

## ABSTRACT

The W.C.T.U. was the largest provincial women's temperance organization of its era in Ontario and, indeed, the largest non-denominational women's group of any kind in the country. From its inception in 1874, the Ontario W.C.T.U. rapidly moved beyond identifying alcohol as the single root of societal evil to a broader critique of the social system. This analysis was based on evangelical principles with the primary role in ensuring a moral society being granted to the family unit and its moral centre, the mother. While accepting many elements of the Cult of Domesticity, the Ontario W.C.T.U. insisted on a public role for women and more responsible private behaviour by men. It has been observed that the American "women of the W.C.T.U. seemed more concerned with uplifting men than with raising the status of women." The Ontario W.C.T.U. sought to do both: to raise the status of women by uplifting the conduct of men.

These conclusions result from examining the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s origins, structures, strategies and achievements at the provincial and local levels. This dissertation is based on the nature of the discourse utilized by these women as recorded in the local minute books, and county, provincial and dominion meetings. The establishing and refining of a



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**"CONTINUED AND PERSEVERING COMBAT":  
THE ONTARIO WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION,  
EVANGELICALISM AND SOCIAL REFORM  
1874 - 1916**

by

**SHARON ANNE COOK, B.A.(HON), B.ED., M.A.**

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

Doctor of Philosophy  
Department of History

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario

June 14, 1990.

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ISBN 0-315-60450-6

The undersigned recommend to the Faculty of Graduate  
Studies and Research acceptance of the thesis

THE ONTARIO WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION 1875-1916  
A STUDY IN EVANGELICAL FEMINISM

submitted by

Sharon Anne Cook B.A., B.ED., M.A.

in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Carleton University

June 1990

## ABSTRACT

The W.C.T.U. was the largest provincial women's temperance organization of its era in Ontario and, indeed, the largest non-denominational women's group of any kind in the country. From its inception in 1874, the Ontario W.C.T.U. rapidly moved beyond identifying alcohol as the single root of societal evil to a broader critique of the social system. This analysis was based on evangelical principles with the primary role in ensuring a moral society being granted to the family unit and its moral centre, the mother. While accepting many elements of the Cult of Domesticity, the Ontario W.C.T.U. insisted on a public role for women and more responsible private behaviour by men. It has been observed that the American "women of the W.C.T.U. seemed more concerned with uplifting men than with raising the status of women." The Ontario W.C.T.U. sought to do both: to raise the status of women by uplifting the conduct of men.

These conclusions result from examining the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s origins, structures, strategies and achievements at the provincial and local levels. This dissertation is based on the nature of the discourse utilized by these women as recorded in the local minute books, and county, provincial and dominion meetings. The establishing and refining of a

collective position on a wide variety of social problems was not easily accomplished by these women. The provincial and local records, however, do permit a close examination of this process, and the resulting repertoire of issues with which they were concerned. By championing temperance through formal legislation and personal commitment, the W.C.T.U. women expressed their anger at male violence towards defenceless women and children and their fears for the survival of the family unit. Their support of the Social Purity movement provided an outlet for their anxiety for the future of young men and women, and the society that would soon be under their control. Their success in promoting Scientific Temperance Instruction in Ontario's public schools was complemented by their unstinting vigilance to educate youth through the Bands of Hope and Loyal Temperance Legions, and thereby convincing themselves and Ontario women that education was a more effective agent of social change than legislative fiat. The Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union allowed the W.C.T.U. to train a new generation of young and usually single women temperance workers. In so doing, it gave status to a single women's organization within the boundaries of its own structure. Thus, while local unions emphasized different features of the W.C.T.U. program according to their interests and community concerns, all women in the Ontario W.C.T.U. between 1874 and 1916 subscribed to these important elements of a common W.C.T.U. platform.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this dissertation has been aided by the generosity of several research institutions. I am indebted to the archival staff at The National Archives of Canada, The National Library of Canada, and The Archives of Ontario where Bennett McCardle, Manager of Public Services, and Leon Warmski, Reference Archivist, were particularly kind and helpful. My cousin, Ted Phelps, Chief of the Regional Collection at the University of Western Ontario, was extremely cooperative in my search for the London District documents.

The Ottawa Y.W.C.A. permitted me to make use of their records while they were being catalogued.

Other individuals have contributed to the successful completion of this thesis. Mr. Grant Carr-Harris, son of Bertha Wright/Carr-Harris, gave me full access to his personal archives and geneologies. His and Mrs. Carr-Harris' gracious hospitality while I worked through the papers made the research a very pleasant experience. Throughout the period of researching and writing this dissertation, I have been on the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa. I am grateful for the support accorded me by my co-faculty. The ideas of several members of the History Department at Carleton University have been beneficial and stimulating in my work.



I am especially grateful to Marilyn Barber, John Taylor, Brian McKillop and Diana Pedersen. My thesis supervisor, Deborah Gorham, has been encouraging throughout, incisive in her questions and a continual source of wonder through the force of her academic and personal example.

This research topic has been a part of my extended family's interests for many years. My great-aunt, Annie R. Fry, was an "independent woman", a teacher and Dominion Superintendent of the W.C.T.U. Medal Contests during the 1920's and '30's. As a child, she was a source of admiration for me. Both her example, and that of my parents, Ethel and Harold Killins, staunch temperance advocates and Christian humanitarians, have fed my interest in this topic for many years. My research necessitated lengthy periods at the Archives of Ontario in Toronto. During this time I was fortunate to be cared for - in sickness and in health - by my remarkable sister-in-law, Suzanne Killins, and my brother, David. In the finest tradition of the W.C.T.U., Suzanne took charge of my physical and emotional needs, and with David, welcomed me into their warm family life. Their kindness will never be forgotten.

It is difficult to imagine that anyone could have a more supportive family than I enjoy. My husband, Terry, has extended sage advice throughout the project, carefully and expertly edited the manuscript, and offered countless acts of thoughtfulness throughout. Our sons, Timothy and Graham,

have buoyed me with their patience, interest and unfailing good-humour. I appreciate the generosity of spirit by all three of my gentlemen more than I can express.

With all of this help and consideration, any deficiencies in the dissertation are my responsibility alone.

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## **CHAPTER ONE:**

### **INTRODUCTION AND HISTORIOGRAPHY**

#### **THE W.C.T.U. AND EVANGELICAL FEMINISM**

The Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.), the first-established and largest of the Canadian provincial women's temperance groups, has been chosen as the subject of this study. It provided a forum for Ontario women to become active participants in their own communities long before they were accorded the prerequisites of full citizenship through the right to vote. This involvement was initiated in the nineteenth century through temperance reform. Temperance had long been a "constellation" issue, concerned with temperance and with several other associated concerns,

through which American women had expressed their outrage at male violence and irresponsibility, their fears for the survival of the family unit, and, eventually, their collective demands for legislative solutions to these problems.

By the 1880's, the Ontario W.C.T.U. had developed interests far beyond the temperance question, however. In fact, by 1916 the organization signified its formal concern with at least fifteen other issues, recognized through its "departments of work." Further evidence that the W.C.T.U.'s attention had been captured by other matters is provided by the fact that not a single local union consulted bothered to take note of the long-awaited Ontario Temperance Act when it was passed in that year. Instead, one could say that by the end of the period under examination, the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union was misnamed. While not abandoning temperance, the W.C.T.U. analysis of societal problems convinced it that temperance alone would be inadequate to achieve a rejuvenated evangelical social order.

This thesis seeks to explain the importance of temperance to the Ontario W.C.T.U. and the interconnections between temperance and other issues, in the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s evangelical vision. It examines the process whereby the Ontario W.C.T.U. expanded its range of pursuits to include any matter which it believed endangered the sanctity of the family unit, and with it, the wider society. It assesses the objectives, structures and strategies used by the Ontario

W.C.T.U. in the provincial and local arenas. Since the Ontario W.C.T.U. created a young woman's sector which, in the 1880's and 1890's rivaled the mother organization in vitality and achievement, the thesis examines the role of young single women within an ethos devoted to marriage and family. It studies the relationship and tensions between its younger, single women and older, married members. Most significantly, it evaluates the importance of evangelicalism to the W.C.T.U.'s motivation, operations and achievements. It suggests that this constitutes the single most distinctive element in the Ontario W.C.T.U. between 1874 and 1916, and perhaps in the Dominion organization as a whole.

Thus, this thesis does not directly investigate prohibition in Ontario, nor the temperance movement per se in Ontario or across Canada. Nor does it aim to be a comprehensive treatment of middle-class Ontario women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. And neither is it an examination of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in other provinces or at the Dominion or American National levels. The study cannot hope to survey other organizations seeking temperance, other than the Ontario W.C.T.U. from its inception to 1916.

The thesis is organized into six parts. First, the origins of women's temperance from its British and American roots will be discussed. Secondly, the W.C.T.U.'s structure at the local, Ontario, and Dominion levels, and the

implications of that organizational pattern will be evaluated. Thirdly, the ideas of the Ontario W.C.T.U. will be considered as they developed through time and as they were consistent or different from the perspective of the National American group. Fourthly, the strategies employed by the Ontario W.C.T.U. will be surveyed to assess changing approaches at the different levels of the Canadian organization. The particular role of the Young Woman's Christian Union, its origins, ideas and strategies, is outlined in chapter six. Finally, the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s decline and significance are appraised.

Previous studies of women's groups have been marred by an undue reliance on national records representing a narrow elite in urban centres. While this inquiry has certainly consulted these same documents, there has been no assumption made that these official chronicles are indicative of local rural, small town or urban union women's ideas or strategies for change. To establish the international context of the W.C.T.U., the records of the conventions of the World's Woman's Christian Temperance Union from 1883 to 1897 were consulted, along with a varied collection of handbooks and manuals. The Dominion W.C.T.U. has been analyzed through the published minutes of its conventions from 1889 to 1917. This was supplemented with scrapbooks from members and children involved in the Medal and Poster Contests, photograph albums, handbills, post-cards and letters, newspaper clippings and information leaflets dating from 1889 to 1969. Information



has been obtained for the provincial structure and personalities from the annual reports of the year's work between 1886 and 1920. The minutes of the Ontario Annual Meetings have also been consulted from 1884 to 1916. Minute books for Ontario and Durham Counties have been scrutinized for the period 1895 to 1909, for York and Peel Counties for 1909 to 1910, Lanark for 1897 and for Oxford County for 1915 to 1918. In addition, a large collection of pamphlets, photographs, commemorative booklets, certificates, recitation books, posters, hand-bills, members' scrap-books and letters from provincial officers have been closely read from the W.C.T.U. Collection at the Ontario Archives in Toronto. This valuable collection also contains a biographical sketch of the provincial organization's first president, Letitia Youmans, which is augmented by her autobiography, Campaign Echoes. S.G.E. McKee's Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1877 - 1927 has also been very useful in spite of its limitations as a hagiographic tribute to W.C.T.U. members.

The only local union able to publish its annual reports was the Toronto District, containing the records for the approximately twenty-seven locals in the Toronto area. These were consulted for the period from 1885 to 1917. However a rich and largely untapped source of primary documents resides in the minute books of the Ontario local unions. Two of the urban unions' records, those for Ottawa and Toronto, are

located in the Ontario Archives. The Ottawa books cover 1881 to 1886. The minute books from 1879 to 1906 for London and district are located in the Regional Collection at the University of Western Ontario. All of these books were utilized.

The minute books for town unions located at the Ontario Archives are an uneven representation of union activity across the province. Nevertheless, the collection spans the period being examined comprehensively and when taken together, provides a detailed map of W.C.T.U. activities and thoughts. All available records were used, including the minute books for Dunnville from 1888 to 1909 and 1916 to 1917, Meaford for 1898 to 1917, Mimico for 1915 to 1916, for Mizpah from 1916 to 1918, Newmarket for 1885 to 1918, Peterborough for 1885 and 1914 to 1922, Richmond Hill for 1884 to 1887, Spencerville for 1897 to 1900, St. Catharines for 1913, Windsor for 1913 and Woodstock from 1912 to 1919. The only rural union available was that of Picnic Grove, Lancaster, where the records extended from 1902 to 1908. These comprise all records for the Ontario W.C.T.U. conventions and minute books for every local union for the period under consideration in the Ontario Archives in Toronto, the Regional Collection at the University of Western Ontario, London, and at the City of Ottawa Archives, Y.W.C.A. Archives and National Archives.

Admittedly "official" in orientation, these records tell a great deal about the ideas of the women at the meetings,

their reactions to "headquarters'" directives, and their internal frictions within the union and the community. All of these ideas and activities were filtered through the pen of the union's Corresponding Secretary. As a group, there is no doubt that this amazingly literate and energetic group of recorders spoke in a different voice than that of the organization's provincial or Dominion (that is, Canada-wide) leaders. The minute books also constitute a type of group biography that record the thoughts, worries and triumphs of the same group of women over many years. The groups were rarely isolated from men's associations. Yet, the interaction in the local union produced a women's culture with a distinct ritual, behaviour and discourse.

The Young Woman's Christian Temperance Unions were researched through the World's, Dominion and Provincial reports, as well as some surviving local minute books. The Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U. minute book covers 1888 to 1891 and is located, along with issues of the Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U.'s publication, "The Friend of the Friendless," in the Y.W.C.A. Archives in Ottawa. Although no minute books are extant from Toronto, the Y unions' activities are documented fairly fully in the Toronto District Directories and Annual Reports from 1889 to 1917. The W.C.T.U. Collection also includes assorted Y.W.C.T.U. handbooks, almanacs, songbooks, and a complete Canadian Young People's Branch Manual. Of great benefit in understanding the work of the Y.W.C.T.U. is Bertha Carr-

Harris' Lights and Shades of Mission Work or Leaves from a Worker's Note Book. Being Reminiscences of Seven Years Service at the Capital, 1885-1892. This, as well as her personal papers contained in a collection maintained by her son, Grant Carr-Harris of Oakville, Ontario, provides one of the few individual portraits of women engaged during this period in evangelical work for the Y.W.C.T.U. and W.C.T.U. However, Carr-Harris' account is similar to Youmans' and McKee's in de-emphasizing the personality of its author while promoting the cause of evangelical feminism. The very lack of strongly defined personal sketches in this body of literature exemplifies the issue orientation of the W.C.T.U. woman of the day. These were strong and immensely competent women, but their autobiographies are remarkably humble. Had biographies been completed by others, as was the case with Frances Willard, the documentary base would be a very different one.

In piecing together the story of the W.C.T.U. and Y.W.C.T.U. at all levels, and throughout the period, the Ontario organization's printed journals were of great use. The Woman's Journal, published between 1885 and 1903, The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings from 1904 to 1914 and Canada's White Ribbon Bulletin for 1915 to 1917 were all read with interest and profit.

The final collections of primary documents include minute books for the Orono Sons of Temperance dating from 1853 to

books for the Orono Sons of Temperance dating from 1853 to 1881 and from 1892 to 1894. The minute book for the Salford Loyal Temperance Legion for 1902 was also reviewed. Both collections can be found at the Ontario Archives. Finally, the membership book of the Wardsville Council, Royal Templars of Temperance for 1898 to 1902 and the minute book of the West Middlesex District Council of the Royal Templars of Temperance for 1897 to 1901 were consulted at the University of Western Ontario. These represent the only records of temperance lodges available in Toronto, London, or Ottawa.

This study will consider the question of motivation. It will be argued that while the Ontario W.C.T.U. was one of many examples of maternal feminism, the far more accurate descriptor would be that of evangelical feminism. The Ontario W.C.T.U. accepted many elements of the cult of domesticity, the idea that woman's primary life work was selfless devotion to home and family, but it departed radically from that role prescription by demanding a public position for women in the life of the community. This involved legislative and educational action as moral arbitration. This analysis will argue that through the collective experience of conservative evangelically inspired campaigns, the W.C.T.U. women were empowered to assert themselves and become leaders in their respective communities. More importantly, the W.C.T.U. went beyond their own group to find other evangelical women for

young and single women's sector as a training ground. Thus a conservative group of married women provided legitimacy for a separate single women's group, thereby providing status for single young women by defining a specific area of work. From this base, the young women developed an independent evangelical rationale which eventually brought them into conflict with some of the married women. That the single women's group took its tasks seriously and fulfilled its objectives so competently also frightened a good number of the married women, and relations between the two groups deteriorated. Therefore, the experience of the W.C.T.U. and the Y.W.C.T.U. provides an opportunity to investigate an important evangelical single women's organization, and to assess the dynamics of interaction with the senior married women's group. One American historian writing in 1981 argues that the urban experience engendered the W.C.T.U. and that the reaction of the urban woman was very different from her small-town and rural counterpart.<sup>1</sup> The only major work completed on the W.C.T.U. to date in Canada, Wendy Mitchinson's 1977 thesis, did not consider this issue<sup>2</sup>. It will be argued that in Ontario this was increasingly true as the period under examination progressed. The first unions to be established in Ontario were in both small town and urban centres. In the nineteenth century they held to a fairly common understanding of society and their role within it. However, as conservative evangelicalism altered to meet the

challenges of Biblical criticism and secularism, industrialization and immigration, the urban and rural unions became increasingly dissimilar. Small-town and rural unions held to traditional evangelicalism far longer than did the urban. The very size of the urban unions in comparison with those in the small town or rural area meant that a wider range of work could be supported, including Y.W.C.T.U. groups.

Throughout Ontario in the period under examination, the class structure was fluid. Temperance was one issue utilized by groups wanting to ascend in the class hierarchy by demonstrating their respectability. Undoubtedly some women joined the W.C.T.U. for this purpose but it will be shown that the W.C.T.U. approached class issues in a far different manner from the male-dominated temperance lodges. This was no brazen seeking of respectability; the process was clearly tempered for W.C.T.U. and Y.W.C.T.U. women by the imperatives of evangelicalism and the cult of domesticity. Women took on far more responsibility for the moral improvement and social welfare of others than did their male associates and thus more often crossed class lines. In the W.C.T.U. view, social respectability was purchased dearly and required social service.

Finally, this study will attempt to show that the single most distinguishing feature and fortifying ingredient of the W.C.T.U. and the Y.W.C.T.U. was their evangelicalism. It was evangelicalism's liberating theology which originally

empowered women and caused them to approach the issue of temperance as a moral and religious issue, not simply a social blight. It was evangelicalism's campaigns that taught women the power of effective collective action and provided them with a rationale to take action against male vices. And it was evangelicalism's support for the conservative ideology of the centrality of home and family which continued to validate these deeply conservative women in their radical behaviour. Without its strengthening influence, the many disappointments faced by Ontario's W.C.T.U. would likely have dulled the edge of their anger, their optimism and their resolve.

Before discussing the W.C.T.U., its origins, structure, ideas, strategies, young women's groups and decline, it is necessary to place this study in its scholarly and historiographic context from four distinct points of view. First, the Ontario W.C.T.U. arose in 1874 in the same period as many other women's clubs and reform associations, sharing with those groups some basic assumptions about the appropriate role of women. Thus, an important component of the W.C.T.U.'s history is understood through the perspective and methodology of women's history and different labels or interpretations of "feminism." Secondly, the women of the Ontario W.C.T.U. were active participants in constructing a middle-class view of society with its changing role



definition, use of leisure time and philanthropy. In some cases in small-town Ontario, the demarcation of middle-class status brought with it the possibility of becoming the town's elite through a redefinition of the community's moral code. In examining this ingredient of the W.C.T.U.'s past, the historian must be informed by the historiography of class, business and urban history. Thirdly, as representative members of Victorian society, the W.C.T.U. was deeply concerned about the same ideas as other serious-minded Canadians, relating to urbanization and industrialization, nationalism, imperialism and idealism. As part of, and in response to the prevailing ideas of Canadian, American and British culture, the Ontario W.C.T.U. fashioned its own distinctive ideology. Hence, this study must also draw on the body of intellectual history relating to late-Victorian and Edwardian Canada and North America. Finally, the religious orientation of the Ontario W.C.T.U. from 1875 to 1916 was conservatively evangelical in perspective and behaviour. In this religious and ethical context, the W.C.T.U. represented the mainstream of Ontario society. The historiography of the strands of conservative evangelicalism and the more liberal social gospel ideas during this period are thus relevant as well.

Although some significant works were produced about Canadian women prior to the 1970's, including Catherine

Cleverdon's The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada dating from 1950,<sup>3</sup> Mary Quayle Innis' The Clear Spirit of 1966<sup>4</sup> and Isabel Bassett's The Parlour Rebellion,<sup>5</sup> women's history as a separate branch of historical inquiry did not begin in this country until the mid 1970's. Drawing on more established British and American work,<sup>6</sup> Canadian historians patterned their scholarship on similar themes. By mid decade historians such as Alison Prentice in her study of the feminization of teaching<sup>7</sup>, and Veronica Strong-Boag through her work on the National Council of Women<sup>8</sup>, began the systematic investigation of significant women's vocational groups and clubs. This perspective differed from the previous studies which were more concerned with hagiographic treatment of Canadian "Women Worthies".

The methodology was also new. It sought to make women's history an "independent field",<sup>9</sup> focusing on issues of importance to women and investigating these issues from the point of view of representative rather than elitist women. One of the first periods to be investigated, using this novel approach, was the late nineteenth century when the National Council of Women shared the stage with a wide range of national organizations, created and run by middle-aged, well-educated and middle-class women. Chief among these were women's church auxiliaries and missionary societies, art associations, the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, the Victorian Order of Nurses, the Dominion Woman's

Enfranchisement Association and the Young Woman's Christian Association.

Women's historians not only attempted to unearth women's fledgling efforts in the Canadian public sphere, but also to discover their motivation for many ventures. The "social control" thesis was dominant in the early scholarship, ascribing to women motives located primarily in fear. It was argued that these representatives of the middle class were concerned with the loss of Anglo-Saxon ascendancy,<sup>10</sup> with the increased possibility of class conflict,<sup>11</sup> and, most importantly, with the undermining of their own role as mothers.<sup>12</sup> By the late nineteenth century, it was suggested, these fears had been translated by women into platforms for social action. Having rejected the moral rescue work of the evangelicals, for whom the problem loomed as one of individual sin, devoid of its societal context, the new female social activists adopted the faith of the Darwinian social gospel in which a reformed environment was expected to reshape individual and institutional behaviour. In an era of feminist consciousness-raising, the activists were examined by historians and found to be proponents of different strains of feminism, but feminism nonetheless. "Social feminists" were identified by William O'Neill<sup>13</sup> as those women who justified their involvement in the public sphere by their own presumed qualities of superior morality. Unlike classical feminism which based its claims on the natural rights argument, social

feminists did not criticize the concept of family or separate spheres. Daniel Scott Smith proposed a second category from which to view private reform, "domestic feminism".<sup>14</sup> Smith attempted to prove through demographic and literary evidence that women wielded significant authority within the traditional family unit, eventually succeeding in changing the family's structure. His contentions were not widely taken up by Canadian historians, but his arguments forced researchers to consider other than legalistic victories in assessing the nineteenth-century women's movement.

It was, however, "maternal feminism" which received the most intensive treatment by Canadian historians. This rationale provided women with the duty to exercise gender-specific nurturant qualities in the public sphere in the defence of social order, the values of the home and family, and, more specifically, the middle class.<sup>15</sup> Maternal feminism has been utilized as the main interpretive structure in much work on women in the late nineteenth century.<sup>16</sup>

From the above, it is apparent that the term, "feminism" has been defined so broadly as to become almost useless as an analytical tool, and that the class solidarity of maternal feminism has been over-emphasized, unduly disparaging the genuine commitment of such women.<sup>17</sup> However, the discussion of feminist categorization has been productive of new analytical structures to assess women's motivation in social reform.

Emerging from this debate has been the identification of another brand of feminism which can be called "evangelical feminism." Sandra Sizer argues that in the nineteenth century American women used their base of power in evangelical religion to serve their own ends in fashioning an ideology of home and women as the primary vehicles of redemptive power, as "embodiments of a pure community of feeling."<sup>18</sup> This interpretation, shared by Nancy Cott,<sup>19</sup> Ruth Boylan<sup>20</sup>, Kathryn Sklar<sup>21</sup> and Nancy Hardesty<sup>22</sup> is in opposition to the earlier work of Barbara Welter, which argued that the idealized view of womanhood exemplified by the Cult of True Womanhood was created by men to marginalize nineteenth-century middle-class woman. In the Canadian context, George Rawlyk describes the liberating impact of the phenomenon of the evangelical revival, particularly on women:

It became a symbol of the social and religious mood in which all sorts of hitherto internalised and sublimated desires, dreams, hopes and aspirations became legitimized. Women, for example, broke through the hard shell of deference to express deeply felt feelings and to criticize their husbands....<sup>23</sup>

Adopting this positive perspective, such historians have suggested that women were freed to become more assertive by this religious experience in a variety of ways. Evangelical feminism is highly suggestive in its application to the Ontario W.C.T.U. between 1874 and 1916, as will be discussed.

One area of Canadian women's history which remains virtually unexplored is that of single women, either the young woman before marriage or the "independent," permanently unmarried woman. Even in British and American historiography, until recently, the single woman was only mentioned in terms of her vocation or special skill, if she was recognized at all. Hence, there are studies of various working-class options for the single woman: the prostitute,<sup>24</sup> domestic servant,<sup>25</sup> nurse,<sup>26</sup> factory and piece-worker,<sup>27</sup> and mine worker,<sup>28</sup> and later the "white blouse jobs" of clerking and typing.<sup>29</sup> In middle-class society, the English and American single woman had access to, and is often identified with, the more genteel but poorly-paid vocations of governess or teacher,<sup>30</sup> companion/housekeeper<sup>31</sup> or seamstress.<sup>32</sup>

The collective recognition of the single woman in Canadian historiography is even more lacking than in its British and American counterparts. Some nineteenth-century jobs, such as domestic labour, were virtually limited to single women. It has been speculated that the single women who took domestic positions may have had few other prospects, since the isolation of the job, the absence of a clearly-defined job description and glaring inequities of social status made domestic labour the least desirable of all paid employment.<sup>33</sup> Similarly, elementary school teaching, which paid about the same as domestic service,<sup>34</sup> by 1871 had become "feminized" by the single woman. "Gradually, schools taught by married couples or married women working with sisters and daughters disappeared; more and more often, women teachers lost

their jobs if they married."<sup>35</sup> And although Graham Lowe in his highly significant article on the feminization of the clerical occupations ignores the marital status of the women, we know that, given the social mores of the day, the majority must have been single.<sup>36</sup> The stories of single women acting as medical missionaries and as representatives of the Canadian Women's Missionary Societies have been unearthed in recent years by Veronica Strong-Boag,<sup>37</sup> Rosemary Gagan<sup>38</sup> and Ruth Brouwer.<sup>39</sup> Even more shadowy is an understanding of the motivation of single women who were not united through their waged labour or through association with a recognized professional organization such as the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Church of Canada, but through more hard-to-trace bonds such as uninstitutionalized evangelicalism.

Independent single women's lives have been investigated by Carroll Smith-Rosenberg who has traced the connection between women's higher education and the rise of "the new woman". From the 1870's to the 1920's, she calculates that 40 to 60 per cent of women college graduates did not marry at a time when only 10 per cent of all American women remained single.<sup>40</sup> The well-educated single woman used single-sex institutions such as settlement houses and colleges to sustain status based on a women's culture and a lifestyle devoted to female relationships outside the bourgeois home. Similarly, Martha Blauvelt suggests that the nineteenth-century single woman in America had many advantages over her married sisters. Single women had much more social independence,

having the right to attend mixed "Frolicks," pay calls, visit neighbouring towns and enjoy light-hearted passtimes.<sup>41</sup>

But married or single, women in the late nineteenth century were prey to destructive theories about their sexuality. To buttress arguments of women's physical, emotional and mental weakness, women's reproductive organs were regarded as pre-eminent in controlling the female biology, where man's locus of control was thought to reside in his brain<sup>42</sup>. Both assumptions devolved from a belief in the closed system of personal energy with the resulting danger of overtaxing one element in the body so that others are impoverished. At all costs, a balance of bodily functions must be maintained, especially during puberty, or the frail female body could be permanently weakened.<sup>43</sup> A woman overtaxing her slim resources could even be driven insane.<sup>44</sup> A popular Canadian health manual of the 1890's declared, "Woman exists for the sake of the womb."<sup>45</sup> As virtual prisoners of their ovaries, women were enjoined to ensure the healthy development of reproductive organs by getting plenty of rest; avoiding displays of strong emotion (especially anger), down beds, corsets, liquor or other stimulating beverages or foods; and by taking on moderate exercise in fresh air and routine domestic tasks.<sup>46</sup>

When the single woman found herself beyond the reasonable age of marriage and child-bearing, she was relieved of some of these role-restrictive limitations. But even at an age when a "normal" married life would still have been possible, the determinedly single woman would have had much greater freedom, as well as a



greater struggle, than her married counterpart. Some Canadian doctors, for example, believed that marriage itself placed a woman's health in jeopardy both through exacerbating disease of the genitals which already existed and in introducing new disease. Women were sometimes urged to remain single to avoid this horrible fate. At the same time, celibacy was thought to be unhealthy. A Canadian medical textbook of 1894 suggested possible diseases of single women:

Especially is the liability to the formation of fibromas of the uterus greater in unmarried and nulliparous women than in those who have borne children, as if the uterus, deprived of the function of building up a new being, were more liable to use the material for the formation of a tumour.<sup>47</sup>

It seems that the safest medical history for a Victorian woman was to have been a now-celibate mother. Regardless of the many traps into which the unwary woman might fall, the prevailing medical ideology suggested that being single seemed to hold no more medical dangers for the Victorian woman than being married, but that all women were handicapped in leading public lives through the potential problems created by their bodies.

The W.C.T.U. accepted nineteenth-century theories of the closed energy system, causing it to worry about the destructive results of male "self abuse" and female over-exertion. Women were enjoined to remain healthy through rest, reformed dress and moderate exercise. The W.C.T.U. anxiously warned its members to avoid strong emotions and foods which were likely to over-stimulate the

body. But providing a woman took these precautions, W.C.T.U. literature proclaimed an unusual degree of confidence in her ability to effect major societal changes. Thus the prevailing medical ideology was used by the W.C.T.U. to caution, and then empower women with their knowledge.

Martha Vicinus outlines the creatively liminal position of the unmarried woman in this era. "The single woman necessarily took a leadership position in the effort to redefine woman's role in society. Her very lack of an ascribed role in private - she was not a mother or a wife - and in public - she was not part of the male political and social spheres - was to prove both drastically limiting and immensely liberating."<sup>48</sup> The discrepancy between the unrealizable ideal and the stark reality provided the chief ammunition for single women to improve their situations. It is important not to overlook the sad position in which many middle-class single women found themselves during the late Victorian era. The image of the spinster confined to a tiny space in the family home, lacking meaningful work or freedom, is all too accurate.<sup>49</sup> But this was not every single woman's experience, and especially not middle-class single Canadian women of the W.C.T.U. and the Y.W.C.T.U. where single women did take a strong leadership role and proved their abilities to the organization and society. In spite of this contribution, single women's achievements have not been well-documented in official records of organizations. This has not been for lack of numbers. Although single women were consistently in the minority of the

Canadian population between 1891 and 1921,<sup>50</sup> single women in the original British North American provinces, and particularly in the cities of those provinces, considerably outnumbered the single men throughout the same period.<sup>51</sup>

The Y.W.C.T.U. was an organization of young, single women of the middle class, not identified through paid employment or through the denominational missionary societies. Of course, not all would remain 'independent.' While they did, however, the single women of the Y.W.C.T.U. were possessed of remarkable stores of evangelical energy which they applied to social problems in their immediate communities. Their contribution to evangelical philanthropy and social reform deserves to be recorded and analyzed.

Within this "evangelical feminist" historiographical context, in 1977 Wendy Mitchinson completed a doctoral dissertation on four women's national organizations in Canada, including the Woman's Christian Temperance Union.<sup>52</sup> Like Strong-Boag's work on the National Council of Women, the study chose to examine national organizations, largely on the basis of official annual reports. She concluded that the W.C.T.U. was in the forefront of societal change, ahead of women's missionary societies, the National Council of Women or the Young Woman's Christian Association. It took the most controversial stand amongst these groups in its appeal to government to impose prohibition and in its early support for women's suffrage. She viewed the W.C.T.U. as an especially radical interpretation of the maternal feminist position, appealing to

middle-aged, well-educated and middle-class women. Their maternal feminism also accounts, in Mitchinson's view, for their naive analysis of social distress and their tendency to deal with the symptoms of alcohol abuse rather than the root causes. Although she credits the organization with being consistently influenced by religious ideas, her description is of a rather vague Christianity rather than rigorous evangelicalism as a motivating force<sup>53</sup>.

Where this study differs is in its analysis of evangelical ideas within the Ontario W.C.T.U. and Y.W.C.T.U. organizations, and the degree to which these ideas provided the motivation for specific policies and approaches. This investigation has been carried out with particular reference to the Ontario provincial and local union levels which were often at variance with the national executive. Women involved at the local level tended to occupy less affluent and influential positions within the middle class and to exercise their authority in different patterns. However, in Wendy Mitchinson's first major study of the W.C.T.U., local patterns were ignored in favour of elitist groups evincing a higher degree of agreement in ideas and action.

Nancy Sheehan has studied the W.C.T.U.'s activities on the prairies and in the Maritimes. Although rooted in the varied provincial experiences, Sheehan's work is also dependent on official and prescriptive records. While she is unsympathetic to the implicit feminism of W.C.T.U. ideas, and indeed, to the ideological discourse contained in the available records, Sheehan has made a contribution to the historiography by uncovering the

W.C.T.U. educational program used through the provincial school systems.<sup>54</sup> The major weakness of Sheehan's work is a failure to place the W.C.T.U. educational program in a broader ideological context so that its policies can be understood as rational expressions to societal problems. This thesis will attempt to remedy this gap as well.

During the last half of the nineteenth century Canada witnessed the growth of an urbanized middle class based on industrial and commercial wealth, which replaced mercantile ventures of general rather than specialized trade catering to local markets.<sup>55</sup> With the development of a more assured middle class came the self-conscious development of a working class, particularly in Ontario's major industrial cities of Toronto<sup>56</sup> and Hamilton.<sup>57</sup>

The role of women changed in this process of middle-class consolidation. The experience of English women is representative of the American and Canadian. From her position as a business partner, often living over the shop, the middle-class woman developed into mistress of a household which had become separated from the business. Women's marginalization in the public realm was accompanied by her idealization as moral example for the family. The upper levels of the middle class trained the lower orders through the practice of small farmers and tradesmen sending their daughters into domestic service in the homes of the higher ranks. Notions of gentility were thus carried back to their own homes.<sup>58</sup>

The rising middle class was distinguished by evargelical notions of duty and morality in public life, resulting, it is argued, in the female suffrage movement and demands for moral reform to purify society.<sup>59</sup> An improved middle-class position with a correspondingly idealized role for women may also have put in place the suppression of female sexuality as a "tacit condition" of women's newly romanticized position.<sup>60</sup>

Under the doctrine of separate spheres women within the home were assigned a special role as the caretaker of morality and religion, the nurturer of children and the director of domestic arrangements.<sup>61</sup> A woman could have authority, but only indirectly, and only, it was presumed, as a wife and mother. The woman's role within the family was to mediate between the rational, urban life of commerce and the emotional, moral environment of loving domesticity. Woman's mission was "by influence, tasteful economy, intelligent piety and faith to inspire and animate, sooth and resuscitate their men, so that 'the mighty engine of masculine life may be aided in its action and results'."<sup>62</sup> But she had no place outside this "proper sphere", that is, in public life. In 1856, the Reverend Robert Sedgwick, an early Canadian exponent of separate spheres, put the case this way:

Woman is the equal of man, alike in the matter of intellect, emotion, and activity, and ... she has shown her capabilities in these respects .... It would never do, however, from these premises, to draw the conclusion that woman ... is bound to exert her powers in the same direction and for the same ends as man. This were to usurp the place of man - this were to forget her position as the complement of man, and assume a place she is

incompetent to fill, or rather was not designed to fill.<sup>63</sup>

The separate spheres ideology resulted in a strict role prescription for women. The "Cult of True Womanhood"<sup>64</sup> assumed that all women aspired to companionate marriage with a successful husband who was usually absent, a well-managed household with servants, adoring, well-behaved children, and as the overseer of the entire structure, mother: a spiritually-superior "Angel in the House".<sup>65</sup>

Members of the Ontario W.C.T.U. were in most cases situated in the middle class. In rural districts, however, the minute books suggest that the Corresponding Secretaries, likely the best educated of the group, were closer to the "aristocracy of labour" in outlook and expression. But whether working or middle class, the women of the W.C.T.U. were anxious to take a leadership role in their community, and perhaps thereby to raise their family's status. This was due primarily to evangelicalism which required active support in others' salvation.

While accepting of most elements of the cult of domesticity, the membership rejected a severe separate spheres ideology. Believing that a woman's influence should generally be indirect, they still expected this influence to be exercised in the public sphere. Moreover, as will be discussed in chapter five, many women in the movement came to accept the use of legislative action in pursuit of the organization's objectives.

The W.C.T.U. was also an active participant in the "rational

recreation" movement which sought temperance and educational reform for the middle and working classes. It sought to reduce what they perceived as the working class proclivity for violence, or at best, undisciplined rowdyism by keeping a temperate sabbath, making the home and family the centre of leisure activities and encouraging all efforts towards self-improvement.

In the period after 1870, rational recreation was strictly compartmentalized by class and gender.<sup>66</sup> Women walked, the major form of female exercise, but soon younger women supplemented this activity with the new game of lawn tennis and by the team sports of field hockey, lacrosse and cricket. Swedish gymnastics swept into the more progressive girls' schools in the 1890's. But the most controversial physical activity for middle-class women was cycling.

The Canadian medical establishment was split on the merits and dangers of cycling by women. Some physicians lauded cycling for taking women outdoors and giving them exercise which, it was believed, would cure such female ailments as anaemia, constipation, amenorrhoea and dysmenorrhoea. But other doctors worried about the effects on the frail female body of this invigorating exercise. The Dominion Medical Monthly and Ontario Medical Journal reported in 1892 that

...the best saddle does not meet the comforts or requirements of the female pelvis, that aside from the pedal motion that ever tends to provoke erethism, the jolt of the machine is not without evil effect upon the uterus and other generative organs, and is especially apt ... to induce laxity, version, prolapse, with all the concomitants of endometritis,



menorrhagia, etc.<sup>67</sup>

The Ontario W.C.T.U. was as uncertain as Canada's medical doctors about the optimal exercise-levels for women. The Y.W.C.T.U.'s, however, adopted the craze with great enthusiasm. Bicycle clubs arose as separate "departments of work" in some Y's, and were defended as an excellent means to recruit new members.

Closely associated with medical concern for women's sports was the issue of her clothing in this period. "Rational Recreation" was only possible with "Rational Dress." Voluminous skirts, tightly-laced and corseted bodices, layers of clothing in one area alternating with insufficient layers in another, all concerned medical authorities and women's rights leaders. Restrictive clothing made women sedentary; tight lacing placed pressure on, and even displaced internal organs, interfered with normal respiration and produced weak backs and chests.<sup>68</sup> A textbook used for Canadian medical students in the 1890's argued as follows:

The mode of dressing, although changing under the varying caprices of fashion, is always fundamentally wrong and conducive to disease. The 'decollete' evening dress and the bell-shaped nether garments drive the blood from the periphery to the pelvis. The lower part of the abdomen is generally insufficiently protected from cold air and blasts of wind, which become particularly dangerous to women who skate. High heels, when worn at an early age, while all articulations are yet subject to change, not only alter the shape of the foot, but are apt to cause neuralgia in the legs and a change in the inclination of the pelvis and the normal curvature of the back.<sup>69</sup>

But even if the young Victorian woman were permitted calm sports

and rational dress, she still was expected to spend most of her time in the service of her family, alongside her mother who distrusted such active enthusiasms. Confined primarily to the middle-class residence, the married Victorian woman busied herself in manifesting the appropriate cultural signals to reflect her family's status. "A man could achieve success through hard work and initiative, and thereby gain economic power, but his social status, if not actually determined through the family he established, was reflected through it. The style of family life, the quality of domesticity achieved, was the final determinant of the niche he occupied in the social structure."<sup>70</sup> Assuming that the Victorian woman had servants to do the household's manual labour - and this was not an assumption that could safely be made in most lower middle-class households<sup>71</sup> - the middle-class woman could devote her extra time, in the name of her family, to helping others.

By the last half of the nineteenth century in Canada, philanthropy was viewed differently from earlier in the century. Where any system of charity existed in the early 1800's it was voluntary, entirely separate from government, local and officially male-directed. It sought to ameliorate the short-term distress of individuals which had been caused by personal moral lapses. Little questioning was undertaken of the possible linkages of individual poverty and societal stresses. A typical institution of the early model in Ontario was the 1817 Society for the Relief of Strangers where the only criterion for receiving aid was

poverty. It was funded by subscriptions from the "charitable and well-disposed" townspeople of York through out-relief.<sup>72</sup> By the 1880's in Ontario, out-relief had been abandoned in favour of housing the "deserving" indigent in institutions segregated by age, sex, and class.<sup>73</sup>

The process of institutionalizing Ontario's unfortunates had been encouraged by the 1874 Ontario Charity Aid Act, "the first legislative attempt to express and enforce the province's right to require privately operated social welfare institutions to accept provincial inspection and to maintain standards deemed adequate for the performance of their functions."<sup>74</sup> Providing that the Inspector of Charities found the institution to be maintaining acceptable standards of cleanliness and supervision as laid out in the Charity Aid Act, the private institution could be partly supported through public funds.<sup>75</sup> In 1880, J.W. Langmuir, Ontario Inspector of Charities, could report with pride to the National Conference of Charities and Corrections that public monies were helping to support institutions devoted to the care of children, the homeless, women, the mentally ill, the retarded and the aged.<sup>76</sup>

Thus, unlike the Ontario out-relief system of charity which was based on the notion that society's failures resulted from the moral flaws of the victims, the institutionalization of philanthropy in Ontario signalled a new respect for the combined impact of environmentalism and moral failings in explaining the loss of respectability of individuals. It also took the administration of charity out of the hands of ad hoc committees, almost invariably

male committees, and counties or towns, and placed it in the hands of institutions created by the men and women of the rising middle class. The interconnections of environmental influences and personal failure received more sustained investigation, and on a national level rather than the purely local.<sup>77</sup> Men continued to establish and administer institutions for the mentally ill,<sup>78</sup> "incurable" children<sup>79</sup> and aged men,<sup>80</sup> but women often took the initiative to set up refuges for orphans<sup>81</sup> and children of impoverished or fragmented families,<sup>82</sup> young, single women new to cities,<sup>83</sup> abandoned women,<sup>84</sup> prostitutes<sup>85</sup> and aged women<sup>86</sup>.

Where men controlled the organizational structure of their own charities directly or through an advisory board,<sup>87</sup> women often hired and supervised the staff and served as "visitors." Visiting the homes of likely candidates for help, as well as monitoring the day-to-day operations of the institutions, provided large numbers of middle-class women with regular tasks in the public sphere, and an apprenticeship in the organization and running of institutions of their own. Women such as the quiet Ella Bronson of Ottawa, who established the city's first maternity hospital, learned their lessons well, and proceeded to establish organizations with different procedures and objectives than those set up by their husbands.<sup>88</sup>

Wendy Mitchinson argues that the myriad of social welfare institutions of late nineteenth-century Canada were motivated by a new outlook: "And no longer were the interests charitable in nature but rather reformist in orientation."<sup>89</sup> In fact, a number

of organizations dating from this period did remain essentially charitable in nature, for example, those dealing with the aged. Nevertheless, reformist or charitable, late nineteenth-century philanthropy was dominated by middle-class women labouring towards a more humanely Christian society and vociferously demanding government assistance in achieving this objective.

Between 1881 and 1891, Canada's urban population more than doubled, rising from 14 to 37 per cent of the whole population.<sup>90</sup>

In Ontario's case, the growth was also dramatic. While the province's population increased by less than 10 per cent in the same period, the cities and towns increased by an average of 23 per cent. Some urban populations rose by much more than this: Toronto's numbers were up by 88.4 per cent, for example. Ottawa increased by 36 per cent from 1881 to 1891, but by over 60 per cent between 1891 and 1901.<sup>91</sup>

The urbanization of Ontario by 1911 was primarily due to the province's newly-acquired image as an industrial empire. "The phrase 'Empire Ontario' described the natural resource wealth and entrepreneurial energy that had been recently discovered within the boundaries of the province. It implied extraction and manufacture, the creation of a new pattern of industrialization linked to the northern resource base."<sup>92</sup> That the image was largely illusory<sup>93</sup> did not deter the flood into the cities, from within the province

and beyond.

The combined impact of urbanization and industrialization drew a number of responses from Ontario's citizens. One proposal was to mount urban reform movements. This crusade was rooted in the concept of the evil city and an idealized rural simplicity and cleanliness. Its scope was a wide one, aiming for broad social justice: the creation of a healthy environment, the regulation of utility corporations, the beautification of the city centre, town planning, tax reform, the remodelling of municipal government, and the elimination of crime and vice.<sup>94</sup> One major wing of the movement saw the solution in the expansion and founding of new municipal social service agencies.<sup>95</sup> Some of these agencies were supported by city councils by the 1890's, for example, the Associated Charities<sup>96</sup> and the Children's Aid Society.<sup>97</sup> Some were supported by the churches, with the Methodist-supported All Peoples' Mission acting as an example for Toronto Settlement Houses. But many others, including those established to deal with problems of intemperance and prostitution, were ignored by city councils and the churches. In these instances the vital new services and their agencies were supported and sometimes provided by middle-class women. Foremost in this movement was the W.C.T.U. and the Y.W.C.T.U. Their special concern was for the city's working poor with its collection, as they saw it, of intemperate men, abused, abandoned and fallen women and neglected children.

The late nineteenth century was an era during which the people of Ontario defined their nationalism within the larger context of

imperialism. As the troops returned from the Boer War in 1900, "back to flags and public rejoicings and to gifts, benefits and promises of free land, Ontario met them with a pride which was shared by most of the country.... The gain ... seemed visible on every hand, in the strengthened bond with the empire and the sense of a new unity that pervaded English Canada."<sup>98</sup> In this concern for the nation's pride, unity and continued vitality, middle-class Ontario women agreed in large part with the male political, educational and clerical authorities. Such groups as the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire were especially concerned that the link to Britain remain strong. But this does not suggest that other groups, such as the W.C.T.U., were blind to the jingoism of the imperial connection, and the dangers of unquestioned alliance with Britain in unsavory colonial struggles. The W.C.T.U. fully supported the idealist and humanist principles of imperialism, but remained wary of the militarist motives of such Canadian imperial federalists as Colonel Denison. Carl Berger has defined the imperialist ethic which appealed most strongly to groups like the W.C.T.U.:

One of the most distinctive features of the imperialist mind was the tendency to infuse religious emotion into secular purposes. The contention that the British Empire was a providential agency, the greatest secular instrument for good in the world, was a widely held conviction among imperialists, but in few places was the conception of Christian responsibility which underlay it more graphically presented than in the writings and experiences of G.M. Grant and G.R. Parkin. They called for a dedication of material things and human effort to spiritual ends and created an imperialist ethic which was so

intense, so insistent upon self-sacrifice, that men must have wondered whether it could ever be achieved in this world.<sup>99</sup>

Men may have wondered, but evangelical women associated with the W.C.T.U. understood the necessity of sacrificing material comfort for spiritual purposes in a program centred on self-sacrifice.

Victorian Canadians were distinguished not only by their faith in nationalism through imperialism, but also by an acceptance of the Idealism of Carlyle, Ruskin and Edward Caird. The central postulate of this belief was that the physical, material world was part of a larger spiritual reality in which the individual could only participate through intuitive perception. The natural and social world was part of a grand design, it was held, in which rank and order occupied an unvarying position in the chain of life, and in which absolute moral truth obtained, all of which reflected a transcendent intelligence. The impact of an evolutionary, Darwinian universe in which the only admissible evidence was empirical data undermined the alliances of natural science, absolute morality and religion. It established an essential struggle between empiricism and idealism, and in operative terms, between critical inquiry and moral conviction.<sup>100</sup> Carl Berger has noted that the ideas of evolution by means of natural selection touched every aspect of intellectual understanding in this period:

Because of the intimate association of natural history and religion in Britain, evolution inevitably brought into question the notion of the Bible as an inspired text in which God had spoken to man of his history, his duties, and his destiny. Evolution above all inverted the tenets of the old natural history tradition. For a benevolent, supervising deity it



substituted a blind, relentless, physical process; for adaptations deliberately designed, random adjustments; for harmony, abiding violence and conflict; for plan and economy, order and balance, a chaotic wasteful process in which millions of beings were born only to die for no apparent purpose; for nature arranged for man's benefit, a natural law operating without any apparent regard for human values.<sup>101</sup>

The competition between these two intellectual systems in Canada and elsewhere represented the outstanding ideological conflict of the late nineteenth century.<sup>102</sup>

Those wrestling with the empirical challenge to religion posed by Darwinian thought were also troubled by Darwinian theories on the scientific divergence of the sexes. In his Descent of Man, Darwin described the process of separate development of human males and females. He contended that, unlike females, males were provided with a higher metabolic rate with a greater tendency to vary. The forces of natural selection produced a stronger and more intelligent male. The demands of motherhood further emphasized the female's dependence on her mate, and eventually produced a brain of lower weight. Furthermore, centuries of natural selection had produced a more primitive female brain. Darwin postulated a hierarchy of mental functions in ascending order from instinct, to emotion, to intuition, to imagination and finally to reason. Males' more highly-evolved brain performed the most sophisticated functions easily while the simpler female brain was best adapted to the lower orders, closer to the animal range.<sup>103</sup> "It is generally admitted that with women the powers of intuition, of

rapid perception, and perhaps of imitation are more strongly marked than in man."<sup>104</sup> These views were taken up and elaborated by such authorities as Dr. Edward Clarke of Harvard who used the theories to provide a critique of women's involvement in higher education.

As conservative evangelicals, the Ontario W.C.T.U. generally dismissed empiricism in favour of idealism throughout this period. In so doing, it could also reject Darwinian theories of women's arrested development in favour of Christian doctrine where it professed to find equality of the sexes before God, particularly as this was interpreted through evangelicalism.

Temperance and evangelicalism were fundamental values in the new middle class of Britain, the United States and Canada. The issues of self control and individual morality were central to the developing ideology which placed the highest value on piety, sobriety and domesticity.<sup>105</sup> In Britain the drive for middle-class respectability was closely associated with the "chapel" movement which included such forms of rational recreation as Sunday Schools, the Temperance Youth and Adult Clubs, all of which appealed especially to the "aristocracy of labour," rather than the common person.<sup>106</sup> In the United States, by contrast, temperance and evangelicalism, expressed in terms of conservative morality and defence of religion, were movements of the majority.<sup>107</sup> They were, most particularly, movements of middle-class women. Because of

their special roles in the revivalism of the earlier two Great Awakenings, and in the temperance battle represented by the Women's Crusade of the 1870's, middle-class American women were drawn powerfully to the ideals of conservative evangelicalism. Falling heir to this tradition through their links with the American Sunday School Movement, the Ontario W.C.T.U. support for temperance and conservative evangelicalism also represented the opinions of the majority of Ontario middle-class women and many men during the late Victorian period.

The British evangelical revival of the eighteenth century adopted a religious idiom as the cultural norm for the rising middle class. "At its heart was concern with individual salvation, only to be won by active struggle. This thrusting religion cut through both the fatalism of the labouring poor and the indifference of the rich.... [The] outlook fostered humanist compassion for the helpless and weak: women, children, animals, the insane, the prisoner."<sup>108</sup> But it did not ascribe any particular agency to women: this was a male-directed ideology, concerned with asserting control over these same groups which were regarded as closer to nature and removed from the new civilization, peripheral, if not outside the social order. This does not suggest, however, that women were not numerous in the movement. "I have heard Mr. Wesley remark," reported an ex-Methodist, "that more women are converted than men; and I believe that by far the greatest part of his people are females."<sup>109</sup> A sample of East Cheshire Methodists in the later eighteenth century showed that women made

up 55 per cent of the sample with almost half of them unmarried.<sup>110</sup>

The Second Evangelical Revival in Britain, beginning around 1858, changed the character of the movement and inspired adherents "who were more fanatical, more bigoted and more introverted than those who followed Wilberforce and Shaftesbury."<sup>111</sup> Nevertheless, it was during this period that women were heavily involved in door-to-door visiting. Teams of women would call on perhaps twenty families at frequent intervals to deliver tracts, encourage attendance at worship and report cases of need to the minister. After 1857 their work was supplemented by Mrs. Ranyard's Bible women, full-time paid visitors directed at the working class. Theoretically a band of married women, the "District Visiting Society" of Lambeth was described as being predominantly comprised of the older unmarried women and daughters of comfortable middle-class homes.<sup>112</sup> Thus, as essential handmaids of this revived evangelicalism, British female converts do not seem to have determined policy or their own activities. At best, nineteenth-century evangelicalism, it is argued, enlarged women's sphere.<sup>113</sup>

Next to sexual wrong-doing, British evangelicals most condemned drunkenness. This took the form of agitation for a restriction of licensing hours and the limitation of the number of drink outlets. Organizations such as the Bands of Hope for children, Temperance Societies, Teetotal Clubs and Coffee Taverns for adults were established. But few of these included women, either as initiator or client. Its other campaigns are summarized by G.M. Young:

Evangelicalism imposed on society, even on classes which were indifferent to its religious basis and unaffected by its economic appeal, its code of Sabbath observance, responsibility, and philanthropy; of discipline in the home, regularity of affairs; it had created a most effective technique of agitation, of private persuasion and social persecution.<sup>114</sup>

In the most general terms, evangelicalism demanded that "the enemy is the spirit of the world, silently blotting out any true awareness of the Christian destiny of man and the life of moral earnestness it demanded."<sup>115</sup> The spirit of the world could only be denied, in evangelical thought, within the fortress of the home:

...The home was a source of virtues which were nowhere else to be found, least of all in business and society. And that in turn made it a place radically different from the surrounding world ... it was a place apart, a walled garden, in which certain virtues too easily crushed by modern life could be preserved, and certain desires of the heart too much thwarted be fulfilled ... a sacred place, a temple.<sup>116</sup>

It is not difficult to appreciate the power of the romanticizing of home, and of the woman who ruled in that private sphere. "Evangelicalism was never really a theological system so much as a way of life," writes Ian Bradley. "It did not present itself to its adherents as a logical set of beliefs but rather as a series of vivid and compelling personal experiences."<sup>117</sup> Thus, it was also open to revision, and particularly to the alterations forged by strong personalities.<sup>118</sup>

American evangelicalism arose during the Second Great Awakening of 1795 to 1840, but its impact was felt far beyond that period: "The story of American Evangelicalism," one writer has asserted, "is the story of America itself in the years 1800 to 1900."<sup>119</sup> Both Richard Hofstadter's equation of evangelicalism with anti-intellectualism<sup>120</sup> and Winthrop Hudson's argument that evangelicalism displayed little theological creativity or intellectual rigor<sup>121</sup> have been disputed by Ronald Walters, who argues that ideas such as millennialism, perfectionism and voluntarism were significant contributions to the American intellectual tradition.<sup>122</sup> George Marsden has also decried the facile notion of evangelicalism as lacking a strong intellectual base.<sup>123</sup> At the same time, however, he notes that the emphasis placed by evangelicals on creed, individualism and personal salvation encouraged strong leaders and a tradition of personal empire-building. "Even where denominational concerns continued, the organizational dynamic of the movement was built around individual leaders and empires made up of agencies dedicated to specific causes."<sup>124</sup>

In the nineteenth century, evangelicals came to accept that the world could be improved through the moral agency of each individual. "The sinner stood alone before God."<sup>125</sup> But the community which had experienced salvation could induce conversion in the sinful by disseminating literature, including Bibles, manuals of devotion and tracts, and staging prayer meetings and rallies to awaken the sinner's hunger for salvation.<sup>126</sup> Having

faced their sinfulness, confessed their sins completely and unreservedly and called on the Lord for forgiveness often through the complex emotional catharsis of revival, true believers could expect God to respond immediately by descending in the form of the spirit into their being, releasing them from anguish.<sup>127</sup> This personal salvation could be transformed into love for others. "The divine method of human improvement begins in human hearts through evangelical truth, and it spreads from within outwardly till all is renewed."<sup>128</sup> The truly penitent could look forward to a millenium when Christian principles, based on God's strictures through Scripture, would govern worldly activity. Evangelicals pointed to an ideal social order in which individual salvation would reflect this Godly vision of human interaction. Thus, evangelicals were concerned about more than their personal salvation. The sense of moral agency with which they approached a sinful nineteenth-century society engaged them in a wide variety of social reform activities as an expression of their own salvation.

