

## **“Temples of an Incrusted Faith”: An Inquiry into the Question of Secularization From Within**

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Generations of clergymen in Canada have reached the disquieting conclusion that religion and the churches were being seriously compromised by secular forces – that there has been secularization from within. The alarm bells were perhaps first sounded by the Rev. E.H. Dewart in 1878. This observant editor of the *Christian Guardian* concluded that the “progress of doubt and unbelief has not been by direct and open assault, but by a slow and steady undermining of the foundation principles of revealed religion.” Secularization of the faith was occurring “within the Church itself,” according to Dewart.<sup>1</sup> By the late-nineteenth century there was growing concern about what was being preached in the church. James Robertson warned the Presbyterian missionaries he recruited for service in the West that “the pulpit was not the place to air one’s thoughts on secular matters.”<sup>2</sup> This concern became more pronounced as the churches became deeply involved in social and political reform. After years of being one of the leading advocates of the social gospel, Rev. S.D. Chown reminded Methodists at the General Conference held in Ottawa in September of 1914 that “the essential thing for the Church to-day to remember is that the Christian life is God inspired and God centred. We have been to a large extent losing the idea, and it has been an immense loss . . . we have been making man, not God the great centre of our spiritual universe.”<sup>3</sup> By the mid 1920s, Canadian clergymen were calling for and attempting to organize spiritual renewal within congregations. Revival was deemed essential to the future of the churches in Canada. The Rev. Richard Roberts,

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despairing the church's accommodation to secular culture, delivered a sober assessment of religious life in the churches during the interwar years. "Religion has become a pale and anaemic counterfeit of itself, he declared, [a] dull thing of rules and subscriptions, of ceremony and formula, of mediocre hopes and middling performances, the sanction of a standardized morality and temple of an incrustated faith."<sup>4</sup>

These statements can be considered jeremiads – not in the traditional sense, but in the sense suggested by Sacvan Bercovitch in his important book, *The American Jeremiad*. They reflected the realization by a number of "prophets" that the churches were losing their spiritual mission.<sup>5</sup> The strategy of accommodating increasingly powerful and pervasive secular forces into church life and teaching as a way to make religion somehow more relevant to society was regarded with some suspicion and foreboding. If the supernatural elements of religion were not maintained then there was the real possibility that there would be little spiritual life remaining in the churches and little that made them distinctive from other secular movements or institutions. There was the possibility of reformation, but only if the churches recaptured their spiritual *raison d'être* and sense of the supernatural and holy. Accompanying the fear about decline were hopes that the mission of the churches could still be fulfilled.

This theme of secularization from within religion and the churches was advanced in my 1992 book, *Secularizing the Faith*.<sup>6</sup> The idea of secularization from within has caused a great deal of controversy. Critics insist that if secularization has taken place, then it happened outside the churches. This case has been forcefully argued by John Webster Grant in his superb survey of religious life in nineteenth-century Ontario, *A Profusion of Spires*. In wondering about the origins of the secularizing tendency, Grant asserts that "social developments over which the churches had little control, rather than their response to them, were the most significant precursors of twentieth-century secularization."<sup>7</sup> The problem with this view is that it isolates religion and the churches from society. The response of churches or religion to social, cultural and intellectual developments, however, is crucial to the process of secularization.

Other critics of the secularization thesis argue that theology underwent *change* with the result that church teachings became more alive to the concerns of modern society. *Change* has become a keyword to mask a persistent belief in Christianization.<sup>8</sup> These critics deny the suitability of secularization as an interpretive framework altogether. There is no

question that theology underwent important change – indeed renewal and modernization – during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century. But whether these changes actually led to stronger and more assured Christian faith or whether they represented a secularization of the faith is a central issue.

