

## SEVEN

# The Scottish Protestant Tradition

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## THE SCOTTISH BACKGROUND

In order to understand the Scottish Protestant tradition's influence in Canadian development, it is necessary to turn back to Scotland itself. The Reformation of the sixteenth century is the crucial factor in Protestant beginnings. In fact some historians have maintained that it is the most important event in Scottish history, for it set the Scots apart as different from all other peoples. Although tied closely to the French and Genevan Protestant movements it was yet different and helped to produce a people who have differed from all other nationalities, even the English, a fact recognized in the sixteenth century itself by men such as John Knox and stressed more recently by Robert Louis Stevenson, Wallace Notestein and others.<sup>1</sup> While a general outline of the Scottish ecclesiastical background has been given in the introductory chapter of this book, it would perhaps be well, before looking at the Scottish Protestant tradition in Canada, to remind ourselves of some of the main characteristics of that tradition.

One important point that must be kept in mind, to appreciate Scottish religious developments, is that the Scottish Reformation was not imposed from above as it was in England, but grew up from the grass roots in spite of much opposition at the higher levels of society. John Knox came of a small farming family and was trained as a notary, which brought him into contact with the middling element in society, the burgesses of the towns and the lairds. He gave the leadership and guidance that shaped the Protestant forces into an effective reforming body which in spite of much opposition from Crown and Church made the Reformation a fact in 1560. Believing strongly that God had called him to "blaw his maister's trumpet" for reform, and that if necessary to accomplish this end force must be used by the nobles, or failing them, by the people, he gave a rationale to religious "rebellion" which brought the Protestant cause to victory.<sup>2</sup>

Probably the most fundamental element in the tradition from the days of Knox onwards has been its Calvinism. In more recent days, some have

attempted to prove that the Scottish church was not Calvinistic or at least not as Calvinistic as the Dutch and French Reformed Churches. Yet as one examines the Scots Confession of 1560 and the Westminster Standards - The Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Common Order of Worship and the Form of Government which replaced the earlier doctrinal statement in 1649 - he can hardly doubt that the Church of Scotland was committed to a well-reasoned, strongly Calvinistic position. Furthermore, even though later groups broke away from the Established Church, their Calvinism still remained. Within the Church of Scotland itself, although the eighteenth century rationalist climate of opinion for a time gained the day, Calvinistic movements eventually developed in opposition to the prevailing ideas, sometimes, it is true, leading to the formation of new Presbyterian denominations as in the case of the Free Kirk (1843), but also stimulating a revival of Calvinism within the parent body.<sup>3</sup> Even today the same struggle is going on and a recent attempt to abolish the Westminster documents as the basis of the established church's doctrine and government has been defeated in the General Assembly.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, although today the Scottish Episcopal Church has been strongly influenced by the Anglo-Catholic movement of the nineteenth century, in its origin it also held to the Reformed theological position.<sup>5</sup> This Calvinism as well as the struggles to modify and to maintain it has had much the same history in the Scottish Protestant tradition in Canada.

Coupled with its Calvinism has gone a stress upon the presbyterian form of government. Although some of the Scottish Protestants known as the non-jurors refused to accept William and Mary as king and queen in 1692 and formed a separate episcopal church, presbyterianism has been characteristic of Scottish Protestantism since the 1570s. With its concept of the government of the church by an hierarchy of courts, each appointing representatives to the court above it, it established a twofold concept of church organization. One was that all those who participated in the direction of the church should be elected to their offices, and the other that church government of clearly defined form and with recognized authority for administration and discipline was divinely ordained. In fact some even went so far as to assert the "divine right of presbytery" over against the "divine right of monarchy and of episcopacy." The presbyterian view of church government had also implications which went far beyond the actual ecclesiastical organization. It involved the view that there was no earthly head of the church, that position being solely the prerogative of the risen Lord.

This brought the Scottish church into direct conflict with such would-be absolute rulers as James VI who was not far wrong when he asserted: "Presbytery agreeth with [absolute] monarchy as well as God doth with the Devil. No bishop no king." When absolute kings attempted to dominate the church as did both Charles I and Charles II, the Presbyterians were prepared to resist in the name of "The Crown Rights of Jesus

Christ."<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, there was the constant insistence that while the state had the obligation to support and defend the true Reformed religion, Christ ruled his church by his Word and Spirit speaking through the faithful people in the church. This concept produced a number of divisions as resistance to government interference and aristocratic patronage arose, ultimately leading some Scottish Presbyterians to deny the validity of the whole principle of establishment and to insist on voluntarism. This opposition to government control of the church was and still is part of the Scottish tradition in Canada, as was revealed in the continuing Presbyterians' denial of the validity of the Church Union Act of 1924.<sup>7</sup>

The stress upon the "Kingship of Christ" was not limited to matters primarily ecclesiastical. There was a constant stress upon the idea that since Christ was Lord over all of life his will and law must be obeyed in every sphere of activity. This applied to both corporate and individual activities. Andrew Melville's calling James VI of Scotland "one of God's sillie subjects" in his Kingdom was a constant theme in much later Scottish Protestant thinking. For this reason the Scottish churches have always believed that it is their responsibility to speak to contemporary society concerning the divine requirements for a society which should manifest the Lordship of Christ. Similarly, the churches have also sought to train the individual from his or her youth to recognize the solemn responsibility of each Christian to manifest God's will in the activities of everyday life. The Christian's chief end is "to glorify God and enjoy him forever," in all he does.<sup>8</sup>

