural commentary. Even in Toronto and Halifax, established urban cities that were the publishing and distribution centres for the *CMM*, potential subscribers were necessarily preoccupied with the practical aspects of life. Among Methodist publications, the literary journal was a departure from the Sunday school periodicals the House had specialized in to that point, and was designed, in form and content, to appeal to a more sophisticated urban audience than the *Christian Guardian*. To smooth the way, the only competition within the House, a privately published monthly called *Earnest Christianity*, was “removed from the marketplace” in a bit of “unbrotherly” manoeuvring that led its editor, the Methodist Rev. Alexander Sutherland, nursing allegorical choler, to charge the Book Committee with distinctly lupine behaviour toward his “lamb” (Friskney 74). In the

CMM's financial favour, however, were the 1,005 Church ministers who would act as sales agents for the magazine, a common House strategy in the tradition of the "bookselling, saddle-bag preacher" that had proved enormously successful in the past (Friskney 51).¹¹ Little did its publishers know at its inception that the *CMM* would become a solid success, at least in terms of relative longevity if not profit, with 2,561 subscribers in 1883 holding steady at 2,726 by 1902 (French).

In this, the *CMM*'s first issue, however, the counter-narrative acknowledging the potential for failure "that would frustrate [...the] cherished purpose" at its inception is a subtle but prevalent undercurrent. The statement's conflation of "native" and "literature" seems to imply a natural ideological affinity, but the zealousness of phrases like "cherished purpose" is, on closer look, a hint of the considerable investment riding on the success of the mission. The passage contains in its wording an "anxiety of enterprise" (Coleman 96) that suggests that the failure of the periodical would reach deep into the Methodist psyche. By repeatedly using verbs that stop just short of the confidence of assertion ("fostering," not "creating;" "re-produce" not "produce;" "wish" not "determine"), the *CMM*'s editors imply, not so covertly, that a uniquely Canadian literature would require careful and disciplined management. It is an attitude that parallels much contemporary reaction to Confederation, insofar as both recognize the difficulty of translating abstract bonds into concrete practices. The possibility of failure carried with it the loss of credibility, not just in the adversarial relationships arising from differences

¹¹ Friskney points out that preachers were not the only salespeople utilized by the House for its diverse publications. By 1869, the House was advertising for canvassers "in every City, Town, Village, and Township in Canada," and profits increased from \$5,465.91 to \$12,393.45 in the three years from 1870 to 1873 (Friskney 68).

between the Canadian Methodists and other religious or secular groups in Canada, but also on the international political stage.

No less than other religious and political groups in Canada, the Methodist church was fundamentally preoccupied with its relationship to its American and British counterparts, and in this may lie a clue to the major source of the magazine's motivation in undertaking nationalism. In the second half of the century, the faith based on an experiential individual salvation became one concerned more and more with collective progress. Playing on the church's twin strengths, administration and zeal, one church commentator remarked in the March 1878 issue that:

One of the most marked differences between the former times and the present is that our fathers trusted principally to individual effort, while we place our reliance more on organized action—they were content individually to do their duty, we want to unite our agencies and work in a body—they felt their individual responsibility, we want to astonish the world by our achievements.

(195)

As an example of the ways in which the creation of a Canadian liberal order defies oversimplifications that fix its ideology solely to that of individual self-interest, the statement lends significant support to Jeffrey L. McNairn's use of Antonio Gramsci's statement that "it is utterly false that people only allow themselves to be moved by considerations of self-interest ... *homo faber* cannot be separated from *homo sapiens*" (68-9). The air of self-conscious communal industry in nationalist rhetoric is not unique to Methodism; it pervaded the secular discourse as well. Still, in the pages of the *CMM* the desire to "astonish the world" is fundamentally tied to the church's particular evangelical

conflation of individual salvation with the “needs of society” (Semple 441). The church’s expanding sense of duty spawned a bureaucracy that began to blur the boundaries between individual salvation and national progress. As Methodism’s investment in the framework of social power grew, so too did the complexities of its balancing act between the future direction of the country and the responsibility to shepherd the individual to personal salvation.

The major difference between the contemporary secular liberal discourse and the Methodist approach to progress was the church’s continuation with a rhetorical appeal that was still based in the metaphysical, in a time when many liberal Protestants were turning to the rationalism of historical or sociological arguments to defend the manifest destiny implied by Scripture (Cook 100). In addition, the union of provinces under Confederation and the limited independence gained by responsible government left the new country divided among a minority who, Annexationists or not, wished for complete emancipation from British rule, a majority who made it clear that Canada’s place was “naturally” one of colonial fealty and obligation, and those who vacillated between the two poles. Moreover, these divisions occurred in the context of another conflict between advocates of federal statehood on one hand and supporters of provincial rights on the other. The Methodists remained loyalists, and their liberalism was in keeping with secular liberal ideology that placed its faith in the British constitutional system as the ideal model for the new country. They were cautiously pro-reform but rigidly anti-radical (Cook 20).

Still, the *CMM*’s “cherished purpose” was inextricably bound to pre-existing forms, despite espousing a “distinctly national flavour [... and] an indigenous growth [that was] ... racy of the soil.” The country may have attained some legislative rights that motivated

self-formulation, but clearly, its cultural future, according to the Methodist periodical, depended on a meaning of “indigenous” that is carefully farmed from British traditions, not one allowed to develop on its own in the “wilds” of the New World. Given the contemporary debate surrounding the 1859 publication of Darwin’s *The Origin of the Species*, it is not surprising that a religious organization would locate meaning this way, on the side of cultivated determinism, rather than chaotic nature.¹²

Thus, the degree to which native literature was indigenous was qualified somewhat by the word “racy,” which stops short of a thoroughgoing naturalism in its connotations. Besides containing a perhaps unconscious but ironic reference to Darwinism, the botanical metaphor also points to the belief that art in all its forms—and especially Literature—necessarily contains the essential seed of its nation, and is simultaneously the spiritual property of that nation and the gate-keeper between those who share its “native” condition and those who do not. To be “racy of the soil” implies a set of climatic and environmental conditions combining for unique genesis, a thriving hardiness and instinct for survival even in difficult circumstances. As a metaphor for “young country” movements inspired to seek varying degrees of freedom from their Imperial ties, the term was especially useful for its implication of autochthonous growth, not transplantation. Importantly, the vegetable imagery avoids the suggestion of violent (American) revolution, and implies a continued kinship with the original tree (Britain) that promises adaptation, not revolution. The fact that it was used by various other proponents of

¹² Methodism seems to have an entrenched association with biological metaphors. David Hempton’s chapter “Competition and Symbiosis” reinforces the growth of the church in North America with evolutionary principles. This may be due in part to church’s association with a visceral, vigorous faith, but also points to the profound internalization by church members—and perhaps church historians, as well— of the liberal concepts regarding natural laws and universal order.

nationalism outside of the pages of the *CMM*, like Thomas D'Arcy McGee and later Charles G.D. Roberts (Bentley 69), shows that the term lends itself well to a country struggling to create a mythic identity based on the trials of uniting large territories and a small population, by fostering the dual impression of individuals "racy" of their local soil and at the same time "native" only to one.

iii. Our Writers

The second part of the magazine's mission statement narrows the focus from the creation of a native literature to its agent, the author. Typically for the period, masculine pronouns are the only form of reference for the subject, and the statement that follows frames the artist's task in terms of aesthetic obligation to the nation. Of note is the way that "savour" replaces "racy" as the patriotic metaphor and transforms the botanical reference to an experiential event.

He may restrict himself rigidly to native themes, and attain supreme excellence; but the native savour is not dependent upon the autochthonous [or indigenous] character of the theme. On the other hand, supreme excellence is hardly to be obtained, however broad one be in choice of subject, if the finished work be found wanting in this native savour ... To bring the point home, our writers may take subjects from Canadian story, and scenes from Canadian landscape, yet miss, for reasons inherent in themselves, the savour of the soil, which is the salt to keep one's product from decay. Others again, may concern themselves little about the birthplace of their theme, yet breathe in every line the flavour of Canadian feelings ... Wheresoever their imaginations wander, they carry with them the savour of the soil. (251-2)

In conceiving of a literature that would carry Canada to a fully realized nationhood, the magazine requires its creative children to walk a fine line. The criteria that meet the “savour of the soil” are practically unintelligible, but between imagination and heritage, the passage implies there is an aesthetic utopia where a sublime standard may be met. The fact that excellence by itself is not enough, but that there is another, loftier summit to be reached before a work can find critical acceptance sets a tone for literature that is as forbidding as it is (presumably) meant to be inspiring.

The passage’s central point addresses the now-infamous conundrum of Canadian literature: Is national literature necessarily tied to the local? Before Confederation, the literature produced in the assembly of communities divided between Upper and Lower Canada, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia reflected specific regional concerns, a condition that suggests that authors’ preoccupations are necessarily tied to their immediate physical and political circumstances. W.H. New writes that after Confederation the desire to speak and write as a member of a new nation began to change the ways in which regional writers in the press identified themselves:

The terminus date 1867 illustrates the distinction; it is a year not of great publications but of political Confederation—an event which would not immediately transform literature but which would entirely change the political context within which **colonial** and subsequently **Canadian** writers wrote. (25, emphasis his)

So theoretically at least, the key to achieving “supreme excellence” while staying true to the “flavour” of nationalism lay in the creation of literature that could transcend its specific regional or temporal conditions by appealing to universal themes adapted to

recognizable forms. Radical formal or intellectual innovation, obviously, was no more part of the Methodist plan for literature than it was for their politics, nor were narratives that prioritized the subject's location within specific contexts—a position curiously incongruous with the Methodist emphasis on personal experience. The paragraph is full of the language of enthusiasm, but pervasively vague, and unconsciously supports the common contemporary criticism that, given the choice, Methodist arguments invariably returned to tried-and-true emotionalism at the expense of clarity (Clark 151). Despite the permissiveness of statements urging imaginations to wander “wheresoever,” there is not much that would suggest that the *CMM* would endorse anything in their native literature that did not come well salted.

The directive is, however, evidence of the level of literacy and sophistication the *CMM* expected from its readership. Obfuscation aside, the *CMM* was confident enough of its base to gauge its readership's political and cultural temper accurately. By basing distribution from Toronto and Halifax, the magazine made its debut in urban centres of commerce and education, and appealed to readers and potential authors from those cultural pools. From this arises a theory of Canadian literature that from the *CMM*'s perspective probably did not need much further elucidation, resting as it does on a point of similarity, not difference, between the readers it hoped to gain and the writers it hoped to foster within the connexional cocoon.

iv. Unfold Our Principles

The third important concept in this first mission statement is one that frames the project for native literature within the context of Methodist doctrine. This is the *raison*

d'être of native literature, and perhaps of nationalism, for the church. The following passage, again from the first issue of January 1875, elucidates the function of the literary within the church's greater moral and spiritual undertaking:

But the culture of literature in itself is not our object. That is only a means to an end. Unless literature is instinct with high moral principles it will be a curse rather than a blessing. It is a literature loyal to Methodism and to truth that we wish to develop—a literature that shall unfold our principles, defend our doctrines and illustrate our polity. Yet it is not a narrow, sectarian literature that we seek to educe. Methodist bigotry is the worst kind of bigotry, because it is so opposed to the genius of Methodism's free institutions. Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; these things we shall endeavour to promote and to urge upon the hearts and consciences of our readers. (76)

That the value of literature lay in its morality was an established belief across the cultural and aesthetic discourses of the time. In the exertion of this morality, literature—especially fiction—was seen as having an almost supernatural power over character. Hearts and minds were malleable clay upon which the word, once apprehended, left an indelible impression that was primarily regulatory or permissive in nature and function. Though the idea that Literature was distinguished from other forms of print by the moral effect it had its on its readers is unique to neither Methodism nor to literary scholarship, the passage does raise an interesting paradox when considered in the context of the statement before it. Ideally, it implies that Methodist readers would become Methodist writers, yet how

would the church ensure that the education necessary to produce those same writers did not result in their worldly corruption by the wrong kind of literary models and at the same time avoid narrow sectarianism? Gerson examines the effect this belief was to have on literary production, by forcing those of a mind to guide the reading public to consider

... whether the reading and writing of fiction were acceptable activities, especially in a society preoccupied with the task of nationmaking; whether Canada could supply the elements required by the genre of the novel; and whether writers and readers could agree upon definitions of romance and realism and an appropriate balance of the two. (x)

For the Methodists, coming as they did from an inherently press- and pamphlet-oriented culture, the question may not have been whether or not reading and writing were acceptable, but in what ways the right kind of reading needed to be protected, and how best to educate readers so that they would recognize the difference between “right reading” and the subtleties of perverse print. By extension, the sanctification of literature would ensure the continued sanctity of scripture, and become, in turn, an endeavour that was “twice-blest” in the implications it contained for both the publisher and the reader. In keeping with the passages that precede it, this one contains within it a meaningful subtext about the divine Methodist character, one that was prone, in its growing prestige and consolidating power, to “bigotry.”

The self-reflexivity evidenced by this admission points to the endurance of a dissenting conscience in a Canadian religious institution that was increasingly evolving away from its eighteenth-century egalitarian roots. At this time, a workable version of a nation that was Methodist in thought and character must have seemed a very real and

tantalizing possibility for the Book Committee shepherding the *CMM*. By inserting itself in the discourse of nationalism, Methodism specifically sought to establish itself as the spiritual guide in the project for a national soul. But just as the specific belonging engendered in the discourses of secular patriotism requires that someone, somewhere, be excluded, so too does religious patriotism risk assuming a Calvinistic determinism that is inherently exclusionary.

Moreover, the moral principle necessary to distinguish literature from perverse print is a continuation of the basic problem of Protestant doctrine—that in appropriating his own salvation by communing with God through text, the individual must be equipped to deal with the evils of temptation that present themselves in the same guise. Sin is always potentiated in undisciplined reading. Heather Murray notes that “[a] distinctively ‘literary’ education may be the underpinning for moral and mental growth, or it may provide a pretext for promiscuous reading whose utility is suspect” (66). Thus, by printing literature that would reinforce the “lovely ... honest ... just ... [and of] good report” the magazine would teach by example. The “high moral principle” integral to a native literature that could transcend the act of reading to become an act of devotion, would have as its heart a unique blend of romance and restraint; romance, to effect an emotionally moving response similar to epiphany, and restraint, to trust that the reader, in the privacy of the reading act, would follow the rules set out for him by a regulating aesthetic.

The swell of literature of every sort being produced at the time of Confederation hazarded pure literature’s innate ability to sustain the “power of good” in the development of a national character. To combat this, the *CMM* was to utilize several of the genres common to literature in the nineteenth century as battlefields for the sanctification of the

moral ideal. Among them, history, travel writing, poetry and short stories were to feature prominently in its pages. Along with biographies, book reviews, “religious intelligence” or mission reports, current events, and illustrations, the newest entry on the periodical market was an influential element in the tradition, not just of uplifting literature, but of its twin and complement, “right reading.”

The *CMM* incorporated a style of picturesque landscape and architectural descriptions, exploration or travel literature installments in journal form, regular biographical installments, as well as standard book reviews, that utilized the literary forms outlined by New as being distinctive of the colonial perception of the relationship to the parent country. As well, despite the Methodist emphasis on a classless spiritual community and individual improvement, the magazine, in its serialized fictions, often reflects attitudes of settlement life and linguistic boundary markers that reinforce traditionally British class divisions. What is so interesting about the *CMM*’s adaptation of these specifically colonial genres is the way they become, over the course of the *CMM*’s first thirteen years, the assertion of the colony as the centre, or parent viewpoint, in “discovering” Europe and the Asian continents for its readership.

III. Writing History

A useful place to begin a study of the way that “native” and “literature” function in the context of the *CMM* is in the version of Canadian history that emerges from its pages. Part of the development of a nation’s soul relies on a sense of shared past, ancestry that can withstand the friction of competing contemporary tensions and thus form bonds that pre-date and underpin the present. As an element of the collective character, patriotism is as much about memory as it is about the future, and, for the *CMM*, the national memory of British North America had the added dimension of being roughly chronologically equivalent to Methodist church history.