The sacred and the secular cannot be compartmentalized into starkly separate categories. There is an integral relation between the two; they are imbued with each other. It is clear that religion and the churches had a profound influence on secular life in nineteenth-century Canada. Religion inspired major social movements such as temperance and it nearly dictated the course of political life until the 1850s. Universities were built by the denominations and intellectual life was shaped by a host of religious questions. Evangelicalism had a profound influence on cultural life. The relation between the sacred and the secular also moves in the other direction. The secular influenced the sacred. Sometime in the nineteenth-century secular forces – concern about the world and scepticism about religious truth, especially the belief in the existence of the supernatural and possibility of the miraculous – began to have a greater influence in society. This secular influence extended to religious beliefs and institutions. To be clear, however, this does not mean that religion vanished. Secularization does not entail the inevitable disappearance of religion, but rather the growing influence of secular forces in society from which religion and the churches were not immune.

One cannot suggest precisely when this shift to a more powerful secular outlook or orientation occurred. What seems clear is that there is no one crisis or break from the past that one can point to and pronounce as the dawning of a secular age. Dewart was quite perceptive in his comment that the progress of doubt and unbelief was “slow and steady.”<sup>9</sup>

### *Voluntarism and the Marketplace*

An important development in the process of secularization may have been disestablishment. On the one hand, the separation of Church and state between the 1830s and 1850s meant the triumph of voluntarism as the evangelical churches entered a period of vibrant growth between the 1850s and 1880s. But on the other hand, the implications of voluntarism for the role of churches and religion in Canada has not been closely studied. What disestablishment or voluntarism meant was that no church had a favoured

or protected role in British North American society. Instead of the clergy and churches being assured a source of support or income from the state, they were dependent on the voluntary support of congregations. In effect, they were thrust into the open marketplace of competing ideas and demands. Churches and clergy who ignored popular beliefs, values, or aspirations risked having no followers.

There were longterm religious implications flowing out of disestablishment. Churches were more susceptible to social pressure and popular culture. Canadian society was characterized by a nearly all-encompassing pursuit of material progress. As William Westfall has argued in his study of Protestant culture in nineteenth-century Ontario, "progress was to replace religion as the new opiate of the masses."<sup>10</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century most people migrating to Canada from the British Isles did so to improve their standard of living, not to gain a sanctuary to practice their religion or build a new Kingdom of God.<sup>11</sup> Many looked to science and technology as the basis for the fulfilment of their hopes and aspirations.<sup>12</sup>

### ***Science and Religion***

The question of science and religion has recently undergone substantial revision. No longer is the metaphor of warfare or the victory of science over religion accepted.<sup>13</sup> Indeed, some scholars have suggested that Christianity was significantly renewed as a result of scientific or modern critical insights.<sup>14</sup> But, the pendulum of historical interpretation has swung too far away from acknowledging the ways in which a more scientific or naturalistic understanding challenged religion.<sup>15</sup>

Something quite profound happened in the relation between science and religion as a result of the nineteenth-century scientific revolution. In the early-nineteenth century, religion had a commanding influence on science. Pursuing knowledge about the natural world was considered a way to reach a fuller understanding of the divine Creator. Much scientific activity and inquiry was inspired by natural theology.<sup>16</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, science was not shaped by religion. Instead, science had a commanding influence on religion. The scientific approach to literature and history shaped the modern understanding of the Bible.

There is no question that many were saved from doubt as a result of modern understanding. Many doctrines and sections of the Bible that were

immoral or incorrect to the modern sensibility were no longer regarded as being essential to Christian faith. The concept of the development of doctrine – or progressive Revelation – convinced many that they had reached a fuller and clearer understanding of Christianity. This modernization of theology – or change in religious thinking – is central to the attack on the secularization thesis.

But there were real perils in this modern understanding. For some, religion was no longer on a firm foundation. What was the Word of God in the Bible, what was factual or historically verifiable, what was mythical or legendary, or what was the product of ancient beliefs and practices seemed open questions. The bedrock of the Protestant faith – the Word of God – was now subject to immense debate. Advocates of a more liberal understanding of Christianity and the Bible were concerned about the implications of modern thought. For instance, Principal Grant of Queen's University, a reluctant prophet of modernism, worried about the fate of the Bible. In a series of addresses on "How to Read the Bible," he pointed out that modern Bible reading, which required insights from geology, anthropology, biology, history, and ancient literature, robbed the layperson of the "old Bible that has hitherto sustained his [sic] faith."<sup>17</sup>

