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BLACK EDUCATION IN CANADA WEST:
A Parochial Solution to a Secular Problem,
Rev. M.M. Dillon and the Colonial Church and School Society

by

Christopher Bruce Elliott
Bachelor of Arts, Wilfrid Laurier University, 1984

Thesis
Submitted to the Department of History
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the Master of Arts degree

Wilfrid Laurier University
26 April 1989

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ISBN 0-315-52741-2

Canada

African-Americans fled the United States of America during the nineteenth century to escape slavery. The majority of the emigrants took refuge in Upper Canada. Slavery had been abolished by 1834 in all British colonial possessions. Blacks were promised protection from racism by virtue of British institutions. Upper Canada offered the fugitives a chance to begin a new life. Life in Canada West was not to be as joyful as was promised.

When Blacks arrived in the British colony they were treated as outsiders, outcast from society. The prejudices of the day flourished throughout the countryside. Racism was manifested in the refusal of local administrators to allow African-American children to attend government financed schools. The settlers were not prepared to abandon their long held fear of Blacks and they prevented the integration of children of all races. The administration did not offer support and protection from intolerance.

The education system failed Black children by not allowing them to attend classes even though their parents paid their school taxes. The British establishment recognized the injustice and tried to remedy the situation by opening schools of their own. The Colonial Church and School Society opened a school in London, Canada West. The Anglican missionaries wanted to prove that Blacks could be educated and become part of society.

The aims of the founder of the school, Rev. M.M. Dillon, differed from the aims of the CCSS. He wanted to have Blacks and whites educated together to their mutual benefit. His participation in the founding and running of the Mission is central to the operation of the Mission to the Fugitive Slaves of Canada West. He did not maintain the support of the influential members of the London society and was removed from his post. The point of contention was that he had allowed more whites in the school than Black children. He left the Mission in 1856 and the Mission closed in 1858.

I would like to thank Dr. Richard Fuke, professor of Black American history at Wilfrid Laurier University, for being an inspired teacher dedicated to the cause of the African-American. He teaches that through understanding, tolerance and respect will grow. I would also like to thank Dr. Barry Gough, professor of Canadian History at Wilfrid Laurier University for encouraging me during the last fifteen years; teaching through example that the search for details can be both exciting and rewarding. I would like to thank my mother, Mrs Chrissie Elliott for having confidence in me and for financing this project with love and dollars.

NOTE ON USAGE

Throughout the years African-Americans have been identified by many different names. Derogatory names have been used to assert a control by whites over Blacks. The search for a Black identity and role in society led through an evolution of nomenclature. The term "Coloured" gave way to "Negro", "Negro" gave way to "black" which was replaced by "Black". "Black" was a term of respect accorded African-Americans for the suffering and sacrifices made during the civil rights marches of the sixties. The anger of the seventies manifested itself in the name "Afro-American", but was abandoned because of the negative connotations. The argument of the eighties has begun and is supported by the Reverend Jesse Jackson. He wants to abandon "Black" and replace it with "African-American". It is my belief that the civil rights struggles should be recognized, and the cultural and ethnic origin of the Black race should be promoted, therefore it is my intention to use both "Black" and "African-American" as interchangeable. I use "African-American" to represent Blacks who are descended from emigrants from the African continent who now reside in North America.

CHAPTER ONE

Black Education In Canada West:
A Study of Institutional Racism

Historians examining the situation in Upper Canada, such as Robin Winks in The Blacks in Canada, and Jason H. Silverman in his Unwelcome Guests: Canada West's Response to American Fugitive Slaves, 1800-1865, have argued that blacks expected integration in Canada West, but no one was able to work them into the body politic. In The Blacks in Canada, Winks writes that Blacks wanted nothing more than to be assimilated into the society of Canada West. In general, white Anglo-Saxon society did not value integration; in fact, assimilation and integration were anathemas to the average person.¹ Prior to the abolition of slavery in the British Empire Blacks were not used extensively as a slave labour force in Canada. Thus they never became an integral part of the economy of the area. White society could afford to ignore Blacks because they were not an important part of the developing society.

Writing in a 1982 Ontario History article entitled "The Pursuit of Knowledge Under Difficulties: Education and the Fugitive Slave in Canada" Jason Silverman builds upon Wink's argument. Silverman writes that "black / white relations in education during the years 1840 - 1860 closely resembled the racial environment that many fugitives hoped, and believed,

they had escaped."² Blacks wanted to prove that they could learn to read and write in order to "refute all those who belittled black capabilities in general."³ Silverman argues that a general form of racism prevented Black education.

Neither Winks nor Silverman, however, nor indeed other studies examined, deal with the administrative structures of education, and the way in which schools became the first example of publicly funded, legislatively supported, institutional racism. The case of Reverend Marmaduke Martin Dillon provides insight into this structural framework of Black education. Furthermore its study explains such things as the nature of Ontario school law and its racial characteristics. It also throws light on Anglican Church and state relations, political conflicts between various levels of the church hierarchy, and the public response as evidenced by educational legislation passed in Canada West. Dillon's case is studied here by focusing on four fundamental propositions, first, the history of the struggle for Black education in Canada West illustrates the racism present in the 1800's, a racism which in turn created an environment conducive to the influx of evangelical missionaries to educate Black children who could not expect to be educated by the white system. Second, the examples of legislation encouraged by Egerton Ryerson, Superintendent of Education in Canada West, and others clearly demonstrate that institutional racism was prevalent in Canada West despite the fact that earlier studies have suggested that it was not.

Third, the mission school which opened with the blessing of the powerful Anglican administration proved through example that not only could Blacks learn but that they could do so in an integrated environment. Fourth, the beneficent work of the Mission school continued at the whim of the politically and socially powerful Anglican administration. Once Dillon became a threat to the administration his foibles were no longer ignored and accusations of impropriety were made. Thus the work of the mission was secondary to the priorities and politics of the Anglican administration.

In researching this essay it has become quite apparent to me that racism existed in Canada West at several levels. Legal racism, which will be further explained, was apparent in legislation and pronounced in the Common Schools Act of 1850. The Act was the work of the so called progressive reformer, Egerton Ryerson. Racism also existed at the social level, examples of which will be demonstrated further in this paper. Studies, especially that of Douglas A. Lorimer and James W. St. G. Walker, have demonstrated that popular culture in both Britain and Canada promoted images of Blacks as objects deserving of interest or pity but not as full members of society. As Lorimer explains, "English commentators were becoming more assertive in their claims of black inferiority, and conversely, of Anglo-Saxon racial superiority."⁴ Canada, with a southern frontier in close proximity to a concentration of blacks in the United States, was a natural focal point for blacks intent on leaving that

country. But fugitive slaves fleeing the United States found Canada to be a less than perfect haven. Promises of emancipation, freedom, suffrage, and education lured runaways into Canada. British government institutions promised protection from slavery. What was not guaranteed was the elimination of silent forms of racism that permeated Upper Canadian society. This form of hatred proved to be as destructive as the overt kind, stopping African-Americans from enjoying their right to a free and unfettered education.

Education was demanded by the growing population of Canada West, both Black and white, because it represented the advance of modern society, a method of escaping ignorance and deprivation. For some segments of society the path to prosperity and power lay eventually through the new common schools of Egerton Ryerson, a path that was closed to all but white inhabitants. African-Americans were prevented from attending common schools by whites who were not prepared to accept Blacks as equals. During the first half of the 1800's Blacks were prevented from attending government financed integrated schools, not by the rule of law but by the rule of will.

Earlier laws set the pattern. The passage of the District Schools Act of 1807 did little to aid Black settlers. The middle to upper class nature of these schools precluded attendance by black children, as well as by most poor children.⁵ The inadequacies of the school system were recognized and the Common Schools Act of 1816 attempted to

address some of these problems. The Reverend John Strachan, appointed director of the school system, still believed, however, in the superiority of children of the British aristocracy and directed his efforts toward their advancement. In 1823, the educational system became more structured with the formation of the provincial Board of Education, but still nothing was done to assist Blacks. The British Imperial Act of 1833 abolished slavery in the British Empire and further British legislation promised equal educational opportunities, regardless of religion, heritage or skin colour. Universal education was the intention, but universal exclusion remained the rule in the southwestern part of Upper Canada. Later, after 1843, legislation allowed for the parents of any twenty students to petition for a common school, a school to be supervised by the provincial Board of Education. School taxes were first levied in 1843 and Black citizens were forced to pay school tax as were their white neighbours. But even after paying taxes, Blacks were prevented from attending the common schools. The London Bible Society reported that black citizens deserved the same rights as the white tax-payer:

If any Coloured child enters a school, the white children are withdrawn, the teachers are painfully obliged to decline, and the Coloured people, while they acutely feel the anomaly of their painful position, yield to an injustice which they are too weak to redress.⁶

Appeals to the Board of Education were made without tangible results. Board rulings were of little consequence when enforcement was not pursued rigorously and expeditiously.

When rulings came down in favour of Black petitioners, white residents still did not allow their children to attend mixed schools.

African-Americans realized that southern plantation owners had prevented their educational opportunities in order to keep them ignorant and malleable. By not allowing blacks to improve their condition, they prevented them from asking for more than the white owners were able or willing to give them. Blacks believed that Upper Canada presented an opportunity to allow their children to be educated. Black settlers only wanted the same opportunities that their white neighbours enjoyed. , the Voice of the Fugitive explained in 1851,

We regard the education of colored people in North America as being one of the most important measures connected with the destiny of our race. By it we can be strengthened and elevated. Without it we shall be ignorant, weak and degraded. By it we shall be clothed with the power which will enable us to arise from degradation and command respect from the whole civilized world. Without it, we will ever be imposed upon, oppressed and enslaved...

Canadian whites were unwilling to allow African-American children to attend common schools, thus holding Blacks in ignorance in the same fashion as had southern Americans.

The irony of the situation was not lost on black settlers. In 1829, a delegation of African-Americans had visited the Lieutenant Governor of Canada West, Sir John Colborne. Sir John's response to his visitors has lived in Africar-American mythology:

Tell the republicans on your side of the line that we royalists do not know men by their colour. Should you

come to us you will be entitled to all the privileges of the rest of His Majesty's subjects.⁸

Much later, in 1852, the principal of Toronto's Knox College, Reverend Dr. Michael Willis, agreed, saying that a Black arriving in Canada West "is on a level, in regard to every political and social advantage with the white man. He can vote for members of Parliament and for magistrates and in every other popular election." Indeed as Willis continued: "The coloured people in Canada have no grievance of any kind."⁹ The African-American grievances contained in letters to Colborne proved such sentiments wrong. They included a lack of educational opportunity, arbitrary arrest, extradition, failure to provide land claims for veterans of war and the negative attitude of those in positions of power in the administration. African-Americans did not have an easy life in Canada, they encountered resistance and opposition from the administration and the population.

The problem of getting African-American children into the schools was not only the fault of uncaring institutions, but also of educators trying to maintain racial and social uniqueness. Educational officials in Canada West struggled to protect the exclusive nature of their institutions even in the face of more enlightened attitudes to education. The Bishop of York Diocese, John Strachan, sought an elitist education for the children of the aristocracy. Strachan imported these ideas when he emigrated from Scotland in 1799. He conducted an exclusive grammar school in York for the aristocracy in Upper Canada. In his role as the Archdeacon

of York and the Chief Executive Officer of the Legislative Council, Strachan was able to further his belief in the inherent leadership potential of aristocratic children. He believed in common schooling as long as it was under Anglican control. According to Howard Adams, Strachan was "successful in preventing the development of free public education for the general population for a number of years."¹⁰ Only by lessening the power of Strachan was another, more comprehensive policy toward education possible.

But even when such policy began to evolve Blacks were never considered a permanent part of Canada West and thus his needs to realize their needs were not taken into account. Redress for injustices committed against the black community was its right, but it was only the exceptional group that won a hearing. One group from Ancaster wanted nothing more than the rights and privileges promised by "the British Mane." They petitioned the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland on 25 July 1828:

...the under-named people of colour, residing in different parts of the Province, and anxiously desire to enjoy more fully the many privileges it confers, and from which they are in their present situation in a great measure excluded. One of the many, and perhaps the greatest disadvantage under which they labour, is the want of means of educating their children - which desirable object they fondly cherish the hopes of being able to accomplish...with all its happy consequences.¹¹

This petition was ignored by the administration. Colonial leaders were not prepared at this stage to assist the African-Americans.

The Act of Union 1840 brought Upper and Lower Canada

together into an administrative entity. The wording of the legislation gave legitimacy to many accepted practices in the newly created Canada West. One clause endorsed the demands for separate denominational schools. Whites in southwestern Ontario conveniently interpreted the law to mean that Blacks should be separated from whites in educational facilities.¹² British settlers in Canada West were actively trying to maintain a division between themselves and Black immigrants. Their new society had fundamental flaws. As Arlo Miller writes: "It may come as a surprise to those natives of Ontario accustomed to viewing the racial bitterness south of the border with the detached piety of the Pharisee who thanked God he was not as other men, to learn that the public schools of the province were closed to Black-skinned pupils..."¹³ While the realization that racism was evident in Canada West proved troubling, many in the administration were happy to maintain the divisions thereby abrogating their leadership role when it was most needed.

Although whites and Blacks attended school together in cities such as Toronto and Hamilton, in southwestern Upper Canada they seldom did during the first half of the nineteenth century. White parents would not accept Black children into the classes, claiming that their attendance would prove to be disruptive. Common schools were open to white children; all others were prevented from attending.¹⁴ Such intolerance manifested itself in both students and teachers. Teachers reflected views held in society. In

1864, an American abolitionist, Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, wrote of one teacher who fairly represented the majority of her peers:

It does not work well with us to have colored children in school with the whites. In our community there is more prejudice against the colored people and the children receive it from their parents. The colored children must feel it for the white children refuse to play with them in the playgrounds.¹⁵

Dr. Howe quoted another teacher:

...the children would be better educated and conditions generally would be improved if the Negroes were sent to separate schools. The coloured children would not be subjected to so much annoyance.¹⁶

Dr. Howe observed children in schools throughout Canada West and he believed that the environment created by the teachers often influenced the acceptability of Black children. The role of the teacher and schoolmaster as public leader did not assist the Black community.