By being so closely connected to recent history, Methodism seems tailor-made for the New World—or at least, that is the opinion of the *CMM*. The history project was therefore an important one on two accounts. First, the production of an attractive historical narrative implies invitation, potentially strengthening church membership by increasing the social, political and economic base from which the group operates. Methodism was not just an “open” religious society in a passive sense, but one that actively sought expansion, and thus colonial history re-worked in the church’s favour reinforced Methodism as the right path for the new concept of the Canadian citizen. Especially, the historical appeal to those citizens likely to comprise the elite class of society, its political and intellectual leaders, meant that a strong Methodist voice in the future affairs of the country was more likely. Second, a historical account that emphasizes some points of view over others sets clear

guidelines for the future. Unacceptable practices, perceived threats, and incompatible values can be retroactively identified and dispatched in the historical narrative.¹³

The argument for the importance of a shared history rests on the idea that people striving to make meaning of apparently random life events very often find comfort in a sense of continuity. After all, as Benedict Anderson asks “[W]ho experiences *their* child’s conception and birth without dimly apprehending a combined connectedness, fortuity, and fatality in a language of ‘continuity’?” (11, emphasis his). The existence of an historical narrative is proof of continuity, reassuring for an individual challenged to locate herself in an enigmatic universe. Besides comfort, history provides the illusion of order, and, by extension, control, over time: “The idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogenous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history” (Anderson 26). When one extends the importance of solidity for group survival, it becomes clear that the historical account must be perceived as being beyond the reach of uncertainty before it can write the intangible into the collective imagination.

As a secular genre history writing was one of the most popular forms of literary activity in Canada during the century and became even more so post-Confederation (Gerson 94). Unlike much current historiography, which examines the assumptions of authority underpinning the relationship of subject to narrative, history writing in the nineteenth century frequently engaged in positive myth-construction and did not

¹³ Before these two actions can be undertaken, however, there is a process of historical bond-making that must occur. Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities* is a key source informing much of the current understanding of the process and function of nationalism in human society, and his consideration of how history is indispensable to the formation of nations is the basis for understanding the first genre studied in this thesis.

necessarily prioritize objectivity in its discourse. History writing was produced across the spectrum of Canadian social contexts, and appeared in a variety of forms across a variety of documents, official and unofficial. The quality of the writing produced varied widely. In his essay “Historical Writing in Canada to 1920,” Kenneth N. Windsor notes that before Confederation “the English-speaking community in Canada could not take much satisfaction in the achievement of its historians” (208), citing both the calibre of writing and the reliability of narrative as main sources of weakness within the genre. The prevailing opinion about the reasons for these failings, in contemporary as well as current accounts, blames a preoccupation with political controversy over the production and consumption of scholarly historical work (Windsor 208).

Exceptions do exist, however, and they are notable both for the serious body of data they represent and for their significance within the formation of a Canadian canon. These were histories, which, though inextricably immersed in the spirit of romantic discovery of their age, strove to provide judicious accounts of the events and cultural circumstances of British North America.¹⁴ Much of the credibility ascribed to these serious works is based on the empirical evidence derived from statistical records. The treatment of the material bears a strong resemblance to the travel literature popular at the time, but there is also evidence that their authors “valued fair-mindedness, clarity of expression, and honesty--for these were some of the virtues they were trying to inculcate” (Windsor 212). The

¹⁴ Among these works are Thomas Chandler Haliburton’s *An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia* (1829), Peter Fisher’s *Sketches of New Brunswick* [...] (1825), Robert Cooney’s 1832 *A Compendious History of the Northern Part of the Province of New Brunswick and of the District of Gaspé in Lower Canada* (1832), George Heriot’s *The History of Canada from its first Discovery; Comprehending an Account of the Original Settlement of the Colony of Louisiana* (1804) and William Smith’s *History of Canada* (1826).

responsibility to “tell the truth” was motivated by a common resentment of American accounts of the War of 1812, and engendered a feeling, among nineteenth-century Canadian historians, that theirs was a virtuous struggle against misrepresentation (Windsor 213). Though the principles of Canadian historians lay in the “truth,” it was a version characterized by a particular political point of view. Windsor observes that:

most of the historians writing in the second half of the nineteenth century in Canada, whether serious or popular in their intentions, possessed that attitude to the historical process which is usually described as the Whig interpretation of history. For those of this sensibility, history is the contemplation of freedom broadening down from precedent to precedent towards an agreeable present. They believe in democracy and in social and economic progress. Their history is Protestant in sympathy and secular in application. It divides individuals, institutions, and movements into those that are for and those that are against progress. This approach ... frequently results in misplaced emphasis, vast oversimplifications, and superficial judgments. (215)

Indeed, but for the secular application, Windsor might have been writing his description with the *CMM* in mind. He makes clear the important role Protestantism was to play in the metacontexts of the emerging liberal order framework. In the pages of the magazine, the complex discourses and competing cultural claims that influenced North American settlement by Europeans were refined by the specifically Methodist interpretations of good and evil. Given the ever-expanding role the church took on in the education of the country, this popular sectarian interpretation of historical events carried substantial implications for Canadian patriotic identification well into the twentieth century.

In keeping with the “Whig interpretation” of history, the *CMM* had no shortage of material from which to choose excerpts, even though those sources did not always coincide with contemporary liberal ideology. William Kirby’s 1859 *The U.E.: A Tale of Upper Canada* has been called the first “imaginative literature of the loyalist experience,” and in 1880 Egerton Ryerson published his own two-volume history that blended myth with fact and influenced patriotic writing for decades to come (MacDonald 187). The need to provide credible local educational material coexisted with a reverence for scripture as the “truth” that prevented either from being treated separately. Thus, though the histories published in the *CMM* were not difficult to understand, exactly what their readers were being taught to “remember” in the pages of the magazine revolves around a core of highly abstracted ideals.

The promise of a fresh start in the colonial woods seemed to carry an obligation to begin a new historical narrative that, while based on the mythic traditions of Imperial history, did not simply transfer them wholesale to the new world. Methodism, it should be remembered, was above all an “expansive enterprise” (Semple 441), one that was constantly seeking growth, improvement, and, increasingly, religious hegemony. However, the timeframe of the opportunity for the creation of an inspiring version of the events leading up to Confederation that was unique and specifically favourable to the Methodist point of view was limited, given the competition from other sources, and the sheer number and nature of other current events vying for attention on the national stage. For Canadian Methodist elders, Confederation meant, in part, that at least some of the disparate threads of both church and British North American secular history during the last two centuries could be cast off. By the time of the *CMM*’s first issue, the Methodist

project in English Canada had changed from one of connexional survival to a play for a religious majority.

The periodical format itself was to influence some of the aspects of the historical writing that would reach the *CMM*'s readers. Too brief to allow for extended treatises, the magazine format tends to condensation, not detail. Second, despite the ambitions of its first issue's mission statement, the magazine needed to appeal to a broad range of reader interests and abilities. Sales were dependent on popular topics and the *CMM* was never so idealistic that it forgot its financial responsibilities. Third and most important, though the *CMM* was not a conversion tract in the style of Wesleyan pamphlets, it was written with a very specific parish reader in mind. John Wesley was a dissenter, but never a radical, and the *CMM* bore the responsibility of the prudent, law-abiding church leadership in all that it published. In the history designed for the readers of the *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, there could be only one myth (though its editors would not have called it so) that was the foundation for the history that could in turn carry the nation forward.

The church's prototype text was, of course, the Bible, and the pressure the editors of the *CMM* felt to conceive a Canadian literature resulted in the emergence of a body of historical literature that was strongly allegorical. It was not an uncommon trope in nineteenth-century literature, but in a February 1875 article, "The Dominion of Canada, by George M. Meacham," allegory was carried to fervent extremes:

In the order of Divine providence, the New World was long hidden from the Old. But in the fullness of time, when the press was getting ready for its mission, and a language was becoming perfected for the Anglo-Saxon race, when religion was about to escape the thralldom [sic] of "the Church" and the

toiling and oppressed millions of the Old World needed an asylum from tyranny, and a country where they might construct a government and frame laws in harmony with the inalienable rights of man, God raised up a man and girt him for his special work of discovering the Western world. (127)

The passage's language and syntax frame European colonization in terms of the Old Testament's *The Book of Exodus*. Inflecting the scriptural viewpoint of the printing press's mission and "perfected" language were a number of factors unique to the Methodist connexion in Canada: the church's struggle against the Church of England; the evolution of the Wesleyan fascination with the power of emotional appeal in print during a time of perceived political-coming-of-age; and the dual notions of the Methodist hero--the folksy itinerant on the one hand, and the warrior intellectual on the other.

Most importantly, however, the Methodist version of the history of Canada depends on the transformation of the New World into a recovery of Eden. By treating the historical narrative as the apocryphal corollary to the Bible, the Methodist use of the transformational power of "the brotherhood of the believer" instills the principle of manifest destiny in the burgeoning middle classes that comprised their English Canadian parishes. Thus, the "special work of discovery" soon evolves into a promise of greatness:

One of the greatest powers of the world has here grown up, and by its side is our young nationality, of very recent origin and settlement, promising to occupy no inconsiderable place in future history. ... Now, what a country we have extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific! (127)

In their competition with other religious and secular institutions for founding rights to the national soul, the *CMM* emphasizes the possibility of a Canadian utopia that will rival its

southern neighbour for greatness. It is a version of utopia that is specifically liberal and humanist. The brotherhood of the believer rests on the individual as its agent, as does the promise of greatness for the “young nationality.” The collective pronouns speak directly to the reader, who is included by the reading act into a communal territory that far exceeds the boundaries of regionalism.

Accordingly, Meacham’s essay continues with the Methodist account of Canadian history.

At last, in 1760, Canada became British. In the century which has since elapsed, how wonderful the changes which have passed upon the primeval and well-nigh unbroken forest! A good portion of this time was the Era of the Axe; and quickly following the wielders of the axe, came the bearers of the Saddlebags ... It is a matter of great rejoicing that we have reached all this—not after a mighty struggle against Imperial power, not by the battle of the warrior with confused noise and garments rolled in blood, but as the free gift of that gracious lady, who no less as maiden, wife and mother, than in her more public character as Queen, has won the admiration, respect, reverence and homage, and in her widowhood the deepest sympathy of her subjects by all the virtues which far too rarely adorn the thrones of empire. (132)

The passage is a powerful example of the literary ideology behind the Methodist approach to the construction of a Canadian historical narrative, and contains several of the most prevalent themes in the liberal humanist tradition in Canadian history. The success of the country is attributed to the Queen, the idealized figurehead of the British Empire. Significantly, the commendable moral character of the Queen as an individual is

distinguished from pointed criticism of the corrupt monarchical institution. The “great rejoicing” and reference to the notions of sympathy, virtue, and respect recall Windsor’s observation about the core values of Whig liberalism. In the same article, there are allusions to Dante and Milton that continue to frame the origins of British North America in the rhetoric of classic British literary nationalism:

It is not long since the people of this country had enough to do to keep the wolf from the door. Miles of dense wood lay between nearest neighbors. Travellers had difficulty in finding their way by the blaze of the trees, over tangled underbrush and fallen trees, the only well-defined road being that running east and west along the front. At length political questions arose, but they were purely local. The foundations of government began to be laid. The spirit of order began to brood over chaos, whence in due time came constitutional liberty and executive responsibility. (128)

The recreation of the pre-settled world with Milton’s pre-lapserian universe, “where thou, dove-like, brood upon the abyss,” is linked with the development and extension of colonial progress as part of the natural order, all things occurring within a divine order that will define and structure chaos. The Miltonic tone is significant as well for the connections it makes between subject and loyalty. Like Milton, Meacham resists tyrannical monarchy but emphasizes the “admiration, respect, reverence and homage” due a monarch who rules without tyranny. In the comparison evoked between the American and British Revolutions, the praise given the American republic is kept in check by the continual reminder of the necessary adherence to the monarchical tradition embodied by the sympathetic and virtuous Victoria.

In its description of the Dantesque wilderness—the woods aflame, the pilgrim’s quest, epic suffering and loneliness—there is the recollection of hell made navigable only by the purest of the faithful. Soon, however, the focus turns to contemporary political issues. In particular, the Methodist attitude to the Church of England in Canada and the Rebellion of 1837 frame the shift:

The young community was found to have a will and passions and individuality of its own. The young bear would not be licked into the shape its rulers wished it to take; and as it came to know its own strength, the domination of a favoured Church was thrown off, the yoke of “the Family compact” broken, imperial interference in purely colonial affairs checked, until nothing was left to prevent self-government and free action. And we are bound on a career in which we shall endeavour to transmit to generations yet unborn, that large heritage of British freedom and British Protestantism which we have received from those above and before us. (128)

Immersed in experiential philosophy, Methodist rhetoric describes its form of nationalism in the same tone as its “discovery”—that of natural rights, endurance under duress, and religious inheritance. By referring to the country as a “young bear,” the magazine takes an early place in the discursive strategies utilizing animal metaphors to symbolize the national spirit. Like the botanical metaphor, it is a technique that glorifies the describer while at the same time taming the referent, likening the natural landscape to something already consigned to symbolic references only and memorialized in the land’s “wild” past.

Besides the overt reference to the evils of the Family Compact that were perceived to be in direct opposition to the rights of the colonist, here the masculine imagos of a Methodist native literature recall the themes that, according to Daniel Coleman, shape the literature of the nineteenth century: the Loyalist Brother, the Scottish Orphan, and the Muscular Christian. In *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada*, Coleman describes the function of these central characters as “a project of literary, among other forms of cultural, endeavours and ... the central organizing problematic of this endeavour has been the formulation and elaboration of a specific form of whiteness based on a British model of civility” (5). Besides being unique to Canada, Coleman writes that these tropes combine to create the “allegory of fraternity and schisms between white North America ... while its [literature] produces that which it must have, its own mythology” (47). Coleman observes that in the very pursuit of literary “purity,” the critical call for the mythical “supreme excellence” desires that which is itself unnatural in the complicated and contradictory human experience.

As a concept, the idea of “purity” in nineteenth-century conceptions of culture has much to do with the origins of the liberal order in British North America after 1840, which attempts to formulate a society that preserves the perceived purity of the British constitutional model (Ducharme and Constant 18) and at the same time generates a new model of civilized white utopia. Because liberal ideology was so deeply equated with truth and “common sense” in Victorian Canada, no one would have been more surprised (and probably indignant) than W. H. Withrow to hear his cherished purpose described in terms of a “problematic” white civility. For Withrow and his intellectual contemporaries, there was nothing more natural than the idea of an achievable purity, and the self-

sacrifices which it required were ultimately for the benefit of all humankind, in what Coleman calls the “sincere racism” that understood civility as a positive ideal (9).

In another sense, the passage’s epic style just as easily evokes specific heroes of Methodist history in British North America, in a reinforcement of the Methodist penchant for elder-celebration that was patterned on the tradition of Wesley’s cult status. In any case, the metaphorical centre for the nationalist project, the image of the devout and capable pacifist pioneer / warrior preacher became a pervasive symbol of nineteenth-century social progress and religious adaptation in the framework of Canadian nationalism in the pages of the *CMM*.

Stylistically, this is writing that thrills, rhetoric that draws back the curtain of history with dramatic timing perfected on revival stages and in camp-meeting tents. Its emotional effect is undeniable. Backed by the entitlement of manifest destiny, the narrative perspective is focused on the “rightness” of timing that is itself a central concept in the Methodist religious conversion experience. For Methodist revivals and meetings, timing was everything—in the art of oratory, in the recognition of potential conversion, and at the moment of salvation. It is a small step from the belief that the church has been specially chosen to the idea that an entire society has, in the discovery of the “New World,” been given what was always destined by Providence to belong to them. The reference to the continent as having been “hidden” from the Europeans not only reinforces this idea, but supports the belief that there is a natural superiority in the Anglo-Saxon language and race “above and before us” which would be revealed to the rest of the world in the fullness of God’s time.