The extent to which this renewal of theology was embraced by congregations has not been confronted. Had theology become too difficult, or too critical or secular? Was it somehow remote from the spiritual concerns or yearnings of the people? Admittedly, these are difficult questions, for discovering the religious beliefs of those in the pews poses real challenges for the historian. Despite his sustained criticism of the secularization thesis, Michael Gauvreau makes the point that denominational colleges became isolated or cut off from their churches, as a result of embracing modern theology.<sup>18</sup>

As theology was being renewed or modernized, there was a definite response insisting that traditional evangelicalism be maintained. Many flocked to the numerous revival meetings of Dwight Moody, the Canadian team of Crossley and Hunter, or Reuben Torrey and Charles Alexander – to name a few – seeking spiritual sustenance.<sup>19</sup> All these revivalists eschewed complex modern theological questions, insisted that the Bible was the Word of God, and emphasized the necessity of personal regeneration. In their preaching, Christian faith seemed straightforward and certain. As John Stackhouse's study of evangelicalism demonstrates, there was a need for institutions in which biblical studies affirmed faith and in

which there was no question about the divine authorship and authority of Scripture.<sup>20</sup> This demand gave rise to a large variety of Bible schools and other evangelical institutions, which are only now receiving serious scholarly attention.

### ***The Social Gospel***

That there was an element of secularization in modern theology becomes most clear in the social gospel. There is no question that the inspiration of the social gospel rests in a deep appreciation of the life and teaching of Christ. Furthermore to advocate Christian social action does not necessarily involve a secularization of the faith. Historically, such advocacy has been central to Christianity.

Emphasis on the social gospel reflected the growing doubts that many had about the supernatural, for it concentrated on Jesus the man and his activities on earth – what seemed to be verifiable within the historical record and consistent with worldly human experience. What was downplayed was the divine Christ – the Son of God who intervened in human history performing many miracles and was resurrected from death.<sup>21</sup> Clergymen such as D.J. Macdonnell admitted that much of their activity in “practical” Christian was a product of doubt or an escape from difficult doctrinal matters.<sup>22</sup>

The secular implications of the social gospel became most clear in S.D. Chown’s series of addresses to the theology students at Victoria College in 1910. He announced that sociology – the study of contemporary societies – represented the culmination of Christian understanding. Advocates of the social gospel regarded their escape from doctrine and emphasis on activism as one of the most important features of the movement. They claimed that such liberality made Christianity more universal and less exclusive. The social gospel, they hoped, would gather the struggling urban masses into the churches. But in reality, the social gospel merely exchanged one form of exclusivity for another. Joseph Flavelle, Timothy Eaton, and R.B. Bennett were no less committed to Christianity because of their veneration of capitalism, hard work, and business than the advocates of the social gospel who insisted that following Christ meant overthrowing many aspects of capitalism.<sup>23</sup> Any equation of Christianity with a particular set of reforms had been the basis of concern about the social gospel from the beginning.<sup>24</sup>

There was a danger that in their advocacy of the social gospel, the churches would be identified with transitory values and objectives. This becomes most clear in J.S. Woodsworth's remarkable confessions during the period he became committed to the social gospel. "It is more and more difficult for me to believe in the 'supernatural' events as recorded in the Old and New Testaments," he wrote his brother in 1907. "I have been seeing so much superstition, so much that is mere tradition, that I have been forced to find some standard by which I could determine what was true and what was false – and I can't see how the supernatural can find a place." In one of his favourite sermons of the period, he defined what was replacing the supernatural in his faith: "Christianity stands for social righteousness as well as personal righteousness . . . It is quite right for me to be anxious to save my never dying soul; but it is of greater importance to try to serve the present age."<sup>25</sup>

The potential of serving the present age leading to a secularized faith became most clear during World War 1. It was no accident that shortly after the flowering of the social gospel the churches uncritically followed the imperatives of the Canadian government into the Great War. The social gospel had equated the coming of the Kingdom of God with many reforms requiring state intervention. As a result, the churches became the servants of the state. In the end, they made the near fatal mistake of identifying Christianity with World War 1. Christian pacifism was rebuked.<sup>26</sup> Ultimately it was Woodsworth's pacifism that persuaded the Methodist church to accept his resignation from the ministry, not the fact that he doubted the existence of the supernatural, including the notion of a divine Jesus.<sup>27</sup> S.D. Chown's ringing endorsement of the war: "Khaki has become a sacred colour" was based on the belief that the war would be redemptive and bring about the Kingdom of God.<sup>28</sup>