In 1855 Benjamin Drew toured the Black communities of Canada West and wrote a book about the conditions of the Black community. He commented on the declining enrollment predicament in the Black community:

The principal reason for this neglect of common school advantages by the colored people, is the prejudice of the whites. Many of the whites object to having their children sit in the same forms with the colored pupils; and some of the lower classes will not send their children to schools where the blacks are admitted. Under these circumstances, it is unpleasant to the colored children to attend the public schools - especially if any of the teachers happen to be victims of the very prejudice which they should induce others to overcome.¹⁷

The situation was exacerbated when teachers realized that if Blacks were admitted white students would be withdrawn. Most

teachers were not sufficiently motivated to stand against public opinion. In consequence, Blacks were excluded.¹⁸

Blacks did not want separate facilities. Until forced out of the common schools they rarely opened educational institutions on their own. Faced with run-down buildings, overcrowding, poor quality instructors, outdated or nonexistent slates and books, and greater distances to travel, they sought desperately to remain in the common school system when possible.¹⁹ Driven by a desire for education, Blacks grudgingly accepted being excluded from the common schools and created their own only when no other choice was possible.

Mary Ann Shadd, editor of the Provincial Freeman, spoke vigorously against such separate schools. She understood the motives of white residents and hated the injustice of the situation. Shadd emigrated to Upper Canada with her family in the 1830's. In 1851 she was hired to teach Black children in Sandwich, near Windsor. She recognized that the whites in the area were racist enough to prevent any government monies from reaching her pupils. She applied to the American Missionary Association (hereafter AMA) for funds to continue her work. The leaders of the AMA found it strange that Miss Shadd would try to create a separate institution and take her children away from whites. She reacted vociferously, protesting her altruistic motives: "Whatever excuse may be offered in the states for exclusive institutions, I am convinced that in this country, and in this particular region

(the most opposed to emigration of colored people I have seen) none could be offered with - any shadow of reason and with this conviction, I opened school here with the condition of admission to children of all complexions [sic]."²⁰ Shadd calculated a fee that the students could pay to help her to live. The AMA provided the difference in order to keep the school going.²¹ Thus separate schools were the only recourse for Blacks when administrators proved unresponsive to their needs.²²

In these circumstances, often the only white people who concerned themselves with the plight of the fugitive slaves, were religious leaders. One such individual, a British educator, Robert Peden had been brought to Canada West from England to teach at a missionary school for Blacks in Amherstburg, when he was a young man. Ever sympathetic to the plight of the Black children, Peden wrote to Egerton Ryerson in 1846 to outline the problems as they existed in Amherstburg. Peden wrote to Ryerson that the situation was intolerable and he explained that it was due to the racist feelings of his peers:

The prejudice in this part of the country is exceedingly strong against the coloured people, and the general proportion of the white people are opposed to the admission of the coloured children into schools along with the whites. To prevent as much as possible the injury to the coloured race arising from the prejudice, I designed District No. 3 in town principally for them.²³

Peden had failed in an attempt to withhold government funds from the common school until Blacks were admitted. He found that whites would not be integrated.²⁴

Ryerson understood the plight of the African-Americans and he commiserated with them about their situation but he offered little practical advice. He wrote that "the exclusion of your children from the school was at variance with the letter and spirit of the Law", and the espousal of the exclusion was at variance with the principles and spirit of British Institutions."²⁵ Ryerson suggested that the settlers seek legal redress, but there was no one to enforce any favourable rulings. The Superintendent of Schools was unable to act because of the strong racism prevalent in the area.

Thus African-American students were finding it hard to receive their promised education in the Windsor area. White parents wrote that they would rather "cut off their children's heads and throw them into the road Ditch" than allow the Blacks to sit together with white children. The living conditions for fugitive slaves residing in Windsor were far from satisfactory. In 1851, the Voice of the Fugitive reported on the state of the community,

There we found some families in the most deplorable state of destitution that I ever saw. Some of them were sick, in miserable huts, without food or clothes sufficient to cover their shivering limbs, - one family of eight or nine children some of whom live almost in a state of nudity, without a bed in the house and the weather intensely cold.²⁶

The Black community in Sandwich resolved to end the injustice and send their children to the school as was mandated by law. In 1854 an attempt was made to send the children of the Black community to the common school. They attended classes for

one week. The trustees waited the week to gauge public opinion before deciding that the children would not be allowed to attend school. The trustees solved the problem by closing the entire school and it was not reopened again until the summer.²⁷ Blacks were forced by circumstance to open their own school in order to educate their children.

In Chatham, a similar situation prevailed. When a separate school was created it was of very poor quality. The least possible was done to assist Blacks. Broken down houses and barns were provided as school facilities.²⁸ After inspecting the facilities at Chatham, Shadd berated the town administrators in the pages of the Provincial Freeman:

...a single miserably contracted wooden building, is set apart for the children of the colored taxpayers of the entire town. The few children of the hundreds of colored people, composing a large portion of our population, must go out of their wards to the 'one horse' school house, there to be taught by the one (colored) teacher employed at a little salary by the one School Committee. The children of the colored school are not promoted to the Grammar School, neither are they led to hope that they may be - why is it? Crowded into a kennel in comparison with the fine edifices of their equals...²⁹

Shadd believed that to allow such schools to exist was "an unmitigated insult, to the colored people and it is a disgrace to the age." Rather than tear down the awful building she wanted it left in place to bear witness "as it is a monument of the injustice the colored people sustain."³⁰

An American Missionary Association publication stated succinctly in the 1840's: "At Chatham they have a large school consisting of from 60 to 80 scholars. But unfortunately it is just like it is at Windsor, a coloured

school - a mark of prejudice uncalled for by the Government under which we live and which has a tendency to perpetuate that prejudice against color, that has always kept our children under the feet of the whites."³¹

There were a few examples of whites disregarding prejudice. One example was in Hamilton, in the 1850's a fast growing city. The Black population grew proportionately with the white population. The administrators of Hamilton promoted the creation of several Black schools during the 1840's. These segregated schools were regarded by their critics as examples of an unequal, discriminatory policy. The African-American community sought redress from Hamilton's Board of Police, the trustees of the public schools. The result was a continuation of the status quo. Accordingly, an official letter of appeal was addressed to Governor General Lord Elgin. In this letter Blacks spoke of their deep feelings of disappointment when they found that racism was strong and destructive in Canada West. The African-Americans believed that they were coming to a place where a man was not judged by the colour of his skin. They "thought that there was not a man to be known by his colour under the British flag, and we left the United States because we were in hopes that prejudice was not in this land."³² They demanded the protection that Sir John Colborne had offered to them, and demanded justice under British institutions.

Reverend Robert Murray, the assistant Superintendent of Education for Canada West, demanded an explanation from

George S. Tiffany, the President of the School Board in Hamilton. Tiffany replied that if Blacks were allowed into the schools, whites would withdraw. Tiffany wrote that forcing Hamilton's schools to accept Black students might create an intolerable situation. This action would result in a small number of Blacks getting an education to the exclusion of whites. White students would be encouraged to boycott classes until Black students were removed. Yet in an astonishing move Tiffany declared that the Board members had decided that "whatever may be the state of feeling at present with respect to the admission of the coloured children into the same school with whites, it would not be advisable to yield to it, but that the law ought to be enforced without distinction of colour."³³ This act of courageous leadership was welcomed in the Black community.

But all of this was quite exceptional. Egerton Ryerson's plans were to illuminate as many minds as possible through education, but he made the decision to exclude the African-American minority to protect the advancement of the white majority. Winks explains this in his article "Negro School Segregation in Ontario and Nova Scotia,"

By the mid-1840's there were 2,610 schools in Canada West giving instruction to nearly 97,000 pupils, and the problem of maintaining equal education for a few hundred Negro children must have seemed of low priority.³⁴

As Ryerson formulated the educational programs to be used in Canada West, he recognized that Black students were being forced out, but even though he sympathized, understood and shared their pain, he failed to exhibit leadership during

their time of need. Ryerson's inability to find the resolve needed to force the issue of universal education left Black leaders to fend for themselves.

It would seem that Ryerson wanted to bury the Black education problem until his new system was running smoothly. He did not want to initiate legislation that would resolve the problem, because that would mean admitting that problems existed within the institutions in Canada West prior to the education bill of 1850.³⁵ Ryerson reflected upon his dilemma: "I have done what I could to remedy it, but with only partial success. The caste of colour in this case is stronger than the law, & yet a law recognizing it would be an anomaly on the Canadian Statute Books & a disgrace to our legislature."³⁶ Attempts were made by concerned Black citizens to prevent such inequality in the law. In July of 1850 the legislative council was presented with a petition from "William P. Newman and others, of the County of Kent, praying that the Common School Bill be so amended as to prevent the creation of Separate Schools for Coloured Children, unless desired by the Coloured people themselves."³⁷ Nonetheless other blacks seemed resigned to accept such segregation. The Voice of The Fugitive denounced Ryerson and those members of the Black race that allowed themselves to become puppets of the administration:

The laws that apply to the Black man apply with equal force to the white men also, and there is no distinction here among men based on the colour of the skin so far as law is concerned, with but one exception, and that was asked for by the coloured people and the Roman Catholics, and their prayer was granted. The request,

however, was not made by the intelligent portion of the coloured population, but by a lot of ignoramuses who were made tools of, and who knew not what they were doing. Such men are hardly fit to live or die.³⁸

In the end Ryerson included Clause XIX of the Common School Act of 1850 to authorize the establishment of separate schools for Protestants, Roman Catholics, and "Coloured People." This provision compelled Blacks to begin their own schools. The law provided the opportunity to exclude Blacks from educational facilities; "prejudiced white men could establish a separate school for Negro children and exclude them from the school for whites."³⁹ Ryerson wrote about his surrender to pressure and his moral objection to what he had done:

The Nineteenth Section of the School Act, - authorizing each District Council to establish one or more Schools for the children of Coloured people, - is submitted with extreme pain and regret. I had hoped that the Act of 1847, authorizing different kinds of Schools in Cities and Incorporated Towns would, to a great extent, meet the case of this class of our fellow subjects....

These people are taxed for the support of Common Schools, as are others; yet their children are excluded from the schools there. I have exerted all the power that I possessed, and employed all the persuasion I could command; but the prejudice and feelings of the people are stronger than law.⁴⁰

Ryerson postulated that he had solved the problem of Black education: "...an ample remedy is provided in the draft of the bill...the Board of Trustees for each City or Town will be authorized to establish any kind or description of Schools they may please. In each town or city they can therefore, establish one or more coloured Schools for coloured children. Thus the best interests as well as the rights of the coloured people can be respected and promoted, & nothing invidious be

admitted into the Statute book."⁴¹ Ryerson, however, was cloaking his own failure by suggesting that others should deal with the conundrum.⁴²

Institutionalized racism was recognized and accepted by John Beverly Robinson, the Chief Justice of Canada West, when he wrote in a ruling:

...the separate schools for coloured people were authorized...out of deference to the prejudices of the white population.⁴³

To make matters worse by the 1840's the British were trying to provide justification for withdrawing their remaining financial support for educational facilities for Blacks. Meager financial support by the British Parliament in 1842, was to be withdrawn altogether. The 1842 Treasury Report to Parliament in Great Britain stated:

Adverting to the improvement which has taken place in the conditions of the Negroes since the date of their emancipation, and to the substantial advantages which they now derive from the social position to which they have attained, Lord John Russell looks forward with confidence to their being able soon to provide for the aid which is now specially voted by Parliament for that purpose.

After the present year, therefore, the Vote for Negro Education will be gradually discontinued, and it must be left to the Local Legislatures to consider the best mode of raising the funds necessary for public education.⁴⁴

In March 1842 Parliament voted twenty four thousand pounds "towards the erection of School-houses in the Colonies and Settlements to which the provisions of the Act for the Abolition of Slavery apply, and towards the Establishment and Maintenance of Normal and other Schools for the education of the Negro Population."⁴⁵ This was a decrease of six thousand

pounds from previous budgets. The Colonial Office believed that its obligation was over and other colonial institutions would have to contribute more. The grant was to be decreased each year by one-fifth until it was excised from the budget entirely.⁴⁶ Notice was given to philanthropic organizations and it was expected that they would raise the money needed to continue such work.⁴⁷

In the absence of public support either in Canada or from the Colonial Office, an awakening feeling of responsibility for the fugitive slaves in Canada West first developed as part of a growing social conscience in England.⁴⁸ Some British citizens in positions of wealth and power understood that the social condition of the lower classes and other races was no longer acceptable; nor was it morally justifiable. These persons sought remedies, remedies that were greatly desired by Canadian Blacks to help ameliorate their condition. A number of philanthropic societies were formed throughout Britain, with chapters in villages and towns. The object of these societies was to provide needed relief. This resulted in the establishment during the 1800's of a number of small Black communities in Canada West. These communities reflected average middle class white communities; they did not have a unique socialistic or communistic focus that would distinguish their society as different from that of their neighbours.⁴⁹ When the settlements were being created, the focus was the building of a church and a schoolhouse, facilities which it

was hoped would open the locked doors of the world.⁵⁰ British benefactors hoped that through education, ignorance would be dispelled.

The importance of education was stressed in the organized community. The school was usually industrial in nature, and the centrepiece of the community.⁵¹ The separate schools were necessary because of the racist pressures exerted by surrounding white communities. Separate schools were the only way that Blacks could be assured that their children would receive an education. Almost all of the organized communities eventually collapsed. This forced the closing of the local schools and the end of the education of Blacks in those regions.

Following in the footsteps of the organized communities leaders of the British Anglican church believed that leading by example was the only way to open the common schools to Blacks. In consequence, missionaries were sent to Black and Indian settlements in Canada: "Nothing will help more to allay this growing dislike than the example of a clergyman of the Church of England, who is known to be a gentleman as well as a Christian, going in and out amongst them as he would amongst his own people."⁵² The Church of England wanted to lead the Black out of ignorance, and lead him into the way of the Lord to improve his condition. If he could read his bible he could also be saved. Black leaders accepted the help, believing that if the church educators were successful and African-Americans could read the bible, then they could

also read well enough to conduct business, thereby solving both temporal and spiritual needs. As the Voice of the Fugitive explained in 1851, Blacks wanted to read:

If we learn to read that (the Bible) we can then learn to read other books and papers and we should understand the laws of the government under which we live. To do this we should read in order to become wise, intelligent and useful in society.⁵³

The gratitude of the Black community was conveyed in a letter from the Toronto Emancipation Day Committee to Queen Victoria reported in The Church in 1854:

At the same time we pray your Majesty in your judgement of us to remember that whilst the invigorating food of education was jealously withheld from us, the brutalizing cup of slavery was forced between our lips until we drained it to the very dregs.