As well, timing is an important factor for the magazine within the context of church history in Canada. In its project to transform Methodist culture from what had been primarily an oral culture to one that prioritized literacy and education, the church's vision for the *CMM* relied on the creation of a nation of readers whose sober intellectualism would lead the way in determining the national character. In the second half of the nineteenth century, Methodism moved away from its evangelical roots to a religious organization that increasingly modeled the bourgeoisie values of Victorian society. The church came to view itself as a national institution at "very heart of Canadian life" and its leaders felt a deep commitment to both their members' individual conditions and the moral state of Canadian society as a whole (Semple 334). Thus, even though the church's roots lay in the classless society where all were theoretically equal, by the time of the *CMM* the church:

increasingly defined its goals and social values according to the attitudes of an upwardly mobile middle class and in particular by a small group of wealthy commercial and industrial leaders who hoped to create a nation in their own image and who were willing to spend their resources to see it achieved. (Semple 334)

The pre-Confederation enthusiasm of the brotherhood of the believer was being transformed, post-Confederation, by a class ethic that prioritized prudence over fervour. As well, in keeping with the revelation of the printed word's "special work" and the emergence of a perfectly just government, one "in harmony" with the natural rights of white English Protestants, there is the recollection of the sectarian bitterness that marks the history of relations between the Methodist and Anglican Churches. By mimicking the

flight from Egypt in the Old Testament, the passage sets the Methodist efforts in the New World on the same stage as the Israelites, persecuted but ultimately triumphant. The “toiling and oppressed millions” would be rightly construed by the average contemporary reader to mean himself and his immediate neighbours, for, as will be discussed later, the Methodist version of the ideal Canadian was one which was homogenous with a specific race and class. Canada has become the promised land, and in the language of faith and freedom the conviction that the Methodist settlers had a religious entitlement to this waiting paradise overrides any dissenting view.

As such, the passages are a prime example of Anderson’s observations on the relationship between the formation of “sacred” texts and the “conviction that languages ... were ... the personal property of quite specific groups—their daily speakers and readers—and moreover that these groups, imagined communities, were entitled to their autonomous place in a fraternity of equals” (84). For the readers and writers who met in the pages of the *CMM*, language perfected for the Methodist mission in the New World entitled church members to a special relationship with each other, a relationship that was mediated by their equally privileged relationship with print culture. This may explain, in part, the obscurity of literary excellence when described by terms, like “savour” and “racy,” that resist clear definition but preserve the mystery and sanctity of their subject. There is the perpetuation of the tradition of belief begun in the Wesleyan press, and maintained in the Canadian Methodist Publishing House, that Methodism had a special vocation for, and divinely inspired facility with the printed word. The *CMM* shows an early appreciation for the fact that the production and consumption of sacred native literature depends in large part on the practices of right reading to guarantee correct

interpretation. Throughout its publication cycle it was to pay special attention to the formation of its message in an attempt to control reception.

Besides the religious zeal for manifest destiny, Meacham's article contains several other themes that are significant for their persistent representation of nationalism in the pages of the magazine. First, there is the contradictory attitude toward Britain. Simultaneously the tyrant from which God's chosen elect must flee, and the origins of a proud Canadian heritage, Britain occupies two positions in the discourse of a native literature. Though neither position is fixed, it is possible to see an attempt to distinguish them by the editorial use of negative connotations attached to Imperial terminology versus the positive metonymic and metaphorical references based on Victoria and Britain. In this separation of empire and nation, the magazine initiates a thematic dichotomy that recurs throughout the *CMM*, and is indicative of the profound difficulty the Methodist church had in separating the theological idea of the individual as a child of God and the political idea of Canada as the child of England. The expression of devotion to the first was invariably bound up with duty to the second, but the confusion with which it is expressed is indicative of a deep-seated ambivalence.

By explicitly naming "imperial interference" and the "yoke of the family compact" the essay alludes to two of the major frictions chafing Canadian Methodists: the perceived aggression of colonial policy and the British Wesleyan Church from the outside, and the presence of Church of England Toryism in the figure of that nemesis of Canadian Methodists (and Scottish Presbyterians) everywhere, Bishop Strachan, on the inside. Ever since Egerton Ryerson's response to Strachan's pillorying of Methodism was published in *The Colonial Advocate* (May 11, 1826), the rallying point for Canadian Methodists had

been a resentment of the tyranny of tradition they perceived in Anglicanism. One gets a clear sense of the competitiveness with which the religious interests vying for dominance in the nationalist discourse engaged by the language used. At the same time, the church had proven unable to survive in Canada without the intercession of English Wesleyans to administer and unify the increasingly fractious sects, and national membership continued to lag behind both the Church of England and Presbyterian Church (Clark 206).

Part of the passage's vacillation about Britain takes place in the description, however veiled, of its southern neighbour as "[o]ne of the greatest powers of the world ... here grown up." Again, however, it is a compliment with an undercurrent, made clear by the disapproval of the revolutionaries in the section that follows it. The ambivalence that shapes Canadian-British relations is repeated in the periodical's construction of Canadian-American relations. Though the *CMM* does not explore its love / hate attitude to the United States, in the following excerpt from *Canada First* (1871), William Foster develops a theory about Canadian nationalist feeling relative to American patriotism:

A young country is peculiarly sensitive to outside criticism. ... Our cousins across the lines, with all their self-esteem and resources, and strength, smarted under the lash of a foreign press; so that Canadians, with fewer pretensions, might be excused for displaying somewhat of a similar weakness. ... We find also, some ground of complaint in that disregard of the tie of kinship and the bond of common allegiance, which leads so many British travelers and writers to lavish their compliments on the United States and their satire on Canada. Time and again comparisons have been made to our prejudice in respect of progress. Time and again we have been lectured on our bubbling and seething

loyalty, and charged with an inclination to sponge on the Imperial exchequer.

... Those who so glibly utter the reproach forget what it is they are striking at.

The citizen of the United States has a flag of his own and a nationality of his own—the Canadian has ever had to look abroad for his. For years British policy isolated the Provinces, to prevent their absorption in the neighbouring Republic, and in doing so stunted the growth of a native national sentiment. “ (36)

Wallace’s characterization of Canadian loyalty to Britain as “bubbling and seething” underlines the complex and often contradictory terms in which the *CMM* perceived Canada’s relationship to the Empire. Wallace’s observations do not separate the concepts of “Britain” from “Empire” in the way that the Methodist history does, and are an astute comment on the economic interests and political conditions at work in the contemporary formation of national identity. In particular, his point that Imperial policy resulted in isolation and fragmentation among the colonies is supported, in the *CMM*, by the project to unify the post-Confederation provinces with literature. Among the specific kinds and types of historical writing chosen to do the work of unification, the narrative of the exemplary individual plays a key role.

IV. Biography

In conjunction with the discovery narrative, biography occupies a significant place in the creation of community through history writing. In the laudable individual, much could be concretized that remained nebulous in abstract forms. For the *CMM*, biography played a key role in shoring up parish faith, creating role models, and defending its territory by erecting print monuments.

In each issue, the *CMM* featured a biographical entry based on a member (invariably male) of the emergent Methodist elite in Canada. Beginning in 1879, Withrow wrote a series of biographies of “Great Preachers, Ancient and Modern” that featured both greater and lesser-known members of the clergy. These exemplary tales emphasize spirituality lived in the world, hardships overcome through perseverance and prudence, and, ultimately, the reward of earthly acclaim. It was a practice in keeping with the church’s increasing legitimization in the decorous middle classes, and one that bridged the sometimes tenuous relations between the bureaucratic elite of the church and the laity by connecting them through the individual. In its growing respectability, Canadian Methodism, in particular, prided itself over its less-sophisticated American counterparts, and in this, Methodist preachers were the standard-bearers for the newly bourgeoisie congregation. As S.D. Clark writes in *Church and Sect in Canada*:

The saddle-bag preacher was giving way to the preacher with some learning and of polished manners, and the practice of holding religious services in any sort of place was gradually being abandoned as permanent places of worship were erected. Methodism, in short, was adjusting itself, if slowly, to the new conditions of Canadian society where the older-settled communities were

becoming mature and greater attention was being given to such matters as education and the amenities of home life. (218)

Often given the prized first pages, the biographies constructed a platform, not just for (and out of) Methodist leaders, but one that also lead into defensive positions of doctrine and politics. The dissemination of the biographical subject's power can be likened to Jennifer Henderson's explanation of a "strategy that harnesses individual modes of self-government to wider campaigns to govern others" (19). The biographical installment served as more than just monument construction, then; it was also a form of discourse in which the clerical elect and the parishioner connect in the textual and metaphorical body of the subject.

In its fascination with the individual, biography is the print form that perhaps best embodies contemporary liberal philosophy in a literary incarnation. The tradition of according near-godly status to influential elders began with John Wesley and continued with the Ryersons, church leaders at the forefront of a parade of Methodist clergymen who earned recognition in their time as being particularly devout, astute, or gifted in oratory. Along the way, the emphasis remained synchronous with contemporary ideology that saw the individual as the powerful agent of history, not its product. In keeping with this belief, there was a significant relationship between the individual's position as a narrative subject and the corresponding cultural position occupied by the traits revealed in the record, whether factual or embellished. That the biography focuses on a real life tends to presuppose truthfulness to the narrative, a prerequisite for the internalization of the subject's desirable qualities by the reader. As the example of self-discipline, the ideal citizen immortalized in biography becomes the "key to social discipline" (Joyce 174) and

the moral bellwether. Especially within the *CMM*, those subjects that can be made to demonstrate unusual fortitude, faith, or perseverance are given exceptionally detailed coverage. In their living fable, the magazine's subjects offer a glimpse of the possibility that the faithful do indeed lead lives closer to God.

Perhaps the best explanation of the uses of the individual as a historical subject comes from the magazine itself. In May 1876, Rev. George Huestis explains the enduring popularity and importance of biography. It is the exemplar of improvement, he notes, that "awakens within us a spirit of emulation to walk in the footsteps of the pious and useful who have preceded us in the journey of life. As the Scriptures warrant this kind of writing, and human beings require it, it should not be neglected" (452). More importantly, "modern" biography conflates the private life with the public sphere, an extension of the movement, in nineteenth-century religion, to become less about man's relationship to God, and more about man's relationship to man (Cook 4). Huestis notes that through biography "[w]hat was private thus becomes public property; hence all classes of society find reading congenial to their feelings, and adapted to their circumstances" (453). Reading biography, it is clear, is not far removed from the democratizing power of prayer to create a communal tie.

Moreover, the literary experts in the *CMM* thought that biography could be easily patrolled for immorality, based as it was on what was understood to be the "truth." For evaluating this truth, Huestis relies on the "peculiar" characteristics of biblical biography. One such marker of veracity, he writes, is its realism: "[t]here are no highly coloured facts; no exaggerated statements. Faults and failings, as well as virtues ... are impartially related" (453). This belief in the realism of the Bible is the Methodist defense of scripture

in the increasing discourse of secular evolution. It is a statement that should be handled with caution, for its potential to mislead the reader into conflating biblical and secular realism—two very different things, it turns out. Despite the vituperative attacks carried out in contemporary newspapers, where politics were taken personally, the biographer's tone, according to Huestis, should be uncritically positive. Later in the same paragraph, Huestis emphasizes that although biography should be factual, and should focus on the real, not ideal, "[n]or should it find any fault, because failings and errors are passed over in silence, while excellencies alone are exhibited. *It is not always wise to tell the whole truth*" (453, italics mine).

As the one of the first explicit statements of regulatory censorship within the magazine's project for native literature, the case made for narrative management of the "great man" subject signifies a crucial moment in Canadian literary history. The power structure it creates, between those who control the production of culture, and those who receive it in forms that are pre-edited and presented as material realities, are compatible with the formulation of culture as a reciprocal social activity that is as dependent on readerly expectations as it is on editorial practices. The audience pre-conditioned to receive literature suitable to class and station might seem now the result of a antique autocratic system, until one remembers that the *CMM*'s readership were quite as convinced as its editors in the correctness of Huestis's assertion that "[t]he common people require not only a preached Gospel, but they should have also a literature suited to their condition in life" (453).

The idea that one had a station in life was still deeply entrenched in Canadian society, even though more radical social reformers were beginning to criticize the system

producing such mores (Allen 3). Thus, the statement describes a complicit understanding of production and reception that depended on a mutual understanding of class.

Importantly, besides creating a hierarchy of role models, biography justified its literary activities by creating a similarly elevated group, in the demand for, in Huestis's words, "men of ability and leisure to attend to this work, in order that the Church and the world may be benefited by every valuable forthcoming publication" (453). The "work" of literature, to promote moral ideals and inspire emulation, required a special class entitled to privileges befitting their vocation. Nevertheless, the magazine was always mindful of its duty to the parish. To this end, it balanced the concentrated individualism of the biographer with frequent editorial treatises, like this one from August 1876, on "the necessity of community" in which the "magic gift" of the single man, is a "power to influence others," and thus ensure the "co-operation of ... a good army" (175).

Huestis's concluding list of edifying biography is notable for the "honorable women, not a few" he includes. Among them, "the deeply devoted and sainted Mrs. Fletcher, the decided and heavenly-minded ... Hester Ann Rogers ... the eminent holy and humble Ann Cutler ... the intelligent, pure-minded and conscientious Lady Maxwell ... and Mrs. Palmer, the ... living embodiment of holiness" are the "useful females" (453) in the projection of ideal characteristics. More often, if women were mentioned, it was as the helpmate of their husbands. Occasionally they are given equal recognition, as in a two-part February 1876 treatment of Edward and Lydia Ann Jackson by Nathaniel Burwash. Despite Huestis's claim the brevity of the list suggests that female subjects were rare, though they frequently figured as secondary characters in the fictionalized dramas that combined biography and history.

If the biographies in the *CMM* do not evoke a sense of critical balance, they are engaging for the sense they create of characters moving through historical events as agents of destiny, that progress successfully through the world by the exertion of sheer will and virtue. By including the reader in the intimate experiences of another life, biography offers an opportunity that is impossible in actuality—knowledge of another human being’s internal processes—but one which is only accessible through a secondary authority and that prioritizes certain elements by denying others. For the biographical tale to fulfill its “special work” in the *CMM*, then, it must successfully negotiate a three-way symbiotic discourse between the subject, author and reader that relies on (a) the author correctly distinguishing between trivia and the significant in a Methodist version of the subject’s events, and (b) the reader’s ability to transform that account into a meaningfully internalized spiritual concept.

Not only was biography useful for inspiring individuals, it provided a vicarious experience of life and movement among other cultures that, for many of the *CMM*’s readers, simply was not feasible. Travel literature is the other of the *CMM*’s genres that begins with the retelling of removed experience and results in an account with specific moral and social goals that are meant to be incorporated as the reader’s own. Since the reader is entirely dependent on the author’s decisions as the interpreter of the “real” experience, and because of language’s fundamental inability to provide an objective account, the written record discloses as much about the expectations that exist between author and reader as it does about the subject in terms of culture and belief. If this presents a potential problem for the successful reception of the narrative, in its favour is the preexisting church community that helps to bridge the space between reader and author.

V. Travel Writing

The rise of travel writing corresponds to the changing landscape of nineteenth-century social and economic relations. Travel books produced in the period, even those which have Canada as their subjects though they are not “natively” authored, bear the influences of the political and social forces at work in national literary ideologies (Waterston 598-9). Thus, the stresses that existed between romance and realism, for example, in Canadian “high” literature are just as evident in the travel literature of the period, and often less self-consciously.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the growing vogue among the middle class for long-distance journeys by train or steamship resulted in extended tours that could last weeks or even months. Though this form of mobility is directly connected to changing ideas of leisure, referring to it as strictly recreational undermines the importance the travel enterprise had in the production of capital, and the serious implications geographic movement had for class and social mobility within the nationalist construction in post-Confederation Canada. Emerging from the new realm of leisure, the physical act of travel and its literary record result in a “production of mobility ... [that] cannot be understood apart from the modulating flows that characterize the processes (and the transformations) of capitalism during the nineteenth century” (Simpson xxi).

In the pages of the *CMM*, mobility also cannot be understood apart from the entwined context of religious doctrine and capitalism in the second half of the nineteenth century. As the Methodist church in Canada moved more and more into the realm of the middle class, and farther away from its itinerant origins, its distinction from secular

capitalist Canadian society became increasingly blurred. Analogous to the assumption of superiority entailed by the church's moral and social elevation, recreational travel writing in the *CMM* became a way to materialize the survey from above. Two things emerge from this position: one, that the narrator, despite the physical and intellectual changes travel entails, is essentially an unchangeable, complete self; and two, that the main effect of travel is the commodification of culture, no matter how deeply and unconsciously capitalism is buried beneath liberal humanist protestations about the civilizing influence of travel (Simpson 69).