By war's end, it was clear that such identification with the interests of the state had robbed the churches of any truly prophetic role in society. The Rev. George Pidgeon, who would soon be leading the church union forces within the Presbyterian church, admitted the church's "inability to rise above national prejudices and the national viewpoint."<sup>29</sup> Disillusioned soldiers charged that they had not encountered any spiritual or moral leadership in the ministrations of the churches at the front.<sup>30</sup> The chaplains, basically agreed, when they concluded that the churches had failed to use the "available resources of Divine Power."<sup>31</sup> Chown, was the most reflective. Defining the repentant mood of the churches in the postwar

period, he solemnly apologized for “painting roses on the lid of hell.” Moreover, he realized that “our faith has been trembling if not crumbling.” He regarded further dedication by the churches to social gospel inspired economic and political reform as extravagant. As he warned in a postwar sermon: “Although we cannot forget the Good Samaritan, we must save the Prodigal Son.”<sup>32</sup> This sentiment was echoed by the Rev. George Pidgeon who bluntly stated: “social service is not religion . . . Christ was no mere social reformer.”<sup>33</sup>

The history of the mainstream Protestant churches since World War I has largely been one of attempting to recover their spiritual vitality. But this proved to be exceptionally difficult. The interwar years were a period of spiritual and theological depression for the mainstream churches. What was most troubling was that the churches themselves had largely succumbed to the consumerism and rampant materialism that they decried.

### ***Consumer Culture***

The argument that religion in Canadian society is shaped by a consumer ethic has been applied to recent history – indeed the contemporary scene – by Reginald Bibby in *Fragmented Gods*.<sup>34</sup> Consumer culture, however, is not merely a recent phenomenon. The culture of consumerism has been a source of secularization far more powerful and enduring than either a scientific world view, modern theology, or the social gospel. As George Rawlyk has recently stressed: “the evangelical consensus disintegrated from within as evangelical Christianity lost its collective soul to . . . consumerism – the insidious antithesis to essential Christianity.”<sup>35</sup> What makes consumerism so destructive of religion is that it stands for values that are indeed anathema to religion. Consumer culture lauded the values of material well-being, immediate gratification, the pursuit of pleasure, and self-fulfilment.

Evidence of the inroads consumerism has had upon religion and the churches in Canadian society becomes apparent by the late-nineteenth century. As a way to hold on to as many adherents as possible, churches attempted to become all things to all people. In a way, the “Institutional Church” mirrored the grand institution of consumerism, the Department store. For like the Department store, the Institutional Church housed many specialized departments, each designed to attract people looking for certain products or services, whether it be for spiritual well-being, physical fitness,

education, social contacts, or curiosity about the world. Churches were no longer places of worship only. Despite widespread approval for expanding church activities, there was an awareness of the perils. The prominent Methodist editor William Withrow warned: "The more of the so-called secular work the Church is doing, the greater need for spiritual preaching in the pulpit."<sup>36</sup>

In the end, the secular work of many churches overwhelmed this spiritual imperative. One example of this was the attempt by churches and evangelical associations to ensure that the restless youth of cities were exposed to a Christian environment. Y.M.C.A.s were established as religious institutions providing a sanctuary against an unrighteous world. Sports quickly became one of the leading counter-attractions offered by the Y.M.C.A. Sacred purpose was attached to sporting activities by clergy espousing "Muscular Christianity." Through physical training, especially on the athletic field or in sporting competitions, preachers argued the necessary qualities for dedicating oneself to the Lord's work -effort, dedication, discipline, courage, and endurance- were developed. Sports would build Christian character. Despite attempts by the churches, sports were not "sacralized."<sup>37</sup> On the contrary, nowhere is the secularizing tendency seen more clearly than in the Y.M.C.A. By the end of the nineteenth century it was dedicated to sporting, fitness, and recreation instead of evangelical religion.<sup>38</sup> Religion became marginalized in this context. Manliness, sportsmanship, and building character not Godliness and spiritual zeal became the standard.