Although not all Scottish Protestants were trained up in the Calvinistic-Presbyterian tradition, this point of view seems to have entered the very bloodstream of Scottish culture. As both Robert Louis Stevenson and more recently Professor Wallace Notestein have pointed out, the Scottish Calvinistic-Presbyterian outlook on life has formed one of the basic drives in the Scottish character. It has meant an emphasis upon personal responsibility which manifests itself in what has often been labeled "the Protestant work ethic." This has meant, however, not only a sense of divine calling to work, but a God-given responsibility to show initiative, foresight and risk-taking. Yet, contrary to many people's thinking, it has not resulted merely in a desire to accumulate worldly goods. A concept of "stewardship" has gone along with it. The individual is responsible to use his gifts, talents and the wealth which they may bring for the benefit of others. The outcome of such an outlook on life has often been the formation of an individual who is hard-working, frugal sometimes to penuriousness, but also capable of acts of considerable generosity when the occasion requires. And all of this bred a race of people who were inclined to be independent, sometimes irascible, argumentative and often very sure of their own correctness of vision and action. Thus the Protestant Scot, although by no means always a 'lovable' character, has very often been a person possessing the necessary drive and self-assurance to make a good colonist.

These are but a few of the characteristics of the Scottish Protestant tradition which were brought to Canada by the influx of British immigrants since 1763. At the same time, we must also recognize that, as in Scotland, the tradition has been very much diluted over the past century. In Scotland the rise of scepticism, materialism and the acceptance of a Higher Critical approach to the Bible have all had their effect upon the church, with the result that the Scottish Protestant churches of nearly every hue have experienced a decline in membership, in giving and in influence. This has been partially responsible for various church union movements, as for instance the union of the majority of the Free Kirk of Scotland and the United Presbyterians as the United Free Church in 1900, the reunion of the UFC with the Church of Scotland in 1929, and the subsequent discussions of the union of the Church of Scotland with the Episcopal Church of Scotland and the Church of England in the 1950s and '60s.<sup>9</sup> There have always been, however, minorities who have refused to accept any watering-down either of doctrine or of the presbyterial form of church government, and have continued to maintain their original stance. The same trends have shown themselves in Canada, for although the Presbyterian Church in Canada has been completely independent of the Scottish churches since 1875, Scottish influences in the church have been very strong through the coming of ministers from Scotland, the publication of books and periodicals which have received a wide acceptance in Scottish Canadian Protestant circles, the study by Presbyterian theological students in Scotland, and the general, perhaps indefinable, sense of attachment and filial relationship to the Scottish Presbyterian churches.<sup>10</sup> Depending upon one's point of view, this influence has been good or bad, but that it has had a major impact no one can deny.

#### SCOTTISH CHURCHES AND CHURCHMEN IN CANADA

The Protestant Scots who came to what is now Canada in the early part of the eighteenth century usually settled in Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. They were, however, neither numerous nor wealthy enough to call a minister until the middle of the century. Eventually they obtained the services of the Rev. James Lyon, a graduate of Princeton Seminary, and also of Rev. James Murdoch, an Irish missionary Scottish-trained, and sent out by the Irish Associate Synod. The first permanent presbytery was established by the Associate (Burgher) Synod at Truro in 1786, to be followed in 1795 by the Presbytery of Pictou in connection with the General Associate or Anti-burgher Church. Of those involved in the formation of these Presbyterian churches two men stand out most prominently. One was the Rev. James McGregor who arrived in 1785 and devoted some forty sacrificial years to ministering to the needs of Scottish settlers throughout the area now known as the Atlantic provinces (with the exception of Newfoundland.) The other was the Rev. Thomas McCulloch who in 1803 settled in Pictou where, despite the

opposition. Members of the Church of England, he established both an academy and a theological college which prepared the sons of the immigrants for service in church and commonwealth. He later became the first Principal of Dalhousie University.<sup>11</sup>

Since many of the Scots who came to the "eastern provinces" were members of the Church of Scotland, with the settlement of the disbanded Scottish regiments and United Empire Loyalists after the American Revolution, increasing demands were made for ministers of the Established Church. Its response was, however, rather slow, much slower than that of the secession churches, but by 1787 ministers from the Kirk were beginning to consider the possibility of coming to British North America. Consequently when in 1817 the two secession presbyteries decided to unite and form a Synod of Nova Scotia, there were three Church of Scotland ministers who joined, bringing the number of Scots in the Synod to seventeen. As two English independent ministers also came into the union, the Synod began operations with nineteen ministers on its constituent roll.<sup>12</sup>

In the meantime Scots had been moving into the recently acquired territories along the St. Lawrence River which fell to British arms in 1760-1763. Among those who took part in the conquest were the Fraser Highlanders, many of whom were Presbyterians. As they were soon afterwards disbanded it may well have been that it was their chaplain, the Rev. George Henry, a minister of the Church of Scotland, who about 1765 took charge of the small Presbyterian congregation in Quebec City. In 1795 Henry was succeeded by another Scot, Rev. Alexander Sparks, under whose aegis the present St. Andrews Church was erected in 1810.<sup>13</sup> By this time there seem to have been about 150 members in the church, most of them Scots holding important government or commercial positions within the community.