The effects, more or less, have been a moral stupor, for which the hand of time and kindness can alone provide the cure. But amid all our trials we beg your Gracious Majesty to believe we yet thank the Most High that he has granted to us the blessed privilege of teaching our little ones to join us in praying...⁵⁴

During the 1840's and 1850's lectures were organized throughout Britain to help finance the work of missionaries and settlements.⁵⁵ Collections were taken at these meetings to allay the costs of food, clothing, building supplies and bibles. Prominent abolitionists from North America were well received on the lecture circuit. The appearance of a Black speaker was sure to draw a crowd and donations were gratefully accepted to help with the work in Canada West.⁵⁶ Liberal Church thinkers challenged the privileged classes to do more for the unfortunates. Reverend J. Kingsmill wrote: What are you doing for those [for] whom you professed so much commiseration when they belonged to others, now that they

have become your own?"⁵⁷ He spoke of providing a Christian education not just to salve the feelings of well intentioned Britishers but to provide a real chance for these people. He wondered whether philanthropy was an expression of emotion or a desire to effect positive change.⁵⁸

Sympathy was growing for Blacks, and the Church urged its workers to take advantage of this reawakening of conscience and make "increased exertions for their spiritual welfare."⁵⁹ Thus the Church of England sent out missionaries to help reinforce British principles amongst the new settlements. It believed that British principles could only be reinforced by the establishment of the Anglican Church in Canada.⁶⁰ Church leaders feared the consequences if the church lost its hold on the Black. The missionaries were sent out to prevent that.⁶¹ What the missionaries found was a segment of society desperate for both organized religion and education.⁶² The missionaries reported that "they have colored preachers....A considerable number of them are professedly religious, many of them evidently experienced in Divine things. The colored preachers, with some few exceptions, are uneducated and incompetent - scarcely able to read."⁶³ In order to comprehend the Bible, the fugitives would have to learn to read. The Missionary societies believed that "we are called to direct the weary wanderer to that 'city made without hands, eternal in the heavens', and, as the fugitive loses his shackles on the British shore, to take care that he is invited to share in that liberty

wherewith Christ hath made us free'."⁶⁴ The Missionary societies wanted to help the fugitives reach out to their God, but they needed financial and moral support.

In the 1850's an open letter entitled "Address to the Women of the United States for the Abolition of Slavery" was written by British women to their counterparts in America. The letter expressed profound distress with the current situation in America. The Duchess of Sutherland authored the letter and 563,000 British women signed it. The letter was viewed as an expression of sympathy for the oppressed: "We in England had little opportunity of directly benefiting the slave population in the United States, but the fugitives in Canada presented an open field for the exercise of Christian benevolence."⁶⁵ Appeals were made to the signers of the Address for help in the new cause. What the missionary societies offered was a project that offered immediate results. African-Americans in Canada could make use of supplies, books, clothes, money, missionaries, and education.

Church leaders wanted to prove through example that Blacks could be educated and assume their proper position in society, thereby proving to republicans south of the border and to whites in Canada West that the natural inferiority hypothesis was deficient: "We have been credibly informed on the authority of persons conversant with the views and feelings of Southern Planters, that the spectacle of a large body of the Negro race, elevated in social and religious condition, and walking, like Christian men, in the light of

the Gospel, would do more to tranquilize their fears, and effect a general, if not a universal manumission, than any plan yet devised in England or America."⁶⁶ A solution to the two most pressing issues, education and spiritual needs of the Blacks, was suggested by the Colonial Church and School Society (hereafter CCSS).

The Colonial Church and School Society of the 1850's was an evangelical missionary society dedicated to the spreading of the Gospel and enlightenment throughout the British Colonies. The CCSS was founded during the 1840's by an ex-British army officer, Colonel Irwin. He was travelling through Australia when he realized that the settlers were completely abandoned by the Church of England. He feared that their souls would be lost if they were not ministered to on a regular basis. Without the reinforcement of the Church of England in their everyday lives the settlers would lose their respect for British institutions and values. He contacted overtaxed missionary societies for assistance. They all replied that it was not possible to assume another whole continent, their resources were already stretched to the limit.

Col. Irwin set about raising funds to provide the required missions. His work was responded to generously and the Australian Church Missionary Society was founded. In 1851 the new society merged with the Newfoundland and British North American School Society. A new name was assumed, one that was more indicative of the objects of the Society: the

Colonial Church and School Society. Part of its mandate was to communicate with settlers and to maintain schools.⁶⁷ The object of the Colonial Church and School Society was succinctly stated: "...the Colonial Church and School Society amounts to this, that where ever in our colonies there is spiritual destitution which is not, or cannot be met either by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, or by local means, the Colonial Church and School Society steps forward to lend its assistance to the utmost of its power."⁶⁸ The administrators of the CCSS proposed that a special branch of the society be created "to be specially assigned to the work of evangelizing the colored settlers. The undertaking will require the establishment of three schools..."⁶⁹

The original proposal for a church school in Canada West dedicated to the fugitive slaves was suggested by Reverend Marmaduke Martin Dillon "at a meeting of the Colonial Church and School Society in the school-room of the Rev. F. Fisk, at St. John's-Wood", and after receiving a positive reaction he began to spread his message.⁷⁰ Dillon was an excellent orator, a charismatic and dedicated minister who could inflame the passions of an audience. Dillon would explain the conditions of the emancipated slaves, telling of the problems they encountered. He sought out influential audiences to listen to his stories and dreams. The wife of a prominent British legislator and philanthropist, the Honorable Mrs. A. Kinnaird listened to the pleas of Rev. Dillon and was convinced of the nobility of the plan. She

offered her support and that of her large group of friends and philanthropic organizations. Mrs. Kinnaird had been sufficiently enthralled with Dillon and concerned about the lack of religious ministrations amongst the Blacks that she "had thought of a plan for raising 1000 [pounds] a year if the Society would organize a complete Mission among them..."⁷¹

British church leaders believed that education must be liberally laced with religious studies. The aristocracy believed that there could not be widespread acceptance of the word of God without education. Only through enlightened thinking tempered with Christian compassion could "any permanent good...be effected..."⁷² The CCSS was one of the first organizations that practically applied these principles to its missionary work in the colonies.

The mission that Dillon proposed was to provide for the education and spiritual enlightenment of its participants while showing Blacks British values and way of life. The CCSS hoped that the example of educated Blacks succeeding in society would help lift the bonds of their brothers and sisters still victimized by slavery.⁷³ Dillon spoke about his aims for the mission:

He concluded with a general statement of the principles on which the Mission would be conducted. His aim would be to raise the character of the people, and this he hoped, with the Divine blessing, to effect, through the influence of the Gospel and their hearts, and by giving them a high class of education. This would be the most effectual means of breaking down the prejudices of the whites. The Mission would go forth, aiming not to make

proselytes but to bring souls to Christ.⁷⁴

Dillon wanted to integrate his mission in order to prove that whites and Blacks could co-exist and he intended to prove that in the colony.⁷⁵ Dillon intended to create: "Schools expressly for their benefit, and to which they would contribute as they were able - not for their benefit exclusively, but open to all..."⁷⁶ The CCSS required that missionaries first deal with the spiritual needs of the inhabitants and then solve educational needs.⁷⁷ The administrators of the CCSS agreed under Dillon's insistence that the educational needs be considered paramount and the evangelizing be secondary until the Mission proved successful.⁷⁸

Chapter 2
Rev. M.M. Dillon and the
Colonial Church and School Society

Marmaduke Martin Dillon was approximately 38 years old in 1851, when he is first mentioned in the CCSS records. Dillon was a veteran soldier who served with British regular forces in the 25th Regiment, which he joined in the West Indies. It was during this posting that Dillon met and married his first wife. When the 25th returned to England, Dillon obtained a posting as a Captain in the 89th Regiment, stationed in Upper Canada, "in order that Mrs Dillon might have an opportunity of being as close as possible with her relations and friends."⁷⁹ While in Canada, Dillon's first wife died. This event tested Dillon's faith, eventually strengthening his belief in God. It was during this period of extreme stress that Dillon decided to leave the army and apply to be trained as a priest.⁸⁰ He sold out his army commission in 1842 and decided to apply himself to evangelical work.

Dillon attended the Theological Institution at Cobourg, Ontario, from May 1842 to May 1843.⁸¹ Reverend John Strachan, Archdeacon of York, endorsed his efforts; "...during that time he lived piously, soberly, and honestly and applied himself to the study of good learning under our Professor of Theology with diligence, fidelity and zeal."⁸² Dillon had experience in the Caribbean Islands and he applied for

postings in that area.

Dillon was admitted into the Holy order of Deacons in May 1844, and the Holy order of Priesthood in September 1845. He was immediately posted to the parish of St. John and was curate of the district of St. James on the Island of Antigua from 1844 until his posting to the Rectory of St. George's in the Island of Dominica in July of 1850. During this assignment in the British West Indies Dillon became concerned about the condition of Blacks. Dillon wrote that "since England was responsible for the introduction of Negro slavery into what became the Southern States of America, English people and especially the English Church should atone for the sins of their country and race by doing everything possible for the Negroes now in America, Canada and the West Indies."⁸³

Dillon was one of only two ministers on the entire island.⁸⁴ He enjoyed a successful tenure until forced to leave Dominica in 1853 due to failing health. His students were distraught that Dillon had to leave the tropical climate. They wrote glowingly of his beneficial influence during his time there. They prayed for his return to health and his return to the island, and barring that; "we pray that should we never meet on Earth, we may meet in that Canaan to which you have so earnestly and faithfully directed our attention."⁸⁵ Dillon received many unsolicited letters of commendation for his efforts at bringing the children of his parish into enlightenment through education.

Dillon had chosen a path that he believed would help the greatest number of Blacks, and he worked hard to help them succeed, even to the point of destroying his health. The Dominican Colonist wrote:

We are sorry to say that this zealous laborer in the cause of religious and educational progress has been obliged to undertake the present voyage with the hope of securing his health....indeed we are aware he has undergone work & fatigue beyond the strength of any three men....Indefatigable in the causes of education and convinced of its importance in a moral and religious point-of-view to the growth of our community....we are satisfied that as a Minister of the Gospel - "We shall never look upon his like again."⁸⁶

Dillon's benefactor was the Colonial Church and School Society and it was written in its Minute book that the level of intensity that Dillon devoted to his work was appreciated. The Society said that it "...cannot speak too highly of the zeal and devotedness with which he had advocated the cause of the Society."⁸⁷ Dillon was ill and leaving Dominica a physically broken man, but he took time to insist that the Society send a schoolmaster and mistress for the school on the Island.⁸⁸

Dillon returned to Britain to recover his health. His period of recuperation was insufficient. Eloquent and charismatic, Dillon found his services were immediately in demand by the General Committee of the CCSS. Dillon's experience of twenty years in the West Indies and Upper Canada uniquely qualified him to speak about the conditions of free and slave Blacks. Dillon had spent much of that time with freed slaves and "his heart was strangely moved towards them from having seen their wrongs."⁸⁹ Raising awareness and

money on their behalf seemed a natural course of work for Dillon.

Dillon was periodically contracted by the CCSS to lecture and collect donations throughout Britain.⁹⁰ He was employed for several three month terms during 1853.⁹¹ In March of 1853 the General Committee voted to offer Rev. Dillon an appointment as Association Secretary, a position previously held by the Reverend Dr. Isaac Hellmuth, a future Bishop of Huron, with a salary of £300 per annum. His area of travel was to be the central counties of England.⁹²

Dillon kept up a harried schedule, traveling all over Britain, often outside his prescribed territory. As early as March of 1853, Dillon had begun his lecture and sermon tour in Southampton, travelled to Liverpool, the northern counties; Garleston, York, Harrogate, Newark, Hulland, Wakefield, Oldham, Leamington, and Belfast.⁹³ The Society was pushing Dillon to his limits. Dillon had a convincing story to tell, one that the people of England were eager to hear. Any deputation from the colonies that had to do with the plight of Blacks received an astounding reception. Harriet Beecher Stowe's work, Uncle Tom's Cabin, had ignited the passions of the nation. There was great demand on the lecture tour for any news of the condition of Blacks in the colonies. Unfortunately, the stories told of the Blacks tended to reinforce racial bias against Blacks and interfered with fundraising. As Douglas A. Lorimer has written; "...the efforts of the well-intentioned philanthropists popularized a

comic, sentimental and derogatory caricature of the negro."⁹⁴

Dillon suffered relapses during his hectic schedule. His frail health was pushed to its breaking point, yet Dillon felt so strongly in what he was saying that he pushed on regardless of the consequences. His efforts were recognized by the Society. The Secretary of the Society wrote to Dillon:

I felt exceedingly sorry to see you so unwell when you left Town on the last occasion & I would have spared you had it been possible. Finding that you were not unwilling to go Northward, & being fully persuaded that you would be of far greater service to us at Glasgow than anyone else I earnestly prayed that if it were the will of God, you might be enabled to plead for us. The result was most cheering - & the Collection the largest ever made for the Society at St. Jude's. For the success we are under God indebted to your zeal, fervor & ability which we acknowledge most gratefully.⁹⁵

It was during one of these tours that he met Mrs William Kinnaird, a philanthropic social activist; "it was the account which Mr Dillon...had given of their condition and wants that had induced the Hon. Mrs. Kinnaird, with the aid of the Earl of Shaftesbury to institute the Mission."⁹⁶ This group of supporters was widened by the inclusion of the Earl of Carlisle and Sir Edward N. Buxton, the world renowned abolitionist.⁹⁷

The Mission to the Fugitive Slaves at Canada West was to be a copy of the school in Dominica. Dillon believed that education would lead Blacks to enlightenment and thereby secure white acceptance. Dillon believed that mistakes made in the West Indies need not be repeated in Canada West. He

spoke of this in a speech delivered in 1854; "We had, indeed, purchased freedom for the slave, but we had omitted to fit him for the blessing by education. The consequences were to be seen in the declension, he might almost say the ruin, of those colonies, and in the fact that numbers of the emancipated Negroes were sinking into a state of barbarism."⁹⁸

Dillon believed that there could be a successful resolution of the problem of Blacks in Canada. He believed that the negative experience of manumitting Black slaves in the British West Indies had been corrected by the French and Danish: "The Danish and French Governments had profited by our mistake. They afforded education to the emancipated slaves, and compelled the attendance of children at school."⁹⁹ He did not take into account the racist environment into which he was proceeding, where Blacks were significantly in the minority. Dillon believed that the example of industrious Blacks in Barbados and Dominica proved that with education the condition of Blacks would improve. He incorporated his dream into the lectures about the work of the CCSS.