The foundation for following these specific causes is seen by several American historians as a revivalist commitment to social reform. "Indeed, some would reason that historians' preoccupation with evangelicalism as a social phenomenon is because evangelicalism took as its goal nothing less than the reformation of society. Thus the social dimension was necessary for the integrity of the evangelical vision itself."<sup>129</sup> Because of the work of such scholars as Timothy L. Smith,<sup>130</sup> Paul Boyer,<sup>131</sup> Donald

Dayton<sup>132</sup> and Nancy Hardesty,<sup>133</sup> it has become accepted in many quarters that evangelicalism provided the ideological underpinnings and the technical skills for the varied reform crusades of the late nineteenth century in America.

In contrast to the British instance, American women played a central role in this process. Martha Blauvelt has shown that women comprised two-thirds of those joining the New Jersey Presbyterian, New England Congregationalist and Southern evangelical churches.<sup>134</sup> Mary Ryan finds that the majority of revival converts were female, mobile, young, and of relatively low social status.<sup>135</sup> In an effort to explain the high percentage of single female membership, Nancy Cott has suggested that New England's growing commercialism unsettled the family, and especially single women in the early nineteenth century. Such women lost much of their economic significance within the family and found themselves seeking employment without the traditional supports of family and kin. In response, she argues, they turned to religion, to find sympathetic companionship with other women and personal confidence through their decision to come to Christ.<sup>136</sup> The long-range result of women's association with evangelical revivalism, argues Nancy Hardesty, was to prepare the nation for nineteenth-century feminism. "[Revivalism's] ...theology and practice motivated and equipped women and men to adopt a feminist ideology, to reject stereotyped sex roles, and to work for positive changes in marriage, church, society, and politics."<sup>137</sup>

The period from 1835 to 1857 was marked in the United States by



localism of religious expression and few major evangelical revivals. In this period, evangelical women were occupied with the abolitionist movement and confined their efforts to the home and immediate community. "Prevented from publicly proselytizing men, devout women sought converts mainly among their own sex ... the fact that women were compelled to recruit converts largely among other females assured that evangelical religion would remain women's domain throughout the nineteenth century."<sup>138</sup> Still, a "community of feeling" survived because of the American liberal clergy's alliance with middle-class women, argues Ann Douglas.<sup>139</sup> The alliance, born out of both groups' isolation from the primary processes of government and decision-making, applies also to middle-class women and the evangelical clergy, suggests Sandra Sizer.<sup>140</sup> The result of these alliances was to produce a more emotional, accommodating and "domesticated" religion, including such theological changes as earlier baptism for children, the end to the concept of infant damnation and the depiction of Christ as "the exemplar of meekness and humility, the sacrificial victim."<sup>141</sup>

Women's active involvement in the lay revival of 1857-58 and in the 1875-77 revivals orchestrated by the charismatic team of Dwight L. Moody and Ira Sankey was tolerated and even nurtured. Similarly, Charles Finney, the evangelical revivalist, had "hoped to make social reform an evangelical obligation and a religious act."<sup>142</sup>

Furthermore, the well-educated, prosperous and pious middle-class women placed their own pressure on religious authorities to provide them with an outlet for talent.<sup>143</sup> Public life for such women was becoming increasingly limited in this era of the Cult of True Womanhood, causing many to make the church and social reform the primary concern of their lives. One avenue for literate women was to team with clergy in writing most of the lyrics of the revivals' gospel hymns. Another route to activity was through penning popular literature as well as the more conventional church and reform activities. From this base, argues Sandra Sizer, women developed an ideology of "evangelical domesticity."<sup>144</sup> Barbara Welter has demonstrated how women's continuing involvement in evangelical religion added credence to the Cult of True Womanhood by threatening neither republican ideals nor male authority and by validating such behaviours as submissiveness, domesticity and purity.<sup>145</sup> "Victorian America insisted that the 'true woman's' very nature was pious: religiosity, it was declared, was synonymous with femininity."<sup>146</sup> But the tradition of feminine piety imbued women, not with an unquestioning acceptance of clerical and male authority, but with a sense of moral superiority and righteousness that bred discontent with a society apparently rejecting the primacy of the family and the sanctity of the home. It also, suggests Nancy Cott, provided a self-identity, collective consciousness and organizational strategies.

The galvanizing experience for women in the evangelical tradition came with the Women's Crusades of 1873 and 1874. At the

close of the 1840's revivals, Barbara Epstein contends, women moved into temperance agitation which gave an opportunity for the ideology of female agency in defence of the home and children to be fought on new ground. Women's anger at the havoc wrecked by alcohol on innocent victims found expression in this fundamentally evangelical campaign against liquor and male violence.<sup>147</sup>

In the late nineteenth century, the American "evangelical empire" collapsed, as it had in Britain. "Something shattering happened to the evangelical consensus, which was strong in 1855 ... but a shambles by 1915," writes Leonard Sweet.<sup>148</sup> Termed the "Great Reversal"<sup>149</sup> where those once on the cutting edge of social reform now brought up the rear, it has been argued that the "Great Split" would be a more accurate term.<sup>150</sup> Although this analysis has been hampered by little research, it is clear that evangelicalism divided into "modernist" versus "fundamentalist," or "liberal evangelical" as opposed to "conservative evangelical" camps. It is likely that the causes related to Biblical criticism, different perspectives on Darwinianism, the impact of professionals on denominational philanthropy and the relationship of the individual to society. One important corrective in the American historiography of this process, however, has been to salvage the evangelical wing of the emerging social gospel movement.<sup>151</sup> Ronald C. White and C. Howard Hopkins make a strong case against equating social activism exclusively with theological liberalism. They argue that both liberals and conservatives were active in social reform, though they approached problems

differently<sup>152</sup>.

Canadian treatment of evangelicalism has been much more meagre. In his 1968 article on "The Evangelical Creed in Canada," Goldwin French defined evangelicals very broadly as being those who evaluated action according to God's will rather than expediency, and who subscribed to the ideas of original sin, faith as a free gift of God, the experience of sanctification through revivals, and the visiting of God's wrath on sinful behaviour. Given these characteristics, French thought evangelicalism to be the mainstream of the reform tradition in Canada.<sup>153</sup>

In Stewart Crysdale's discussion of the origins of the social gospel movement in Canada, which he suggests may have had some indigenous causes, no mention whatever is made of evangelicalism.<sup>154</sup> Christopher Headen credits the evangelical revival with paving the way for acceptance of the social gospel in Canada, if not women's role within that movement. "Overall, women remained within rigid denominational structures in a passive dependent relationship to men...."<sup>155</sup> He accounts for the Methodists embracing the social gospel by the waning popularity of the evangelical tradition. Evangelicalism was eclipsed by a quest for respectability with its material aspirations of large church buildings and secular entertainment. Higher criticism, fueled by Darwinian logic, brought into question the Biblical literalism of the evangelical creed. Evidence that evangelicalism was in precipitous decline by 1910 included the Methodist General Council's elimination of the "note," passed in 1886, which had condemned "dancing, playing at

games of chance, encouraging lotteries, attending theatres, horse races, circuses, dancing parties, attending dancing schools".<sup>156</sup> Although Headen accepts that evangelicalism experienced the most extensive challenge among urban congregations with their clergy trained in the new theological colleges, he and most other Canadian religious historians of this period do not distinguish adequately between urban and rural congregations. The urban experience is regarded as the norm, even though most of Ontario's residents lived until 1921 in rural districts. There is no doubt that the urban experience is important, but it was not the only experience.

In his celebrated book on the social gospel, published in 1971, Richard Allen describes the liberal wing of evangelicalism as the precursor, but not the contemporary of social gospelism. While he accepts the evangelical motive for social reform, he suggests that its principles, preoccupied with personal salvation, were found to be inadequate to deal with a society in such distress. "As evangelicalism became more diffused in the latter half of the century, as more organic forms of social thought emerged, and as awareness of the demands of the social problem became more acute, the underlying individualism of the evangelical way seemed to many to be less and less appropriate."<sup>157</sup> Thus, encumbered with a perspective which was outdated and incapable of dealing with the depth of society's problems or the Darwinian challenge, Allen believes that liberal adherents of evangelicalism abandoned their considerable program of social reform and took up the social gospel. In The Regenerators Ramsay Cook continues in this view,

arguing that "the manner in which liberal Protestants responded to the socio-economic, scientific, and historical challenges of the nineteenth century resulted in Christianity becoming less rather than more relevant."<sup>158</sup> The fate of conservative evangelicals is left unstated by either historian. Presumably, they were so marginalized by higher criticism that they faded away quietly. Allen's and Cook's analyses, like Headon's, carry an urban bias and assume that changes in religious orientation occurred far more rapidly than the evidence of the W.C.T.U. would suggest. Furthermore, they quite disregard the many Canadians who still held to the evangelical creed by 1914, they misrepresent a good deal of the social activism in Ontario during that era, and they generally disregard women entirely. This error by omission is clear also in Ramsay Cook's study of social criticism and social reform in English-speaking Protestant Canada in the same period.<sup>159</sup> This is no minor omission: the W.C.T.U. was the largest non-denominational organization of its time in the entire country, boasting over 16,000 members nationally by 1914, and over 8,000 in Ontario. It represented conservative evangelical women who held tenaciously to their vision of a new social order and, quite obviously, not a secular order!

William Westfall has approached evangelicalism from the standpoint of millenarians who, "far from believing that their age was one of unrelenting improvement, interpreted current affairs in apocalyptic terms."<sup>160</sup> He argues that by 1870 a distinctive Protestant culture had taken root in Ontario comprised of four

denominations' outlooks: Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian and Anglican. All of these had evangelical wings and millennarian sub-groups and, while the era of camp meetings and revivals was spent by 1860, the elements of cathartic salvation were preserved in Bible-reading groups and the Sunday Schools, particularly in rural districts.<sup>161</sup> By the mid nineteenth century, he argues, the "religion of experience" in the reshaped Methodist Church was no longer an intense emotion that struck the supplicant down, but a more temperate force that raised her up. "Experience was now clothed in the rhetoric of inspiration and heroic individualism. The religion of experience had become a romantic evangelicalism".<sup>162</sup>

John Webster Grant argues that with a growing belief in the importance of environmental factors in determining personal inclination, and therefore salvation, evangelicals now began to devote themselves to the sinfulness of social problems. Secularism and the rising materialism of the age became the great enemy. In this context, Finney had introduced to Canadian evangelicalism the notion of opposition to alcoholic measures by encouraging abstinence as a helpful step towards conversion and insisting on it as a test of genuine commitment.<sup>163</sup> The second target in this campaign to assure individuals' and therefore society's salvation was strict observance of the sabbath.<sup>164</sup> It was from this tradition of millenarianism, individual responsibility before God, community support for the salvationist process, and eventually reform of a materialist, secular society that the W.C.T.U. emerged.

Within the context of the Cult of Domesticity, W.C.T.U. women developed an Evangelical Domesticity. In this construct, the home was of critical importance in providing a refuge from an evil world. As "mother" in this sanctified space, women "could tame, and ultimately save, the rest of the world."<sup>165</sup>

Therefore, with the exceptions of John Webster Grant's and William Westfall's work, the impact of evangelicalism on Canadian society has been ignored or misconstrued. Christopher Headen is simply incorrect in his assertion that women remained passive and dependent in the face of the evangelical challenge. It is also inaccurate to suggest that evangelicalism was beating a hasty retreat by 1910, particularly amongst women in the small towns and rural districts of Ontario, or that evangelicalism - or conventional denominations for that matter - failed to incorporate new ideas and strategies into their message. John Webster Grant suggests that this was the position in which all Christian groups found themselves in Canada:

Neither the world nor the evidence was as hospitable to traditional formulations of Christianity as before. Religious leaders on their side were beginning to diagnose elements of systemic evil in society which these traditional formulations did not seem adequately to address. It was not strange that they rushed to update their message while holding fast to Victorian moral verities.<sup>166</sup>

Evangelicalism in 1916 was not what it had been in 1874, but then neither was denominational Methodism unchanged in that period, nor, for that matter, secular social criticism and philosophy! While



Canada's liberal elite may well have found it inadequate to its purposes, this was not everyone's view. Finally, the clumsy dichotomy of a liberal/social gospel/reformist impulse opposing a conservative/evangelical/other worldly retrenchment is unfair to the historical record of both the social gospel and evangelical movements. To say that social gospelism called for a societal reformation on Christian principles should not suggest that conservative evangelicals did not also desire societal reform. Evangelical women of the W.C.T.U. worked long and hard for social reform through a variety of sophisticated channels. Their considerable contribution to Canadian society deserves to be recognized and analyzed in the same fashion as has been applied to the smaller, more elitist liberal forces from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Yet, while sympathetic to and very influential in effecting social reform, these evangelical women were not social gossellers, for they still believed intensely in the primacy of personal salvation before the society could be saved.

#### ENDNOTES

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14. Daniel Scott Smith, "Family Limitation, Sexual Control, and Domestic Feminism in Victorian America," Mary Hartman and Lois Banner, eds., Clio's Consciousness Raised (New York, 1974).
15. For example see Terry Crowley, "Madonnas Before Magdalenes: Adelaide Hoodless and the Making of the Canadian Gibson Girl," Canadian Historical Review 67 (December, 1986).
16. See Wayne Roberts, "'Rocking the Cradle for the World': The New Woman and Maternal Feminism, Toronto, 1877-1914," Veronica Strong-Boag, "Canada's Women Doctors: Feminism Constrained," Suzanne Buckley, "Ladies or Midwives?: Efforts to Reduce Infant and Maternal Mortality," Wendy Mitchinson, "The W.C.T.U.: 'For God, Home and Native Land': A Study in Nineteenth-Century Feminism," and Barbara Roberts, "'A Work of Empire': Canadian Reformers and British Female Immigration," all in Kealey, ed. A Not Unreasonable Claim. See also Nancy M. Sheehan, "The W.C.T.U. on the Prairies, 1886-1930: An Alberta-Saskatchewan Comparison," Prairie Forum 6 (Spring, 1981) and "Women Helping Women: The W.C.T.U. and the Foreign Population of the West, 1905-1930," International Journal of Women's Studies 6 (1983). For a different view see Deborah Gorham, "Singing Up The Hill," Canadian Dimension 10 (1975) and Veronica Strong-Boag, "Pulling in Double Harness or Hauling a Double Load: Women, Work and Feminism on the Canadian Prairie," Journal of Canadian Studies 21 (1986).
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## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **ORIGINS**

#### **"NOT TO BUY DRINK, SELL OR GIVE ALCOHOLIC LIQUORS WHILE I LIVE"**

The first local Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union was organized by Letitia Youmans in Picton, Prince Edward County, in December, 1874. Almost a year earlier, the organization had been founded in Fredonia, New York, but the National W.C.T.U. was not constituted until its Cleveland Convention in November, 1874. Fired by the evangelical enthusiasm of the Cleveland Convention, Youmans resolved to plant the W.C.T.U. in Ontario soil. That the first local union arose in a small town rather than an urban setting is indicative of the profile which the W.C.T.U. maintained in the province. That it was founded by the evangelical figure of

Letitia Youmans also set the Ontario W.C.T.U. apart from its mother organization in the United States.

Letitia Youmans had been raised in an intensely evangelical household through which she had experienced the excitement of revivalism as a young girl. Supported by her family, she presented herself for prayers at a revival meeting. But to her distress she was turned away because of her youth.

This seems to me to have been a mistake. Christians instead of bringing the children to Jesus, too often allow them to grow up in sin, until their hearts are so hardened as to be almost impervious to the Spirit's influence. Never, at any subsequent period, have I had keener consciousness of sin, nor a higher sense of my responsibility to God than I had at this time.<sup>1</sup>

Youmans' life-long service to children's education as a Sabbath School instructor, Band of Hope organizer and Ladies' Academy teacher would seem to bear out this confidence in children's interpretive abilities and goodness.

Her evangelicalism and interdenominational position was also developed by attendance at Professor Van Norman's Ladies' Seminary at Cobourg where Friday evenings were devoted to religious services featuring all denominations represented in the school. These too were strongly revivalist in tone. At one, she

arose and from that moment I felt that I was committed to the service of God, and in a little prayer-meeting a few evenings afterwards, with a few of my schoolmates, who, like myself, were seeking to realize the pardoning love of God, we were enabled to venture upon the sin-atoning sacrifice, and



claim Jesus as our Saviour, and take Him as our guide.<sup>2</sup>

Youman's childhood had also been indelibly marked by the almost gothic sufferings of townspeople sacrificed to alcoholism. She describes coming on the rotting body of the local drunkard, "swarming with worms" after he had lain unattended and unmissed for days. "This was my first impressive temperance lesson and I still look back to it with horror" she wrote<sup>3</sup>. But her greatest sympathies were marshalled for the innocent women and children whose lives had been destroyed by the bread-winner's addiction to alcohol. A sense of Youmans' sensitivity for others' suffering and her gift for evocative description is gained through her story of the next-door neighbour, a "heart-broken wife and mother" who sewed to support herself and her children,

while the man who had promised at God's altar to support and protect her until death, and who might have had a first-class salary as an accountant, was spending what little he did earn in a bar-room and sharing the pittance of his wife's earnings with the children.

One day his children discovered his stash of liquor hidden in the long grass and came to tell their mother. She had them lead her to it, whereupon she announced,

'Children, I want you to kneel down,' and then, holding up the bottle, said, 'Here is the cause of all our trouble, and the reason I have to work so hard, and why you cannot get books to go to school, and sometimes we have not even enough food or fire to keep us warm. Now, there is one thing that would make me suffer still more than I have yet, that is, if one of my children should ever get to be drunkard, it would break my heart. Raise your right hands to heaven (they raised those

little hands, with streaming eyes fixed on their mother). 'Now,' said she, 'I want you to promise - and God will hear the vow - that you will never taste anything that would make you a drunkard.' They made the solemn promise while she broke the bottle.<sup>4</sup>

At the age of twenty-three, Youmans married a widower with eight children and settled down in Picton. With her supportive husband, she became deeply involved in temperance lodge work, serving as Superintendent of Juvenile Work in the Grand Lodge of the Order of Templars. She was also an editorial member of the Templars' Temperance Union. She organized a Band of Hope and worked steadily at Sabbath School instruction, travelling to a Sabbath School Convention at Lake Chautauqua in 1874. Thereafter she began the W.C.T.U. in her town. In 1875 she established the first urban union in Toronto.

Youmans became the first Ontario W.C.T.U. president in 1877, and the first Dominion W.C.T.U. president in 1888. She went on to have a prominent role at the World's level and with the American National W.C.T.U. She was widely recognized as a "woman of brains and power" and as an outstanding orator.<sup>5</sup> An early biographer of the Ontario W.C.T.U. credits Youmans' demands for a Scientific Temperance course in the public schools as the source for the government's nick-name for the W.C.T.U.: "Women Constantly Troubling Us." When the Education Minister provided an inadequate response to the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s request for a course in temperance, "Mrs. Youmans, metaphorically, took her slipper to Hon. Geo. Foster .... Mr. Foster's critic certainly left her mark, if

not on his body, at least on his spirit...."<sup>6</sup> A Canadian Frances Willard, she was the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s strongest personality. However, as the organization's pioneer organizer, Youmans drafted a different blue-print for the Ontario and Canadian organization than Willard used for the American. More decentralized in structure, more consciously evangelical in ethic and less inclined to fight legislative battles, the Ontario W.C.T.U. developed a separate identity almost from the start.

No Ontario structure was set up until 1877, and even then, and for several years thereafter, the focus of provincial work was the convening of annual conventions. Because of the personal friendship of Letitia Youmans and Frances Willard, President after 1879 of the National [American] W.C.T.U., the Ontario and American organizations kept in close communication throughout much of the nineteenth century.

By the 1880's, the W.C.T.U. had been organized in several other provinces, and by 1888 a Dominion W.C.T.U. was established. As in the case of the provincial structure, the primary function of the Dominion Level was to hold conventions and speak for the W.C.T.U. on national matters. The Dominion W.C.T.U. was a pioneer association in being the first non-denominational woman's group in Canada to organize on the national level.<sup>7</sup> Wendy Mitchinson credits the Dominion W.C.T.U. with providing a national podium for women, a chance for such women to broaden their perspective on public issues, and the confidence to speak out on such issues.<sup>8</sup>

While this is undoubtedly true, the Dominion W.C.T.U. was a "late starter" in comparison with the Provincial and Local unions where far more substantial work was accomplished. The Dominion level was not representative of the typical W.C.T.U. activities during this era. Increasingly, the Dominion group saw itself as a rather august political forum where florid sentiments were expressed, resolutions passed and high-profile guests were honoured.<sup>9</sup> Neither the Provincial nor county levels devoted as much time to posturing in this way. Thus, by basing her comments almost exclusively on the Dominion level of the W.C.T.U. and very heavily on the leadership at that level, the motivation, work and impact of the W.C.T.U. in Canada is somewhat distorted.

The World Woman's Christian Temperance Union first met in Boston in 1891, the joint effort of Frances Willard of the National W.C.T.U. and her British counterpart, Lady Henry Somerset. The close friendship of Willard and Somerset was reflected in the American and British dominance in this organization. While Canadian representatives regularly attended its conventions, it was remote from the real work of the Ontario W.C.T.U.<sup>10</sup>

The Ontario W.C.T.U. had its origins in several types of American and British temperance organizations: the society, lodge and federation, the Women's Crusades and the resulting American Woman's Christian Temperance Union, the Sunday School movement, and the Bands of Hope. The American influence through male temperance groups, evangelical women's initiatives and the original W.C.T.U. was undoubtedly stronger than the British in the early and mid

nineteenth century. American male temperance groups established a tradition in Ontario that further informed the early Ontario W.C.T.U. efforts. Non-evangelical and male-directed, the male temperance lodges and societies had different motivations and used different tactics in their campaign to rid the province of "demon alcohol." Because Ontario women had learned to co-operate with male temperance groups, the model of the American Women's Crusades and W.C.T.U. was also adapted to the Ontario setting. The British influence was felt mainly in the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s work with children. Techniques pioneered by the Sunday School movement and the Bands of Hope provided the Ontario organization with an enduring focus for their work on children. Even though the Sunday Schools and Bands of Hope had pre-dated the W.C.T.U., the development of strategies to effectively educate youth shaped the W.C.T.U. in Ontario. The result was a W.C.T.U. that differed from both of its mentors, and from Canadian men's temperance groups as well.

The first American temperance reformer was Dr. Benjamin Rush whose major concern was the effect of alcohol on health. His 1755 pamphlet, "An Enquiry into the Effects of Ardent Spirits on the Human Body and Mind,"<sup>11</sup> became a model for the medical temperance lecture. The first medical doctor to champion the cause in Ontario was Peter Scholefield who delivered a similar message in his lecture in June, 1828. In arguing the medical implications of alcohol, Scholefield cited "an instance where a whole family, a woman and several children, died the last winter entirely from the

effects of ardent spirits. I have been credibly informed that the coroner of the District of Bathurst has held about twenty inquests over dead bodies, and that every one, without exception, had been produced by ardent spirits."<sup>12</sup>

The first temperance societies appeared in British North America soon afterward from the United States.<sup>13</sup> There, two models had been used. The Massachusetts Society for the Suppression of Intemperance had tried to unite the social elite in enforcing standards of morality on an intemperate lower class. By contrast, the American Temperance Society sought self-reform by emphasizing the qualities of respectability and encouraging intemperate individuals to gain regeneration through total abstinence. It was this second model which was generally adopted by temperance societies in Canada. However, in the case of the temperance lodges one finds a modification of the first model. Here, members of the upper stratum of the working class, bent on self-improvement, attempted to turn themselves into an elite group within the community by enforcing moral standards in an intemperate community.

The W.C.T.U. used a mixture of the two approaches. Its evangelicalism placed the onus on the alcohol imbiber, while its program of social and political activism tried to establish a community standard through law and custom. In so doing it attempted to have its group defined as the moral elite in each community.

The leaders of the American Temperance Society were mainly evangelical clergy.<sup>14</sup> American preachers of the Methodist,

Presbyterian and Quaker denominations had long spoken out against intemperance, but until the early nineteenth century the afflicted were encouraged to take a personal pledge of temperance. The temperance society as transplanted to Canada was sometimes associated with a specific congregation and sometimes not. But one common element held: the society made this pledge a social contract with others who were like-minded. The societies also introduced the issue of the morality of intemperance in both societal and spiritual terms.

Typical of the temperance society of this period was that created by the community of Beaver River:

We, the undersigned, firmly believing and most assuredly gathering that the use of spirituous liquor is prejudicial to the body and soul of mankind in general, both spiritual and temporal, and to remedy this great and spreading evil[sic]. We, therefore, whose names are hereunto annexed, do forever renounce the use of ardent or distilled spirituous liquors of any kind except what may be taken as a medicine in case of sickness. And we pray Almighty God to establish our hearts and strengthen our serious resolutions.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, by mid century, intemperance by male groups was condemned on medical, social and moral grounds. Nevertheless, in spite of the grand language and ardent appeal to the deity, there was as yet no widespread acceptance of either total abstinence or involvement of Canadian denominations in the movement. The concept of total abstinence is credited to Joseph Livesay, a merchant and social reformer of Preston, England, who formulated the teetotal pledge

in 1832.<sup>16</sup> This hardening of the position of abstinence in temperance circles was reflected by tougher positions being taken by evangelicals on other issues as well, for example, concerning animal cruelty and sabbath-breaking.<sup>17</sup> Thereafter, however, total abstinence was quickly adopted by the Canadian movement, and, as a reflection of the more rigid stance on leisure, rejection of alcohol was often grouped with strictures against profanity and the use of tobacco. The churches in Canada did not formally support the temperance movement until very late in the century. For most of the nineteenth century, then, Canadian temperance was a secular though morally-grounded program of abstinence from alcohol and usually tobacco as well.

The temperance lodge or fraternal society reached Canada from the United States about 1848. The lodge provided sickness insurance and funeral benefits for male members and their wives, as well as alcohol-free recreation in exchange for a pledge of total abstinence. Benefits were paid only to members in good standing, which meant adherence to the pledge of total abstinence from all intoxicants.<sup>18</sup> Groups such as the Sons of Temperance, Independent Order of Good Templars and the Royal Templars of Temperance grew rapidly throughout the century, peaking and declining just as dramatically near the century's close.<sup>19</sup> The minute books for the Sons of Temperance in Orono, Ontario provide us with a full account of the process of acquiring members, mutual monitoring, the substance of the meetings, and the ideas that appear to have motivated the lodge. Espousing a indeterminate



Christianity, the lodges' non-evangelical motives set them apart from the later Ontario W.C.T.U. while at the same time influencing their approach to intemperance.

The Sons of Temperance at Orono attempted to interest members of the community in their lodge by staging "programs" or entertainments. Generally a program evening would begin with a speech from the chairman, followed by other impromptu addresses or songs. On April 3, 1878, for example, "Bro Dean from Kirby Division on being called on made a speech, which was followed by one from Bro Dean of Orono after which Bro Dean (Kirby) gave another speech. he[sic] was then called on for a song which he gave. he[sic] then said he would sing song about with any or all members of the Division. Sisters Pierce & Vinson then favored the Div. with a song after - according to promise - Bro Dean sang another but as there were no more who accepted Bro Dean's challenge the amusement stopped."<sup>20</sup> On another occasion a program included a covenant reading, a chapter reading, a musical selection followed by one unspecified reading and one entitled "Downey's Slaughter," a recitation, another chapter reading and a final musical number. Sometimes skits were offered; other times debates.<sup>21</sup> Paid lecturers worked their way through the province<sup>22</sup>, and prohibition literature was studied and distributed<sup>23</sup>. Thus, new members were solicited by presenting programs that would appeal to those bent on self-improvement and within an oral tradition where one could hope to improve one's expository skills.

Individuals indicating a desire to join the lodge were

sponsored by present members. An investigation committee was then named to look into the suitability of the candidates. It appears from the Orono example that the committee was required to be the same sex as the candidate. Following a favourable report from the committee, the members voted for or against the candidates' admission. Typically, five negative votes from the existing membership meant refusal of a candidate.<sup>24</sup> Sometimes an unsuccessful candidate could present him or herself for re-election, as in the case of the persistent Mr. Best. After having received a positive assessment from the committee, "they were then balloted for and with the exception of A. Best declared elected .... Moved and Seconded that we reconsider the case of Mr. Best. Carried. He (Mr. Best) was then balloted for and again rejected."<sup>25</sup> Acceptance was followed by an initiation ceremony and the conferring of an "order" or position in the lodge.

Had Mr. Best been accepted, however, there is no guarantee that his association with the Sons of Temperance would have been a long one. The first Minute Book opens with the expulsion of a Brother Heney and the curt admonition that "his name be entered on the black book."<sup>26</sup> Thereafter, charges are hurled back and forth amongst the company: Brother Copeland charged Brothers Watson, McDonald and Hunter with "violating article 2 of the constitution by drinking spirituous liquors,"<sup>27</sup> Brother Lang, having been similarly accused and convicted, forfeited "all honors previously carried by this bro.... Ballots was then taken & Bro Lang was declaired[sic] expelled.... instructed to erase his name from the

books."<sup>28</sup> Sometimes, however, a member known to have transgressed could still retain his membership. "Bro. C.T. Mallon acknowledged having violated Article II of our constitution. The Division then proceeded to ballot on the question of expulsion and Bro Malon's[sic] membership was declared retained."<sup>29</sup> Brother Mallon was far luckier than most; given the expulsion rates, it was amazing that any members dared to attend meetings. Perhaps one reason why prospective and accepted members continued to brave their peers' suspicion and criticism was their need for a personal support group to remain temperate, a sort of nineteenth century Alcoholics Anonymous. The records are strongly suggestive of a lodge membership which frequently strayed from sobriety. Operating under the guise of reforming others, it is very possible that a prime motive of the lodges was to reform themselves.

Perhaps people came also for the energetic discussions. These seem often to have gotten out of hand: "The W.P. then gave a few remarks asking the members to aid him in the discharge of his duties and saying that he wanted to have Good Order and was going to have it, and that he hoped the members would in future conduct the discussions in the Division in a more Brotherly manner than he had seen several times of late, and concluded by thanking the Division for electing him to the office of head of the Division."<sup>30</sup>

In addition to accusations of back-sliding and defence or capitulation by the victim, meetings discussed the arrangements for visiting lecturers,<sup>31</sup> the generally critical state of their finances<sup>32</sup>, the lodge's funeral benefits,<sup>33</sup> the provision of pledge

cards,<sup>34</sup> the possibility of organizing a youth corps, called "Cadets,<sup>35</sup>" and the attendance at a temperance Convention to be held in Cobourg.<sup>36</sup> But the business of a meeting held on October 29, 1879 deserves to be quoted at length because of its presentation of ideas held by, and about, a typical temperance lodge. A visiting Sons of Temperance official made them a visit and brought greetings. He also

made reference to a report, which he heard from some person on the street. That our Dramatic Company while practising the Drama 'The Little Brown Jug' had on Monday evening left the 'Brown Jug' partly full of whiskey. Bros. J. Allen and F. Squair replied to last part of Bro. Walkley's speech saying that they did not have any 'Brown' Jug at their practice on Monday evening. Bro. Callahan thought the report was groundless, and that it had been started by some person to injure the Division. he[sic] said that those who buy Whiskey do not often leave it for others to drink and therefore those who drank the Whiskey out of the Brown Jug were the same who put it in. Bros Smith and Morrison though[sic] the story was not worthy of our notice. Bro. Daniel Allen said he thought the main fault was the way in which the doors of the hall is secured, that had they been properly fastened that story could not have been started. Bro Walkley agreed with Bro Allen that the evil lay in the carelessness of the Division, he said he did not credit the report when he heard it but that he thought if it could be talked about outside it could be in this Hall.<sup>37</sup>

The tendency to wild and hurtful accusation, even by an outside official, is clear in this instance, as in others. That the lodge had generated some hostility in the community is also apparent: Brother Callahan assumes that the story has been created by someone wishing to "injure" the division and Brother Allen opines that the

problem is an ill-fitting door, eloquently denoting a garrison mentality. The secrecy of lodge proceedings to reduce the liability of public exposure is also apparent.<sup>38</sup> The self-righteousness of the lodge shines. One wonders at the wisdom of presenting a play clumsily satirizing demon whiskey in a community that seems to be devoted to its consumption. Even the imagery is informative: sly metaphors are used abundantly, suggesting a group given to colourful language and speech-making. Perhaps most interesting, however, is the discussion's conclusion as to where to lay the blame: not with the visiting dignitary who spreads malicious stories, not with a community that ridicules the lodge's efforts to dramatize the alcohol problem, but rather with the "carelessness of the Division." The lodge was not alone in detecting hostility from the community. The women of the Newmarket W.C.T.U. complained that "roughs congregate in front of the Temp Hall during Lodge hours making outsiders believe the disturbance is caused by the members. Where are our constables?" they asked plaintively.<sup>39</sup> This was a embattled collection of characters, vainly attempting, it seems, to improve the moral tone of the town.

Undoubtedly, the W.C.T.U. learned from the lodges' acrimonious relationships with their communities. There is no evidence from the Ontario W.C.T.U. records of similar vandalism of W.C.T.U. quarters or meetings. This was largely because the tactics used by the women in the W.C.T.U. were non-confrontational and generally indirect. There is also no indication in the W.C.T.U. records that

the members were themselves drawn to alcohol, as was the case with lodge members. This too must have provided greater credibility and less hostility from the community for the W.C.T.U.

One element of temperance lodge life that obviously was attractive to its participants was the highly-ritualized meeting, including positions with elegant titles. Since the drama of lodge life was played out in secret, members could act their parts to outrageous excess without fear of outsiders' ridicule.<sup>40</sup> For instance, the Royal Templars of Temperance were fond of medieval militaristic imagery: the officers included the Select Councillor who opened the meeting with the Royal Decree, the Herald, the Guard and Sentinel and members of varying grades, including the Select Degree and Royal Degrees.<sup>41</sup> Minutes note the appropriate drapery for the chairperson's table and the use of impressive gavels.<sup>42</sup> Again, the Sons of Temperance adopted elaborate regalia, decorating both the meeting rooms and the officers and members of the order.<sup>43</sup>

But how were the costumes used? Were ritual handshakes and greetings exchanged as in the Masonic Order? Did the temperance lodges, like the Orange Order, stage marches as well as entertainments?<sup>44</sup>

This cannot be discerned from the available literature. It does seem safe to conclude, however, that the pomp and ceremony of the temperance lodge satisfied a need to feel important and experience a sense of community in small-town Ontario. This conclusion is supported by American research on the Sons of Temperance in Beverly and Salem, Massachusetts, where the majority of members were found

to be younger, poorer and less likely to hold church membership or town office than were prohibitionists in their communities.<sup>45</sup> This presents another point of contrast with the W.C.T.U. which depended very little on ritual and ceremony, particularly in the early years. The Ontario W.C.T.U.'s evangelicalism, it will be argued, endowed the members with an ardent sense of personal importance and group identification, based, not on ritual and ceremony, but on service to others.

The Ontario temperance lodges admitted both men and women to membership. This broke the model of many American temperance lodges which established women's auxiliaries or separate women's organizations, such as the Daughters of Temperance, instead of permitting women full membership. In one acrimonious Convention of the American Sons of Temperance in 1852, the Daughters of Temperance were not permitted to speak. Sustained male opposition to women's full participation in the lodge convinced many women to transfer their energies to the women's rights movement.<sup>46</sup>

In Canada, the barriers to participation at the provincial or local levels seem to have been less well-defined. For example, the records of the Wardsville Royal Templars of Temperance and the Orono Sons of Temperance indicate that women represented a significant proportion of the membership roll. In 1899, for example, thirty-eight of one hundred and five members were women in the Wardsville Royal Templars of Temperance.<sup>47</sup> While it is not clear what membership rights women had, and if these were in any way different from men's, there is ample evidence of women

participating in programs, helping to arrange entertainments, and acting as officers.<sup>48</sup> The records also suggest that many of the members, and particularly the female members, were young and single. There is in the sources consulted no mention of married women holding office or participating in any way in the lodge's activities, while there is much mention of single women doing so. In April of 1898, there is this tantalizing note in the Royal Templars' minutes: "Report from Miss Bryan of North Ekford - Struck with matrimonial fever having a somewhat bad effect but nevertheless Council flourishing with increased membership." One is tempted to speculate that the temperance lodge served as a type of nineteenth-century singles' club where one could expect to find an appropriate marriage partner.

Despite the role played by women in the lodges, however, it is apparent also that in policy-making sessions where political or financial issues were discussed, the ascendant voices were male. Thus, it can be said that while women had an important stake in lodge activities, their roles were strictly circumscribed. This may have been one reason why the W.C.T.U. was able to lure female members away from the lodge.<sup>49</sup>

Another reason may have been the perceived lower status of the lodges in comparison to such a middle-class organization as the W.C.T.U. The lodges' sensitivity to community ridicule has already been noted. The minute books demonstrate an awe and fear of those glib-tongued detractors of temperance who were better educated than lodge members. One finds the West Middlesex Council of the Royal



Templars deeply concerned about the following that could be commanded by such well-educated individuals as Principal Grant of Queen's University in his campaign against prohibition, and their fear that they were powerless to oppose such august persons.<sup>50</sup> The lodges appear to have had an "image problem" in the community, and one can well understand some women moving to a more respectable group like the W.C.T.U.

A different culture characterized the temperance lodges and the W.C.T.U. Where the lodges engaged freely in raucus oratorical contests and sustained criticism as a social control device, the W.C.T.U. typically adopted a courteous, mutually-supportive approach which avoided internal dissension and personal slights at all costs. The W.C.T.U. took careful note of its union's members' family crises and deaths, and faithfully extended sympathy and prayers to members in times of need, while the temperance lodge records consulted show only one resolution of "Sympathy and Condolence." This was extended to no one in particular, but to record the lodge's "deep sense of loss in the death of Rev. A.M. Phillips, B.D. of Montreal, the father of Royal Templarism in Canada, a hero in the Prohibition Ranks, and a fellow worker in the Truth in every department of the Kingdom of Christ."<sup>51</sup> Where the W.C.T.U. ran "Medal Contests" to encourage children to give temperance lectures and thus train the next generation of workers, the lodges ran "Gold Medal Contests" for their own members' stirring speeches about temperance. There is no evidence that women participated in these contests.

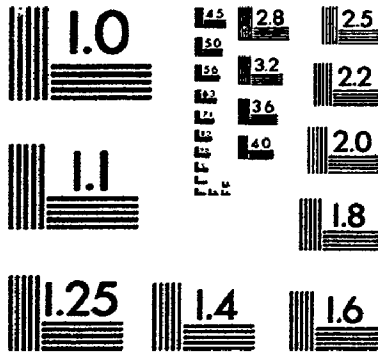
Other differences that may not be attributable to male or female patterns of behaviour are also evident. The lodges were more inclined to attempt to control local unions from a centralized authority.<sup>52</sup> In 1897, for example, the Middlesex Templars agreed that the District Council would bear half the cost of resuscitating the moribund Middlemiss Council, and someone was delegated to meet monthly with the members to assist them. Again in 1899 a committee was struck to "work up the fallen councils of the District."<sup>53</sup> Beyond the 1880's, the W.C.T.U. local unions controlled almost entirely their activities and membership. The Provincial or Dominion associations existed primarily to register the number of members, not to organize new unions.

Finally, the lodges demonstrated far more interest in ritualized behaviour than did the W.C.T.U. Aside from the white ribbon, the W.C.T.U. depended little on pomp and ceremony, especially at the local level. This, of course, is aside from the essential evangelical ceremony that underlay every W.C.T.U. meeting. In this case, however, religious ceremony defined the group's *raison d'etre*; it was not an artificial means to group glorification.

As the century wore on, the Provincial, Dominion and World levels developed more ritualized ceremonies of a non-evangelical nature, but in the local unions where most of the work was completed, there is little evidence of this.

At the same time, there was a good deal of similarity between the tactics used by the W.C.T.U. and the temperance lodges in the battle to gain prohibition. Both organizations attempted to

# 2



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS  
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a  
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maintain interest by the community through sponsoring itinerant lecturers. Petitions were sent to legislatures<sup>54</sup>, local papers were encouraged to print anti-intemperance pieces<sup>55</sup>, plebiscite campaigns were fought<sup>56</sup>, and Conventions were held<sup>57</sup>. Women participating in the activities of the temperance lodges would have learned a good deal about the political process from their male associates.

Although American temperance societies in the nineteenth century often admitted women, their role, as seen with the temperance lodges, was usually subsidiary.<sup>58</sup> Women had, however, taken on leadership during periods of religious revival in the United States, particularly during the periods of the First and Second Great Awakenings.<sup>59</sup> In 1874 fear of intemperance was combined with revivalist techniques in a "Women's Crusade" in Ohio. In Clarkesville and Hillsboro the town's saloons were closed by women holding prayer meetings outside and in, by occupying the premises of uncooperative bar-keepers, through embarrassment of the clientele by recording names of men entering drinking establishments and by bell ringing. Within a few months, the Women's Crusade had spread to 130 towns, villages and cities in Ohio, 36 in Michigan, and 34 in Indiana.<sup>60</sup> Independent women's temperance societies developed from the crusades with state-level organizations in ten states.<sup>61</sup>

Beyond the organizational level, the crusade profoundly influenced the American W.C.T.U.

The crusade contributed to the model for W.C.T.U. activity by showing women the results that were possible with effective

organization and powerful leadership. Barbara Epstein contends that the crusades "expanded the horizons of the ... women who participated in them. They began to feel their collective power, and what had been a rather amorphous, if widely shared, set of moral values began to take shape as a social outlook and a guide to women's action."<sup>62</sup> Ruth Bordin concurs: "The Crusade had an emotional impact equivalent to a conversion experience and moved these women to feminist principles, whether they recognized them or not."<sup>63</sup> Although Jack Blocker remains unconvinced of the ultimate attitudinal change effected in crusade participants, he does accept that the creation of new women's institutions represented a genuine change in behaviour. Pioneering temperance reformer Frances Willard described her attendance at a crusade meeting at which the participants "spoke, they sang, they prayed with the fervor of a Methodist camp." The effect on her was galvanizing: "What I said I do not know except that I was with the women heart, hand and soul, in this wonderful new 'Everybody's War.'<sup>64</sup>

The Women's Crusade helped crystallize the methodology and organizational structure to be adopted, especially in Ontario: a strong communication network between "locals" would be maintained, while the formal political dimension would be largely ignored and effort expended instead on changing public attitudes towards alcohol as in the Women's Crusade. It has been suggested that the education gained by women in the decentralized crusade permitted the Cleveland Convention to create "from the top down."<sup>65</sup> Lacking

this experience base, the Ontario W.C.T.U. formed a far more decentralized structure than its American cousin. The apolitical networking approach to societal change characterized the American W.C.T.U. in its first decade, until Willard increasingly involved the union in direct political action; in Canada it remained the pattern through the organization's long history.

Finally, the Women's Crusade contributed to the evolution of a working ideology for a women's temperance organization operating in an era of declining per capita consumption of hard liquor. The first temperance societies and lodges of the 1820's had arisen in a period of rising hard alcohol consumption in the United States, exceeding five gallons per capita per annum.<sup>66</sup> and they had fashioned ideological positions to meet this challenge. By the 1870's, consumption had declined in the United States to about two gallons per capita<sup>67</sup>, and in Canada to 1.1 gallons a year.<sup>68</sup> The replacement of whiskey by beer, however, especially in urban areas, alarmed many. In the United States the 1865 per capita consumption of beer totaled a little over three gallons, which doubled the level of 1850. By 1900, however, per capita beer consumption reached sixteen gallons. This represented a major shift in drinking habits with a likely increase in the drinking population.<sup>69</sup> But the pattern of consumption had changed as well.

More solitary drinking was believed to be occurring<sup>70</sup>, more binge-drinking which resulted in family violence and financial pressure, and more drinking took place in male-segregated locations.<sup>71</sup> The crusade ideology, it has been argued, was a

response to the injuries suffered by women: women were victims in an alien landscape. But while the ideology remained, the tactics changed. Where the crusaders had utilized confrontational strategies, the W.C.T.U. opted instead for manipulative ones.<sup>72</sup> Jack Blocker observes, "The W.C.T.U. not only institutionalized the Crusade, it also domesticated the Crusade."<sup>73</sup>

As the last crusades were subsiding, churchwomen and men were drawn from the northeast and midwest to the National Sunday School Assembly in New York State. This group enthusiastically endorsed the establishment of a women's temperance organization. The first president of the W.C.T.U. was Annie Wittenmyer, a proponent of strong central authority with virtual veto power over local and state unions. Wary of the implications of a rapidly-expanding membership, Wittenmyer's diffidence contributed to the W.C.T.U.'s slow growth during the first few years. Wittenmyer also held to a strict temperance program with involvement only in education through evangelical persuasion, on the model of the crusades. In the late 1870's, however, Wittenmyer's leadership was challenged by Frances Willard who foresaw a far wider and politicized role for the W.C.T.U. While it may be too facile to suggest that under Wittenmyer's presidency the organization had "slowly begun to grow into a stiff and stilted body of automatic workers, whose chief aim was uniformity, whose local unions were held with too tight a hand, and whose business was done by the most official of committees,"<sup>74</sup> as Willard's loyal biographer has done, Willard certainly did bring a new set of objectives to the organization.

Willard had come to temperance work at the age of thirty-five with a family heritage rich in academic excellence and evangelical commitment. Her father had been a revival leader as a young man.<sup>75</sup>

When she was still a schoolgirl, Willard and her family migrated to Charles Finney's fledgling school, the Oberlin Collegiate Institute, where her parents took classes. Firm abolitionists, the family's cellar became a haven for travellers on the Underground Railway. After a short schoolteaching career and two years' travel in Europe, Willard was chosen as the first president of Evanston College for Ladies, the first college to confer degrees headed by a woman.<sup>76</sup> The Chicago Fire impoverished the struggling college and it was merged with Northwestern University where Willard became dean of the Woman's College and professor of aesthetics in the liberal arts faculty in 1873. Resigning this post in 1874 after an argument with the university president, she became corresponding secretary of the National W.C.T.U. and president in 1879.

A supporter of female suffrage (or the "Home Protection Ballot" as she termed it), birth control, Social Purity, and fair treatment of prostitutes and women in the courts, Willard became known for her "do-everything policy" and her aggressive membership drives. Political involvement extended from formally supporting the National Prohibition Party, which included a plank for female suffrage in its platform, and later the Progressive Party, to the creation of its own political organization in the form of the Home Protection Party. The American W.C.T.U. also identified closely with the American labour movement, stressing the oppression of



women and children in factories. For many years it was associated with the Knights of Labour.<sup>77</sup> While the organization had fewer than 27,000 members when Willard became president in 1879, it boasted 73,000 names on the rolls just four years later, and by 1900 there were 168,000 members in 7,000 locals.<sup>78</sup>

Willard's evangelicalism and feminism are undisputed. In a letter to the revivalist D.L. Moody, with whom she worked for a year, she emphasized her commitment to women's equality in evangelical religious organizations and practice:

All my life I have been devoted to the advancement of women in education and opportunity. I firmly believe God has a work for them to do as evangelists, as bearers of Christ's message to the ungodly, to the prayer-meeting, to the church generally and the world at large, such as most people have not dreamed. It is therefore my dearest wish to help break down the barriers of prejudice that keep them silent. I cannot think that meeting in which 'the brethren' only are called upon, are one half as effective as those where all are freely invited....<sup>79</sup>

Even unsympathetic historians credit Willard with exceptional ability. Jack Blocker allows, for example, that she "had a subtle and sometimes devious mind and an extraordinarily graceful pen, and consequently, was able to make revelations and express opinions upon subjects which her more straightforward contemporaries dared not touch."<sup>80</sup> Barbara Epstein suggests that Willard's leadership permitted the American W.C.T.U. to rise above its religious base and focus the opinions of middle-class women on broader issues of social reform. "While avoiding the language of feminism, she

initiated discussion within the W.C.T.U. about female equality in the home and outside it. She outlined what she regarded as a feminine vision of social order."<sup>81</sup> Ruth Bordin argues that precisely because Willard accepted the precepts of the Cult of Domesticity, she became, more than any other woman of her age, the embodiment of the ideal of female moral superiority. This firm foundation of acceptance by men and women in her society equipped her to nurture a massive following in the wider community. Nancy Hardesty takes a different perspective, contending that, while Willard used the rhetoric of domesticity, separate spheres, home and motherhood, she articulated more forcefully an egalitarian vision rooted in the evangelical tradition of Finney.<sup>82</sup> Most remarkable, however, was Willard's success in taking a male-controlled temperance movement and making it the centre-piece for a wide-ranging program of female social reform, including women's suffrage, improved working conditions, and the more general evangelization of American society.<sup>83</sup>

It seems unfair to assume that the Cult of Domesticity ruled out a concept of equal rights, at least within the home. Increasingly, women's historians see the dichotomy of maternal feminism versus equal rights as an artificial one<sup>84</sup>. Quite obviously, Frances Willard accepted both, as did many of the women of the Ontario W.C.T.U.

In terms of personal style, Willard adopted a charismatic though never strident approach in her leadership, characterized by energetic travel, writing and speech-making.<sup>85</sup> She elicited

passionate responses from both male and female admirers and opponents. One of her classmates wrote that as a student she "came to be something of a 'beau'" and that as a teacher she "attracted love letters from her girl students written in passionate terms that hardly seem appropriate even for heterosexual correspondence...."<sup>86</sup> Although Willard had been engaged to marry after a whirlwind romance, and had several other suitors, she broke the engagement after a month. However, Ruth Bordin indicates that she never relinquished the idea of marriage.<sup>87</sup> While Willard spent most of her adult life with her secretary, friend and confidante, Anna Gordon, she refused to accept the "loves of women for each other" as acceptable to her. "The friendships of women are beautiful and blessed; the loves of women ought not to be."<sup>88</sup> Nevertheless, Wendy Mitchinson finds the adulation of Willard by her associates and followers to have pronounced sexual overtones.<sup>89</sup>

A reading of the Ontario W.C.T.U. records does not bear out this interpretation, although the episodic nature of the relationships developed between most Ontario W.C.T.U. women and Willard suggests that caution must be used in drawing any conclusions of this sort.

The one enduring friendship with an Ontario woman about which a good deal is known, that with Letitia Youmans, provides no evidence of sexual attraction<sup>90</sup>.

As part of her membership campaigns, Willard took a personal interest in the Canadian organization, and herself organized a number of urban unions in Ontario, for example, Ottawa's in 1881.<sup>91</sup>

Her visits were frequent and emotionally-charged. She took an

active part in the proceedings; at the 1890 meeting she took the chair and gave a "parliamentary drill" to the members.<sup>92</sup> Still, the adulation accorded Willard by the American sisterhood was not duplicated in Canada.<sup>93</sup>

The bond with the American organization extended beyond Willard's personal role, however. The Canadian W.C.T.U. regularly sponsored American W.C.T.U. speakers, as in 1891 when the Ontario Provincial Convention heard Rev. Dr. Anna Shaw of Boston speaking on the enfranchisement of women as a weapon for home defence. "The next day the Convention endorsed woman's franchise without any attached tags."<sup>94</sup> Local unions also supported American speakers sponsored by others. In 1893 the London W.C.T.U. "announced that Rev. Dr. Aurora H.[sic] Shaw of Washington will lecture in the Talbot St. Baptist Church on Thursday evening, March 16th, Subject Woman's Enfranchisement. At the close of the lecture Miss Shaw will answer questions from the audience. The President urged all present to attend, especially those not in favor of Woman's Enfranchisement as it would at least be fair to hear what the eloquent advocate had to say before condemning her."<sup>95</sup> On occasion, too, appeals to local unions were refused. In 1894 the Newmarket W.C.T.U. decided not to sponsor an American speaker: "Mrs. Cody read a letter from a party, asking permission for Mrs. Blekely to hold a public meeting in Newmarket under the auspices of the W.C.T.U. she[sic] is a W.C.T.U. organizer from the North West and only charges \$10.00 an evening yet we felt as though the money might be spent to better advantage."<sup>96</sup>

Beyond speakers, the American W.C.T.U. provided most of the literature for the Ontario W.C.T.U., both for distribution and to train members in their duties. A good number of the tracts were written personally by Frances Willard. Short courses initiated by the American organization were adopted as well in Canada. In 1912, the Ontario W.C.T.U. used the seven-week Temperance Course offered at the Chicago Training School as a model and decided "to look for a bright young woman who would do the same in Ontario," finally settling on Miss Bertha McLeod of Cainsville who became their Young Peoples' Temperance Worker.<sup>97</sup> The powerful influence of Frances Willard, a similar structure, common speakers and literature, created many similarities between the American and Canadian W.C.T.U. organizations. They were by no means, however, indistinguishable from one another. As will be discussed in chapter three, the Ontario W.C.T.U. differed from its American model in its principal interests, tactics, demography and leadership.