While Quebec was the administrative centre of the region, Montreal soon became the commercial capital, for that was the jumping-off point for the fur traders who were pushing out to the West. Since many of these were Scots it is not surprising that a Church of Scotland congregation was organized there also soon after the American Revolution. The first minister was the Rev. John Bethune, who had served with the loyalist forces in North Carolina and later as chaplain of the 84th Regiment. So far, however, no one has been able to trace a record of his ordination. He was, nevertheless, always regarded as a *bona fide* minister of the Church of Scotland in whose name he established St. Gabriel Street Church, to which most of the Scots in Montreal belonged. Later he moved to Williamstown, Upper Canada, where he received a large grant of land, but continued to carry on his activities as a minister among the Scottish settlers of that area until his death.<sup>14</sup>

Before the end of the century troubles had begun to arise over the question of the right of non-Anglican churches within the Province of Canada to be recognized as bodies with a legal civil status. Efforts were made to

deny to all Protestant communions but the Church of England the authority to perform civil acts such as marriages, on the ground that the Church of England was the established church of the country. To this the representatives of the Church of Scotland took very strong exception, claiming that they were part of an established church in Britain by the Union of 1707, and since the conquest had taken place after that date, they had an equal right to civil status and financial assistance in the form of subsidies and participation in the Clergy Reserves set aside for the support of clergy and churches within each parish. The battle continued for many years, even after the division of Canada into Lower and Upper Canada, the opposition to the Church of Scotland's claims in the latter province being led by Bishop John Strachan, a former licentiate of the Kirk. But in 1854 the matter was finally settled by the abolition of all ecclesiastical establishment and the granting to the Church of England the largest share of the endowment, a somewhat smaller amount to the Church of Scotland and smaller sums to some of the other denominations. The stubborn opposition of the Scots led by such men as the Hon. William Morris, George Brown of the *Globe* and William Lyon MacKenzie was one of the principal factors that guaranteed that there would be no state church in Canada.<sup>15</sup>

Meanwhile Scots had continued to migrate to the Canadas, some settling in the Eastern Townships of Lower Canada and others, not infrequently disbanded soldiers, in the Glengarry district of eastern Ontario and others to the west and northwest of York (Toronto) as far as Goderich on Lake Huron and Windsor across from Detroit. Although many of the churches, particularly along the St. Lawrence and the lakes, were frequently ministered to by clergy from the United States, the bulk of the congregations were made up of Scots, farmers, artisans and businessmen who sought to call men from Scotland when they had the opportunity. It was, however, the seceders who again took the first step in organizing as a denomination, for in 1818 the Presbytery of the Canadas was brought into existence by the authorization of the Associate Synod of Scotland. Although the Canadian ministers, who were led by Rev. Alexander Smart of Brockville and Rev. William Bell of Perth, sent out invitations to all Presbyterian ministers throughout the Canadas inviting them to join the presbytery, the Church of Scotland clergy did not even bother to reply. They were apparently content to remain attached somewhat loosely to the Kirk in Scotland.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, as Rev. William Proudfoot, the founder of the Associate Church in London pointed out, the Church of Scotland men did not seem to have very much zeal for pioneer work and consequently they probably felt that eventually they would return to Scotland to take up charges there.<sup>17</sup>

A change in outlook in Scotland was now beginning to take place. The United Associate Synod of the Secession Church began to display increased interest in sending out men to minister to the needs of the Scottish settlers. To fulfill this plan in 1832 they commissioned three men to act as

More important, however, was the action of the evangelical wing of the Church of Scotland. Deeply conscious of the responsibility of the Church of Scotland for the spiritual welfare of the Scottish emigrants to British North America, they recognized that the Established Church had not done its part in meeting the settlers' spiritual needs. Therefore, under the patronage of the Earl of Dalhousie, the Governor-General of British North America, they organized in 1825 "The Society (in connection with the Established Church of Scotland) for promoting the religious interests of the Scottish settlers in British North America," often known as the "Glasgow Colonial Society." Led by the Rev. Dr. Robert Burns of Paisley, one of the secretaries, the Society immediately sought to send men to both the eastern provinces and the Canadas. The results, however, were not always happy, for the representatives of the society set up a synod in connection with the Church of Scotland separate from the one established earlier in the Atlantic region. The work of the society, on the other hand, did lead to a considerable expansion of the Kirk's activity throughout the area.<sup>18</sup> Simultaneously, Church of Scotland ministers were coming in larger numbers to Lower and Upper Canada with the result that in 1831 they formed a synod in connection with the home church and shortly afterwards told the members of the United Synod of the Canadas, formerly the Presbytery of the Canadas, that they would receive them if individually they submitted their credentials. The Synod of the Canadas, however, refused to join unless they were received as a body and unless the link with the Church of Scotland and the government were broken. As the Church of Scotland synod would not agree to this, the two bodies remained separate despite the government's wish that they would form one church.<sup>19</sup>

But more division was ahead. The Scots in Canada were watching with keen interest the conflict going on in the Established Church in Scotland over the subject of patronage. Soon after the outcome had become clear in 1843, emissaries of the Free Church arrived in British North America led by the redoubtable Dr. Robert Burns, who set forth the issues at stake. Although the problem of patronage did not exist in America, underlying this official reason for conflict was the basic theological disagreement between the evangelicals and the moderates. Dr. Burns, because of his evangelical zeal and his connection with the "Glasgow Society," succeeded in persuading most of the ministers sent out by the society to follow him out of the Church of Scotland to form a "free" church. In this he had the support of a large number of influential laymen such as Peter Redpath, the sugar magnate of Montreal, William Lyon MacKenzie, the "old rebel," and various others. While this may seem to have been a disaster, in another way it helped the Presbyterian cause, for the new church was missionary-minded and side-by-side with the "Missionary Presbytery" of the United Synod of the Canadas began to expand into the newly opened areas of Upper Canada such as the Huron Tract, and thence to the west of the Great Lakes. By 1851 there were some 238,000 Presbyterians in what

was now Canada East and Canada West, making that denomination the second largest Protestant body, by far the largest part of which were first or second generation Scottish immigrants. In the Atlantic provinces of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island somewhat the same growth had taken place, with Presbyterian numbers rising to 93,000.<sup>20</sup>