Dillon spread the message to the highest levels of British society, making it easier for Mrs Kinnaird to begin accepting subscriptions for the "Mission to the Fugitive Slaves in Canada West." On 7 July 1853, a letter was received by the CCSS General Committee from the Honorable William Kinnaird, indicating that he had raised nearly £300

toward the fund for the creation of a mission to the Blacks of Canada West. Kinnaird insisted that there was no time to waste. The Committee were not to be rushed, they had experience in the creation of missions and recognized that more preparatory work had to be completed first. The committee wrote that £300 would only allow them to hire one agent. More subscriptions were needed. The Committee was encouraged by the dedicated support and accepted in principle that the money would be raised. They set out to determine which area in Canada West would benefit most from an education mission and they began deliberations to hire an agent for the work.¹⁰⁰

Dillon had worked indefatigably for the Society on the lecture tour and as a result of his efforts had suffered a relapse. In March of 1854 a doctor told Dillon to stop touring and recuperate. Feeling responsible for his failing health, the Committee members sought to appease their consciences by paying Dillon an additional £50 "as an acknowledgment for his valuable labours."¹⁰¹ Touring had taken a toll on Dillon's health, making him seek a more permanent locale to raise his family. Dillon was offered several positions within the administration as well as postings in the colonies. Christieville, near Montreal, did not appeal to Dillon because the posting paid only £150. He had been receiving £300 and could not accept any less.¹⁰² His dream of a mission to the Blacks of Canada West was coming to fruition.

On 16 May 1854 Reverend Marmaduke Martin Dillon called the debt the Society owed him and declared himself available for the posting in Canada West. Dillon believed that he was the only person for the job. In his own words he possessed "long and extensive acquaintance with the characteristics of the African race both in Canada and the West Indies, and was eminently qualified for the work."¹⁰³ Dillon presented Mr. Ballantine for the scrutiny of the General Committee as the best man available as a "Catechist, and organizer and superintendent of schools."¹⁰⁴ Mr. Ballantine was a co-adjudicator and a lay-missionary, "who had gained much experience as an organizing master under the Mico Charity" where he was trained.¹⁰⁵ Reservations were expressed about the fragile health of Dillon, yet his persistence and experience led the Committee to find in his favour. Dillon had "forgone prospects of ministerial position at home and in the colonies, and was determined in preference to spend and be spent for Christ in this new and interesting field of labor."¹⁰⁶ The General Committee resolved to accept Dillon and Ballantine for the posting. They were entreated to begin immediately, at a salary of £300 for Dillon and £150 for Ballantine. The location of the Mission was to "be left to the decision of Mr Dillon, subject to the confirmation of this committee."¹⁰⁷

The committee was too far away to make pragmatic decisions so they expressed absolute confidence in Dillon's judgement. Upon his arrival Dillon was to obtain his licence

from the Bishop of Toronto John Strachan.¹⁰⁸ Dillon was charged with creating a Corresponding Committee, Bible classes, cottage lectures, Sunday schools, and tract distribution. The incidental costs of the mission were to be drawn quarterly, in advance. Extraordinary costs were to be presented to the General Committee for approval before any outlay of monies. Living expenses for the missionaries could not be made from the Society's monies as they were contributed for religious purposes only. Ballantine and Dillon were told that they must regularly correspond with the Committee in order to fulfill their mandate. After agreement was reached on all of these points Dillon, Ballantine, and the Titre sisters received the blessing of the Committee.¹⁰⁹

In an acceptance speech to the General Committee, Dillon stated that he believed that immediate results were not to be hoped for, since racism and distrust would slow down the process. Gaining the trust of local Blacks would take time, and the rampant racism in Canada West would have to be confronted and challenged until attitudes were changed.¹¹⁰ If the quality of education was high, then positive results would effect a modification of prevalent attitudes.¹¹¹ Dillon originally planned to establish the school at London, Canada West; upon his "arrival there to hire a building for public worship, and to commence a school."¹¹² The school was to be under the control of Ballantine and he sought "to make it a Model Institution in which Teachers for outstations might be trained."¹¹³ Dillon wanted to quickly bring the school up to

the standards of the Government Grant for Common Schools in order to meet local standards and thereby gain general acceptance for its graduates. He wanted to create an institution that would teach Blacks and whites together. Dillon also wanted to train Black teachers to go as missionaries to the West Indies and Africa; but primarily he wanted the school to be successful in the eyes of the local school boards so that graduates would be accepted and not excluded.

Dillon did not want to encounter resistance to his mission from local church administrators. In order to avoid this problem, Dillon obtained the blessing of the Archbishop of Canterbury on 2 May 1854 and a letter of recommendation from the Bishop of London, Bloomfield to the Bishop of Toronto, Strachan.¹¹⁴ Reverend John Strachan's assistance was assured by the assistance of the Earl of Shaftesbury, who volunteered to correspond with the Governor General of Canada, the Earl of Elgin.¹¹⁵ He entreated the Governor General to help deflect criticism in Canada and to personally "meet possible difficulties in obtaining a licence for a clergyman from the Bishop of Toronto."¹¹⁶ Bishop John Strachan's co-operation was therefore assured and Dillon's licence would be granted immediately upon arrival. Lord Shaftesbury also provided Dillon with a letter of introduction to the Hon. Sir Francis Hincks, the leader of the Canadian cabinet.¹¹⁷ Sir Edward Buxton, a prominent abolitionist of the day, wrote Dillon a letter of

introduction and commendation to the Black community.¹¹⁸ The British religious establishment wanted the founding of the new mission to be as incident-free as possible. Therefore, every pressure available was brought to bear in order to ensure the cooperation of the Canadian religious establishment.

Dillon sailed from Portsmouth on the morning of Tuesday the 4th day of July, 1854.¹¹⁹ Accompanying him on the packet-ship Victoria were his wife, children, Ballantine, Sarah and Mary Ann Titre and boxes of school supplies, including Library books provided by the Religious Tract Society at half price.¹²⁰ They landed in New York City on the 23rd of August 1854.

CHAPTER 3

The Mission to Fugitive Slaves of Canada West

Great expectations and momentous fears traveled with Dillon and his party as they made their way westward to their new calling. Much was riding on the experiment. Success at the mission would foster greater interest in the project and possibly raise more money to allow for additional schools to be founded. The party arrived in the Canadian colonies in early September. Dillon presented his credentials to the Governor General, the Earl of Elgin and Kincardine, at Quebec City. He presented his letter of recommendation from Shaftesbury: "His lordship at once expressed his deep interest in the Mission, arising from his former connexion with Jamaica, and promised all the aid that his influence could carry with it; also to recommend it to the kind consideration of his successor, Sir Edmund Head."¹²¹

On the way to his posting in Upper Canada, Dillon tarried briefly in Montreal. He visited with the Rev. W. Bond, the master of the Montreal CCSS school. Dillon studied the teaching methods at this school. The monitorial style being used at Montreal was what he planned for his school. Dillon believed that proper supplies, hard work, and Divine inspiration would help the teachers bring great numbers of students into the grace of God. This visit gave Dillon added confidence that he could accomplish positive results.¹²² Renewed and refreshed, the party traveled quickly to Toronto,

eager to get started.

The Anglican newspaper, The Church, welcomed Dillon and his party:

...they have brought out several cases filled with books and instruments, & that the work may be at once commenced. The work has been undertaken by the Colonial Church and School Society. We have often wondered that so much sympathy could be exhibited by professing Christians of all denominations, with the wrongs of the Fugitive slave, but that no attempt was made to save them from a worse thralldom than that from which they escaped.¹²³

At Toronto the Reverend William King presented himself to Dillon to help pave the way into the Black community. Realizing the potential benefit for the Black race, King had traveled from his settlement at North Buxton to help establish connections between Dillon and the African-American community. Dillon wrote: "Mr. King, having heard of my arrival, came a distance of 120 miles to visit me. He expressed great delight at our Mission. He accompanied me to a meeting of the colored people held at Toronto, when 500 were present."¹²⁴ Notice was issued to the newspapers and throughout the Black community. It read: "The Rev. M.M. Dillon, a Missionary from the Colonial Church and School Society, in England, having recently arrived in Canada, is desirous of addressing the coloured residents of Toronto, and citizens generally, in the Methodist Chapel, on Sayer Street, at 7 o'clock Tuesday evening, the 12th instant."¹²⁵

The large group was politely receptive to the Minister. Dillon introduced himself and his ideas, taking full responsibility for the planning of this mission. He outlined

the goals of the workers who he had brought with him. He spoke of an institution that would not recognize a person by the colour of the skin, one that would accept whites as well as Blacks. He proposed to create a Normal School that would educate workers for God, future missionaries that would carry the word of God into the deepest parts of Africa. He concluded that the elevation of the Black race could be helped by whites, but in the final determination only Blacks could work together to improve the lot of their own people.¹²⁶

His speech was well received, but one dissenting voice was that of the Provincial Freeman and its editor Mary Ann Shadd. She argued against the fundamental principle for the founding of the institution. Her fear of misplaced white philanthropy coloured her view of what was being proposed. Shadd believed that Blacks should help themselves and not be recipients of charity. She viewed this latest proposal as just another attempt to separate Blacks from whites. Her arguments, while well intended, ignored the obvious failure of the African-American community. They had not been able to raise enough support on their own. If there had not been a void, Dillon's mission would not have been needed. Shadd wrote that: "The Common schools are open to all, in the larger towns, and wherever the large town takes the precedence in matters of the kind, the smaller ones generally follow suit - So far from being needed, the establishment of a Normal School, of the kind proposed, would be a positive

injury..."¹²⁷ Shadd's expectations were unrealistic, common schools in the western part of Upper Canada had been closed to Blacks for decades. She believed that any time the prefix -coloured was added to anything it denoted something special, something different, when all the while they wanted sameness, not exclusion. The separateness fostered a prejudice against colour, "the very state of affairs that missionary labors should obviate."¹²⁸ The suggestions that Blacks should be trained to do missionary work in Africa struck Shadd as ludicrous. As with the back-to-Africa schemes, African-Americans responded that they considered North America home as did other immigrants. She believed that there was plenty of work in Canada for any educated man or woman, regardless of their colour. She dismissed Dillon's suggestions as being insulting to the Black race.

Dillon reacted to these charges in a letter to the General Committee. He wrote:

...some evil-disposed and interested individuals, who represented us to the poor ignorant colored people as their bitterest enemies - desiring only their moral degradation, wishing to create distinctions between them and their white brethren - in fact, as leagued with the Colonization Society of the United States, and aiming at their total removal from the British provinces to the coast of Africa. However absurd such statements may appear, they were at first readily believed by an easily-excited and truly injured people, suffering under great prejudices on the part of their white neighbours, and also from being so often the sad dupes of professed friends, both of their own colour as well as among whites.¹²⁹

While Dillon was gauging the response of the Black community to his proposal he met with Josiah Henson.

Henson founded and operated the British North American

Institute, a Black industrial school at Dawn, Ontario. Dillon gained confidence and reassurance from this meeting. He also met with the Anglican Bishop of Toronto, John Strachan. Dillon presented his papers and letters of recommendation. His licence was granted immediately. The Bishop made polite enquiries of his guest but offered little in way of support. Bishop Strachan wrote: "My sanction so far is merely the legitimate consequence of the high authority which acknowledged him & his enterprises in England. I am only bound to countenance him so far as I find him worthy & pursuing the attainment of his object by lawful & proper means."¹³⁰ Strachan did not enjoy being told what to do in his Diocese and he resented Dillon. The General Committee anticipated this. They asked that Dillon provide the Bishop with all his reports as usual, but to make duplicates and direct them to the Society independently in order to ensure their arrival.¹³¹

Bishop Strachan insisted that he had made attempts to reach the Black population but at every attempt Blacks had withdrawn, suspicious of all interference. He called the African-Americans "very ignorant and bigoted" and declined to assist Dillon independently because he believed "that without such aid as he brings with him any exertion made amongst ourselves would prove abortive." Strachan also reported that the Black community did not meet with Mr Dillon's ideas in a "friendly spirit."¹³² In concurrence, Dillon reported that the Black community "regarded our Mission too good news to be

true" and was distrustful of its efforts.¹³³

Dillon reported to the Committee that he was seeking advice as to the proper location of the Mission. He had previously determined that London was to be the location but he was open to convincing suggestion.¹³⁴ When he received no compelling arguments to the contrary he settled upon London where the local minister had kindly offered the use of a building attached to the church for Dillon's school. Bishop Strachan approved the location and gave Dillon his episcopal licence to operate in any part of the Diocese.¹³⁵

Dillon set out from Toronto on a preliminary investigation of Black settlements. From this trip it became apparent that the original plan to fix upon London as a central base for operations was correct.¹³⁶ London was the hub of southwestern Ontario and many Black families gravitated there because of its booming economy as well as its distance from the border. Here they felt relatively safe and secure. What they did not find was the benevolent, just society they had been led to believe existed everywhere in British North America.