The difficulty for clergy in competing in the marketplace of popular culture becomes clear in the Rev. C.W. Gordon's career as the popular novelist "Ralph Connor." Gordon began writing fictional sketches about life on the frontier as a way to reach as broad an audience as possible. The major theme of the early novels, *Black Rock* (1898), *The Sky Pilot* (1899) and *The Man from Glengarry* (1901) was the Prodigal Son. The heroes were missionaries, the plots turned on death bed scenes, major religious issues were discussed, and in the end doubt and immorality was vanquished by the missionary-hero leading the righteous in building a church. Gordon's early novels were extended sermons on the universal Christian themes of redemption for all believers, divine purpose in human suffering, and the necessity of forgiveness.

Gordon did not think he was abandoning the ministry but rather expanding it. He was keenly aware of all the activities and diversions the

pulpit had to compete with in modern society. When he signed away the dramatic and movie rights for some of his more popular novels, he hoped that his work would uplift the essentially immoral stage and screen with his Christian message, making these media yet another pulpit. He was bitterly disappointed in this respect.<sup>39</sup>

Moreover, Gordon's later novels demonstrated just how difficult it was to maintain a strong evangelical message in fiction that strove to be popular. By 1904, the didactic aspect of his writing was being severely criticized. Gordon was able to maintain his highly successful formula by emphasizing drama and adventure and pushing the explicitly religious content into the background. In *The Foreigner* (1909), being a Christian was defined as nothing more than "good citizenship" – a doctrine that captured the essence of a secularized faith, for this was a stance that made Christianity completely indistinguishable from basic social values. What is clear is that Gordon's writing succumbed to the pressures of a reading public wanting entertainment instead of religious edification. His later popular novels were not sermons dressed in fictional garb, rather they were designed to appeal to readers fascinated with different aspects of the Canadian experience and yearning for more quick-paced heart-rending adventure tales and romances. The attempt by Gordon and many other clergymen-authors to expand the pulpit in secular society through religious fiction ultimately led to that pulpit becoming more secular.

We see the corrosive powers of consumerism most clearly in the character of revivalism and evangelicalism in Canada – the very heart of religion. Concern for the salvation of individual souls did not disappear from revival activity but gradually attention to leisure and elements of entertainment crept in and became increasingly prominent.

Descriptions of Methodist revivals from the early-nineteenth century make it clear that bringing about conversions was the focus of the camp meeting. The three day meetings were packed with exhortation, sermons, hymn singing, times for contemplation, the salvation of souls, and joyful celebration of God's saving mercy. There were diversions, but they were not within the camp meeting itself, but rather on the periphery. People arrived "full of holy expectation" and the atmosphere was spiritual. By the 1880s at the Grimsby Park camp meeting site one could still receive spiritual sustenance. Bible study classes were held, there were concerts of sacred music, and preachers delivered sermons. But the emphasis on conversions had disappeared. Grimsby Park boasted every facility for "in-

nocent and healthy enjoyment and sport,” such as boats, tennis courts and bicycles. People arrived there, not with the expectation of a deeply moving religious experience, but to have a holiday and enjoy a retreat away from the rigours of urban life. In attempting to make sure that leisure activity somehow remained in a religious setting, Grimsby Park was transformed into a summer recreational resort.<sup>40</sup> Religion was moved to the margins of Grimsby Park life.

Revivalists, also made accommodation with secular values in order to compete in modern urban society. To continue to attract the urban masses who had an increasingly wide divergence of attractions before them – theatre, lectures, music hall performances, sporting competitions and latterly moving picture shows – revivalists adopted techniques that would appeal to a secular culture. Modern revivalism was distinguished by its emphasis on preaching which featured personal and often dramatic narratives instead of an explication of Scripture and doctrine as well as the singing of gospel songs set to popular tunes.