From 1812 on Scots had been moving west on to the prairies, the first colony being that set up on the Red River by the Earl of Selkirk for the ousted crofters of Kildonan, Sutherlandshire. Other Scots had already arrived as officials of the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies, but only after Selkirk had successfully established a Scottish settlement at Eldon in Prince Edward Island and had failed to do the same in the southwest of Upper Canada, did he turn his attention to the lands beyond the Great Lakes. The sufferings of the settlers both from the weather and the opposition of the North West Company are mentioned elsewhere in this volume, but they also suffered from lack of spiritual leadership. Although they had been promised a Presbyterian minister on their arrival, owing to Selkirk's early death the promise was not kept and they had to depend upon the services of an elder, James Sutherland, specially commissioned to baptize and marry, but he left in 1818. The only ministrations from that time until 1851, when the first Scottish minister arrived on the scene, were those provided by the Church of England. Although the Rev. John West, the Anglican clergyman, adapted his services to the Presbyterian form, the settlers were still not willing to become Anglicans. Consequently, when the Rev. John Black, sent by the Presbyterian Church of Canada (Free Church), arrived in Kildonan in 1851, three hundred of the colonists immediately became members of his congregation. They then proceeded at considerable sacrifice to erect a stone building which is still in use as a Presbyterian church at Kildonan on the outskirts of Winnipeg.<sup>21</sup> From this church went out many settlers to points farther west, as well as missionaries to the Scottish and Indian settlements in what are now Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Thus as the Canadian West as far as the Pacific coast began to come under settlement, the ministers from the Presbyterian Church of Canada, the Missionary Presbytery of the United Synod and, to a lesser extent, from the Church of Scotland, carried Presbyterianism to the Scottish and any other settlers or native peoples who wished their ministry.

While expansion had been taking place in the work of the various churches, moves had also been made to bring them all together to form one Canadian Presbyterian Church. The United Presbyterian Synod in the Canadas, made up of the Associate Secession and Relief Churches, had from the very beginning declared their independence of all Scottish churches. And while the Free Church body, which had come out of the Church of Scotland in 1844 as the Presbyterian Church of Canada, had some connection with its Scottish mother church, it was also virtually independent. These two bodies, therefore, joined together to form the Canada Presbyterian Church in 1861. Similar moves took place in the

Atlantic region. Thus when confederation of the Canadas and the eastern provinces was effected in 1867, to be followed later by the addition of Prince Edward Island and some of the western territories, it seemed only reasonable that the Presbyterians across the land should all come together. The result was that after some considerable discussion, in 1875 at a large gathering in Montreal the Presbyterian Church in Canada came into existence, with Rev. Dr. John Cook, minister of St. Andrew's Church, Quebec, the first moderator of the General Assembly. Of course, Scottish-like there were minorities who refused to enter the union for various reasons, but in general most Presbyterians came in, the doctrinal, organizational and liturgical bases being those of the Westminster Standards adopted by the Church of Scotland in the seventeenth century and held by all the uniting bodies. The one change made was that the concept of an established church was rejected, a move which caused some of the Church of Scotland ministers to refuse to join. The new body, however, by 1881 had some 650,000 members and adherents east of the Great Lakes, being the largest Protestant denomination in Canada until 1925.<sup>22</sup>

With Confederation, the opening up of the West, the laying down of the Canadian Pacific Railway and the government policy of granting land to homesteaders, settlers, not only from the British Isles, but also from Eastern Canada, the United States and all parts of Europe began to flood into the country. The response of the Presbyterian Church was a vigorous effort to meet the spiritual needs of all comers. In this connection one name stands out as pre-eminent, that of Dr. James M. Robertson, who from 1881 to 1902 acted as Superintendent of Western Missions, establishing congregations from the Red River to the foothills of the Rockies. Coupled with the name of Robertson were other Scottish ecclesiastical pioneers - W.G. Brown of Red Deer, D.G. MacQueen of Edmonton, E.D. MacLaren of Vancouver and almost equally well-known as Robertson, Andrew S. Grant, who followed the "trail of '98" in the Gold Rush to the Yukon where as a medical doctor as well as a minister he established in Dawson City both the Good Samaritan Hospital and St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church.<sup>23</sup> It is impossible to refer to all those who took part in the pioneer work in the West. Perhaps one example of what was being done is the present writer's father, W.D. Reid, who was Superintendent of Missions for the Province of Alberta, 1910-1912, during which period the number of Presbyterian preaching stations increased from around 100 to 160. But the fact that many of those ministered to were Ukrainians, Americans, Germans, and Poles as well as Scots shows that the Presbyterian Church in Canada was losing its strongly Scottish character, although even today that has by no means entirely disappeared.

It was at this point that new developments in the church's life began to appear on the horizon. While the Westminster Standards with their strongly biblically-oriented theology had been adopted as the basis of the union in 1875, biblical criticism, Darwinism and rationalism began to

have their influence, particularly in the theological colleges. Queen's Theological College, Kingston, which had been founded by Church of Scotland adherents in 1842, was the spearhead of this movement, particularly under the leadership of Principal George M. Grant at the end of the century. Although Principal Sir William Dawson of McGill University, a New Brunswick Scot, and Principal Donald H. MacVicar of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, founded in 1868, and Principals Willis and Caven of Knox College, Toronto, opposed this tendency, it continued to spread with the result that the Presbyterian doctrinal distinctiveness of a Reformed church was being gradually eroded.<sup>24</sup> Added to this, there was the practical problem of attempting to minister to a widely spread Presbyterian population with limited resources in both men and money. Many were, therefore, beginning to feel that only a larger church organization, perhaps a federation of denominations or even an organic union, along the line of some of the big corporations such as the CPR might be the answer to the problem.