A final American influence on the Ontario W.C.T.U. was the Chautauqua Movement, a system of adult education started in Chautauqua, New York. Chautauqua Meetings were held annually, often in association with Sunday School Conventions. At one of these in Chautauqua, New York in 1874 the news of the recent Women's Crusade was broadcast. Letitia Youmans attended the women's temperance meetings held at the Sabbath School Convention at Lake Chautauqua in 1874. She and her husband had also been drawn there by Palestine Park, a kind of nineteenth-century

religious theme park where costumed guides took the faithful on guided tours of the Bible and acted out Biblical stories.<sup>98</sup> But it was Mrs. Youmans who attended the Sabbath School Convention, not her husband, and there were enough other women from Canada and the northern American states to organize women's temperance meetings daily. Here Mrs. Youmans was surprised to meet women "of mental culture, good social position and deep piety, not by any means belonging to the class I had supposed."<sup>99</sup> While men were invited to attend the temperance meetings, women organized and ran the sessions. One speaker was Mrs. Jennie Fowler Wiling.<sup>100</sup> "This was the first lecture I had ever heard delivered by a woman"<sup>101</sup> reports Mrs. Youmans. Women who became active in the Chautauqua movement developed essential organizational and speaking skills that would be required in the women's temperance movement.

The British contribution to the women's temperance movement in Canada is closely associated with middle-class efforts in the early nineteenth century to provide "rational recreation" for itself and for the working classes, who were thought to be vulnerable to corrupt appeals of an alcohol-oriented leisure industry. The campaign for rational recreation was part of a front pushing for temperance and educational reform: "Abstinence and edification were common prescriptions of rational recreation."<sup>102</sup> One of the primary vehicles to be developed by which rational principles could be instilled in children was the Sunday School. Although originally the effort of middle-class

evangelicals to replace the defunct charity school movement, by the early nineteenth century the Sunday Schools were largely controlled by the upper working class as institutions of self-help and self-improvement. Thomas Laqueur notes that by 1810, some 60 per cent of all Sunday School teachers had once been students themselves.<sup>103</sup> Furthermore, a good number of these teachers were women, supported also by the British tradition of Dame Schools.<sup>104</sup> Teachers were usually unpaid and would leave if unhappy. Thus, out of necessity, operations in Sunday Schools were often governed by consensus.<sup>105</sup>

This was the tradition adopted for the Canadian Sunday School movement. It was a distinctly different approach to education than was accepted by the American Sunday School where mainly male instructors taught a clientele of children from both the middle and lower classes, and increasingly identified the school with a single denomination and congregation.<sup>106</sup>

After their introduction to Upper Canada around 1820,<sup>107</sup> Sunday Schools expanded quickly. Allan Greer estimates that by 1832 about 10,000 children were attending 350 to 400 Sunday Schools in the province.<sup>108</sup> The Sunday School's function was to inculcate Christian morality (and behaviour consistent with this), as well as fundamental computational and reading skills. As in England, many of these schools were staffed by women. But if the organizational structure was drawn from the English example, teaching aids were mainly of American origin. A Sunday School magazine was produced for continental distribution, lesson plans were sold, and a Sunday School Teacher training institute was

established in Chicago during the 1860's by several non-denominational firms.<sup>109</sup>

Thus, women's leadership in the Canadian Sunday Schools provided them with oratorical skills and a forum for practicing those skills; teaching materials and strategies intended to standardize the Sunday School lessons were readily adapted by the W.C.T.U. to further the temperance cause. Children who were drawn to the rational recreation of the Sunday School were prime candidates for another British group which greatly influenced the work of the W.C.T.U., the Band of Hope. First inaugurated by the Leeds Temperance Society in 1847 to inculcate the respectable values of honesty, cleanliness, punctuality and delayed gratification with children in the working class, the term soon came to describe any children's temperance group.<sup>110</sup> In Britain, Bands of Hope were non-denominational although several denominations set up their own groups, usually quite separately from church-controlled Sunday Schools. Like the Sunday Schools, a large proportion of the workers were of working-class background, having successfully made the transition into middle-class life, "absorbing and then generating without condescension the 'respectable' values sought by the members."<sup>111</sup>

This was the first English organization to work with children in a general recreational as well as educational way. The message was conventionally anti-drink, but the recreationally-oriented methodology was comprehensive and highly successful. A strong esprit-de-corps was fostered through temperance concerts where



children recited and put on musical entertainments, and temperance parades, complete with banners and costumes. Mass choirs were organized: in 1886, fifteen thousand children were divided into three choirs appearing on one day on the stage of the Crystal Palace.<sup>112</sup> Beyond these extravagant productions, organizers attempted to maintain interest in temperance issues by sponsoring temperance lectures, especially by medical doctors. Didactic biographies of self-made abstainers were published and distributed nationally; journals with items written for children were published, and anti-drink novels, such as Danesbury House, were printed in cheap editions.<sup>113</sup> To help workers, the Band of Hope Blue Book, A Manual of Instruction and Training was published to aid in organizing and running a Band. The manual included outlines for local lectures against drinking and gambling. It was one of these publications that Letitia Youmans consulted when organizing her Band of Hope in Picton.<sup>114</sup>

There is no evidence of organized temperance work with children in the United States before the Civil War.<sup>115</sup> The Bands of Hope or Juvenile Unions, initiated through the National W.C.T.U. in the mid 1870's, were usually affiliated with Sunday Schools and held their membership through demonstrations of marching and song. They appear to have adopted the British model in this way, and often provided entertainments to W.C.T.U. Conventions.<sup>116</sup> This was not the approach taken in Canada where the Bands of Hope operated through a network of local groups, rarely massing for others' diversion. The American Bands of Hope were most often middle-

class organizations of W.C.T.U.-members' children, but occasionally, as in the large Ontario cities, working-class children were conscripted into special units. American membership numbers remained much smaller than the British.<sup>117</sup>

While the Canadian Band of Hope movement could not claim the spectacular success of its British counterpart - by 1900 three million children were members across the United Kingdom<sup>118</sup> - its close identification with the W.C.T.U. helped to shape the enduring focus of work with children and to remember, as the Ottawa W.C.T.U. reported in its Minute Book, "that work among the young insures ultimate triumph."<sup>119</sup> In Canada, the Band of Hope was sometimes associated with the Sunday School and at other times it was consciously removed from Sunday School quarters to emphasize the interdenominational quality of the sponsorship. For example, Mrs. Youmans feared that the Band of Hope in Picton would be too closely identified with the Methodist Church if the children used their quarters, and thus she moved the children to a rented hall.<sup>120</sup> Similarly, the Ottawa W.C.T.U. held their Band of Hope at the Orphans' Home for the same purpose,<sup>121</sup> and thereafter in the Orange Hall, free of charge.<sup>122</sup> The Newmarket Union acquired as the Band of Hope worker, a Miss Ross, "who is quite a capable Teacher in the Model School." Soon thereafter, the Band of Hope was held in the school rooms after hours.<sup>123</sup> A close association with the local school was not atypical. Even when the classes were held on other sites, the same texts were often used as the public schools had provided for their Scientific Temperance courses.<sup>124</sup>

On the other hand the Richmond Hill and North Toronto W.C.T.U.s requested that local congregations take over the work.<sup>125</sup> The Dunnville union ran the Band of Hope alternately in the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches to dispel denominational flavour.<sup>126</sup> Often, when energies and attendance flagged, the unions regrouped by focusing their attention anew on temperance instruction within the Sunday Schools.<sup>127</sup> As the Y.W.C.T.U. became stronger in urban centres, it was often given the task of supervising the Bands of Hope. As a result, through this intense involvement with working-class children, the Y.W.C.T.U.'s became particularly skilled in pedagogical techniques.

Through the combined influences, therefore, of several temperance and evangelical organizations, the Ontario W.C.T.U. was molded. The male-dominated temperance societies, lodges and federations identified the central evil to be attacked, and continued to work in league with the Ontario W.C.T.U. throughout most of the period examined. The American Women's Crusade and W.C.T.U. provided direction with ideology and strategies for change, as well as a feminization and evangelicalization of the whole process. The Sunday Schools and Bands of Hope permitted women to exercise leadership and organizational skills in their work with children. The Ontario organization would now need to translate these influences into formal structures.

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122. Ibid., May 7, 1883.

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## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **THE ONTARIO STRUCTURE**

#### **"A MINT OF WEALTH FOR US SOMEWHERE"**

This chapter will examine the W.C.T.U. within the context of the campaign to achieve prohibition in Ontario. However, it should be emphasized that although prohibition represented an early and primary aim of the Ontario W.C.T.U., it was by no means its only objective. Within a few years of the organization's founding, efforts to obtain prohibition were supplemented with a wide range of other causes including crusades for social purity, female suffrage and temperance education. The Ontario W.C.T.U. argued that most social

evils were rooted in intemperate behaviour. Alcohol intemperance was a visible expression of this failing, and a causal force in the acquisition of other social vices. Thus, while the W.C.T.U. began by viewing prohibition as the chief panacea for a multitude of social ills, it soon accepted the challenge of fighting this multi-faceted evil on more than one front. It continued to support the prohibition contests, but not to the exclusion of its other evangelical efforts to eradicate evil. In this respect it differed from male temperance groups in its approach to the alcohol problem. This resulted in the W.C.T.U. being virtually ignored by the coalition of forces which eventually secured the Ontario Temperance Act in 1916. It also helps to explain why every W.C.T.U. local union for which records exist neglected to mention the passage of the 1916 Act. By this date the organization, especially at the local level, gauged its success less by legislative measure sticks and more by behavioural change.

The chapter will survey the history of prohibition in Ontario and the position of its male and female stakeholders will be contrasted. Secondly, the structure of the Ontario W.C.T.U. will be surveyed at the dominion, provincial and local levels. The most significant part of that structure, the Departments of Work, will be examined in detail and a comparison drawn between the W.C.T.U.'s work in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It will be argued that as the

organization at all levels matured, increasingly more attention was devoted to educational and social matters, and less to direct political action. Thirdly, the membership figures for the Dominion and Ontario W.C.T.U.'s for the period under examination will be surveyed in an effort to assess the organization's representativeness. Finally, the relationship of the W.C.T.U. with other men's and women's associations will be examined. It will be argued that, unlike the Provincial and Dominion W.C.T.U.'s competitive connections, the local unions generally cooperated amicably with other associations.

The nineteenth century was paradoxically an era of reduced alcohol consumption and increased acceptance of the temperance organization. Within this climate of public concern about the dangers posed by alcohol, both the federal and provincial governments found themselves under sustained pressure to introduce legislation in order to further curb public drinking. The approach taken by all levels of government was to defer action as long as possible, thus estranging as few interest groups and voters as it could in this period of changing public mores.

The first piece of legislation to encourage temperance groups such as the W.C.T.U. was the provincial Crooks Act of 1876. It placed the granting of a locally-determined number of licences for taverns under the control of a government-

appointed board in each riding. The result was that the board, usually the nominees of the local government candidate, could be petitioned by concerned citizens to further limit the number of licences granted.<sup>1</sup> In the event that a board did not act responsibly, from the point of view of those same citizens, pressure could and was applied for a new slate to be named. Take for example, the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U. which decided at its second meeting in 1884 that its major work would be "the better enforcement of the Crooks Act."<sup>2</sup> Thus, the Crooks Act kept temperance forces busy by providing a mechanism by which the licensing system could be monitored and significantly amended if consistent pressure were maintained. It provided a first and enduring political focus for temperance activities.<sup>3</sup>

The first federal initiative to affect the W.C.T.U. in Ontario was the Canada Temperance Act, often called the Scott Act, of 1878. Like the Dunkin Act of 1864 which it superseded, the Scott Act provided for local option in the retail sale of liquor. This provision effectively gave counties, cities, towns, and townships the authority to prohibit the sale of liquor by popular vote.<sup>4</sup> A poll could be forced by petition of one-quarter of the electors of any city or county, and a simple majority of votes cast was considered to be decisive. Hence, from 1878 local W.C.T.U. unions busied themselves with circulating petitions and fighting local option campaigns, even though they themselves could not vote.

A second political front had been opened. Local option votes increased membership in the combative zone, and won support for their other activities from sympathetic soldiers-in-arms.

In fact, the Crooks and Scott Acts were contiguous with the founding of many W.C.T.U. local unions, and together probably account for the earlier and faster growth of the local unions compared with the provincial or dominion organizations. A federal prohibition act passed in 1884 was almost wholly ineffective in controlling the liquor trade,<sup>5</sup> but seems to have helped to place pressure at the provincial level for some demonstration of support for temperance. In 1887, the Ontario Government, in response to a petition from 30,000 temperance sympathizers, introduced a course in Scientific Temperance into the public schools.<sup>6</sup> This provided a new rallying-point for the W.C.T.U. and a focus for the organization's increasing emphasis on education. In turn, this spurred W.C.T.U. efforts to influence teachers and principals, teachers' associations, and curriculum leaders in the Department of Education. It also led to demands for women to be given the right to vote and hold office, particularly as school trustees.

A federal Royal Commission into the Liquor Traffic was named in 1891 and, while it resulted in no new legislation, its deliberations provided the W.C.T.U. with more fodder for the struggle against the "liquor interests." It also undoubtedly forced a provincial plebiscite in 1894 in which the Mowat Government gave women who already held the municipal



franchise, widows and spinsters who owned real property, the right to vote. The plebiscite campaign is credited with having forced the Dominion Alliance, a coalition of male temperance groups created in 1876, to develop an effective political structure,<sup>7</sup> and obviously, it had a similar effect on the W.C.T.U., particularly at the provincial level. After winning the plebiscite by a majority of 81,769 votes,<sup>8</sup> the Mowat Government promised to refer the issue of provincial jurisdiction to the Privy Council and bring in "all the provincial Prohibition the Privy Council decision would permit." S.G.E. McKee, president of the Ontario W.C.T.U., reports that the "Convention fairly sizzled with indignation" at the weak government response.<sup>9</sup> After the Privy Council cleared the way for provincial legislation in 1896, the Ontario Government passed a new law reducing liquor licences by 130, raising the age limit from 18 to 21 years with a ten dollar fine attached to each infraction. "The mountain had labored and brought forth a mouse!" sniffed Mrs. McKee.<sup>10</sup> Another plebiscite, this time by the federal government, was taken in 1898 and won by the temperance forces, but still no legislation resulted. An embittered Mrs. McKee reported that the plebiscite had been carried in spite of "every trick that was known to politicians."<sup>11</sup>

By 1899, the provincial organization saw that "the year's work ended in gloom and depression of spirit. Three years of heart-breaking toil had resulted in nothing tangible,

because of the casuistry of political double dealers."<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, the referenda and local option campaigns had drawn by 1900 more than 5,000 committed members to the organization, so that it was healthier than it had ever been.

The same applied at the local level. For example, in 1900 the London W.C.T.U. had the strongest membership list in its history with 240 members<sup>13</sup>; the Dunnville Union had 55 members, but gathered 221 names on a petition demanding prohibition.<sup>14</sup> Still, the impact was felt, and by 1905 it was apparent that membership figures were not growing. (See Appendix II).

Most of the unions' energies were taken up with local option campaigns between 1906 and 1910. The declaration of war in 1914 further distracted potential members. Even so, by 1914 there were over 9,000 members in Ontario and the organization remained one of the strongest in the field of temperance groups.<sup>15</sup> When a "Committee of One Hundred" used the patriotic fervour of war to pry legislation from the provincial government in 1916, the Ontario W.C.T.U. had over 10,000 members. Women across Ontario were well practised in the techniques of plebiscite, referenda and petition. Over 850,000 names were collected, many by W.C.T.U. members, and in September 1916, the Ontario Temperance Act was unanimously passed. It closed all bars, clubs and liquor shops for the duration of the war, banished liquor from hotels, boarding-houses, offices and places of business, and permitted legal sale only for "medicinal, mechanical, scientific and

sacramental purposes."<sup>16</sup>

Although the W.C.T.U. had been one of the most powerful and long-standing players in this drama, contributing almost one-third of the expenses to the successful campaign, it was not included in the final plans or celebrations. The legislative success was jealously guarded by the male temperance societies.<sup>17</sup> This slight disappointed the Dominion W.C.T.U., but it is interesting to note that not one local union made mention of the passage of the Act in its minute books. The only conclusion to be drawn from this dazzling omission is that local unions had long since abandoned political solutions to social problems. The women of W.C.T.U. unions across Ontario were too busy reforming society to notice the passage of a prohibition act that had formed the major objective of male temperance groups for almost seventy years.

The basic structure of the Ontario W.C.T.U. was modelled on the American National W.C.T.U. under the leadership of Frances Willard. However, in Ontario the organization began at the local level, later adding a Provincial and Dominion Executive and Convention. Where local unions were established in rural or small towns a County Executive was occasionally created. At all but the local levels, the association

operated with the same structure. The executive consisted of a President, sometimes an Ex-President, Vice-Presidents, Recording and Corresponding Secretaries and Treasurer. The executive officers were usually chosen by election at all levels. These officers met separately at the provincial, dominion, National and World's levels to maintain contact with other groups and arrange conferences. As a general rule, the executive did not set policy. Representatives to annual conventions delivered reports and considered resolutions drafted by the executive to determine official policies. It was then the task of the executive to implement these decisions, reporting any difficulties that arose in the course of their work to the unions through written reports or convention statements.

The local unions replicated this structure whenever they had sufficient numbers, but often no Ex-President sat on the executive since the same woman carried the presidency for years at a time. Whenever possible, the local unions named representatives from the community's denominations as Vice-Presidents, thus expanding the executive group disproportionately to the membership. However, this had the positive effect in some local unions of garnering sustained support for the organization from a number of congregations and clergy in one area. The tasks of the local union executive were to arrange and run interesting meetings, recruit membership, represent the local W.C.T.U. to the

public, and supervise the departmental superintendents.

The work of the W.C.T.U. at all levels was carried out by the "Departments of Work", committees headed by a superintendent which concentrated on promoting temperance with one interest group or through a particular strategy. The departmental structure was adopted from the National W.C.T.U. and represented the type of work encouraged by the mother organization. There was no suggestion that all levels, or all unions at the same level, should attempt to engage in every department of work. The range was far too broad for any but the National or Dominion levels to be able to contemplate such activity. At the same time, local concerns could be addressed by the creation of new Departments of Work that appeared at none of the other levels. As interests or conditions changed, old departments could be phased out and new ones introduced. The departmental arrangement was intended to provide for maximum flexibility within an internationally-recognized structure. Thus, the Dominion W.C.T.U. supported Departments of Work that had no provincial or local counterparts.

While it was the responsibility of W.C.T.U. unions lower in the hierarchy to report to those above them, there is no indication that the higher levels controlled the local unions through monitoring their adherence to official policy or disciplining infractions. The local unions operated in a loose confederation to form the next level of the hierarchy, deciding the degree to which they would support the provincial

or dominion structures financially and ideologically. This sense of virtual autonomy may account for the longevity and vitality of the local unions in otherwise difficult circumstances.

Women were chosen for superintendencies in the Dominion and Provincial W.C.T.U.'s through election by the annual convention; in the local unions superintendents generally volunteered, and often for several departments in small unions. At the provincial or dominion levels, the superintendent had a different mandate than at the local, however. The role of the Provincial and Dominion Departmental Superintendents was to gather information about actual work completed from the next level down. Reports were then compiled, and sent up to the next level in the hierarchy. In the local unions the superintendents had the roles of working with the women on her committee to set goals, supervising their implementation, maintaining morale when disappointments intervened, and reporting all of this activity to the Provincial, Dominion or World Superintendent of the appropriate department. The local records indicate that where a superintendent was inactive, the department normally lapsed. Except in cases where the entire union was failing, this happened rarely. However, the breadth of departmental work and the vigor of individual departmental effort was a reliable indicator of the union's general health.

For example during the Provincial Convention of 1887 119

delegates met in Napanee to elect a new slate of executive officers and departmental superintendents. Each superintendent from the previous year gave a verbal report of all work undertaken and completed in her department, as well as editorial comments on the significance of the success or failure of activity in her area of work. The president, Letitia Youmans, also felt free to comment on reports. After Mrs. Inskster of Kingston, Provincial Superintendent of Prisons delivered her report, Mrs. Youmans "followed with earnest words, shewing how much drink has to do with the first fall."<sup>18</sup> A "Question Drawer" was opened with a plenary discussion of "troublesome issues" that had been suggested by the convention delegates. Letters were read to inform the convention of actions taken on their behalf by the executive. Eleven resolutions, proposed by the executive, were debated, amended and approved. In addition to the superintendents' reports, each union gave an accounting of its triumphs over the course of the previous year. Finally, the president gave her address, punctuated by single verses of hymns which were sung by the assembled delegates.<sup>19</sup>

Local unions of the W.C.T.U. were organized in a variety of ways. During the 1880's and early 1890's, several women acted as official organizers for the organization. For example, the Peterborough Union was organized by Miss Bowes, and Toronto by Letitia Youmans on behalf of the Provincial union. The Picnic Grove W.C.T.U. in rural Lancaster was

organized by the County President, Mrs. McDougall.<sup>20</sup> Several Ontario unions were established by the personal intercession of Frances Willard, sometimes on the ashes of defunct philanthropic organizations like Ottawa's Woman's Christian Association.<sup>21</sup> Once set up, unions were encouraged to scatter the seed for new growth. In the Ottawa case, letters were dispatched to women in the surrounding communities and, while the women in Fitzroy Harbour, Merivale and Richmond neglected to set up unions,<sup>22</sup> those in New Edinburgh and Hintonburg eventually created their own organizations.

In order to provide a sense of work at the provincial level, the 1887 departmental list will be reviewed. In retrospect, the departments were of four general types: educational, social, religious, and political, with an emphasis on the first three of these. From the beginning, the Ontario W.C.T.U. devoted the bulk of its energies to educational and social projects.

The most popular category involved education. The Social Purity Department made literature on personal purity available to members and schools, and urged ministers to preach sermons on the theme. The message emphasized the dangers of over-indulgence in food and social pastimes, the connection between alcohol and irresponsible behaviour, impurity in language and thought, and most particularly the perils of masturbation for young men. In general, the greater the threat, the more obliquely was it expressed. Occasional



travelling lecturers were engaged to help disseminate the news.

The Scientific Temperance Instruction Department pressured the Department of Education to introduce a mandatory textbook, compulsory courses and an examination on temperance. It also tried to convince principals, teachers and their professional associations to support them in the introduction of Temperance instruction in the public schools.

The Temperance Literature Department coordinated and supplied a wide variety of materials to local unions. The materials included pamphlets for members' use and a separate series for young men and women which attempted to fashion the temperance argument in language and use imagery which would appeal to youths. Instructional guides were offered to local unions to educate the women in officers' responsibilities and to improve the quality of programs.

The Organization and Lecture Bureau attempted to provide support for new unions, and speakers on topics of interest to develop informed support for the W.C.T.U.'s causes. The Hygiene and Heredity Department provided instruction on eugenics and health issues to unions, schools and civic authorities. The Departments of Young Woman's Work and of Juvenile Work instructed the next generation of temperance workers. The young women were then encouraged to teach younger children in temperance and home-making skills. One of the prime vehicles for this instruction to working-class

girls was the Kitchen Garden Program. Members were kept abreast of provincial and local activities, crises and ideas through The Woman's Journal. The Press Department was charged with the task of providing informative articles to newspapers and periodicals.<sup>23</sup> The Department of Sunday School Work made available "pledge cards," Sunday School Temperance Quarterlies, Sunday School teachers' lesson plans and quantities of inexpensive temperance leaflets for scholars of various ages.

A second area of work might be called social issues. In 1887, all provincial departments in this category were focused on groups outside the W.C.T.U. fold. Four departments concentrated on temperance and charity work with men perceived to be in high-risk vocations: the Departments of Work Among Lumbermen, Work Among Railroad Men, Work Among Soldiers and Work Among Sailors. In each case, temperance literature was tucked in with "comfort bags" containing such items as needles, thread, buttons, quilts and a Bible. Men attending county fairs or provincial exhibitions were considered highly vulnerable to the blandishments of gambling and drink; hence, a department was set up to disseminate information concerning tea tents and other healthy refreshments that might be provided by local unions. A Department of Prisons and Police sought to maintain links with law-enforcement agents so that temperance aid could be provided. It also placed pressure on government to classify prisoners. The 1892 Ontario Convention

went further. It called for the introduction of enforced labour into County and Local Jails. The final socially-inspired department dealt with Flower Missions, the provision of flowers, fruit and other delicacies to the poor and ill, particularly poor and ill women. Thus, it is clear that only a portion of the educationally and socially-oriented departments of work were concerned directly with alcohol. The multi-faceted nature of social problems was addressed by the Ontario W.C.T.U. through a wide variety of channels.

A third category of departmental work dealt with matters of religion, attesting to the organization's evangelical agenda. In 1887, three departments were identified of this type. An Evangelistic Department issued cheap tracts, made suggestions for meetings and prayer services, and outlined a variety of worthy causes from helping the indigent aged to providing refuge for reforming prostitutes. The Sabbath Observance Department offered guidelines for local monitoring of the Sabbath and attempted to place pressure on provincial authorities whenever contraventions were uncovered. For example in 1889, the Ontario Convention passed the following resolution: "That as Christians we should be careful not only to keep the Sabbath ourselves but to see that there is no infringement of its hours in the family; to watch our music that it be wholly sacred and that our children be early trained to meet with God's people in public worship. To neither purchase or[sic] patronize any trade carried on on the

Sabbath. To avoid as much as possible Sunday funerals. To use our influence for the early closing of stores on Saturday night, and by making the Sabbath work at home as light as possible, let all enjoy the day of rest." On the basis of such resolutions, one can well appreciate the depth of feeling on typical sabbatarian issues as the running of streetcars in Toronto on Sunday. The Department of Unfermented Wine provided printed materials for local unions and assiduously compiled statistics of victories and near-victories in denominational use of non-alcoholic sacramental beverage.

The fourth and final area of interest was in the effective use of the political process. Only two provincial departments served to promote a myriad of causes: the Legislation, Franchise and Petitions Department and the Conference with Influential Bodies Department. Both sought to influence policy-makers at the provincial level on a number of issues. While the emphasis in these early years by the Provincial Departments of Work was on educational and social service in the community, there was considerable interest in political issues.

There was a good deal of duplication of effort in this structure, but the departmental design permitted a broad range of topics to be dealt with by relatively few women. These areas of interest were represented as well at the dominion level after its organization in 1888, with some interesting

additions. The same four categories of work are represented but with the addition of a department of "Foreign Work." The Dominion W.C.T.U. was more aware of the negative implications for temperance with the increased immigration to Canada of groups, such as Germans, who were thought to be especially inclined to use alcohol. There were also twice as many politically oriented departments, suggesting a greater interest and confidence in direct political action.<sup>24</sup>

At the level of the local union the range of departments in 1887 generally mirrored the Provincial and Dominion structures. The growing community of North Toronto might be taken as an example. There, the union was able to support twelve departments. One of its most important, the Evangelistic Band of Hope, did not appear on the departmental roster for either the Provincial or Dominion W.C.T.U.'s. This attests to the autonomous initiative of local unions, and to the high value placed on youth work in many areas. In later years, the Bands of Hope would figure prominently in both of the higher levels. In this union, attendance during 1887 ranged between six and eighteen women at each meeting.<sup>25</sup> As a final comparison the six regular members of the Dunnville Union managed during 1887 to run vigorous departments in Temperance Literature, Juvenile Work, Evangelistic Work, Heredity and Hygiene and to maintain contact with the Press.<sup>26</sup>

This is not to suggest, however, that it was a simple matter for so few women to complete work in so many

departments. For example in 1887 the North Toronto W.C.T.U. Corresponding Secretary did not arrive for the meeting with the union's other five active members. She sent word that due to overwork, she had not prepared the report of the union for the Provincial and County conventions. She had, however, written forty-one letters and a hundred post cards on behalf of the union, and she wished to be reimbursed. Furthermore, she tendered her resignation which the union wisely refused.<sup>27</sup> Miss Rose was not alone in feeling pressured by the demands of her temperance work.

Although the work of the Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union will be surveyed in a later chapter, it is important to note that where Y.W.C.T.U.'s thrived, they often took on responsibility for the W.C.T.U.'s evangelistic work with working-class children, and were noted by one union to be the "power plant" of the whole organization.<sup>28</sup> But in strong Y. unions, the range of activities often extended beyond work with children to support for all age groups. The Toronto Central Y.W.C.T.U. with about thirty members in 1905 is a case in point. Operating with a fairly small active membership, the union involved itself in a considerable number of social projects. The Y Evangelistic Department distributed large numbers of tracts, often through door-to-door canvassing. A Flower Mission provided bouquets and delicacies for the infirm, elderly and poor: "...afternoon tea was served to 20 of our old and lonely ones at headquarters, little birthday

parties were given for the shut-in ones, also take them out in invalid chairs; take our tea with us in a basket and share it with some lone one, in fact do all we can to brighten and uplift their lives.... The expenditure of this amount, in love and for Christ's sake, has helped and comforted many a lone and discouraged one. We have striven to 'do good as we had opportunity,' remembering 'that pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world." A Kitchen Garden program for working-class girls was offered and materials were distributed to their brothers on the topic of Social Purity, specifically to discourage "self abuse." The Y's arranged lectures and provided pamphlets for the same group under their White Cross Society. A Y Heredity and Hygiene Department gathered publications and prepared programs on the importance of physical purity. The W.C.T.U. refreshment booth, directed primarily at working-class men, was supported by the Y.W.C.T.U. at the fairs. The Y's contributed to the Willard Home for working girls. This was an inexpensive residence and dining room for young women newly-arrived to Toronto. Finally, the Y's prepared "comfort bags" for the men in the lumber camps.<sup>29</sup>

In order to assess the Ontario W.C.T.U. and its changes over time, the same levels of the organization can be contrasted twenty-two years later, in 1909-10. By this date.

the W.C.T.U. had a much expanded departmental structure at the provincial and dominion levels, while the local unions in most cases had pared down their activities. The primary focus now differed between the Provincial and Dominion organizations on the one hand, and the local unions on the other. While the largest number of departments continued to fall into the educational category for the dominion and provincial groups, the Dominion W.C.T.U. in particular remained active in its attempts to influence the political process. The provincial level had less confidence in this strategy for change after 1900. The local unions, however, tended to emphasize the widespread social mission of the organization and with only a limited temperance program, having long since abandoned much of a directly political agenda.

In this second period, the Dominion W.C.T.U. created fifteen departments directly concerned with education, and several additional departments for which education was a secondary, but important issue. A number of these departments had existed in 1888, although often not at the dominion level. For example, Scientific Temperance Instruction, Health and Heredity (formerly the Hygiene and Heredity Department), Sunday School Work, and the Press were familiar areas. Such departments as Work among Soldiers and Militia, Sailors, Fishermen and Light-House Keepers, Raftsmen and Lumbermen, and Railway Employees were new definitions of old target groups and combined a social and educational focus. New target



groups were added, to be approached using the same model of distributing uplifting literature and conducting judicious visits.

The additions included work with Canadian Coloured People, which seems to have been largely inactive, and Young Peoples' Societies, on which the W.C.T.U. lavished more attention. The introduction of the Y.P.S. groups meant that young men were vigorously recruited as members where the nineteenth-century organization had emphasized the enlisting of young women. Scientific Temperance Instruction was supported by a new department of Medical Temperance which provided printed materials and speakers dealing with the medical implications of alcohol use. For example, the Ontario Department of Education's recommended textbook for use in its public schools was William Nattress' Ontario Public Physiology and Temperance, authorized in 1893. In a survey of the medical effects of alcohol, children were invited to inspect every major organ in the human body. Arteries of chronic if moderate drinkers, for example, instead of being "strong, elastic tubes, like new rubber hoses, become hardened and unyielding, and are liable to give way." The liver, however, was given star-billing in this campaign intended to induce apprehension, if not fear: it was not uncommon, according to the text, for it to have an enormous weight in the intemperate, reaching "fifteen, and even twenty to twenty-five pounds."<sup>30</sup> In an age when medical doctors were revered,

"Medical Temperance" work sought to add credibility to a traditional educational program.

The public school temperance curriculum was further supported by two new structures: first, the School Saving Banks Department which encouraged children to delay gratification in the hope that they would mature into abstemious adults. It was also hoped that these children's parents would be positively influenced by the good example of their offspring. Secondly, and much more successfully, a Department of Medal Contests was introduced to reward children's essays and speeches on temperance. The departmental superintendent provided prizes to provincial unions, suggested essay topics and appropriate selections for recitation. The Medal Contests seem to have replaced the public, "improving" entertainments provided throughout the late nineteenth century by the Bands of Hope.

Tobacco users were thought to be particularly vulnerable to the alcohol menace since nicotine, like alcohol, is a narcotic and has a similar impact on the nervous system. In 1893 the Ontario Convention resolved to employ only temperance lecturers who did not smoke since the two vices were regarded as natural companions. Even more feared were drugs such as opium. The new Department of Anti-Narcotics waged war against the many threats of "cheap thrills," and aimed its efforts primarily at boys and young men.

With an organization as dependent on the printed word as

was the W.C.T.U., updating and publicizing literature, and organizing and disseminating it became a major task. The Dominion Literature Depository tried to serve the entire Canadian W.C.T.U. and general public. At the 1891 Dominion Convention a resolution was passed that barber shops be supplied with the "proper kind of literature." A further resolution proposed that literature concerning Systematic Temperance Instruction be distributed at the International Teachers' Association to be convened that year in Toronto. In return, they would seek an expression of support "in favour of the educational methods of the Dominion and National W.C.T.U." Mothers were the main objects for the Department of Moral Instruction and Mothers' Meetings. Here, the topics were exceedingly far-ranging, from dangers of the theatre and "self abuse" to improved diet. Finally, the Dominion W.C.T.U. sought to educate provincial and local unions in parliamentary procedure and effective organizational techniques so that members would be retained within the movement. This School of Methods program involved making available printed materials, speakers and workshop suggestions. Refresher courses were offered periodically.

The Dominion organization also lent its support to social programs among groups likely to be exposed to, and victimized by, alcohol. While the provision of educational materials remained the primary thrust of this work, the Dominion W.C.T.U. encouraged other procedures to remove individuals in

particular danger from the polluting evil. This was the rationale behind the Prison Reform and Police Stations Department which visited inebriates in jail, and sought a declaration of their intention to reform. On receiving this, measures were often taken to relocate the victim to a healthier setting. As a political measure, pressure was placed on prison authorities to separate hardened criminals from neophytes, and to provide female matrons for women prisoners. The same strategy of removing temptation motivated the work of the Curfew Bell Department. It encouraged local unions to pressure town and city councils for the invocation of a curfew, usually at 9 p.m. so that young men would be safely in the family's care rather than frequenting public houses. A second strategy of providing alternative, non-alcoholic refreshments for thirsty men and women was the objective of the Department of Exhibitions and Fairs. This department also sought to add to the local union's membership roll. Sick and lonely women continued to be served by the Flower, Fruit and Delicacy Mission.

Departments devoted to serving the members' social needs were more obvious in the later records of the Dominion W.C.T.U. than earlier. Two departments fall directly into this category, with a third also being concerned with members' socializing. The Department of Parlor Meetings gave official recognition and support for union "socials" of various types. Tea parties, luncheons, prayer meetings,

membership drives, and "at homes" were all suggested by the Dominion W.C.T.U. to weld together present members and to facilitate new members' acceptance into the local unions. This formal acceptance of the important function served by the members' socializing suggests that even the Dominion organizers recognized the potential value in nurturing a women's culture at all levels. That this nurturant women's culture was regarded as a strength and not a distraction to the achievement of the organization's goals is further explanation for the receding importance of temperance per se, and the increasing significance accorded to social interaction amongst the members.

The Department of Systematic Giving was a program to encourage members to support local, provincial and dominion initiatives on a regular basis. A third department, that of Evangelistic Work, was most directly a reflection of the religious foundation of the organization. However, as with the Evangelistic Department in Ottawa in 1888, many of its activities had a social element that unified the women working in aid of religious conversion. The other religiously-oriented departments were, along with the Evangelistic Department, reflective of the earliest objectives of the W.C.T.U.: the Lord's Day Observance and Unfermented Wine Departments. A new concern had also been added since 1887. This was the co-ordination of temperance Missionary Work on a world scale through the World W.C.T.U.

A significant difference between the Dominion structure of 1887 and that of 1910 was the markedly larger range of activity and the political involvement by the later date. In 1910, four Dominion Departments (Conference with Influential Bodies, Legislation and Petitions, Equal Franchise and Christian Citizenship) and the internationally-directed Peace and Arbitration Department, demonstrated a new interest in waging political battles.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately, there was more sound than substance; very little was achieved at this level in political terms.<sup>32</sup> It is apparent also that the Dominion was the only level of the W.C.T.U. prepared to debate these political issues. Increasingly, the provincial and local levels of the organization worked in the cause of educational and social reform, rather than political change. For example, the Provincial W.C.T.U. in 1910 named only two politically-directed departments: one devoted to winning the franchise and a second concerned with Law Enforcement. Similarly, only two departments of religious work remained at the provincial level: a relatively inactive Unfermented Wine group - since most denominations amenable to removing fermented wines from the Communion Table had long since done so, that is to say, all but the Anglicans - and the consistently active Evangelistic Department.

The provincial union maintained its prime interest in educating children in 1910. Departments functioned in Sunday School Temperance Work, Juvenile Unions, Hygiene and Heredity,

Medal Contests and Scientific Temperance Instruction. The Provincial W.C.T.U. had long been frustrated by the difficulty of having a textbook adopted for the public schools, and by the Department of Education's failure to identify Scientific Temperance Instruction as a compulsory subject. The greatest frustration of all, however, was in convincing teachers to include the subject in the curriculum at all. In 1899, the Convention passed this resolution:

Whereas, We believe that teachers throughout our land wield a powerful and life-long influence over their pupils, Resolved, That we urge them to endeavor more earnestly to inspire those under their charge with exalted ideals of purity, nobility and integrity of character, and Further, That in teaching of physiology and hygiene we ask them to lay special stress upon the evil effects of alcohol and tobacco upon the human system, also their debasing power over mind and soul. And that still further, We would emphasize our belief that no person addicted to the use of any of these narcotics should ever enter the schoolroom as a teacher.

In 1901, the W.C.T.U.'s concern was extended to teacher-training institutions: "we urge the necessity of our Model and Normal schools giving to the teachers in training, as thorough a preparation for teaching Scientific Temperance as any other subject; and we believe no teacher should receive his or her certificate who has not passed a satisfactory examination upon it and the best method of teaching it."

Mothers were also addressed through the departments of Purity

and Mothers' Meetings, The Woman's Journal, the White Cross Society, and the Press. Of continuing concern, too, were those groups requiring both educational materials and support to help shield them from the alcohol peril: the departments which worked among prisoners, soldiers, sailors, Indians, coloured peoples and lumbermen in the Muskoka Area all remained active during this period. Similarly, the Flower Mission and work at County Fairs continued. Finally, those internally-supportive departments such as the School of Methods and Parlor Meetings were well-supported across the province.

However, the list of provincial departments to have been dropped by 1910 is as instructive as those that remain. The Department of Young Woman's Work had disappeared, and with it went the provincial recognition of the special role of the single young woman. With the eclipse of the Y.W.C.T.U., the Kitchen Garden program as well as many activities subsumed under the Evangelistic Department disappeared as well. Gone too was the Legislation, the Parliamentary Practice and Sabbath Observance Departments, suggesting a deep frustration with the legislative route to gain control of the liquor traffic.<sup>33</sup> This movement away from efforts to influence law-making and towards informal pressure tactics and small-group activism were reflected even more strongly in the local unions.

The Minute Books of selected local unions in 1909 and 1910 reveal not only the types of work favoured by small women's groups, but also the relative amount of time spent on each activity, as



well as the recording secretary's views of these endeavors.

In this period the Newmarket Union operated with between five and thirteen members. They chose to set up no political departments at all, and explicitly refused a community request to mobilize the community in favour of early shop closings: "One of the local Merchants[sic] requested the W.C.T.U. to get signers to a petition for early closing of the stores Sat. nights. the[sic] plan was not taken up. after[sic] former experience it was decided to 'tell the Merchants to let sleeping dogs lie'"<sup>34</sup>

Most Newmarket W.C.T.U. efforts were directed to social matters and not directly to temperance. Help was given to "the foreign women up the canal to clothing,<sup>35</sup>" to "a family we heard was in need. there[sic] are some coats still at Mrs. Mairs ready for any who are in need also some pieces for another quilt and other clothing,<sup>36</sup>" to another "family whose mother lies very ill and weak; decide to finish a quilt for them, and to provide a washerwoman to clean up at a cost of \$1.00 to the treasury,<sup>37</sup>" to the people of Muskoka and in particular, cases "where one or other of the parents were dead and the poor innocent children suffering for clothing. 2 quilts were donated immediately another[sic] offered her Home for the W.C.T.U. to make clothing and send to the poor unfortunates. all[sic] hearts were touched and longed to help."<sup>38</sup> On February 1, 1910, "Mrs. C.E. Cane asks to have a box filled with clothing suitable for a family of children whose mother was taken from them by death. At the next meeting of the W.C.T.U. sewing circle the box is to be filled and sent." The women were

tireless in ministering to the needs within and beyond their community. In addition, they organized a social to raise money for the Muskoka Missionary cause. It featured the Rev. Mr. Cornell's Magic Lantern views and a short musical program. Later in 1910 a tea was organized and realized \$10.00 for the Lumbermen.

But the W.C.T.U. women did more than pack clothing and give parties. They sought both to educate the young people and themselves about a number of troubling problems. Mr. Beal, a Purity lecturer, was engaged for \$3.50 to speak to the boys about their personal habits.<sup>39</sup> After the president read a resolution on "the Evil of the Tobacco habit," the recording secretary noted, "oh![sic] what can be accomplished when men of high degree in prominent positions indulge in the habit setting a bad example for young boys even[sic] women and girls are taking to the habit in some places not far distant."<sup>40</sup> In addition to confirming their own worst fears about tobacco, the members had educational meetings dealing with "Social Purity in the Home," and the "White Slave Trade which is being carried on in our own fair Canada. How can we stop it? our[sic] hearts ache for the Mothers whose innocent Daughters have been captured & carried away by vile women in sheep's clothing. several[sic] cases have been reported in the various papers. oh![sic] that we might send a warning into every home to beware of such creatures."<sup>41</sup> The Recording Secretary's comments are most revealing of righteous anger and fear and directed against men of influence and women who are seen as turn-coats. Papers were also read on the pest of flies and on the

morality of the stage.

Although in general, the Young Woman's movement within the W.C.T.U. had undergone a decline, the Newmarket W.C.T.U. still had a strong Y.W.C.T.U. connected with it during this period. The Y's main responsibility seems to have been to run Mothers' Meetings, and the minute books recount their on-going problems in locating appropriate quarters for the working-class women attending the Mothers' Meetings. "Prayers are being offered by them [Y.W.C.T.U.] to have the Mothers Meetings continued hoping good may be done for their Eternal welfare as these women meet with mothers who never go to any church and who may be persuaded to attend these meetings occasionally where they may get both physical and spiritual good."<sup>42</sup>

The list of departments for the Newmarket W.C.T.U. and Y.W.C.T.U. indicates that work was done in the department areas of Evangelistic, Flower, Fruit and Delicacy, Parlor, Systematic Giving, Sabbath Schools, Narcotics, Purity and Mothers' Meetings, Press and Lumbermen. This list, however, is inadequate to fairly assess the amount of effort consistently and conscientiously expended by this small group of women for the welfare of their families and community, and all in the name of their Saviour. Their favoured work was educational, mainly among young men and themselves in this later period. The shift in educational focus away from young women towards young men is representative of the W.C.T.U.'s general movement away from perceiving women to be a motive force and towards men as the protector of women and the family, and the primary change agent in society. The Newmarket

Union's second major interest was in social reform to lighten the burden of women and families in the immediate area and beyond.

Wendy Mitchinson argues that the departmental organization handicapped the W.C.T.U.'s efforts by spreading members' energies too thinly so that little effective work resulted.<sup>43</sup> The record of W.C.T.U. accomplishments at all levels, but especially at the local, casts doubt on this conclusion. Mitchinson also suggests that "once formed, [departments] became a permanent feature" with the result that the field of work expanded beyond reasonable limits.<sup>44</sup> This has been shown not to have been so. As issues were resolved satisfactorily or unions became discouraged with the reaction to their efforts to improve society, departments were dropped. When new issues arose, such as war work, departments were added. The records of the Newmarket W.C.T.U. demonstrate that the women of that local union chose areas of work within departments that interested them, and concerning issues where they believed they could make a difference in the community. The departments of work which they chose were different from those undertaken by, for example, the women of the Ottawa W.C.T.U. and Y.W.C.T.U. However, in both instances the members devoted enormous energies to the tasks which they deemed important. Furthermore and contrary to Mitchinson's contention, neither group seems to have felt that it had overextended itself. Had it done so, the overly-ambitious departmental range would have been cut back in the next year. The structure of the Ontario W.C.T.U. encouraged this type of

flexibility. In summary, it has been shown that the departmental organization did not handicap the W.C.T.U. or the Y.W.C.T.U., but rather added to their effectiveness in communities where the organization's goals varied with local needs.

The membership figures for the Dominion W.C.T.U. are impressive: by 1891, almost 10,000 women were reported as active members,<sup>45</sup> but eighteen years later, the figure was still under 12,000<sup>46</sup>. By 1914, the Dominion listed 16,838 members,<sup>47</sup> making it the largest non-denominational organization in Canada.<sup>48</sup> (See Appendices IV and V).

The largest and most active of the provincial unions was Ontario.<sup>49</sup> Yet even here, the membership figures demonstrate slowed growth after its enthusiastic and well-supported start in the 1880's, with no real recovery until after 1910. In 1882, the Ontario Union, just five years after its creation, could boast of having 96 unions with 2,500 members.<sup>50</sup> By 1891, there were 175 unions with 4,318 members.<sup>51</sup> In 1895, 205 unions had almost 5,000 members,<sup>52</sup> but by 1900 the membership had risen to only 5,521 in 222 unions.<sup>53</sup> The number of unions remained steady; by 1911 there were 215, but individual unions were stronger, with a total membership of 7,128.<sup>54</sup> In 1913, a modest expansion occurred with 479 unions and 8,179 active members.<sup>55</sup> (See Appendices I and II).

Yet these figures represent only the active members, and give

little sense of the general support for specific issues, such as temperance. For example, during the "Petition Campaign" in 1916 when the W.C.T.U. worked with a coalition of prohibition forces in enlisting support for temperance legislation, 850,000 names were collected on a petition and submitted to the Hearst Government.<sup>56</sup>

This resulted in the Ontario Temperance Act of the same year.

Membership figures are deceptive with most organizations. Official reports usually provide inflated totals, even though they purport to list only "active members." So it is with the W.C.T.U. Blurring occurs in two directions. Although the stated membership of a union might be 66, as in the case of Ottawa in 1886, the actual attendance on a representative date was 11. (See Appendix III) The disparity appears to have been more pronounced in city unions than in town or village ones. At the same time, unions with modest memberships were able to attract large numbers of sympathetic adherents for special presentations. This occurred, for example, with the Meaford Union which struggled for years with a small attendance at its regular meetings. Nevertheless, in a three month period in 1902, it was able to sponsor three highly successful temperance lectures in the town hall.<sup>57</sup> Clearly, membership figures do not begin to tell the story of a group's real support or influence in a community.

Several factors affected the membership of unions at the dominion, provincial and local levels. Of primary importance at the dominion and provincial levels was the status of temperance reform in the wider community: with the growth of temperance

societies of various types throughout Canada, the W.C.T.U. grew apace. As support for temperance, or suffrage, or purity legislation, waned internationally and nationally, the popularity of the W.C.T.U. was affected, though its membership had greater stability than most other temperance groups. This fluctuating support for temperance was both influenced and demonstrated by provincial and federal plebiscites, petitions, referenda, Local option campaigns and statutes. All of these had an enormous effect on W.C.T.U. membership. At the local level, these larger movements also had an impact, but a less critical one. Here, the health of the membership rolls was most closely linked to the number and strength of other women's groups of all types and men's temperance groups in that locale. While much more research needs to be carried out into competing societies for women at every level, the annual reports and minute books do provide some sense of the competitors and cooperators at each level of operation. A third determinant of a union's success or failure proved to be the strength of social relations between members. Where unions nurtured friendships and social gatherings, union membership was more consistently buoyant than in unions where the only link was service to the community or a shared sense of religion.

Throughout most of the nineteenth century the relationship with the individual temperance lodges had been warm. Official

greetings were extended at the annual meetings of the Provincial and Dominion W.C.T.U.,<sup>58</sup> and high-ranking officers of the W.C.T.U. and various temperance lodges paid visits to each others meetings. Mrs. Youmans tells how a deputation of the Right Grand Lodge of Good Templars was to meet in Napanee, and being in the area, she decided to attend and bring greetings. She was called upon to prepare and deliver an address, but when the time came for her to mount the platform, she was too frightened to move. "I had never stood on a public platform in my life. I could not do it, but did venture to read the address from the aisle."<sup>59</sup>

On occasion too, delegations met with the dominion or provincial executive, as in 1890 when a delegation from the Royal Templars of Temperance proposed the establishment of a "Home for Intemperate Men." While the W.C.T.U. executive supported the idea, it insisted that to receive any financial support, it would have to be open also to inebriated women.<sup>60</sup> Positions such as this one are indicative of the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s sympathy with women's plight beyond their own direct experience. It is suggestive too of the difference in outlook between the male-dominated lodge and female-run W.C.T.U. on social problems.

Local W.C.T.U. unions often teamed with their temperance lodge counterparts to effect political change, as in London when the union resolved in 1894 "That the Executive be appointed a deputation who will confer with the London and Western Ontario Prohibition Union and Royal Templars and who will go with them to interview the License[sic] Commissioners in regard to whatever



requests are thought advisable to make." In the same vein, the Woodstock Union decided that to effectively wage the local option campaign in 1913, they would send a delegation to work with the Temperance Citizens' League.<sup>61</sup> The Toronto Union worked with the local Good Templars, Royal Templars and the Young Men's Prohibition Club to demand Scientific Temperance Instruction in the schools,<sup>62</sup> and to protest the availability of liquor in military camps and police forces.<sup>63</sup> Some unions held Sunday afternoon gospel meetings to promote the cause of temperance and shared the duties with local temperance lodges.<sup>64</sup> Inexpensive temperance literature was procured from the lodges<sup>65</sup>, and quarters were shared for temperance meetings.<sup>66</sup> Where the latter arrangements were made, the W.C.T.U. generally owned the rooms and charged the lodges rent. There is little evidence from the minute books that the offer was reciprocated by the lodges when they owned quarters. When conferences were held, the lodges even requested billets from the local union.<sup>67</sup>

In fact, where cooperation did not occur, the W.C.T.U. was not always the loser. For example, the Newbury town report to the District Council of the Royal Templars of Temperance noted that there were "too many other meetings in the village, a W.C.T.U. had been started there and some of the Sisters had joined it." Generally, however, the temperance lodges and local W.C.T.U. unions worked amicably together in the period before 1900 when the lodges were thriving.

Attendance figures for the lodges were impressive. In 1882, for

instance, when the W.C.T.U. in Ontario had about 2,500 active members, the Ontario division of the Sons of Temperance boasted of over 5,000 members, while the Independent Order of Good Templars six years earlier had signed memberships from 25,000 Ontario residents!<sup>68</sup> If the growth in the lodges was phenomenal, so was their decline. In 1891, when the Ontario W.C.T.U. membership had climbed to almost 5,000, only 12,000 members remained of the Independent Order of Good Templars.<sup>69</sup> Their numbers further declined to 2,268 in 1899, while the W.C.T.U. membership remained well above 5,000.<sup>70</sup> By 1904 the Royal Templars of Temperance membership had slipped to 6,000 from 15,000 eleven years earlier.<sup>71</sup> In the same year, the Ontario W.C.T.U. had almost 5,400 members.

Thus while D.C. Masters contends that the temperance movement was at flood-tide in Toronto by 1850,<sup>72</sup> and Graeme Decarie surveys temperance lodges and organizations and concludes that most were in serious decline by the 1890's,<sup>73</sup> these conclusions appear to be accurate only for the male temperance lodges, where minute books speak of the sliding membership and apathy in formerly vibrant divisions.<sup>74</sup> W.C.T.U. membership, by contrast, grew more slowly, but maintained their numbers in the face of bitter disappointments over slow-reacting governments.

In the early days of the W.C.T.U.'s existence, the relationship with the lodges' federation, the Dominion Alliance, had also been cordial. In 1876, very soon after the W.C.T.U.'s founding, the Dominion Alliance for the Total Suppression of the Liquor Traffic

was established by the many temperance societies operating across Canada. Similar to the American Anti-Saloon League, it took a very different approach to prohibition from the W.C.T.U. Whereas the Woman's Christian Temperance Union sought to unite supporters behind a multifaceted reform program, the Dominion Alliance was a single-issue organization which emphasized the lowest common denominator upon which temperance supporters could agree. This approach brought it, with the Anti-Saloon League, "the greatest political triumphs in the history of temperance reform and contributed as well to the reform's most resounding political defeat."<sup>75</sup> Membership was also open to churches, the Y.M.C.A., the League of the Cross, Societies of Christian Endeavour, Epworth Leagues and the St. Andrew's Brotherhood.<sup>76</sup> The dominion and provincial levels of the W.C.T.U. regularly stated their support for the Dominion Alliance<sup>77</sup> and there is evidence that, particularly before 1890, the Dominion Alliance was regarded as the mouthpiece for the W.C.T.U. in political matters. For example, Mrs. Chisholm, president of the Ontario County Union, in speaking to the Ottawa W.C.T.U. in 1884, noted that "while the W.C.T.U. would like to have the liquor trade law amended, the Dominion Alliance has asked them to delay until the time is right."<sup>78</sup> The W.C.T.U. complied. W.C.T.U. representatives were entertained and courted by the Dominion Alliance.<sup>79</sup>

After 1890, the relationship appears to have cooled at the dominion and provincial levels, although The Woman's Journal continued to advertise Dominion Alliance conventions and

legislative initiatives.<sup>80</sup> Most of the Alliance's efforts, however, seem to have been directed to the local unions which were often contacted directly, many opting to support the Alliance in a variety of ways. The Ottawa Union accepted a Dominion Alliance lecturer on the condition that two-thirds of the proceeds be given to the W.C.T.U.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, the Dunnville Union extended an invitation to the Dominion Alliance lecturer to visit for a modest fee.<sup>82</sup> A good deal of evidence exists that the Dominion Alliance regularly sent appeals to the local unions for financial support, and that they were often successful.<sup>83</sup> In fact, the women of the Dunnville Union generously presented five dollars to the Dominion Alliance Convention meeting at their Baptist Church, which so depleted the union's financial resources that three months later the contribution was noted as the reason that the W.C.T.U.'s missionary could not be entertained for a visit.<sup>84</sup>

Periodically the Alliance requested that union members and their sympathetic friends write directly to their Member of Parliament, for example, "asking him to use his influence to secure legislation in fulfillment of the promises made...."<sup>85</sup> Nevertheless, by 1916, the association between the Dominion Alliance and the W.C.T.U. was strained. The most plausible explanation for this cooling of relations related to the W.C.T.U.'s waning interest in political action of any type after the many discouragements of the plebiscites of the 1890's. The Alliance's reasons cannot be ascertained from the records consulted for this study. For some reason, however, it appears that they found the W.C.T.U. official

involvement embarrassing or an obstacle to political success.