There was growing concern that entertainment was being substituted for devout communion with the Holy Spirit. Some charged that the rise of sentimental religion and emphasis on “pomp and ostentatious display” revealed a languishing of true piety and the decay of vital Christianity.<sup>41</sup> It seemed that people were not being lifted out of the “mundane everyday world” into an experience of the supernatural. In attempting to make religion something appealing to the masses, modern revivalists robbed it of some of its substance and much that was demanding and instead dressed it up in whatever was entertaining. As the *Presbyterian Review* lamented: “the old, old story of the love of Jesus seems to have lost its charm; and so there must be something more spicy for a religious public that seems to be acquiring a depraved taste.”<sup>42</sup>

By the 1930s, revival activity in Canada featured a secularized faith. Clergymen in Canada had been hoping for a revival throughout the 1920s and they thought this long-awaited revival had arrived in the form of the Oxford Group movement led by Frank Buchman, which had spectacular success in most Canadian cities. This movement stressed the necessity of a “life change” and dedication to the principles of absolute honesty, purity, love, and unselfishness. This insistence on conversion to a moral way of life was consistent with the evangelical tradition. But there was little explicitly religious content in the meetings. This movement was shorn of many of the basics of Christian worship. There were few traditional

religious preliminaries, such as prayer, hymn singing, sermon or Scripture reading. There were few references to God's plan of salvation and redeeming power or Christ's atoning sacrifice. Instead the emphasis was on personal testimonies of life changing or moral re-armament, not a conversion to Christianity.

In the end, the verdict of the United Church of Canada on the Oxford group inspired revival was quite disturbing. It suggested that many aspects of Christianity were avoided by this movement because they were too difficult.<sup>43</sup> The fact that many clergy and laity embraced this movement demonstrated how secular ethics were penetrating religious beliefs and church life. The Oxford Group movement's emphasis on immediate psychological well-being indicated the extent to which the culture of consumerism had transformed religion in Canada. Protestant values were shifting from a spiritual emphasis on salvation to a more secular emphasis on self-fulfilment in this world.

### ***Conclusion***

The mainstream Protestant churches have enjoyed significant influence and a real presence in Canadian society. They have done so by making a number of crucial accommodations with modern social and intellectual trends. But in their encounter with modern thought, advocacy of social reform, and competition with the culture of consumerism these churches have sacrificed a great deal. To a significant extent, the mission and message of these churches have been shaped by these secular forces. The churches have not been able to maintain a leading or dominant role. Instead modern critical inquiry, scientific advances, the agenda of progressive social reformers and popular culture have determined the course of religious developments. The culture of consumerism – with its emphasis on recreation and entertainment and its veneration of materialism immediate self-fulfilment – has been particularly corrosive. Religion has not disappeared but the essential supernatural or spiritual *raison d'être* of the churches and religion, those elements which make them distinctive from other institutions and movements, have been attenuated. Christianity is not proclaimed, but rather diffused. To suggest that Canadian society was somehow "sacralized" as a result of this diffusion of Christianity ignores the degree to which secular elements have come to shape religious life, and moreover the extent to which religion has become marginalized in

Canadian society.

### ***Endnotes***

1. E.H. Dewart, "Christianity and Scepticism: An Essay on Current Infidelity," in *Living Epistles; or, Christ's Witness to the World* (Toronto: Christian Guardian Office, 1878), 231-244.
2. "On the Topic of Sermons," n.d., James Robertson Papers, United Church Archives (UCA).
3. "The Vitality of Religion," Official Sermon Preached before the General Conference, Ottawa, September 1914, S.D. Chown Papers, file 101a, UCA.
4. "Treasure Trove," n.d., Richard Roberts Papers, UCA.
5. Jeremiads traditionally expressed a profound disenchantment with society, stressed human depravity and threatened doom. There was always the warning of God's wrath to follow. In North American society, the jeremiad was also designed to be corrective. Sacvan Bercovitch does not think this more positive side of the jeremiad applies to Canadian society. It may be that the mission was defined differently in Canada and that the sense of mission in Canadian society was not nearly so pervasive (*The American Jeremiad* [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978], xiv, 4-10, 11).
6. *Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).
7. J.W. Grant, *A Profusion of Spires: Religion in Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 229. The implication of this statement is that secularization is primarily a twentieth century phenomena in Canada. The timing of secularization is another point of debate among scholars. For a challenge to the view that secularization did not get underway until the twentieth century see David B. Marshall, "Canadian Historians, Secularization, and the Problem of the Nineteenth Century," in Canadian Catholic Historical Association, *Historical Studies* (1993).
8. Change is utilized by Marguerite Van Die, *An Evangelical Mind: Nathanael Burwash and the Methodist Tradition in Canada, 1839-1918* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 186-8, 193-6; and Phyllis Airhart, *Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 166n4. The most vociferous critic of the secularization thesis is Michael Gauvreau. He argues that the evangelical creed was persistent and vital