The matter of church union was brought to a head in 1903 when the General Council of the Methodist Church sent a formal invitation to the Presbyterian and Congregationalist Churches to enter into conversations concerning organic or corporate union. Almost immediately there was division within the Presbyterian ranks. Scots and those of Scottish origin took positions on both sides, and, as in most cases of Scottish conflict, feelings ran high and antagonism became bitter, dividing not only friends but families. Two successive votes taken on the matter by the Presbyterians showed a diminishing majority in favour of the union, but at the General Assembly of 1923 held in Port Arthur the final decision was made to take the plunge.<sup>25</sup> One commissioner to the 1923 assembly pled for time, but Dr. Charles Gordon ("Ralph Connor") declared that an act of Parliament would force "you rebels" in whether they wanted to go or not. To this the reply quickly came that Dr. Gordon had obviously forgotten the tradition of John Knox and the failure of the Stewarts to force the Covenanters to conform in the seventeenth century, and, the speaker added, "Scottish Presbyterians have not changed overmuch since then."

On June 10, 1925, the union took place between the Methodist, the Congregationalist and about 65% of the Presbyterian membership. Those Presbyterians who refused to enter the new church constituted themselves as the continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada, and under the leadership of its moderator, Rev. Dr. Ephraim Scott of Montreal, reaffirmed its adherence to the Westminster Standards and promised to carry on as the Presbyterian Church in Canada.<sup>26</sup> As one glances over rolls of presbyteries and of congregations since that date, one can see that the Scottish element is still very strong within both the ministry and the membership: Dickie, MacInnis, MacGregor, Lennox, MacBeth, Reid, Campbell, along with MacDonalds, MacLeods and MacLeans galore, as well as many others indicate clearly that the Scottish Protestant and Presbyterian tradition has

continued within this body. In the 1931 census of 870,728 reporting as Presbyterians, 245,000 said they were either Scots or of Scottish origin.

Although the United Church of Canada is much more of a mixture of both races and creeds, Scottish influence in its ranks is also quite strong. Names such as Slater, MacDonald, MacLean, Sinclair and MacLeod appear repeatedly in its records. The 1931 census shows about 8% of its members and adherents claiming to be Scots or of Scottish origin. It, however, has moved away from the basic Calvinism of the Scottish tradition, which tends to change its Scottish character. Nevertheless, the same fundamental moral values seem to survive along with the same tendency towards rebelliousness which has characterized Scots of Presbyterian background down to the present, for while it has accommodated itself to many middle class values, it has also been known as the "praying arm" of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, now the NDP, of which a number of Scottish ministers such as William Irvine were founding members.<sup>27</sup>

Up to this point we have dealt with the Scottish Presbyterian tradition in Canada, and rightly so, as this has represented the main Scottish Protestant tradition in Canada as well as in Scotland. Yet we must recognize that Scots were by no means limited to the Presbyterian bodies which went to make up the Presbyterian Church in Canada. It is an interesting point that many of those Scots who are to be found in the Anglican, Baptist and other churches came to Canada as Presbyterians, but for one reason or another joined other denominations. One example is John Strachan who when he failed to receive a call from a Presbyterian congregation joined the Church of England, in whose ranks he rose to prominence.<sup>28</sup> Others joined the Methodist or Baptist churches simply because their own church was not providing them with the services that they needed. A good example of this is to be found in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, where the Methodist circuit riders were quite active, while the Presbyterians under the leadership of Dr. Cook of Quebec City would not send out ministers to the Scottish settlements unless they had passed all the academic requirements of a Scottish presbytery. The result was that many Presbyterians, for want of their own church's ministrations, became Methodists, or where there was an English church, Anglicans. One other reason for Scots joining other denominations or groups was that not infrequently, coming from a background where theology was important and "sermon tasting" strong, they found the local Church of Scotland minister bland and not particularly helpful spiritually. Consequently, if there was no other Presbyterian church available they turned to the Methodists, Baptists or Plymouth Brethren.

As one looks over the roll of prominent Anglican churchmen in Canada one cannot but be somewhat surprised at the large number of Scottish names. It is interesting too that some of the most vigorous supporters of the Anglican Establishment came from this group. It is well to note, however, that few if any of the Scottish Anglicans came from the Scottish

Episcopal Church. Most of them came to Canada as Presbyterians, usually Church of Scotland, joining the Church of England shortly thereafter. It is not always easy to explain why this change was made, but it may have been partially the claims of the Church of England to be the Established Church which made the appeal. Or it may have been the influence of the High Church movement of John Henry Newman and E.B. Pusey which was having a certain amount of impact on some Presbyterian circles in Scotland.