Capitalism, with its self-determinative individualism and liberal emphasis on property, ultimately turns travel into acquisitive action. Methodism, steeped in the idea of salvation as the right of possessive individualism at the heart of liberal philosophy, takes on aspects of commodity exchange or barter systems in its exchange of good works for redemption. For both, the right to "own" an internalized experience takes place within a larger liberal ideological framework, one that seeks to reaffirm the inherent rightness of its own culture against the backdrop of alternatives.

Over the years, the magazine's contributors traveled widely. In the April 1878 issue alone, there are accounts of "A Canadian In Europe," "China and its People," and "Underground Jerusalem." Popular North American landmarks figure predominantly, as do places of historical interest and technological progress. Throughout, the editorial perspective is consistent with the European assumptions about culture and entitlement. In a typical example, the May 1886 essay "Landmarks of History" briefly discusses the coronation etiquette of the French monarchy as a segue to the superiority of British monarchical traditions:

[O]f greater interest to the English reader is the chapel and tomb of Henry VII ... [G]rand and gloomy and blackened by time without, it is all glorious within ... I was kindly accorded permission to stroll through the chapels alone, and for hour after hour I mused amid the mouldering effigies of the kings and queens, and princes and nobles who slumber here. (399)

The author goes on to romanticize Elizabeth and “the beautiful and unhappy Mary Stuart” before returning to the glory of the catacomb:

Beneath these moth-eaten banners and their fading escutcheons and crumbling effigies they keep their solemn state in death. All around were England’s mighty dead, laid to rest in this great Walhalla [sic] of the nation—her warriors, and statesmen; and mightier than they, her kings of thought and literature—the anointed priests and sages and seers of the “Poets’ corner,” in which I stood, who still rule our spirits from their sceptred urns. And I felt that in all this, though a stranger from over-sea, I was not an alien, but that I shared the inheritance in those spirit-stirring memories of the English-speaking race throughout the world ... (399)

The pattern of emphasis in the passage moves from the glorification of the dead to personal participation in a literary and cultural heritage that is significant for its elucidation of Mary Louise Pratt’s term “autoethnography.” In *Imperial Eyes; Travel Writing and Transculturation*, Pratt describes autoethnography as the process by which “colonized subjects undertake to represent themselves in ways that engage with the colonizer’s own terms” (202). Far from finding him- or herself in an alien environment, the Canadian traveler in search of identity directs his gaze backwards through British time

and simultaneously arrives home. By assuming an entitlement to the “shared inheritance,” the individual struggling with a weak colonial identity gains access to the supplementary prosthetic of British heritage.

Other general similarities exist between travel and Methodism that are refined in the pages of the *CMM*. Though the first is active and the second figurative, both are rooted in personal movement and manifest themselves through subjects acting within and through ideological frameworks to which they respond with varying degrees of acceptance and resistance, consciously or subconsciously. Geographic and spiritual movement are preoccupied with searching for revelations of some deeper meaning that is bound to mortal experience, the “need to move” being fundamentally connected to “the need to rise” (Simpson xxv). In the *CMM*, the travelogue’s frequent forays into mysticism are evidence of the search for deep roots in a Canadian identity, one that can negotiate the space between colonial vigor and British civility. Often, the idea of a secure “home” place of security if not advantage is traded for the risks associated with the unknown. Both involve subjecting individuality to forces that symbolically or physically disrupt established habits and redefine personal boundaries in the quest for personal improvement.

In religion, the goal of this upheaval is spiritual rebirth; in travel, a geographical displacement results in a similar experience. Unless the traveler is an immigrant (and in the *CMM* this form of movement only occurred *into* Canada), mobilization away from “home” often entails the re-invigoration of the values, traditions, and beliefs of citizenship (Cresswell 165). For Canadian Methodist nationalism, travel writing, with its focus on the

differences and continuities it finds in other cultures “away,” offers a rich medium for instilling the “home” cultural ideal.

Travel writing took several forms as part of its staple role in the magazine, but the accounts had two predominant narrative voices: “the scholar in the catacomb” or the “civilized Christian.” For the *CMM*’s native literature project, the genre had the double advantage of showcasing desirable writing technique and modeling appropriate cultural interpretations. As well, the articles address the rising number of Canadians born in North America who had no other means to experience “the old country,” the desire of the laity for vicarious missionary experience, and the church’s stress on educational material. Importantly for contemporary travel literature, the average nineteenth-century reader was not conditioned to question the veracity of texts or the authors presented as authorities. First-hand experience was not instinctively privileged over narrative accounts, and so literary travel modeled the “posture and viewpoint proper to socially and culturally sanctioned travelers” (Simpson 71).

i. Anthropological Travel Writing

The social and cultural sanctions produced in the travel literature of the magazine resonated with the church’s theory of the individual’s place in society and the value of vicarious experiential transformation. The forms that transformative moment took led to the development of several kinds of travel literature, distinguished by theme. The first example of the travel genre in the *CMM* falls under the broad category of anthropology, for its concentration on race and culture. In keeping with the church’s emphasis on education, this form of travel was frequently combined with history writing and focused on places of biblical or cultural significance for Christianity. Accordingly, besides

accounts of English and Wesleyan landmarks, there are articles about Palestine and histories of Rome and Greece, in addition to details of Assyrian discoveries and accounts of Norse mythology related to sites of excavated relics. By focusing on historical expeditions, authors discovered cultural landmarks for the reader in an explication of their religious meaning, followed closely by the appropriate liberal humanist interpretation. From 1875 to 1888, the magazine devoted space in every volume to this kind of writing in lengthy articles that gradually become the visual and literary showcase pieces of the magazine. Catacombs, tombs, and shrines to martyrs are popular subjects, and the writing is frequently redolent of the supernatural, as the first paper submitted by the Hon S.L. Shannon in the July 1875 issue, entitled “A Visit to the Catacombs,” shows:

The traveler to the Eternal City, whose mind has been imbued with classical recollections, finds, when he reaches it, a rich treat spread before him ... the Christian traveler recollects that her streets were once travelled by the Apostle of the Gentiles, that her colossal amphitheatre witnessed the martyrdom of the early Christians, and that in every direction there are traces of that great conflict ... between light and darkness (197).

The voluptuous imagery sustains a lavish metaphorical tapestry. The reader is presented with a spectacular sensory experience, one that feminizes the city waiting for its discovery by the traveler, “her” streets and monuments “a rich treat spread before him.” The returning emphasis to a highly spiritual romanticism that links the individual’s experience of travel with an internal transformation is a central theme and repeatedly fixes the reader’s attention on the lingering spiritual presence in historical ruin.

The Methodist prescription for the emotional epiphany combined with pedagogy is consistently applied. The goal was the improvement of the reader, and the forms this improvement takes in the narrative are both overt and subtle. Travel, it is clear, should educate and illuminate, but not change the essential Anglo-Saxon viewpoint or character. For nineteenth-century travelers, finding home communities in strange places added a sense of security in the midst of strangeness, and reinforced home ties while standardizing interpretations of “foreign” customs. Travel is a particularly important component of nationalism, since against the backdrop of the traveler’s observations of cultural difference the elements of the viewing identity are reconsolidated. The “adornment of the mind and the formation of judgment” nurtured by the travel experience were to move the traveler closer to, not further from, the “home” culture (Fussell 39).

As Canada sought to construct an identity that was capable of withstanding international scrutiny, the idea of a sophisticated Canadian became increasingly prevalent in the *CMM*’s travel articles. Later in his article, Shannon abandons his historical feast to point out that the Piazza di Spagna is “where the English travelers most do congregate” (198), thereby enforcing a code of cultural boundaries perpetuated even in vicarious experience. With a system of etiquette modeled on the codes and practices of British manners, the Canadian traveler depicted in the pages of the *CMM* is urbane without being affected, enthusiastic but not unrestrained, and maintains Canadian cultural dignity at all times. However, these “desirable” qualities often reinforce the very bigotry deplored in the magazine’s mission statement. In the May 1886 essay “Landmarks of History,” French culture and history are incidental to a tour of the grandeur of Britain, which is presumably “[o]f greater interest to the English reader” (399). Other, more dramatic

examples of prejudice abound. In “Across the Isthmus” (July 1875), the following passage describes a village in Panama (now The Republic of Panama):

Pigs, dogs and negroes, dwell together on terms of equality; the pigs are either in-doors or wallowing in the mire without, whilst the dogs and the darkies are to the fore ranged in line along the track, the women wearing heavily flounced frocks of limp muslin, off the shoulders and down in the dirt, and the picaninnies naked as they were born. (531)

In contrast to the colonial ethnography that is characteristic of the *CMM*’s Canadian-in-Britain travel writing, this passage provides a description of imperial ethnography that is evocative of the typical attitudes of privileged European North Americans towards non-white cultures. Especially, the article’s suggestion of the depravity of Panamanian women and the objectification of their primitive children is difficult to reconcile with the professed Methodist call, in a *CMM* editorial published exactly a year later in July 1876, for a “community of effort” reliant on the “united labours of all God’s people” (175).

The description of the “Jew of Modern Jerusalem” (October 1888) relies less on bestial analogies and more on economics to identify cultural boundaries. It is a noteworthy description of the way in which the culture under scrutiny is diminished in the present, while the Anglo-Saxon, by comparison, is only improved by time and trial. The subaltern is fixed in a form of historical stasis that makes “him” unequal to the task of shepherding the world into the future. The modern Jew lacks his ancestor’s “proud bearing” but has retained all of the less-desirable traits imagined: “dark skin, hair and beard, keen eyes, especially sharp for a bargain, nose more or less eagle-beaked ... much

given to hair-splitting [in] ... arguments, and driving sharp bargains in trade ... clad in his linen, not always too 'white and clean'" (320).

In the *CMM*, the articles aimed at improvement of the individual through travel were matched in length and frequency only by missionary travel narratives, and the two forms are often combined in serialized accounts spanning several issues. Though a regular series called "Religious and Missionary Intelligence" appeared near the end of almost every issue, its concerns were mostly financial. For descriptions of the cultures and people undertaken on behalf of the Methodist missionary effort to spread Christian perfection on earth, the illustrated narrative was the preferred form.

ii. Missionary narratives

By the 1860s, the Methodist church in Canada had an active and well-regarded missionary branch that was one of its distinguishing features and sources of pride. As part of its principle of expansion, the church's interest in mission work was neither entirely selfless nor wholly evangelical. It was, rather, an organized undertaking that mobilized the church polity and laity in mass projects that reaffirmed their mutual goals. As a nation-making tool, few things cemented Canadianism to Christianity so well as the narrative accounts of the effort to save the godless foreigners from themselves. Mission stories also provided the opportunity for useful proselytizing on the moral, sexual, and religious habits of the other that led to perdition.

Living conditions and hardships encountered by the mission cleric are frequently highlighted in the narratives, and thus the reports assume a curious blend of piety and sensationalism. Curiously, Canadian Aboriginal mission work is featured relatively rarely in the *CMM* despite the church's consistent involvement with First Nations' affairs from

1854 to 1925. In 1878, a third of all Methodists—39, 165 people—in Canada were involved in home missions. There were 44 missions devoted solely to various Aboriginal communities and 24 “frontier” missions in the north and west. By 1905, there were 66 missions to First Nations people, a number reflective of the church’s expansion into British Columbia. The projects employed missionaries, interpreters, and teachers and consumed a good deal of the church’s intellectual and financial resources in their planning and management (Semple 276-8).

As the starting place of its missionary endeavours, the *CMM*’s position regarding Canadian Aboriginal peoples at the centre of the church’s “home missions” was decidedly fixed at a distance that was both one-dimensional and inflexible. In a preamble for the continuation of the glowing record of the advance of European civilization, the entire experience of native North American peoples encountering the European “discovery” of their home is summed up in one brisk, bleak sentence in the very first issue (1875): “But how long and cheerless was the period of struggle with the Indians, which we may well call the Era of the Rifle!” (127). Instead, the majority of the mission narratives concentrate on Japan, India, and the “Friendly Islands” (now the Kingdom of Tonga) and Samoa. A modern critic can speculate that the allure of the other grows proportionately with geographic separation, and that the Canadian home missions were perceived as too immediate and fraught with problematic ambivalence and politics for the magazine to negotiate successfully.

In the May 1885 issue, an article entitled “American Indian Literature” discusses several anthropological studies of the American Indian, but does not, typically for the time, employ a single viewpoint from the people under its dissecting gaze. Instead, the

objectification is made complete by framing the study of the North American Indian in terms of an exercise necessary to complete white “men of culture.” In distinguishing the practices of oral cultures from literate ones, the magazine returns to the oral tradition as an indicator of primitiveness, something to be studied as a curiosity simply on the understanding that their traditions comprise a novel collection of “fables and fireside tales ... regarding the early history of the tribes [and their] unwritten literature” (456). The perspective is not entirely devoid of self-reflexivity. In May 1886, “Among the Eskimos” observes that unprofitable land is the only thing protecting this “barbarous people” from “that process of dispossession and gradual extinction to which most of the weaker races of mankind have been, or are being, subjected [since ...] [t]here is no motive to induce their more powerful neighbours to attempt to supplant them and to crowd them out of existence” (414).

The “Indian problem” did, however, provide opportunities for employment of the best and brightest intellects of the day, in which “the most eloquent of men, and some of the most efficient literary talent” could reveal their special genius with the profitable written word. Though the mission statement claims that “the culture of literature” is not an object of the *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, the evidence in its many mission narratives suggests the opposite may have been true more often than not. Recalling the necessity of biographers for the study of great men, the need for examinations of lesser cultures describes a complete continuum of historical being in the *CMM*, one that began to apply the scientific principle to the study of people and favourably measures the civility of Canadian Christians against more “primitive” peoples.

In keeping with the missionary attitude developed by British Wesleyan Methodists, the erasure of an entire people into a sideline of “progress” is the precursor of the missionary narratives that detail the growing international missionary projects of the Canadian Methodists. The system describes a relationship consisting of superior and inferior cultures, with the latter dependent on the former for salvation, civilization, and reform. It was a cultural outlook that mimicked British patriarchal traditions and reinforced the Methodist self-image in the reflected glory of evangelical work.

Missionary work became the figurehead of the Church’s burgeoning respectability with the Canadian middle classes. Not surprisingly, the language of the mission narrative bears a strong resemblance to the romance of the discovery narrative, with one difference. The goal of interaction with the heathen is conversion, not community. In the *CMM*, racial boundaries are clearly maintained in the missionary literature. Returning to the church’s preoccupation with the authority of language, the magazine notes in January 1876 that “[i]n low states of society, the words used are almost entirely descriptive of subjects” (12). British linguistic superiority was inherited, and one was either of “us,” or in need of guidance and regulation by reason of the metaphorical disability that characterized the purely descriptive language of all “low” races. None of this is new to the scholarly discourse surrounding practices of cultural conversion and assimilation, of course, but to ignore its presence in the pages of the *CMM* would be to overlook a shaping element of the “native” aspect of their project for native literature.

In the 1880s, a growing number of articles began to appear with either India or Japan as their subject. Often abridged and reprinted from other Methodist American or British magazines, articles like one from August 1887 portraying the Anglo-Saxon “universal

mission of colonization and civilization” (171) exhibit the conflation of theology with technology as the progressive ideal: “steam navigation, railroads, magnetic telegraphs, and Christian ideas go with them everywhere” (171). A defence of British imperialism in India written by an American Methodist attacks the “hostile criticism” of the occupation by pointing out that Indian critics were given the newspaper by England, and that England’s presence “checks [the] general disorder” of traditional Indian society. Another article, “Our Indian Empire” (August 1886) observes the exoticism of the country’s women and culture while emphasizing their deliverance by the superior British culture in elaborate illustrations entitled “Indian Widows Rescued From Sutterism by the British Government,” “Mendicant Priest,” or “Parsee Lady and Child.” “Mohammedans” represent a particular devilment to European civilization, since they are “shrewd, designing, fanatical, and powerful ... [and rule] the poor timid aborigines with a rod of iron” (126). As for Hinduism, the same issue deplores the ignorance of idolatry, on which thrive “splendid temples ... to numerous gods ... idols of gold, silver, brass, wood, and stone ... of the most hideous and repulsive form ... [and the] priests, who live in ease and indolence” (126).