The Black population of London in the 1840's consisted of approximately six hundred people and was growing daily. Facilities available for these refugees were not integrated. Blacks could attend church, but only if they went at different times than whites. There were two common schools that reluctantly admitted Black children, but not many of them attended because of the racist attacks that they were

forced to endure.¹³⁷ It was easier for parents not to send their children to these schools than to try to justify the attacks to their children, the focus of all the hatred. Black landowners paid their property taxes for education yet their children were effectively denied admittance to the common school which was dependent on tax dollars. The children had every right to attend the schools, but were denied access by the teachers. It was reported in Drew's book The Refugee that: "If any Colored child enters a School the white children are withdrawn, the teachers are painfully obliged to decline, and the Coloured people while they acutely feel the anomaly of their painful position, yield to an injustice which they are too weak to redress..."¹³⁸

In 1849 Black residents founded a school for their children in London but it was not large enough to deal with all of the Black population desiring an education.¹³⁹ They could not be educated in London, yet they did not want to leave. Prosperity was coming and Blacks wanted to share in it. By the 1850's there was a general growth in business, six newspapers had begun printing, the streets were lighted by gas lamps, and a number of banks had been established in London. Positive change could be expected to take place in Canada West and London was the most progressive place to try to effect it. In the 1850's there were nearly 16,000 inhabitants at the fork of the Thames River. In London it was said that "there is not a town in Canada where the respectable colored people enjoy more of the esteem of the

best classes than London."¹⁴⁰ The town was in a boom period where business and population were being attracted to prosperity. Here was an opportunity for African-Americans to take charge of their destiny.¹⁴¹

Several Black residents were doing quite well. There was little poverty amongst the town dwellers. African-Americans who had reached the middle class bought property within town limits. A correspondent of the New York Tribune, who visited the city wrote that "many of the coloured people are amassing wealth". All parties testify that the coloured man's condition is as good as that of any other emigrants."¹⁴² The assessed value of Black real estate possessions was \$13,504.00.¹⁴³ Blacks were drawn to London for many of the same reasons that whites were.¹⁴⁴ The total number of Blacks in Canada West was estimated at 60,000. The 1851 agricultural census cannot be used to determine the actual numbers of Blacks within the colony because most of the census was lost or destroyed. What is available is inaccurate because most census enumerators failed to complete the colour designation section on their forms.¹⁴⁵

Reverend Benjamin Cronyn, the minister of St. Paul's Cathedral, welcomed Dillon into the community and made available to him the use of St Paul's.¹⁴⁶ The temporary location of the school house was a building at the side of the Church. It was a draughty old building that was hard to heat in the winter. A Presbyterian minister who spent time preaching in the building reported that he would be

"reluctant to enter the building again during the wintertime."¹⁴⁷ Dillon was constantly searching for other facilities within reach of St. Paul's and his constituency.

The Colonel in charge of the 89th Regiment was a friend of Dillon's from his days in the army. A room in the army barracks was given over to Dillon on a temporary basis until permanent facilities could be built. This part of the school opened on 20 November 1854.¹⁴⁸ The outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853 had led to the recall of the regiment stationed in London, and thus made superfluous the many barracks on the military reserve.¹⁴⁹ Dillon appealed directly to the Military Superintendent Colonel Tulloch for permission to use the now abandoned artillery barracks. Dillon reported to the CCSS: "In the kindest manner he granted my request, with many earnest wishes for our success."¹⁵⁰ The three locations, beside the church and in the barracks were filled to capacity. The "Town School" opened on 8 January 1855. The Titre women divided the two locations used for infant children's education, Sarah at the new school and Mary Anne at the barracks. The new school was a success from the first day when 61 children attended and on the second day when the school filled up and they were forced to turn away 115 children.¹⁵¹ Need for the facility was never in doubt.

The Anglicans sought to provide two things at once, religious training and education. Educating Blacks in a religious environment would reach both their minds and their souls. The mixture of religion and education proved to be

the adhesive that cemented the Mission's purpose in the community. Blacks attended the school both day and night, and also attended the religious services offered by Dillon. On Emancipation day, 1855, Dillon preached to an overflow crowd numbering between six and seven hundred at St. Paul's Church. Dillon wrote in a report to the General Committee:

The colored people of London and the neighbourhood, desiring to commemorate, before God, the emancipation of their brethren in the British Colonies, on the 1st August, 1834, sent a deputation to request if I would be so kind as to hold divine service on the anniversary of the day in question....I preached from St. John XIII, 34, 35, and 36. In the afternoon they had a public luncheon, attended by the Mayor and many of the most respectable citizens...¹⁵²

Dillon led the assembled masses from the barracks passing along the city streets into the church where they raised prayers to thank God for their deliverance to Canada. Dillon preached for understanding in London; "a new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."¹⁵³

Dillon's school was an attempt to put theory into practice. He wanted the races to mix together without antagonism. He believed that if he could get them to learn together they would lose the feeling of strangeness that bred racism and distrust. He insisted that Blacks and whites study together as equals. Dillon opened the doors of the school to everyone, "even...Romanists."¹⁵⁴

The school was well attended but not particularly well supplied. Dillon was constantly appealing for supplies from English benevolent societies. The Committee of the CCSS wanted the mission school to be self-sufficient. They were

to obtain their own supplies. But Dillon needed supplies, as he indicated in a report to the General Committee of the CCSS: "In our schools we want - all our supply having been expended - six Mimpriss's 'Manuals' for the First and Second Grade, published by Varty; two of the new and large edition of the 'Treasury Harmony'. These supplies would indeed be a blessing at the present moment, and perhaps some kind ladies might send them to us instead of clothing."¹⁵⁵ In order to help collect needed monies and to increase the public's awareness and acceptance of the mission Dillon quickly moved to establish an auxiliary association.

The newly formed Corresponding Committee expressed its determination to help both the CCSS and the mission school succeed. Dillon enlisted the aid of some of London's most prominent and influential members: John Labatt, George Goodhue, L. Lawrason, Rev. C.C. Brough and the Rev. Benjamin Cronyn, who served as President.¹⁵⁶ The London Corresponding Committee was to report to the General Committee in England as well as advise the mission workers.

The auxiliary association set about solving the overcrowding problem at the barracks school. The members formed an internal committee to determine the best means to solve the problems facing the mission. They wanted to increase the number of beds available for the boarding students, obtain the necessary supplies for the school and erect a permanent structure built of brick. The anticipated cost of L1,200 was to be raised by private donations.

Collections were delayed by the temporary financial crisis that London was experiencing.¹⁵⁷

The Mission's initial success was above expectations. Day classes for children, and night classes for adults were well attended. The Bible and Sunday School classes fulfilled the original mandate of the Society. As Dillon wrote: "These schools, under the immediate superintendence of Mr Hurst, are likely to produce blessed results, being well attended, chiefly by the colored adult population, many of whom have to be taught their letters."¹⁵⁸ The Sunday school "in the Colored Chapel" was attended by "all adults, except ten."¹⁵⁹ The adults took advantage of the opportunity to attend a school that would teach them reading, writing and the bible. Men and women, children and adults, parents and grandparents all gathered in the Sunday schools determined to learn to read their bibles.¹⁶⁰ The students at the Sunday school showed marked improvement and displayed a true desire to succeed. Williams reported to the Committee that the Blacks seemed more receptive to instruction and less distrustful than originally. As fear disappeared, the African-Americans allowed themselves to be helped, and their progress was evident.¹⁶¹ Dillon suggested somewhat optimistically that these labourers "carry their books in their pockets, when out at work, and may be seen at intervals sitting on a log of wood, or bank of earth, preparing to acquit themselves well on Sunday."¹⁶² The farm workers attending the classes at night would work all day and drag their tired bodies to the

school in the barracks in order to improve their minds.

The mission school prospered through determined effort. The missionaries continued to break down the resistance of the Black community and more Blacks wanted to register for classes. Dillon reported that as a result of the missionary efforts, 21 additional Black students completed applications to attend the school.¹⁶³ The school had only 18 Blacks attending in October 1855 out of a school population of more than 60 students. Dillon blamed the racial attendance discrepancy on the initial prejudices of the Blacks. Dillon explained that the suspicious Black community was at first hesitant to send its children to the white school.¹⁶⁴

On January 8th, 1855 the school split into separate sections in two locations. The older students moved to the school house which is believed to have been located in the old Sunday school building adjoining St. Paul's. The younger children stayed at the barracks building under the instruction of the Titre sisters, who were under the supervision of Ballantine. He wrote:

I confess the experiment was made with much fear as to the result, yet in humble faith and prayer to almighty God for its success. As it is the first instance, either in the United States or this country, in which colored persons have been introduced as teachers of white children, the experiment was a bold one, but I felt assured that if, under God, it should prove successful, the great barrier of existing prejudices to the introduction of white and colored children to the same common school - to be treated alike, as the children of Christian parents...would at once be broken down, and this great and much-to-be-desired and truly Christian object attained. It succeeded, thanks to God's mercy, beyond my fondest hopes: not a murmur was heard from parent or child, and the children, especially the little ones, seemed greatly attached to the two

colored Teachers.¹⁶⁵

As British soldiers left London for foreign wars, more space became available at the Military reserve. Dillon was granted permission to use the artillery barracks. This allowed him to expand the number of students in his classes to 450 by the summer of 1855. The school building adjoining St. Paul's had been too small to hold the numbers required, thus the barracks were taken over by Dillon and his missionaries. His new location on Wellington Avenue between Dufferin and Princess Avenues proved to be much more conducive to education than the cramped quarters previously used.¹⁶⁶

Ballantine was responsible for the curriculum, and he included the necessities: scripture reading, junior reading, spelling and alphabet, writing on paper, writing on slates, arithmetic, grammar, geography, mental arithmetic, music, natural history, natural philosophy and plain needle work.¹⁶⁷ Dillon believed that this form of education would help his charges integrate themselves successfully into white society. In reports to the General Committee, Dillon stressed the effect of the religious education in order to satisfy the original religious focus of the CCSS. Dillon reported that: "The children have made great progress, not only in secular knowledge, but above all in the higher acquirement of those things which relate to their everlasting peace. Mr. Ballantine's mode of Scriptural and moral training has indeed worked wonders."¹⁶⁸ Hurst managed to obtain a melodeon for use in the school to teach music. He trained thirty young

students to sing in a choir to provide a cheerful setting for the evening services in the school-room.¹⁶⁹

The mission was an open experiment in education and tolerance. Visitors were encouraged to come and examine the work being accomplished. The Archdeacon of York, Rev. Neil Bethune, reported satisfactory progress of the students. He was "highly gratified with the mode of instruction."¹⁷⁰ Colonel Tulloch, the military superintendent of the area, was satisfied and impressed by the mode of education.¹⁷¹ The emphasis on religious education and discipline in the classroom was greatly appreciated and respected within the London community. Traditionalists in London society had been disturbed that religious instruction had been removed from the secular schools. There was still hope that the government would return to a more "enlightened" form of education.¹⁷²

By necessity, the system of instruction employed in Dillon's classroom was the monitorial form. Due to a lack of finances and thereby a shortage of staff most Black schools employed the monitorial system. Older boys and girls in the one room school would be entreated to help educate or at least guide the younger children through their lessons. This system did not reflect the current trends in educational philosophy.¹⁷³ As J. Donald Wilson wrote in Canadian Education: A History: "Its supporters claimed that three basic requirements were met: the education of larger numbers of children than might be possible under prevailing

conditions, the reduction of overall expense . and finally, the training of future teachers at minimum cost."¹⁷⁴ A teacher who worked in monitorial schools was usually overworked and needed all the help available. In 1888 Daniel Payne wrote about his observations in Canada West:

The system was Lancastrian and the children were advanced to the rank of monitors according to their qualifications, not their colour. In the male school I saw two monitors of colour - each drilling a class in which but one pupil was coloured; and the white lads seemed to be happy as those whose monitors were white, thus verifying Lewis Tappan's utterances on the subject years before - "that all children are naturally anti-slavery and only by false teachings, become pro-slavery."¹⁷⁵

The monitorial system of education would explain how Dillon was able to enlarge the student body and not the number of instructors. The common schools had abandoned this system for a progressive style of teaching.

Dillon was hard pressed to provide adequate facilities on the budget with which he had to work. The teachers depended on the more mature, well-educated students to assume roles within the classroom structure to help relieve the workload of the instructors.¹⁷⁶ Firm discipline set the rigid standard from which there could be no deviation or control would be lost. This style was accepted readily. As one petitioner wrote: "My reason for applying is simply this - I see the children of my friends and neighbours who attend your school are so well behaved, they are so improved in their manner and conduct, of nothing are they so afraid as doing anything that would cause their removal from the school."¹⁷⁷ The parents expressed appreciation of the improved behaviour

of their children, resulting from the "moral and religious training at the school."¹⁷⁸ The improvement in secular knowledge and behaviour was compared favourably with private institutions of the day.¹⁷⁹ Dillon wrote:

The general habits and system of education pursued in this country, are, in their very nature, calculated to make boys and girls, of twelve and fourteen years of age, consider themselves men and women, and all as equals: no respect whatsoever being paid to age or station in life. Such were the materials received into the school - yet now, at the end of only a few weeks, he (Ballantine) has managed, by his excellent system and gentle manners to reform as rude a mass as ever it was my misfortune to see, into as gentle and well-behaved children as you would meet with in any part of the world, and this without the use of the rod.¹⁸⁰

Many of the most respectable white families in London made application to have their children taken out of the common schools and enrolled in the Mission school. Unfortunately this would take more seats away from Black students but Dillon accepted the loss of seats to whites in order to prove his original aims.

Dillon was riding a crest of popular support for his school. The classes were growing daily, applications for spaces continued to pour in. As Dillon wrote; "...we cannot pass through the streets since the schools have been opened without being stopped and repeatedly solicited to receive children into the school. At the public meeting the exclamation burst from several lips, 'The establishment of such schools is the best day London has ever yet seen.'¹⁸¹ On the first day of classes, the 20th of November 1854, there were 11 children enrolled, and by the end of the first week there were 50; by the summer of 1855 there were 450.¹⁸²

While there were questions regarding the numbers of Blacks attending in proportion to whites, the fact was that the religious school was a tremendous success in London.

The quality of education does not appear to be in question. Dillon wanted to be able to compare his school with any in the common school system. Eventually, Dillon wanted to have his school included in the school board in order to prove further that Blacks could co-exist with whites. Visiting educators conducted pedagogical studies at the institution. The consensus was that the progress of the students was satisfactory, and the subjects being taught complied with current common school practices.