The first Anglican of Scottish descent to become important in Canada was Bishop Charles Inglis, the first Bishop of the Diocese of British North America, a somewhat large area to oversee. He came of an Ulster family which had migrated from Roxburghshire some years earlier. Appointed Assistant of Holy Trinity Church, New York in 1765, as a Loyalist he migrated to Nova Scotia at the time of the Revolution, shortly afterwards being appointed to his episcopate. His son later became the third Bishop of Nova Scotia.<sup>29</sup> Most famous or notorious, depending upon one's point of view, of all the Scots who entered the Anglican Church was Bishop John Strachan, to whom we have already referred, a strong defender of the Anglican claims to establishment, the founder of the University of Toronto and one of the dominant political figures of his day. As tutor in his earlier days of the two sons of Rev. John Bethune, founder of St. Gabriel Presbyterian Church, Montreal, and Scots minister at Williamstown, he brought both of them into the Church of England, Alexander Neil becoming the second Bishop of Toronto and his brother, John, Archdeacon of Montreal and first Principal of McGill University. One might refer to many others such as Charles James Stewart who became in 1826 the second Bishop of Quebec. By 1827 the Church of England had thirty clergymen in the Canadas of whom eleven were Scots, most of them having been Presbyterian when they came to the New World.<sup>30</sup>

As we look west beyond the Great Lakes we see much the same type of development. In 1865 the second bishop of Rupert's Land took office. He was a Scot, Bishop Robert Machray, who effectively organized the missionary diocese which had up to this time been no more than a geographical expression. When he divided the diocese, setting up the Bishopric of Saskatchewan, he had his friend John MacLean who had been teaching in St. John's College, Winnipeg, appointed bishop. Machray, who became archbishop, was succeeded on his death by S.D. Matheson, also of Scottish extraction, who had been brought up by an aunt, a Miss Pritchard, who was an Anglican. Although the rest of the family were strongly Presbyterian he eventually became Anglican primate of Canada.<sup>31</sup> One could mention various other Scots who were active in the Anglican Church in Western Canada, but this should suffice to indicate that they played a considerable part in the development of Anglicanism as well as Presbyterianism in Canada.

As mentioned above, other churches also had their share of Scots. The

evangelical movements of eighteenth century Britain resulted in the formation of the Methodist Church, the development of various Baptist groups and the founding of the Christian Brethren (usually known as Plymouth Brethren) by J.N. Darby soon began to have their offshoots in North American colonies. Laying much less stress on academic qualifications than the Presbyterians and Anglicans, but stressing conversion, commitment and "spiritual gifts" in their preachers, these bodies began to have a wide influence particularly in the areas where the more formal churches never seemed to go. The outcome included camp meetings, revival services and the founding of small churches and assemblies in many localities. A considerable number of the Scots became involved in these bodies, playing a large and important part in their development and extension.

The Methodists were one of the bodies which counted a considerable number of Scots in their membership. For years the official paper, the *Christian Guardian*, was edited by two Ulster Scots: W.B. Creighton, father of Professor Donald Creighton, the well-known historian, and William McMullen. Moreover, many of the ministers of the Methodist Church came of Scottish backgrounds: Alexander Sutherland, Lachlan Taylor, James Roy are but three names which stand out in Eastern Canadian Methodism. In the West Rev. George McDougall, of Scottish parentage but born in Grey County, Ont., was one of the first missionaries to the Cree Indians. Rev. John MacLeod was another Scot who held a number of pastorates in the West. Rev. Ebenezer Robson, born of Scottish Presbyterian parentage in County Lanark, Ont., opened the first Methodist church in Victoria, B.C. When in 1925 the Methodist Church went into union with the majority of the Presbyterians and the Congregationists, Scots Methodists were quite prepared to welcome Scots from the other denominations.<sup>32</sup>

Not many Scots seem to have been active in the Congregational Church, although there were a few. The most outstanding was Rev. Alexander MacGregor of Yarmouth, N.S., who was active in Upper Canada. He later went to the largest Congregational church in the Atlantic region where he also acted as one of the editors of the church's paper, the *Christian Standard*.<sup>33</sup>

Among the Baptists, Scots have always been a very strong element. Many of the members of the Church of Scotland were influenced by the revivalism of Robert Haldane. Some of his adherents came to British North America early in the nineteenth century and established congregations in a number of places. Having rejected infant baptism, they linked up with the existing Baptist groups, but in many cases remained strongly Scottish in orientation, so that in some places such as Dalesville, Que., until rather recent times there were Gaelic-speaking Baptist congregations. This tendency to attract Scots to the Baptist fold, particularly

when the Presbyterian ministers were of the dry-as-dust variety, has continued to the present time. One might cite the influence of Dr. J.A. Johnson, originally of Stirling, Scotland, of Westmount Baptist Church, Montreal, in this regard. Scottish Baptists were active, however, beyond the pastorate, for when what is now McMaster University was founded its first principal was Rev. J.H. Fyfe, another Scot.<sup>34</sup>

An indication of what happened in the cases of some Scots of Presbyterian background is the story of the Elliots and the McAllisters who settled around Molesworth in southwestern Ontario in the mid-nineteenth century. The nearest Presbyterian church which was at some distance did not seem to meet their spiritual needs. Thus when travelling evangelists representing the Plymouth Brethren came through the district holding services, members of the family were converted through their ministry, and have been leaders among the Plymouth Brethren in Canada for many years.<sup>35</sup>

As we have looked at the Scots in the various Protestant denominations and the important parts they have played in these bodies we have talked more in terms of organization than in terms of lifestyle and general outlook. The question then is what part in the development of Canada has the Scottish Protestant tradition played. The Protestants, like their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, if they settled on farms usually congregated in family and kinship groups. But the many artisans, businessmen or professional men tended to put down their roots in the burgeoning cities and towns. Moreover, not infrequently after two or three generations on the land, the Scottish Protestants began to move into the urban areas, breaking with their rural and agricultural background. This meant that the Protestant tradition, while often losing much of its specifically Scottish character, e.g. services in Gaelic, has exercised a wider influence than has the Scottish Roman Catholic tradition which tended to keep the people on the land.