Another male organization that worked warmly and productively with the W.C.T.U. was the Y.M.C.A. As with the temperance lodges, rooms were often shared, although in this case, the owners were generally the Y.M.C.A. and not the W.C.T.U.<sup>86</sup> In several instances at the local level the two organizations were able to carry out their temperance programs by cooperating closely. Temperance literature was purchased together<sup>87</sup> and, in the case of the Ottawa Union, the rough work with lumbermen was taken over for them by the Y.M.C.A., "as most of our honorary [male] members and church workers are connected with the association."<sup>88</sup>

The final men's organization to work cooperatively with the W.C.T.U. at all levels were the ministers of individual Protestant congregations, primarily the Methodists, Presbyterians and Baptists. Ministers and church officials often provided the church basement or manse parlor as a meeting place for the union<sup>89</sup>, and ministers regularly preached temperance sermons and gave public encouragement to the local unions.<sup>90</sup> By far the strongest support came from the Methodist Church which had been fully committed to total abstinence and legal prohibition since its formation in 1883.<sup>91</sup> A good deal of sympathy also came from the Presbyterian Church, although it was not as unified in its support as were the Methodists. Nevertheless, it should not be assumed, as Wendy Mitchinson has done, that the W.C.T.U. was essentially a child of the Methodist Church. In her examination of the leadership of the Dominion W.C.T.U. she finds that almost 44 per cent of the women

were Methodist and 21 per cent of their husbands were clergy.<sup>92</sup> Given that her sample only comprised thirty-two women, all at the dominion level which, it has been argued, was hardly representative of local union membership, this assumption of a close identification of the W.C.T.U. with the Methodist Church at all levels must be questioned. In fact, most of the local unions examined for this study attempted to maintain their non-denominational status by appointing vice-presidents from each of the town's denominations.<sup>93</sup>

Beyond the male-controlled church organizations, the W.C.T.U. worked very closely with church women of many Protestant denominations, including the Baptists, Anglicans and Congregationalists as well as Methodists and Presbyterians. It was particularly in youth work and in the Missionary Societies that the church women and W.C.T.U. women were drawn together. The temperance Sunday School Quarterlies were generally distributed in every sympathetic denomination's Sunday School. At the very least, this involved interviewing all Sunday School Superintendents or Teachers in the community's churches.<sup>94</sup> Sometimes the cooperation was extended to the public schools, as in the case of the London union which authorized the "Superintendents of Juvenile Work and Narcotics to ask for the co-operation of the Societies of Christian Endeavour and Epworth League in the different churches be called to meet with the Superintendents of Juvenile Work [of the W.C.T.U.] for the purpose of devising plans for more energetic and Systematic effort in introducing Scientific [Temperance] Instruction in our

schools.<sup>95</sup> Co-operation was also evident in arranging for temperance Sunday School lessons.<sup>96</sup> Greetings were often extended to meetings of denominationa<sup>l</sup> missionary societies meeting nearby.<sup>97</sup>

The local unions' minute books provide a sense of the W.C.T.U. women working effectively with women in many other organizations and possibly sharing members. This generalization applies particularly to the village and town unions where little evidence is provided that the W.C.T.U. women were in hot competition with any other group. Aside from the women's missionary societies, one might expect that some competition in the rural and small town unions would be provided by the Women's Institutes, a popular organization for rural and town women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Not a single instance of this emerged from the primary research. Clearly, the W.C.T.U. worked hard to be considered a respectable women's group, and at least in the small town and rural districts, that designation was beyond doubt.

It was in the cities and on the provincial and national stage that one can detect some evidence of competition between certain women's organizations. The city provided many more options for middle-class women in the latter quarter of the nineteenth-century and the first two decades of the twentieth. In addition to the W.C.T.U., a city such as Ottawa in 1895 had a variety of Missionary Societies, the Orphans' Home and Refuge for Aged Women, the Lady Stanley Institute for the training of nurses, a Local Council of Women, the Ottawa Maternity Hospital, the Home for Friendless

Women, the Associated Charities movement, a Y.M.C.A., and a Y.W.C.A. and a number of literary and cultural societies. It was in this rich milieu that the W.C.T.U. was thrown into some competition with other groups. Most challenging to the W.C.T.U. position was the new National Council of Women, headed by the indomitable wife of the Governor General, Lady Aberdeen.

An outgrowth of the Women's Congress held in Chicago in 1893, the National Council of Women of Canada took as its vague aim the promotion of international sympathy and the conservation of "the highest good of the Family and the State."<sup>98</sup> The N.C.W.C. was not only non-sectarian, it was non-religious and happily accepted into its federation all women's groups, including those not "acknowledging God and Christ."<sup>99</sup> This position, as well as the use of silent prayer and an unwillingness by the N.C.W.C. to formally support prohibition, caused the Dominion W.C.T.U. not to affiliate with the N.C.W.C. until 1919. In addition to the substantive differences between the two organizations at the national level, there were less tangible differences that nevertheless resulted in the N.C.W.C. assuming a more elitist image. Undoubtedly, Lady Aberdeen's spirited leadership helped to elevate the N.C.W.C. in the public's perception, and the group conducted its conventions with this firmly in mind. Wayne Roberts has criticized the N.C.W.C. for its "aristocratic pretensions," a group "of the bland leading the bland. Their conventions bristled with ceremonies lacking only in content."<sup>100</sup> The social cachet of the N.C.W.C. was difficult for the W.C.T.U. to compete with, and nationally and



possibly in the cities, the organization seems to have garnered less status than did the N.C.W.C.

In the same year that the N.C.W.C. was formed, Adelaide Hoodless called the inaugural meeting of the Dominion Y.W.C.A. in Toronto. The principal address was given by Bertha Wright, President of the Ottawa Y.W.C.A., who was also an active member in the Ottawa W.C.T.U and Y.W.C.T.U.<sup>101</sup> As two evangelically inspired and sustained organizations, the Y.W.C.A. and the W.C.T.U. co-existed reasonably well and, indeed, shared several characteristics and approaches. While the Y.W.C.A. was particularly concerned about the plight of the young working woman in an urban setting, it shared the W.C.T.U.'s horror at the dangers posed by alcohol, particularly among the young. The London Y.W.C.T.U., for example, ran the Y.W.C.A. as one of its departments, providing an "attractive suite of rooms open daily with a paid secretary in charge," and a library of three hundred volumes for mutual use.<sup>102</sup> It also participated energetically in the Social Purity campaign with the W.C.T.U., the two organizations joining forces to engage Arthur Beale as their itinerant Purity Speaker in 1901.<sup>103</sup> Delegates were dispatched as representatives to each others' conventions<sup>104</sup>. As the W.C.T.U. had not affiliated with the N.C.W.C. until after the First World War, neither did the Y.W.C.A. join until later on, in 1914.<sup>105</sup>

Nevertheless, the Y.W.C.A. was perceived by some W.C.T.U. women as a threat to its own organization for young women, the Y.W.C.T.U. At the World's Conference of the W.C.T.U. in 1906, a Mrs. Clara

Parrish-Wright made the Y.W.C.A. challenge explicit: "Now, I believe in the work of the Y.W.C.A.," she insisted, "but we all know that it does not 'broaden the horizon' of young women, and 'drive self from the throne' as does the work of the Y.W.C.T.U. Can we not do something to meet this? I do not mean can we not push them out - no indeed. I rejoice in all the good they are doing, but can we not formulate some plan whereby we may 'hold our own' too? Without a single exception, I believe we were on all those grounds first. Oh, if we only might unlock the 'storehouses' of gold and send our young women forth! There must be a mint of wealth for us somewhere. Let us pray, and let us ask that its 'hiding place' may be revealed."<sup>106</sup> This transparently anxious statement of losing a foothold that once had been so firm indicates that a young woman's life devoted to self-betterment, to 'broaden the horizon', and selfless labour, to 'drive self from the throne,' was no longer held in such high esteem. By 1906, the Y.W.C.T.U. in the international, national and provincial arenas felt its appeal slipping.

At the city union level, some competition was also apparent, but far less than in the provincial or dominion associations. For instance, the year after the president of the Dominion W.C.T.U. was treated shabbily by the Council of the N.C.W.C. by not being allowed to bring greetings from her organization,<sup>107</sup> the London W.C.T.U. cheerfully decided to send a delegation to the N.C.W.C. Conference to be addressed by Lady Aberdeen<sup>108</sup> and two months later the London union federated with the Local Council of Women.

Similarly in Ottawa, a network of women worked together during the 1890's in the Methodist and Presbyterian Missionary Societies, the Orphans' Home and Refuge for Aged Women, the Local Council of Women, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and the Young Woman's Christian Association.<sup>109</sup> It is reasonable to conclude that at the local level women's organizations cooperated far more than they competed. It was not until 1922 that the Ontario President reported worriedly, "Some of our members and many true-hearted temperance women outside our ranks really think our society has finished its work and are turning to other organizations. Some that still believe in our work give from union funds to maintain other societies...."<sup>110</sup> But this process of disintegration had not yet begun by 1916.

Through much of the period under examination, the relationship between the local, Provincial, Dominion and World W.C.T.U. organizations was uneasy. With the exception of the local unions, a small corp of workers maintained operations throughout the year. Enormous energies were focused on the annual or semi-annual conventions which began provincially in 1877, dominion-wide in 1888 and on a world-scale in 1884. The convention became the most ritualized of the W.C.T.U. undertakings. It was also an opportunity to report on the year's achievements, and to formulate resolutions of future action. The debates were occasionally heated with local interests and personalities clashing. Doctrinal changes, based on the evolving relationship between evangelicalism and empiricism, created strains in the association, a topic which

will be explored more fully in the next chapter.

The uneasiness was also due partly to the fact that the W.C.T.U. had originally been organized, and had much of its strength, at the local level. The other tiers of the organization were in search of causes and constituencies not presently served by the local unions. This did not leave a great deal of territory. Funding such a sizable organization presented a continual worry even though much of the work was carried on through volunteer action. In 1884 the Richmond Hill union noted one of the many calls for funds from the provincial level and, later, the minutes noted wearily a further campaign by the Dominion and World executive: five cents per member to be sent to each level.<sup>111</sup> The area of jurisdiction was an additional source of irritation. After local unions complained that they were being bombarded with appeals, the provincial executive received an agreement from the dominion level that local unions would be approached only through the provincial organization and with its consent.<sup>112</sup> The agreement was usually observed, but the general question of jurisdiction was not settled until 1911 when representatives' credentials to Dominion Conventions were agreed to be provincially-determined.<sup>113</sup>

The other matter to cause hard feelings between the Dominion and Ontario levels was the status and financial support of the W.C.T.U. journal, at various times called The Woman's Journal, The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, and Canada's White Ribbon Bulletin. The Woman's Journal was first published in 1884 in Ottawa. While it attempted to represent the W.C.T.U. and its youth groups across

Canada, it was from the start more representative of the Ontario group than any other. The periodical was chronically short of money and repeated appeals to the Dominion executive were unsuccessful. At the 1896 Provincial convention, for example, delegates suggested that the Dominion salvage the Journal by levying a ten cent fee on every member.<sup>114</sup> There is no evidence that the suggestion was pursued. By 1903 the Journal had been reduced to spotty coverage of even Ontario's activities. It carried a sizable debt, and had an inexperienced editor after the retirement of Mary McKay Scott who had ably headed the magazine for thirteen years. The dominion organization found itself unable to provide better financial terms and, in 1903, the publication ceased.<sup>115</sup> When the magazine was resuscitated in 1904, its banner identified it as the "Official Organ of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in Canada" even though Ontario continued to pay most of the bills. The Dominion W.C.T.U. demanded control of the editorial policy and writing; Ontario resisted and suggested a paper partly devoted to Dominion matters, and partly to Ontario's interests. The power struggle continued until 1906 when the relationship between the dominion and province in supporting The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings was terminated,<sup>116</sup> and the paper became the organ of the Ontario W.C.T.U.

In 1915, the title was again changed to Canada's White Ribbon Bulletin, "Official Organ of the W.C.T.U. of Canada" and more dominion matters were included.<sup>117</sup> But this apparent rapprochement did not end the acrimony. In 1916 the Bulletin published an

editorial which was critical of the British Woman's Temperance Union. On receiving a protest from the B.W.T.U., the Dominion convention promptly passed a resolution vowing its support for the B.W.T.U. and dissociating itself from the editorial. The B.W.T.U. was applauded as a group "who have been an example to us in their self-sacrificing devotion to the highest ideals for which our World's W.C.T.U. stands."<sup>118</sup> The confusion of role and responsibility between the provincial and dominion levels was amply demonstrated in the chequered history of the W.C.T.U.'s beleaguered journal.

The relationship between the dominion and world levels of the W.C.T.U. was uneven as well. The World W.C.T.U. first became a high-profile organization with the accession to the presidency of Frances Willard in 1891. From Willard's death in 1898 to 1906, it was controlled by the unconventional personality of Lady Henry Somerset, long the president of the British Woman's Temperance Union. A Fabian socialist, Lady Somerset was not convinced that total prohibition rather than temperance was the best policy for the W.C.T.U.<sup>119</sup> Her views were made clear to the Canadian W.C.T.U. when the World Convention was held in Toronto in 1897. In that year's report of the Ontario Convention, it was noted that the delegates felt deeply agitated over Lady Somerset's position, but that they would defer action for the present. The Ontario Executive had agreed at a closed meeting to discuss the matter in "Christ-like and harmonious spirit," but still to express concern for Lady Somerset's sliding position on prohibition.<sup>120</sup> Dr. Amelia

Youmans, Vice-President of the Dominion W.C.T.U., however, was not prepared to support errant policies being framed for the world organization. She accused Lady Somerset of taking an inappropriate view of prohibition, and professed to back the "time-honoured principles of absolute abolition and prohibition of all and every kind of licensed sin."<sup>121</sup> Surprisingly, the Dominion W.C.T.U. backed not Dr. Youmans, but Lady Somerset, although there was a good deal of disapproving discussion in the final decision. Dr. Youmans resigned.<sup>122</sup> Strong personalities and extended distances between the upper levels of the organization created problems of unity.

Organizationally, the W.C.T.U. was made more effective by its varied departments of work. They permitted much flexibility in the choice of issues to which unions could devote their labour. It might be conjectured that because of this choice and, as will be seen, the evangelical motivation for social action, the W.C.T.U. was more successful in holding its membership than were male temperance groups, which were limited to the single issue of alcohol reform. At the local level relations between the W.C.T.U. and other male and female societies was generally mutually supportive. The same cannot be said for the Provincial, Dominion and World levels. The W.C.T.U. found its strength, energy and endurance in its local unions; it was from this base that the middle-class women of Ontario carried out their mission of social reform within their communities.

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## ENDNOTES

1. Malcolm Graeme Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario: 1894-1916," (Ph.D. thesis, Queen's University, 1972) p.41.
2. Ontario Archives, W.C.T.U. Collection, MU 8428, Richmond Hill Treasurer's Book, May 14, 1884. NOTE: Unless otherwise stated, all documents located in the W.C.T.U. Collection of the Ontario Archives, Toronto.
3. Even at the provincial level, the licencing system was criticized regularly at the annual conventions. For example, this resolution was passed at the 1894 Ontario Convention: "That we ask immediate relief from some of the more burdensome features of the present license[sic] system, such as the misnumbering of offences - long the source of flagrant abuse; the lack of legal provision for relief in cases where licensed bars exist in section where public sentiment does not sustain them; and the continuance in office of men out of sympathy with the laws they were appointed to enforce...." MU 8404, Ontario Annual Meeting, 1894.
4. The Scott Act was silent on the issue of the manufacture of liquor, "perhaps in deference to the interests of capital and labour involved." Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario," p. 42.
5. Ibid., p. 44.
6. Ibid., p. 49.
7. Ibid., p. 86.
8. Ibid., p. 83.
9. S.G.E. McKee, The Jubilee History of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1877-1927 (Whitby, 1927) p. 42.
10. Ibid., p. 42.
11. Ibid., p. 44.
12. Ibid., p. 49.

13. UWORC, MN 1129, London District W.C.T.U. Records, October 9, 1900.
14. MU 8415, Dunnville Union Minute Book, October 17, 1900 and November 21, 1900.
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16. Joseph Schull, Ontario Since 1967 (Toronto, 1978), p. 220.
17. See Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario," chapter 7 and McKee, Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, pp. 104-105.
18. Minutes of the Ontario W.C.T.U. Annual Meeting, 1887.
19. Ibid.
20. MU 8419, Minute Book of the Lancaster W.C.T.U., March 5, 1902.
21. MU 8425, Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., October 1, 1881.
22. Ibid., January 3, 1882.
23. MU 8405, Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1887.
24. MU 8394, Minutes of the Second Convention of the Dominion W.C.T.U., Toronto, 1889.
25. MU 8424, North Toronto Minute Book, 1887.
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27. Minute Book of the North Toronto W.C.T.U., September 19, 1887.
28. MU 8432, Pamphlet, "The Progress of Half a Century", n.d.
29. MU 8432, Toronto Directory and Report, 1905.
30. Nancy Sheehan, "The W.C.T.U. and Educational Strategies on the Canadian Prairie" History of Education Quarterly, 24 (1984), pp. 104-105.
31. Minutes of the Twenty-Second Convention of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1909.

32. Among the unsuccessful political causes championed in this period were half-way houses for female former prisoners, prohibition of cigarettes and alcohol, banning the sale of liquor on the Trans-continental railways and female suffrage.

33. MU 8404, Minutes of the Ontario W.C.T.U. Annual Meeting, 1910.

34. Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., February 1, 1910.

35. Ibid., February 2, 1909.

36. Ibid., March 2, 1909.

37. Ibid., December 7, 1909.

38. Ibid., January 4, 1910.

39. Ibid., January 5, 1909.

40. Ibid., October 11, 1910.

41. Ibid., May 3, 1910.

42. Ibid., April 6, 1909.

43. Wendy Mitchinson, "Aspects of Reform: Four Women's Organizations in Nineteenth-Century Canada" (Ph.D. Thesis, York University, 1977), p. 176.

44. Ibid.

45. Minutes of the Third Convention of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1891.

46. Ibid., 1909.

47. Ibid., 1916.

48. Wendy Mitchinson, "Aspects of Reform," p. 171.

49. Ibid., 1889-1916.

50. McKee, Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, p. 15.

51. Ibid., p. 28.

52. Ibid., p. 38.

53. Ibid., p. 50.

54. Ibid., p. 85.
55. Ibid., p. 94.
56. Ibid., pp. 104-105.
57. MU 8420, Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., August 29, 1902 - November 7, 1902.
58. See for example the 1898 Annual Meeting of the Ontario W.C.T.U. and the 1890 Annual Meeting of the Dominion W.C.T.U.
59. Mrs. Letitia Youmans, Campaign Echoes (Toronto, 1893), p. 125.
60. Annual Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Dominion W.C.T.U., May 28, 1890.
61. MU 8439, Woodstock Minute Book, May 22, 1913.
62. Toronto Directory and Summary of Work, 1888.
63. Ibid., July 13, 1899.
64. Newmarket Minute Book, February 23, 1885 and September 6, 1892. and Richmond Hill Treasurer's Book, March 23, 1886.
65. London District W.C.T.U. Records, June 29, 1897.
66. Newmarket W.C.T.U. Minute Book, April 30, 1886. and London District W.C.T.U. Records, May 29, 1905.
67. Ottawa Branch Minute Book, June 7, 1884.
68. Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario," pp. 8-10.
69. Ibid., p. 11.
70. Ibid., p. 103.
71. Ibid., p. 12.
72. D.C. Masters, The Rise of Toronto, p. 31.
73. Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario," p. 12.
74. Minute Book of the West Middlesex District Council, Royal Templars of Temperance, October 26, 1899. The minutes indicate that in Glencoe there was "not much interest taken with just a medium attendance" and in Appin, "but very little interest taken in attending the regular meeting" while in Ekfrid it is reported that "they have no place of meeting and not much interest". At

the same time in nearby London, the W.C.T.U. had 55 at a meeting and reports of work completed at the local jail, with the Band of Hope, in the Industrial School, with the franchise and in other areas of work. London District W.C.T.U. Records, September 26, 1899.

75. Blocker, American Temperance Movements, p. 98.
76. Decarie, The Prohibition Movement in Ontario, p. 24.
77. See for example, the Annual Report of the Dominion W.C.T.U. for 1889 and the Annual Report of the Provincial W.C.T.U. for 1887.
78. Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., February 18, 1884.
79. Ibid., January 3, 1882.
80. MU 8455, The Woman's Journal, August, 1899.
81. Ibid., March 3, 1884.
82. Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., November 2, 1901.
83. See Treasurer's Book of the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., January 14, 1885; Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., June 28, 1892 and January 5, 1915; Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., September 2, 1898; Minute Book of the Peterborough W.C.T.U., October 1914.
84. Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., September 31, 1902 and December 17, 1902.
85. Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., January 6, 1899.
86. See Minutes of the Convention of the Dominion W.C.T.U., June 16, 1892; Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., September 21, 1881; London District W.C.T.U. Records, August 25, 1896 and September 22, 1896.
87. Minute Book of the Woodstock W.C.T.U., January 28, 1915.
88. Minutes of the Ontario W.C.T.U. Annual Meeting, 1887.
89. See London District W.C.T.U. Records, March 28, 1893; Treasurer's Book of Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., January 3, 1895; Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., March 3, 1899; Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., November 5, 1888.
90. Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., November 15, 1887; London District W.C.T.U. Records, May 23, 1893.
91. Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario," p. 25.

92. Mitchinson, "Aspects of Reform," p. 200-202.
93. Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., October 16, 1888; Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., November 6, 1882.
94. See for example, Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., May 3, 1901.
95. London District W.C.T.U. Records, April 25, 1893.
96. Ibid., June 13, 1893.
97. For example, Ibid., September 26, 1899.
98. National Archives (hereafter NA) MG 28 III, vol. 719, Records of the Bronson Family, Local Council of Women file.
99. J.T. Saywell, ed. The Canadian Journal of Lady Aberdeen, 1893-1898 (Toronto, 1960), p. 74.
100. Wayne Roberts, "'Rocking the Cradle for the World': The New Maternalism and Maternal Feminism, Toronto, 1877-1914" Linda Kealey, ed., A Not Unreasonable Claim (Toronto, 1979), p. 25
101. Diana Pedersen, "The Young Woman's Christian Association in Canada, 1870-1920: 'A Movement to Meet a Spiritual, Civic and National Need'" (Ph.D. Thesis, Carleton University, 1987), p. 82.
102. Report of the Convention of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1893.
103. Report of the Convention of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1901.
104. Minutes of the Convention of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1913.
105. Pedersen, "The Young Woman's Christian Association in Canada," p. 88.
106. MU 8471, World's Y Hand-Book, (1906).
107. Mitchinson, "Aspects of Reform," p. 184.
108. London District W.C.T.U. Records, January 23, 1894.
109. Sharon Anne Cook, "'A Helping Hand and Shelter': Anglo-Protestant Social Service Agencies in Ottawa: 1880-1910" (M.A. thesis, Carleton University, 1987). Appendix I.
110. Annual Meeting of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1922.
111. Treasurer's Book of the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., August 27, 1884 and February 8, 1886.

112. Minutes of the Ontario Provincial Executive Meeting, April, 1899.
113. Proceedings of the Conference of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1911.
114. Annual Convention of the Ontario W.C.T.U., October, 1896.
115. MU 8455, The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings: Official Organ of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union in Canada, January, 1904.
116. McKee, Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, p. 70.
117. Canada's White Ribbon Bulletin, August, 1915.
118. Minutes of the Dominion W.C.T.U. Convention, June, 1916.
119. Barbara Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century America (Middletown, 1981), p. 145.
120. Executive Meeting of the Ontario W.C.T.U., May, 1898.
121. The Woman's Journal, December, 1898.
122. Ibid.

## **CHAPTER FOUR:**

### **IDEAS**

#### **"FOR TIME AND ETERNITY"**

The ideas of the Ontario W.C.T.U. were representative of those which scholars have identified as maternal and evangelical feminism. As nurturant and morally superior mothers and daughters, the women of the W.C.T.U. accepted as their task the clarifying of the roles of members of the evangelical family, and thus shoring it up as a bulwark against the dangers presented by a dissolute society. Ultimately, the purified and reconstituted family held the promise of a reformed society by teaching roles, providing shelter for its members and imbuing the evangelical ethic



which demanded service to others as an expression of personal salvation. Infused with the principles of conservative evangelicalism, the women of the W.C.T.U. developed a vision of this ideal social order, grounded as it was on an idealized family structure and attendant social relationships. Women, married and single, took a central role in the private and public expressions of this societal vision.

This idealized society would place Christ's saving grace as the central experience, with the family unit the chief embodiment of evangelical Christian ethics. It held that equality of expression, opportunity and behaviour for men and women was grounded in Christian teachings even if their life tasks were different. It envisioned a society that would shun growing secularism and materialism by rejecting both self-destructive behaviour arising from overindulgence in food, use of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, sexually explicit clothing and entertainment, and the "secret vice," and the socially injurious behaviour arising from alcohol and impurity. The original W.C.T.U. target had been alcohol. While the organization remained steadfast in its condemnation of drink and its associated vices, this came to represent just one of its designated causes. From the mid 1880's the Ontario W.C.T.U. viewed alcohol as a primary but not isolated social evil. In the same vein, the solution to societal problems was no longer seen by the Ontario W.C.T.U. to be simply prohibition, but a wide array of social programs, including

prohibition.

Individuals had a responsibility to Christ, themselves, their families and friends, and to the extended society. The W.C.T.U. never espoused an evangelicalism bent solely on personal salvation: the social imperative was clear from its inception as an organization. Nevertheless, they based their social imperative and their vision of the ideal society firmly on the ethics of personal salvation, on the relationship of each human being with God. As each person was part of a wider community -family, locality, nation, empire - the broader social dimension automatically entered the equation of the individual's ideal relationship with, and salvation through, God.

This chapter considers the W.C.T.U.'s ideas about the family, and the appropriate roles of family members, the social evils of alcohol and impurity, support for woman's suffrage, the changing Canadian society in a nationalist and imperial context, and evangelicalism. It argues that the most important component in the W.C.T.U. ideology, and that which set it apart from other temperance and social reform groups, was its enduring evangelical faith.

A major component of the W.C.T.U. ideology involved clarifying obligations of all members of the human family. Children and youth were regarded as having rights and

responsibilities in the promotion of temperance and clean living. As youth moved towards adulthood, the responsibilities for young men and women were shaped by behavioural expectations, including the Cult of Domesticity for women. Adult males were ascribed by the Ontario W.C.T.U. the primary role in any direct political action, while women were expected to be most prominent in promoting ethical solutions to domestic and public problems.

Temperance organizations had long recognized the value of involving children in their activities. Not only could children be convinced of personal abstinence far more easily than their seniors, but a pure-hearted cherub could act as a powerful force in convincing adults to accept temperance. The W.C.T.U.'s view of children contained, then, both of these elements. First, children were naturally inclined to goodness, and therefore especially amenable to moral education. Secondly, children had a responsibility to hold to the truth, to make themselves useful and to proselytize others. This applied to children of all classes, although working-class children would require more education before they could effectively participate in disseminating the truth.

The W.C.T.U. approach to children was consistent with the emerging concept of "childhood" during the nineteenth century. During the latter half of the century, "the child became, in fact, the primary focus of family life and, thus,

a central commitment of society."<sup>1</sup> Using a paradigm to locate the beginning of the concept of "childhood," Rooke and Schnell identify four elements in the treatment of children including the provision of protection, segregation, dependence and delayed responsibilities.<sup>2</sup>

The W.C.T.U.'s ideas of children generally reflected this analytical framework. Its only departure from these ideas would occur in the issue of personal responsibility. As an evangelical institution, the W.C.T.U. advocated personal duty at a very early age in spiritual and temperance matters. Youth was no excuse for inactivity in improving self and society. In fact, children could bring about reformation where adults would often fail.

Frances Willard's experience as a child informed her view of how other children reasoned and should be treated. In her autobiography she describes the close supervision provided by her parents. "We never went anywhere except with our parents until I was sixteen, and almost never, after that, until fully fledged and flown....We were literally never left alone with children or work people."<sup>3</sup> Children were innocent and impressionable. Such decisions as sending a child to the corner saloon to obtain liquor for intemperate parents could cause lasting damage.<sup>4</sup> They must be protected from irresponsible adults, and removed from homes where neglect or abuse were present. The family was not an indivisible unit, but if children were to be placed with other than relatives,

the W.C.T.U. preferred family-like settings to provide the necessary care.

Lavishing attention on the blameless and innocent child became the focus of the W.C.T.U.'s Little White Ribboners, a department catering to the instruction of children under seven years of age. Never very popular in Ontario, the groups seemed to operate as play groups for very small children, and opportunities for mothers to meet.

The extensive network of youth organizations established by the W.C.T.U. for older children under sixteen, including the Bands of Hope, Loyal Temperance Legions and Kitchen Garden Groups, was intended to allow children to minister to intemperate acquaintances, young or old. In Ontario, the Bands of Hope and Loyal Temperance Legions were largely directed to middle-class children, although working-class boys in the major cities were often included also. In spite of the class base, however, the expectations were the same. Children were to pledge themselves to abstinence from liquor, tobacco and foul language first. The temperate child would provide testimonial of his or her determination to hold to a high moral standard to peers and adults.<sup>5</sup> These testimonials would be furnished through public entertainments and personal conduct. The W.C.T.U. never doubted the persuasive power of a winsome child in convincing others to reform. "We have the whole future of the liquor traffic in our power if we will only take up this children's work with a will. Be sure and

save the children, and the fathers and mothers will follow."<sup>6</sup>

The W.C.T.U.'s ideas of the appropriate roles for men and women can be understood most easily from the mountain of literature directed towards youths. The point of much of this prescription was to mould youthful behaviour into morally acceptable habits for life.

Because of the creation in the Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union of a separate and powerful group for single and usually young women over the age of sixteen, the W.C.T.U. was forced to distinguish the role prescription for the young single woman as opposed to that for the mature married woman. This special role will be outlined fully in chapter six, but it included the concepts of the sanctity of the home and the prominent role of women in that setting, the necessity of acting as a witness to Christ's salvation and temperance to self, their elders, male and female friends and, most importantly, to children within an educational setting. That the Y.W.C.T.U. chose to expand this prescribed role to include evangelistic work with dissolute and fallen women caused some of the older women, as will be seen, to feel threatened. Nevertheless, it must surely be regarded as a success in the inculcation of ideas when such a subsidiary group so thoroughly imbibes the ideology of its parent and even embellishes and expands it.

Unfortunately, the W.C.T.U. spent far less energy discussing and refining the ideas of its own prescribed role.

Most of these were obliquely discussed in the treatment of other issues, such as social purity where the ideal relationship between mothers and sons was carefully traced. The W.C.T.U. accepted the essential elements of the Cult of Domesticity and separate spheres. The centrality of the woman's place in the home, and her responsibilities for creating a supportive, moral environment in that private sphere, was a central idea held by the W.C.T.U. about women throughout the period. The recording secretary of the Newmarket Union, in a summary of their 1915 president's speech to them, noted: "Then another bit of advice to try to be cheerful in the Home yes, everywhere, especially now when so many hearts are sad.... let us remember her especial thought that 'Home is the center,' not the boundry[sic] and let all good go out from that."<sup>7</sup>

The responsible woman undertook her domestic duties with energy and commitment, providing nourishing, varied and safe food, medicinal remedies and tonics that contained no alcohol or narcotics,<sup>8</sup> displaying modesty of speech and comportment.<sup>9</sup> She took care to venture outside alone only during daylight. The Meaford Union reported that "some particular subjects spoken of was[sic] being out In the Twilight, In the Evening. In the Dark hours of the night and dressing in Gay attire. Contrast last Chap. of Prov. Describing the virtuous woman and the busy woman."<sup>10</sup>

The W.C.T.U. woman was generally portrayed as keeping no

servants, so the burden of housekeeping was presented as one she should expect to shoulder personally. In fact, W.C.T.U. members often described themselves as having only modest means: "Then, again, you and I are not wealthy. We can see just what 'our town' needs, but we can not hire eloquent speakers, one after another, to come and arouse the people. We can not furnish a single drunkard's family with food or clothing; perchance we can not even afford to purchase tracts for free distribution!"<sup>11</sup> This portrayal of the W.C.T.U. woman managing without servants is validated by the many profiles which emerge from the local minute books. The membership in urban unions would have been most likely to keep servants. Yet no mention is made of this in the minute books for the Ottawa, London or Toronto groups. In addition, no town or rural unions mention domestic servants. This finding calls into question the contention by such historians as Wendy Mitchinson<sup>12</sup> and Veronica Strong-Boag<sup>13</sup> that an important ulterior motive for middle-class women's involvement in social reform was to train domestic servants for their own homes.

Nevertheless, when faced with the choice of keeping a clean home,<sup>14</sup> monetary gain or developing her mothering skills, the latter must surely win. "No woman ought to be allowed to take upon herself the possibilities of motherhood without first passing an examination proving her fitness for the same,"<sup>15</sup> asserted a correspondent to The White Ribbon



Tidings. Daughters were to be trained, lovingly but firmly, to help their mothers and retain all virtues essential to Christian womanhood.

Certain impediments stood in the way of young women successfully taking on this role, and to these the W.C.T.U. devoted some discussion in its pamphlet series and journals. Occasionally, there was worried mention about young women within the temperance fold taking on the "hideous habit of sneak drinking,"<sup>16</sup> but this was not regarded as a form of rebellion that would be adopted by many young women. Of much greater concern were presumably innocent pleasures such as Coca-Cola, about which mothers were enjoined to warn their daughters. Concerning this issue, the W.C.T.U. demonstrates its acceptance of prevailing beliefs in the "closed system" of the human body with the resulting requirement for a balanced diet and careful life force expenditure. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings reported to mothers that "Coca-Cola is a dangerous medical compound which will originate, engender, cultivate and inflame the desire for stimulants, opiates and narcotics."<sup>17</sup> Similarly, the drinking of cider was dangerous "because it will create an appetite for stronger drink."<sup>18</sup> Even such stimulating drinks as coffee and tea held terrors for mothers of budding young daughters.<sup>19</sup> Feasting was dangerous. Too much food "deranged bodily functions," causing the mind to suffer through sympathy of the brain with the stomach. This produced irritable feelings and peculiar

temptations. The moral powers, especially those of young women, cannot maintain equanimity under these circumstances with the dreadful result that "many are held captive by their animal passions."<sup>20</sup>

The exciting of passion in young women appears to have been the greatest fear of mothers for their daughters. This was most vividly illustrated in a Y.W.C.T.U. leaflet entitled, "A Girl's Influence." An orphan of unimpeachable character, Mabel, meets a shady young man, Ed, at a temperance revival. He confesses past transgressions with liquor and a new-found desire to rebuild his life. Mabel, trusting, sweet-tempered and intelligent, resolves to help Ed "come to Christ." "Mabel was enlisted heart and soul in his rescue; she thought of and prayed for little else; she believed herself entrusted with a sacred mission; she grew a little pale and large-eyed in the intensity of the struggle." To Mabel's astonishment, Ed proposes a romantic attachment, and she recognizes the error in her efforts. Ed backslides; Mabel mourns. A friend explains consolingly that while her intentions were the best, the mistake was in making Ed's redemption "a personal matter."<sup>21</sup> Strong emotions are misleading, and can be devastating to an inexperienced young woman. Should these pit-falls be avoided, however, the prescriptive literature demonstrated considerable confidence in young women and their potential to capably carry on the movement.

More problematic, however, was the relationship of mother

and son. Mothers must act as a model for all womanhood, and inculcate in their sons a respect and a commitment to translate this respect into action.<sup>22</sup> Mothers must actively guide their sons, listening to their concerns and worries. This could require a mother, unblemished of spirit and behaviour, to witness the distressing crudity of the male world. Frances Willard recounted the story of a young minister who had been taught at home by his widowed mother until he was ten. "On the first day in public school he heard such language at recess as outraged his sense of purity, and rushing home he poured out his heart to the dear mother whose name stood first on his calendar of saints. But to his astonishment she turned away from him with indignation, saying: 'Charlie, never come to me again repeating what the boys have said, for I won't hear it.' As she thus spoke it seemed to him that the hand he trusted most was roughly snatched from the helm of his life barque, and he was thrust out to sea without a guide, nor did he regain the port of purity until after a storm of sin that lasted many years."<sup>23</sup> In another story, a young man turns to selling tobacco and a sinful life because his mother was unwilling to pray for him.<sup>24</sup> It seems, then, that the son was less answerable for his years of sin than was his mother.

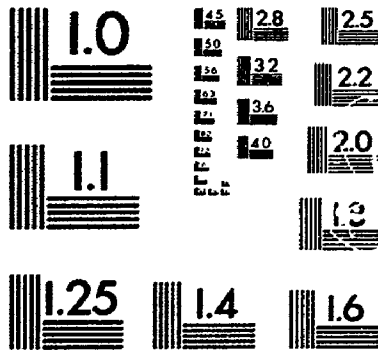
To provide this level of ethical direction, mothers must know virtually everything about their sons. To young men indulging in "the secret pleasure" of masturbation, a writer

warns: "But you are told that mother must not, under any condition, know of it. O boys, the first effort Satan makes toward your ruin is to interpose himself between you and your mother!"<sup>25</sup> An article in The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings has a "noble" young lad assert, "'You may laugh if you want to ... but I've made up my mind never, as long as I live, to do anything I would be ashamed to tell my mother.' We need a thousand boys to talk like that."<sup>26</sup> However, the W.C.T.U. goal for the young man went beyond simply informing mother of one's most private thoughts and actions to empowering him to reject societal evil on his own. "I have been told by many a fortunate mother that her son indignantly repelled the degradation of the common school-boy talk upon subjects he had learned to regard as sacred by reason of confidences exchanged between himself and her who bore him,"<sup>27</sup> wrote Frances Willard.

Did this role description indicate an elevated or reduced position for the mother in an ideal society? While in the short term the mother's position was raised almost to the status of a confessor, if the mother properly carried through her responsibilities this power was only transitory. The young man was expected to develop independence and self-reliance, thus ending the need for his mother to act as a moral guardian.

The assumption of young men's growing personal authority differed dramatically from the W.C.T.U. view of young women's

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ideal development, as will be discussed in chapter six. Young women were expected to serve with their mothers in reaching the organization's evangelical goals. This service was not foreseen to result in increasing authority or independence, however. When it did just this, the W.C.T.U. felt threatened and uneasy.

As difficult as it would be for mothers to carry out this systematic surveillance of their sons' lives, none should doubt its importance. If properly and thoroughly influenced, mothers could assume that "when they grow up they shall be ours in sympathy, ours in pure habits, and ours as the coming leaders of the future in State and philanthropic work."<sup>28</sup> But the greater bonus of this intrusive mothering style, W.C.T.U. women were assured, was that their sons would be grateful. The portrayal of the emotionally-charged, almost sexually reverential mother-son relationship was common in W.C.T.U. literature: "'Oh mother, mother,' he sobbed, 'I wish I had never left you!...I'll keep as near to you in heart as I can. I wish I hadn't grown away from you so; but I'll get back again if I can!'"<sup>29</sup> Another woman enthused: "One of the beautiful sights I have seen is a lady and her son walking, arm in arm, from church, Sabbath after Sabbath. He was like a lover in his tenderness. It made no difference who saw him, he was just as considerate as he could have been if she had been radiant with youth and beauty."<sup>30</sup> This romanticized characterization reached its height during the war when

the enforced separation caused women pain and worry. In the W.C.T.U. journals, mothers and sons spend long hours together, "walking to take communion when she had noted the consecrated expression on his young face,"<sup>31</sup> sharing the same opinions, glorying in each other. Allowance must be made, of course, for the Victorian tendency to describe all relationships in an over-blown manner.

Even so, the idealized mother-son relationship was both unrealistic and unhealthy in its implications for the mother. If a mother seized the opportunity to forge this intensely emotional relationship with her son, she risked the attendant pain of inevitable separation when her son struck off on his independent path. If the bond was never broken, the mother would be criticized for blunting her son's growth as a Christian man. If a mother did not build this ardent alliance with her son, forcing independence too early, she stood as an object of unfit motherhood. A superficially powerful mothering role was actually fraught with danger for the W.C.T.U. woman.

Since motherhood was regarded as a sacred trust, the W.C.T.U. reserved the deepest scorn for alcoholic mothers. Generally such women were presented as working class, but a few references are made to upper-class women who desecrated the motherhood role. Where mothers were found to drink, the assumption was made that husbands also used liquor. In 1913, the editor of The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings carried a

number of items linking child mortality to alcoholic mothers. It reported that in families regularly using alcohol, thirty of fifty-five live births resulted in death during infancy while the rate of survival in abstemious, although poor families was sixty-eight of seventy.<sup>32</sup> Stories were run of obese, red-faced mothers mistreating their starving, wretched children. Mothers were shown as taking their children's wages to buy drink, and forcing their children to lose their jobs due to ragged clothing and lack of shoes. "Oh, how I cried, ragged and cold, turned out at 15 years old, to the dangers of the midnight streets, while my mother raved and raged, a drink maniac, in our room! A good doctor, going home late from a patient, found me, crouched in a doorway, sobbing with terror. He took me to his wife. She was one of the 'strong women;' strong to defend the weak and insist on the right.... Oh! the tender mercies of drunken mothers are cruel!"<sup>33</sup> It should not be considered accidental that the strong woman to rescue the victimized fifteen-year-old male was a middle-class paragon of womanly virtue.

Where middle-class husbands make any appearance at all in W.C.T.U. literature, they are depicted as kind but weak, inept at any domestic skill and with an almost complete lack of facility in meaningful conversation or in facing the power of human emotions. The second prize winner of The Woman's Journal fiction contest told the story of two men, wise Grandmother Brandon's father-in-law and husband. The young



Mrs. Brandon is first encountered defying the foolish medical doctor who suggests that cognac be used to revive her father-in-law, a drowning victim. To the man's surprise, Mrs. Brandon brings the senior Mr. Brandon around through the ministrations of scalded milk. Unfortunately, however, this would not have been the first time that Mr. Brandon Sr. had tasted alcohol and in the eugenicist's worst fear, the taste for liquor had been inherited by Mrs. Brandon's husband. While drunk one evening, the husband gives baby Frank the wrong medicine and almost kills him. The doctor's reputation is salvaged when he saves child and father, causing Mr. Brandon Jr. to vow never again to touch liquor.<sup>34</sup> These men are morally weak through lack of will, miscalculation and misdeed. Their only redeeming quality is that having seen the error of their behaviour, they determine to reform by disciplining their selfish nature. The reader's hopes are not brought too high, however, by their pathetic histories of failure.

Husbands are occasionally criticized, if obliquely, as in the article entitled "Undervalued Work of Wives": ". . . almost all wives engaged in domestic duties work harder, longer hours, and more productively than any other class of laborers, yet receive, instead of wages, only food, clothing and medicine."<sup>35</sup> It is not a great leap to assume that the article's author meant that wives work harder than their husbands and without the respect due to them. This feminist statement is startlingly in contrast to the submissive pose

taken by these same women in their role as mothers of sons. The negative portraits of husbands betray frustration and bitterness at the social inequities of men and women, while the hopeful discussions of radiant mothers and fair-minded, disciplined sons points to a future of reformed social roles.

Working-class men appear much more frequently in the W.C.T.U. journals and pamphlets. This might relate to the W.C.T.U.'S anxiety concerning their own position in the middle class. By identifying a target group that exhibited a triple inferiority -class, gender and intemperance - it solidified its moral control. The profiles of working class males were stereotyped and unflattering. Working-class husbands were represented as weak, selfish, irresponsible, and violent. These men are described as struggling "under a power with which they could not cope,"<sup>36</sup> of being "lured into the barroom for company ... where despair and ruin alike, two expectant vultures, hover around their dissolute, self-sacrificed prey,"<sup>37</sup> as squandering slim family finances on tobacco and alcohol rather than providing the necessities for their families,<sup>38</sup> of making poor use of the little money they managed to earn,<sup>39</sup> of drunkenly striking out against defenceless women and children, "in the hubbub of unmeaning laughter and howls and curses."<sup>40</sup> The Mizpah Union program on April 4, 1916 featured a presentation by Mrs. Henderson, a local member. In her address on "the drink problem" she noted that she did "not fear immoral women as much as men - there are 20 such men

to 1 woman - they ruin the minds of little boys."<sup>41</sup> The cure for male irresponsibility and violence towards their families was, in the view of the W.C.T.U., two-fold. Men must be reminded of their Christian duty to their dependents; women must become more assertive in pointing out injustice in their own family units, and in those dysfunctional families within their ken. The key to much of this family distress was the combined evils of alcohol use, impurity, which included visiting prostitutes and engaging in masturbation, and the silencing of women's moral voice by a male-controlled government.

Frances Willard's "Do Everything Policy," it has been argued, may have been grounded in domestic feminism<sup>42</sup> with its emphasis on temperance and protection of the home, a conservative analysis of appropriate roles and evangelicalism. But before the end of the 1880's, the American organization under Willard's leadership had adopted, argues Ruth Bordin, pragmatic or social feminism through which it aimed to solve specific societal problems, many of which were not directly associated with temperance. "Of all major women's organizations, the nineteenth-century W.C.T.U. came closest to advocating sweeping societal reform."<sup>43</sup> While this pragmatic approach of "Do Everything" was reflected in the

broadly-based Ontario W.C.T.U. program, it remained more restricted in scope than its model, Willard's National W.C.T.U. The "Do Everything Policy" implicitly de-emphasized temperance by placing it in a wider program of social action. But the major difference between Willard's and the Ontario programs was not its scope, but the motivation for the program itself. The Ontario W.C.T.U. action was grounded not in pragmatism, but in evangelicalism.

The evangelical imperative to engage in social reform was sustained across the province throughout the period being examined. It operated in unions of all sizes, in rural, small town and urban settings, and amongst married and single women. In this, the Ontario W.C.T.U. impetus appears to differ from some American analyses of the W.C.T.U. where evangelicalism has not been identified as important.<sup>44</sup> Single, young women in the Y.W.C.T.U. generally evinced a more militant evangelicalism and developed their skills with different groups, but the basic ideological blue print did not greatly differ beyond this.

The W.C.T.U., like many organizations of the period, blamed alcohol for individuals' and society's ills. Early in its existence, however, it tried to show the devastating effect of alcohol when combined with a variety of other abuses. Although the organization came to accept that alcohol was both cause and effect, it never retreated from its ideas of the combined evil of alcohol with other substances and with

other patterns of behaviour. This relationship was clearly outlined in one of the earliest of the National Leaflets written by Frances Willard. This evangelical argument concentrated on the relationship between individual character and physical health: ".physical being is the firm base of the whole pyramid of character." But one's health is undermined by several threats: poor ventilation, dress which is too light, too heavy, constricting or dirty, and by "unbalanced exercise," overly spicy food, including pork and strong tea or coffee, alcohol or narcotics such as nicotine which first excite the body, then depress it and finally derange it, leading to compulsive excess.<sup>45</sup> Alcohol is especially dangerous to the balanced body, since it consumes water, "precisely as fire acts upon water, lapping it up with a fierce and insatiable thirst. This affinity of alcohol for moisture is like a feverish and consuming passion, and the blistered nose, burnt brain, and parboiled stomach of the drinking man are nature's perpetual object lessons to illustrate the fact that alcohol must be the redoubtable enemy of an organization made up as the human being is, of seven in every eight parts of water."<sup>46</sup> Having destroyed the balance, and ensuring that it will remain destroyed because of alcohol's addictive qualities, the individual's character is permanently crippled, possibly for several generations.<sup>47</sup> "Character," then, is comprised of sobriety, integrity, industry and gentleness. "But these cardinal points are all

determined by the the first, sobriety."<sup>48</sup> Largely because of the organization's stress on temperance in the nineteenth century, the W.C.T.U. accepted eugenics in this period. However, this determinist approach had eroded by the 1890's. With the impact of environmentalism, along with the organization's growing endorsement of the redeeming effects of education, eugenics and the primacy of temperance were reduced in significance.

Sometimes individuals were unknowingly exposed to alcohol in their own homes by mothers or doctors seeking medicinal agents. To correct this misguided home use by mothers, and to further buttress its anti-alcohol arguments with medical support, the W.C.T.U. devoted much effort to denigrating alcohol's curative powers, and to suggesting healthful alternatives. For example, one of its National Leaflets entitled "Spirituous Liquors Not Needed in Medicine or the Arts" hopefully complimented housewives on their rejection of alcohol-based medicines: "Since it became known that alcoholic solutions of camphor, paregoric, cordials, tincture of peppermint etc., - articles once found in every household - are remedial agents of doubtful efficacy, or positively hurtful under indiscriminate use, they have been to a large extent banished from dwellings." Doctors were encouraged to replace alcohol-based products with glycerine, naphtha, bisulphide of carbon, pyroligneous products, carbolic acid "and a hundred other agents which are capable of taking the

place of alcohol in a very large number of appliances and processes." The entire argument is grounded in respect for the new scientism and modern, laboratory-proven methodology. Alcohol is portrayed, then, as not so much immoral as pathetically out-of-date. "This view of the chemical and therapeutical needs and uses of alcohol, as related to the human family, is not presented from the standpoint of the temperance orator, but from that of the scientific investigator."<sup>49</sup>

Women in America, Britain and Canada had long been regarded as guardians of the home by the time the W.C.T.U. was formed in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Denied a public role, women had been encouraged to set a good example and exercise moral suasion on the their menfolk in a domestic setting, and thus influence public life indirectly. The early temperance movement assumed individual agency, as contrasted to legislative fiat, to be the means of redemption from alcohol. This concept fit neatly with woman's role as domestic help-meet and with the non-intrusive role of government. Individual women gave spiritual and physical support to their individual male kin.

For the most part, this remained the approach counselled by Annie Wittenmyer, President of the American W.C.T.U. from 1874 to 1879. But this view was rejected by Frances Willard, who saw defeat of alcohol, or any other evil in society, being accomplished only through the united action of a group, as had been illustrated with the successes of the Women's Crusade. Willard argued further

that change could only occur with direct legislative action, rather than moral suasion. While it took some time for Willard's strategies to be condoned, by the 1880's it had become accepted that if temperance were to be realized, women must unite in their efforts, since the attack on the family affected the entire society, including themselves. An additional incentive to initiate a public struggle in defence of the family unit came with the recognition that women and children suffered grievously from the effects of alcohol even though they were not the offenders.

By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, then, the "drink problem" came to be seen as a male problem, with its most destructive impact on the home and often defenceless family. It did not require a huge mental leap from seeing some men as the embodiment of iniquity, to seeing all men as prone to engaging in the destructive behaviour, and as being peculiarly vulnerable to the false blandishments of the saloon. By the 1870's this was called by Frances Willard the "home protection" movement. Such a conclusion might logically lead a group of women to feel powerless and victimized, but in the case of the W.C.T.U. this was not the result. It reasoned that if women and children were the victims of this widespread abuse, women must correct the wrongs by protecting the helpless. Therefore, in terms of their ideas about patriarchal controls in the family and society, the W.C.T.U. presented a fairly radical interpretation of the problem and its solutions. Their ideas of female moral superiority and male weakness propelled them to demand a more equitable power balance



within the family unit. It must be granted that a reconstituted family unit would look to its young men to ultimately right the wrongs which had been pointed out in the W.C.T.U. analysis, but this would be accomplished through women's moral training. Thus, conservative ideas of family relationships could, and did, result in progressive demands.

How widespread was support for this set of ideas around the concept of "Home Protection"? Norman Clark attests that in this period the American family was more threatened than that of any other society because of westward movement that interfered with continuity of place, by mass immigration of non-English-speaking peoples and by the dangers posed by urbanization and industrialization.<sup>50</sup> Anxiety for the future of the family was pronounced in both the United States and Canada. "Home Protection" ideas would, therefore, likely strike a responsive chord in many a listener and adherent.

The early W.C.T.U. in both the United States and Canada viewed drink as the primary cause of poverty<sup>51</sup>. The poor were enjoined to reject alcohol so that society's bounty, available to all temperate citizens, could be theirs as well. By the late 1880's, national leaders and local members were beginning to accept that drunkenness was a result as well as a cause of poverty. Since an unjust division of society's wealth made alcohol the inevitable escape to ameliorate suffering, the solution came to be seen in fundamental changes in the environment. This also resulted in a reduced stress on temperance as a panacea for the many, inter-related social ills.

Hence, the Ontario W.C.T.U. by the 1890's supported temperance as well as prison reform, separate facilities for women, improved arrangements for neglected and dependent children, the kindergarten movement, social and reading rooms for the working poor, refuges for abandoned and fallen women, mother's education and vocational training, among other initiatives.

The social purity or White Shield-White Cross program was regarded as an important means to achieving home protection. The movement is also intimately associated with evangelical ideas of womanhood. In Frances Willard's opinion, social purity was also closely associated with intemperance which she classified, with impurity, as "iniquity's Siamese Twins."<sup>52</sup> In the late 1860's moral reformers in Britain and the United States took aim at prostitution, commercialized vice and the white slave trade. The American W.C.T.U. joined with the moral reformers first in 1876 through its rescue work with prostitutes.<sup>53</sup> In 1877 the Committee for Work with Fallen Women was established and by 1883 it had become the Department for the Suppression of the Social Evil, signalling a new confidence in social rather than exclusively personal reform. The Department of Social Purity, as it became in 1885, worked towards the joint elimination of prostitution and liquor: "...every house of ill-repute is a secret saloon and nearly every inmate an inebriate."<sup>54</sup> It sought to achieve this by

several routes. "Houses of Refuge" such as Ottawa's Home for Friendless Women was one means of reformation attempted. Travellers' aid, most notably at Toronto's Union Station, was introduced to intercept young women coming to the city and to provide them with decent shelter before they "fell" into iniquity.

The ideological position of the W.C.T.U. on the fallen woman remained highly ambiguous throughout the period under examination.