Of the Methodist church and the American and Canadian black communities, the *CMM* takes a narrative stance that falls somewhere between missionary regulation and indulgent patron. Canadian Methodism had never really focused on slavery as an issue worthy of its involvement, and the only parish to show a practical concern for former slaves was the New Connexion branch in the Eastern Townships (Semple 123). Even when the numbers of free blacks and escaped slaves supported the creation of a strong and committed connexion called the American African Methodist Episcopal Church in

British North America, the majority of Canadian Methodists were content to remain remote from these denominations, and the black churches were “substantially ignored” (Semple 123).

The paradox this creates lies in the fact that Methodist doctrine was powerfully appealing for marginalized groups far from the centre of nineteenth-century power, especially women, West-African slaves, and the working class (Hempton 131). The reasons for the attraction, Hempton theorizes, are in part due to the church’s evangelical supernaturalism, its anti-bondage rhetoric, and strong social-tie building capability (132-3). Though some slave-owners actively participated in the process of evangelical conversion, Methodism also grew among the southern slave population spontaneously, not as an instrument of social control “imposed from above and from without” (Hempton 133). That the movement should not only survive but flourish in the American South, where its ecstatic spirituality and demonstrative public nature frequently caused anxiety and unease in the white population, has been the subject of much study, though a definitive explanation seems elusive.¹⁵

In September 1876, the magazine did feature a description of “A Negro Methodist Conference” that took place in Washington, D.C. and included participants from West Virginia, Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. Besides the irony that none of the existing Canadian black connexions are mentioned in the text, two things stand out from the *CMM*’s coverage of the event: one, that there is a clear distinction drawn

¹⁵ Research suggests some possible reasons include the innate symbiosis between Methodist doctrine and traditional West African religions; the social benefits of a communal faith in an oppressed population; and the ease with which some aspects of Methodist liturgy and song, rhythm, and language were incorporated into authentic expressions of West African culture (Hempton 134).

between the brand of Methodism practiced by the American black congregation and the white Canadian ministers acting in the role of official and distinguished observers and guests; and two, that race determines innate characteristics and, linked to that, social class. Certainly, the writer thought it was natural that the “impulsive African” (221) was given to ardent demonstrations during the service, and that a “negro could hardly sing out of tune if he wished to” (222). Beyond this, however, there is the suggestion that the form of Methodism being practised was itself more primitive than the faith of the white church, and that it was likely to remain so.

Falling back on language as the foremost indicator of cultural superiority, the *CMM* ran fiction, such as the story “Uncle Mingo” (May 1888), based on the black experience of Methodism that purports to highlight the “touching story of negro fidelity and child-like faith” but in actuality uses dialect to underscore the inferiority of the other. The “garrulous old negro” (253) at the heart of the narrative is the vehicle for dialogue obviously intended to be comic that expresses simple thoughts strung tangentially together. The “negro” used for his incompetence with “correct” language is balanced by the reminder of the dignity of his “inner life” (255), a technique that fosters a tone of benevolent guidance on the part of the nearly silent white respondent in the piece.

It should be noted that the kinds of racial viewpoints appearing in the magazine were not restricted to the Methodist church but are indicative of values common to nineteenth-century conceptions of class and culture. Nevertheless, over the years the *CMM* espoused a version of nationalism that became more and more fixed on race as a factor determining the individual’s progress in society, and the moral guidance that society, in turn, was obligated to provide. The *CMM*’s attitude to race assumed an objective justification for its

moral reasoning, an outgrowth of the progress of science in the secular and religious domains.

iii. Scientific Travel: Archeology and Architecture

As well as its overtly didactic anthropological and missionary travel writing, the *CMM* published other travelogues, both historical and contemporary in focus, that were lighter-hearted and shared a fascination for technological advances, marvels of human ingenuity, and empirical statistics. Behind the interest in ruins and artifacts at the centre of the archeological tour is the search for evidence proving the existence of the places and people described in the Bible. The emphasis on what may be called apocryphal archeology serves to consolidate the authority of the church as the natural inheritor of these sights in the same way that other forms of writing in the Victorian age served to consolidate Imperial interests and authority (Schweizer 3). By positioning the reader in the frame of history, these narratives strengthen the figurative connection of Methodist believers to a larger Protestant tradition. Handsomely illustrated and written in a relatively ecumenical tone, the archeological essays have the narrative point-of-view of a scholarly tourist, one not actually involved in the excavation but capable of providing a summary that explains and contextualizes their science in terms of its religious relevance for Canadian readers. Natural history, meteorology and geology are employed to detail the diverse subject sites, and though the focus is always on verification of the Scripture, the inclusion of science in the journal recognizes the growing importance of empiricism in everyday culture, as well as providing the editors with an opportunity for recovering science as proof of a divinely ordered universe. Archeology, with its emphasis on excavation, is an especially important venue for providing rational proof of the veracity of

Scripture, a project close to the heart of the Methodist church in the mid-nineteenth century.

In the July 1879 issue, “Underground Jerusalem” is a detailed description of the archeological mission undertaken by the Palestine Exploration fund, in hopes of at last providing a “perfect and accurate map of the Holy Land, whereby the whole history of the Bible can be clearly followed and understood for the first time ... It is a work for all ages, and for the whole world” (11). An interest in architecture is evident in the amount of space devoted to descriptions of ancient aqueducts and temples. Indeed, the prevalence of architectural illustrations in the *CMM* addresses the value placed on institutions by the editors, for whom the elaborate building becomes symbolic of Canada’s civilization and the dominance of the church in the social landscape.

Equal to an interest in ancient buildings and construction methods, the *CMM* was perennially preoccupied with its “home churches.” Though the articles devoted to church buildings are not, strictly speaking, travel literature, they share similarities with that genre. In creating a kind of map to the church’s progressive civility and achievement in the New World, the narratives assume a specular position not unlike the tone taken by the explorer of classic ruins and the modern sightseer. In the later decades of the century the construction of churches that were progressively grand became indicative of Methodism’s standing in Canadian society. As a result, the church as an architectural and aesthetic symbol became a regular subject in the *CMM*. Descriptions were often accompanied by illustrations and even floor plans that are interesting for the way that they trace the progress of Methodist places of worship from simple country buildings, or even outdoor stages, to elaborate and imposing monuments.

In Ontario especially, the construction of churches and related frontispiece articles in the *CMM* corresponded to the rise of middle-class Methodism. Outside of the *CMM*, the March 2, 1870 issue of the *Observer* approvingly notes that the status and prestige gained by the exceptional parishioners who could afford to support these projects asserted the “increasing spirit among the brethren and friends of the church, of liberality and regard for the interests of Zion” (qtd. in Semple 336). Built in the Gothic tradition, the churches, and their centrality in the *CMM*, recollect all of the tenets so central to the rising liberal order in Canada’s geographic and spiritual centre, Ontario. Discussing the reasons for the medieval revival in mid-Victorian Protestant Ontario church architecture, William Westfall notes that the Gothic style is not just a matter of taste, but is reflective of a “general social and religious movement” (134). The Gothic influence in Ontario after 1840 is indicative of “the determination of religion to proclaim anew a world of spiritual values at the very time when these values were in danger of being lost” (Westfall 135).¹⁶ The order, reason, progress and tasteful display of wealth symbolized in enormous stone and brick churches like Toronto’s Metropolitan or Sherbourne Street churches, Montreal’s St. James, the Dominion in Ottawa, or the Centenary in Hamilton (Semple 337) are advertised in the similarly high culture of the magazine. The attention drawn to the good taste and fine detail in the material celebration of the church buildings disseminates a form of religious culture that is closely linked to a principal goal of liberalism in Canada after 1840, the production of a nation that values the outward display of inner ascension.

¹⁶ Westfall observes that before 1840, neo-classicism dominated church architecture in Ontario. For a thorough explanation of the medieval revival, see Chapter Five of *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario*.

Interestingly, despite what these churches suggest, the majority of urban Methodists were probably not as well connected to the upper middle class and struggled to maintain a foothold on its lower economic and social rungs. As late as 1890, Toronto Methodists were concentrated in areas that fell somewhere between the “industrial furnace and the shaded suburban street” (Goheen 188). That Methodism presented images that sometimes were contradicted by reality indicates the ready adaptation of the liberal order message to the specific goals and aims of its proponents. No doubt the tremendous Canadian edifices were meant to inspire awe, pride, religious and civic allegiance, and spiritual (if not material) ambition in the lower classes, but they were also a very concrete reminder of the strata of Canadian Methodist society by whom they were built. The paradox that is represented by the *CMM*’s fascination with church architecture—that cultural and spiritual improvement are synonymous with material prosperity, but prosperity alone should not be sufficient for salvation—mirrors the one occurring in the church’s theology in the second half of the century.

iv. Sightseeing

In conjunction with their fascination with historical touring, the *CMM*’s editors devoted equal space to contemporary travel. A series of “picturesques” detail the landscape, and at the same time create a vogue for empirical detail in geographic features and technological marvels. This class of travel writing showcases major natural or technological landmarks across North America and Australia, and in a generally more relaxed style than the awed respectfulness that characterizes the narrative style of the archeological and historical journeys.

As the magazine matured, narratives about travel to places of contemporary interest gradually replaced travel articles with historical themes. Among the travel articles those printed from January-June 1886 are characteristic of the genre. American and Canadian destinations figure roughly equally, and sometimes together. The American travel spectacle was a frequent theme in *CMM*, and points to the ongoing ambivalence of Canada to that country. Perhaps due in some part to a desire to emulate the fervent brand of American patriotism that was seen to be a prerequisite for Canadian nationalism at heart but not in manifestation, the magazine frequently featured articles about spectacular American natural landmarks like the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, and the Appalachian and Blue Ridge Mountain ranges. Illustrations were now sophisticated and numerous, and travel essays, especially, usually showcased several examples.

The magazine's favourite Canadian destinations were, predictably, those in the church's heartland and the country's political centre, Ontario. In October 1881, Niagara Falls is described in terms of rapturous awe:

Great fragments of the seething cataract—not mere drops, but what seem to be solid *chunks* of water, rent from the main body—are hurled down with catapult-like violence, upon our heads. The air is filled with blinding spray. It drives into our eyes, our ears, and our mouth, if we open it. A deep thunderous roar shakes the solid rock, and upward gusts of wind almost lift one from his feet. A dim light struggles through the translucent veil. All communication is by pantomime—no voice could by any possibility be heard—and often the guide has almost to carry his charge through the seething abyss. [...] Pressing on, we cross galleries fastened to the face of the cliff, and bridges springing from rock

to rock; and clambering over huge boulders, gradually emerge again to the light of day. (292)

Of special relevance in this form of travel writing is the internalization of a visual panorama and the concomitant relationship between the picturesque and the sublime. The term “picturesque” carries with it late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century implications of scenery distinguished by carefully cultivated wildernesses, a trope that recollects the *CMM*’s “savour of the soil” in its literary vision. When describing human environments in its travel writing, the *CMM* frequently employs the picturesque to emphasize the “naturalness” of human activity on the landscape. However, though part of the magazine’s picturesque series, the excerpt above better encapsulates an equal devotion to the terrible sublime that occurs in the contemporary description of nature as yet untouched by human endeavour.

In an effort to manage the uncontrollable aspect of the sublime, spectacular natural features are incorporated by the traveler as possessions “dedicated to the nation as a playground for all time ... highly-favoured haunt[s] among the hills [that] will be the Mecca of many millions of pleasure-pilgrims in the generations yet to come” (17). Thus the danger of a too-powerful, enigmatic nature is reduced to a recreational pilgrimage, albeit a pilgrimage that is a confused mix of secular and religious goals. By viewing the natural world as the inheritance of humanity, the liberal belief in the entitlement and privilege of society to the control and use of that natural world is reinforced. Congruent with this world-view is the impression that “primitive” cultures are likewise obliged to give way to progress.

The *CMM*'s contemporary travel writing was equally interested in the journey as it was in the destination. These accounts are interesting, not just for the window of insight they provide into the attractions and popular spots of their time, but also for their growing focus on the modes and practical aspects of travel. By the 1880s, the train was a recurring image in the *CMM*, as in the June 1886 essay, "Wonderland and Beyond: Notes of a Trip to the Pacific Coast, Embracing the Grand Tour of the Yellowstone National Park," by John T. Moore:

"All aboard!" shouted the conductor, and, as I mentally add "to the Pacific!" the Canadian Pacific train moves out of the Union Station in our good city of Toronto. Now we are speeding past cosy suburban homes; and the fair metropolis beside Ontario is fast receding. Thoughts are present of the tender leave-takings—leave-takings should always be tender—and turning towards the vanishing spires the last lingering look of a lover, I realize that we are off at last ... By the Credit Valley to St. Thomas, and on by the Canada southern to Detroit, we traverse the Midlothian of Ontario ... Well may the sons of Canada feel proud of their goodly heritage. Never were the vistas of my native land more radiant than to-day. (18)

As a symbol of progress, the train is "the affirmation of Canada's ascendance to nationhood" (Flynn 56). Canadian travel literature in the latter half of the century frequently features the railway and, as Kevin Flynn observes, certain thematic tendencies characterize the narratives. The writing "pay[s] homage to the great men of England, Canada and the CPR; ...comment[s] on Canada's climate; ...catalogue[s] resources

region by region ... and, fittingly, ...express[es] their faith in CPR technology” (Flynn 37).

The blissful description of Ontario is notable for the traveler’s identification with the city as his “lover” and its heartland with Sir Walter Scott’s mythic pastoral novel. The time of the tourist had arrived, and with it, the goal to see as many of the man-made marvels that created the vogue for industrial tourism. Later in the same essay, the traveler marvels over “the sublime audacity that dared to run a railroad through such a region,” a sentiment that indicates the boundless optimism that associated science with progress in the nineteenth century.

The fascination with rail travel was paralleled by an admiration of the industrialization of the landscape, or the description of natural capital in agrarian potential, mineral wealth, or water. In February 1887, the travelogue “At the Antipodes” catalogues the resources of New South Wales as an agrarian utopia “rich in agricultural possibilities and products,” with “great sheep-grazing districts ... and rivers of huge length” (100). The encroachment of human activity in natural resources is recorded in the January 1886 issue as the train passenger exclaims with delight over “the salt-works, the marble, the iron works, the coal-mines that one notices ... which long trains of freight-cars, respectfully waiting on sidings to let him pass, will not allow him to forget” (23). It is a vision of the harvesting of nature long before environmental assessments and ecological impacts, an uncritical admiration for “the energy and skill that clasped the Virginias in iron bands” (24).

Besides giving more evidence of the fascination for empirical detail that had inserted itself into common thought, the accounts, again from January 1886, have about them the

early flavour of “World’s Biggest” claims, boasting variously of “one of the longest [tunnels] in the United States” (24); “One of the most beautiful panoramic views” (25); and “the highest grade elevation of the entire line” (25).¹⁷ Along with railway specifications, natural elevation statistics and survey measurements contribute to this effect. As the number and quality of the illustrations in the magazine increased in the 1880s, so did explications of the engineering sciences. Paragraphs explaining how trains ascended escarpments were accompanied by mathematical diagrams (1887, 103) that superimpose order on the awful natural scenery: “It takes one a little time to get over the sensation of horrified surprise, before one can begin to calculate and compare distances” (105).

Ultimately, the *CMM*’s contemporary travel writing functions to identify the stamp of human ingenuity on the landscape as the means to civilized progress. In addressing the appeal of Methodism’s highly social organization to the pioneer in British North America, Neil Semple points out that in the pioneer experience, the force and threat posed by the omnipresent natural environment led to feelings of insignificance and a longing for control over what was often perceived as a defiant and hostile landscape (54). Extending this early experience to the latter half of the nineteenth century, then, represents on the one hand a residual anxiety about the ability of settlers to subdue the wilderness, and on the other a growing investment in the practical sciences as the manifestation of divine favour for human industry (Semple 274).

¹⁷ The magazine’s fascination with technological and scientific marvels echoes The Great Exhibition of 1851. Held in Britain, the fifteen-day spectacle was the first of its kind, and showcased the achievements of the “civilized” world. Impressive totemic collections of machinery and instruments placed alongside carefully planned “natural” displays exhibited the triumph of human ingenuity and progress over raw resources.