throughout the nineteenth century. It suddenly succumbed to secular pressures with the rise of relativism between 1906-8 (*The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada from the Great Revival to the Great Depression* [Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991]).

9. One might note that one of the definitions of secular in the Oxford English Dictionary is: "lasting or going on for ages, occurring over an indefinitely long time."
10. William Westfall, *Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's 1991), 107-11.
11. This becomes most clear in the recent literature on immigration, see Bruce Elliott, *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988); Cecil Houston & William Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links, and Letters* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990); and Marianne McLean *The People of Glengarry: Highlanders in Transition, 1745-1820* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991). The literature on settlement also stresses the overwhelming concern for material well-being and progress, see especially David Gagan, *Hopeful Travellers: Families, Land and Social Change in Mid-Victorian Peel County, Canada West* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981); and Donald Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario: A Study in Rural History* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984).
12. On the relation between science and the Victorian obsession with material progress, see Suzanne Zeller, *Inventing Canada: Early Victorian Science and the Idea of a Transcontinental Nation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987); and Carl Berger, *Science, God and Nature in Victorian Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 3-27.
13. James R. Moore, *The Post-Darwinian Controversies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
14. See especially, Van Die, *An Evangelical Mind*; Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century*; and Jerry N. Pittman, "Darwinism and Evolution: Three Nova Scotia Newspapers Respond, 1860-1900", *Acadiensis* 22, No. 2 (Spring 1993): 40-60.
15. John Hedley Brooke, *Science and Religion: Some Historical Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 12, 51.
16. Brooke, *Science and Religion*, 192-225; and Berger, *Science, God, and Nature*.

17. George Grant, "How to Read the Bible, No. 2" (Queen's Theological Alumni, 1893), 10-11.
18. Gauvreau, *The Evangelical Century*, 239-250.
19. On Dwight Moody in Canada, see Eric Crouse, "An American Evangelist in Canada: Dwight Moody and the Canadian Protestant Community, 1884-1898", M.A. thesis, University of Calgary, 1993; on Crossley and Hunter, see Marshall, *Secularizing the Faith*, 89-95. Much more needs to be done on the role of revivalists in Canadian society. George Rawlyk's important study, *Wrapped Up in God: A Study of Several Canadian Revivals and Revivalists* (Burlington: Welch Publishing, 1988) is highly selective and focuses on the colonial period. Phyllis Airhart's *Serving the Present Age* focuses on official Methodist responses to modern revivalism between the 1870s and 1920s rather than the revivals and revivalists themselves. Revivals have been of declining importance in Canadian religious history since the late nineteenth century, but they still require study.
20. John G. Stackhouse, Jr., *Canadian Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century: An Introduction to Its Character* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), see especially the account of the Toronto Bible College, 53-70.
21. On the relationship between the social gospel and late Victorian doubt, especially the need to ground religion in the material or historical or scientifically verifiable, see Ramsay Cook, "Spiritualism: The Science of Earthly Paradise", *Canadian Historical Review* (March 1984).
22. Quoted in J.F. McCurdy, *Life and Work of D.J. Macdonnell* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1897), 48-50.
23. For an assessment on Flavelle's deeply rooted Methodism and how he struggled with the Methodist and the United Church's growing commitment to the social gospel and advocacy of a socialist platform, see J.M. Bliss, *A Canadian Millionaire: The Life and Business Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart. 1858-1939* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978), 9-13, 375-6, 454-5, 497-8, 504-6. On Bennett's Methodism, see P.B. Waite, *The Loner: Three Sketches of the Personal Life and Ideas of R.B. Bennett, 1870-1947* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 8-17.
24. Alexander Sutherland, *The Kingdom of God and the Problems of Today* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1898).
25. Quoted in Kenneth McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), 26-8. For a possible explanation of why the Methodist Church of Canada tolerated