The organization forcefully blamed men for forcing themselves on young women who were previously sexually innocent: "Young girls are decoyed by all manner of subtleties and deception .... he is liable to five years penal servitude. And this is the penalty for the offenders, if captured and convicted for entrapping a guileless young girl and plunging her, against her will or wish into a life - the horrors of which one's pen dare not write or depict."<sup>55</sup> At the same time, the women of the W.C.T.U. showed disappointment that women's allegedly superior moral qualities were inadequate to protect them in this time of need. Frances Willard describes her reaction to an unchaste woman:

When I was first a boarding-school pupil, at Evanston, in 1858, a young woman who was not chaste came to the college through some misrepresentation, but was speedily dismissed; not knowing her degraded status I was speaking to her, when a school-mate whispered a few words of explanation that crimsoned my face suddenly; and grasping my dress lest its hem should touch the garments of one so morally polluted, I fled from the room. It was, no doubt, a healthful instinct that led me to do this, but I am deeply grateful that the years have so instructed and mellowed my heart,

that, could the scene recur, I would clasp that poor child's hand, plead with her tenderly and try to help instead of deserting her as I did in my more self-righteous youth.<sup>56</sup>

Clearly, the pivotal ethical issue was whether or not women found their debased behaviour agreeable. In the early years of the W.C.T.U., the assumption was generally made that no woman would ever consciously comply with a man requesting sexual favours because of her feminine lack of sexual desire. The popularization of the White Slave Trade as a middle-class issue encouraged a bifurcation in the W.C.T.U.-approved view of the unchaste woman.

The concept of the asexual, pure but naive young woman as victim could coexist with an acknowledgement that some degraded women consciously chose such a lifestyle. The former view permitted an outpouring of anger against men, but the latter was much more resistant to solution. In most cases, as is suggested in Willard's statement, the strategy taken was to force unchaste women to face the depth of their sinfulness and take stock of the errant choice they had made. Hence, the evangelical approach of challenging one's sinfulness through guided introspection was the favoured view of treating the fallen woman.

This view of female agency contrasts dramatically with the White Cross literature directed to young men. "Fallen" male youths became the focus of the W.C.T.U.'s Social Purity activities from the mid 1880's. Lectured by itinerant speakers, and provided with quantities of literature, they were urged to keep "a white life for

two." The American W.C.T.U. adopted the British White Cross Series, "For Men Only," for distribution across North America. These pamphlets promoted Social Purity through the use of paternalistic ideas, and stark and violent imagery which emphasized good [white] and bad [black] that was quite foreign to the principles underlying the National W.C.T.U. in the United States. Beginning in 1885, its journal, the Union Signal, began reprinting the works of Ellice Hopkins, the English purity reformer,<sup>57</sup> and soon thereafter, the entire White Cross Series was made available to North American readers. Frances Willard contributed to the social purity pamphlets, arguing that social purity would best be taught through the public schools, since "lack of knowledge lies at the root of physical degeneracy."<sup>58</sup> Her support for the movement is not surprising. The White Cross Society and its female variant, the White Shield Society, was added to the National W.C.T.U. organization with Frances Willard touring the countryside as an official speaker.<sup>59</sup> Social Purity fit easily into the W.C.T.U. ideological framework of undisciplined males and morally superior females. What is surprising is Willard's advocacy of the White Cross Pamphlet series which approached the problem through an analysis that was uncharacteristically hostile to women and their abilities. None of these pamphlets was produced in Ontario, but the fact that they were distributed widely by the W.C.T.U. in this province indicates that the sentiments were indicative of those held by Ontario W.C.T.U. women.

The pamphlet series presented the problem of impurity as one

largely created by women's intellectual and physical weakness, with the concomitant solution resting entirely with the strengthened male. The imagery tended to be medieval or militaristic, with archaic language used to give an extra flourish. Of this too, curiously, Willard was an enthusiastic booster: "White Cross work contemplates a direct appeal to the chivalry of men; that they shall join this holy crusade by a personal pledge of purity and helpfulness; that boys shall early learn the sacred meaning of the White Cross and that the generous Knights of this newest and most noble chivalry shall lead Humanity's sweet and solemn song."<sup>60</sup> In Ellice Hopkins' pamphlet, "My Little Sister," young men are told that "if you look at the best and highest men, the men who are touched to fine issues, you will find them knightly men, thoroughly chivalrous in their conduct towards women."<sup>61</sup> Women are weak and dependent on men to correct injustice: "Young men, I write unto you because you are strong; use your strength to protect our dear girls from the devils in human form that lie everywhere in wait for them. Never was knight of old more needed than you are to take up the cause of the wronged, the helpless, the unprotected."<sup>62</sup> Impurity, like other historical evils such as witch-burning, duelling and drunkenness, "each in turn has been conquered by brave Christian men daring to resist them."<sup>63</sup> It must have been disconcerting for W.C.T.U. members to read that brave Christian men had conquered drunkenness, presumably obviating their efforts in this arena! Women are naive and childish, "having none to care for them; some flung out by the hand of the very man they loved and trusted, some

drugged and trapped; some leaping down of their own free will on that fatal stage of death in pursuit of some childish bauble, unknowing of the bitter end till it is too late to escape."<sup>64</sup> Women had significance only in the private sphere; men had significance in both the private and the public: "...impurity in the woman destroys the family, but impurity in the man destroys the wider family of the nation."<sup>65</sup>

To convince young men to take up this noble work, the White Cross Series endeavoured to frighten recalcitrant youths into compliance. Young men were told that self-abuse took hold gradually but steadily with the inevitable end being the ruin of one's constitution. Physical and mental powers atrophied with the victim suffering from weakness and disease, a failing memory and a loss of interest in nature, athletics, society and "good" books; "...unless he controls himself and breaks the spell of the temptation at once and forever, he becomes a mere wreck, possibly idiotic or insane."<sup>66</sup> Should a young man feel that he might succumb to temptation, it is suggested that he engage in vigorous outdoor sports, choose companions "of cheerful, hopeful natures," avoid rich or spicy food, tobacco, alcohol or "exciting novels."<sup>67</sup>

It might be noted that women, intellectually dull, naive and confused as they were portrayed, were seen to have no role in saving the vulnerable young man from a hideous fate. Pity further the overburdened male youth: he was charged with saving frail womankind and himself!

Even the apparent assumptions of the White Cross Pledge ran

counter to the usual style of argument employed by the North American W.C.T.U. :

I promise by the help of God - First. To treat all women with respect, and endeavor to protect them from wrong and degradation. Second. To endeavor to put down all indecent language and coarse jests. Third. To maintain the law of purity as equally binding upon men and women. Fourth. To endeavor to spread these principles among my companions, and try to help my younger brothers. Fifth. To use all possible means to fulfill the command, 'keep thyself pure.'<sup>68</sup>

The pledge is revealing of ideals held by the social purity movement generally, but with an argument structured differently from most W.C.T.U. materials. The first four provisions of the pledge prescribe proper behaviour within a societal setting; only the last, as a kind of after-thought, concerns itself with the private activities of the young man. This reverses the usual pattern in W.C.T.U. literature, which argues from the individual case to the more generalized<sup>69</sup>. It appears to give prominence to the effect rather than the cause, and implies a pessimistic prognosis for individual males having the willpower to "keep thyself pure." It suggests that even if the latter is not possible, the public realm should be a more pleasant, humane and safe place for women. That is, society must appear to be non-threatening, even if individual behaviour belies this.

One is left with the question of why the American and Canadian W.C.T.U. organizations supported a program which was based on



ideals quite incompatible with its own. David Pivar argues that most temperance women were repelled by the social purity movement,<sup>70</sup> although Ruth Bordin finds this an inaccurate assessment from the mid 1880's onward. Neither historian attempts to explain the incongruence of the two sets of ideas, however. Does the embracing of the White Cross Society, as opposed to the earlier social purity dogma, represent a simple attempt to broaden the W.C.T.U.'s affiliations? In Ontario, for example, the provincial W.C.T.U. worked collegially in many centres with the temperance lodges without fully accepting the principles or operating procedures of those organizations. Or, more ominously, did the acceptance of ideas of female incapacity and male authority represent a gradual movement within the W.C.T.U. towards a more conservative, less dynamic position? As will be described in chapter five, the shift of the Ontario and local unions away from direct political action, towards more indirect educational and social methods might be seen as evidence of a waning confidence among women that they could change the major structures of society at all, and certainly not by acting alone. Further evidence of the organization's eroding assumption that women would correct those abuses of an unjust world is discussed in chapter six. Where the Young Woman's Christian Temperance Unions had been in the vanguard of social change during the 1880's, they were gradually supplanted by male-dominated youth temperance groups with W.C.T.U. resources being thrown behind the males and not the young women. It might be effectively argued that after 1900 the W.C.T.U. lost more than confidence in its own

power to effect change; it generalized its relative loss of authority by constructing a more conservative view of gender relations, by ascribing power to make societal change to men rather than women.

But if the W.C.T.U. hoped to gain members through its support of social purity, it was to be disappointed. Few mature women were drawn into the organization directly through social purity work. The "Mother's Meetings" were one attempt to popularize the issue with women. Here, women were provided with materials and strategies to impart sex education to their children, although the meetings obviously served other purposes as well. In many Ontario unions, for example, the Mother's Meetings became a forum for the discussion of infant and child care, nutrition and pure food preparation.<sup>71</sup>

To further broaden the appeal of this message, American purity reformers such as Anthony Comstock argued that many more "germs of licentiousness"<sup>72</sup> than prostitution or the white slave trade needed to be identified and rooted out in order to prevent them from contaminating public morality. To this end, undesirable billboard advertising, "impure theatrical placards," objectionable theatrical performances, ballet, social dancing, "pornographic magazines," suggestive and binding clothing, peep-shows, fair midways and "indecent art" were all condemned.<sup>73</sup>

All of these causes were accepted by the W.C.T.U., some more enthusiastically than others. The issue of dress reform was of great interest to the organization in the 1880's and 1890's, with

Josiah Leeds' pamphlet on Simplicity of Attire in Relation to Social Purity published as one of the National W.C.T.U. tracts in 1886.<sup>74</sup> Frances Willard took up the cause in her "Society and Society Women," where she argued that wine, "the décolleté dress, whirling waltz, progressive euchre party and box at the theatre" were the barbaric relics of a high "society" that would soon collapse from its own vulgarity and corruption. "Waltzing in the arms of men, disrobing in public that one may be 'in style,' wearing high heels and camels' humps, describing the wardrobes of ladies, and enumerating the dishes of their table in the public prints, will be counted as the almost unbelievable phenomena" and utterly inconsistent with "the growing uplift and dignity of womanhood."<sup>75</sup> Another tract deploring immodest dress, illustrates the dangerous connection which the W.C.T.U. believed existed between excessive stimulation of the body, fatigue, poor ventilation with temperature extremes, unacceptable clothing and morality. "Dancing rarely begins, either in a private or public place, until so late an hour that it would be more appropriate to be going home, than going out therefrom. Again, the exercise in a brilliantly lighted, and, as a rule, poorly ventilated room, permits of thinner clothing and, we might add, often a less amount of it."<sup>76</sup>

The Ontario W.C.T.U. took up the cause of modest dress reform (as opposed to that promoted in the cause of "rational recreation") in a number of articles in The Woman's Journal. The main precepts of the National W.C.T.U. were adapted to the Canadian setting.

Wool was recommended as the best possible fabric since it permitted the skin to perspire and thus keep cool in summer and warm in winter. It was recommended that underclothing be kept scrupulously clean since "when it becomes clogged with perspiration, it becomes unwholesome as well as becoming less capable of keeping the body warm." Tight lacing and garters were criticized, the latter tending to produce varicose veins. A final, spirited condemnation was reserved for women who neglect to properly bundle their babies (in wool!) and who "can lay aside their flannels for an evening, bare the upper part of their chests and the greater part of their arms, leave their own warm apartments and promenade in cold banqueting rooms, disregard the dictates of common sense altogether in the bitterest weather, and yet survive."<sup>77</sup> In 1890 the Convention of the Dominion W.C.T.U. passed a resolution discountenancing "the objectionable style of evening dress which obtains in society gatherings throughout the Dominion."<sup>78</sup> As late as 1913 the annual convention of the Ontario W.C.T.U. resolved to "do all in our power to raise the whole question of dress to a higher plane, training our daughters to desire only beauty of line and color - the visible sign of the soul which is 'all glorious within'".<sup>79</sup> Local unions made dress reform a favourite topic, "a subject which is every day receiving increased attention."<sup>80</sup> As with other elements of the social purity movement, seemingly innocent pleasures were exposed as contributing to a growing and destructive hedonism through an intricate network of evil. By the mid 1890's this message was buttressed with medical opinion,

adding "scientific" evidence to moral outrage.

But even though the social purity movement was broadened and personalized through the dress reform issue, it failed to attract large-scale support in the American or Canadian community. This was certainly not for lack of effort. In 1887, the American W.C.T.U. uncovered an example of the white slave trade, and energetically publicized it in the tradition of William T. Stead. A young woman, searching for employment, had answered a sly advertisement for work at a lumbercamp in Michigan. Her employers-cum-captors imprisoned her with other prostitutes in a compound, guarded by vicious dogs. Determined to escape this life of evil, she fled into the surrounding swamps in an unsuccessful bid for freedom. Like the slaves before her, she was, inevitably, recaptured and returned to her degraded life where she was punished horribly. To the W.C.T.U.'s surprise and dismay, the expose failed to spark public indignation. Dr. Kate Bushnell, a W.C.T.U. missionary, conducted an investigation into the "Michigan dens," but an incredulous public was not even swayed when Frances Willard verified Dr. Bushnell's findings, averring that her name ought to be placed among the "Grace Darlings of moral rescue work"<sup>81</sup> for the service she had rendered. The chief result of this investigative reporting was that some states raised the age of consent.<sup>82</sup>

In fact, a major campaign was waged to raise the age of majority. The English social purity leadership, including Josephine Butler and William T. Stead, was credited with starting the public outcry against abuses of the "daughters of the people,"

and maintaining pressure until the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 raised the age of consent to sixteen.<sup>83</sup> By 1894 twenty American states had raised the age to sixteen, an accomplishment for which the W.C.T.U. could take substantial credit.<sup>84</sup> In Canada, the legislative changes dating from 1892 sprang from a belief that "positive social goals could be achieved by negative means, that is, by prohibiting certain kinds of behaviour."<sup>85</sup> The age of consent was raised from sixteen to eighteen in 1900. At the same time, the crime of seduction no longer applied only to females "of previously chaste character." Now the onus was placed on the accused male to prove the previous loss of the seduced female's chastity.<sup>86</sup>

But this legislative change was just one of many for which the Canadian W.C.T.U. and other social purity groups pressured. In 1892 there had been demands that legislation protect young girls and immigrant women from seduction and abduction, that brothels be crushed and that the procuring of underaged females be stopped. As a result, "Canada's Criminal Code of 1892 had and retains the most comprehensive system of offences for protecting young women and girls from sexual predators."<sup>87</sup> In the same year, a new section declared it a criminal offence for an employer or manager in a factory, mill or workshop to seduce or have "illicit connection with" any female under age twenty-one. In 1896 women in shops and stores were similarly protected.<sup>88</sup> In 1894 the Ontario W.C.T.U. demanded that the names of prostitutes and their clients be published, insisting that by withholding men's names, "unjust

discrimination ... brands the one sinner and shields the other."<sup>89</sup>

In 1904, the W.C.T.U. in association with the Y.W.C.A., the Police Magistrate of Winnipeg, the Moral and Social Reform Council of Canada and the Plenary Council of the Roman Catholic Church, all demanded stiffer punishment of adultery and extra-legal marriage. Although legislation did not result, adultery was attacked through a variety of indirect measures.<sup>90</sup> In 1909, the Ontario W.C.T.U. requested the establishment of Juvenile Courts, "being thoroughly alarmed at the white slave trade."<sup>91</sup> Thus, both the American and Canadian organizations fought the battle for social purity on the basis of both individual conscience and legislative intervention.

The women of the W.C.T.U. regarded themselves as dutiful citizens of their society even though, throughout this period, they lacked the right to vote. Their involvement in the political process was generally indirect, but they prided themselves in understanding that process sufficiently to exercise great authority as a pressure group. Furthermore, they accepted the critical role of government in regulating social evils such as the liquor trade and, in Canada, they even came eventually to accept the wisdom of a government-licensed monitoring system.<sup>92</sup> In fact, when the government was perceived to be lazy in its surveillance system, the W.C.T.U. demanded vociferously and repeatedly that it carry out its leadership duties. To support their involvement in the political system, the W.C.T.U. long agitated for the right to vote.

Frances Willard describes her "conversion" to the ballot for women in her autobiography. In 1876, during a visit to Ohio, while praying alone, "there was borne in upon my mind... the declaration, 'You are to speak for woman's ballot as a weapon of protection to her home and tempted loved ones from the tyranny of drink.'"<sup>93</sup> Later that year, the National W.C.T.U. passed a resolution in support of the "home-protection ballot," the name having been lifted from an address given by a Canadian, Letitia Youmans.<sup>94</sup> Ruth Bordin calls the phrase "a masterstroke of public relations, which made suffrage palatable to many, both men and women, who would not otherwise have been able to swallow it."<sup>95</sup>

In Canada, acceptance of women's franchise gained acceptance somewhat more slowly. Contrary to the arguments presented by Carol Bacchi of the leadership role played by urban women in promoting woman's franchise,<sup>96</sup> there is some evidence that small town W.C.T.U. members supported the vote for women before it became fashionable at the provincial and dominion levels. For instance, the women of Richmond Hill in early 1887 discussed an opinion expressed by Dr. Gilmour, their M.P.P. To his assertion that "woman's influence could be more beneficially felt in the home than at the polls," the recording secretary noted that "the opinions of the ladies did not on the whole harmonize with that of Dr. Gilmour."<sup>97</sup> Later that same year, the Ontario Convention created a "Legislation, Franchise and Petitions" Department and the following year it passed a resolution calling for "the still further extention[sic] of the Franchise to women in any and every



possible way."<sup>98</sup>

A similar department was created by the Dominion Convention in 1889. In that year, Dr. Stowe-Gullen addressed the convention on the franchise. Mrs. Youmans, Ontario President, repeatedly emphasized the duty of women duly qualified to vote in municipal elections and to serve as school board trustees.<sup>99</sup> It would be several years before the demand for women's franchise in provincial or federal elections would be made, however. The Canadian W.C.T.U. continued to have confidence that indirect influence would result in their political ideas being accepted by male parliamentarians.

The records indicate that the first local union to champion the cause of woman's suffrage was London in 1893<sup>100</sup>. It directed a resolution to its local Member of the Provincial Parliament to vote in favour of the current bill. By no means did all local unions declare their support for full female suffrage, however. The Dunnville Union recorded that in 1903 the question was discussed, "but was not favorably received as an unqualified and universal vote for women."<sup>101</sup> In 1896 the Ontario W.C.T.U. issued a statement redolent with evangelical fervor and confidence. "That as God's intentions concerning woman must be measured by the capabilities with which He has endowed her, as we have no right to let any of His gracious gifts to us lie unused, and as he has provided us with all the qualifications which make intelligent and helpful voters, and added to them, that tender and vital interest in the human race which inheres in womanhood and maternity, we will never rest until we can fight Christ's battles armed with ballots,

and we demand from our Dominion government the speedy enactment of an Act which will give equal franchise with men, to the women of our vast Dominion.<sup>102</sup> Soon thereafter, a similar resolution was formally passed by the Ontario W.C.T.U.<sup>103</sup>

After 1905, there is evidence that female suffrage became a more significant issue for the Ontario W.C.T.U. Children engaging in the Medal Contests, as discussed in detail in chapter five, were encouraged to give speeches on set topics, including after 1909 in Ontario, Woman's Franchise. In 1910 the columns of The White Ribbon Tidings were bursting with acerbic comments on disenfranchised womanhood: "The contemptuous reference in regard to the signatures of women on the anti-gambling petitions is enough to raise an army of belligerent suffragettes on Canadian soil.... If the majority of signatures were those of women, it goes to show that women as a class are against gambling and furthermore that their home influence is counteracted, in a large degree, by outside forces. This gives the ancient lie: 'The hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that moves the world' a denial. The hand that holds the ballot is the hand that moves the political world."<sup>104</sup> By 1916, the W.C.T.U.'s support for women's franchise was so engrained that when the Regina Mayor sent his greetings to the Dominion Convention meeting in his city, he presented his credentials in being "...a total abstainer and prohibitionist, but also a believer in woman suffrage."<sup>105</sup>

The Ontario W.C.T.U. supported the imperial link and Canada's particular position as the destination for large numbers of immigrants. Its position on acceptable treatment of immigrants was different from the American. Having established a single Department of Foreign Work - directed, surprisingly, primarily at Amerindians as well as Germans - the provincial union devoted very little time to approaching immigrant groups directly. Instead, it chose to expend its energies on occupational groups which were thought to be especially vulnerable to alcohol abuse. Doubtless, the departments working among lumbermen, sailors and railway men encountered large numbers of immigrant men, as did the Evangelistic and Flower Mission Departments with ethnic women. However, the reports at the provincial and dominion conventions rarely highlighted the ethnic perspective. There is little evidence that attempts were made to organize women in ethnically homogenous communities, except for an affiliated group for Black women in the Toronto area. Thus the Ontario Union was delivered from the American experience which one historian has labelled, "not only paternalistic but ... frequently accompanied by bigotry."<sup>106</sup> The strongest statement to come to light on the "immigrant question" is stunningly bland: "Canada is growing, and at a quick pace, making history as she never made it before, and it is for us who are here to set a high standard of morals in the home, in the Church, in the State, and as we extend the hand of welcome to the incoming hosts who are to people our shores, conscientiously may

we say, 'God's Word is our code. Come help us build, and be happy.'"<sup>107</sup> The Ontario W.C.T.U. actions corroborated its words in this statement.

In international affairs, the early W.C.T.U. at the World level took a firm stand on disputes likely to lead to war. By 1883, it had established a Department of Peace and International Arbitration,<sup>108</sup> and at the Dominion Conventions there was periodic support provided for this position throughout the nineteenth century, as well as the establishment of a similar department in Canada after the turn of the century.<sup>109</sup> Although no such department existed provincially, the provincial conventions regularly passed resolutions supporting the use of arbitration rather than war to settle disputes.<sup>110</sup>

However, it appears from debate and resolution at the Ontario level that engaging in war worried the W.C.T.U. less than did the tradition of liquor being freely dispensed in military camps to young soldiers. The most consistent W.C.T.U. policy was to protest the existence of "wet canteens." The W.C.T.U. wrote fiery letters, demanding that the wet canteens be discontinued for every military manoeuvre from the Boer War to World War One.<sup>111</sup> In addition, they denounced compulsory military training in the schools. "Our duty as women is to train the boys and girls in the highest ideals," noted the Dominion Convention in 1916.<sup>112</sup> They observed that high ideals were in contradiction to free use of liquor. But other aspects of military drill troubled the women as well. In 1909 the Ontario W.C.T.U. resolved that "we discourage the celebration of

patriotic occasions with the booming of cannon, the marching of soldiery, and all that represents the diabolical arts of that wholesale butchery known as war, remembering that the W.C.T.U. stands for peace."<sup>113</sup> As late as 1913, the Ontario W.C.T.U. advocated the holding of 'Peace Days' in public schools to teach the principles of arbitration and peace.<sup>114</sup>

Nevertheless, as the nation moved closer to war in 1914, the W.C.T.U. reinterpreted "duty" and, after stating its renewed support for the "Hague idea, International law, International Courts of Justice, International sanctions and International Executive,"<sup>115</sup> it threw its collective weight behind the Anglo-Saxon Race, the British Empire and the allied effort. Statements from this period have a jarring jingoistic ring:

There is one race that is fast dominating the world - the Anglo-Saxon race, represented by Great Britain and the U.S.A., born rulers, exceeding all others in the capacity for governing. The only Empire of the present day which answers to this is the British Empire, a Christian Empire, which includes strong young nations, that are federating into a company - which carried the gospel to all lands, in all languages -and which is growing and growing - and bids to fill the earth. Do you belong to the British Empire? Then you belong to the blessed race, the blessed Empire - God's chosen rulers of the world!<sup>116</sup>

The Provincial Conventions during the war years were more restrained in their advocacy of the British cause than this atypical outburst. Their fundamental anxiety remained the long-range impact of war on children and young people, conflict

resolution and drinking habits. For example, after war had been declared in 1914 the Ontario Convention pledged its confidence to the peaceful solving of disputes and asked that "the homes, the schools and the churches ... help educate public opinion toward International understanding without war."<sup>117</sup> It also pledged its loyalty to the imperial cause at the same time as it requested prohibition:

During this time of our National calamity when the Great Empire which is dear to our hearts is embroiled in a bitter war with a relentless enemy, our thoughts turn to the future, and we earnestly desire some means whereby want and famine may be reduced to a minimum, and believing this can be done by conserving our national resources with which God has so abundantly blessed us, therefore resolved, that we petition the Government to close the bars until after the war.<sup>118</sup>

With an ideology rooted in the evangelical home and family, it should not be surprising that the Ontario W.C.T.U. retained its concerns for the individual soldier and his moral welfare. Indicative of this individualizing and personalizing of all issues was the patriotic work carried out by the local unions. The Department of Work for the Soldiers occupied much of the members' time as they prepared "comfort bags" for the boys overseas. These contained many of the same materials as the nineteenth-century members had sent to lumbermen, but with the addition of chocolate and soups to dull the appetite for liquor. The nature of the organization's war work is also symptomatic of the Ontario

W.C.T.U.'s emphasis on social service.

The war years saw the culmination of two of the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s campaigns: prohibition in 1916 and women's suffrage, gained provincially in 1917 and federally in 1918 with the Women's Franchise Act. Both were recognized through warm resolution and speeches at the Annual Conventions. It is important to note, however, that neither achievement received even passing comment in the minutes of local unions. How can such glaring omissions, particularly in the case of the Ontario Temperance Act, be explained?

Having received repeated rebuffs in political campaigns, the prohibition campaign had been taken up by other groups, as will be discussed in chapter five. The Dominion W.C.T.U. continued to agitate for woman's suffrage, but the issue was supported much more quietly at the Ontario Provincial level and in the local unions, with the notable exception of the union in London. When the franchise victory was announced, the Provincial Convention reacted quickly and enthusiastically, but it could not claim to have been a powerful pressure group at either the provincial or federal level. The local unions of the Ontario W.C.T.U. had redirected their efforts almost exclusively into social and educational projects by 1916. These undertakings, with their short-range and concrete achievements, validated the women's considerable efforts and their evangelical principles. In 1916, neither provincial prohibition nor women's suffrage was irrelevant, but they no longer predominated in the members' thoughts or actions.

Most historians viewing the W.C.T.U. see it having had evangelical roots, particularly during the tenure of Annie Wittenmyer, but that, with the acceptance of community action, these were outgrown and rejected. For example, Ruth Bordin asserts that the "realm of philanthropy" by the early 1890's had "replaced prayer as woman's answer to distress."<sup>119</sup> However, the Ontario records at the provincial and particularly, the local level do not bear out this false division between social action and evangelical zeal. Rather, the two coexisted throughout this period in both the urban and rural unions, and to a lesser degree at the provincial and dominion levels.<sup>120</sup> Gospel temperance meetings and jail, hospital and refuge prayer meetings continued to figure prominently in the work of many unions, alongside such new projects as the Willard Home in Toronto, where young women new to the city were housed, fed and counselled.

More importantly, however, the vision of a reformed society espoused by W.C.T.U. women, at least those in Ontario between 1874 and 1916, was an evangelical one. Arising from revivalism and the essential experience of conversion, through to the post-millennarianism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, theirs was above all an evangelical religious motivation. Society would be reformed through the individual will and salvation of the sinner, as supported by a caring community. But the community's Christian program was grounded in individuals' initiative. Referring to



their position on temperance, the Ontario W.C.T.U. noted in 1894 that they reaffirmed their policy as "Moral Suasion for the individual and Prohibition for the State."<sup>121</sup>

As the Canadian evangelical community fractured into its conservative and liberal parts, the W.C.T.U. watched with horror. The Ontario organization recognized the danger of losing the evangelical vision. In 1901, an article appeared in The Woman's Journal in which the author pressed for a renewed and systematic plan of action to promote evangelistic work. "The class we need to reach and help, if they will let us, is one over which the church has no power, and it may be that an earnest consideration of the subject by our local union may open up some plan by which the message of salvation may be carried to every man and woman in this town, and thereby do a work which shall lift them out of their present evil surroundings, and place them in a position which shall help them, both for time and eternity."<sup>122</sup> In 1902, the Ontario W.C.T.U. Convention passed a resolution in which it underscored the importance of individual conscience, motivated by evangelical ethics, in overcoming the liquor traffic. "Resolved that in our opinion the one insurmountable obstacle to Prohibition is not the liquor traffic with its money coined from blood, and its unscrupulous methods, nor the politician with his flexible conscience; but the disloyal follower of Christ who is over-awed by the fear of loss, or blinded by party loyalty, and who, with his ballot, strengthens the Kingdom of Satan instead of building the Kingdom of Christ."<sup>123</sup> The essential problem in losing sight of the

evangelical mission, then, was a tendency to commit one's loyalty to ephemeral, worldly causes while the basic issues of justice and purity languished. All-day prayer meetings to speed the success of local option campaigns were reported through 1916.<sup>124</sup> Particularly in the rural and town unions, the records bear eloquent testimony to the evangelical mission being carefully preserved.

At a more official level, the literature emanating from Chicago revealed a progression away from strict individualism towards an evangelicalism in a societal context. The earliest tracts, the Signal Lights Series, argued the case against alcohol and tobacco addiction entirely from the individual perspective. The evidence presented tended to relate to the victim's quandry, not society's. For example, an early Signal Lights pamphlet, probably dating from the 1880's, enumerated only personal reasons to reject smoking, including the unnatural physiological effects causing a person to feel unwell, smoking's expense, dirtiness, its tendency to produce disease, its wastefulness of time and energy, its link to alcohol in being a "nervine depressant," and its inevitable results of lower grades in students and loss of personal property and lives.<sup>125</sup>

In the Canadian context, Mrs. Youmans delivered a speech condemning tobacco to the Ontario W.C.T.U. in 1881, in which all her arguments were focused on individual rather than societal destruction.<sup>126</sup> A later tract produced on the same issue from the National Leaflets of a later period, probably at the turn of the century, also cited the personal factors, but added testimonial of

the amount spent by the nation annually on tobacco with vivid illustrations of how this money might better have been used, perhaps to feed the nation's hungry.<sup>127</sup> In both periods, however, the solution to tobacco addiction was seen to be a personal commitment by the "sinner" to reform and, through this reformation, to encourage friends and associates to do likewise for the general betterment of society.

By the 1890's the National W.C.T.U. was beginning to view alcoholism as a disease rather than a sin,<sup>128</sup> yet there remained much Canadian comment, even to 1916, which viewed the drink problem in moral terms. For example, the question of whether alcohol could ever be safely used was the basis of the celebrated argument between Lady Henry Somerset, who argued that it could, and Dr. Amelia Youmans, daughter of Letitia Youmans, who insisted that this was nonsense, and that drink must be totally suppressed because of its dangerous impact on weak people.<sup>129</sup> It might further be argued that the enthusiastic championing of social purity by the Canadian W.C.T.U., which saw the issue of self-abuse and the seduction of young girls in exclusively moral terms, appealed to this still-vibrant evangelical strain in the organization.

How widely were the ideas espoused by the W.C.T.U. accepted by society as a whole? Ruth Bordin reveals that the American W.C.T.U. claimed larger numbers of women to its membership than any other women's organization of the nineteenth century.<sup>130</sup> Mitchinson has shown the same situation for Canada.<sup>131</sup> The W.C.T.U. was the first women's mass movement in both countries. The Dominion, provincial

and local records also show, however, that more than charter members sympathized with the ideas of the W.C.T.U. In Ontario, for example, the organization was very successful in working with other temperance and denominational groups; large numbers of women were influenced through "Mothers' Meetings" and children through the Bands of Hope. W.C.T.U.-sponsored demonstrations and entertainments drew sizable crowds at the local level, demonstrating a generalized acceptance of the W.C.T.U. and its principles. It does not seem extreme to assert that the evangelically-inspired reformism of the W.C.T.U., including its prohibition demands, represented mainstream thinking in Ontario between 1875 and 1916.

## ENDNOTES

1. Neil Semple, "'The Nurture and Admonition of the Lord': Nineteenth-Century Canadian Methodism's Response to 'Childhood,'" Histoire Sociale/Social History 14 (May, 1981). See also Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth Century Consensus (Toronto, 1976) especially Parts I and II.
2. Patricia T. Rooke and R.L. Schnell, "Childhood and Charity in Nineteenth-Century British North America," Histoire Sociale/Social History 15 (May, 1982), p. 157.
3. Frances E. Willard, Glimpses of Fifty Years (Chicago: 1889), pp. 637-638.
4. Ontario Archives, MU 8449, W.C.T.U. Collection, "Why Should a Christian Girl Sign the Total Abstinence Pledge?" Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 109, n.d. Note: Unless otherwise stated, all primary documents are located in the W.C.T.U. Collection, Ontario Archives, Toronto.
5. See fiction pieces supporting children's purifying influence in MU 8456, The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, March, 1913.
6. MU 8405, Minutes of the Annual Report of the Ontario Convention, 1890. See also MU 8394, Minutes of the Convention of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1916.
7. MU 8422, Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., November 2, 1915.
8. Dr. James R. Nichols, "Spirituous Liquors Not Needed in Medicine or the Arts," National Leaflet No. 40. See also a condemnation of Lydia Pinkham's Vegetable Compound for its high percentage of alcohol in The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, August, 1910. NOTE: Because the various Ontario W.C.T.U. journals were unevenly numbered, and were generally short, dates rather than page numbers have been provided whenever The Woman's Journal, The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings or Canada's White Ribbon Bulletin have been cited.

9. Frances E. Willard, "Society and Society Women," National Leaflet No. 27.
10. MU 8426, Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., January 3, 1908.
11. Mrs. Lucy A. Scott, "Busy Women and the W.C.T.U.," National Leaflet No. 41.
12. See for example Wendy Mitchinson, "Aspects of Reform: Four Women's Organizations in Nineteenth-Century Canada," (Ph.D. Thesis, York University, 1977).
13. See for example Veronica Strong-Boag, "The Parliament of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada, 1893-1929," (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1975).
14. Readers of the December 1886 issue of The Woman's Journal were warned that insisting on excessive standards of cleanliness in the home would drive young men from the home into taverns with male company. Further, a December 1891 article told the story of a young man who blames his too tidy mother for driving him into the streets, bad company and taverns. "The over-neat and fussy mother is working against temperance and good order every day of her life."
15. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, August, 1910.
16. Ibid., October, 1910.
17. Ibid., March, 1910.
18. Ibid., February, 1910.
19. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1887.
20. Ibid.
21. Anna M. Vail, "A Girl's Influence," National Y.W.C.T.U. Leaflet No. 102.
22. Ellice Hopkins, "What Can We Do?" The White Cross Series No. 7.
23. Frances E. Willard, "Safety for School Children," National Leaflet No. 48.
24. Mrs. S.M.O. Henry, "Somebody is Praying for You," Signal Lights No. 22.

25. Mrs. Lucy A. Scott, "Personal Purity," The White Cross Series No. 11.
26. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, April, 1910.
27. Frances E. Willard, "Safety for School Children."
28. The Woman's Journal, January 1, 1901.
29. Ibid., October, 1890.
30. Lucy A. Scott, "Real Chivalry," The White Cross Series No. 12.
31. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, September, 1915.
32. See Ibid., March-October, 1913.
33. The Woman's Journal, July/August, 1893.
34. Ibid., January, 1893.
35. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, February, 1910.
36. Esther Pugh, "The Spirit of the Crusade," National Leaflet No. 64 and Mrs. S.M.O. Henry, "Somebody is Praying for You," Signal Lights No. 22.
37. The Woman's Journal, January 1, 1901.
38. "Smoking", Signal Lights No. 7.
39. Frances E. Willard, "Temperance and the Labor Question," Signal Lights No. 18 and Frances E. Willard, "The Shoemaker and Little White Shoes," Signal Lights No. 9.
40. Anna M. Vail, "A Girl's Influence," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 102.
41. MU 8422, Minute Book of the Mizpah W.C.T.U., April 4, 1916.
42. Ruth Bordin, Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900 (Philadelphia, 1981), p. 117.
43. Ibid.
44. See for example Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity where the motive is seen to be female anger directed against a male-dominated family and society or Ruth Bordin's Women and Temperance in which women's empowerment is located in the

nineteenth-century temperance campaigns during which women discovered their communal strength.

45. Mrs. Helen I. Bullock, "The Tobacco Toboggan," National Leaflet No. 32.
46. Frances E. Willard, "Scientific Temperance Instruction in Public Schools," National Leaflet No. 9.
47. A Symposium of Eminent Physicians, "Is Alcohol a Stimulant?" National Leaflet No. 23.
48. Willard, "Scientific Temperance Instruction in Public Schools".
49. Dr. James R. Nichols, "Spirituous Liquors Not Needed in Medicine or the Arts," National Leaflet No. 40.
50. Norman Clark, Deliver Us from Evil: An Interpretation of American Prohibition (New York, 1976) pp. 51-53. See also Joseph Gusfield, Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance Movement, (Urbana, 1963), pp. 79-80 and Jack S. Blocker Jr., Retreat From Reform: The Prohibition Movement in the United States, 1890-1913 (Westport, 1976), pp. 8-10.
51. Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity.
52. Willard, Glimpses of Fifty Years, p. 418.
53. David J. Pivar, Purity Crusade, Sexual Morality and Social Control, 1868-1900 (Connecticut, 1973), p. 10.
54. Willard, Glimpses of Fifty Years, p. 418.
55. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, February, 1910. See also Deborah Gorham, "The 'Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon' Re-examined: Child Prostitution and the Idea of Childhood in Late-Victorian England," Victorian Studies (Spring, 1978), p. 354.
56. Willard, Glimpses of Fifty Years, p. 421.
57. Ibid., p. 104.
58. Willard, "Safety for School Children."
59. Pivar, Purity Crusade, p. 112.
60. Willard, Glimpses of Fifty Years, p. 429.



61. Ellice Hopkins, "My Little Sister," The White Cross Series. n.d.
62. Ibid.
63. Rev. A.G. Butler, "An Evil Tradition," The White Cross Series No. 6.
64. Ibid.
65. Ellice Hopkins, "What Can We Do?"
66. Mrs. Lucy A. Scott, "Personal Purity." Emphasis appears in the original text.
67. Ibid.
68. Willard, "Safety for School Children."
69. See for example Henry, "Somebody is Praying for You," and Bullock, "The Tobacco Toboggan". n.d.
70. Pivar, Purity Crusade, p. 85.
71. See, for example, the Kingsville W.C.T.U. Mother's Meetings as reported in The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, January, 1910.
72. Ibid., p. 111.
73. See Annual Report of Dominion W.C.T.U. 1891, 1903, 1905.
74. Pivar, Purity Crusade, p.110.
75. Frances E. Willard, "Society and Society Women."
76. Mrs. Frances J. Barnes, "Our Social World," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 110.
77. The Woman's Journal, March 15, 1901.
78. Minutes of the Convention of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1890.
79. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1913.
80. UWORC, MN 1129, London District W.C.T.U. Records, Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., May 9, 1893.
81. Willard, Glimpses of Fifty Years, p. 419.

82. Pivar, Purity Crusade, pp. 137-141.
83. Deborah Gorham, "The 'Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon' Re-examined," p. 353.
84. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p. 110.
85. R.C. Macleod, "The Shaping of Canadian Criminal Law, 1892 to 1902," Historical Papers, (1978) as cited in James G. Snell, "'The White Life For Two': The Defense of Marriage and Sexual Morality in Canada, 1890-1914," Histoire sociale/Social History, 16 (May, 1983) p. 117.
86. Snell, "'The White Life For Two,'" p. 121.
87. G. Parker "The Origins of the Canadian Criminal Code," in D.H. Flaherty, ed., Essays in the History of Canadian Law (Toronto, 1981), p. 268.
88. Snell, "'The White Life for Two,'" p. 121.
89. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1894.
90. Snell, "'The White Life for Two,'" pp. 119-120.
91. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1909.
92. The Ontario W.C.T.U. took some time to arrive at this position. In 1883 the official stance of the organization was that Parliament be asked to completely suppress the liquor traffic, but through a free liquor trade system. The Local Option method was endorsed while any licensed system was rejected on the grounds that this would provide an official stamp of propriety that it did not deserve. See summary of 1883 Provincial Convention in MU 8425, Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., October 15, 1883. In 1889 the Provincial Convention opposed licensing because "a revenue taken from the liquor traffic has a tendency to blind the eyes of the taxpayers to the evils of the trade and demoralize the conscience of the public generally." Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1889. By 1894, however, the Ontario Convention indicated its support for licensing in principle when it passed a resolution deploring the insufficiencies of the license system and requesting that it be reformed. S.G.E. McKee, Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1877 - 1927, Whitby, 1927, p.37.
93. Frances E. Willard, Glimpses of Fifty Years, p. 351.
94. Bordin, Women and Temperance, pp. 57-58.
95. Ibid.

96. Carol Bacchi, "Divided Allegiances: The Response of Farm and Labour Women to Suffrage," in Linda Kealey, ed. A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s (Toronto, 1979), pp. 89-94.
97. MU 8428, Treasurer's Book of the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., April 26, 1887.
98. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1888.
99. See for example, Minutes of the Ontario W.C.T.U. Convention, 1887.
100. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., February 14, 1893.
101. MU 8415, Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., February 19, 1903.
102. Annual Report of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1896.
103. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1899.
104. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, February, 1910.
105. Annual Report of the Dominion Convention, June, 1916.
106. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p. 86.
107. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, January, 1904.
108. MU 8452, Convention of the World's W.C.T.U., 1883.
109. See for example the Annual Report of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1909.
110. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1899.
111. See Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1899 and 1914, Minute Book of the Spencerville W.C.T.U., August 3, 1899, and Annual Report of the Dominion W.C.T.U., June, 1916.
112. Annual Report of the Dominion W.C.T.U., June, 1916.
113. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1909.
114. Ibid., 1913
115. Ibid., 1914.
116. Canada's White Ribbon Tidings, August, 1915.
117. Annual Convention of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1914.

118. Ibid.
119. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p. 95.
120. See for example the Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., January 22, 1907 where the secretary notes a clear connection made in the conversation between intemperance and sin.
121. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1894.
122. The Woman's Journal, April 1, 1901.
123. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1902.
124. See for example, Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., 1912-1914, MU 8284, Minute Book of the Peterborough W.C.T.U., 1914 - 1916.
125. "Smoking," Signal Lights No. 7.
126. Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., October, 1881.
127. Mrs. Helen I. Bullock, "The Tobacco Toboggan," National Leaflet No. 32.
128. Frances Willard, for example, argued that "a purpose to drink liquors is a sin" but that the "appetite thus formed and forced is a disease". Bordin, Women and Temperance, p. 99.
129. See Kathleen Fitzpatrick, Lady Henry Somerset (London, 1923), p. 120. Dr. Youmans professed to back the "time honoured principles of absolute abolition and prohibition of all and every kind of licenced sin." The Woman's Journal, December, 1898.
130. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p.3
131. Mitchinson, "Aspects of Reform: Four Women's Organizations in Nineteenth-Century Canada" (Ph.D. Thesis, York University, 1977) p. 185.

## **CHAPTER FIVE:**

### **STRATEGIES**

#### **"THE DARKNESS OF THIS WORLD"**

From 1875 to 1916, the W.C.T.U. employed a variety of strategies to achieve its evangelical feminist objectives. Four approaches were used at the Dominion, Ontario and local levels: political channels such as petitions and resolutions, educational means such as leaflets and school courses, religious techniques such as prayer days and temperance revivals, and social and philanthropic works such as homes and other services for vulnerable elements in the community.

the formal political process far longer than did the provincial or local unions. In the latter, informal methods through educational and philanthropic works were increasingly employed to slowly nurture new, responsible attitudes of what constituted acceptable behaviour. These strategies for change set the Ontario W.C.T.U. apart from its American predecessor and established a distinctive Ontario version of the W.C.T.U.

Throughout the period under examination, the Dominion Executive and Conventions spent a considerable amount of time working with the political process, if in a rather haphazard fashion. This involved strategies to directly influence legislation as well as informal tactics to convince offenders to alter their behaviour, thus circumventing the need for legislation. Issues, many of which had no direct connection to temperance, were condemned or supported with petitions, delegations, letters, resolutions and by motions. In 1891, for example, two petitions dealing with international matters were circulated at the convention, one concerning the Siberian exiles, and a second in support of the Band of Mercy Pledge opposing the use of bird plumage in wearing apparel. National failings were also criticized through delegate petitions. In 1890, the Dominion Convention expressed concern that the "Grand Trunk Railway provides a Railway Buffet at

Richmond Station where intoxicating liquor is sold in contravention of the Dunkin Act." A petition was dispatched to Grand Trunk officials that these "hinderances to the efficient operation of the prohibitory law" be immediately removed.<sup>1</sup>

Petitions were often personally delivered by a delegation to the offending parties, combining personal and written authority. Mrs. McKee describes the anti-tobacco campaign of 1900 during which "petitions, memorials and deputations besieged the Dominion House of Parliament." On this occasion, the women were defeated by a reputed counter-campaign staged by the "Tobacco Trust of Montreal" with twenty thousand dollars at their disposal. "We had no money to spend, nor did we ever dream that money was needed to secure the passage of a Bill which was for the benefit of children and the saving of the race from this evil. One learns a lot when lobbying,"<sup>2</sup> McKee concluded ruefully.

Letters were dispatched on a wide variety of topics. In 1909 a letter was directed to the Minister of Justice in defence of Annie Robinson, convicted of murder at the Sudbury assizes. The convention respectfully requested on behalf of its twelve thousand members that her sentence be commuted or that she be pardoned. We remain unenlightened from the next convention's report about the Minister's response or Robinson's fate. The 1913 Dominion Convention forwarded a letter objecting to government action which permitted liquor

to be sold along the trans-continental railway.<sup>3</sup>

The Dominion Convention also used formal resolutions to influence political decisions. These were sometimes drafted to comment on concerns beyond Canada's borders: for instance, in 1899 support was expressed for Madame Dreyfus, the international use of arbitration in settling disputes, and for Finland in its struggle with Russia.<sup>4</sup> The International Teachers' Association meeting in Toronto received a resolution in support of Scientific Temperance Courses in the schools, and even Queen Victoria was consoled on the conspicuous failings of her son:

That in the present sorrowful and grievous crisis in the career of the Heir apparent through which reproach is brought upon a reign, pure with the light of motherly and wifely virtues, our sympathies, loyalties and prayers are with Her Majesty the Queen, and we fervently hope and pray that her reign may be prolonged for many years of purity of peace and honor as the fitting sovereign of an empire in which the Bible and the Home are the mightiest safeguards of the State."<sup>5</sup>

The Dominion W.C.T.U. assumed that the Queen would appreciate hearing a supportive word from other mothers.

Resolutions were also directed towards national events. In 1899, the Convention passed resolutions in favour of prohibition, the Lord's Day Observance, equal suffrage, non-liquor groceries, dry military canteens, the banning of cigarettes, and increasing the age of consent for girls.<sup>6</sup> The lists of causes are



increasingly eclectic, but the association's faith in the resolution as a strategic tool was unshaken. They served to educate delegates and members, provide direction for executive actions, and place pressure on authorities.

Occasionally, the Dominion Convention passed motions to direct its own membership to a particular end. In 1913, for example, it moved that "this convention urges delegates to impress on all Branches the importance of studying the subjects of food, and without advocating any special system of diet, directing attention to food values, and the nutriment and economic advantages of cereals, fruits, nuts and vegetables."<sup>7</sup>

As the organization aged, the Dominion level made fewer political demands on the outside community in favour of more social ones. Graeme Decarie has argued that the ambiguous results of the 1898 federal plebiscite shook the Dominion and Provincial W.C.T.U. organizations and other members of the prohibition machine. In the prohibition plebiscite only 44 per cent of eligible voters cast ballots of which only 51.3 per cent voted for prohibition.<sup>8</sup> Mrs. McKee too notes that the W.C.T.U.'s reaction to the prohibition plebiscite was "gloom and depression of spirit."<sup>9</sup> Henceforth, the W.C.T.U. greatly reduced its political action at the federal level and reset its sites on the provincial realm.

The apex of political action by the W.C.T.U. in Ontario was, therefore, during the 1880's and 1890's. During this period the provincial executive and conventions used the same political tools as their sisters in the Dominion Conventions with resolutions and

letters being the favoured devices. Mrs. Youmans set the tone for political involvement when speaking to the London Convention in October of 1881: "It is sometimes said you cannot make people sober by Act of Parliament; we ask our Government to stop making people drunk."<sup>10</sup> After 1900, the organization devoted most of its political energies to local option campaigns after the disappointments of the 1894 provincial and 1898 federal plebiscites. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century, political campaigns in Ontario were fought mainly on three issues: curricular changes in public education, the liquor licence system, and the tobacco trade. By tracing the progress of the Ontario W.C.T.U. with these and other issues, the political strategies of the provincial organization can be clearly seen.

The major curricular innovation demanded by the W.C.T.U. was the introduction of Scientific Temperance courses into the province's public schools. The first stage in the Ontario campaign, as in the United States<sup>11</sup>, was to use moral suasion to convince trustees and teachers that temperance studies be voluntarily taught. This had disappointing results, however, when the issue had first been presented to the Ontario Department of Education in 1881 through a letter recommending that Dr. Richardson's textbook be formally adopted in the public schools. Education Minister Crooks replied that while he could not consent to the book being mandated, it had been "introduced into the Normal Schools under the Head of Hygiene, so that teachers were obliged to be instructed upon that subject."<sup>12</sup>

This elicited some hope from the W.C.T.U. since one of the tactics

being used by American temperance women was to have teachers instructed and examined on the effects of alcohol and narcotics.<sup>13</sup>

But disappointment followed here as well, since the subject seems never to have been systematically examined in Ontario's Normal Schools. From that time the issue was kept before the public, and particularly before female teachers, in a relentless lobbying campaign which emanated from all three levels of the organization. For instance, the Ottawa Union was markedly successful in convincing city teachers and Miss Shanock, Head Mistress of the Model School, to join their union. Miss Shanock wisely noted that the Minister of Education favored the temperance workers among the young and "will do all in his power to further the cause of Temperance," unofficially, of course.

At the 1882 Provincial Convention, Mrs. Youmans expressed disappointment at the slow acceptance of a mandated textbook for Scientific Temperance, but suggested that "if we could induce the teachers to adopt our views, we would at once have a most potent influence at work upon the growing public opinion of our country."<sup>14</sup>

Thus, unlike the American program, the Ontario W.C.T.U. urged legislative change, but at the same time continued to urge teachers to present temperance materials voluntarily. They never lost faith in the possibility that they could "induce the teachers to adopt" their views.

At the same time, the Ontario W.C.T.U. pushed onward with other aspects of its political agenda. They mounted a campaign to gather support in the community with the result that a thirty thousand-

name petition was presented demanding that temperance instruction be taught formally in Ontario's public schools. Their efforts were met with success. The course on "Scientific Temperance" was introduced in 1887, just as the American Congress was passing similar legislation for the District of Columbia and the territories.<sup>15</sup> The problem with Ontario's legislation was that no formal examination was required, and as a result many teachers regarded it as an optional subject. "Though never popular with teachers, the course was one of the few successes prohibitionists had achieved with any government to that time."<sup>16</sup>

For the remainder of the period under examination, the Ontario W.C.T.U. placed pressure as often and as strongly as it could muster to have Scientific Temperance regarded as a compulsory subject with a mandated textbook and a year-end examination. As early as 1887, in response to a letter from the provincial executive, Education Minister G.W. Ross assured the women that temperance was treated in the official textbook. Thus, he argued, a separate temperance text was not required. But, the women demanded to know, if there were no compulsory text or examination, was the course mandated?<sup>17</sup> The answer was no. An examination was finally added in the 1890's, the period during which Scientific Temperance Instruction was most consistently taught. The early to mid 1890's must be considered the period of greatest success in the Scientific Temperance Campaign, therefore. The W.C.T.U. women could measure their achievement by reference to public support as reflected in the 1886 petition, a sympathetic textbook for required

classroom instruction, and a compulsory examination.

In 1896, the provincial executive decided to expand its lobbying group and it published a letter in all Protestant denominational papers urging Ontario clergy to use their influence in aid of having the course declared compulsory. At the same time, it stepped up its old campaign of working on teachers' attitudes when it sent a letter to all public school teachers in the province "to impress more deeply upon their minds their personal responsibility in the matter of Temperance Instruction."<sup>18</sup> In the same spirit, an attempt was made to draft more female teachers into the provincial W.C.T.U. executive, causing the 1897 Provincial Convention to consider changing the days for its next convention to a week-end so that teachers could attend.<sup>19</sup> Receptions were held to fete the teachers and, incidentally, educate them in their duties. One calculated effort was reported from Brantford where the W.C.T.U. invited the public school teachers to a reception: "After a delicious repast and social chat they were invited to give their opinion on Scientific Temperance Teaching etc etc. Of course the Ladies had secured those who could throw true light on the subject and a profitable evening was the result."<sup>20</sup> As the W.C.T.U. did in Alberta, temperance women appeared at teachers' and school board meetings and donated books on alcohol and tobacco to classrooms and libraries.<sup>21</sup> But by the century's close the movement's peak had passed and nothing seemed to work very well. Ontario's record paralleled the American. By 1897, only three American states were without Scientific Temperance legislation, but by 1907, most of

this had been reversed.<sup>22</sup>

The downward slide in government support for this measure in Ontario began in 1900 when a committee of the Ontario Provincial Teachers' Association was appointed to consider how the Public School Curriculum could be lightened. They suggested the dropping of Scientific Temperance and the substitution of Hygiene, which might be taught "if the teacher chose."<sup>23</sup> This also reflected the American pattern where, by the mid 1890's, opposition amongst teachers to curricular coercion had developed.<sup>24</sup> When it was rumoured that the Department of Education would accept the teachers' recommendations, the W.C.T.U. brought in the strongest speaker they could find to work on the teachers. Mrs. Mary Hunt, National and World Superintendent of Scientific Temperance and the author of the Congressional legislation on Scientific Temperance, did her best to convince the teachers at a heated Toronto meeting in 1901. "By vote, this distinguished woman was allowed only fifteen minutes, [by the Teachers' Association] the presiding officers sitting, watch in hand, during the address, which was made amid a good deal of noise and disorder."<sup>25</sup>

Having lost the war, the W.C.T.U. attempted to win the last battle by holding the line on the textbook to be used.<sup>26</sup> It turned its attention to finding a more acceptable textbook that would emphasize the physiological impact of alcohol and be more attractive to children. The 1901 Provincial Convention sent a resolution to the Minister of Education in which they "vigorously protest[ed]" the teachers' and Department of Education's position,

and requested that suitable textbooks be provided for the students, and "graded to suit the capacity of those passing examinations in Geography, Grammar and Arithmetic." That they did not also volunteer to choose the text is an indication of their removal from this highly emotional debate; it was as close as the association came to admitting defeat on the Scientific Temperance issue.