About the Victorian approach to the picturesque, Pratt writes that there are three main elements that characterize the genre:

The landscape is estheticized. The sight is seen as a painting and the description is ordered in terms of background, foreground and symmetries between foam-flecked water and mist-flecked hills [...] the esthetic pleasure of the sight singlehandedly constitutes the value and significance of the journey. Second, density of meaning in the passage is sought. The landscape is represented as extremely rich in material and semantic substance. Third, the relation of mastery predicated between seer and the seen [...results in] a rhetoric of presence. (205)

The importance of the natural environment in the Canadian consciousness cannot be underestimated, but neither should it be oversimplified. In keeping with “the density of meaning” that Pratt sees in the literature of scenery, the *CMM*’s fascination for natural features contains within it the country’s pioneer history and the optimism of a nation poised on the brink of international power. The physical world becomes a rich allegory for the kingdom of heaven on earth, and Canada, with its variety of impressive and potentially enriching resources, embodies ideals that are both aesthetic and practical.

VI. From the Parishioner to the Reader: Literature in the *CMM*

i. Methodist Poetry

More than any other genre, poetry is fundamentally tied to the *CMM*'s literary project and, in indeed, to the Methodist church itself. In their original form, the lyric hymns written by Charles Wesley and edited for publication by John Wesley form the cornerstone of Methodist worship and the poetry that was to appear in the *CMM*. From the church's beginnings, Methodist hymns signal a departure from the hymns that characterize the Church of England services. Rather than occupying a set position, as they did in the relatively inflexible structure of Anglican services, hymns were present at every stage and in every form of Methodist proceeding, but were especially popular at "love feasts" and at camp meetings for the powerful emotional bonds produced in the moment of choral ecstasy. By utilizing the lyric as the basis for cementing the "oceanic feeling" that Freud felt embodies the special appeal of religious membership (251-60), hymns further intensified the emotional component of worship so important to the Methodist service. The Methodist gift for song reinforced church doctrine and came to be viewed with pride as the unique contribution of the church to Christianity generally (Armstrong 76-7).

Song has the useful advantage in worship of eliding class and educational difference. The hymns were memorable, easy to follow, and did not require advanced literacy, if any. In addition to their egalitarian inclusiveness, the hymns reinforced the influential tie to John Wesley, whose personal myth assumed near-messianic proportions in the nineteenth

century. Charles composed between 6,500 and 9,000 alone,¹⁸ though it was John who controlled their editing, publication, and practice, even issuing directions on how they should be sung (Armstrong 77). Four collections of hymns published by the Wesley brothers in the eighteenth century made up the standard opus from which John Wesley, in 1742, chose 525 for the authoritative *Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists* (Armstrong 77).

As part of their purpose, John Wesley believed that in hymns could be found all of the important truths of Methodism “whether speculative or practical” (Armstrong 77). Although diverse in scope and content, some central themes appear in the foundational collection. Communion is a frequent subject, as is the universality of God’s love and forgiveness. The hymns are highly emotional, and personalize the divine by a morbid perseveration on blood, loss, death, and grief. Critics frequently charged the hymns with indecency because they incited their congregations to a form of ecstasy that bordered on profanity and masochism.¹⁹

In British North America before 1860, the hymns assumed a central role in the Methodist revival camps. Typically, many of the colonial settlers present at outdoor meetings in the first decades of the century were not Methodists, or even motivated by spirituality. The promise of excitement in the revival meeting and a respite from the

¹⁸ Estimates about the actual number of hymns composed vary from 6,500 (Friskney) to more than 9,000 (Semple 11).

¹⁹ Armstrong notes Leigh Hunt and E.P. Thompson separately. In fact, in *The Making of the English Working Class* Thompson used one of Hunt’s essays, “An Attempt to Shew the Folly and Danger of Methodism” (1808) to emphasize an undercurrent in Methodist rhetoric that fetishized death and sex, often simultaneously, “in the language of bride and bridegroom impatient for the wedding-night” (Hunt qtd. in Thompson 374). In the same passage Thompson goes on to quote William Edward Hartpole Lecky’s description of Methodism as an “appalling system of religious terrorism, one ... fitted to unhinge a tottering intellect and to darken and embitter a sensitive nature.”

loneliness and hardship of everyday life were often enough to draw huge audiences from the surrounding communities. Lured by a desire for entertainment and companionship of the opposite sex, people participated enthusiastically in activities that had enormous social appeal. Song, especially, offered the promise of emotional catharsis and at the same time exerted a psychological pressure to extend the emotional high to a conversion commitment. The same criticisms began to appear, however, that had dogged the church from its earliest days.

Despite the official doctrinal stance handed down from the British connexion, that bizarre behaviour, wailing, speaking in tongues, and physical “fits” during particularly fervent moments were to be accepted as the manifestation of the divine spirit in the body, colonial Methodist leaders were not unmindful that the credibility of the church was undermined by the behaviours that were suggestive of fanaticism. Semple notes that in 1832 Egerton Ryerson suggested a policy for British North America whereby “ungoverned passions” would be “immediately corrected” in order that “unintelligible noise [would be replaced by ...] ardent (not fiery) ... zeal ... settled and prevailing faith, [and] more rational and sound conversions” (133).

As a consequence, in Canada the loosely disciplined enthusiasms of the “love feast” began to undergo restrictions that increasingly structured and regulated the associated practices into prescribed forms. The salvation of the individual was still, theologically at least, the foremost tenet of the church, but the necessity of maintaining social credibility and acceptance in public realms outside of the immediate connexional structure led to significant transformations in the ways that individual experience was expressed. By Confederation and the time of the *CMM*, Canadian Methodist poetry had become as much

about ordering the transcendent emotion as it was about inspiring it (Semple 133), a shift that delimits the enthusiastic orality of the hymn tradition from the sober propriety of print verse.

Accordingly, in 1887 the *CMM* published an essay on William Cullen Bryant that praises his poetic restraint. Against the “throbbing” emotionalism of Longfellow, and the “fire” of Whittier, Bryant’s capacity for “self-possession” and the absence of “religious enthusiasm” makes a laudatory reading experience, without a “word that is irreverent,” a “profane” figure, or a “low” allusion (162). Bryant’s classicism and love of nature parallel Wordsworth’s, the article says, but in his dispassionate approach and formal control the *CMM* finds the answer to the dangers of ecstatic excess. Especially, Bryant’s work is held up as the antidote to two of the most pernicious poetic sensationalists, Swinburne and Wilde, “who think that poetry holds a license to pour out filth.” Though the article does not make clear exactly what it is about the work of these two that constitutes “filth,” it is not difficult to speculate. Probably, the irreverence of Wilde and the general air of decadence that clung to Swinburne were its sources.

In constructing the “literary,” the *CMM* transformed the hymn in form, reception, and practice so that it became synonymous with poetry. Like most intellectuals of the day, Withrow (and by extension, the church elders in Canada) believed that poetry was at the highest end of the literary spectrum, and novel writing at the lowest. It must have seemed a heaven-sent indicator of divine favour for their literary undertakings that such a wealth of poetic resource was already at hand, waiting only for the transfer to the page from the hymnal. Indeed, Withrow’s essays on poetry offer the evidence of an attempt to

aestheticize what could be potentially construed as unsophisticated in reference to traditions of Methodist hymnary:

The careful reading of hymns in public service is a subject to which, in passing and by way of parenthesis, attention may be turned. Between the pulpit and the pew there is a close bond of sympathy ... the intense personality of Wesleyan hymnody cannot be overlooked ... The grand simplicity of Wesleyan hymnody is in harmony with its intense personality, in words of the utmost plainness and simplicity, strains of thought and feeling, rapt and elevated, find fitting expression—words so plain that a child ... can ... use them, and thoughts so lofty and comprehensive that an archangel might speak them. (May 1875, 408)

Using the hymn, Withrow continues to describe the ideal Methodist literary standard in terms that merge the complex intellectual and emotional interplay of poetics into an intense simplicity. By emphasizing a concept with such dichotomous connotations, the poetic ideal in the project of native Canadian literature clearly responds to the tradition of romanticism in Canadian poetry, with one significant difference. Where the individual at the centre of secular Victorian romantic poetry is often struggling against the ambivalence of being in an enigmatic universe, the centre of the Methodist sublime is an unquestioning faith in its “grand simplicity.” The sublime is the “bond of sympathy” between the pulpit and pew, created to promote admiration and reverence, not to generate critical inquiry into its processes.

In formulating this theory of the sublime, the *CMM* borrows from British neo-Classicist and Romantic traditions as well as the American transcendentalist movement. When it came to publishing poetry, the *CMM* prized verse for its moral qualities rather

than its nationality, and, not surprisingly, found many sources of inspirational mysticism in Tennyson, Whittier, Longfellow, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and Christina Rossetti, although this was gradually balanced by contributions from celebrated Canadian poets like Archibald Lampman and Charles G.D. Roberts. The contradiction, that the *CMM* at once criticizes and valorizes its mystic poets, is in accord with the tension between discipline and enthusiasm that the magazine continually struggled with in its definition of the literary.

True to the hymnal instructions outlined by John Wesley, the *CMM* published a great deal of material meant to be read in conjunction with the actual poems published in its pages. In book reviews, poetic biographies, and formal treatises, the *CMM* developed a body of extra-textual analysis that continually elaborated on poetry, both in a general, historical sense and as the heart of contemporary nationalist literature. From this body of material a unique theory of poetics begins to emerge that is based in equal parts on Canadian Methodist doctrine and patriotism.

As always, the *CMM*'s theory of poetics was grounded in the mandate for "right reading," a concept progressively synonymous with right writing. In one of the clearest explanations to appear in the *CMM* about the distinction between practical language and the literary, in March 1875 Gervais Holmes wrote:

The verse of the poet, the well-chosen words of the orator, the sanctified eloquence of the preacher are each and all of them too often treated as if they were very agreeable to listen to—like the "lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument"—but only word after all, a sound, "a voice and nothing else." Of still less esteem are the words of many a

carelessly read book, and the daily flow of those which are uttered in the ordinary intercourse of life ... it is the purpose of these present words, which aim to be *right*, and therefore convincing, to show that the articulate voices of the world are not without signification, that there is power behind, or rather *in* all of them when rightly used; and that is only the abuse or misapplication of words that renders them vain and unmeaning. (198-99)

Language, the passage makes clear, exists sacrosanct somewhere outside of humanity's use. Perfect language is perfect signification,²⁰ and words are the reflection of God's expression. Practical speech has its own, lesser sphere, one that is entirely removed from the special purpose of literature and poetry. This lesser language, which tellingly includes recreational novels and the "misapplication" of language (occurring, perhaps, when one speaks "above" one's natural station or class) poses a threat to the ideal form. In its misinterpretations and general ignorance, everyday speech moves its users further away from the true meaning of words rightly used, while the proper understanding of language reveals its special meaning—a concept very much like Methodist conversion, in its special vision for a life devoted to achieving earthly perfection.

Once language's inviolable nature has been established, it becomes necessary for the *CMM* to explain how the special meanings revealed by "right reading" are manifested, or how the lesson will bear upon reality. In doing so, the *CMM* articulates some of the core values at the heart of nineteenth-century post-Confederation Canadian liberal philosophy. Describing the universal virtues and their corresponding rewards understood to be

²⁰ It is important to note the distinction between the use of signification in the passage as opposed to the Saussurian meaning now commonly ascribed to the term. Holmes refers to the power inherent in a divinely-inspired language to guide human life to godliness.

referred to by all immortal poetry, “Lessons from Gareth and Lynnette” (April 1875) concludes:

Success is the great object we desire, in whatever sphere we move. As we stand, looking out into the future, brightly before us glow the prizes of the world. We would be rich, conspicuous; we would stand side by side with the scholars, the orators, the statesmen, the commercial princes, who have vindicated their claim to a place in the world’s memory. ...the books we read that have done the most for the education of the race, the poems that inspire us to noble deeds of chivalry, the sermons that take hold of the fibre of our thought, are the offspring of labour, whose record would surprise those who believe in the afflatus of inspired moments. (353)

Like the ideal reader, the magazine worked hard to inspire a new generation of ideal writers. In a review from 1876, Samuel James Watson is commended for his “true poetical spirit—the keen, quick sympathy, the musical ear, the artistic touch, without which a man may write verses, but not poetry” (284-6). If this seems a difficult distinction for modern readers to understand, it was probably no clearer at the time of publication.

The difficulty of the Methodist conception of poetry versus mere “verse” is that in the stress the *CMM* places on the necessary innateness of true poetic genius, the magazine makes very little headway in defining what technical components separately distinguish excellence. Though it is clear that effort is required, no specific standards are established. The result is an approach to poetic criticism that consistently sidesteps substantial intellectual engagement in favour of emotional response. In the following February 1881

poetry review of *Tennyson's Ballads and Other Poems*, Withrow's enthusiasm for the laureate foregoes analysis in favour of idolatry:

A new volume of poems from the laureate is an important literary event. Some captious critics say that he has lost the spell of his earlier lute. We find no sign of it in these ballads. They are as sweet and tender, or as strong and grand, as any he ever wrote ... that "stir the pulses like the blast of the clarion" evoke pathos that "will bring tears to may an eye" or carry "martial fire" with lines as vivid as lightning flashes on a stormy night. (163)

Withrow's criticism is hard to sound, and especially when he is dealing with "laureates" he can be frustratingly unwilling to engage lest he disturb his readers' preference "to enjoy the fragrance of the flowers rather than have them dissected and analysed" (166).

As the *CMM*'s guiding opinion, Withrow's reluctance to enter into poetic analysis may have its origins in the skepticism of the day, in which the church, defending its doctrines from an increasingly secular scientific world, seemed forced to rely more and more on the authority of aesthetic language to assert what reason could not. By insisting that the purest form of language, poetry, remain free from critical intellectualism, the *CMM* betrays doubts about its ability to withstand skeptical inquiry. Occasionally, though, essays, like this one from May 1875, undertook analysis of aspects of the lyric form:

Variety of metre is a marked feature of Wesley's hymns. A comparison with the compositions of any other hymn-writer will make this clear at a glance. The critical and practical value of this variety is in the harmony subsisting between thought and expression. They fully exemplify the acknowledged canon of lyrical literature; "each stanza should be a poetical tune played down to the last

note.” They have pre-eminently the excellence which Isaac Taylor deemed essential to good hymns, “rhythm, rhyme and music.” (456)

Despite their appeal to “variety of metre” the periodical’s emphasis on content over form tends to be reflected in poetry that is unremarkably uniform rather than innovative. This is in direct contrast to the school of Confederation poets, for whom literature’s evaluative criteria rested largely on technical aspects of form and style. Though somewhat predated by the *CMM*, the group known as the Confederation Poets were sharp critics of what they considered the excuse given inferior craftsmanship by moral convention, and in their association with the idea of native literature and Canadian nationalism, it is worth comparing their poetic theories to those adopted by the *CMM*.

In their common poetic bonds of theme, form, and technique, Charles G. D. Roberts, Bliss Carman, Archibald Lampman, William Wilfred Campbell and Duncan Campbell Scott, as well as Frederick George Scott and E. Pauline Johnson, remain a primary influence in the formation of what is commonly accepted as a distinctly Canadian “school” of poetry and prose literature. Together, their emphasis on technical excellence and workmanship (Bentley 5) seems to parallel the *CMM*’s similarly “excellent” goals for literature; but the visions diverge in the execution of what actually comprised the criteria of excellence.

The *CMM*’s attitude that a native literature would foster native character is in direct contradiction to Charles G.D. Roberts’s view that literature was an effect, not a cause, of a national character.²¹ In other ways, however, the consensus endorsed by the

²¹ Quoted in Bentley, Roberts wrote: The literature of a people, if genuinely a national product, is of necessity shaped by the national character. It is the effect, not the cause, of the national character. In its turn, however, when once set in motion with the nation’s

Confederation “brotherhood” (Bentley 8) was not dissimilar to the *CMM*’s poetic theory on several important fronts. Both felt that literature ought not be limited by regionalism and should strive to shake off the cruder aspects of colonialism that persisted in the national image (Bentley 12), and that the best examples were the result of innate genius, not perseverance.