The African-Americans in Ohio had heard of the dispute between Shadd and Dillon, and they sent a powerful deputation from the United States. The leader of the group was the Reverend Daniel Payne, Bishop of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. Rev. Payne stayed at the school for three days conducting a thorough examination of the children and the methods of instruction. Dillon wanted Payne to issue an accurate and unbiased report. Accordingly, Payne was left to his own devices, free to examine any facet of the operation. Dillon was desperate to receive official acceptance by the established Black community. As a result of the three days of scepticism, examination and study, Dillon was given a hearty commendation for the works that he was accomplishing. In his report, Payne expressed "his deep feeling of gratitude to the Society

for the great boon they were conferring on his race; said that he never before had witnessed such a course of instruction so calculated to do good, blending in such an admirable manner a religious education, purely scriptural, with secular instruction of the highest order."¹⁸³ Payne returned to Ohio promising to raise his voice in support of the efforts of the missionaries. In a personal note to Dillon he wrote: "Yours is a noble undertaking, Sir; It was wanting to raise my people from moral degradation, by doing away with the prejudice against them on the part of their white brethren, and thus acting most powerfully against slavery in the United States."¹⁸⁴

Benjamin Drew, visited the school when there were 175 students in attendance, of which only 50 were Black. He observed the free and open intermingling of the races. He looked for examples of poor socialization, such as separation into cliques and association along class or race lines. Drew was joyfully unable to see poor playground habits and he attributed this to leadership of the people in authority. Drew suggested to the readers of his report that all the support possible be given to the school.¹⁸⁵

The Christmas examination period of 1855 was well attended by interested parties who wanted to witness the progress of the students. The assembled examiners reported unanimously that the students in the three mission schools would be able to compete favourably with any students in the province, or even in Britain. What impressed the clerical

examiners was that the "Biblical knowledge of the children was a theme of general admiration, not only exhibiting a perfect acquaintance with the great leading truths of Holy Writ, but with the history, geography, manners and customs of the nations mentioned in the Sacred Volume."¹⁸⁶ As a reward for the efforts of the 480 students, Dillon arranged a Christmas celebration. At the boys' schoolroom, two Christmas trees were assembled by Mrs. Dillon and friends, with a multitude of presents attached to their boughs. Many of the local friends of the Society graciously donated presents, one for each child. Suitably, the most common present was books. Speeches by Cronyn, Dillon and Ballantine led off the day, but the draw for the presents and the attendance of their parents made the day special for the children.¹⁸⁷

Dillon's biggest problem at this time was to find room for all those desiring an education. Few of the students ever surrendered their position once enrolled. A small number of male children entered the work force to help support their families during the summer months, succumbing to the temptation to make large wages; "a boy of twelve years of age will get more wages here than a man would in England."¹⁸⁸ Only by increasing the number of available seats could Dillon provide more room. The problem was that Dillon was not providing as many seats for Blacks as he had originally wanted to. Dillon was trying to be all things to all people, with varying degrees of success. He had Sunday

school classes underway, adult classes and infant classes in three different schools. In each situation he was forced to exclude a large number of applicants for admission.

Only the vagaries of weather held students away from their classes.¹⁸⁹ Both parent and child would struggle through the winter months to attend classes. As Reverend Isaac Hellmuth of the CCSS was later to report: "It was an interesting sight to see so many grown up men and women sitting like little children to be instructed in the first rudiments of both secular and religious knowledge..."¹⁹⁰ Mr. Hurst reported upon the adult student who sought help from another at the school: "He obtained assistance from a little boy who could read, and a month ago he was able to read slowly in the New Testament."¹⁹¹ The staff of the Sunday-school had grown to 27 members of the local community, devoted to Christian teachings.¹⁹² Dillon's concern was to raise enough interest and money in the local community to build a solid brick structure which could house all the students. A permanent classroom was needed to protect the children from the harsh weather.

The infant school was suffering from an overcrowding problem. It had a full house of 100 students with hundreds more on a waiting list. The accepted standard of eight square feet of space per child could not be adhered to in this school. The teachers were forced to deal with a space of five and one half square feet per student. Ballantine was concerned about this situation for a practical reason: "We

feel much anxiety as the warm weather approaches, for we are convinced that we overcrowded our schools last summer, and when smallpox and measles broke out they suffered severely."¹⁹³ The Corresponding Committee tried unsuccessfully to obtain a new location for the infant school.¹⁹⁴

The school for girls was commenced on the 30th of July 1855 by Miss Jemina Williams. She had been hired specifically for this purpose. She began classes with 105 girls and she increased that to 130. As with the other schools, Williams was forced to turn away additional applicants. Dillon would teach three Scripture lessons per week, and Ballantine would teach three secular lessons per week. Williams reported that she was confident that her senior class would be able to acquit themselves well in any competition with the common schools even though the common schools had many more teachers than she.¹⁹⁵ Williams wrote:

My principal object in imparting instruction is to give a clear and concise view of their state by nature, and of the means by which God has provided for their salvation. I also give them some instruction in writing and 'counting up', as they call arithmetic. I cannot say that they have any spiritual desires...¹⁹⁶

The girls' school also suffered from sharing close quarters during the summer. Many children missed classer from illness.¹⁹⁷ Williams was very popular amongst her students and she believed that this helped her to effect desirable results. Williams believed that her object "is not to draw them to myself, but to the Saviour."¹⁹⁸ She also taught in the all Black school where all of her students were adults,

some much older than she.

Ballantine's school for boys numbered 165 during the winter of 1855. Several of the boys attended school when they could not make a living in the fields. Once spring arrived they left for the fields after having been taught all winter. Ballantine held these new positions open so that students progressing from the infant school could begin immediately in the higher levels: "we begin to see that it will always be necessary for us to reserve room in both juvenile departments for such children as may be fit for advancement from the infant school, and we are the more anxious to do so, as many young colored children are offering for that school."¹⁹⁹

The teachers of the Mission faced their calling with great courage. They faced mistrust and suspicion from those they intended to help; hatred from those who opposed Black immigration; opposition from the populace that opposed intermingling of the races; and a lack of cooperation from Strachan who seemed to have given up easily on the Black race. But in the midst of the negative attitudes, Dillon and his associates found assistance from the benevolent upper class of London society. They were encouraged by the numbers of whites and Blacks that arrived to attend classes. Dillon was gratified by the loan of facilities both educational and spiritual in order to teach and preach to his flock.²⁰⁰

The positive example of missionaries traveling amongst the Black community taking time to minister to the ill,

infirm, unconverted and members of other denominations did much to allay the suspicions in the community. Dillon wrote about their success at "the breaking down of the prejudices that existed in the minds of the colored classes against the school. Several of our most bitter opponents have voluntarily acknowledged themselves to have been deceived..."²⁰¹ This acceptance procedure was long and drawn out. A Black resident of London, Ontario, Henry Williamson told Drew: "Some of our people are very jealous of the white people. If they approach them with the best intentions in the world, they are suspicious, and will not communicate anything, even if it were to their own benefit. This is because they have been so much deceived and kept down by the white people."²⁰² Blacks were so mistreated by whites that finding whole groups of beneficent whites put them on edge. The missionaries had to earn their respect. This was unlike the white community where the Church of England missionaries were automatically accorded respect by the parishioners.

The congregation of St Paul's was called upon to assist in the work being undertaken at the school. Its task proved to be the most difficult. The congregation was asked to change long held attitudes toward African-Americans. The congregation was entreated to accept the use of the facilities by Blacks who had previously been excluded from the church. No hue and cry followed the offering of the church for Dillon's use. This is largely due to the powers of persuasion of Reverend Benjamin Cronyn. The congregation

was not entirely convinced to allow full integration in the main Sunday service. Only the afternoon service was opened up for Blacks to attend. Whites that attended the afternoon service "held no barriers up" to the Black worshippers. There were no distinctions between whites and Blacks at this service.²⁰³

Not everyone was happy with the arrangement. Mary Ann Shadd would not accept that the intermingling of races at this church was anything more than an example of the paternalism of the Anglicans. She wanted immediate change and acceptance of Blacks into full usage of the church whenever they wanted. She would not accept that this was not possible:

The English Establishment has, among other improvements, a service for the colored people, in the afternoon, which is probably benevolently designed, as an introduction to the service on the following Sabbath morning; the service is an unwise one and may lead to a colored English church. What will those white Christian souls do in Heaven?²⁰⁴

Black churches were in such disarray that Shadd felt that many Blacks were forced to accept the meager offerings of white parishioners. The Black congregation had no alternative due to the failings of Black religious leaders. As Shadd wrote in the Provincial Freeman: "The Colored Churches are in a predicament - their pastors do all they can, but so long as drunken trustees are allowed to control at the one, and prejudice against whites to hold sway at the other, there will be confusion."²⁰⁵ Black pastors were unable to provide the needed leadership and spiritual guidance.

The work undertaken by the mission continued each day as new refugees settled in London. Hurst reported in 1855 that "not less than forty have come around London, since my last report. It is grievous, however, to discover the cold, dead state of their minds, and their utter indifference to instruction."²⁰⁶

Dillon needed time to himself, time to recharge his diminished constitution. His schedule was extreme, the demands upon his time all-consuming. His overwhelming desire was for the mission to succeed no matter what the cost to his precarious health. Dillon did not take proper care of himself. As he wrote: "You cannot be surprised, then, that my time is fully occupied: indeed, between schools, lectures, meetings, colored people, and our own dear countrymen, I rarely if ever have the privilege of spending an evening with my family. I may truly say, I have not an hour that is not fully occupied."²⁰⁷ The General Committee had been reticent about appointing Dillon to the new post because of the frailty of his health combined with his selfless work for the Black race. They had witnessed this during his tours in Britain on behalf of the Society. His diminished capacity led to a much-needed trip to Boston in order to seek support for his mission as well as get some rest.²⁰⁸ This was the first indication of the breakdown of Dillon's health. The General Committee approved a request from Dillon for an expenditure of ten pounds to cover his expenses, and approved his leave of absence. Shadd wrote that Dillon was in the

United States begging and lying for the mission. Shadd wanted Blacks in Canada West to be self-sufficient, and she saw this trip as setting the wrong example for Blacks to follow.²⁰⁹

Dillon was not the only missionary to suffer a physical breakdown within the mission. The winter of 1855 - 1856 was exceptionally harsh, students were unable to attend classes due to the inclement weather. For the Titre women, Canada West proved to be harsh and forbidding. Both developed lung disorders, most probably tuberculous. In the words of Ballantine: "The doctor has pronounced the case of both beyond hope unless by speedy removal to their native land, and go they must; but they will leave this the field of their labors accompanied by the regrets and sympathies of all who have known them."²¹⁰ Dillon reported to the General Committee that the two Titre women were not expected to recover. The women returned to the West Indies, departing from Baltimore on the 18th of June, 1856. Ballantine obtained a conclusive medical opinion from specialists in Baltimore before sending them on their way home with a negative prognosis. He appealed to the General Committee for thirty pounds for expenses related to their return.²¹¹

CHAPTER 4

The Mission Versus the Administration

The winter of 1855 exacted a severe toll upon the two Titre sisters, the students and Dillon. Dillon's failing health impeded his ability to deal effectively with the mounting problems. J.I. Cooper has written that Dillon suffered a mental breakdown as a result of the pressures of management.²¹² Dillon was portrayed by his enemies as a pathetic creature who was losing control of his faculties. This theory is incorrect. Dillon suffered from fatigue and exhaustion brought about by his devoted service to the African-Americans in his school and community, but that was not what caused his downfall. His demise was engineered by the Anglican administration in London, Canada West.

Reverend Cronyn was an ally of Dillon and as Rector of London, sat as a member of the Corresponding Committee to help counsel the administrators of the Mission. During one of the meetings it was announced by Dillon that he had entered into an agreement to purchase the property next to the school at St. Paul's. This extremely valuable land was situated in a prime downtown location. Prior to this announcement it was widely believed that there was little chance of purchasing the land. The owner had recently died and Dillon had quickly negotiated a deal for a permanent location to build his brick school.²¹³

In a land deal that created a great deal of animosity

and disruption within the community, Cronyn arranged to have his son purchase the land immediately. Cronyn left London on a trip to England to avoid any hint of impropriety. It was impossible for Dillon to move fast enough to secure the deal because he needed time to raise the funds to buy the property. This provided enough time for Cronyn's son, Verschoyle Cronyn, to arrange the purchase. Cronyn must have thought that the issue would have died down by the time he returned from England, but he was greatly mistaken. His leading role in the community was tarnished by the controversy. Dillon repeatedly accused Cronyn of having benefitted by the knowledge he gained as a member of the Corresponding Committee. He was accused of being less than Holy in his land speculation.²¹⁴

Dillon was profoundly shaken by Cronyn using his position as a member of the Corresponding Committee to make a profit. Dillon and Cronyn fought bitterly about the land deal. Cronyn asserted that he did not use unfair advantage, that in fact it was his son who purchased the property. Dillon asserted righteously that his case was valid and he tried to rally support in order to gain control of the property. Dillon wrote to the Anglican Church and the CCSS to have them force Cronyn to turn over the property to the Mission. The General Committee responded thusly;

In reference to the plot of ground purchased by Mrs Cronyn and the application to the Home Committee whether anything can be done to procure the property for the purposes of the society, it seems that this is a question depending on the law of Canada as to the titles to lands. We infer from the papers sent to us that the

land was conveyed to the late Mr Raynor, & that he alone had power to dispose of it; further that on his death, the property & power to dispose of it devolved on Mrs Raynor, & that she has sold it & legally transferred the ownership to Mrs or Mr Cronyn. Whether all this has been done effectually according to the laws of Canada, we have no means of judging, but we assume it to be so.²¹⁵

Cronyn had not been authorized officially to act as a trustee of the Mission to represent the interests of the Corresponding Committee. Cronyn was not compelled to act on its behalf. The General Committee decided that if Cronyn used the information gained as a member of the Corresponding Committee to gain financial advantage, then "such conduct would in itself be most dishonourable."²¹⁶ After careful consideration of all the facts the Committee felt that "there does not seem to be anything which would enable a Court of Equity to pronounce him to be a trustee" and thereby compel Cronyn to turn over the land.²¹⁷ This debate infuriated Cronyn and he resolved to be the instrument of Dillon's downfall.