Scientific Temperance was finally removed from examination by the Department of Education in 1903.<sup>27</sup> By 1910 the campaign was reduced to placing readings dealing with temperance in teachers' hands as resource books.<sup>28</sup> The last word on the provincial struggle for Scientific Temperance should be given to Mrs. McKee, the organization's ex-president and historian: "the history of Scientific Temperance has been one of continued and persevering combat with the powers that be, whose glaring obtuseness and blind ignorance, where this moral issue is concerned, has[sic] always been inexplicable to us."<sup>29</sup>

While the Scientific Temperance campaign was never as successful in Ontario as it was in the United States, it helped teach the W.C.T.U. the essential elements of lobbying. The lessons learned through this cause would be applied over and over to new issues. Indeed, lobbying became the hallmark of W.C.T.U. political strategy. In addition, it has been argued that the training which children received in Scientific Temperance classes may well have disposed them positively as adults to prohibition.<sup>30</sup>

Political endeavours at the local level took quite a different pattern from either the dominion or provincial. After receiving

notice that the dominion or provincial bodies had taken a stand on an issue, such as support for a referendum or petition campaign, local unions frequently backed that stand by doggedly gathering signatures,<sup>31</sup> or dispatching letters to "Influential bodies," as was the case with the Richmond Hill Union in response to a letter from the Dominion Superintendent of the Legislation Department asking that members write to their Member of Parliament to protest the Scott Act amendments. "Action was taken, a letter had been written and signed by the officers."<sup>32</sup> Delegations met with the authorities: the Ottawa W.C.T.U. reported in 1882 that they planned "to present a petition on the issue of licences [granted to the wives of saloon keepers] after having interviewed the Licence Commissioners & receiving a positive reception."<sup>33</sup> They also sent money to support the major Plebiscite Campaigns, and sometimes substantial sums from slim treasuries.<sup>34</sup> On polling day, lunch might be provided for the scrutineer, "not wishing our side to suffer even in a good cause."<sup>35</sup>

Very often too, the local unions fought their own local option campaigns, and attempted to weld coalitions with other local temperance groups. The women of the Meaford W.C.T.U. concentrated their efforts on "getting the girls that earn salaries on the assessment roll"<sup>36</sup> and looking over the voters' list for any names likely to be antagonistic to the local option campaign,<sup>37</sup> while the London W.C.T.U. divided the campaigners amongst the city wards, allocating the largest delegation to London West which was the weakest area in their view in supporting local option.<sup>38</sup> But even



those members who had no vote participated in the political process by vocally supporting certain candidates. The London Union moved "that as soon as it is known who are the candidates for alderman that the ward superintendents meet and decide whom to support."<sup>39</sup> Voteless women were also requested to "use influence in papers & with brothers, husbands."<sup>40</sup> Doubtless all of these strategies had an influence on the political process.

Second only to the battles to win local option was the monitoring of the liquor licence system. Here, the women attacked several problems. They petitioned the government-appointed board to reduce the number of licences throughout the province, and to have fewer in their own towns.<sup>41</sup> For example, the Newmarket W.C.T.U. drew up six petitions to circulate "for signatures of rate-payers ... to be presented to the Council at next meeting" that the hotel licences be reduced to four from six, and that all shop licences be abolished.<sup>42</sup> The London Union reported the splendid success of the "deputation who waited on the council in opposition to the Liquor Party who asked for an increase in Licences. All present formed in Thanksgiving and together sang the Doxology."<sup>43</sup>

Sometimes they paid to have an organizer collect the names for the petition.<sup>44</sup> When this tactic was unsuccessful, they maintained their complaints to the provincial inspector about the board members themselves<sup>45</sup> and were quick to suggest appropriate names to fill vacancies: "...it was decided to send a letter of recommendation to Mr. E.J. Davis in favor of Mr. J.S. Green who is

a strong man in the Temperance Cause."<sup>46</sup> They also complained about local enforcement: "The men who are appointed to enforce the Liquor Law draw the wages, but do not do the work. If the Liquor Law were enforced a great deal of drunkenness would be done away with." opined the secretary of the Meaford W.C.T.U.<sup>47</sup> The Ottawa Union sent a letter to the Police Commissioner suggesting that a strong "Temperance Man" be named as the new Chief of Police.<sup>48</sup> And sometimes, as with the London Union, they complained of all of these:

It was brought to our attention that the licence holders in Potteersburg, London West & Hamilton Road are in daily and flagrant violation of the law. Moved that we as a Union protest against the utter disregard of the Law permitted by the Licence Commissioners of the East Riding of Middlesex, and do urge that steps be taken to arouse the attention of the temperance people in this riding, That the Provincial Licence Inspector be communicated with and, that we co-operate with the London and Western Prohibition Association in doing what we can to abate the evil.<sup>49</sup>

While the number of licences to be granted was regularly challenged, the women conscientiously monitored establishments in their own communities to ensure that no other businesses were illegally selling liquor without a licence, and that regulations were being strictly observed.<sup>50</sup> "A little discussion on private detection business in regard to drinking after hours and on Sundays around Hotels....,"<sup>51</sup> remarked the Newmarket Union secretary ominously. Sometimes action was suggested on slender evidence:

"Herm West who kept a booth in the Fair Grounds is said to have sold drinks that stupefied some young boys; the case should be taken in hand before another year brings trials in the same way."<sup>52</sup>

The Dunnville Union instructed the Corresponding Secretary to "write a letter to the inspector informing him of the rumors circulated that one of the Hotel Keepers has been selling liquors in his barn on Saturday nights."<sup>53</sup> At other times, unions such as London's were conscientious in their information gathering: ". . . we have a tally of the number of persons drunk & disorderly on the city rolls, number of fines laid by Inspector & Police & what happened to the charges."<sup>54</sup>

During the war, the Woodstock W.C.T.U. got up a petition against a wet canteen for Canadian soldiers and managed to get twenty-four women to sign it, eleven being visitors. Still wrestling with the soldiers' taste for liquor, the Peterborough Union decided some months later to send chocolates with "W.C.T.U." stamped on them, gum and Washington Coffee, "which helps to destroy the taste for liquor."<sup>55</sup> The Dunnville W.C.T.U. wanted a public demonstration of support for sobriety. It petitioned the council "to pass a by-law to have any man found drunk on the streets at any time arrested."<sup>56</sup>

Public displays of other offensive acts rankled the W.C.T.U. women also. The London W.C.T.U. directed the superintendent of narcotics to write to the local M.P.P. asking him to support an amendment to the Tobacco Act, "prohibiting boys under 18 yrs of age from smoking on the public streets."<sup>57</sup> The women of another union

struck a committee "to wait on the Storekeepers to have them quit selling tobacco."<sup>58</sup> And like well-brought-up women, they remembered to write their thank-you letters: "...decided to write to Dr. Sproule thanking him for voting right on the question, and to ask the Editor to write an article.... Scores of Electors write letters to thank the Representatives who stood by the abolition of the cigarette."<sup>59</sup> In fact, it was with the tobacco menace that one local union demonstrated its grasp of the political process, effectively putting this knowledge to good use. After having donated thousands of leaflets to teachers informing them of the dangers of cigarettes, the London W.C.T.U. circulated a petition among the teachers in the city asking the board of education to take into consideration the increasing power and extent of the cigarette habit among youth. Reportedly every teacher signed. The minutes tell the remainder of the story. "In response to the teachers the Board passed a resolution requiring the teachers to faithfully teach the evil effect of tobacco upon the system, also asking the co-operation of the parents and guardians in this matter and calling the attention to the Police Com. to the constant violation of the Ontario Tobacco Act." In celebration, the women distributed another thousand copies of the "Deadly Cigarette" leaflet.<sup>60</sup>

The Meaford W.C.T.U. circulated a petition in support of women's franchise.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, the London Union sent a resolution to their local M.P. asking him to support the issue of Woman's Suffrage.<sup>62</sup>

When the provincial president asked that unions register their

concern on the observance of the Sabbath, unions wrote to the premier and their M.P.'s as requested, one union reporting happily that a letter in reply was received from Sir Wilfrid Laurier's private secretary.<sup>63</sup> But the monitoring was carried out at home also. The Richmond Hill Union noted that "it was decided that Mrs. McLean see Mr., Mrs. Throop & see if he would on behalf of the W.C.T.U. go to Mrs. Smail & tell her [~~crossed out~~] persuade her to not break the Sabbath ...."<sup>64</sup> The London Union publicly deplored the running of boats on Sunday, "thus desecrating the 'Lord's Day'" and fought through resolution the proposed opening of the public library on the Sabbath: "This Society looks upon a Sabbath Day devoted to the needful rest and worship as a God-given right as old as Creation and not to be interfered with except at peril to the Moral and Spiritual Life of a Community."<sup>65</sup>

Another favourite of the late nineteenth century was the introduction of a Curfew Bell, to be installed and administered by the town council. Sometimes the adoption of the Curfew Bell was as simple as visiting the Mayor and Council, as in Newmarket. "The [W.C.T.U.] committee was rec'd very cordially by the Council. The Mayor thought it would be an excellent thing to have and instructed the bye-law committee to prepare bye-law for the same."<sup>66</sup>

Lotteries and gambling establishments were sniffed out, and the town council pressured to eliminate them,<sup>67</sup> the town council petitioned to have stores close at 9:30 on Saturday evenings,<sup>68</sup> and attempts were made to shut down unseemly social events: "A long discussion followed about the evil arising from the Annual Ball

held in the Town Hall by the Trolley Employees. It was decided to talk to the Town Council quietly and try to induce them not to lease the Hall again for the same body as it proved a disgrace to our town."<sup>69</sup> Or, again, this report was made: "Information has been received that the majority of the Council were in favor of another pool room and passed a bye-law to permit a licence. Arrangements were made to try and petition against it ...many frequent it, young boys, old boys and even married men."<sup>70</sup> The Woodstock Union named a committee to "gain what information they could regarding children attending picture shows" unattended by friends or parents.<sup>71</sup>

With such a concerted policy of snooping, the local W.C.T.U.'s were sensitive to being perceived as busy-bodies. There is evidence that, as the local unions matured, they became more subtle in their pressure tactics. The Newmarket Union, which had been unstintingly vigilant in voicing its alarm on a wide assortment of matters, noted after twenty-two years of frontal attacks: "About having the signs removed from the closed Hotels, it was decided to wait and see if they would come down without our seeming to meddle.... Mrs Hill and Mrs. Main will please see that a note to that effect be inserted in the local papers - not as a W.C.T.U. item but a general [one] as other than W.C.T.U. women have mentioned it before."<sup>72</sup> "Say less pray more," it counselled in another context, "that the men will do better if not nagged too much."<sup>73</sup> The Peterborough W.C.T.U. expressed the same idea this way: "We band ourselves together not as a political organization but to stand behind our Council for the Temporal & Moral reform of

our own town & to clean up some of places where vice & drunkenness are allowed to exist."<sup>74</sup>

Several conclusions can be drawn about the political strategies of the W.C.T.U. First, there is much evidence of unions specializing in particular kinds of activities. For example, the London Union was a much more scholarly group than the Ottawa Union and delighted in staging complicated debates. However, all unions for which records exist used some form of political tactics. Some, like the Newmarket Union, changed their forms of political expression over the long period during which it kept records. Overt demands for legislative change were replaced by more subtle pressure tactics to have others effect the desired changes. But this represented no reduction in political interest.

Secondly, topics for which the women sought political change were not limited to those involving alcohol; a wide range of other issues were confronted over this period. Issues waxed and waned in popularity. In the 1880's, many unions were concerned with the sanctity of the Sabbath; by 1916, this concern was rarely mentioned, but there was much concern over Social Purity. The call for prohibition was a central issue in the 1880's, but it had become marginalized by 1916. In all of these areas, however, reform was sought through political channels. It is important to recognize that although the W.C.T.U. rooted its ideas in the importance of the home and family, it saw the political system as an important vehicle to right society's wrongs.

A second broad strategy of the W.C.T.U. for achieving change was through educational means. The campaign to have Scientific Temperance made a compulsory, examined subject has been presented as a study in the use of political channels, but it was at the same time an example of the most enduring technique developed by the W.C.T.U., that is, changing attitudes through new information. The wide-ranging educational program closely corresponded with the organization's interests in work with children, and spurred the development of materials and methodologies especially intended for children. The formal educational system was only one target in this campaign; medal contests, public lectures and children's clubs were also sponsored by the women. Other groups to be targetted were working-class mothers and men, and middle-class men sympathetic to the temperance cause. Finally, the W.C.T.U. developed a "School of Methods" to train its own workers, leaders and supportive followers. The common assumption behind all of these educational initiatives was that knowledge, combined with evangelical energy, would be sufficient to win "converts" to abstinence for the individual and society. This optimism pervades the educational materials and pedagogical strategies: it seems rarely to have occurred to W.C.T.U. members that an enlightened person could do otherwise than support them.

In the United States, as in Canada, the W.C.T.U.'s unsuccessful efforts to have Scientific Temperance made a compulsory school



subject was succeeded by a still-surviving educational program: the Medal Contests.<sup>75</sup> W. Jennings Demorest of New York began the contests in April of 1886. The next year he introduced them into California, and hereafter across the United States and into Canada. Demorest agreed to give medals free to anyone who would drill a class for a speech contest on the condition that no admission fee was charged or collection taken. By 1894, thirty-four thousand medals had been given away worth seventy-five thousand dollars. The Medal Contests became an official American W.C.T.U. activity in 1895 and a department of work in 1897 with medals redesigned bearing W.C.T.U. mottoes. Recitation books listing selections from which children were to choose were printed on the topics of Prohibition, Total Abstinence, Scientific Temperance, Anti-Narcotics, Women's Franchise, and Social Purity.<sup>76</sup>

In Canada, the Medal Contests first became a department of work at the Dominion level in 1905 and in Ontario in 1908. For a number of years children seem to have simply recited selections from the recitation books, but gradually essay contests were added to the repertoire, encouraging some personal additions to the set piece.

The medal contests provided a forum for intensive education of children which could form the basis of a public entertainment, including the rewarding of handsome prizes. But the W.C.T.U. had a long tradition of public competitions and awards. In some cases the prizes had grown out of the Scientific Temperance Courses, as

in Meaford where the local union gave a copy of Elizabeth Brownings's poems to the Model School student taking the highest marks.<sup>77</sup> The Meaford women also presented prizes to students in the public school, at least in part to have a pretext to interview the principal and students to ensure that Scientific Temperance was, in fact, being taught.<sup>78</sup> The London W.C.T.U. also provided prizes, reserving the right to publicly examine the students and establish that the authorized textbook was being used.<sup>79</sup> Long before Demorest began funding the Medal Contests, a number of unions ran essay contests, sometimes advertised by the women visiting the schools. An account of one such visit from Ottawa indicates that the contest, open only to children who intended to remain non-drinkers, was a popular diversion. "This committee during their visit to one of the Schools desired the pupils to stand up who intended in the future to be total abstainers. All the boys and girls present instantly stood up."<sup>80</sup> Prizes were offered in all of Ottawa's public schools, collegiates, the ladies' college and Miss Harmon's School.<sup>81</sup> In 1888, for example, the Toronto W.C.T.U. women combined three prizes costing \$13.00 for the best temperance essays with a complimentary social for the Public School Teachers and Normal Students.<sup>82</sup>

Doubtless, however, the formal Medal Contests permitted a dramatic forum for juvenile temperance education. Furthermore, adults who otherwise were not touched by W.C.T.U. influence could be reached through the medium of child proselytizers. "The medal contest can overcome indifference and opposition to our principles

faster and surer than any other known form. Saloon-keepers' children, wine drinkers' children, white ribboners' children, the fathers and mothers, the sisters and brothers, the aunts and the cousins whom we reckon by the dozens, come out to hear the entertainment - barriers all down - because it is the young people who are to speak...."<sup>83</sup> The Medal Contests assumed that one could find no better foil in an evil age than the purity of children. Even better, adorable children would attract a paying public. Both the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U.<sup>84</sup> and the Windsor Union sold tickets to the Medal Contest entertainments.<sup>85</sup>

One effect of the Medal Contests, particularly those based on speech-making, was to further validate the importance of skills of elocution, so promoted in Canada by the Temperance Lodges. "It can develop in the many the great art of expression. Second only to having truth to tell, is the art of telling it with winning power. In the contest drill the future housekeeper, farmer, tradesman, professional, etc. are prepared to ably plead our cause along the way of life."<sup>86</sup> This was also the preferred method by which children demonstrated competence and were evaluated in the public school system of Ontario. Echoes of the usefulness of eloquence, particularly for women, ring through several of the organization's National and Y.W.C.T.U. Leaflets. In "Our Social World," Frances Barnes proposes that women nurture the art of conversation: "By studying the use of words, and by reading the best authors, we learn to use better language and express ourselves more readily in fitting and faultless terms. When we hear the misuse of words and

the superfluity of adjectives among young women of the 'perfectly splendid' type, the desire to have the Y's sign 'anti-slang' pledges is increased to wishing them to exemplify more extended wisdom by the study and application of right words." And to what purpose can this rhetorical might be put? "A young woman can put a bashful young man entirely at ease by simple, natural conversation."<sup>87</sup>

Medal Contests were rarely run as a separate department in the local unions; most often they fell under the Y.W.C.T.U., the Juvenile Department, the Little White Ribboners, the Band of Hope or the Loyal Temperance League. As such, they formed part of the educational and "outreach" program encompassed by one of the union's several youth groups.

The W.C.T.U. mirrored the public school system by age-grading children and channelling them into the appropriate youth group: the Little White Ribboners served children under seven; the Bands of Hope and, later, the Loyal Temperance Leagues, served boys and girls to about age fifteen; and the Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union served women from about sixteen to thirty, although there is evidence that women older still attended its meetings. After the First World War, young men were also invited to attend the Y.W.C.T.U. and, by the 1930's, the organization had become the Young People's Branch. The W.C.T.U. developed educational literature for each of its target groups in an effort to mould its message to the interests of particular ages and both sexes.

The Canadian W.C.T.U. distributed five American leaflet series to its supporters. Because of a limited market and financial resources, the Ontario W.C.T.U. produced no leaflets of this nature. However, the large numbers ordered by the Ontario and local unions indicates the sustained support across the province for the messages carried in the leaflet series, each of which had a distinct approach, clientele and area of concern. The Canadian W.C.T.U., and primarily the Ontario organization, did publish its own periodical, however. This distinctively Canadian record permits a comparison with the American model of prescriptive literature.

The first leaflet series adopted by the W.C.T.U. was one called "Signal Lights," a scion of the official organ of the American W.C.T.U., the Union Signal. While the series was certainly sanctioned by the W.C.T.U., with Frances Willard authoring the first issue, it was put out by the Women's Publishing Association of Chicago, and probably first appeared in the early 1880's. The pocket-sized, four-page pamphlet was the most inclusive of all the leaflet series: it spoke to an audience of middle-class women, men, and boys. Succeeding leaflets would specialize more rigidly in the group to be addressed. These leaflets display an individually-directed evangelical fervor that never reappears with the same intensity in later pamphlet series. Several examples may provide a flavour of the approach taken.

The early issues spoke directly to men and women of the middle class, and not exclusively about alcohol. The first issue, Frances

Willard's "Individuality of Conscience," is a spirited defense of the Home Protection Vote with the desired end of legislated prohibition. Another issue discussed the problem of location in any city of the dreaded "evil houses" frequented by social undesirables<sup>88</sup> W. Jennings Demorest, the founder of the Medal Contests, authored several of the "Signal Lights." "Definite Political Action Necessary to Antagonize the Liquor Traffic: A Most Atrocious Public Outrage," like Willard's contribution, is a call to political action by a united temperance force:

...the liquor traffic is the great octopus on society, the monumental curse of our country - a curse without one mitigating feature.... These cormorants of society fully understand this question, and also the significant virtue of combined action. They have accordingly fortified and entrenched their numerous allies. Using their moneyed interests they have largely subsidized the press to silence, and by the use of sophistical arguments as the most effective means to accomplish their nefarious purposes.

In succeeding issues, Demorest argued that the liquor interests were so effective in influencing weak people that, without a mighty effort to root out the poison, the nation would be destroyed:

Thus gradually and insidiously has this moral cancer of alcoholic poisoning imbedded itself into the nation's life, and its degrading, desolating grasp on society has become such a domineering influence in our political and social economy that it has blighted our moral sense, destroyed our material prosperity, depressed our commercial vitality and brought all the business relations of the country into such a distressed condition that a terrible paralysis now covers the whole nation.<sup>89</sup>

Several of the issues savagely ridiculed the working man's demands for a living wage: "Men who strike for higher wages can find enough generally for whiskey and tobacco."<sup>90</sup> Frances Willard asserted in her "Temperance and the Labour Question" that "the central question of labor reform is not so much how to get higher wages as to how to turn present wages to better account. Until our friends the "Knights" study this problem, they will have learned but half their lesson...."<sup>91</sup> Again, in her parable of "The Shoemaker and Little White Shoes," she pictures a temperance crusader visiting the tenement of a young family in which the husband was a hopeless drunk. The temperance reformer confronts the husband and accuses him of loving the saloon-keeper's daughter more than his own sweet little girl, since the saloon-keeper's child is dressed in delicate white shoes and a pretty dress with a sash, purchased with his liquor bills. Meanwhile, his daughter dresses in rags with no shoes. He must love the saloon-keeper's wife more than his loyal spouse since his money allows the saloon-keeper's wife to take fine carriages while his wife is in want of food. Predictably, the drunk faces the horror of his life, takes the pledge and pulls himself and his family out of the degradation into which they had sunk.<sup>92</sup> The temperance visitor received a further boost in "Somebody is Praying for You." This is a compilation of treacly stories centring on the thought that each person is being spiritually supported in some way by others, even if not apparent, and that this could well change a life of evil to one of good:

A young tobacconist came to me for the temperance pledge. A few days later I took a marked copy of the book of Proverbs and called upon him in his cigar-store. After a few inquiries, I handed him the little volume and said, 'Read a few verses in this book every day, and remember I pray for you....' He gave me a quick look, and turning about, began fumbling among the boxes on the shelf behind him as though I had asked for a box of cigars. But after a moment he turned again toward me, and with moist eyes looked me frankly in the face and said, 'Excuse me - you took me by surprise; thank you; nobody in the world ever prayed for me before.' 'Not your mother?' I asked. 'My mother never prays.' 'Then would you like to have me pray for you?' 'Indeed I should. I shall not forget it; I will read the book.' 'Well,' I said, 'you may know then that I shall pray for you; but when my prayer is answered you will be in a different business and a different man; will you be willing to make the change?' It was a moment before he replied. Then he said: 'The change would be for the better: yes, I should be willing to be anything that your praying would make out of me.'

It is worth noting that all of the objects of prayer in this issue are male, and that most of the visitors female. The salvation recipe is also clearly laid out in this example. The object of concern wants to improve his life and be saved; he presents no resistance to the plea. Indeed, only one plea is required to capture this young man's utter devotion. He changes his life almost before the visitor's eyes and vows to follow the goals she has outlined. Finally, it is worth noticing who is to blame for the young man's wayward state: his mother. There is no suggestion that the visitor should pursue the mother, however. The prize to be gained is young manhood.

As a foreshadowing of the later "White Cross Series" which was



directed entirely to young men, two final issues of the Signal Lights series might be discussed because of their concern for middle-class youth. H.H. Seerley's "The Tobacco Habit and Its Effects Upon School Work" is representative of the fear-mongering literature that showed the lasting tragic results of a single character flaw, such as smoking. He asserts that, after surveying several hundred boys, the following conditions were found in those who used the tobacco narcotic. Boys who began the habit at an early age were stunted physically, and "never arrive at normal bodily development." Indigestion, impaired taste, defective eyesight, dull hearing, "nervous affections" and heart diseases were all present in the boys under study. But worst of all, smoking destroyed the ability to apply oneself to study, destroying memory and comprehension. "The faculties of a boy under the influence of the narcotic seem to be in a stupor, and since depraved nerve power stultifies and weakens the will power, there is but little use for the teacher to seek to arouse the dormant, paralyzed energies, or to interest and foster the fagged desire."<sup>93</sup> An anonymous pamphlet entitled "Smoking" concluded with a math problem which parodied the lifestyle of the working class, but was clearly intended for the respectable classes. "Tom smokes three cigars, and his father smokes five cigars each day, for which they pay sixty cents a dozen. His father drinks three glasses of beer a day at five cents a glass. Tom's mother buys three loaves of bread a day at five cents a loaf, and two rolls of butter a week at fifty cents a roll. At the end of the year how much more do the cigars and the beer

cost than the bread and butter?"<sup>94</sup>

The "National Leaflets" series was produced for the W.C.T.U. by the Woman's Temperance Publishing Association, also in Chicago. This collection, dating from about 1885, devotes its attention primarily to the women of the organization, with special focus on the female school teacher. Far less emotional and evangelical in tone, the National Leaflets approach a variety of problems with a measured, often scientific pose.

Frances Willard's "Scientific Temperance Instruction in Public Schools," is an example of this type. A polemic to prove that temperance education should occupy pride of place in the school curriculum, her article charges the teacher to impart the dangers of this life-threatening substance: "But how shall the young and thoughtless avoid this supreme peril of their youth unless they know about it, and how shall they learn without a teacher, and how shall they teach except they be sent?" In response to teachers' complaints that there was no room in the curriculum for temperance instruction, she quotes a superintendent of schools in Massachusetts that "this subject ought to be taught. If the schedule is too much crowded already, we will take something out and make room for this, because it is entitled to the right of way."<sup>95</sup>

In her "Safety for School Children", Willard expanded her argument concerning the teacher's essential role in educating the child about other problems, such as self-abuse. Here, the feminization of teaching convinces Willard that the right-thinking

female teacher is often preferable to the natural mother, and certainly preferable to the working-class mother:

But all mothers are not what we would wish. The average teacher is greatly superior in character and culture to the average parents whose children are placed under her care. She knows far better what to say and how to say it.... Two-thirds, if not three-fourths, of our public school teachers are women. As I have watched them, my heart has thanked God for their gentle individuality, their gracious strength and their notable good looks! No factor in the woman question evolution is more significant than that women are teaching the men that are to be. A solid respect for woman's mental powers must be the mental habit of the boys thus trained ... with all my heart I believe there are two motives on which a lady teacher can rely. One is a boy's love for his mother and his sisters; the other a boy's desire to please the lady who teaches him, and it is possible to establish such esprit de corps that boys will not do what they would be ashamed to have her know or what she assures them would be [a] bad example for the smaller pupils.

Despite the general unwillingness of teachers to shoulder the burden of temperance education, much less social purity, other numbers in the National Leaflets series nevertheless also urged the teacher to consider these issues as essential to her task. Alice Guernsey wrote several pamphlets to teachers, showing that "those boys who most needed to hear that Alcohol is a poison, to stomach and heart, to nerve and brain, to muscles and blood, always and everywhere - in cider, home-made wine and beer, as in brandy, whiskey and gin" cannot expect to be reached in the Sunday Schools or Loyal Temperance Legions. They could, she stressed, be sought

only in the public schools, with teachers alone able to break the intemperance cycle. This otherwise unreachable group included not only working-class children, but also those from "prosperous families where wine is served to guests, where parents smoke as is fashionable."<sup>96</sup>

In addition to pitching the message to teachers, however, many of the titles in the National Leaflet series were devoted to the women of the W.C.T.U. "Is Alcohol a Stimulant?" was answered in the negative by the authors, "A Symposium of Eminent Physicians." To buttress his argument that alcohol was actually a depressant, a Dr. Palmer of the University of Michigan produced this baffling explanation: "Paralysis of the splanchnic nerve causes increased peristaltic motion of the intestines, and the paralysis of the inhibitory nerve of the heart increases the frequency of its beat; but in neither of these cases has the real power of the organ been increased, only a restraining, governing influence been removed...."<sup>97</sup> It is doubtful that any W.C.T.U. member was expected to understand this pompous explanation; rather the objective was probably to support moral arguments with respected medical opinion. "The Tobacco Toboggan" carefully traced the effects of narcotics such as tobacco, alcohol and opium on the body: "...each of these affect the brain first, the heart second and the stomach third; from the brain, the whole nervous system is affected, from the heart, the entire circulation of the blood, from the stomach, the digestive and assimilation apparatus is influenced." The medical argument is capped, however, with a

moral one: "Boys who use tobacco almost invariably begin a practice of deception, which robs them of integrity of character...."<sup>98</sup>

The National Leaflets sought to prescribe other aspects of the W.C.T.U. woman's life as well. Frances Willard's "Society and Society Women" criticized scanty dress fashions, gambling, card playing and dancing: "Banish wine from the dinner, dancing from the 'evening entertainment' and 'society' with its bare arms and exposed busts, its late hours and indigestions, would collapse."<sup>99</sup>

Above all else, the dutiful temperance woman must never let the alcohol interests win through her apathy. She must join forces with other women "against the principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness."<sup>100</sup> "We must cling together, moving forward without regard to politics, as we have in the past, doing right as God reveals it to us. We need not be afraid."<sup>101</sup>

The W.C.T.U. began producing a separate series of leaflets for the young women, probably in the early 1890's.<sup>102</sup> The Y.W.C.T.U. leaflets are strongly evangelical, and even martial in style. Most were published, apparently privately, by Miss Ruby I. Gilbert of Chicago. Three main types of pamphlets were produced in the series.

The first, and earliest, leaflets justify the separate existence of the Y.W.C.T.U. from the W.C.T.U. "Wherefore a 'Y'?" and "Is a Y.W.C.T.U. a Necessity?"<sup>103</sup> both argue this case. A second category of leaflet concerned the establishment of Y unions, the

training of the executive, and the retention of members.<sup>104</sup> The third group contained prescriptive codes for the behaviour of the Y.W.C.T.U. woman, including "Why Should a Christian Girl Sign the Total Abstinence Pledge?," "Our Social World," "A Girl's Influence" and "What is Your Value?"<sup>105</sup>

After the turn of the century, two more leaflet series were produced, both for children, especially male children. Both were authored primarily by British Temperance leaders, and represent a different approach than that generally taken by American authors. The rigidity of sex roles is powerfully presented: nowhere is woman's strength apparent, except as a moral guide, and her manifold weaknesses are noted often.

The Loyal Leaflets promised to be "crisp, telling stories, that will lead the youthful reader to adopt the motto of the series, 'For Truth and the Right, in the King's Name.'" They were intended to be used for supplementary reading in the public schools, for Sunday School classes on Temperance Sundays, and in the Loyal Temperance Legions. Even a sample of the titles speak of male interests: "The Life-Saving Station," "Boxing the Compass," "St. George and the Dragon," "At the Station - On the Square," "How Ralph Stopped Smoking" and "The Temperance Circus Tent."<sup>106</sup>

By far the more popular of the two British series, however, were The White Cross leaflets. While similar in appearance to the Loyal Leaflets, each White Cross issue contained a brief introduction with two short stories. The American W.C.T.U. had cooperated with the British White Cross Army to produce these

social purity tracts for boys in public schools, Sunday Schools and youth groups. Imbued with British evangelicalism, the leaflets are dramatically different in style and message from any of the other W.C.T.U. examples. The White Cross Manual had been penned by Frances Willard and was published by The Woman's Temperance Publishing Association in Chicago. Apparently the distinct differences in approach did not disturb Willard or those in charge of W.C.T.U. publications. Why this should have been is not clear.

The White Cross series provided the basic position of the W.C.T.U. on the issue of social purity. The organization had always had problems in transmitting the message effectively because of the need to veil each comment in euphemism and generality. Prior to the White Cross leaflets, the only other means to transmit the social purity dogma was through itinerant speakers, as with the instance of the peripatetic Mr. Beale. Encompassing only twelve titles, the White Cross pamphlets put the case directly and, occasionally, disturbingly. None of the pamphlets assume that women are any more than passive vessels, to be cherished or violated. Women are portrayed as child-like and childish, possessed of almost no common sense. In "My Little Sister" a man is enjoined to "never let your animal spirits make you take liberties with any girl, pulling her about and romping with her. Many young men excuse themselves by saying, 'Oh, she likes it!' That is all the more reason that you should teach her, by your knightly conduct to her, to like something higher and more womanly

than that."<sup>107</sup> Frances Willard praised this issue highly in its introduction which, curiously, suggests that men teach women their appropriate role. Woman's only strength, and a passive one at that, is that she has a more acute moral sense making it possible for her to influence those around her into high-minded conduct: ". . . if the man be the head of the woman, woman is the heart of the man, the natural fount of those holier and tenderer feelings which are so often dulled and dried up in the hard conflicts and selfish interests of his life."<sup>108</sup>

The apparent acceptance by the National and Dominion W.C.T.U. organizations of these views of women standing in direct opposition to those repeatedly outlined in the nineteenth century must be addressed. Perhaps Willard gratefully embraced any literature which would promote a favourite issue; perhaps the difference in tone was not as apparent to those engaged in the active campaign of social purity. Or, sadly, perhaps the social purity literature, written mainly by women, denotes an emerging view of women as less competent, more conservative and dependent on men. As has been discussed, this change in ideology was reflected also in the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s organizational pattern after 1900.

All of the leaflets stress that the tendency to self-abuse can be overcome with the exercise of discipline. Mrs. Scott's "Personal Purity" implores, "The simple truth is, self-abuse must be overcome by self-control. You must appreciate at the very beginning that everything is at stake; health, happiness, long life, union with a pure woman, a home of your own with its sacred



associations; all these are lost to the unfortunate being who becomes the slave of his own depraved appetites."<sup>109</sup> "When not provoked, passion slumbers, like a sleeping giant in the calm depths of a higher nature. This nature is a large word. It will cover the excesses of the savage. It will apply also to the self-mastery and aspirations of the saint."<sup>110</sup> At their most benign, the series criticize the lack of social graces of young men, and instructs the reader on the appearance of purity. Generally this involves a demonstration of "reverence [for] their mother's womanhood."<sup>111</sup>

The various leaflet series were not equally popular. Minute books of local unions document the regular purchase of the National and Y.W.C.T.U. Leaflet series, while neither the Loyal nor White Cross Series received much mention. One explanation for the apparent lack of acceptance of the youth pamphlets may lie in the turgid writing style used in the British leaflets, particularly in comparison to the breezy approach of the American-produced materials. For example, the following paragraph appears in Rev. Horsley's leaflet for boys entitled "Bloodguiltiness": "I would say that at the sight or knowledge of the girl that most willfully and inexcusably embraces a life of sin, of the foulest in language or habit, even of the procuress, or the vendors of obscene literature or art, our first thought should it be, Thou art my sister! and the second, Am I free from thy blood?" Compare this tortured statement with the opening lines of a sample Y.W.C.T.U. leaflet, "Is a Y.W.C.T.U. A Necessity?": "There is no time in the home life

when a girl receives so much thought and care, when a mother's love and a father's arm are so ready to shield and protect, as when she enters the portals of young womanhood, and stands with all life centred in the happy present and the ever-changing future."

The five leaflet series sponsored or adopted by the W.C.T.U. appealed to specific interest groups within the organization. But the most effective educational channel for the women and youth groups was The Woman's Journal, later to be called The White Ribbon Tidings. Begun in 1885 in Ottawa, this regular publication disseminated news from the World, American National, Dominion and Provincial Unions, as well as local unions when they could be convinced to submit reports. It printed fiction and advice columns, some produced by its own members, to confront problems and suggest appropriate responses befitting women of this organization.

Finally, it helped to shape programming and suggested boundaries for new youth groups so that duplication and conflict would be kept to the minimum.

It has been suggested that much of the effective change initiated by the W.C.T.U. was accomplished at the local level, where women could exercise both formal and informal political lobbying. The impetus to identify problems in the community came from meetings at the various levels of the organization, and a communication of the ideas generated in those forums through the journal. New approaches to deal with urban problems were also reported. In February 1886 the Ottawa W.C.T.U. reported the visit of a David Tatum, a Quaker preacher, who, with his wife, had set

up a "Home for the Friendless" in Cleveland, Ohio, in 1872 in order to break the impact of drink on the working-class community. This may well have been one of the inspirations for the very successful Home for Friendless Women later established in Ottawa by the Y.W.C.T.U. In the first issue, another problem of ill-prepared working-class girls was addressed, when the Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U. provided an extensive report on their Kitchen Garden program, which was subsequently adopted by the Toronto Y.W.C.T.U. and other groups.<sup>112</sup>

As new issues became popular, for example, social purity, local unions reported in the magazine new ways of educating the membership and population. In 1900 the Toronto Union announced that it had assembled a Purity Library containing eighteen numbers of the New Crusade and ninety-seven books, all by Dr. Wood-Allen.<sup>113</sup>

The Brockville Y.W.C.T.U. reported that it had gathered eighty-five interested observers for a "progressive debate" when eight topics, including "Ought the Liquor Traffic be prohibited?," were discussed by eight experts, each seated at a table ready to outline the issues to the next group. At the end, leaders summed up the points they had gathered from the presentation and discussion, and presented them to the audience. In 1900, this is called a "modified Jigsaw" technique for classrooms, considered to be a new methodology for effective group work!<sup>114</sup> P r o v i n c i a l superintendents regularly reported to the membership through The Journal and, for example, in 1892 urged women to run as public school trustees in order to more easily place temperance literature

in the schools.<sup>115</sup> In fact, as the journal aged, it printed less local material and more from the Dominion, National and World organizations, often pointing out where the Canadian or Ontario policy differed from the international, as in the case of women's suffrage. The magazine's comment on the violent strategies used by the British Suffragists was that, "the W.C.T.U. has never resorted to force, but has always advocated a liberal educational campaign and then looked confidently to the Captain of our salvation to bring the desired issue to pass."<sup>116</sup>

Almost from the beginning, The Woman's Journal ran fiction pieces that served to define behaviour and deal with problematic issues. In January 1886, a heavily melodramatic piece was run describing how a home almost destroyed through liquor was on the way to recovery through the ministrations of a determined and pure Band of Hope girl. Later that same year, a story appeared with dire warnings that women who strove to keep too tidy and clean a home will drive their sons and husbands from their door.<sup>117</sup> In fact, The Journal bombarded women with the many mistakes they were prone to make, with the evil effects vividly portrayed.

A favourite theme during the early 1890's was the danger in accepting liquor to fortify women after childbirth, or as a general tonic. Pretty Mrs. Carr, for example, was prescribed "plenty of wine and porter" by her doctor to build her strength, but after her third child, she is deep in the "doze of beer." The children are neglected, she cannot keep servants, has head-aches and a bad temper. Her poor husband learns the dreadful truth when he invites

guests to dinner and discovers that no dinner is ready! Matters further deteriorate with the increasingly haggard Mrs. Carr pawning her jewels to procure strong drink and then indulging "till she was delirious." To drown his sorrow, her husband also overindulges. They decline together, and as wrecked Mrs. Carr lies on her deathbed, she extracts a promise from Mr. Carr that he turn to temperance. "Alas!" ends the story, "how many blighted homes there are through the doctor's orders."<sup>118</sup>

In 1891, The Journal began a Household Page which included recipes ("Dainty Dishes for Invalids"), Advice to Mothers, and Comportment, including diagrams of how to sit, stand and walk.<sup>119</sup> By 1907, The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings' eclectic offerings included a Family Page, a Quiet Hour column, a Children's Corner, Household Hints, a Current Events column, Mother's Corner, and didactic prose and poetry sprinkled liberally throughout.<sup>120</sup> The organization's interests had moved far beyond temperance as a single issue.

In 1910, the magazine was reorganized again, this time with the following sections: a lead article, which in January 1910, was from the Dominion Alliance, the President's Message, the W.C.T.U. Missionary's Message, an Editorial Page, and columns on "How To Make A Good Local President," "Our Workers and Their Work," "Notices, Notes and Personals," "Evangelistic Work," "The Home Circle," "Daddy's Column" and "Household Hints," as well as sundry recipes, poetry and fiction. The educational function was never lost, although the significant groups identified in this process

changed over time.

The emergence of the new Loyal Temperance Legions created a need for more youth programs. This was filled periodically by helpful suggestions in the magazine, including a lesson plan which suggested that leaders compare the healthy human body to a house, showing the required foods and the destruction wracked by alcohol.<sup>121</sup>

In the broadest sense, The Journal shaped the W.C.T.U.'s activities and programs by maintaining a consistent evangelical message. The columns of The Woman's Journal and The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings demonstrate an on-going acceptance and proselytizing of the evangelical creed.<sup>122</sup> More specifically, the appropriate role for such groups as the Y.W.C.T.U. and the Loyal Temperance Leagues was discussed freely in The Journal's columns, often with frank admissions of the fears expressed by W.C.T.U. members.<sup>123</sup>

Special ceremonies were itemized for the local unions, such as that for the "Red Letter Day, February 17th, Frances Willard's Heavenly Birthday!" For the special Memorial Day Program, unions were suggested to include the following eleven items:

1. Madam Willard's favourite hymn, "Lead Kindly Light"
2. Repetition of Lord's Prayer
3. Crusade Hymn, "Give to the Winds Our Fears"
4. Psalm 146, Crusade Psalm read responsively
5. Prayer
6. Hymn, "How Firm a Foundation"
7. Roll Call

8. Name of promoted leaders. Two minute tribute to memory of each (previously arranged)

9. President - explain that this is the anniversary of the glorification of Frances Willard

10. Five minute sketch of her life

11. Quotations from her pen.

The W.C.T.U. sought to bring about change through a wide variety of educational strategies including the formal educational system, children's groups, leaflets and its periodical. The result was a program which was regularly put to the membership and actively debated, from the international to the local levels. Combined with its political strategies, the educational program effectively reached most sympathetic observers of the W.C.T.U. and sought to enlist their active support. The remaining two strategies, that of Social and Philanthropic work, and the Religious efforts, enlisted fewer members in the larger urban unions. Both, however, attested to the organization's grounding in the evangelical ethos.

The W.C.T.U. from its founding had supported an active program of philanthropic work, which has been described in detail in Chapter Three. It included the provision of warm clothing, bedding and food to families, and particularly mothers and children in distress; visitations and presents to institutions for the aged,

especially aged women; the sponsoring of missionaries working with Native Peoples;, the making of "Comfort Bags" for men separated from their families, such as lumbermen, miners and soldiers; and the care and attempted reformation of abandoned and fallen women. In all of these cases, relatively small groups of people were helped, but the nature of the work was intensive and demanding, both financially and emotionally. These projects often formed the weekly work of women in the local unions. For example, the Picnic Grove W.C.T.U. from Lancaster operated for some years with between eight and ten members. From 1902 to 1908 the union devoted itself to making curtains and paying to have the organ repaired for the public school, providing china cups, saucers, plates and financial aid to the Cornwall General Hospital, fuel for poor families, boxes of literature for sailors and lumbermen, eight "comfort bags" including bandages, bottles of vaseline, adhesive plasters, two cakes of soap, three spools of thread, needles, buttons, salvecorn, plaster needles, pins, thread of yarn, three marked testaments, a Bible, hymn books, and printed letters! Incredibly, the women also produced fourteen "Temperance" quilts, some of which were sold and the money donated to worthy causes. The quilting became a mainstay of the womens' social interaction, which kept the group convivial and united. The group contained several sisters or sisters-in-law, and the executive occupied the same positions year after year. Clearly, this was a group which knew each other well, enjoying their companionship. "Mrs. John A. McLennan brought a quilt ready to quilt[sic] she furnished all the material. As it



took all the time we did not have a lesson but Ethel and Mabel McIntosh read one of the prepared drills while the members quilted. It was interesting and instructive ... tea served after meeting."<sup>124</sup>

The Lancaster W.C.T.U. was not unusual: local unions sustained their membership and commitment to change society by nurturing their personal friendships. Illness was recognized with notes of encouragement and communal prayer; death of a loved one brought effusive statements of support and sympathetic grief; personal achievements and acts of kindness were noted carefully and reciprocated. The local sisterhood was nurtured through countless teas, bazaars, garden parties (including something called a "Shredded Wheat Social!"<sup>125</sup>), excursions, and, of course, projects. The local union minute books provide a strong sense of women, well-known to one another, who were comfortable and generous in their individual triumphs and trials. The Lancaster W.C.T.U., and many others across the province, have left a legacy of a flourishing women's culture, similar to what Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Nancy Cott suggest existed at the time in the United States. The women's culture of the Ontario local W.C.T.U. was evangelical in focus and form. Endorsement by the women's community of the evangelical ethos helps to explain the longevity of traditional evangelicalism in rural and small town unions, as against the eroding evangelicalism of urban unions.

The W.C.T.U. worked through religious channels to achieve change in several ways. At the county or local community level, the women frequently helped organize temperance revivals and regional meetings.<sup>126</sup> These often featured a rousing speaker, or a series of testimonials, musical selections, recitations, readings and prayers. The hope was that individuals attending the entertainment would pledge abstinence and remain active in the temperance forces. The Newmarket Union carried out an elaborate advertising campaign for one of their temperance meetings. They printed three hundred invitation cards "to be given or sent to any whom we think we can reach in that way, may every card be well laden with Prayers as it goes on its faithful mission."<sup>127</sup> The same women commented that "the Gospel Temperance Meetings held in the Temperance Hall are usually well attended, never less than 40 present. Although we do not get many to sign the Pledge it is educating the young along that line of work in which good results must follow in due time for we rely not on the strength of men but God whose promises are sure."<sup>128</sup>

An alliance was struck in most communities between the W.C.T.U. and local clergy, with clerical wives often occupying executive positions in the union.<sup>129</sup> This close association benefitted the W.C.T.U. in a number of ways. Church buildings were placed at their disposal for meetings. Specific church groups, such as the Women's Missionary Associations<sup>130</sup> and Young Peoples' Societies<sup>131</sup> were made available to sponsor events or to more effectively reach particular groups, such as the Sunday School children<sup>132</sup>. Ministers

lent their considerable public authority in support of the temperance cause by preaching temperance sermons and visiting the unions to participate in prayer days<sup>133</sup> or to hold devotional services. For instance, the Spencerville Union called a meeting in 1897 "of the ministers and influential men of each congregation to organise an educational campaign that shall prepare the way for the Plebiscite."<sup>134</sup> In return, supportive clerics and their congregations often had their philanthropic and educational duties lightened because of the W.C.T.U.'s work. Thus the relationship was often one of productive symbiosis, with religious principles working hand-in-glove with temperance.

Local unions did not become strong units just because of their social interaction; the fact that each union followed a devotional program strengthened their communal resolve to carry on a campaign which the W.C.T.U. women believed was unpopular. The devotions may have been simple as with the Dunnville Union where the women opened their meetings with Bible readings and prayer, carried out their business, and then studied temperance papers and held discussions, and closed with the Doxology.<sup>135</sup> Rather more time was spent by the Meaford Union where a typical meeting opened with a hymn, followed by some inspirational poetry, readings from different portions of Scripture, and then prayer by three different members.<sup>136</sup> But while the degree and extent might vary, all the unions carried on such religious observances at every meeting. It is safe to assume that this participatory religion gave the women a clear purpose and rationale for the work they carried out so faithfully. It also

testified to the evangelical character of their work, faith, and vision. Historians rather too anxious to trace the secular origins of mid-twentieth century life tend to overlook such deep and fundamental religiosity. They concentrate instead on the concrete social policies and social reforms. In doing so, they miss the essential character of evangelical social reform as practised by the women of this study.

The Ontario W.C.T.U. was a distinct organization which differed from its American model. The Ontario organization's principal interests were based on evangelicalism. It used different tactics to achieve its objectives. It had greater strength and longevity in rural areas and small towns than in the cities. Finally, its leadership under Letitia Youmans was markedly different from that provided by Frances Willard. All of these factors mark the Ontario W.C.T.U. as a separate, Ontario-generated phenomenon.

The Ontario organization supported Willard's "Do Everything Policy" by branching out early in its existence from narrow temperance concerns. However, because of the smaller size of the Ontario organization and its firm evangelical foundation, the range of activities in which it engaged was necessarily more limited than its American counterpart's. At the same time such causes as the Bands of Hope, Gospel Prayer and Temperance Meetings and the limiting and monitoring of licences for everything from pool rooms

to taverns were pursued more vigorously than in the United States, attesting to the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s surviving evangelicalism.

The Ontario W.C.T.U. also avoided some issues prized by the National W.C.T.U.. The Ontario organization offered to throw its weight behind whatever political party would support prohibition,<sup>137</sup> but it never formally allied with any party, nor did it attempt to form its own party. Also unlike the American National W.C.T.U., the Ontario association avoided close identification with labour groups and leaders, and indeed, exhibited a less than coherent position with regard to various labouring groups. For example, while the London W.C.T.U. firmly supported the petition of the city's milkmen that the sale of milk be prohibited on the Sabbath<sup>138</sup>, the same union found itself almost continually at war with the working classes over the closing time of bars and the number of liquor licences to be granted.<sup>139</sup> Similarly, at the Provincial and Dominion levels, there was no consistent policy on political or labour union affiliation.

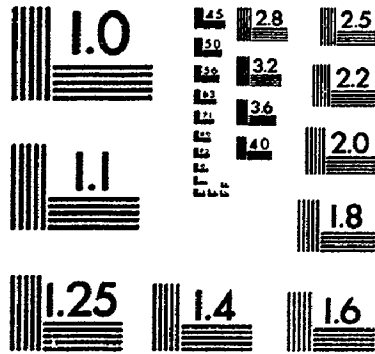
It is apparent that the Ontario W.C.T.U. was less inclined to engage in direct political action than was its American cousin. Hence, its operating tactics also differed. Although direct political measures such as the petition were used in Ontario, most of the changes achieved by the Ontario group were through indirect pressure. A multitude of examples appear in the local minute books and in the provincial reports of modifications to public policy being achieved through a quiet word with an official or offending citizen, a show of strength at a meeting or a rallying to the cause

at a temperance entertainment. These indirect measures were especially effective in the towns and villages of Ontario, suggesting another apparent difference with the American organization.

Barbara Epstein has argued that the American W.C.T.U. had its greatest strength in the cities, rather than the small town or rural district of America. Where the nineteenth-century rural woman continued to gain status through her economic role in society, she argues, the middle-class urban women was robbed of this primary identity through urban capitalism and the resulting separation of spheres. Ultimately, however, "the confinement of women to a distinct sphere of activities provided a basis for a distinct set of values; their heightened dependence on men brought a greater subordination to them. In a milieu in which independence was highly valued, resentment often lay close to the surface."<sup>140</sup> The Ontario records indicate, however, that the W.C.T.U. in Ontario was far more than an urban phenomenon. Acting as the unofficial moral arbiters of small communities, members of the W.C.T.U. across the province used mainly informal strategies to eliminate liquor, tobacco, gambling and other activities which they considered to be immoral or illegal. Direct political strategies were used at the Provincial and Dominion levels, but never to the same degree as in the United States.

How could the demography of the Canadian and American movements differ so radically? One factor which may cause the two organizations to appear more different than they actually were

# 4



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS  
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a  
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

results from the choice of records consulted. Until very recently those favoured were the annual reports and minutes of the National and Dominion Conventions.<sup>141</sup> The local records of the Ontario organization show that, obviously, while the stated membership was smaller in towns and villages than in the cities, the accomplishments were often as impressive as those in the larger centres, and sometimes more so. In Western Canada, Nancy Sheehan finds that the W.C.T.U. was strongest in the small towns.<sup>142</sup> One might also draw the conclusion that the W.C.T.U. could not be considered to have prospered in the small town if the standard of success used was the number of members or the extent of legislation passed rather than the quieter, informal accomplishments. There is the additional issue that formal tactics and large-scale urban movements are easier to track than non-legislative strategies in a small town.

But the greatest single difference between the two organizations resulted from leadership. It has been noted that evangelicalism lent itself to becoming dominated by charismatic leaders who could command intense devotion and loyalty. Operating from an almost unassailable position of power, evangelical leaders are peculiarly free to establish an empire in which the leader's goals become those of the followers. Frances Willard, seriously called "Saint Frances" and the "Queen of Temperance"<sup>143</sup> had a very different counterpart in Ontario. Letitia Youmans was a former farm daughter, teacher at the Burlington Ladies' Academy and the Picton Ladies' Seminary, devoted wife and mother of eight, Revivalist,



Sunday School teacher and temperance child-worker.<sup>144</sup> Youmans was as conservatively evangelical as Willard was a "strong, independent, sharp-witted rebel."<sup>145</sup> Instead of a "superb showwoman,"<sup>146</sup> Youmans' skills were more apparent in creating a solid, decentralized organizational structure with a clear-eyed sense of evangelical purpose, and a collegial working climate that encouraged independent action by local unions within the provincial framework.

Youmans was a very capable woman who worked especially hard at forging the links between the W.C.T.U. and other temperance groups in the province. She was in demand as a public speaker across Canada and in the United States where she campaigned in Michigan, Maine, Kansas, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York, as well as having addressed the Maryland Senate.<sup>147</sup> One of her daughters, Dr. Amelia Youmans, carried on the tradition of public speaking and writing.

The introduction to Mrs. Youmans' autobiography was written by Willard in which she addressed Mrs. Youmans as a woman "altogether remarkable."<sup>148</sup> Throughout her career, Mrs. Youmans received a great many tributes and expressions of gratitude, but she was never the object of the intense loyalty showered on Willard. Perhaps Youmans' invalidism for the last ten years of her life (forcing her into a state of near penury), coupled with her intense evangelicalism, and heavier family responsibilities, created a looser hold on, and a different vision for the Ontario W.C.T.U.

The members of the Ontario W.C.T.U. carved out a distinct organization with different causes, roots of power, tactics and

leadership from its American mentor. It sought to achieve its varied reform objectives through the political process, formal and especially informal, education of the membership and clients, philanthropy and social interactions, and an ever-present evangelical religious underpinning and practice.

## ENDNOTES

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2. S.G.E. McKee, Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, 1877 - 1927 (Whitby, 1927), p. 50.
3. Conventions of the Dominion W.C.T.U., 1909 and 1913.
4. Ibid., 1899.
5. Ibid., 1891.
6. Ibid., 1899.
7. Ibid., 1913.
8. Malcolm Graeme Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario: 1894 - 1916" (Ph.D. Thesis, Queen's University, 1972) p. 108.
9. McKee, Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, p. 49.
10. MU 8425, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., October 19, 1881.
11. Ruth Bordin, Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900 (Philadelphia, 1981), p. 135.
12. Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., October 19, 1881.
13. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p. 136.
14. Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., November 4, 1882.
15. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p. 136.
16. Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario," p. 49.
17. MU 8406, Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1887.