From 1880-1884, the Young Canada movement had a dramatic impact on secular Canadian poetry. Among the Confederation poets, there was a growing belief, which found its voice in the assorted editorials of Joseph Edmund Collins, in the essential connection between poetry and politics (Bentley 26-6). Canadian poetry was seen as a prophylaxis against annexation to the United States (Bentley 92), a map to the creation of an ideal citizenry (Bentley 97), and the wellspring of sustenance for a national literature that would create nationalism and in turn be elevated to even greater peaks of literary achievement.

In its increasingly political formations, however, nationalist poetry as it was conceived of in the late 1880s diverged more and more from the Methodist ideal. As the guiding voice of British North American Methodism regarding political affairs, Egerton Ryerson made the church’s position clear. Methodists, he repeatedly wrote, were to protect and exercise their constitutional rights, but at the same time were to guard “conscientiously [...and] carefully ... against a political party spirit [that could be...]

force behind it, it exerts an almost incalculable influence upon the direction of the nation’s aims, upon the mode in which the national character takes expression. This it continues to do, so long as its connection with the springs of national life is full and vital. The ideal, surely, of a national literature, is that it shall be the most perfect expression in written words of the best of the nation’s thought and feeling. The ideal of national politics, speaking broadly, is that it shall be the most effective expression in act and deed of the best national thought and aspiration. (109)

detrimental to our own religious prosperity and the general tranquility and advancement of the church” (Semple 90).

So, the discussions of lyric poetry that appeared in the *CMM* remained, like the Methodist hymnal, an evaluation of the quality of the emotional event first. In the spontaneous overflow of emotion that so typically (and too glibly) describes romanticism, the original Methodist lyrics that appear in the *CMM* are notable for their focus on felt response. It was, however, an illusion of spontaneity that was belied by a general adherence to regular symmetry in line and stanza. Carefully planned, the *CMM*’s devotion to poetry in simple language fit for every reader did not evolve into an interrogation of the complexities of metaphysical existence.

In considering the emphasis repeatedly placed by Methodist poetry on a “bond of sympathy,” it is worth keeping track of the two threads of meaning implied by “sympathy.” On the one hand, it represents an aesthetic facility for language and metre. On the other, the term is invested with overtones of religious significance, especially for the individual as a conduit for the divine, a concept that has important implications for nineteenth-century Canadian Methodist nationalism. Like lyric excellence, the ideal patriotic qualities were innately present, waiting only to be developed by the proper forms of literature. In a poetic analogy, the highest state of being in the new nation would not be determined from social realities, but would instead continuously gauge its own worth by the emotional effect that it produced. In defending its poetic canon, the magazine adopts a defensive posture that discourages too close an inquiry into the more difficult aspects of nationalism, as well. Poetry that focuses on Acadian, French or Roman Catholic social

and political life in Canada is notably absent from the *CMM*, as is poetry that identifies with regional folklore or the immigrant's experience.

By elevating poetry above the rest of print, the lyric was removed several more steps from the more vulgar associations of camp and revival—the very naturalness by which Methodism had so profited. In effect changing what was primarily an exuberant aural performance to one that was subdued (in group readings) or even silent, the *CMM* moved the hymn back into private space for contemplative consideration. It seems a contradiction for the church that established itself as the community of the believer, but it is one in keeping with the *CMM*'s quest to appease an increasing middle-class liberalism that was becoming a majority parish voice.

It was not always so. In his study of “Lake Methodism,” Jasper Cragwall explores the disparities between “low” Methodist Romanticism and “high romantic argument” (4). Arguing that Methodism's roots among the vulgar poor and the working class resulted in a form of romanticism that resulted in “boisterous apocalypses of ecstatic inspiration” that were seen as a “toxic eruption” among high romantics, Cragwall's astute analysis of the uneasy relationship between British Methodist poetry and the “Lake Methodists” Southey, Wordsworth and Coleridge, contributes valuable insights into the transformation of romantic poetry that occurred across class and culture (4).

It is an interpretation that extends itself to an analysis of the nineteenth-century Canadian Methodist romanticism in periodical poetry. Alongside the laureates, the magazine published innumerable short lyrics by amateur poets and devoted significant space in every issue to lyric poems. If the technical quality of this poetry is occasionally questionable, its prevailing sentiment is not, especially when the nation is its subject. In

this paen to Canada, printed in April 1876, the thumping pentameters are forcibly attached to a utilitarian rhyme scheme that suggests its aesthetic “high emprise” was rooted in exuberance, and not unduly exercised by the abstract intellectual problems associated with the literary psychology of contemporary high romanticism:

O Nation, young and fair, and strong! Arise
 To the full stature of thy greatness now!
 Thy glorious destiny doth thee endow
 With high prerogative. Before thee lies
 A future full of promise. Oh! Be wise!
 Be great in all things good, and haste to sow
 The Present with rich germs from which may grow
 Sublime results and noble, high emprise.
 Oh! Be it hence thy mission to advance
 The destinies of man, exalt the race,
 And teach down-trodden nations through the expanse
 Of the round earth to rise above their base
 And low estate, love Freedom's holy cause,
 And give to all men just and equal laws.
 Oh! Let us plant in the fresh virgin earth
 Of this new world, a scion of that tree
 Beneath whose shade our fathers dwelt, a free
 And noble nation—of heroic birth. (412)

Again, the focal point for the poetic conceit is the nineteenth-century liberal conceptions of race, progress and civility. Although the poem shares universal themes like Canadian destiny, freedom, and pride in the supremacy of the British tradition with the Confederation poets, its childish form and simple morality are anathematic to that group's poetic mission. By privileging technical complexity, Roberts, Carman, Lampman and Scott crafted poems that reflected the interpenetration of nature and cosmopolitan experience in the development of Canadian patriotism. Their poetry appealed to "lay" readers but was designed for appreciation by a refined elite that had already at hand the capacity for literary discernment and appreciation.

The *CMM*'s mission for poetry had other, more elemental tasks. The magazine effected the transformation from parishioner to reader by performing in its publication a frequent repetition of the key themes of church service that instilled these ideals into its readership. The pedagogical importance of the short lyrics that appeared in every issue cannot be underestimated for their ability to educate and inspire. Though the focus on the individual continued to remain one which extolled the three Protestant virtues most important to a nineteenth-century framework—temperance, thrift, and industry—a great deal of the lyric's value to the Methodist press lay in its ability to incorporate active patriotism as a characteristic essential for the completion of the individual.

ii. Fiction

Despite its belief in lyric poetry as the highest form of literature, and novel-writing as the most pernicious and immoral form of literary activity, the *CMM* did publish a good deal of short fiction. Possibly motivated by a pragmatic recognition of the popularity of the novel—especially among female readers—the stories printed in the *CMM* are made

acceptable by virtue of their unassailable moral lessons. Frequently, the pieces take the form of inter-volume serials, in which a hero or heroine progresses through an episodic narrative that poses various dilemmas to be resolved.

If a perfect Christian state of being was not just a possibility in Methodist theology, but at the very heart of its mission to form a model society, then literary purity would naturally follow suit, and even so corruptible a form as fiction could be transformed. Moreover, in October 1876 the *CMM* recognized its obligation to shepherd and improve the youthful reader:

It must be remembered that if we do not furnish our young people with interesting reading of an instructive and wholesome character they will be more apt to seek that which is of a pernicious or vicious character. And unhappily the latter is often more accessible than the former—the poison is often more plentiful than the food. The story papers and dime novels, that swarm like an unclean plague of frogs in the land, will creep into our houses and pollute the minds of our youth unless we furnish some counter attraction. Like the gilded and coloured candies that tempt the infant appetite, the garish pictures of this cheap and nasty literature fascinate the taste of the young. Christian parents owe it to their households to supply them with wholesome food for the mind as well as for the body. (186)

Importantly, fiction is the form that most grants a feminine authorial presence in the magazine's literature. Historically, Methodism is notable for the role women played in establishing the church at the grass-roots level. Women constituted a majority of the church's members on either side of the Atlantic, leading one researcher, Ronald Knox, to

observe that “the history of enthusiasm is largely a history of female emancipation” (qtd. in Hempton 137), a claim that is borne out statistically. Before 1830, the female mean in trans-Atlantic church membership was 57.7 percent, and women made up 52.3 percent of the adult Methodist population. As well, unattached women (single or widowed) made up, on average, a third of the Methodist membership (Hempton 137).

As with its popularity in American black populations, Methodism’s appeal for women may have been in the encouragement the liturgical structure gave to voices typically silenced in conventional institutions. The emphasis on “liberty, orality and communalism” and “tender and uncontrollable emotionalism” meant that the discursive patterns unique to Methodism tended to elide the gender boundaries that characterized more rigid systems (Hempton 138).

Indeed, in 1819 the Methodist church in British North America had taken the unusual step of allowing women to practice their “biblical and providential right” to preach, and by 1823 over 100 were listed as itinerant preachers, though by 1838 the numbers had fallen off (Semple 118). Semple attributes the decreasing participation of women in the clerical ranks to the church’s burgeoning desire for respectability and orthodoxy in the ranks of its members, as well as the demands of marriage and children, but the female evangelical remains a significant element of the church’s development. Women were especially important in the church’s missionary activities later in the century (Semple 279-83).²²

²² In Canada, the Woman’s Missionary Society (1880) and the Methodist Deaconess Society (1890) were of crucial importance in domestic and international missionary work. Educated single women were given opportunities for fulfilling work beyond the traditionally spheres acceptable in Canadian society, and as a result the missions became popular places for female doctors and educators to pursue ground-breaking careers—but

In the *CMM*, these observations are both supported and subtly refuted by the fictional piece. Very often, the domestic situation is the narrative centre, and allows for models of marital decorum and relations to emerge. If beautiful, women are unfailingly modest, and if “plain,” saintly. They always demure to the wisdom of the men in their lives, be they brothers, fathers, or husbands. For their part, the men are sober, hard-working, and good-humouredly indulgent towards female characters, though not above reproofing error.

Though Withrow himself wrote a good deal of the fiction that appeared in serial form in the *CMM*, another frequent and prolific contributor was A. E. Barr. Often, the fictional pieces are thinly disguised domestic or historical romances. In “The Preacher’s Daughter” (January 1887), Barr writes the first installment of the tale of John Denby, a young man in need of a wife. Luckily for him, his female relation arranges for him to meet the new Wesleyan preacher, Mr. Fletcher, and at that good man’s side, his significantly named daughter Salome:²³

John felt her large gray eyes raining the sweetest and most perplexing influence upon him. She was plainly, even poorly, dressed in a grey merino, and wore no ornaments but a knot of blue ribbons at her neck; but ... she brightened the whole room with her smiles and words and pretty attitudes ... John had found the woman he could love; he had not known her ten minutes when he acknowledged it to himself. (61)

only until marriage, after which they were relegated to aids, if their husbands did missionary work at all (Semple 281-3).

²³ In the New Testament, Salome was one of the women present at both the Crucifixion and the tomb. In the Gospels, another Salome, the daughter of Herodias, danced before Herod and later demanded the death of John the Baptist.

As a manual for courtship, the story goes on to detail the increasing frequency of John's visits to the preacher's home, and the growing affection between the young people.

Portentously, Salome's faults are exposed in a dialogue in which her mother chides her impatience with her family's poverty, an issue that reoccurs when John asks her father for her hand:

“I wish to tell you, sir, that I love your daughter, and that with your consent, Salome has promised to be my wife.”

“Are you sure you love Salome? She has many faults ... Her faults are womanly faults, that men do not understand; but they can cause misery, a great deal of misery...” (63)

Luckily for Salome, good John manfully acknowledges his duty to her “as she is” (63), and thus the young couple are married, and set off on life together. Alas! Salome proves her father right, and various character flaws become, for a time, her husband's trial.

Notably, Salome's faults are of a lesser, highly feminized sort, and are rooted in household profligacy, pride, petty domestic dishonesties and deceptions, not those more serious failings which would presumably place her beyond redemption—sexual infidelity, slatternly conduct, religious skepticism, or public larceny. Through his patience and wisdom John is eventually able to turn marriage into an improving experience for wayward Salome, and thus both the purposes of marriage (for the church) and literature (for the magazine) are neatly fulfilled in the story. The family, with the dual influences of mother and father, is a concept at the heart of nineteenth-century liberal Methodism, and in the correction of Salome, the story is evidence of how Methodist prescriptions for conduct moved into the zone of Canadian conjugal relations.

Foremost in the family, the figure of the father as leader, provider and instructor is in keeping with eighteenth-century patriarchal ideology, but in the nineteenth century, Methodism began to encourage a change in domestic relations among its adherents. The early church supported a model of femininity that was based on religious experience and contributions to the church's cause, not conduct in the domestic sphere—though it follows that the latter was assumed to be above reproach if the former was commendable. In later decades, however, the community of believers began to reproduce itself in the domestic sphere at the practical level of the family, in effect making a significant contribution to the “Victorian cult of domesticity” (Hempton 139).²⁴ The consequences of the movement of piety into the relative seclusion of the home meant that the church's “public face” increasingly became one of political and bureaucratic programming, as opposed to itinerant revivalism, that was designed to ensure denominational security (Hempton 139). Meanwhile, the household pact between husband and wife that assumed the wife's inferiority, and a mutual respect that nonetheless left the weight of obedience to the woman and direction to the man, began to have similarly mixed implications for the role of nineteenth-century Canadian women.

In 1829, the *Christian Guardian*'s description of the good wife hinges on her moral and financial economy, her modesty and immunity to ornament, and her piety. As well, she is:

ever mindful of the solemn contract she hath entered into, is strictly and conscientiously virtuous, constant, and faithful to her husband ... humble ...

²⁴ For an analysis of the influence “Christian nurture” was to have on the home as a place of integration for private and public values in Victorian middle-class Canada, see Marguerite Van Die, “Nurture and Education: the Christian Home,” in *Religion, Family, and Community in Victorian Canada*.

modest ... submissive ... obedient ... [and most of all] makes it her business to serve ... and her pleasure to oblige. (qtd. in Semple 64)

This is in contrast to the female model touted by the church before 1810, which constructed the ideal Methodist woman on the virtues of her religious experience, progress, and contributory efforts, not her conduct in the marital relationship (Hempton 140). As a measure of its pervasive presence in the regulation of feminine taste and conduct, in February 1882 the magazine even provided instruction in home decorating through a fictional piece titled “Life in a Parsonage.” In it, expectations for masculine and feminine behaviour within the sphere of marital relations are portrayed in a division of cultural labour that pays homage to European art and culture in even the most rudimentary of Canadian mission cabins. To the husband belong the accoutrements of the intellect; to the wife, the complementary subservience of decorative arts. She is to paint watercolour pictures of Ontario scenes, play her father’s wedding-gift organ, and appreciate Italian High Renaissance art and contemporary German culture. He is to lead his household with the authority of a benevolently accessible king.

Some furniture—rather plain and not too much of it—was purchased. Some rooms were papered by Lawrence himself. His books were unpacked and put in a book-case, making the best and noblest adornment any room can possess—introducing, even into a cabin, the mighty kings of thought and priests of poetry. Edith set out some beds of flowers, and draped the windows with tasteful though inexpensive curtains. Some cool summer matting covered the bare floors. Her prize books and parlour bric-a-brac were displayed upon the table. A tinted photograph of the Dresden Madonna—the loveliest of Raphael’s works—

a chromo of the Pfazburg on the Rhine, two water colour sketches, by her own hand, of the rock scenery of Lake Muskoka, a steel portrait of Wesley, and another of the poet Dante, gave the needed touch of colour to the walls and an air of refinement to the little parlour not surpassed by any in the village. Beauty and elegance depend not so much on the purse as good taste. A cabinet organ, her father's wedding-gift with some familiar music, gave the room a still more home-like effect. (174)

What is not new is that the magazine continued to prescribe feminine duty to the domestic sphere in the manner of standard contemporary beliefs about the female "place"; but what is new, and what this thesis views as a key theme in the *CMM*'s fiction contributions to a native literature, is the way in which the female forces that had been so important in the establishment of Methodism in North America were moved back to the domestic cloister as nation-making became a focal point for "male" energy. The vigor and industry essential for a strong native character are understood to be the moral virtues of public men, not women "by nature" meant for the domestic hearth. The implications of this masculinization of discourse within the *CMM* are complicated further by the fact that the popular and prolific "A.E. Barr" was, in fact, Amelia Elizabeth Barr.