Cronyn had great aspirations within the Anglican Church. His ambition made him extremely careful in his manipulations to destroy Dillon. Cronyn had to remain the aggrieved party. This approach would ensure that sympathies were directed toward him while he quietly destroyed Dillon's credibility. Cronyn wrote to the General Committee to discuss the rising tension in the community. To his letter he attached letters written by Dillon. In these letters Dillon was apologizing for making strong statements in Toronto reflecting unfavourably on Rev. Cronyn's character. The letters

established beyond a doubt that Dillon admitted his mistake, that he was unjust to Cronyn. This established that Cronyn was the injured party.²¹⁸ Cronyn also enclosed a resolution from the Corresponding Committee that expressed unqualified support for Cronyn. They wrote that they "wholly disclaim having made any charge against the Rev. Dr. Cronyn" and that they believed him "fully exonerated from any charge or imputation of impropriety with respect to the purchase of the said lot by his son Mr. Verschoyle Cronyn, and this Committee regret exceedingly that any unjustifiable reports should have obtained circulation on this subject."²¹⁹ Cronyn then presented a conciliatory tone when he wrote that he hoped that "the wound received by the cause of religion in London Canada West may by the interposition of God be speedily healed."²²⁰ Thus Cronyn established his credibility and brought Dillon's actions into question. The final note was very damaging to Dillon, yet was slyly offered only in passing to focus the attention of the Committee on the actions of Dillon. Cronyn wrote that he felt it wise to suppress the quarterly report by Dillon to the General Committee of the CCSS entitled "Occasional Paper No. IV" because its distribution might cause permanent injury to the Mission. Cronyn wanted the General Committee to conclude that the "Occasional Paper" contained fraudulent accounts.²²¹ Cronyn's letter of accusation was the beginning of the end for Rev. Dillon.

Stories began to be circulated about Dillon. It was

reported in the London Free Press in 1856 that there "were the rumours of immorality which had been circulated to the prejudice of the Rev. Mr. Dillan [sic] to the effect that he had been guilty of inebriety and the use of profane language."²²² The incident regarding the land purchase still affected Cronyn's normally good judgment. Cronyn was upset about the damage caused by Dillon's personal attack.²²³ Cronyn had little trouble recruiting willing participants to his schemes. Many people were disenchanted with Dillon, simply because of the success of the school. Dillon alleged that Cronyn supporters were circulating stories around town trying to destroy the credibility that Dillon had worked so hard to build. Dillon responded to these rumours by demanding an Ecclesiastic Commission be established to deal with the allegations of impropriety:

In this position, and understanding that rumours detrimental to my character and conduct have been, and are in circulation, I have applied to his lordship the Bishop of the Diocese for an investigation into every part of my conduct as a Minister of Christ, from the time of my entering this Diocese until the present time. This investigation having been granted, I am prepared to meet any charges which may be made against me...²²⁴

The Commission was struck by Bishop John Strachan and consisted of The Archdeacon of York, Dr. Bethune, the Examining Chaplain Rev. H. Grasset, and the Rev. H. Bloomer. They convened the regular proceedings of the Commission at 2:30 pm on Wednesday 28 May 1856 in St. Paul's School Room.²²⁵

The evidence of Rev. Dillon's inebriety was presented and an article by the London Free Press summed up the

evidence as being of "the most trivial character."²²⁶ Dillon was seen on two occasions staggering and exhibiting an unsteadiness of gait. It was well known that Rev. Dillon was suffering from ill health and testimony was given that Dillon was seen staggering in the chemist's shop at the very time that he was seeking medicine to relieve the illness. This was the only time that Dillon was reported to be drunk. Dillon's physician, Dr. Brown, gave evidence that the Reverend was suffering from a weak constitution and one of the symptoms that Dillon would exhibit was staggering and an unsteady gait. He testified that these symptoms were what brought Dillon into his medical office seeking treatment.²²⁷ Ballantine had testified that Dillon was struck by a form of paralysis in Dominica, and since then he had exhibited an unsteady gait that gave the impression of drunkenness.²²⁸ Dr. Brown gave support to the statement that Dillon led an exemplary life. Brown had "been on terms of the greatest intimacy with him and had never witnessed improper conduct in him."²²⁹ The Free Press dismissed the charges as being ridiculous and unfounded: "The very fact of their having occurred at times when Mr Dillon was in search of medicine is, of itself, most conclusive that at those times he was labouring the most severely under a disease whose only tangible sign as stated by Dr. Brown, is that of staggering and unsteadiness of gait."²³⁰

One of the witnesses of Dillon's alleged inebriety retracted his statement by saying that he had attended the

shop after Mr. Dillon had left. Mr. Jeffery clarified his testimony by saying that he "could not say that Mr. Dillon was drunk, he only heard of it."²³¹ A witness was brought forward who repudiated the rumours that Dillon had been drunk. The original statement of inebriety had been made by one Mr. Mitchell who had witnessed that incident in the chemist's shop. A Mr. Adams testified that he had spoken to Mr. Mitchell about the charges and Mitchell admitted in conversation that he "could not say that Mr. Dillon was intoxicated, except from the fact that he staggered." He also had said that the words attributed to Mr. Dillon might not have been used in a profane sense. All the reports of inebriety had emanated from Mr. Mitchell.²³²

How the two small examples of staggering could result in an Ecclesiastical Commission is beyond comprehension. It was assumed by the impartial observers, the editors of the Free Press, that Cronyn was orchestrating events behind the scenes in order to discredit Dillon. They wrote extensive articles reporting on the events of the commission. They reported that several witnesses were called as character witnesses for Dillon. Capt. Thomas Hodgins said that he had worked with Mr Dillon and had seen him daily for thirteen months and at no time had there been anything but exemplary conduct. He had never seen Dillon under the influence of alcohol. Mr. Ballantine gave similar evidence. Ballantine stated that he knew Dillon to be a "most abstentious man", and on the numerous occasions when they had dined together he

had never seen Dillon take more than a glass and a half of wine.²³³ Mr Haskin gave testimony that indicated that he had nothing but respect for Rev. Dillon and he had never seen him drunk.²³⁴

Cronyn had worked to gain support for his plan to destroy Dillon. He had approached the Rev. Mr. Brough, another member of the British clergy and establishment in London, Canada West. He entreated Brough to remove his name from the certificate which endorsed the work that Dillon had done with the mission. Cronyn approached Brough on several occasions trying to influence his decision. Brough disliked the deviousness of Cronyn's plan. He felt that an injustice would be done if the signatures were arbitrarily removed thereby indicating a finding of guilt without a trial. The implication would be that Dillon had done something wrong, while he would not have a chance to clear himself. Brough wrote that he "gloried in the British maxim that every man should be deemed innocent until he was proved guilty."²³⁵ He would not join Cronyn in this immoral plot.

Cronyn was called to appear at the Ecclesiastic Commission. He testified that he had known Dillon for a long period of time and he felt that it was unusual that the unsteadiness of gait was never witnessed. Cronyn said that he withdrew his support from a letter of certification and recommendation because Cronyn felt that Dillon had slandered him. Dillon responded explaining his feelings of grievous injury;

Being about to leave this diocese I applied for, and obtained the signatures of three Clergymen to usual letter testimonial, which letters bear date the 18th day of April, 1856. One of these signatures was that of the Rev. Dr Cronyn, and while in Toronto he formally intimated to the Bishop of the Diocese the withdrawal of his name from these letters - and I must presume that he did so upon grounds which he conceived justified him in taking that course.

The injury done to me by the withdrawal of Dr Cronyn's name was, and is very great...and I conceive it can only be removed by letting it be seen that Dr Cronyn was mistaken in supposing that anything had transpired to warrant him in looking upon me at the time of this withdrawal of his name, as an individual less worthy of such a testimonial than he must have conceived me to be when he without hesitation appended his signature to the said letters.²³⁶

As Commissioner of Schools in London, Cronyn had close contacts with Mr. Lester, the headmaster of the central school. Several children had left Lester's school to attend the Mission to the Fugitive Slaves because the quality and type of education was different and Lester resented it. The London Free Press reported that: "The scandal seems to have arisen from this source in the first place and the eager way in which Mr. Lester wished to 'extract' from Mr. Mitchell his opinion that Mr. Dillon made too free with the glass, is quite of with [sic] the desire to damage the reputation of Mr. Dillon..."²³⁷ It was important to Dillon that there be open doors to the Commission in order that he be cleared of this disgrace.

Cronyn did manage to embarrass Reverend Dillon when the topic of attendance figures was presented to the Commissior. This subject was not as easy to explain. Dillon desired to effect dramatic change within Black society as well as white society. His original plan was to have the white students

fill in vacant spots within the Black student population. If the whites occupied fewer seats than the Black students Dillon could prove that there were no ill effects felt if whites and Blacks were taught together. The original intent was quickly abandoned as the white population increased quicker than the Black population. The explanation given for the disparate figures was that Blacks were hesitant to accept help from the Anglicans, citing pride and fear of misuse. White settlers recognized the value of a religiously oriented education that was strict in nature, and they continued to tell their neighbours about the values of the school. In contrast, the African-Americans had to be convinced to attend. Another factor was that the mission purse strings were being held in tight check by the General Committee of the Colonial Church and School Society. They expected Dillon to raise money locally to operate the Mission. This insistence of self-sufficiency led to a creeping but pervasive racial imbalance within the schools.

More white students than Black students were accepted to attend the school. More Black students were on the waiting list than whites. There were more whites at the school because whites could easily afford the yearly cost of one pound per student, while Blacks were usually indigent and could not afford to pay the voluntary fee. Black students were supposed to be accepted whether or not they could pay the yearly amount and most couldn't. White students readily paid the yearly amount in order to get a structured

education. The glowing reports that Dillon was sending back to the Colonial Church and School Society may not have accurately represented the actual attendance. It was reported in the Free Press that Cronyn's testimony pointed accusingly at Dillon: "Mr Dillon had sent over to the Colonial Church and School Society, in England, false statements as to the mission here, which had misled the public, the Rev. gentleman produced one of the reports containing Mr. Dillon's statement as to the mission of the colored population in Canada. While the statements referred to were acknowledged in all hands to be exaggerated..."²³⁸ There is no doubt that Dillon glorified the results of the Mission to make his work look more successful in order to attract donations. He could not admit that subscriptions from white students supported the Mission if he wanted to maintain support within the British philanthropic societies.

In his testimony to the Ecclesiastic Commission, Cronyn stated that it was not because of the rumours alone that he had withdrawn his signature from the certificate of recommendation but also because of the false statements being sent to the Colonial Church and School Society. Cronyn presented to the Commissioners a copy of the "Occasional Paper Number IV" and explained that several of the statements contained in the report were exaggerated in order to misrepresent the effect the mission was having on London. He asserted that the quoted numbers of blacks resident in London were fictitious and the numbers of Black students receiving

education were flagrantly incorrect.²³⁹ Dillon claimed that many of his letters and reports had been compiled into one report that had been submitted by a devious detractor who worked to destroy Dillon's credibility with the Colonial Church and School Society. He entirely repudiated the statements as they appeared in the report, thereby disclaiming responsibility for the incorrect statements.²⁴⁰

Questions were raised about who had falsified the reports. Hurst claimed that Dillon said that when he realized the reports were "a tissue of falsehoods" he threw the "Occasional Paper Number IV" into his stove.²⁴¹ Hurst professed his innocence and insisted that he had not falsified any reports.²⁴² Dillon denied the comment Hurst attributed to him regarding "a tissue of falsehoods." Dillon was responsible for the reports to the Colonial Church and School Society and therefore had to take responsibility for what was printed. If the figures were inflated he should have prevented them from being sent to England for publication. It was to his advantage alone that the figures be misrepresented. It is clear that Dillon inflated the figures in order to inflate his credibility in England. He was not condemned by the local press for his indiscretion. The Free Press realized the need to make the situation appear favourable in England:

"We have read the statements made by Mr Dillon as they appear in the report, and have failed to find in them anything worthy of censure. Those who are in any way acquainted with the great liberties which are taken with correspondence in order to get up a report, or more properly to 'cook' one, will not be surprised when

they learn that the plausible tale dished up for a philanthropic but gullible public in England, has resulted more from the ingenious dovetailing of detached sentences written at different times, then from any perversion of facts by Mr. Dillon."²⁴³

The Commission ended its questioning of witnesses by 10:00 pm. It reserved the right to release its deliberations on the following day.

The next morning the commission announced that it had "no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that Mr. Dillon was acquitted of the charge of intemperance and profaneness of language."²⁴⁴ The members found that on the issue of the "tissue of falsehoods" Dillon and the Colonial Church and School Society would have to resolve them without a ruling by the Commission, it being beyond its jurisdiction. It did express its inability to believe Dillon's report in "Occasional Paper No. IV." It found it difficult to reconcile that the statements by Hurst and Williams, to be included in the report were word for word correct and that Dillon's were incorrect. It was possible that someone had changed Dillon's figures but the commission believed it was an implausible possibility. It wrote its findings to Dillon, reporting that it found nothing that would prevent him receiving the usual testimonials, nothing that would reflect injuriously upon his moral character. Later, Strachan expressed concern about Dillon's attitude, charging him with "something of imprudence."²⁴⁵

Out of all of this one thing was clear: there was a problem with the numbers of Blacks attending classes at the

"Mission to the Fugitive Slaves in Canada West." The aim of the Colonial Church and School Society was to educate African-Americans in the colonies in order to improve their condition. Dillon's aim was to prove that Blacks and whites could be educated together. The Mission's difficulties resulted because Dillon's aim differed from that of the CCSS. As a result of poor planning, there were too many whites attending classes. Dillon allowed insufficient time for the Black community to accept the mission into the community, and he concerned himself only with filling the school with students. When the Blacks did accept the school it was too late. Dillon had filled all vacant spots with white students. As a result Blacks filled the lists of students seeking the next available seat in the school.

From the moment the doors of the school opened, it was obvious that there would be more whites than Blacks attending. On 8 January 1855 there were 113 boys, 118 girls and 30 infants at the Barracks School for a total of 261.²⁴⁶ Dillon reported in February of 1855 that there had been 430 applications from parents for admission to the school.²⁴⁷ There were only 40 Blacks enrolled as full time students at the Mission, less than sixteen percent of the total school population.²⁴⁸ Dillon had forgotten that the fundamental purpose of the school was to provide Blacks with opportunities denied them in the common school system. Blacks could not attend white schools, but Dillon allowed white children to crowd out Blacks in the Mission school.