18. MU 8405, W.C.T.U. Collection, Provincial W.C.T.U. Executive Meeting, Toronto, March, 1896.
19. Ibid., 1897.
20. MU 8422, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., June 13, 1893.
21. See Nancy Sheehan, "The W.C.T.U. on the Prairies, 1886 - 1930; An Alberta-Saskatchewan Comparison" Prairie Forum, 6 (Spring, 1981).
22. Bordin, Women and Temperance, pp. 136-138.
23. McKee, Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, p. 51.
24. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p.137.
25. Ibid., p. 54.
26. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1901.
27. MU 8425, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of Ontario and Durham Counties, 1904.
28. MU 8456, W.C.T.U. Collection, The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, December, 1910.
29. McKee, Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, p. 51.
30. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p. 138.
31. See UWORC, MN 1129, London District W.C.T.U. Records, Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., February 14, 1893 and Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U. January 27, 1891.
32. MU 8428, Treasurer's Book for the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., June 10, 1885. See also Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., November 30, 1886.
33. Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., April 3 and 17, 1882.
34. Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., December 5, 1893.
35. Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., December 26, 1893.
36. By 1885 in Ontario, unmarried, wage-earning women had won the municipal vote, but not the provincial. While such women had the right to elect school trustees, it was 1892 before women stood

for election as trustees, winning in Toronto. Alison Prentice et. al., Canadian Women: A History (Toronto, 1988) pp. 178-79.

37. MU 8426, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., November 30, 1906, September, 1911, March 1, 1912 and December, 1912.

38. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., November 14, 1893.

39. Ibid., December 26, 1893.

40. Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., January 2, 1885.

41. Treasurer's Book of the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., February 14, 1895.

42. Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., February 5, 1895 and May 1, 1906.

43. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., February 28, 1893.

44. Treasurer's Book of the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., March 6, 1899.

45. Ibid., May 14, 1884 and Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., September 6, 1886.

46. Ibid., August 21, 1894.

47. Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., December 6, 1901.

48. Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., April 20, 1885.

49. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., January 23, 1894.

50. Ibid., November 5, 1907 and Treasurer's Book of the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., December 8, 1885.

51. Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., April 3, 1900.

52. Ibid., October 3, 1905.

53. MU 8415, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., October 19, 1905.

54. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., October 11, 1893 and December 12, 1893.

55. MU 8439, Minute Book of the Woodstock W.C.T.U., June 24, 1915 and MU 8284, Minute Book of the Peterborough W.C.T.U., October 29, 1915.

56. Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., January 16, 1901. and this note from July 23, 1903: "A letter read by Secy from the License Inspector in ans to the one sent him last month in which he states he is in communication with the Government in regard to the License Law enforcement and one fine of \$50. has been imposed for selling illegally since and we intend more shall follow. From his letter we find that there is a Bye Law of the town that it is an offence for a man to be seen on the streets any day under the influence of liquor and it was suggested that we call the notice of the officers to the fact."
57. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., April 11, 1893.
58. Treasurer's Book of the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., January 31, 1895.
59. Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., May 1, 1903.
60. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., October 9, 1900.
61. Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., June 3, 1899.
62. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., April 11, 1893.
63. Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., May 6, 1906.
64. Treasurer's Book of the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., April 21, 1898.
65. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., June 27, 1893 and September 26, 1899.
66. Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., April 24, 1894.
67. Ibid., June 5, 1894.
68. Ibid., November 7, 1900.
69. Ibid., May 8, 1901.
70. Ibid., October 2 and November 6, 1906. See also Minute Book of the Peterborough W.C.T.U., April 19, 1917.
71. Minute Book of the Woodstock W.C.T.U., June 26, 1913.
72. Ibid., February 5, 1907.
73. Ibid., April 4, 1911.
74. Minute Book of the Peterborough W.C.T.U., March 15, 1917.
75. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p.138.

76. MU 8450, W.C.T.U. Collection, untitled leaflet on the medal contests.
77. Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., December 1, 1899 and January 3, 1900.
78. Ibid., February 6, 1903.
79. Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., May 24, 1894.
80. Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., May 4, 1885.
81. Ibid., October 18, 1885.
82. MU 8431, W.C.T.U. Collection, Directory and Summary of Work of the Toronto W.C.T.U., 1888.
83. Untitled pamphlet on the Medal Contests, p. 10.
84. Treasurer's Book of the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U., August 8, 1895.
85. MU 8438, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Windsor W.C.T.U., April 25, 1913.
86. Untitled pamphlet on the Medal Contests, p. 11.
87. Frances J. Barnes, "Our Social World," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 110, pp. 9-10.
88. V.A. Lewis, "Where?" Signal Lights No. 5.
89. W. Jennings Demorest, "Our National Dilemma," Signal Lights No. 6.
90. Mrs. Augusta C. Bristol, "Words For Wage-Workers," Signal Lights No. 8.
91. Frances E. Willard, "Temperance and the Labor Question," Signal Lights No. 18.
92. Frances E. Willard, "The Shoemaker and Little White Shoes," Signal Lights No. 9.
93. H.H. Seerley, "The Tobacco Habit and Its Effects Upon School Work," Signal Lights, no number.
94. "Smoking," Signal Lights No. 7.
95. Frances E. Willard, "Scientific Temperance Instruction in Public Schcols," National Leaflets No. 9.

96. Alice M. Guernsey, "The Teacher Questioned," National Leaflet No. 37. See also Guernsey, "The Teacher Helped."
97. A Syposium of Eminent Physicians, "Is Alcohol a Stimulant?" National Leaflet No. 23.
98. Mrs. Helen I. Bullock, "The Tobacco Toboggan," National Leaflet No. 32. See also Dr. James R. Nichols, "Spirituous Liquors Not Needed in Medicine or the Arts," National Leaflet No. 40.
99. Frances E. Willard, "Society and Society Women," National Leaflet No. 27. See also Maud Rittenhouse, "A New Regime," National Leaflet No. 104.
100. Margaret B. Platt, "The Hour and Its Needs," National Leaflet No. 45.
101. Mrs. Lucy A. Scott, "Busy Women and the W.C.T.U.," National Leaflet No. 41. See Also, Mrs. E.C. Read, "Why?" National Leaflet No. 46, Esther Pugh, "The Spirit of the Crusade," National Leaflet No. 64 and Alice M. Guernsey, "The Child of the Crusade," National Leaflet No. 66.
102. It is difficult to know if the collection of pamphlets deposited in the Ontario Archives is a representative sample. The earliest sample is Y.W.C.T.U. Departmental Leaflet No. 52, and its strong evangelical tone and issues raised suggests that it was produced in about the middle of the last decade of the nineteenth century. Nevertheless, the collection available is sizable, running to number 115.
103. Anna Pearl McVay, "Wherefore a 'Y'?" Y.W.C.T.U. Departmental Leaflet No. 52 and Ida C. Clothier, "Is a Y.W.C.T.U. a Necessity?" Y.W.C.T.U. Department Leaflet No. 58.
104. See the following titles in MU 8449, W.C.T.U. Collection, none with authors: "Why and How", "To Hold and to Gain", "Hints and Helps", "What a Superintendent Should Know" and "A Problem Solved: How to Maintain Interest in Our Meetings", Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflets. See also Ida C. Clothier, "Inasmuch," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 112, Mary G. Fernald, "A Field of Practical Y. Work," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 113 and Mrs. Ella A Boole, "A 'Y' Catechism," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 115.
105. "Why Should a Christian Girl Sign the Total Abstinence Pledge?" Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 109, Mrs. Frances A. Barnes, "Our Social World," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 110, Anna M. Vail, "A Girl's Influence," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 102, and Mrs. L.A. Scott, "What Is Your Value?" Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 111. See also Margaret Wintringer, "One



Summer's Flower Mission Work," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 103, and Eva Kinney Griffith, "Counting One," Y.W.C.T.U. National Leaflet No. 105.

106. MU 8449, W.C.T.U. Collection, Loyal Leaflets Series.

107. MU 8449, W.C.T.U. Collection, Ellice Hopkins, "My Little Sister," The White Cross Series No. 1, Chicago, n.d.

108. Ibid.

109. Mrs. Lucy A. Scott, "Personal Purity," The White Cross Series No. 11.

110. Rev. A.B. Butler, "An Evil Tradition," The White Cross Series No. 6.

111. Ellice Hopkins, "What Can We Do?" The White Cross Series No. 7 and Mrs. Lucy A. Scott, "Real Chivalry," The White Cross Series No. 12.

112. MU 8455, W.C.T.U. Collection, The Woman's Journal, January, 1885 and periodically thereafter, for example, February 1, 1900.

113. The Woman's Journal, March 15, 1900.

114. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, December 1, 1905.

115. The Woman's Journal, April, 1891.

116. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, March, 1910.

117. The Woman's Journal, December, 1886.

118. Ibid., October, 1890.

119. Ibid., January, 1891.

120. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, June, 1907.

121. Ibid., October, 1911.

122. Many examples could be suggested to support this contention. One might consider a column from The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings: the annual Week of Prayer was announced for February, 1910 "in which all other work is laid aside and God is implored to overthrow the Liquor Traffic and kindred evils, upbuilding righteousness in the White Ribbon membership and for the salvation of souls" The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, January 1, 1910. Miss Mary Jameson counsels Y girls that "...knowing that truest joy comes by surrender, I urge you to 'surrender all' to His clear will."

November, 1910. In March of 1912, the journal printed its answer to "the Ideal Y", being "a consecrated girl who is not afraid under any circumstances to show she is endeavouring to follow the Master. She studies her Bible to know her Master's Will and uses the compass of prayer to guide and has great faith." The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings, March, 1912.

123. For example, see The Woman's Journal, June, 1890.
124. MU 8419, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Picnic Grove W.C.T.U., Lancaster, December 21, 1904 and March, 1906.
125. Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., June 7, 1912.
126. See MU 8430, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Spencerville W.C.T.U., November 14, 1894.
127. Minute Book of the Newmarket Union, March 5, 1895.
128. Ibid., September 1, 1896.
129. For example see Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., September 21, 1881.
130. See Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., February 3, 1905.
131. For example see Minute Book of the London W.C.T.U., January 24, 1893.
132. For example see Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., February 10, 1888 and Minute Book of the Woodstock W.C.T.U., September 21, 1916.
133. Minute Book of the Woodstock W.C.T.U., February 25, 1916.
134. Minute Book of the Spencerville W.C.T.U., February 1, 1897.
135. Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., February 5, 1889.
136. Minute Book of the Meaford W.C.T.U., June 2, 1902.
137. For instance, in 1904 the provincial convention passed this motion: "that we, the Ontario W.C.T.U., do hereby affirm that should either party declare, in clear and unmistakable terms, that they, if elected, will enact such prohibitive legislation as will reduce the liquor traffic to a minimum, it will be not only our duty, but our pleasure, to promote, by every means within our power, the election of such party." McKee, Jubilee History of the Ontario Woman's Christian Temperance Union, pp. 63-64.
138. London District W.C.T.U. Records, October 13, 1896.

139. Ibid., March 27, 1894 for example.
140. Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity, p. 2.
141. See Decarie, "The Prohibition Movement in Ontario," Barbara Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century America (Middletown, 1981), Wendy Mitchinson, "Aspects of Reform: Four Women's Organizations in Nineteenth-Century Canada," (Ph.D. Thesis, York University, 1977) and Veronica Strong-Boag, "The National Council of Women: The National Council of Women of Canada, 1893-1929," (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1975).
142. Nancy Sheehan, "The W.C.T.U. and Educational Strategies on the Canadian Prairie," History of Education Quarterly, 24 (1984) pp. 101-119.
143. Ruth Bordin, Frances Willard: A Biography, (Chapel Hill, 1986) p. 5.
144. Mrs. Letitia Youmans, Campaign Echoes (Toronto, 1893).
145. Bordin, Frances Willard, p. 38.
146. Ibid., p. 3.
147. Mitchinson, "Aspects of Reform," p.189.
148. Youmans, Campaign Echoes, p. vii.

## **CHAPTER SIX:**

### **THE YOUNG WOMAN'S CHRISTIAN TEMPERANCE UNION**

#### **"THE WORK OF WINNING SOULS"**

The W.C.T.U. became the first temperance organization in Canada to proselytize among children.<sup>1</sup> This was partly as a result of its long-standing commitment to children, and partly to secure a future generation of temperance workers. In addition to the Bands of Hope, which had been adopted from the British temperance movement, the W.C.T.U. organized several youth groups between 1874 and 1916, including the Little White Ribboners and the Loyal Temperance Legion. However, the Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union was on a much larger scale and had a rather indeterminant, yet definitely older

clientele. Originally intended for single young women of about fifteen to thirty, a number of older single women were also in its ranks from the early 1880's. Of all the youth groups created by the Ontario W.C.T.U., the Y.W.C.T.U. was, with the Bands of Hope, the most active. In fact, during the late 1880's, several urban Ontario unions were virtually taken over by the Y.W.C.T.U. (See Appendix III). This would never be true again, and seems not to have been a phenomenon duplicated in other provinces or at the Dominion level. (See Appendices I, II, IV and V). An examination of the Y.W.C.T.U.'s mandate, strategies and achievements enriches an understanding of the urban impact of the W.C.T.U. and the contribution made by single women in social reform, provides a working example of the power of evangelicalism in social reform, and illustrates the process of marginalization successfully imposed by a threatened mother organization on its own creation.

Ruth Bordin in her account of the American W.C.T.U. provides one of the few scholarly assessments of the impact of the Y.W.C.T.U.: "The exciting, innovative Union projects were not the work of the Y's but of older women...."<sup>2</sup> Similarly, Nancy Sheehan inaccurately identifies the Y.W.C.T.U. as one of the three "informal" youth departments, with the Y.W.C.T.U. trailing as "probably the least successful of the three."<sup>3</sup> The history of the Ontario Y.W.C.T.U. reveals that Bordin's conclusions do not hold for the Canadian case, and that

Sheehan's assessment is incorrect. This is largely because both are based on data postdating 1918.

Yet, it is preferable to be discounted by historians than ignored, which has been the fate of the Y.W.C.T.U. in the other relevant historiography. For example, Wendy Mitchinson does not mention the Y.W.C.T.U. In the organization's early years, the Y.W.C.T.U. was not an embarrassing failure or a group of smug young women which "concerned itself largely with busywork."<sup>4</sup> It was imbued with seemingly unflagging evangelical energy and carried out the most daunting of the W.C.T.U. social projects. In 1886, Mary Scott, Superintendent of Young Women's Work for the W.C.T.U., asked: "Do you ever think that if we were to stop the work of young women in the world, at the present day, what a blank there would be? Take away the bright, earnest, young teachers out of the Sunday Schools, the teachers from the Day Schools, stop the Mission Bands, Sewing Societies, Church socials, everything in fact in which young women are concerned and just think what the world would be like...."<sup>5</sup>

The W.C.T.U. and the Women's Crusade had drawn to their ranks single and married, young and middle-aged women who, in Frances Willard's words, learned the "power to transact business, to mould public opinion by public utterance, and opened the eyes of scores and hundreds to the need of the Republic for the suffrages of women, and made them willing to take up for their homes and country's sake the burdens of that

citizenship they would never have sought for their own."<sup>6</sup> Crusaders came from the towns' upper ranks. Charles Isletts estimated that Crusader families controlled two-thirds of one Crusade town's wealth,<sup>7</sup> with a correspondingly high educational standing. The American W.C.T.U. class position was even higher, with many of the early leaders having "considerable formal education. Those W.C.T.U. leaders who worked outside the home usually did so as lecturers, authors, editors, teachers, professors, or professional temperance workers."<sup>8</sup>

Single women who had been convinced to assume "the burdens of that citizenship they would never have sought for their own" during the Crusade found a home in the W.C.T.U. from the start. The organization's early offices in both countries and at all levels were held by single and married women. Thus, the important and equal role of the single woman within the W.C.T.U. was apparently widely accepted.

Sadly, such early equal status was not retained. By the late 1870's, the American W.C.T.U. began noting the importance of self-renewal through training young - and presumably single - women in separate unions. In 1878 a National Committee of Young Women's Work was established, and this group was organized into a Department of Work in 1880 under the Secretariat of Frances J. Barnes.<sup>9</sup> In 1890 Mrs. Barnes organized the World Y.W.C.T.U. In Canada, the first record at the Dominion level of a Y.W.C.T.U. appears in the minutes

of the second convention, held in 1889, while provincially a Department of Young Women's Work dates from at least 1885. It was headed by the remarkable Miss Scott who had helped to found the Y.W.C.T.U. in Ottawa, would serve for many years as the editor of The Woman's Journal, and in other Dominion Superintendencies.<sup>10</sup>

As a product of the W.C.T.U., the Y.W.C.T.U. shared many common ideas with the mother group. The sanctity of the home was unquestioned. In 1898, one Y.W.C.T.U. spokeswoman described the Y members as "home-loving women and no public work that will make the home of secondary importance should be favored at all by our bright, winsome Y's."<sup>11</sup> Where the Y's could not sustain a separate organization, as in several Toronto unions, the remaining members apparently merged with little difficulty with the mother union.<sup>12</sup>

Yet, any separate structure encourages separate ideas, and this too was true for the Y.W.C.T.U. The chief difference between the W.C.T.U. and its daughter organization was the more powerful evangelical motive in the single women's social reform endeavours, particularly during the 1880's and 1890's. Before the turn of the century, the Y's adopted a more pronounced militant evangelicalism as the foundation of their activities than can be ascertained in the W.C.T.U. Many examples of this potent evangelicalism can be found in the Y.W.C.T.U.'s efforts to explain its ideas and role differences, especially in contrast with the W.C.T.U. "Who but



women have the power" asked a speaker at the 1886 provincial convention,

the mighty power of sympathy which alone can roll away the stones of prejudice so that the Master's life-giving words may penetrate into dead hearts! Who but women can perform the individual or personal heart to heart work which is so essential to the success of our object. 'Go ye into all the world,' meant the shop as well as the church, the kitchen as well as the hospital. It is in these neglected parts of our Lord's vineyard that we desire to extend the influence of our Young Women's Christian Temperance Union.

The mission of acting as a witness to Christ's salvation has frequently been seen by evangelical groups as the particular purview of young people, and especially young women. This has been found to have been true in both the English and American evangelical revivals, as was discussed in chapter one.

A Y.W.C.T.U. woman considered the mission before her sisters and herself:

Thinking it was a self-devised scheme (as opposed to a God-inspired one), she hesitated, was about to abandon the idea, but first laid it before the Lord and awaited His answer. A message from His own word came about immediately. 'Arise, stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness....' This was our commission, here was our plan of work, the work of bringing souls out of darkness into light, from the power of Satan unto God, and all laid cut by an unerring hand.<sup>13</sup>

Young women, then, were particularly fitted to "roll away the stones of prejudice" by approaching sinners individually in the home and in the workplace to effect reform. They could proclaim,

in Christ's name, an "eloquent ministry of loving deeds."<sup>14</sup> Further, "women have the abandon of enthusiasm which shows an unselfish and lovelike spirit, they can give to a cause a love and loyalty and heart-force that is not found in man."<sup>15</sup> Young women had the time to devote to the mission, and the confidence arising from God's challenge. Further evidence of the evangelical ethic was the Y.W.C.T.U. proclivity to provide testimony of personal conversion long after the W.C.T.U. had ceased to entertain the practice.<sup>16</sup>

At the local level too, the evangelical ethic is striking. The Toronto Central Y Union explained their program to visit elderly women and invalids as springing from "love and for Christ's sake.... We have striven to 'do good as we had opportunity,' remembering 'that pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.'"<sup>17</sup> It seems, therefore, that while the Y.W.C.T.U. adopted the basic ideas of the mother organization, its members were more moved by evangelicalism as a primary motive force in their work during the late nineteenth century.

The period of greatest expansion and most significant work by the Y.W.C.T.U. in Ontario occurred during the 1880's and 1890's in several city unions. While various town or rural unions contemplated the possibility of establishing a Y.W.C.T.U. Department, there is no evidence that any did so for longer than a few months.<sup>18</sup> For instance, when it was suggested that the

Dunnville W.C.T.U. organize a Y.W.C.T.U., the idea was rejected on the basis that they had "no room for more young peoples' organizations at present, owing to those of the different churches."<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, the few rural examples devoted themselves to helping the married women rather than taking on special projects, as occurred in the urban unions. To explore the nature and scope of young women's work in the Ontario W.C.T.U., the urban Y's of Ottawa and Toronto, established in the late 1880's, will be contrasted with the Y's work in 1910 and in 1931.

The date of the Y's establishment in Ottawa is unclear, but by 1886, the local Y.W.C.T.U. had 119 members on the rolls<sup>20</sup> and Vice-Presidents representing the Episcopalian, Reformed Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational and Baptist Churches.<sup>21</sup> There were, however, far fewer active members. By 1888, only eighteen young women's names appear repeatedly in the minute book. This small group, all single women, ran entirely by themselves the W.C.T.U.'s Evangelical Department.

Some of the Y's works were of an educational nature. Between 1888 and 1890, it managed to offer a night school for working girls to improve literacy, which served about ten students each time. A second motive for the night school was to gain converts to evangelicalism: "Lessons were simple, emotional and emphasized the need to have a religious experience by giving oneself up to Christ,"<sup>22</sup> reports the school superintendent. Sewing schools were maintained in both Upper and Lower Town where between sixty and eighty girls learned to make quilts and pinafores. A well-

subscribed Kitchen Garden Program was undertaken where "exercises were well performed" and prizes, a tea and oranges given to the girls at the end of the season when "an exhibition of sweeping lesson in St. George's Church" was staged.<sup>23</sup> The program was so popular that the Evangelical Superintendent, Bertha Wright, regularly bemoaned the lack of enough teachers to satisfy the demand. Calisthetics classes were also taught.

Temperance education was provided through two Bands of Hope, one in Ottawa and the other in Hintonburg, which children attended on Saturday afternoons. Curiously, the Y's appear to have been in competition with youth temperance instruction offered by the local temperance lodges. A note in the minute book of April 1888 complains that many of the children had been "taken away" by the lodge.

But the area where the Y's made their greatest efforts was in evangelical proselytizing. A Flower Mission provided flowers and fruit weekly to the Protestant Hospital. The hope was that after recovery, the recipient of such gifts would remember the kindness, and seek out the generous benefactors for religious advice. A Bible Study class met regularly and formed itself into a choir that went weekly to the women's corridor of the county jail, on Sundays to the Protestant Hospital, and to the elderly women's Refuge Branch at the Orphans' Home. It seems that their enthusiasm outstripped their talent, since reports exist that some of the patients covered their heads with blankets to avoid the inspired young women!<sup>24</sup> A "training class" was held weekly, presumably to

learn to distribute tracts effectively, 724 of which were delivered during the single month of April, 1888. In November of the same year, 109 "friendly letters" were penned by the young women and dispatched to the infirm and depressed, with the same hoped-for result as with the Flower Mission.

The young women in the Y persisted with their door-to-door visitations, and became so keenly evangelical that a series of Gospel Meetings were run in Anglesia Square, near to the Fish Market. A report of the work at the Anglesia Square Mission was submitted to the Ontario Convention in 1889. The Y.W.C.T.U., in concert with the W.C.T.U.'s Bible Reader, started the mission,

with a view of reaching fallen men and women, many of whom we had met in the jail, and in house to house visitation. The meetings, which have been well attended, consist of a short open air song service, which generally attracts quite a number, who are afterwards invited to attend the meeting. In this way we have reached a large number of men and women under the influence of liquor, who have staggered out of the bar-rooms and other dens of iniquity to hear the singing. Several women have been brought from this meeting in an intoxicated state to the Home.<sup>25</sup>

Even though the W.C.T.U. women did not participate in these evangelical Gospel Meetings, the Y's came to feel so proprietary about them that they moved at their March 1889 meeting that the project "be under the auspices of the Y.W.C.T.U."<sup>26</sup> The Gospel Meetings were not always without incident. Years later, a newspaper article told the story of one held in Hull turning violent: "Standing upon the bank of a river, Bible in hand, seeking

only to interpret the Gospel to the masses, an angry mob assaulting and dangerously wounding two officers who sought to protect her, and a Canadian regiment of infantry on the opposite side immovable under the orders of one Christian woman. Such was an incident in the life of Miss Bertha Wright...."<sup>27</sup> Coloured though the account undoubtedly was, it speaks eloquently to the conviction and energy of these women. By late 1889, the Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U. was attempting to reach "students, society girls, young women in the Civil Service, girls in business and working girls." They reported proudly that the union supported eleven branches of preventive and only four of rescue work.<sup>28</sup> Here, then, is demonstration of the changing evangelical ethic: social activism was not discovered by evangelicals in the late nineteenth century, but redefined.

As in the case of the Y.W.C.A. a few years later<sup>29</sup>, individual rescue work amongst confirmed sinners was seen to have a more limited return than preventative social measures to avoid further sinful behaviour. The most ambitious project undertaken by the Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U. clearly demonstrates this gradual change in focus by placing effort in effecting lifestyle changes in a group through evangelical principles rather than seeking to make this change in individuals through moral rescue work. The Home for Friendless Women was a "mission to the masses," but with a difference; this time the object was the "fallen woman." The idea for the Home seems to have come from Mayor Howland of Toronto who addressed the Ottawa W.C.T.U. in 1885 on the "advisability of having a home or refuge for female prisoners coming out of Jail. Also having a

weekly Evangelistic Meeting so that that class and others addicted to drink might be drawn in."<sup>30</sup> In the final plan, the two ideas seem to have been combined. Two months later the question of "providing a Temporary Home for female prisoners having then been discussed it was decided by a vote of 8 to 3 that the Union should take up work on behalf of discharged female prisoners."<sup>31</sup> It was not the W.C.T.U. which took on the project in the end, however, but the Y.W.C.T.U.

The Home was founded and managed for eight years by one of the Ottawa Y's most capable and evangelical members, Bertha Wright, a descendent of Hull's founder, Philemon Wright. Explaining her entry into the mission field, Wright, in her 1892 book, Lights and Shades of Mission Work, describes watching working-class women on the street with their "pale, careworn, unsatisfied faces" and her growing conviction that God was pointing out the mission that she must follow: "He had really chosen such an instrument to be used in the highest, the noblest, the grandest work in which mortal man can engage - the work of winning souls."<sup>32</sup> To this end, she had organized the Y's visits to female prisoners to offer a new life. The Y's limited successes here convinced her of the futility of such work, believing that such women were inexorably drawn back to the bar-room since they saw themselves as outcasts without the redeeming hope of salvation. She concluded that there was a need "where a helping hand and shelter could be offered to any sinful, friendless woman without regard to creed, nationality, age or condition, at any time, night or day, the only requisite being a

desire to lead a better life."<sup>33</sup> The Home for Friendless Women was to minister to the spiritual and physical needs of "unfortunates" who required pre- and post-natal care, and who agreed to stay in the home for a full year so that a new way of life could be forged. Child-care was to be regarded as essential to regeneration, following a recognition that sin had been committed. The Home's rules would end with the stern statement that "the board heartily disapproves of any arrangement or institution that provides for relieving the patients of the care of their offspring, thus rendering it easy for them to escape the full penalty of wrongdoing."<sup>34</sup>

The Y's work with friendless women was not undertaken without an expression of hostility from the community. It was argued that the Home would become a "hot bed of vice," housing "vicious creatures" who could not be managed by a troupe of delicate young women. The fever raging during the winter of 1887 was even used as a warning against the proposal.<sup>35</sup> In spite of Ottawa's anxiety about the Home, the Y.W.C.T.U. forged on, canvassing the community for private donations. Neither the Y.W.C.T.U. nor the W.C.T.U. seem to have made formal financial contributions to the Home; the Y contribution was in the form of labour.

In late December of 1887 the Y.W.C.T.U. Bible Class cleaned a rented house from top to bottom in readiness for the first "inmates." Furnishings were made from inverted flour barrels with white marble oil cloth, and draped with cretonne. They finally finished the work on Christmas Eve with a view to opening the



residence after the new year. Solemnly, they held a prayer service in the new dining room and departed for their homes. During the night a water pipe burst in the upper storey and water flowed throughout the house all night. When they returned the next day, they found six inches of cold water in the basement, whitewash coating everything, rugs soaked and icicles hanging from the stoves. "It seemed as though all the forces of evil combined had arrayed themselves against us in order to hinder the commencement of a work which had for its chief aim the glory of God in the salvation of the most degraded."<sup>36</sup> This statement demonstrates that the Y.W.C.T.U. saw its noble evangelical work pitted against the forces of evil in an almost physical contest.

Yet the Home survived this early trial and soon flourished. It supported itself by operating a laundry: "The Home is not a place for the maintenance of the idle."<sup>37</sup> In September of 1888 the following notice appeared in the Ottawa papers: "Washing and ironing done at the shortest possible notice at the Home for Friendless Women. Good satisfaction guaranteed. Terms cash on delivery."<sup>38</sup> The conditions in which the laundry work was accomplished are reminiscent of a Dickens' novel. The furnace and boiler were found in the basement through which the yard water ran so that the foundations of the engine were undermined. The ceiling was so low that a man or tall woman could not stand upright. A horizontal smoke pipe from the furnace ran so close to the beams that care needed constantly to be taken to see that they did not ignite. The washing room was so laden with moisture that one could

barely see the other figures in the room; the windows were so warped that none closed tightly; the floor was slippery and the machinery soon covered with rust from the condensation. All linen had to be carried from this basement room to the first floor where the wringer was kept and from there to the dry closet on the second floor. The ironing room was also the nursery. "From 15 to 20 babies are to be seen every day scattered on ironing tables, in clothes baskets, or creeping on the floor, while unceasing vigilance has to be exercised to keep them from the machinery."<sup>39</sup>

In 1890, the Home moved to larger quarters and a new steam laundry was installed. But even with the improved quarters, the evangelical creed that one must work hard, shun the world and adopt moral rigor was apparent. That the rehabilitation program was largely punitive was also clear. Judith Walkowitz has observed: "...through laundry work, women could do penance for their past sins and purge themselves of their moral contagion. Clear starching, it would seem, cleanses all sin, and an expert ironer can cheerfully put her record behind her."<sup>40</sup>

In addition to fallen women, the home accepted the children of mothers who, through love of hard drink or abandonment by their husbands, neglected them. A Mrs. Nelson was found recovering from intoxication in a jail cell:

She was in a sad plight, poor thing, having slept part of the night in a coal bin, and lost her shawl, hat and shoes, and was evidently much concerned about her children, whom she had left alone in a house on Albert Street. As she was sent down for a month, we

went in search of the neglected little ones, and found a beautiful curly haired boy of five, asleep on the broad windowsill, his pale, wan cheek resting against the pane, while his little sister had crept into a clothes basket on the floor which was half full of wet linen and she too, was fast asleep. They had evidently been waiting and watching for mother until at length they had cried themselves to sleep. We took them to the Home, which was only a short distance away and where they were kept until their unworthy mother's release.<sup>41</sup>

Finally, destitute old women who were not eligible for the Refuge Branch of the Orphans' Home were also accepted in the Home.

One cold January morning, an aged woman, clad in a thin calico dress, without a shawl, cloak or warm wrap of any kind, appeared at the gate. She was homeless and friendless, having been arrested the previous August for vagrancy, and so frail and feeble was she that it was with the greatest difficulty that she was led to the street cars, in which she was conveyed to the Home.<sup>42</sup>

The Home's Register of Inmates from 1888 to 1894 indicates the source of the women agreeing to stay in the Home for Friendless Women. From January 1888 until September 1889, the majority of inmates came from the women's corridor of the local jail, from the street and from the railway station, where "vulnerable" young women were directed to the Home. This is not surprising since the Home, like the Anglesia Square Mission, had originated in jail visits. The Home was regarded as an extension of work carried out by the Ottawa Superintendent of Prison and Public Works for a number of years.<sup>43</sup> A few others were referred by the police and by the local hospitals. The only period when women came in large numbers from the brothels was in late 1888 and 1889, although a few women

continued to arrive from this source until 1894. As the Home became more settled in its operating procedures, it accepted fewer cases from the jails with the argument that such women were particularly hardened to the rough circumstances of life on the street and were not immediately or even gradually amenable to rehabilitation. A fairly steady clientele continued to be routed, however, from the street, railway station and hospitals.<sup>44</sup>

The Register of Inmates also indicates the destination of women leaving the Home. In 1888 and 1889, most women were transferred to some other facility, whether this was the hospital, back to their families, or into service. From early 1889, however, increasing numbers of women fall into the "removed" and "left" categories, with fewer moving into other institutions or families. This appears to suggest a general recognition that some women were beyond help and might be considered part of the Victorian "social residuum."<sup>45</sup> The record shows also that the Home's numbers remained high throughout the period, indicating that there was a real need for the services provided. A rough classification for the inmates indicates that while a roughly equal number were "unfortunate," that is living by prostitution, and "abandoned," the largest group by far were "intemperates." Mysteriously, after the Home became independent from the Y.W.C.T.U. in 1891, the "intemperate" classification declined precipitously, perhaps because of a changed philosophy although it is not possible to document this. In terms of nationality, Irish women far outdistanced the other groups, including English, Scots, French,

American, German and Canadian. The Irish preponderance was likely due to the endemic poverty of that community in Ottawa, and to the dominant size of the Irish group in Ottawa at the time.

The Home for Friendless Women was a bold experiment by the Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U. and one which required courage and entrepreneurial skills. The Y.W.C.T.U. reported on-going "difficulties and discouragements," and concluded their report in 1890 by lamenting: "God only knows what it has cost us to rise above all these trying circumstances. He only has seen the tears and heard the cries of distress that have gone up as we have waited at his feet, sometimes for whole nights, pleading for funds, for souls, for success."<sup>46</sup>

The whole history of the Home is also consistent with the evangelical woman's refuge concept pioneered in the Eastern United States of the period:

Not only as shelters, but also as retaining centers for fallen women, the homes catered to uniquely feminine needs. Through evangelical religion, education, and discipline, the matrons and managers offered courses to restore the womanhood of residents, daily lessons in reading, writing, sewing and other feminine services, thus ensuring both domesticity and piety. Discipline included the banning of profanity, tobacco, alcohol, and coarse behaviour, plus a routine of early rising, regular work (sewing, laundry, cleaning) and habits of neatness and industry at all times.<sup>47</sup>

What is different from the American example was the failure to develop any apparent sense of "sisterhood" between care-worker and

inmate. One possible explanation for this relates to the change in administrative control. The Home for Friendless Women had had its start with a group of dynamic single young women. In 1891, although "all felt that the Home was doing a grand work... if it were for the advantage of the Home to be independent of our Union it was certainly wiser to relinquish all claims...."<sup>48</sup> Once it became incorporated and established as a charitable institution under the review of the Provincial Government, it lost most of its single women supporters other than Bertha Wright. The Board of Management came increasingly to reflect the middle-class married woman club member associated with not the Y.W.C.T.U., but the W.C.T.U. Of course, there is no guarantee that had the young single women maintained control of the Home for Friendless Women, a sisterhood concept would have arisen.

Regardless of the apparent lack of female solidarity between classes, the Y.W.C.T.U. in Ottawa accomplished a significant amount in a relatively short period of time. A group of about twenty young women taught, evangelized and attempted to reform a substantial group of troubled women in the Home for Friendless Women. During the same period, the Ottawa W.C.T.U. remained active with tract distribution at the railway and fire stations, by monitoring the Scientific Temperance course in the city's public schools and in establishing a Temperance Coffee House. But the Ottawa W.C.T.U. never displayed the verve and evangelical energy that was the norm for the Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U. during the same period. It took no hand in the energetic evangelism of gospel meetings or

female reform. Although the tracking of membership numbers is difficult, the Y.W.C.T.U. seems to have rivalled, and at times exceeded, the mother group in Ottawa as is demonstrated by Appendix III. In 1886 and 1894 the figures show that the Y.W.C.T.U. was considerably stronger than the W.C.T.U. in Ottawa. Without doubt, the results of the Y.W.C.T.U.'s efforts are far more impressive than those of the W.C.T.U. in that city during the same period.

The records for the Toronto Y.W.C.T.U. are not nearly as rich as those for Ottawa, but they do permit some insight to single women's work in the urban setting. In the Toronto area, the strongest Y.W.C.T.U. in the late 1880's and 1890's was the Central Y. In 1889-90, it had sixty-nine members, of which eight were married, and presumably younger women. Like the Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U., it took care to find representatives from the Presbyterian, Methodist, Church of England and Baptist churches. It had equipped itself with both a motto: "Be not weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not," and a poem:

It is not the deed that we do,  
 Though the deed be never so fair,  
 But the love the dear Lord looketh for  
 Hidden with holy care,  
 In the heart of the deed so fair.<sup>49</sup>

Both attest to the perceived difficulty of the task they had set for themselves, and the evangelical impulse behind those tasks. The deed was not important of itself, but the love impelling the deed was what the "dear Lord looketh for hidden with holy care...."

The Toronto Central Y was well established by 1889 when a "group of girls ... made their chief work the Kitchen Gardens, the

forerunner to Domestic Science classes. In classes the children of the poor were taught housewifely duties with toy furniture and utensils. These tasks were set to music and many a Toronto housewife secured a well trained maid from these classes, and many a home was made comfortable through the training of these children."<sup>50</sup> The middle-class imperative shines through this statement from a later period. Nevertheless, it may well have represented the ideas of the nineteenth-century Y.W.C.T.U. since they too ran a number of working-class educational programs similar to the Ottawa Y's. The Scientific Temperance Instruction Department provided temperance classes in the Girls' Home, News Boys' Home, Orphans' Home and the Mission Avenue School. A Cooking School gave practical lessons and a demonstration course to middle-class women, as well as free classes for working women and children. A kindergarten was also made available to working women. Temperance instruction to working-class boys was not neglected: three Bands of Hope worked out of the city missions. Various works of evangelism were also carried out. A Flower Mission and a separate Letter Mission visited the Sick Children's Hospital, the Old Woman's Home, the Home for Incurables, the General Hospital and sick cases in St. John's Ward. A Boys' Gospel Temperance Meeting was also maintained. While the Central Y attempted no female reform work, it did demonstrate its commitment to evangelical activities. In sum, aside from the monumental work of Home for Friendless Women, the Central Y work seems every bit as serious and energetic as its Ottawa counterpart and developed, as early as



1890, a social program that included Parlor Meetings and, in 1892, a Bicycle Club.<sup>51</sup>

Two other Toronto unions had a Y.W.C.T.U. during this period, North Toronto and the Toronto Gordon Union. During the autumn of 1887, the young women of the North Toronto Union took over the Kitchen Garden Program and the flagging Band of Hope. With implements provided by the W.C.T.U. for the Kitchen Garden and a subscription to the Heredity and Hygiene Magazine as well as two dollars from the senior women to the Band of Hope, the Y's got along reasonably well.<sup>52</sup> The Y at the Gordon Union was so small that it could support only Press, Evangelistic and Kindergarten Departments with no elaboration of the work in any of them. In all seven of the remaining Toronto unions with no Y.W.C.T.U., the proportion of single women involved in W.C.T.U. activities was much smaller than in those with Y.W.C.T.U.'s. For example, the Western Union had only one single woman to twenty married, the Parkdale Union had three singles to thirty-eight married and the Willard Union had a lone single woman to twenty-six married women.<sup>53</sup> Thus, the existence of a Y.W.C.T.U. organization seems to have provided a welcoming environment for single women. Without the separate status, fewer single women joined.

By 1910, however, the Y.W.C.T.U.'s were a mere shadow of their robust 1880's and 1890's profile. At the international level, the Y's were reduced to costume pageants. One suggestion was made to have Y's dress in the costume of countries having Y.W.C.T.U.'s. Each representative was to be introduced with a report of Y

activities in that country while the hostess wound each representative with "strands of broad white ribbon."<sup>54</sup> Provincially, accounts of Y's activities had virtually disappeared from the annual reports. The Canadian White Ribbon Tidings could only recommend the following "hints" for surviving unions: "Always wear the white ribbon. Let at least 15 minutes be given to the devotional part of the program, have a regularly appointed organist if possible, and see that the leader of the devotions is appointed in advance. Begin each meeting on time. Give each member some definite work to do. Write to your provincial Y Secretary. Secure as many subscribers as possible to the National and Provincial Papers. Study carefully how to conduct all public meetings so that those not interested will be pleased and come again. Make it 'go' with a 'swing', have a good program, good music, 'a presiding genius.'"<sup>55</sup>

In 1898, an ominous note had been struck when Y groups in various parts of the province began admitting men to full membership. Most of these groups soon thereafter called themselves Young Peoples' Groups or Loyal Temperance Legions with women's special role being forgotten.<sup>56</sup> The Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U. had ceased to exist altogether. In 1910, the Ottawa W.C.T.U., on the other hand, had 245 members and maintained twenty departments of work. Under its tutelage, the juvenile societies had 272 members, as well as two large anti-cigarette leagues.<sup>57</sup>

After a brief rally in 1899-90, many Toronto region Y.W.C.T.U.'s had folded by 1910, including those at Dovercourt, Western,

Parkdale, and Bascom, although the decline was apparent to those in the organization by 1896 when the Y.W.C.T.U. provincial superintendent bemoaned a precipitous decline in Y membership: "This was not the result of any laxity on the part of those in charge, but of the numerous new outlets for Christian activity which have come into existence since those days."<sup>58</sup> The banner organization, the Central Y, struggled on with six single women somewhat dispiritedly running programs for the Band of Hope, Flower Mission, a general educational and evangelistic department, and soap wrapper collection. (The Surprise Soap manufacturers offered a rebate on wrappers, which would be donated to the Willard Home for Girls). The power in Toronto appears to have shifted to the Northern Y.W.C.T.U. which boasted thirty-six single and six married women members. Nevertheless, the forty-two women could maintain efforts only in Lumber Camp, Scientific Temperance and Refreshment Work. The Youmans Y listed sixteen single and three married members engaged in Lumber Camp work and reports to the White Tidings magazine. The Bathurst Y was barely alive with no membership list recorded or work completed.<sup>59</sup> In the same year, the Toronto W.C.T.U. was experiencing a substantial growth in its membership to 1,138 with nineteen departments of work undertaken.<sup>60</sup>

Although this study ends in 1916, a later date has been chosen to examine the longer term condition of the Y.W.C.T.U. in the twentieth century. By 1931, the condition of both the Ottawa and Toronto Y.W.C.T.U.'s was grim: Ottawa's remained non-existent and

Toronto's nine unions devoted themselves almost exclusively to social meetings and collecting Surprise Soap wrappers for the Willard Home.<sup>61</sup> In 1914, the Dominion constitution was changed to reflect the merger of the Y.W.C.T.U. into the Loyal Temperance Legion.<sup>62</sup> The Ottawa W.C.T.U. had also lapsed by 1931. In Toronto, however, it seemed still to command a strong following. Twenty-six unions with 3,228 members worked under the W.C.T.U. banner. But what did they do? The reports show that most of their time was spent in securing pledges and seeing that Days of Prayer were observed. It must be admitted that this is a far cry from the range of activities successfully undertaken in the nineteenth century. But innocuous as these activities were, the W.C.T.U. was at least able to survive.

At the dominion and provincial levels, the Y.W.C.T.U. had been converted into the "Young People's Branch" which, of course, included both young men and women. This was also true in many local unions, the "Y" now referring not to the Y.W.C.T.U., but to the Y.P.B. What had been an exclusively female organization, then, was diluted into a catch-all youth group. The great hope for the W.C.T.U. was no longer its young women, but increasingly sympathetic young men.

What had happened to the Y.W.C.T.U. organization in Ontario? How did Y.W.C.T.U. work become so trivialized, irrelevant and out of women's control? To adequately answer these questions, three lines of investigation might be pursued. First, the nature of the role defined for the Y's by the W.C.T.U. must be analyzed along

with any evidence of the Y's acceptance, rejection or modification of this role. Secondly, the relationship between the Y.W.C.T.U. and the W.C.T.U. needs to be traced. Thirdly, the centrality of the evangelical motivation of the Y.W.C.T.U. so clearly established in the nineteenth century must also be surveyed in its twentieth-century context.

The story of Y.W.C.T.U. activity in Ottawa and Toronto represents what the local Y's saw as their function in temperance and social reform. The conception of appropriate endeavours from the Y.W.C.T.U. point of view, however, was a somewhat expanded version of the role set out for them by the W.C.T.U., which produced great quantities of prescriptive literature for its membership, both youth and adult. Canadian temperance youth in the late nineteenth century would have been exposed to the "National Leaflets" emanating from Chicago, to the more didactic "Department Leaflets," to The Woman's Journal and to the reports of the World, Dominion and Provincial Conventions in which the organization tried to convince the local unions to invest. Although the message of the appropriate role to be played by single women in all this literature altered over time, it was remarkably consistent in the period before 1905.

The primary role for the young single woman was to be trained so that she could one day take over the tasks of the senior generation as a W.C.T.U. member: "These Y's are to be the future W's, and must be preparing for the work, or it will suffer at their hands."<sup>63</sup> "What hope then for the W.C.T.U. army if bands of new

recruits have not been trained to fill the gaps and continue the warfare...."<sup>64</sup>

If the Y's would soon do the work of the W.C.T.U., most would also be burdened with the chief responsibility of the mature married member: running a household. Thus, the Y's were often asked to take on the "Kitchen Garden" program which The Woman's Journal thought "just the work to attract bright, active young ladies to the Y.W.C.T.U., and its practical bearing upon the vexed question of the day, 'How to secure competent servants,' must commend it to every one who has the care of a house resting upon his or her shoulders."<sup>65</sup> A later issue of The Woman's Journal outlined the importance of the Kitchen Garden program in emphasizing for working-class children the central perspective of the home in the nation. The program intended nothing less than making young women recognize that the home is the "cradle of the nation. It takes the drudgery out of the 'daily round, the common task,' and makes it beautiful, and the lessons learned by the little ones are never forgotten."<sup>66</sup> The Y.W.C.T.U. was charged with the responsibility of teaching this essential role to working-class girls and, in the process, learning their own future roles as leaders of the W.C.T.U.

In many instances, the Y's accepted this definition of their tutorial role. Most Y's carried out their studies of W.C.T.U. work faithfully. They ordered information pamphlets, and practised their parliamentary drills, public speaking and organizational skills. They lent a hand in large W.C.T.U. undertakings. But a

group kept perpetually "in waiting" will eventually tire of study and performing menial tasks. Where the Y's did not go beyond training and identify their own special mission, they were doomed to failure.

A second prescribed role for the Y.W.C.T.U. was to further the temperance cause through work with children.<sup>67</sup> "Then will these young women ... be our strongest allies and helpers; and with one hand placed in the hands of our parents for guidance, with the other will grasp the hands of the children, and lead them through brighter, broader and purer pathways, and together, the three generations in one, crush out the great destroyer of the home here and the home eternal."<sup>68</sup> While the Kitchen Garden programs remained the most popular undertaking of Y's during the 1880's and 1890's, this work was supplemented, as has been discussed, by work with children in the Bands of Hope, Sunday Schools, Sewing and Reading Groups, and in children's gospel meetings. Curiously, however, the Y's seem never to have been invited to direct the Little White Ribboners or the Loyal Temperance Legions.<sup>69</sup> Work with children, as with abandoned women, developed young women's skills and sense of evangelical mission. The Y's not only conformed to the prescriptive literature in this case; they bettered it.

The W.C.T.U. romanticized children, their interests and desire for salvation. Little girls, even from the working class, were typically seen as dainty and delicate.<sup>70</sup> Dominion organizers were not above exploiting children's attractiveness to develop even more

sympathy by adults. At the Dominion Conference in 1916, "while the collection was being taken a little twin boy and girl were made Little White Ribboners, the President pinning the white bow on each."<sup>71</sup> One could only maintain this idealized view of children by not dealing extensively with them. It has been noted that the women of the W.C.T.U. often found it difficult to control the children in the Bands of Hope.

Through their extensive work with working-class children, the Y.W.C.T.U. developed some highly effective strategies for teaching a potentially hostile population. Gospel Meetings especially for children were offered in the context of the revival meetings which were presented periodically in many Ontario communities during the late 1880's and 1890's.<sup>72</sup> Attracting the children the first time presented little problem. But the task of holding their attention throughout a didactic presentation, and encouraging them to return, offered enough difficulties that Y readers of The Woman's Journal requested advice. This was provided by the intrepid Bertha Wright of Ottawa whose suggestions are worthy of much admiration for their advanced pedagogy. Her "classroom management" was far ahead of her teaching contemporaries, and fits comfortably with late twentieth-century views of the recommended teaching process that should be used with disaffected students.

Miss Wright suggests that after gathering the children for a given gospel meeting, they should be immediately fed: food from the Bible, food from the instructor's experience and food prepared for their stomachs. In today's parlance, this would be called the



"lesson hook" or "motivator." Thereafter, a regular course of exercises should be followed, usually in this order: prayer, recitation of scripture texts, roll-call, the lesson, prayer, testimonials and prayers by the children. The generally unvarying pattern of classroom activity is today recommended for low-achieving students in order to give them a sense of control and order<sup>73</sup>. The order of the exercises is also one that would be commended in the modern teacher-training institute: move from the impersonal to the personal, from the general to the specific, from teacher direction to student involvement<sup>74</sup>. With such students, concrete illustration of ideas, through "advance organizers," teacher instructional aids and application exercises is critical. "Let the lesson be simple and pointed, with practical application for both Christians and the unconverted. We earnestly recommend the use of the blackboard, if only for writing outlines," Wright counsels. Lesson process was not ignored either. She urged that all instructions be definite and clear to the children. She understood what today would be called "reinforcement" or "validation" strategies with difficult students. "Never discourage a child's effort to answer correctly by replying 'no' whatever he may say. Find something good in every answer."

Discipline must have been a major chore, as it is today with students unwillingly held in school. Bertha Wright's suggestions here are relevant and cover most sources of discipline that could be imagined:

Remove any possible occasion for disorder. Be wise in seating the children. Sometimes it

works admirably to make certain older children officers, with the leader commander-in-chief. Occupy the ground so thoroughly that there will not be foot-hold for the enemy. But if disorder actually breaks out, try first, by all means, the counter-irritant, or divertive treatment. Write a word or make a symbol on the blackboard. Tell a story. Talk with increased animation; direct your words toward the offenders; ask them a question. These methods usually accomplish their purpose. If not, try the direct method, earnest remonstrance with the offender personally. But this should always be out of meeting, and usually with each one alone. Detain the offender, and tell him that such disorder is a pain and grief to you, and to God. Ask him never to repeat it, and assure him, kindly but firmly, that it must not be repeated!

One would be hard-pressed to provide any better pointers to maintain discipline in any situation. Her column ended with a worthy motto for any teacher, "Keep on teaching; keep on trying new plans; keep on expecting; keep on praying."<sup>75</sup> If followed, such sound advice would have created outstanding teaching skills and a sense of major achievement in the women who used these strategies to teach difficult children.

Even more important for the direction taken by the Y.W.C.T.U.'s in the late nineteenth century, however, was the opportunity provided by the education of children in honing a strong evangelical philosophy to underpin their activities: ". . . scientific knowledge must be introduced on dangers of alcoholism and tobacco to boys and girls in public schools and in Sunday Schools, to produce the "arrest of thought" in those so introduced to new and powerful ideals." A Christian girl must "let her 'light so shine before men, that others seeing her good works

may glorify her Father which is in heaven.'"<sup>76</sup> Both sterling example and the opportunity for sinners to individually reflect on their sinfulness was necessary in carrying out God's plan for young women. Imbued with this evangelical understanding of their place in the universe, the Y's of the 1880's and 1890's were emboldened to fortify themselves by developing new skills, and then to spread the gospel to children.

The major vehicle used by the Y.W.C.T.U. for inculcating in children temperance values within an evangelical context were the Bands of Hope. The Bands tended to be large -- one hundred children in each was typical -- and the activities closely mirrored the British example. In Picton, the children met on Saturday afternoons to hear lectures, read the Bible, sing hymns, and practice their public entertainments, albeit on a smaller scale than those of their British cousins. One example that is very reminiscent of the British Band of Hope entertainments occurred in 1886 with the Ottawa Band. Here, the two children in the Band staged a demonstration in which they marched around the room to the sound of musical instruments, carrying banners and regalia of the Good Templars, to which the Band belonged. Thereafter, the children provided recitations, sang temperance songs and recited some stirring dialogues.<sup>77</sup>

Children were encouraged to adopt the pledge that they would reject intoxicating liquors, tobacco in any form or bad language, the so-called "triple pledge."<sup>78</sup> In at least one instance, the signing of the pledge seemed to come as a surprise. When the

Prescott Y.W.C.T.U. advertised a new Band of Hope, a hundred children arrived, but only fifty stayed after they learned that they were expected to sign the temperance pledge.<sup>79</sup> The solemn tone of these programmes is clear: "Every recitation, dialogue or song rendered, even by the youngest of the crowd, inculcated some strictly moral or temperate sentiment. Nothing merely comic was ever tolerated, so that the entertainments never degenerated, as is sometimes the case, into mere buffoonery."<sup>80</sup> Where no Y.W.C.T.U. had been formed, the married women often took on the task. The Newmarket Union visited each school to announce the founding of a Band of Hope, and as a result, twenty-five children met at the Temperance Hall "with warm hearts and true" to have classes on temperance. The women arranged to present each child with a red, white and blue ribbon as a sign of membership.<sup>81</sup> Later, a blackboard and a dozen hymn books were purchased for the Band.<sup>82</sup>

The Spencerville W.C.T.U. arranged for a lecture to be given to the children about cruelty to animals.<sup>83</sup> Clearly, there was a good deal of variety in the kinds of activities engaged in by the Bands of Hope. This worried a correspondent to The Woman's Journal in 1885 who served notice that the Provincial organization would be asked to regulate lessons so "teaching may be uniform."<sup>84</sup>

Under Y.W.C.T.U. and W.C.T.U. sponsorship the Bands themselves sometimes took on the task of providing help in the community wherever it was possible. The children in the Bands of Hope in Newmarket and London formed "Bands of Mercy" with the girls competing against the boys for the number of kind deeds done and

recorded at Band of Hope meetings.<sup>85</sup> At the end of six months, the Newmarket W.C.T.U. volunteered to present a suitable banner to the winning side.<sup>86</sup> Nine months later, 325 acts of kindness were reported!<sup>87</sup> The Y.W.C.T.U.-operated Central Toronto Band of Hope purchased plants in order to stage a flower show in the autumn, and, with the Flower Mission women, managed to distribute 22,188 pages of temperance literature in one year throughout the community.<sup>88</sup> At other times, the Bands were entertained at such festivities as a Lawn Party given by the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U.<sup>89</sup> and cake and oranges by the women of the North Toronto union, even though the Bands were run by the Y.W.C.T.U.<sup>90</sup>

The Bands of Hope figured prominently in inspiring fiction pieces of The Woman's Journal. In one maudlin piece in 1886, a graphic description is painted of a household on the verge of being destroyed by alcoholic parents. An adorable, pure and righteous Band of Hope child leads the family back to temperate bliss.<sup>91</sup>

Of course, even with supportive literature, not all of the Bands of Hope prospered. Particularly vulnerable were those sponsored by unions with no Y.W.C.T.U. After a number of false starts, the Richmond Hill W.C.T.U. rather desperately resolved that "one or two Ladies of the Union be appointed at each meeting ... whose duty it shall be to attend the Band of Hope and do something to make the Band of Hope interesting."<sup>92</sup> The women appeared none too clear as to specifically what would make the children's meetings interesting. And even in cases where the group flourished, the women sometimes felt overwhelmed by their duties. The Toronto

union suggested that with 170 members, "there is a great need of more ladies to keep the children in order."<sup>93</sup>

One major difference between the British and Canadian Band of Hope movements was the class and gender of children involved. The British children were preponderantly male working class. The Canadian Bands of Hope under the jurisdiction of the W.C.T.U. welcomed both male and female children, but particularly those of the middle class. In this, it was similar to the American groups.