At the beginning we can say that there was little or no class distinction in the influence which the Scottish Protestant tradition exerted. Whether the Scots came as farmers, fishermen, labourers, merchants or professional men they all seem to have had very much the same point of view. Furthermore, the Protestant tradition seems to have fostered considerable social mobility. "The lad o' pairts," whatever his background, social and economic origins, felt that he had the right and duty to make the best of himself and to rise in the world. One can think of farming families which have produced ministers, doctors, lawyers, nurses, and school teachers. This was simply carrying on a Scottish Protestant tradition which, as has been shown in another chapter, was not generally as true of the Roman Catholic Scots, although some did follow this pattern. The important thing to be noted here is that Scottish Protestants did not accept any rigid class structure, but stressed the importance of every man developing his God-given gifts to the best of his ability in this life. Class divisions, therefore, were to be ignored.

This meant of course that the Protestant tradition had its influence on

even part of the Scottish social spectrum. We can think, for instance, of a man such as Peter Redpath, the Montreal sugar magnate, who founded the Coté Street Church in support of the Free Church of Scotland after the Disruption in 1844. His principles and outlook were very much the same as those of the humbler, working class members of the same congregation. The Marquess of Lorne, the Governor-General, in his metrical version of Psalm 121, expressed the same point of view as that set forth by Burns' "Cottar's Saturday Night" a scene which was re-enacted over and over again across the country from Cape North in Cape Breton to Prince Rupert on Vancouver Island. In the nineteenth century the Scottish Calvinist tradition was all-pervasive among those Protestants who had come from Scotland.

One thing which stands out very clearly in the Protestant tradition is the desire for intellectual and technical training. The home was the basis for the children's education and it began with the Westminster Shorter Catechism. As R.L. Stevenson points out, the Scot was always surrounded with an air of metaphysical divinity from his cradle by this means, and the tradition continued even when transported to Canada. The writer can remember his father telling him that as a boy on the farm in the Eastern Townships every Sunday night the family would gather to recite the Catechism, one-half one evening and the other half the next. But the Church also played an important role in this, particularly in the country congregations. Various methods were taken to train the young. In one country congregation a minister, the Rev. James M'Conachie, set an essay topic which was: "In Old Testament times when men's thoughts and sentiments were rough and crude, their religion had to be of the same character. In the light of this, discuss the significance of animal sacrifice." Over a dozen essays were submitted by the young people, the prize production winning the astounding sum of one dollar. With such church training went the stress upon the school where the teachers were not always good or even kind, but where youngsters knew that they had to have the elements of education if they were to accomplish anything in life. While Ralph Connor draws a somewhat romanticized picture, his *Glengarry Schooldays* comes close to reality in many ways. When the budding scholar had gone as far as he could in the one-roomed schoolhouse, he could then take off for Quebec to Morrin College, for Montreal to McGill, for Kingston to Queen's or for Toronto to the University of Toronto, all of which had a large proportion of Scots both in faculty and student body, to obtain training which would make him a lawyer, a doctor, a minister or even a professor. Others might head for some merchant's counting house, a bank or some other business concern where they often rose to places of importance and responsibility.

Yet the Scottish Protestant did not think only of the importance of "making it" in this world. There was a strong sense of divine calling which arose out of his Calvinistic background. From the days of John Knox great stress had been laid in Scottish Protestantism on the importance of one taking his proper place in society where he could work for the

benefit and advantage of the commonwealth, wherever his might be cast. As Knox and many of those who came after him constantly stressed, he was to seek to do all for the glory of God. His own personal development, therefore, had not merely a worldly stimulus, for he was actually working for eternity. This was impressed upon him from an early age when he learned the first question and answer of the Shorter Catechism: "What is man's chief end? Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever." This gave the Scot a sense of objectivity and of purpose which transcended monetary or social advantage.

Along with his feeling of calling and responsibility went the evangelical emphasis upon conversion. The stress upon man's own weakness and sinfulness, forcing him to turn to God, seeking his grace, mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ, was basic to much Scottish thinking. True, there might be theological differences among them, but the evangelical influence was extremely strong as can be seen at the Disruption of 1844 which was partially caused by frustration at the lack of truly evangelical preaching in the Church of Scotland. The fact that a considerable number also left the Church of Scotland for the more evangelical denominations, Methodist, Baptist or Plymouth Brethren, points in this direction. Even when such people turned away from the church of their fathers, they carried with them the stress on sovereign grace and the necessity of loving obedience to God's call.

While it is true that all Scots were not Presbyterians and so would not necessarily study the Westminster Shorter Catechism, yet the large majority were, and their attitudes and outlook certainly influenced the whole Scottish culture, with the result that Scottish Protestants generally developed much the same point of view. Furthermore, when we realize that many of the Scots who became active in non-Presbyterian denominations in Canada were originally trained as Presbyterians it is not difficult to understand how Scottish Protestantism helped to develop a very definite type of individual in Canada.