Woodsworth's doubts about the divinity of Christ and refused his resignation, see Airhart, *Serving the Present Age*, 113-4. Still Ramsay Cook's argument that the refusal to accept Woodsworth's resignation was indicative of the "almost total disarray" of the Methodist church is compelling (*The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada* [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985] 215). The Woodsworth case is superb evidence of secularization within the churches.

26. See Thomas Socknat, *Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada, 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 48-53.
27. Socknat, *Witness Against War*, 71-72; McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics*, 79-87; Cook, *The Regenerators*, 215; R. Allen, *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 49-50).
28. "War Sermon," 1915, S.D. Chown Papers, File 486, UCA.
29. "The Moratorium on the Sermon of the Mount," 13 October 1918, File 666; "The Spiritual Side of the Forward Movement," 5 October 1920, File 788, G.C. Pidgeon Papers, UCA.
30. C.T. Watterston to T.A. Moore, 30 December 1918, File 459, Methodist Church Army and Navy Board Papers, UCA.
31. *A Message from the Chaplains of the Overseas Military Forces of Canada to the Churches at Home*, UCA.
32. "The Mission of the Church after the War," n.d., File 616; "The Abolition of War," n.d., File 146B; "John 12:21 'Sir, we wish to see Jesus,'" 30 August 1923, File 889, S.D. Chown Papers, UCA.
33. "The Spiritual and the Practical in the Church's Life," June 1926, File 996, G.C. Pidgeon Papers, UCA.
34. *Fragmented Gods: The Poverty and Potential of Religion in Canada* (Toronto: Irwin, 1987).
35. Rawlyk, *Wrapped Up in God*, 136. Despite her criticism of the secularization thesis, Phyllis Airhart makes similar suggestions concerning the values that consumerism encompassed in "Ordering a New Nation and Reordering Protestantism 1867-1914," in *The Canadian Protestant Experience 1760-1990*, ed., George Rawlyk (Burlington: Welch Publishing, 1990), 115, 125.
36. *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, December 1894.

37. Alan Metcalfe, *Canada Learns to Play: The Emergence of Organized Sport, 1807-1914* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1987).
38. See George M. Ross, *The Y.M.C.A. in Canada: The Chronicle of a Century* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1951).
39. C.W. Gordon to George H. Doran, 5 May 1913, C.W. Gordon Papers, Box 31, Folder 13, MSS 56, University of Manitoba Archives; C.W. Gordon to Ernest Shipman 5 May 1920, Box 33, Folder 6, MSS 56, University of Manitoba Archives; C.W. Gordon to King Gordon 24 May 1921, King Gordon Papers, MG30 C241, National Archives of Canada.
40. Harriet Youmans, *Grimsby Park: Historical and Descriptive and Biographical Accounts* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1900); "Grimsby Park: Past and Present," *Canadian Methodist Magazine*, June 1886.
41. William Cochrane, "Sentimental Religion," in *Warning and Welcome: Sermons Preached at Zion Presbyterian Church, Brantford during 1876* (Brantford, 1876).
42. *Presbyterian Review* (22 April 1886). For a study of the pressure of entertainment values upon fundamentalism in the interwar years, especially in relation to the radio ministry and gospel tunes, see James W. Opp, "'Culture of the Soul': Fundamentalism and Evangelism in Canada, 1921-1940," M.A., University of Calgary, 1994; and James W. Opp, "The New Age of Evangelism: Fundamentalism and Radio on the Canadian Prairies, 1925-1945," *Historical Papers: Canadian Society of Church History* (1994).
43. United Church of Canada, Committee of Thirty, *The Oxford Group Movement: An Attempt at Appraisal* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1933).