A report of the death of a child in the Newmarket Band indicates that the "little boy who prized his badge" was the grandson of the union's president.<sup>94</sup> One of the exceptions, along with working-boys clubs in both Ottawa and Toronto, was the London Band of Hope with a membership in 1893 of 74 working boys. The Y.W.C.T.U.'s Band Superintendent reported that they had "taken up the study of Beer and the body, as some of our boys are employed in the Brewery[sic], we thought it well to instruct them as to its dangers, 'forewarned is forearmed'. Last Thursday evening we held an open meeting to which the parents were invited but no one came. But it was a successful meeting as far as the boys were concerned. There were 100 persons present: 87 boys and 13 officers and teachers."<sup>95</sup> Even the activities chosen by the London Band of Hope reflected the male working-class clientele. At a later meeting, "an exhibition of Dumb Bell swinging was given by Mr. Heury Westman and 12 or 15 other young men and was thoroughly appreciated."<sup>96</sup> This model for the Band of Hope, then, was very different from the norm and it closely replicates the British example.

Mrs. Youmans' group had half boys and half girls, and it became the model for other groups in Ontario.<sup>97</sup> Girls often held executive positions and figure prominently in the records of Band activities. It might be speculated that the positive role models of Y.W.C.T.U. or W.C.T.U. leaders encouraged little girls to develop their own abilities.

Thus, the Y.W.C.T.U. developed innovative teaching strategies through their work both with children's gospel meetings and the Bands of Hope. The highly competent and productive Y's may well have intimidated the older women in the W.C.T.U. even though they took charge of challenging groups such as the Bands of Hope and appear in general to have been far more successful in running the Bands than were the W.C.T.U. There is no direct evidence that the W's forced the Y's to abandon their projects, but conversely, in the case of the Newmarket Union, the Y did fail because of lack of support from the W.C.T.U. Did this constitute a subtle "putting in their place" or a more simple policy of permitting independence for the young women? The available records do not say, but perhaps both were true.

A third component of the Y.W.C.T.U. role was to convince their peers, as no older person could do, to reject evil. Female friends must be turned to the righteous path: "You stand between your own sister-girls who had not had your advantages and the wisdom of the mother W.C.T.U. from which you may draw. You stand between hosts of uncertain ones and the tempting wine, and the deadly cigarette,

the card party, the dance, the theatre - everything that may degrade."<sup>98</sup> Of even greater urgency, however, were those most vulnerable to the siren call, young men, who could only "be reached through the influence and companionship of the young women."<sup>99</sup> This enormous task was underlined repeatedly in fictional pieces that ran in The Woman's Journal.

One story depicts Edith, a young, beautiful, and brave woman, who has been left crippled and bed-ridden for life after being grievously injured by a horse that threatened to run down a child in its path. She encounters her brother planning to take wine at a Christmas celebration. After having confided her fears to a Sunday School teacher and receiving sage advice, she resolves to start a Y.W.C.T.U. in her community. "With eager, earnest words she told them of the need there was for every young woman to stand firmly on the right side of every question of moral reform and to show her colours, if not for her own sake, for that of her brothers and friends."<sup>100</sup>

Young men's weakness, and young women's tolerance of it, is lampooned in a National Leaflet story in which Dune, the heroine, announces that she will have nothing to do with any man who smokes. And who is mainly to blame to this noxious habit? "I blame the men, but candidly, girls, I blame you more, for it lies with you to check this evil in large measure, if not entirely. How can you have so little spirit, so little womanliness, as to lay aside your own self-respect to win the favor of these men, to lower your own standards of what is true and sweet in character, for a few paltry



attentions from men whom you ought to despise."<sup>101</sup> Such self-blame was not just levelled in fictional pieces. A column in The Woman's Journal accused the Y.W.C.T.U. "or our older sisters ... to blame that such a large percentage of young men were found unfit for service in our last war as a result of the use of tobacco. Let us not try to shirk our responsibility."<sup>102</sup> By "saving" a society's young men, one also wins over "the coming leaders of the future in State and philanthropic work."<sup>103</sup> Young woman's superiority carries with it a heavy burden. And not only young men will be protected by a young woman's courage.

Her influence can extend even into her own home: "Many a mother has been brought into the work by a consecrated young life in her own household."<sup>104</sup> It would seem, therefore, that nothing less than the protection of society is in the care of righteous young women. "Will there not be an equally terrible responsibility resting upon us if we are not willing to do everything possible to stay the tide of iniquity, to save our weaker brothers, to save ourselves, to save our homes, to save our nation?"<sup>105</sup> It is important to note the connection made here between self-protection and societal protection. There can be no neutral stance in this war against evil. "If she is not for the movement, she is against it! And if she gathers not with it, she scatters abroad! The pledge of total abstinence is the muster-roll of the army...."<sup>106</sup>

Whether or not members of the Y.W.C.T.U. took this challenge seriously or, in the event that they did so, how successful they were in convincing others to take the moral path, is not known.

One way of assessing the attempt to influence others, peers in particular, is by charting the use of "Parlor Meetings" or "At Homes" where uncommitted women, and sometimes men, were invited to attend. The Y's of the early 1880's rarely held social gatherings of any kind. This is consistent with evangelicalism where all behaviour must be purposeful and have a greater object than mere personal fulfilment. The women in the Ottawa Y did not find the time to arrange a Parlor Social until 1891, when one was held to raise money for Y projects.<sup>107</sup> In the Toronto Central Y, the social gathering was introduced through a Department of Parlor Meetings in 1889, and the social outing seems to have been introduced with the Bicycle Club, organized in 1892.

By 1901, however, its Literature and Scientific Temperance Departments had been replaced by a Department of Parlor Meetings, a Convenor, Literary Committee, Current Events Committee, Personal Work, a Librarian and Auditors!<sup>108</sup> As early as 1890, The Woman's Journal was abetting this approach by suggesting a "Y Peanut Party": a musical passtime in which guests would be presented with such titles as "Piano Piece Played Per Prominent Person," being a piano solo, and "Paper 'Peanuts' Per Prosaic Penman, which translated as an essay on peanuts.<sup>109</sup> In 1902, the Windsor Y held a social to which fifty members and their guests arrived, each representing a book. This was followed by a guessing contest of over two hours. The evening ended with a vocal and instrumental music show and candy refreshments.<sup>110</sup>

Doubtless, Y unions that devoted themselves to socials succeeded

in adding more names to the membership rolls. But these new members were a different sort of woman than had been attracted during the 1880's and '90's. The minute books of local unions demonstrate that with the higher incidence of socials to attract outsiders, fewer evangelically inspired good works were attempted. It is not clear how often men were included in these festivities, or the nature of the informal conversation in promoting "right thinking," but undoubtedly it would be difficult in such settings to exert sustained and effective peer pressure on male and female friends without becoming a social outcast.

A second way by which the Y's influence on others, particularly men, might be investigated is to follow a single issue, such as the anti-tobacco campaign, noting the Y.W.C.T.U. efforts in this regard. Until the 1920's, the tobacco habit was associated almost exclusively with men. Frances Willard had adopted early temperance societies' condemnation of tobacco as a drug, and published a National Leaflet in which she classified nicotine with alcohol as poison.<sup>111</sup> A later leaflet, dating from around 1887, groups tobacco with alcohol and opium as a narcotic which "first excites, then depresses, then deranges" the victim. But the gravest danger was the appetite created by the tobacco addict. "The tobacco road, though reeking with smoke and the filthiest kind of filth, is the broadest, and by all means the shortest and most direct route to that river of death, Alcohol."<sup>112</sup>

To what degree, then, did the Y.W.C.T.U. take on the battle of the cigarette? Only to a limited degree, it seems. Wherever the

Y's encouraged boys to sign the pledge, of course, tobacco was one of the banned substances. But rarely did Y's organize separate anti-cigarette leagues. The Toronto Y appears to stand alone in Ontario by having two such leagues for a short time. Very possibly, Y.W.C.T.U. women informally discouraged their male friends and family members from using tobacco, but this cannot be established from the available sources. At the same time, rural W.C.T.U. members in Ontario characteristically fought a pitched battle with the vendors of tobacco to young men. For example, after the Spencerville W.C.T.U. had discussed the possibility of petitioning for a Curfew Bell in their town to reduce the neglect of children, three women were named a committee "to wait on the Storekeepers to have them quit selling tobacco."<sup>113</sup> Again, the Newmarket W.C.T.U. reported that "Mrs. Penrose saw the Inspector and asked him if he knew the young boys were using tobacco etc. Of course he does but felt unable to stop it yet. The kind given him by Mrs. Penrose may show him the W.C.T.U. means business. it[sic] was suggested that other members follow Mrs. Penrose fairly besieging the inspector until he does his duty in order to get peace."<sup>114</sup> There are no indications that the Y.W.C.T.U. besieged storekeepers or inspectors. Thus, a social evil that affected many young men and could have been a rallying point for the Y.W.C.T.U. was missed. The inescapable conclusion to be drawn is that the Y.W.C.T.U. had very little influence on their unaffiliated peers.

In the event that young women were able to forge a righteous

alliance with young men, the hope was expressed over and over again by the W.C.T.U. that the often unpopular W.C.T.U. goals could be made more acceptable to a wider society through the evident support of such cultured young men and women. This can be seen as the fourth component of the Y.W.C.T.U. role, and it was one with the potential for internally conflict. While priding themselves on the fundamental truth promoted by a select women's organization, and by the strength of character required of the small band prepared to broadcast this truth, the W.C.T.U. fretted that its was "not a popular institution" because it acted "on the principle that prevention is better than cure, and therein lies the root of the trouble.... It is far easier for the mankind of to-day to assist in ameliorating the poverty and degradation growing out of intemperance than it is to countenance and aid any work which aims at the abolishment of intoxicating drink."<sup>115</sup> Recognizing the difficulty of the young women's position, the Y.W.C.T.U. members were encouraged nevertheless to have courage and wear the white ribbon, even though they might not be able to actively preach against alcohol.<sup>116</sup>

At times, the description of young women's temperance work took on an embattled tone. A fictional piece written especially for The Woman's Journal by Mrs. Reede of Teeswater, Ontario, has the heroine, Flora, exclaiming: "Oh, no, it is not a popular society, and all the girls do not belong to the 'Y'. It requires more courage to belong to the 'Y' than it does to go to South Africa and fight the Boers or to go and nurse the boys who are wounded while

fighting on behalf of our beloved Empire."<sup>117</sup> This is not the only instance when it is suggested that the rebuffs experienced by temperance workers dispirited them. The hope was that the optimism of sunny young women would reinvigorate all temperance warriors: "Now the greatest obstacle in the way of our young ladies doing just this work is a feeling of prejudice, conscious or unconscious, that enters into our estimate of temperance work and temperance workers; and more than any other reason why we need a Y.W.C.T.U. is to take off the disagreeable edge from an unpopular subject, and to prove that the very best class of young ladies and gentlemen, socially and intellectually, are in this work; to make the principle of total abstinence a fashionable one...."<sup>118</sup> The Toronto Y's even wrote a recruiting song for the organization:

The evening hours are fleeting fast,  
As down the long church aisles there pass  
Bright maidens with their ribbons white,  
Who say, 'pray join us in our fight --  
Oh do be 'Ys?'

'What makes us 'Ys?' you'd like to ask --  
To tell you that will be no task:  
'If you this better part will choose,  
To sign the pledge - and pay your dues,  
You will be 'Y's'

'What do we do?' We work for right,  
For 'God and Home' we wage our fight.  
Our unrelenting hate we'd prove  
For wrongs that blight the land we love.  
Will you be 'Y's?'

Our young men also have their part,  
In wisdom's ways they've made a start -  
'Tis not the 'Y's' way to be funny -  
We'll just say that what they ask is money;  
Now do be wise.

King Solomon, in days of old,  
A choice did make, we have been told,

'Twixt gold and wisdom, and his name  
Is to us synonym of fame  
For being wise.

His choice was good, we all confess,  
For 'wisdom's ways are pleasantness,'  
But in the story we are told  
That Solomon received much gold  
Through his good choice.

That we are 'Y's' there is no question,  
To you, dear friends, we make suggestion:  
We're not yet rich. Before you go  
We hope your great good-will you'll show -  
In our collection.<sup>119</sup>

The Toronto Y's song plainly describes the various approaches taken to increasing support for the Y.W.C.T.U. and thus for the W.C.T.U. cause. "Bright maidens" implore their friends to join battle with them against "wrongs that blight the land we love." What is wanted, in addition to new Y members who will sign the pledge and pay their dues, is visible financial support from young men and other "dear friends." There is a good deal of evidence to suggest that women in the Y.W.C.T.U. worked very hard at recruiting new members, particularly in the late 1890's until about 1910. In fact, the Northern Toronto Y was first in Ontario to incorporate young men into their meetings in 1901 to broaden its membership.

One result of this extended membership was programming of a very different type than most Y's had developed before, including a model parliament in which countries debated the wisdom of invoking prohibition.<sup>120</sup> A further effect may have been a hastening of the Y.W.C.T.U.'s demise since its female-oriented and controlled mandate was lost. By 1904, the union was left with no departments of work and only a skeletal executive.<sup>121</sup> There can be no doubt

either that, as the nineteenth century drew to a close, it was increasingly unpopular to be a member of a young women's temperance associations such as the Y.W.C.T.U. All the bluster of brave songs and membership drives could not dispel the fact that the Y was designed to attract a particular type of serious young woman. By its very nature, it would not appeal to a mass audience. This is likely one of the strongest explanations for the organization's demise.

The final element in the prescribed Y.W.C.T.U. role was individual self-improvement: "The fact seems overlooked that any movement for improving the race, to be successful, must primarily be directed toward the betterment of the individual in the first person, singular number ... So our Y union offers to girls the opportunity to become something better and worthier than they at present are. Yet primarily for our union, we seek the girls of strength and principle."<sup>122</sup> Betterment of one's knowledge and parliamentary skills was demanded in much of the literature of the period: "'I haven't the ability,' is a poor excuse; make an effort to **cultivate** ability, and rather be **ashamed** of your lack of it."<sup>123</sup> One authority was quoted admiringly, encouraging girls to gain "true nobility of character through study, effort and self-restraint."<sup>124</sup> Self-improvement meant that strong leaders would be nurtured within the organization. "Select well the leader ... she should be as near perfect as it is possible to be; she should likewise be judicial and have a knowledge of parliamentary practice. Do not select a quiet, meek, humble woman. I do not



underestimate those qualities, and they are charming in their place, but such an one is not fitted to be a Napoleon."<sup>125</sup> Nevertheless, Napoleonic qualities must be tempered with a sense of humility and self-restraint. "God Himself gave to woman an invisible armor, imperfectly described by that good, old-fashioned word, **modesty**. Wearing this, she may still do her best, physically, intellectually and spiritually, without harm. ...No matter what you lack in wealth, culture or beauty, you can be self-controlled, dignified, **modest**."<sup>126</sup>

With this modest but masterful comportment, the young woman must be mindful of her domestic duties so that a healthy balance could be maintained. To remind its readers that self-help involves selfishness which must be controlled, The Woman's Journal offered a profile of Marion who was so busy improving herself that she neglected her overworked mother: "Those eyes grew dim sewing for the girls, to give them time to study ancient history and modern languages; those wrinkles came because the girls had not time to share the cares and worries of every day life. That sigh comes because the mother feels neglected and lonely, while the girls are working for the women in India; that tired look comes from getting up so early, while the poor, exhausted girls are trying to sleep back the late hours they gave to study or spent at the concert." So Marion dutifully decides to stay away, gives up presenting her "bright essays," loses her ambition to be highly educated and creates her own Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Mothers.<sup>127</sup> Self-improvement, then, would be tempered by self-denial.

How successful were the Y women in holding to this portion of the prescription? A careful reading of the nineteenth- as opposed to the twentieth-century records suggests that evangelicalism permitted the Y.W.C.T.U. of the 1880's and 1890's to combine self-help with helping others. All of the strong Y unions assumed that in order to right society's wrongs, one must study the conditions and determine a course of action carefully. Discussion of issues was at the very root of both Y.W.C.T.U. and W.C.T.U. meetings. When considering the leaders of the Ottawa and Toronto Y.W.C.T.U.'s, one finds women who adhered closely to the model defined in the literature: the most complete surviving profile of any Y.W.C.T.U. leader is that of Ottawa's Bertha Wright.

Relentlessly self-improving while devoted to a myriad of causes, Wright remained a model Victorian single woman. Educated at the Ottawa Ladies College, she lived after graduation with her aunt and uncle, the Curriers, at 24 Sussex Drive. Joseph Currier was a wealthy lumber baron and Member of Parliament for Ottawa. As part of Ottawa's social and political elite, Bertha worked with determination and verve in a variety of activities along with her Y.W.C.T.U. work, including initiating an interdenominational Sunday School, work with the Presbyterian Ladies' Aid, and the Orphans' Home, but always with a suitably modest demeanor. "After hearing Miss Wright," an observer noted, "one does not wonder at her success. One element of that success, we should imagine, is her 'womanliness,' there is nothing of the 'new woman' about this charming speaker."<sup>128</sup> All of her efforts were supported by her own

family living in Aylmer, Quebec, and by her adopted family, the Curriers. In turn, she lavished affection on her kin: "But what will I ever do without you for five long months," writes Bertha to her aunt on holiday in Bermuda in 1883. "I often wish that I could fly to the first flat of the Hamilton Hotel - steal one good kiss from each of you, and fly back again...."<sup>129</sup> This warm relationship remained while her aunt and uncle lived.

In 1896 at age thirty-three, Bertha Wright left Ottawa to marry Robert Carr-Harris, a professor of Engineering at the Royal Military College in Kingston. He was twenty years her senior, and a widower with six children. The taking on of a widower's family was not unusual in Victorian Canada. The Carr-Harrises would have another six children of their own. Here was a dutiful, self-denying woman indeed. But she was also an accomplished and serious woman who had exerted her leadership through the Y.W.C.T.U. Does this aspect of the Y.W.C.T.U. help to explain the organization's decline? One fact strikes one immediately apparent: being a Y woman involved a great deal of work, most of which was self-denying and unexciting.

After the Y's hey-day had passed, a revealing "Declaration of Principles of the Y.W.C.T.U." was published. It codified the role that has been outlined, and emphasized the importance of evangelicalism as the foundation of all behaviour:

We believe in the coming of His Kingdom whose service is perfect freedom, because His laws, written in our members, as well as in nature and in grace, are perfect, converting the soul. We believe in the gospel of the Golden Rule, and that each man's habits in life

should be an example safe and beneficent in every other man to follow. We believe that God created both man and woman in His own image, and, therefore, we believe in one standard of purity for both men and women, and in the equal right of all to hold opinions and to express the same with equal freedom. We believe in a living wage; in an eight-hour day; in the course of conciliation and arbitration; in justice as opposed to greed and gain; in 'peace on earth and good will to men.' We therefore formulate, and for ourselves adopt the following pledge, asking our sisters and brothers of a common danger and a common hope, to make common cause with us, in working its reasonable and hopeful precepts into the practice of every day life. I hereby solemnly promise, God helping me, to abstain from all distilled, fermented and malt liquors, including Wine, Beer and Cider, and to employ all proper means to discourage the use and traffic in the same. To confirm and enforce the rationale of this pledge, we declare our purpose to educate the young; to form a better public sentiment; to reform, so far as possible, by religious, ethical and scientific means, the drinking classes; to seek the transforming power of divine grace for ourselves and all for whom we work, that they and we may willfully transcend no law of pure and wholesome living; and finally we pledge ourselves to labor and to pray that all these principles, founded upon the Gospel of Christ, may be worked out into the customs of society and the laws of the land.<sup>130</sup>

Originally limited to a role encompassing only public relations, self-training, and work with children, the Y.W.C.T.U. obviously had expanded its range far beyond those limits. By 1905, the Y's were on record as supporting equal suffrage for men and women, social purity, a shorter work day, higher wages and enlightened resolution of labour disputes. That their ideas and actions were "founded upon the Gospel of Christ" and the belief in "the coming of His kingdom" gave these women the needed justification to "seek

the transforming power of divine grace for ourselves and all for whom we work...." Thus, not only would illegitimate decisions relating to alcohol per se, or the training of children, draw their righteous fire, but also any threat that challenged their wider role to uphold the "law of pure and wholesome living." However the order of their stated concerns is most revealing. The abstinence pledge is placed last, almost as an afterthought, following an extended statement outlining their broad social program. And the objects of this program are vividly defined as "the drinking masses". This was indeed a far-flung net, and Christian labour in defence of all the social injustices encompassed by it would require service in many just causes.

If one were to compare the role mandated for the Y.W.C.T.U. and its large expansion of that role, at times so energetically as to eclipse the senior W.C.T.U., the danger posed by this organization in the nineteenth century to the W.C.T.U. can be sensed. While freely admitting the many advantages of organizing a young woman's sector, the W.C.T.U. was anxious almost from the beginning about having such a separate body. In 1886 the provincial president attempted to soothe the older women's concerns in her address to the annual convention: "Do not think that a 'Y' in any place of considerable size will interfere with the work of the senior Union. The records all point the other way. Young ladies naturally feel more at home with a president and officers of their own, arranging and planning for their own work. Then their influence will be greater and more widespread when banded together as societies than

as individuals, and they can reach and influence for good those whom the older ones among us cannot touch."<sup>131</sup> "I know there is a feeling of opposition in some quarters from a fear of a division of interest in the work of the W.C.T.U."<sup>132</sup> admitted another speaker in 1886. And the opposition did not evaporate with the years. In 1892, a debate ensued in The Woman's Journal over whether or not the Y should remain separate from the W.C.T.U. One writer ("an old president") declared herself very much in favour of a continuing special sector for the young women since "there was always too much work for too few in the days before the Y's."<sup>133</sup> In 1897, the provincial Y.W.C.T.U. Superintendent suggested "that local presidents of the W.C.T.U. lay aside all personal objections to 'Y' work and be willing to allow and assist the Superintendent to organize in her territory."<sup>134</sup>

Yet the fact that the issue was considered so often over the years suggests that many W.C.T.U. members never reconciled themselves to a Y.W.C.T.U. That at least some of the criticism levelled at the Y's was rooted in unkind comparisons is suggested by one writer in The Woman's Journal: "I would be ashamed of any member of our Union, who would look upon this success [of the Y.W.C.T.U.] with any feeling of jealousy, or consider them rivals in any way.... Jealousies and rivalries are the death of many good societies and poison at the fountain head, the very waters of healing which we are trying to carry to the suffering."<sup>135</sup> Did the Y's threaten the W.C.T.U. women with their passion and competence? The situation may well have varied from region to region in

Ontario, but it seems clear that at least some of the older women were ungrateful and perhaps afraid of their young and single associates.

Yet, in those unions where the Y.W.C.T.U. prospered, and particularly in the early years, relations seem to have been very good between the two sectors. In 1884, for example, the Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U. presented a basket of flowers to Mrs. Tilton, "as a token of their appreciation of the President of the Union and the kindness she had shown to them during the year."<sup>136</sup> The Y's regularly invited the married women to their lectures, reading groups and Bible meetings.<sup>137</sup> The London Union considered the Y work so important that it established a management committee comprised of the presidents of the Y.W.C.T.U. and the W.C.T.U. with a past-president as advisory member.<sup>138</sup> Perhaps distance from the Y.W.C.T.U. increased the W.C.T.U.'s fear? Nevertheless, there were many more unions without a Y than those with one, and the hostility which bristles towards the Y's in so many of the records makes one is amazed that they survived as long as they did.

The definition of Y membership was another issue to create acrimony with the mother union. In theory, the Y's were considered to be full unions on par with the W's. However, in practice, Y's often operated more like a department of work within the mother union. While most Y's from their inception had sought single women under the age of thirty, in the early 1880's, some married women had also held membership in the Ontario Y.W.C.T.U. from the early 1880's. Similarly, age restrictions were relaxed

so that some mature single women with firm friendships in their Y unions could maintain their membership.<sup>139</sup> In some cases, such as in Ottawa, the W.C.T.U. voted to make the Y.W.C.T.U. fully fledged members of their union, creating a kind of double membership.<sup>140</sup> Frequently also, the executive Y members were married women. An 1890 issue of The Woman's Journal asked again, "Should married women remain Y members?" and concluded that no answer was yet available.<sup>141</sup> In 1896, a W.C.T.U. benefactor, Mr. J. Hale Ramsay, offered a commemorative banner to the Province showing the greatest increase of members in Y unions. However, he restricted it to the unions which had no married women. The Ontario delegation to the Dominion Convention in that year petitioned the assembly to send an official communication to Mr. Hale Ramsay imploring him to remove the restrictions.

In 1912, the fees required from Y's were lowered to encourage a membership drive. However, this precipitated a furious argument in the convention, ending with an agreement that married women in Y unions would pay the same dues as married women in W unions: "If married women are eligible to membership in the Y's at a lower fee than that prevailing in the W's, this would be liable to do serious injury to the W's - diverting from their ranks many who, while not active members, desire to wear the white ribbon and be counted amongst the feminine contingent of the Temperance Workers."<sup>142</sup> At the same time, where no Y unions existed, single women were welcomed into W unions. Occasionally, Y unions in the general proximity corresponded with young women in the W.C.T.U.,



encouraging them to establish a separate Y union.<sup>143</sup> The confusion in membership standards, and the obvious anxiety reflected by the W.C.T.U., suggests that even as the Y.W.C.T.U. declined in strength and purpose, the W.C.T.U. continued to fear its presence.

But surely the issue of Y.W.C.T.U. membership was not related only to age and marital status. The question of class identification must also be assessed. In the 1880's, there seems to have been some support within the Y.W.C.T.U. to expand its membership into the respectable working classes. The establishment of the Willard Home in Toronto and a similar residence in London for working girls undoubtedly had the potential to incorporate these women into the framework of the Y. A hopeful statement was issued also by the London Y.W.C.T.U. in 1886: "Do not let us be content with looking forward to the reunion of our own family circles, much as we love them, but let us think of the many who have no homes and nothing to brighten their lives.... Some young women with just as refined tastes, and social natures as their more fortunate sisters are living in boarding houses."<sup>144</sup> But the challenge was ignored and the Y.W.C.T.U. remained determinedly middle class.

The Canadian Y's class position was questioned by the Glasgow Y.W.C.T.U. in 1911 which welcomed working-class women and had a stronger organization than its Canadian counterpart. "We just go for everyone," said the Scottish Y organizer.<sup>145</sup> By this date in Canada, however, the Y position on the young working-class woman had hardened to revulsion. One report of a British Factory Girls'

Drinking Club portrayed the women as participating in "wanton orgies" with their hard-earned salaries. It concluded, "Drunkenness saps a woman's moral fibre more quickly than it does a man's, yet these misguided factory girls are the potential mothers of a future generation."<sup>146</sup>

If they were not prepared to be identified with even the respectable working classes, the Y's could not hope to be considered part of the "smart" upper middle classes either. In a lament on the W.C.T.U.'s class position, a correspondent to The Woman's Journal begs the Y.W.C.T.U. not to separate from the main organization since they are so badly needed. Expecting to achieve prohibition in five or ten years, it is still beyond the W.C.T.U.'s grasp, she says, in 1892. "So we learned more than we accomplished ... we learned that not many rich or influential women will join, that we cannot expect to be popular or numerous ... most of us keeping no servants."<sup>147</sup> The Y's must have assumed the same class profile as the W's; by rejecting the possibility of expanding their organization into the working classes, they may have further assured their demise.

One of the major tasks of the Y's was to lead the Bands of Hope. Appendices I, II, and III demonstrate that as the Y's lost membership, so did the Bands of Hope. Or perhaps the causality ran in the other direction: as the Bands of Hope declined, so did the Y.W.C.T.U. It is difficult now to know which group was the prime agent, but clearly their fates were intertwined. Picton County reported in 1902 that while a Band of Hope had operated for years

there, they became discouraged and disbanded when they could find no one who could command the attention of a large band of children. It reported also that in its later years of operation only younger children attended, and of these, mainly girls. So the "very boys, who need the help the most, will not attend," they lamented.<sup>148</sup> By the 1890's in the United States the Bands of Hope faced competition from the United Boys' Brigade, a quasi-militaristic, uniformed and church-sponsored marching and drilling organization.<sup>149</sup> While this group did not affect the Canadian Bands, it is possible that the newly-formed Boys' Scouts might have provided a similar outdoor/militaristic rival.

In Ontario, the apex for Band of Hope unions occurred in the early 1890's, with the movement remaining healthy until the turn of the century. The gradual sapping of strength can be detected by the mid 1890's, however, by comparing numbers of children enrolled in the unions. (See Appendix I) The reported figures indicate that while unions proliferated, they included smaller groups of children. The Ontario experience was duplicated at the Dominion level. (See Appendices IV and V). With occasional periods of recovery, as between 1910 and 1914 when temperance forces of all kinds revived across Canada, the Bands became progressively weaker after the mid 1890's. The membership figures tell a more accurate story than the numbers of unions which also appear to have become smaller.

By 1910, the Bands of Hope in Ontario had been absorbed into the "Loyal Temperance Legions," a polyglot organization that catered

to boys and girls over the age of seven. Information for the L.T.L. is limited, but one Minute Book of the L.T.L. in Salford has survived from 1902. Generalizations based on a single minute book must be made cautiously, of course, but if the Salford L.T.L. was representative of other unions' operations, several tentative conclusions might be drawn. The meetings have an even more didactic tone than those of the Bands of Hope cultivated. The children met in the school house and were examined weekly on memorization of passages and elocution. The minute book contains twenty-seven examination marks for the twenty-eight active and seventeen associate members. The activities seem to have been similar to many Bands of Hope, however. The children gave public readings, and recitations, dialogues and musical choruses. They recited prayers, their motto, and pledge:

God Helping Me,  
I promise not to buy drink, sell or give  
Alcoholic liquors while I live  
From all tobacco I'll abstain  
And never take God's name in vain.

As prizes, the children received blue ribbons.<sup>150</sup> Therefore, the L.T.L. appears to have been a more academic version of the Band of Hope. However, the main difference between the L.T.L. and the Bands of Hope was that it had no connection to the Y.W.C.T.U.

A final factor in explaining the Y.W.C.T.U. decline involves the ideas held by the organization in the twentieth century. The Y.W.C.T.U. experienced an apparent lessening of the sense of evangelical mission which had been so obvious in the earlier period. Here again the records do not pinpoint the exact date when

the vision began to slip. As the Y unions' activities by 1910 suggested a religious social club lost in self-absorption, the erosion was probably well underway by that time. By 1931, the official ideas of the Y.W.C.T.U. were contained in the Manual of the Young People's Branch. The prospective member is told that, although she can expect to study "Christian Citizenship" and "Social Welfare," there also awaits her a veritable "University of Reforms," "delightful entertainment" and a "community of pleasure and interest." Y organizers were directed in the Manual to run meetings with lots of Y songs and to provide some temperance information: "bright, pithy news items from latest Press reports.... All meetings should bristle with brightness and song and good cheer."<sup>151</sup> The evangelical nightmare of selfishness to the exclusion of societal needs seems to have become reality for the Y's sometime prior to the First World War. Before long, all Y.W.C.T.U.'s were absorbed into the omnibus "Young People's Branch," with young men welcomed into the membership.

In summary, the Y.W.C.T.U. disappeared for a number of reasons: as a "farm team" for the W.C.T.U., it lacked authority in the wider organization and eventually suffered from too prescriptive a mandate. As long as it could combine its evangelicalism and work with children, it prospered, particularly where the Y women extended the range of children under instruction. But as the Band of Hope, Kitchen Gardens and Gospel Bands waned in popularity internationally, the targets for instruction disappeared. Y.W.C.T.U. women needed to find another cause, but because of the

marginalization of temperance organizations of all types, their own ambiguous position within the women's temperance organization, and their weakening evangelical vision, they failed to do so. The result was a gradual slide into a new role as rather pathetic cheer-leaders for an increasingly unpopular cause. Their decline into social gad-flies seems to have been mourned by none of the W.C.T.U. Perhaps they too were forgetting the evangelical mission.

## ENDNOTE

1. Jack S. Blocker Jr., American Temperance Movements: Cycles of Reform (Boston, 1989), p. 82.
2. Ruth Bordin, Women and Temperance: The Quest for Power and Liberty, 1873-1900 (Philadelphia, 1981), p. 151.
3. Nancy Sheehan, "The W.C.T.U. and Educational Strategies on the Canadian Prairie," History of Education Quarterly 24 (1984) p. 112.
4. Bordin, Women and Temperance, p. 150.
5. MU 8406, W.C.T.U. Collection, Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1886. Note: Unless otherwise stated, all primary documents are located in the W.C.T.U. Collection of the Ontario Archives, Toronto.
6. Frances Willard, "Introduction" to Annie Wittenmyer, History of the Woman's Temperance Crusade, (Chicago, 1882), pp. 15-21.
7. Charles A. Isetts, "A Social Profile of the Woman's Temperance Crusade: Hillsboro, Ohio," in Jack S. Blocker, ed. Alcohol, Reform and Society: The Liquor Question in Social Context (Connecticut, 1979), pp. 104-107.
8. Blocker, American Temperance Movements, p.81.
9. MU 8288, W.C.T.U. Collection, Manual: Young People's Branch of the Canadian Woman's Christian Temperance Union, n.d. (c. 1931), pp. 4-5.
10. Surviving documents make it difficult to specify exact dates. The first report for a Dominion Convention is in 1889, the second to be held, and by this time a Y.W.C.T.U. had been organized. The first provincial records in the Ontario Archives date from 1886, by which time figures were being collected for Y.W.C.T.U. groups around the province.
11. MU 8455, W.C.T.U. Collection, The Woman's Journal, October, 1898.

12. For example, the Newmarket Y.W.C.T.U. seems to have existed from at least December, 1887 until it amalgamated with the W.C.T.U. in October, 1888. During that brief period it organized a Flower Mission and supported the W.C.T.U. in its many endeavours. A second Y was organized sometime in early 1906 when their only activity seems to have been a social staged by the members in the Temperance Hall, followed by refreshments in April, 1906. MU 8422, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Newmarket W.C.T.U., 1885-1913.

13. MU 8406, W.C.T.U. Collection, Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1886.

14. City of Ottawa Y.W.C.A. Records, Principal Austin, "What Christ Has Done for Woman," The Friend of the Friendless, October, 1892.

15. MU 8471, W.C.T.U. Collection, World's Y hand-Book, 1906.

16. The Woman's Journal, June, 1892.

17. MU 8432, W.C.T.U. Collection, Records of the Toronto Union W.C.T.U., 1904-05.

18. See footnote 13. The Mizpah Union was unable to sustain its own Y.W.C.T.U. but a "Coloured" W.C.T.U. and Y.W.C.T.U. operated for a time in 1917 under its direction. MU 8422, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Mizpah W.C.T.U., 1916-1918. The Peterborough Union established a Y in November, 1915, which survived until May, 1916. MU 8284, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Peterborough W.C.T.U., 1914-1922.

19. MU 8415, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Dunnville W.C.T.U., March 6, 1905.

20. Y.W.C.A. Records, Minute Book of the Ottawa Y.W.C.T.U., 1888.

21. Ibid., September 20, 1889.

22. Bertha Carr-Harris, Lights and Shades of Mission Work or Leaves from a Worker's Note Book. Being Reminiscences of Seven Years Service at the Capital, 1885-1892 (Ottawa, 1892), p. 36.

23. Carr-Harris Collection, Oakville, Assorted papers of Bertha Wright/Carr-Harris, untitled newspaper clipping, 14 February, 1890.

24. Carr-Harris, Lights and Shades of Mission Work, p. 24.



25. MU 8406, W.C.T.U. Collection, Eleventh Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1889.
26. Ibid., March 8, 1889.
27. Carr-Harris Collection, The Washington Post, 9 November, 1891.
28. Annual Report of the Ontario W.C.T.U., 1889.
29. Diana Pedersen, "The Young Woman's Christian Association in Canada, 1870-1920: A Movement To Meet a Spiritual, Civic and National Need," (Ph.D. Thesis, Carleton University, 1987), p. 3.
30. MU 8425, W.C.T.U. Collection, Minute Book of the Ottawa W.C.T.U., February 17, 1885.
31. Ibid., April 20, 1885.
32. Carr-Harris, Lights and Shades of Mission Work, p.11.
33. Ibid., p. 38.
34. Ibid., pp. 55-56.
35. Ibid., p. 39.
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## **CHAPTER SEVEN:**

### **CONCLUSION**

The W.C.T.U. was the largest provincial women's temperance organization of its era in Ontario and, indeed, the largest non-denominational women's group of any kind in the country. From its inception in 1874, the Ontario W.C.T.U. rapidly moved beyond identifying alcohol as the single root of societal evil to a broader critique of the social system. This analysis was based on evangelical principles with the primary role being granted to the family unit and its moral centre, the mother. While accepting many elements in the Cult of Domesticity, the Ontario W.C.T.U. insisted on a public role for women and more responsible private behaviour by men. It has been observed that the American "women of the W.C.T.U. seemed more concerned with uplifting men than with raising the



status of women."<sup>1</sup> The Ontario W.C.T.U. sought to do both: to raise the status of women by uplifting the conduct of men.

These conclusions result from examining the Ontario W.C.T.U.'s origins, structures, strategies and achievements at the provincial and local levels. This dissertation has based its argument on the nature of the discourse utilized by these women as recorded in the local minute books, and county, provincial and dominion meetings. The establishing and refining of a collective position on a wide variety of social problems was not easily accomplished by these women. The provincial and local records, however, do permit a close examination of this process, and the resulting repertoire of issues that were fought. By championing temperance through formal legislation and personal commitment, the W.C.T.U. women expressed their anger at male violence towards defenceless women and children and their fears for the survival of the family unit. Their support of the Social Purity movement provided an outlet for their anxiety for the future of young men and women, and the society that would soon be under their control. Their success in promoting Scientific Temperance Instruction in Ontario's public schools was complemented by their unstinting vigilance to educate youth through the Bands of Hope and Loyal Temperance Legions, and thereby convincing themselves and Ontario women that education was a more effective agent of social change than legislative fiat. The

Young Woman's Christian Temperance Union allowed the W.C.T.U. to train a new generation of young and usually single women temperance workers. In so doing, it gave status to a single women's organization within the boundaries of its own structure. Thus, while local unions emphasized different features of the W.C.T.U. program according to their interests and community concerns, all women in the Ontario W.C.T.U. between 1874 and 1916 subscribed to these important elements of a common W.C.T.U. platform.

The Ottawa Citizen of January 8, 1990 profiled the five remaining members of the Winchester W.C.T.U. under this heading: "Dying Group Still Fights for Prohibition." How did the Ontario W.C.T.U., almost 17,000 strong in 1916, dwindle to this sad end? When did it begin its slide into irrelevance and why? The answer lies, at least in part, in the wise reflection of Nancy Hardesty:

One of the ironies of history is that abolitionists, despised by the majority of their contemporaries, have been lauded by historians, while temperance advocates, almost uniformly respected in their day, have been dismissed as meddlers, cranks, neurotics.<sup>2</sup>

As seen, in the 1880's and 1890's the W.C.T.U. were widely respected in the villages, towns and cities of Ontario. In the

mid 1880's, for example, the Ontario W.C.T.U. was powerful enough to muster a 30,000-name petition in support of Scientific Temperance Instruction in the public schools. The Minister of Education recognized the organization's moral authority by acceding to its curriculum demands, and by regular communications with the W.C.T.U. to explain and defend his position. In that period as well, the dynamic urban Y.W.C.T.U.'s were capably directing a multi-faceted evangelical teaching program to capture the loyalty of children to temperance and "purity" as well as establishing and running facilities for fallen women, and working girls and boys. By the end of the period under examination in 1916, much of the W.C.T.U.'s authority in the formal legislative realm had disappeared. The male Committee of One Hundred, which organized to pressure the Ontario Government into passing prohibition through the Ontario Temperance Act, studiously ignored the W.C.T.U. as long as possible. In the end, it accepted the W.C.T.U.'s money, but managed to cut it out of any official role in the ensuing celebrations. The Ontario W.C.T.U. had somehow become an embarrassment, "meddlers" and "cranks" if not "neurotics," to the reconstructed (and male) temperance forces.

Three elements of the Ontario W.C.T.U. ideology help to explain its failure to survive in a leadership position after the turn of the twentieth century, especially in urban areas. For the slide into insignificance was the fate of the urban unions and provincial organization of the W.C.T.U. much more than for the small town and rural unions. First, the movement away from the single issue of

temperance removed a powerfully symbolic cause from the W.C.T.U. paradigm, and it was one which the organization never successfully replaced with a similar emotional concern. Secondly, the challenges of secularism and professionalization were not effectively met by the organization. Thirdly, the idealized social roles prescribed by the W.C.T.U. were so unrealistic as to seriously handicap the private role of such women in their own families.

By 1916, most of the temperance-based causes had waned in popularity or were no longer necessary. Provincial prohibition was accepted with the Ontario Temperance Act of 1916; Scientific Temperance Instruction had been relegated to a peripheral position in the Ontario public school curriculum; the campaign for unfermented wine had long since been won with denominations amenable to change; with prohibition, the mobilizing force of the Local Option campaigns were a concern of the past. The temperance issues that continued to rankle the W.C.T.U. appeared so resistant to change that the women became discouraged. Male leisure centres such as billiard parlours, where drinking and other immoral behaviour was thought to flourish, continued to spring up in towns and cities while liquor dispensed in military canteens or tolerated by the military establishment to ameliorate the stresses of combat all distressed the W.C.T.U. The evil of alcohol continued to be discussed not only because it was difficult to eradicate, but also because it summoned a powerful, self-righteous response from the women of the W.C.T.U. What was more, that response was in accord

with the sentiments of large sectors of their community. No other issue permitted them to create such a broad consensus with the citizenry of Ontario.

The Ontario W.C.T.U. did not deal effectively with either professionalization or secularism. The leadership role assumed by the W.C.T.U. during the nineteenth century in such matters as working-class education and philanthropy had been taken over by 1916 by municipally-controlled services. Vocational education had been introduced into the public and high schools to more productively serve working-class children. The Associated Charities movement had become a favoured device in many Canadian cities to seek out cases of deserving philanthropy and to coordinate the municipal response. Both of these areas were becoming the purview of the educational and social work professional with its attendant training and secular world-view. The rise of the professional signalled the demise of the club woman, and especially the evangelically-motivated club woman. As well, many of the most important social initiatives of the Ontario W.C.T.U. had been achieved, or were very close to fruition by 1916. Woman's provincial suffrage was little more than a year away; Social Purity campaigns had resulted in such legislative changes as raising the Canadian age of consent, protection for young women from "sexual predators" and the establishment of Juvenile Courts.

The combined forces of Biblical Criticism, Darwinianism, liberalism and secularization caused the conservative evangelical

agenda to be seriously questioned after 1900 in the urban setting. There, for example, new urban youth groups were successfully competing for the same young men and women as had been drawn to the Bands of Hope, Loyal Temperance Legions and Young Woman's Christian Temperance Unions. One explanation for the decline in W.C.T.U. strength in the cities after the turn of the century must, then, have been the relative inadequacy of the underlying individualism of evangelicalism in the face of urbanization. This challenge did not influence the W.C.T.U. to the same extent in the town, village and rural unions, however. There, the W.C.T.U. women carried on with an active social program grounded in evangelical zeal. Social activism did not replace prayer in smaller communities; it was motivated, reinforced and sustained by prayer. The evangelical sisterhood, rooted in personal salvation but expressed in social activism, bound the local W.C.T.U. unions together in an enduring social collective, and permitted them to continue to influence their communities directly and through informal channels.

Most apparent to W.C.T.U. women in the towns and villages of Ontario, however, was the need to maintain the evangelical vision of a purified and reconstituted family. Imbued with evangelical principles and self-discipline and centred on the moral influence of the mother, the sanctified family remained at the core of the Ontario W.C.T.U. social programs. This idealized social order, founded on a bedrock network of evangelical family units, would resist the encroaching secularism and materialism of the modern world. It would allow its citizens to look beyond their selfish

personal desires to their responsibilities as Christians in remoulding the social order. An evangelicalism directed to personal salvation was not only inadequate, but irresponsible, argued the W.C.T.U. While this concept remained at the centre of W.C.T.U. ideas and actions throughout the period examined here, it faced more competition in urban settings than in small towns. Of course most of the organization's official statements and large-scale campaigns emanated from just these cities where the conservative evangelical vision was under most sustained attack.

A third component of the W.C.T.U. discourse which disadvantaged it in an increasingly competitive, male-dominated society was its concept of ideal social roles. The expectations raised in W.C.T.U. women - of sons confiding their innermost thoughts and desires to mother, of daughters serving in a perpetually subsidiary station to mother, of husbands accepting their moral inferiority in comparison to mother - nurtured assumptions about mother's central authority, in and outside the home, at a time when "unprofessionalized" women were becoming increasingly marginalized in society. The slow recognition of this dissonance between the discourse and societal trends may have forced the W.C.T.U. to acknowledge its waning influence by increasingly removing itself voluntarily from the legislative battleground. It may also account for such decisions as the opening of Y.W.C.T.U. membership to men, and the throwing of W.C.T.U. resources behind programs which encouraged males rather than females to right society's wrongs. Not

all W.C.T.U. unions reacted to the new conditions by catering to men, of course. Sadly, however, there seems to have been little option. Either the women could accede to the new social order and retreat gracefully into the bastion of the family, there to become the handmaids of the new professionals in child-care and family nutrition. There also strains were likely created by mother's unrealistic expectations placed on family members, and her perceived powerlessness to change this new order. Alternately, the women could continue to act as moral arbiters in communities that found them increasingly irrelevant, shrill and even totalitarian in comparison with the new liberalism in social mores and methods. The women of the Ontario W.C.T.U. took both courses, with urban women generally making the first choice, and town and urban women the second.

This investigation of the Ontario W.C.T.U. makes no pretense of providing definitive answers to all the questions it has raised. It represents but one study of this important women's evangelical organization from its founding to 1916. However, this thesis does raise new topics for research in women's history, evangelicalism, and social reform. It would be useful to know if the Ontario experience, and particularly the role played by the Y.W.C.T.U., was duplicated in other Canadian provinces or American states. What was the relationship between the local unions and headquarters in



other jurisdictions, and how did this relationship mediate the various prescriptions of the central authority? What was the relationship of the W.C.T.U. to the various types of denominational evangelicalism and what was the impact of the W.C.T.U. on those churches? It is important to investigate as well the impact of temperance and evangelicalism on other organizations and activities of women in this period, including the Y.W.C.A. and the C.G.I.T., missionary work, teaching and nursing. Too little is known of the personalities, and thus the individual motivations of those women who shaped the Ontario and other provincial W.C.T.U. organizations. Finally, the long-term decline of the W.C.T.U. and the persistence of their ideas far beyond the decline of their direct influence should be investigated in Ontario and elsewhere.

And yet, despite what research has not yet uncovered about the W.C.T.U., despite its gradual decline and marginalization, from the vantage point of a late twentieth-century observer, the W.C.T.U. seems to have been unusually prescient in many of its causes and concerns. Its dire warnings of the destructive effect of tobacco have only become widely accepted in the 1980's. The W.C.T.U. would applaud the steady decline in cigarette consumption, but deplore the decreasing average age of smokers and the growing tendency for young women to indulge in the habit. It would not knowingly at the federal government's intention to revamp and

stiffen a law, passed in 1908 at the behest of the W.C.T.U., which governs the sale of tobacco to minors.<sup>3</sup> It would point to the passage of the Young Offender's Act and its provisions for separate regulations, trials and incarceration for youths. The women would note sadly society's horror at the destruction created by twentieth-century recreational drugs and, wearily, they would marshal today the same arguments against their use that they applied in 1890. The W.C.T.U. would grieve that, just as they had warned, society almost unreservedly embraced materialism and secularism, while denying its evangelical roots. Perhaps most of all, the W.C.T.U. would take pride in the heightened public awareness of the damage resulting directly from alcohol - as a source of family violence and abuse, as a prime indicator and source of degradation for troubled young people, and as a killer of innocent people on the nation's highways. Student-directed programs to reduce drinking and driving would have made the women of the W.C.T.U. glow with happiness. The details of modern campaigns differ from those waged by the W.C.T.U. many years ago, but the essential elements and many of the innovative pedagogical techniques are identical. Beyond these specific programs and goals, the women of the Ontario W.C.T.U. would have welcomed, and by their actions were partly responsible for, women's separate discourse and their new public life.

Like the women in a Mary Gordon novel who understand "the pleasures of judgment, the lust for it, the taste for condemnation like a taste for salt ...the reward for hours of exhaustion and for

years of self-control"<sup>4</sup> the women of the Ontario W.C.T.U. were certain of right and wrong. When they discovered wrong, especially that which departed from the evangelical ideal, they judged and judged harshly. Nevertheless, the image of the blue-haired dogooders waving umbrellas and meddling in neighbours' lives has become a popular but hardly accurate caricature. For the most part, they sought to rediscover the right, and in so doing they acted responsibly and effectively across a whole spectrum of issues, leaving a legacy that enriches our historical past.

**ENDNOTES**

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## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX I

## ONTARIO MEMBERSHIP TOTALS

DATE	Y. W. C. T. U. MEMBERS	W. C. T. U. MEMBERS	BAND OF HOPE / L T L MEMBERS
1890	638	4,733	14,945
1891		4,318	10,613
1892	321	3,287	9,040
1893	600	4,614	6,840
1894	498	4,992	10,028
1895	351	4,311	6,005
1896		5,110	6,285
1897	474		
1898	671	5,597	4,978
1899	585	5,469	3,847
1900	414	5,521	4,140
1901	333	5,505	4,737
1902	568	5,235	
1909	264	6,022	4,500

1910	413	7,103	8,000
1911		7,128	5,969
1912	588	7,700	4,948
1913		8,179	3,443
1914	1,046	9,500	3,712
1917		6,974	2,883

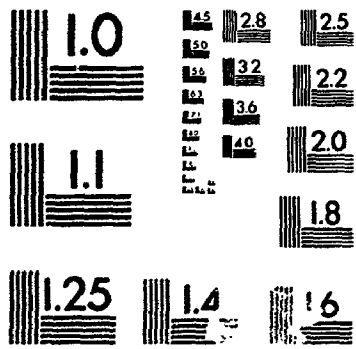
## APPENDIX II

DATE	ONTARIO	UNION	TOTALS
	YWCTU UNIONS	WCTU UNIONS	BAND OF HOPE / L T L UNIONS
1886	12	150	6
1887	25	137	18
1888	35	188	14
1889	33	193	14
1890	25	219	13
1891	19	175	80
1892	19	179	109
1893	16	229	89
1894	12	202	88
1895	11	205	84
1896	12	220	95
1897	20	228	43
1898	25	244	89
1899	26	223	74
1900	26	222	69
1901	20	224	83
1902	23	192	59
1903	23	217	

1904		216	
1905	11	187	
1906	18	201	
1907	9	178	
1908	7	181	
1909	13	209	62
1910	21	230	91
1911	21	215	80
1912	25	240	64
1913	25	479	60
1914	40	548	67
1915	40	234	67
1916	49	230	58
1917	41	205	59
1918	32	237	14



5 of/de 5



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART  
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS  
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a  
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

## APPENDIX III

SURVEY OF ONTARIO W.C.T.U., Y.W.C.T.U. AND BAND OF HOPE MEMBERSHIP

YEAR	LOCATION	W.C.T.U. MEMBERS	Y W C T U MEMBERS	BAND OF H O P E MEMBERS
1886	Toronto	100	42	4 (250)
	Ottawa	66	119	2
	Hamilton	100	130	1 (100)
	Brckvill	24	25	1 (50)
	Brantfrd	80	45	1
	Picton	50		1 (300)
1888	Toronto	502	121	10 (1,164)
	Ottawa	105	67	2 (221)
	Hamilton	275	164	10 (1,955)
	Brckvill	145	42	2 (100+)
	Brantfrd	100	40	2 (202)
	Picton	33		2 (220)
1890	Toronto	225	60	7

	Ottawa		50	1
	Hamilton	222	83	10 (2,000)
	Brckvill	50	32	1 (100)
	Brantfrd	40	23	1 (95)
	Picton	8	34	1 (100)
1892	Toronto	281	39	5 (474)
	Ottawa	50		1 (89)
	Hamilton	149	107	8 (1819)
	Brckvill		22	1 (80)
	Brantfrd	46		1 (78)
	Picton	11	17	1 (100)
1894	Toronto	339	41	4 (378)
	Ottawa	100	200	1
	Hamilton	200	180	11 (3,600)
	Brckvill			
	Brantfrd	40		1 (70)
	Picton	18	15	1

## APPENDIX IV

## DOMINION MEMBERSHIP TOTALS

DATE	Y . W . C . T . U . MEMBERS	W . C . T . U . MEMBERS	BAND OF HOPE / LTL MEMBERS
1890		9,040	19,184
1891		9,343	19,557
1892		6,982	15,107
1893	1,265	9,310	10,869
1894		9,676	10,028
1895		8,449	9,959
1896		9,959	9,839
1897			
1898		10,886	8,531
1899	896	10,628	6,757
1900	860	10,319	6,795
1901	1,051	9,849	7,448
1902	1,469	9,488	2,684
1909	758	11,428	7,667
1910	947	14,283	10,702
1911			9,688
1912	1,152	15,948	8,586
1913			8,802

1914	1,596	16,838	11,535
1917		13,825	7,731

**APPENDIX V**  
**DOMINION UNION TOTALS**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>YWCTU UNIONS</b>	<b>WCTU UNIONS</b>	<b>BAND OF HOPE / LTL UNIONS</b>
1890	46	368	192
1891	38	335	206
1892	40	363	202
1893	35	442	117
1894	35	422	185
1895		404	189
1896		450	185
1897			
1898		505	189
1899	52	483	153
1900	47	446	150
1901	45	435	150
1902	41	404	114
1909	29	421	148
1910	49	538	164
1911			181
1912	57	539	177

1913

179

1914

56

939

222

1917

578

160

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