That the *CMM* included fiction at all in its project to nurture "right reading" is an interesting indication of the ways that the periodical form adapts to public demand. In its inherent power to corrupt susceptible readers, fiction was viewed by the Methodist press with a good deal of skepticism and suspicion. Perhaps in its perceived similarity to drama, fiction awoke all of Methodism's instincts for that which was *not* high, lovely, or just and recalled the lack of class and cultural distinction of the pre-respectability days of the camp

meeting. Though Shakespeare was excused on the merit of his “noble dramatic literature” which supposedly arose from the tradition of miracle plays and other religious drama of the middle ages, there is a definite disapproval of low literature, of which prose fiction was the prime vehicle. Speculating that undisciplined reading was a prime cause of this pernicious evil, Withrow wrote, in January 1876:

Reading was an art confined, of course, entirely to the clergy, and the ignorant masses could only vaguely comprehend the dull homilies they heard; ... but these sacred representations soon became subject to abuse. Droll characters, comic scenes, and ridiculous speeches, were introduced in order to excite mirth; and a flippant and irreverent treatment of the most sublime themes became a prevailing vice ... the rude populace founding the subjects for burlesques and caricature. (135)

The irony, that the Canadian church comes full circle, as it were, to worrying about the power of print in the hands of the “ignorant masses,” is underscored by Withrow’s nostalgia for days when “art [was] confined ... entirely to the clergy.” If dramatic satire is one of the most effective ways to publicly criticize institutions, it is clear that the church’s discouragement of flippancy in general literature is a reflection of its attitude to criticism directed at its own edifices. As well, Withrow’s disapproval of levity generally emphasizes the church’s historical emphasis on sobriety in the settlements and outposts of colonial British North America and its post-Confederation desire to shape a national character that is dignified, noble and “high-minded.”

The importance of decorum extended even to public festivities, a position so removed from the welcomed exuberance of the love-feast that it is hard to imagine that

only a few decades separated such polarities in the church's attitudes. Without a trace of self-consciousness regarding Methodism's past reputation for wild emotionalism, in February 1875 the *CMM* was able to take the following stance regarding the style in which Dominion Day should be celebrated:

The more intelligent people become, as a rule, the quieter and less demonstrative do they become. At least it is so in this northern part of the new world. With us there may be strength of conviction and depth of feeling, with very little manifestation of enthusiasm. A people more thoroughly loyal to the government under which they live, or more patriotic, than the Canadians are, we do not believe exists on the earth; but they claim the right to determine for themselves how, and on what occasions, their sentiments may be most appropriately manifested. (175)

The determination to leave behind forever the primitive aspects of colonialism underscores the desire that Canadians be universally recognized as industrious, responsible, and soberly modest. The *CMM*'s approval of an economy of affect in public deportment that borders on taciturnity idealizes an internalized "deep well" from which all observers can assume spring truer convictions, profounder loyalties, and nobler sentiments than would be suggested by the (American?) superficiality of unrestrained carousal. Unstated but implied is the oblique comparison to unrestrained republican patriotism to the south that on more than one occasion had threatened British North American security. Self-restraint is proof of the perception that Canada was coming of age and capable of responsible government. The statement is also a long thread of that most tenacious of Canadian knots when it comes to self-perceptions of our international

reputation: Are Canadians too polite when it comes to demonstrating their patriotic feeling?

After Literature in the *CMM*: News and Commentary

Though the previous sections have focused on the *CMM*'s understanding of "pure" literary genres as the vehicles for the magazine's formulation of a native canon, the editorials and "Current Topics and Events" sections make a considerable contribution to the magazine's content. Placed as they were at or near the end of each monthly issue, and printed in a smaller, almost cramped font, the reviews and current events sections are easily overlooked but are often the most direct route to understanding the magazine's standpoint in relation to the specific contemporary contexts that comprise McKay's oft-quoted liberal order "matrix-events." Typically, these regular features are the forums for the *CMM*'s engagement with the political issues of the day. In May 1885, for example, a current topics column addresses the troubles of the North West rebellion in a journalistic style that leaves no doubt about the magazine's position:

the rash insurrectionists will submit to the forces of the Queen and cast themselves upon the clemency of the crown. While the ringleaders of the revolt should, after fair trial, receive due punishment, their misguided followers should have them offered a generous amnesty ... When the majesty of the law shall have been fully vindicated, no feeling of revenge should follow. (471)

Despite its unwavering loyalty to the Empire, the passage is balanced by its emphasis on due process before the law. As the 1880s wore on, the magazine's attention in these features increasingly turns to the duty of Canadian institutions to protect the rights of

Canadian citizens and support Canadian governmental policy. It is a direction that is increasingly synonymous with the Christian duty of those who can to shepherd and provide for those—the weak, the ignorant, the dissolute, the godless—in need of peace, order, and good government.

There are limits to the *CMM*'s tolerance for social unrest, however. About the Irish National Land League, the editorial position in February 1881 is unequivocal. Unlike the secular Young Canada movement of the early 1880s, which took its inspiration in part from the Young Ireland movement of 1848, the *CMM* sees in the Land League movement a “conspiracy against law and order” that is the harbinger of “idleness, anarchy, and distress” (184). Describing its character as secretive and its operatives as “midnight assassins” (184), the *CMM* forcefully condemns the “arch conspirators” for having “not even the courage of open revolt” but coercing “poor peasants ... into these outrages—from which their generous hearts would naturally recoil” (184). Clearly, the judgment of the poor cannot be relied upon. The promotion of a middle class educated so that it is able to discern dangerous agitators in its midst, provide a supportive base for the smooth operations of a stable government, and support a prosperous economy is the only safeguard against the “terrorism” of disorganization and “midnight murder” (184).

Constitutional monarchy modeled on the British parliamentary tradition is the foundation of the *CMM*'s vision for Canadian society. In its admiration for the British Constitution, the *CMM* cites its tradition of “direct responsibility to the people” (May 1880, 465) as the keystone of Imperial success. So, a discourse exists between the middle class and their government that relies on the fulfillment of mutual requirements for security and accountability. Built into the system are vents that manage dissent before it

festers into anarchy and that at the same time reinforce institutions which have important associations for the liberal tradition—free speech, free press, and free vote. By prizing the appearance of openness between people and government, the *CMM* emphasizes the role these three cornerstones of Christian liberality play in quelling unrest by preventing the repression of the “safety-valves of public feeling and ...opinion” that can lead to the evils of “the pent-up elements of discontent ... Nihilism and Socialism” (465). Just how “free” are the freedom of the press and speech as defined in the *CMM* is debatable. Above all, the *CMM* nurtured a model of citizenship that had Christian obedience to God’s authority as one of its key precepts, and respect for the secular law as another. Between the two, the individual’s liberty in private or public was never unregulated.

Subject matter for the *CMM*’s randomly placed editorials had a wider scope than the current events reports, and covered everything from temperance issues (an enduringly popular topic) to the significance of the seasons in Canadian life. Throughout, the omniscient editorial voice became the substitute for the sermon, a development that highlighted the slow but steady movement from an oral congregation to a literary community, and one that in its authority and ability to influence public opinion is mirrored in secular press editorials. Unlike the other extra-literary features in the *CMM*, the editorials are interspersed throughout each issue. The usual topics debate the responsibility of the individual versus the church in effecting salvation, the role of science and technology in Christian society, and the future of Methodism. Others offer treatises to material success, that marker of Protestant progress in the nineteenth century. Printed in August 1876, “On Spending, by John Ploughman (Rev.Charles Spurgeon),” lectures the reader on fiscal responsibility that is rooted in Christian prudence (168).

The magazine reveals its own business interests, as well. The search for the honest and lovely in literature is tempered by a prosaic materialism that can result in passages, like this one from July 1876, that exhort *CMM* readers to:

furnish a disproof of the accusation of unfriendly critics that Methodism is unfavourable to literary culture, and will also greatly increase their influence for good in the community. We request the hearty co-operation of our readers in endeavouring to extend the circulation of the Magazine ... Let all our friends endeavour to secure each an additional subscriber, and we shall be able to make this Magazine still more worthy of the noble Church of which it is an organ.

(89)

Contained within the plea for financial support is the interesting acknowledgement that Methodism has a reputation for being “unfriendly to literary culture.” A discrepancy arises when this statement is contrasted to Withrow’s nostalgia for times past, when literature was guarded as the private reserve of the Methodist clergy, as is discussed on pages 101-2 of this thesis. Now, apparently, the campaign for readers has to overcome the view that Methodism is hostile to literature, and that the church’s cherished purpose has nothing to contribute to Canadian culture. In response, the benefits conferred by the “broad gauge” of the *CMM* are hailed in January 1886, along with the “development of the writing talent of many of the younger ministers and members of the Church ... now they may largely influence their age through the press as well as from the pulpit and the platform” (68).

The *CMM* was beginning to feel a measure of success. Towards the end of 1888 the *CMM* adopted as its future models periodicals like *Scribner’s*, *The Atlantic*, *The Forum*,

Blackwood's, *The Spectator*, and *The Athenaeum*. By many standards in Canadian periodical publishing, the Methodist venture was already a success, but the troubling question of whether or not it had realized the cherished purpose in nurturing a viable national literature remained less certain.

Conclusion

Within the *CMM*'s complicated literary mission lie some of most deeply held traditions of Canadian thought. As the 1880s drew to a close, the picture that emerges from the *CMM* and its dedication to religion, literature and social progress is one that increasingly values the social element in the individual while at the same time continuing to promote a British model for Canadian society overall. Though the magazine devoted itself to a literary ideal and native canon that were grounded in the traditions of what the *CMM* understood to be "classic" British literature, it seemed simultaneously unable to chart clearly the course such a canon was to take, making a definition of "native literature" an undertaking that defied clear explication then as now.

As I stated in the introduction, this project was inspired by Ian McKay's call for a new approach to the study of Canada and the origins of liberalism in this country that will lead, not just to a better understanding of the history of Canada, but to a reinvigoration of the discipline of history itself. McKay's hopes are twofold. First, he promotes a renewed examination of the origins and sources of the liberal tradition after 1840 as a means of re-visiting how the project called Canada came into being and continues to evolve. Second, he believes that the divisiveness permeating current scholarship can be mitigated, resulting in a kind of holistic reconnaissance. In "The Liberal Order Framework: a Prospectus for a Reconnaissance of Canadian History", he asks:

Why even have a field called history if it lacks internal coherence, if its distracted practitioners are too busy to attend seriously to each others' work, if many of their primary loyalties lie with other (sometimes ahistorical) theoretical and methodological traditions? (617)

McKay's vision of a paradigm capable of "going beyond the fragments' in Canadian history writing" ("Liberal Order" 620) is an attempt to re-encounter Canadian history that, as Jean-Francois Constant and Michel Ducharme phrase it, will preserve the "new-found richness and diversity" (3) of Canadian research interests while at the same time reducing the harm done by particularism. McKay's call for a "strategy of integration" seeks to provide a counterpoint to the "sense that the field [of Canadian history] ... is in crisis" ("Liberal Order" 617). In fact, McKay's worries about coherence and cohesion are not new, and reproduce a debate that has been underway among scholars of Canadian literature for some time. Just as the *CMM* grappled with the mechanics and implications of a native literature, so have literary scholars in Canada tried to synthesize understanding from a multiplicity of voices. The history of the search for a paradigm of Canadian literature frames and predates McKay's historiographic equivalent.

The *CMM* results from one such attempt, although the scope of its inquiry was much greater. By undertaking the creation of a paradigm for the archetypical Canadian, the *CMM* sought a post-Confederation resolution to the diverse interests that had previously characterized relations among the British North America colonies. Like McKay, the *CMM* approved of plurality insofar as a communal project was benefited; unlike McKay, its success or failure carried implications beyond the condition of an academic discipline. For the *CMM*, the object was nothing less than to shape the direction of the nation through the lives of ordinary Canadians. To do so, it undertook a mission to create an ideal community through a body of native literature, one that would successfully integrate contemporary social and political interests under the umbrella of Methodist theology.

The problem with McKay's paradigm is that it can evolve into the very thing that he criticizes in traditional methodologies, a project productive of a master strategy. The *CMM*'s attempt to create an all-encompassing literary paradigm proved impossible for its promulgators to adequately define, and resulted in contradictions, problems, and inconsistencies. Likewise, critics of McKay's interpretation caution that his reading of historiography emphasizes certain aspects of liberalism, especially those that result in class and economic oppression, at the expense of others. Bruce Curtis, for one, argues that the "everyday" benefits produced by liberalism in nineteenth-century Canada fit less easily into McKay's thesis because they were predicated on discursive relationships that were primarily participatory and reciprocal, rather than impositions from a minority elite onto the masses below. Liberalism as a "historically specific project of rule" (McKay, "Liberal Order" 620) fails to negotiate adequately the complexities of interdependence between nineteenth-century self-interest and collective wellbeing. Too often in McKay's reading, liberalism and socialism move to opposite ends of a spectrum that forever fixes individualism at one end and the social good at the other. In the *CMM*, the dynamic between the individual and his or her contribution to society emerges as a key prerequisite for the success of the nation, and one that eventually leads to the emergence of that important predecessor of the Canadian left, the social gospel movement. McKay's militaristic reconnaissance ("Rebels" 82) leaves little room for the liberal influence at the heart of what Jennifer Henderson, in her comments on this thesis, calls "proto-socialist thinking" to describe the movement. The *CMM* truly believed that without the ministrant influence of native literature, colonists would not—could not—evolve into citizens, and that without the right kind of citizen, a nation possessed no soul, literary or otherwise. It

is a point that echoes Curtis's about the inextricability of relatively commonplace individual improvements and conceptions of the collective good.

The magazine's desire for the success of the collective relied on the salvation of individuals, and so to ensure Canada developed according to the right kinds of ideals, the *CMM* integrated essentially private acts—reading and writing—into a form of self-government that was expected, in its turn, to spread outward in ever-widening circles to municipal, provincial and national levels of government. Methodism's project for literary discipline can be understood as part of a wider nineteenth-century movement in which self-improvement was an integral part of the effort toward a common good. One reading act at a time, the goal was to convert to rationality those who had begun in enthusiasm, and, as this study shows, the *CMM* revealed a greater degree of self-reflexivity than might be supposed possible under McKay's conception of liberalism. In its struggle for "right reading," the magazine's utilization of genre and form becomes the "internal dynamic" also emphasized by Curtis as a point of negotiation in nineteenth-century liberalism. As an important branch of an institution with a significant role to play in the affairs of nineteenth-century British North America and subsequently Canada, the *CMM* is an example of the ways in which liberalism hung in fine balance between individual and social progress. The emphasis on a life that could be considered morally "good" was not one entirely based on self-interest, a parallel to Bruce Curtis's point that "liberal ...projects are communal projects" (181), and that no easy divisions can be drawn between nineteenth-century conceptions of "the relation between individual conduct and social order" (181).

No easy divisions, indeed. Certainly there is ample evidence that although the *CMM* did promote a form of individualism that was inextricably linked to community, it vacillated just as often between bigotry, intolerance and rigidity, as the excerpts in this thesis show. As for its creation of a native literature, in the 1880s the magazine became so bourgeois in attitude, and its editors' hegemonic impulses for art so restrictive, that its own creative call was rendered practically sterile. Torn as the *CMM* increasingly was at the end of this period of study over vitality in principle and conformity in practice, its sense for a native literature likewise became less discursive and more prescriptive.

Instead of ferreting out the evil at the heart of the *CMM*'s liberalism, however, this thesis must conclude that the project for Canadian literature was neither entirely liberal nor truly egalitarian; neither an unqualified success nor an absolute failure. Its precepts were seldom imposed but more usually took root—to return to a biological metaphor—in an entirely natural-seeming way, as a collaborative exercise that was not confined to just a few men but reliant instead on the cooperation and willing endorsement of many ordinary people, in the sincere belief that they were advancing a societal good through their individual choices. In its approach to reason, decorum, and formality, much can be found to criticize in the *CMM*, for the promotion of middle-class prejudices and hypocrisy. But in its conception of the common good, the *CMM* reproduces in one form a discourse of universality that is still underway in Canada, the fascination with what it means to be “Canadian” and what constitutes “Canadian literature.”

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