This in turn seems to have resulted in other characteristics. Probably one of the most noticeable was Scottish hard work and thrift even among those who may have rejected the 'faith of their fathers.' Furthermore, the Scots were prepared to take chances in order to advance their fortunes and their work. It is no accident that the North West Company was made up largely of Scots, and that so many of Canada's other large industrial and commercial ventures were fathered by Scots. Donald Smith, Lord Strathcona of the Hudson's Bay Company, Robert Simpson of the Robert Simpson Company and Colonel Robert MacLaughlin of the MacLaughlin Carriage Works, later General Motors of Canada, are but a few of the names one could mention. This all involved independence of thought and heart, which one sees only too plainly if he attends, even today, a Presbyterian church court. Yet along with this went also a strong sense of responsibility in the use of one's wealth, time and talents. It is no

accidents, for instance, that so many of the universities, hospitals and similar institutions particularly in Eastern Canada, were established through the generosity of wealthy Scots or Canadians of Scottish origin. This again was part of the Protestant emphasis upon the fact that wealth was given by God for the benefit of all, not just for the enjoyment of the few, a point that is constantly made from the other end of the social spectrum by such Scots as the Honorable "Tommy" Douglas, first leader of the national New Democratic Party. To the Scot his religious beliefs have always been something which must lead to action and application in everyday life.

Although today much has changed with growing secularism and materialism, and declining membership in all the Protestant churches, the Scottish Protestant tradition still exercises its influence. In many cases the religious foundation may have been eroded with the result that the individual rejects, or at least neglects, the specifically religious presuppositions of the Scottish Protestant tradition.

The ethical and moral principles, however, have been so imbedded in the individual's personality that they are still operating automatically. Some may feel that it would be well to rid oneself of these characteristics, while others may seek to keep them even though they do not agree with their source and origin. Since the Scottish Protestant tradition in the past has made men strong to do great things, perhaps it is time that Scots began to look back to the rock whence they have been hewn to renew their strength and the spiritual vitality upon which their forefathers drew with such effect.

#### NOTES

1. R.L. Stevenson, "The Foreigner at Home," *Memories and Portraits* (London: Collins, n.d.); W. Notestein, *The Scot in History* (London, 1947).
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 119f; P. Janton, *John Knox, L'homme et L'oeuvre* (Paris: Didier, 1967), pp. 174ff; W.S. Reid, *Trumpeter of God* (New York: Scribner's, 1974), pp. 150ff.
3. "The Confession of Faith," (1560) in *John Knox's History of the Reformation in Scotland*, W.C. Dickinson, ed. (Edinburgh: Nelson, 1949), II, 266; cf. D. MacLean, *Aspects of Scottish Church History* (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark, 1927), *passim*, G.D. Henderson, *Church and Ministry* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1951), *passim*.
4. J.H. Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland* (London: Oxford, 1960), pp. 420ff.
5. W.R. Foster, *Bishop and Presbytery, The Church of Scotland 1661-1688* (London: SPCK, 1958), pp. 155ff.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 12ff; Burleigh, pp. 261ff; D.G. Henderson, *Presbyterianism*

(Aberdeen: University Press, 1954), pp. 53ff; J.G. Voss, *The Scottish Covenanters* (Shanghai, 1940), pp. 137ff. For a more detailed account of the Covenanters cf. J.K. Hewison, *The Covenanters* (Glasgow: Smith & Son, 1908).

7. Burleigh, pp. 263ff; E. Scott, *Church Union and the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Montreal: Lovell, 1928), pp. 73ff.
8. MacLean, pp. 37ff; Burleigh, pp. 261ff; R. Buchanan, *The Ten Years' Conflict* (Glasgow: Blackie, 1854), I, 123ff, 151ff.
9. MacLean, pp. 134ff; Henderson, *Presbyterianism*, pp. 1ff, 175ff; W.S. Reid, "The Scottish Disruption and Reunion, 1843-1929," *Christendom* (1943), pp. 318ff, 326ff; Burleigh, pp. 395ff.
10. For an indication of this trend see J.S. Moir, *Enduring Witness* (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1974).
11. Wm. Gregg, *History of the Presbyterian Church in the Dominion of Canada*.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 143ff; W.W. Campbell, *The Scotsman in Canada*, (Toronto: Musson, n.d.), p. 308.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 309ff; Gregg, pp. 155ff; J. MacKenzie, "John Bethune, Founder of Presbyterianism in Upper Canada," *Called to Witness*, W.S. Reid, ed. (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1975).
15. W.S. Reid, *The Church of Scotland in Lower Canada: Its Struggle for Establishment* (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1936); Gregg, pp. 406f.
16. Gregg, pp. 204ff, 359ff.
17. Reid, *Church of Scotland*, p. 65ff.
18. Gregg, pp. 278ff.
19. *Ibid.*, pp. 446ff.
20. *Ibid.*, pp. 587.
21. *Ibid.*, pp. 213ff.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 600ff; W. Gregg, *A Short History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Toronto: Robinson, 1892), pp. 188ff; W.S. Reid, "John Cook and the Kirk in Canada," *Enkindled by the Word*, N.G. Smith, ed. (Toronto: Presbyterian Publications, 1966), pp. 28ff. *Dominion of Canada Census, 1881 & 1921*. Those claiming to be Presbyterians increased from 663,000 to 1,409,000, while Anglicans increased from 575,000 to 1,408,000.
23. N.G. Smith, "James Robertson and the Churches in the Prairie Provinces," *ibid.*, pp. 43ff; David A. Smith, "British Columbia and the Yukon," *ibid.*, pp. 53ff; G. Bryce, *The Scotsman in Canada* (Toronto: Musson, n.d.), II, pp. 255ff.
24. W.J. Rattray, *The Scot in North America*. (Toronto: MacLear, 1882), III, 821ff.
25. Scott, pp. 59f; A.L. Farris, "The Fathers of 1925," *Enkindled*, pp. 59ff.
26. *Acts and Proceedings of the 51st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* (Toronto, 1925).