Dillon's rationale was explained in a report to the General Committee:

That they have discovered the sad mistake of their former prejudice against us is evident, for they, equally with the white, are flocking in crowds for admission, but all have to be answered alike, - "no room." I can assure you, it is heartbreaking equally to Mr Ballantine and myself to be forced thus to deny admission.²⁴⁹

By the fall of 1855, Blacks in attendance at the school had been increased to only twenty five percent of the total. And yet, Dillon did provide more opportunities than the common schools. Benjamin Drew, an American visitor to the school, remarked to Dillon that he was amazed that the Mission had more Blacks enrolled than all the common schools in the city combined. He had discovered only 19 students in his inspections of the city schools, while at the Mission he found 64 Blacks playing and learning without hindrance amongst the white students.²⁵⁰ Dillon was trying to improve the racial inequities but these new attempts were inadequate. Dillon reported that an enrollment increase of 27 places was divided between Black and white. He allowed 18 places to be given to Blacks and 9 to whites.²⁵¹

Dillon manipulated figures to present a better picture of the Mission. In June of 1855 Dillon reported that: "When we arrived here last November there were but 800 Colored persons in London. They now number more than 2,000, and are daily on the increase. Between 300 and 400 of this number are now under our immediate instruction either in the day or night schools, or Cottage lectures delivered by Mr. Hurst or

myself."²⁵² The validity of Dillon's statement is not in question, but the impression given of having a larger enrollment of Blacks in the day school is erroneous. The figures given in another part of the report are deceiving when he states: "I may safely say, that three-fourths of the colored children here are in daily attendance, and a large increase will take place the moment we have increased accommodation."²⁵³ With a population of over 2,000 Blacks in London, as previously claimed, it is not possible that the African-American population would have only 100 children in their community. The actual Black attendance at the school was 75 when Drew visited. Dillon was trying to juggle the figures to justify why he had admitted more whites than he had Blacks.

The original facilities were quickly found to be inadequate. Dillon had to turn away 304 applications for admission, a problem that would not have developed if there had been a larger building.²⁵⁴ Dillon wanted to construct a new school complex, but was willing to place his charges in any structure that was larger and available. Dillon impressed Colonel Tulloch with the quality of the teaching and he presented his case for the need for better facilities. When Dillon began using the artillery barracks they had more than enough room for 450 students with extensive room in the yards for playgrounds.²⁵⁵

Tulloch was prompted to make such a benevolent gesture because Dillon allowed many white children of the British

servicemen and pensioners to take the places that should have been reserved for Black students:

Having been, when in London, so much pleased with my visit to your school and observing the large number of pensioners' children allowed to participate in the advantage of the admirable system of education adapted, I feel it my duty, as the military superintendent of pensioners in North America, to thank you for your kindness and liberality to the families of so many old soldiers.²⁵⁶

Dillor needed help from the local community and he accepted children of the pensioners in order to engage sympathetic support. Tulloch might not have offered the use of the artillery barracks, if Dillon had not accepted their children. Dillon might not have needed to expand his schools had he not accepted the pensioners' children. Donations poured into the Mission school from the local inhabitants once the planned expansion was announced. He collected \$1,271.00 to help outfit the Barracks for educational purposes.²⁵⁷ On July 29th, 1856 Dillon and his charges began classes in the new school. On opening day there were 960 applicants for the Barrack School but there were only 450 available spaces.²⁵⁸ A chance to rectify past mistakes was lost when Dillon did not allow an additional 200 Blacks into the school when the space became available. In fact not more than 75 Blacks were admitted as reported by Williams. Not more than 130 students in all the schools were Black out of a possible 450.²⁵⁹ This meant that the percentage of Blacks attending classes i. 1856 had only increased to twenty-nine percent.

Day school was not the only area that caused concern

amongst the detractors of the school. Attendance at Sunday school had dropped off since it had enjoyed its early success and all religious services were becoming poorly attended. Blacks in London were falling under the influence of the travelling fundamental evangelists. Reports of the numbers of people attending the Sunday school do not specify race, but a report by the Rev. Edmund Baldwin in March of 1856 made mention of the poor representation of Blacks:

...in the morning Sunday School under the charge of the Rev. M. M. Dillon 76 were in attendance, of whom 11 were Colored: that in the afternoon school under the care of Mr. Hurst, 8 colored persons were present, and in the afternoon service conducted by Mr. Dillon there were 110 present of whom 5 were colored...²⁶⁰

These numbers of Blacks in attendance were tempered by the inclement weather the day Baldwin visited but fairly accurately represent the inequity commonly found in the Sunday school. The actual daily attendance at the Sunday school had reached 300 students by October 1855. Only fourteen of the members of the class were Black.²⁶¹ Williams reported that the advancement of her pupils was hampered by the vagaries of weather, job placement and the marriage of the young women.

By the summer of 1856 the attendance problem had to be addressed. Ballantine wrote:

I am endeavoring to increase the number of colored children in the schools, and am happy to say that this quarter shows a larger attendance than we have ever had of this class. I have kept the lists lower this summer than last, in order at all times to have room for such applications...²⁶²

Ballantine reported that 10 Black students were admitted to

the infant school in August 1856, not mentioning how many whites were admitted.²⁶³ On 20 May 1856, the General Committee in London, England discussed a correspondence from Williams. They had sent her a letter in which they expressed their joy that her work was progressing well. Williams reluctantly replied that the Mission was not operating as was reported. She asserted that "the published reports from the Mission convey an erroneous impression respecting the numbers of colored children under instruction, - that while white children readily obtain admission the colored are refused for fear of giving the schools a too decidedly colored aspect."²⁶⁴ Miss Williams eased her conscience by reporting the disparities to the General Committee, thereby leaving ultimate responsibility for the situation in its hands. Mr. Hughes later wrote to the General Committee, confirming the information that the General Committee had received.²⁶⁵ As Hughes wrote: "Hurst further proceeds to point out the cases of exaggeration in the Reports of Mr. Dillon - which has induced him to state in reply to the inquiry of the Commissioners that 'the statements signed M.M. Dillon were not correct'."²⁶⁶ The General Committee informed Williams that they had taken the information under advisement. The General Committee determined to take action immediately, and as a result Dr. Helmuth was sent to investigate.²⁶⁷

On site observers of the mission could see the disparity in numbers first hand just by attending the classes at the school. Shadd wrote in the Provincial Freeman that

the Missionary School consisted "of upwards of three hundred white pupils, and thirty or forty colored, - the school supported by funds raised in England to educate the 'Negroes' in Canada..."²⁶⁸ On 31 May 1856, Cronyn wrote to inform the General Committee about the numbers of Blacks being educated at the Mission school.²⁶⁹ He told them what he had told the Ecclesiastic Commission, that the figures quoted by Dillon in his reports were inaccurate if not fabricated.

A special subcommittee of the General Committee was struck to deal exclusively with the problems developing at the Mission. The committee undertook to determine whether the reports submitted by Dillon were accurately printed in the "Occasional Paper No. IV" or if they were changed and as a result were "a tissue of falsehoods." They decided that the report was fundamentally the same as submitted for publication by Dillon. The only portions removed were portions which would have "afforded stronger ground for the charge of exaggeration which has been brought against him in Canada."²⁷⁰ Rev. W. Hill spoke out in Dillon's behalf, saying that the numbers of residents Dillon estimated in his reports were correct, and the numbers helped by the Mission were also correct. Dillon had two local citizens investigate his claims and their report was published in the local city papers.²⁷¹ What was not proven, however, was that the numbers of Black students actually attending the Mission day school were fair, equitable, or just.

The limitations of both Dillon and the Colonial Church

and School Society were responsible for the disparity discovered in attendance figures. Dillon's paramount need was to be successful in order to promote the abilities of his Black students. His school had to be perceived as a progressive institution to help remove prejudicial barriers. He wanted to prove that Black and white students could work side by side without detrimental effects, while also exhibiting the intellectual potential of the Black race.²⁷² He opened the school to prove his hypothesis and Dillon acted as was necessary to preserve the school.

The CCSS was not prepared to support financially the Mission forever. It supplied the start-up equipment and paid the salaries of the instructors, but would not pay the continuing costs of the school. Dillon was responsible for raising the money on his own and paying the expenses out of the money that he could coax out of the local community. The money raised in Britain by the Ladies' Committee was held by the General Committee and dispersed as needed. In order to raise additional monies and to justify admission of whites, Dillon assessed a fee for attendance of whites. He charged all white students one pound per year, as long as they could afford to pay.²⁷³ This explains more concisely why the disparity of numbers existed and continued to exist as more spaces became available. Dillon could not afford to allow Blacks into the school when they were admitted free. His justification for allowing whites to be educated along side Blacks would ring true if he had reversed the percentages of

Black and white students. Having more Blacks than whites in attendance would have proved the ability of whites to learn in a Black environment, not that Blacks could learn in a white environment. In later correspondence Dillon wanted the Society to drop the name "Free Colored Mission" in order to give greater respectability to his school and more correctly reflect the actual attendance at the school. Dillon was altruistic in intent but his actions were pragmatic.

Dillon's supporters included some of the more powerful in London. As a result of the Ecclesiastic Commission, a damaging schism developed between the Cronyn and Dillon forces. Ten leading citizens including John Labatt wrote to the General Committee of the Colonial Church and School Society expressing their concern that Dillon had been mistreated. They believed that the final report of the Ecclesiastic Commission was produced to destroy Dillon: "We consider that full justice has not been done in said report to the Rev. Marmaduke Martin Dillon according to the evidence then and there addressed there being many discrepancies between the report and the evidence, the report being in many respects incorrect, containing several matters not given in evidence..."²⁷⁴ The letter argued that several statements given at the commission regarding the charges of intemperance were ignored in the preparation of the report. All of these statements proved that Dillon was not drinking and the charges of intemperance were "extorted" by the detractors of Dillon.²⁷⁵ The statement of support said that the

Commissioners were selective in their inclusion of evidence;

Neither has the report done M. Dillon justice in that part which refers to his having declared part of the occasional paper No. 4 published by the Colonial Church and School Society to be a "tissue of falsehoods" (the explanation made by M. Dillon is not even referred to) these words were used by M. Dillon during a contention between himself and Dr Cronyn, when Dr Cronyn said "Now let us understand each other, Is it to go down in the evidence that the report published as yours is a "tissue of falsehood" - "No" - replied M. Dillon the statements are all correct"²⁷⁶

Dillon wanted the report printed in full so that all those who had heard that he had been charged would be able to read first hand that he was not a drunken, mentally deranged, irresponsible minister. He wanted his name cleared in order to cast aspersions upon his detractors for giving false statements about his character. The Commission acquiesced to Dillon's request that the report be published. It expressed concern that Dillon might be exposing himself to further unflattering scrutiny, suggesting that there was evidence available that would confirm the original accusations.²⁷⁷ It was precisely this attitude that led to Dillon's request to have the report published. He would not allow his name to be besmirched by innuendo and gossip.

Chapter 5
The End of the Mission

As the result of the negative testimony of Williams and Hurst, Dillon found that he could not work with them and he declared that Hurst and Ballantine could no longer work under the same roof. He asked that Williams and Hurst be removed to another mission.²⁷⁸ Dillon started treating Williams and Hurst poorly. Dillon wanted them to leave the Mission so he made life miserable for them. Williams and Hurst were curtailed in what activities they could participate. Hurst was forbidden by Dillon from entering the girls school, an attempt to restrict his influence. Williams wrote to the General Committee expressing her full support of Hurst and the statements he made about Dillon. Williams told of the negative effect of the proceedings upon the minds of the young students, the affair and the aftermath causing problems for the students. She asked for advice as to her next steps.²⁷⁹

The simple act of accusation was enough to cause division within the Diocese and the CCSS. Dillon was accused of circulating letters denouncing the General Committee. Dillon wrote to the Committee insisting upon his innocence. The Committee wanted Dillon to know that it did not believe his protestations of innocence regarding the circulation of letters prejudicial to its management:

They must at the same time add that they have no reason to doubt the substantial fact upon which the Minutes, of

which he complains, was founded; - namely that letters, reported to contain allegations prejudicial to the Society and its management, had been circulated in Canada thro' Mr Dillons instrumentality. And while reasserting this fact they have no intention of impugning the sincerity of purpose with which Mr Dillon states himself to have acted.²⁸⁰

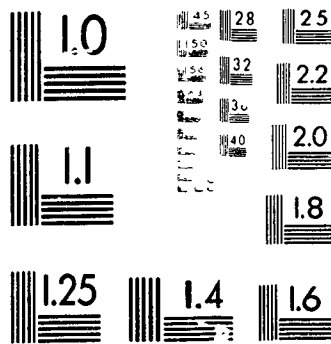
The Committee resolved that "the Committee cannot refrain from expressing the deep pain" that it felt reading a letter from Dillon expressing the utmost respect and personal admiration toward the Committee, while it had been informed that Dillon was circulating the most "unfounded and slanderous attacks" regarding the Committee and its members in Canada West.²⁸¹

Dirty tricks were not Cronyn's exclusive domain. Dillon had used his friends in the community to work against Cronyn. Cronyn was not universally admired in the Anglican hierarchy. Bishop John Strachan disliked Cronyn intensely. Strachan wrote to the Archdeacon of York: "I have said nothing of the evil you may prevent and the good you may do by supplanting Dr. Cronyn..."²⁸² Dillon mustered his forces in London to work behind the scenes trying to damage Cronyn as Cronyn tried to damage Dillon. The General Committee was the eventual recipient of the damaging information, as was reported in their minutes: "Read a letter from Mr. H. Briant dated London Canada West 3 July addressed to Mr. Dillon and apparently forwarded by mistake here detailing the proceedings taken by Mr. Dillon's friends in opposition to the Rev. Dr. Cronyn, and manifestly not designed for the information of this Committee."²⁸³ It is not known who

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actually authored the letter, sent the letter, or purposefully placed the letter in hands that would cause the most damage.

The General Committee decided to send Dr. Helmuth to Canada West to represent its wishes, to create some order in the Mission. He was charged with the job of making some definite arrangements for the future regulation of the "Free Colored Mission."²⁸⁴ The directions given to Dr. Isaac Helmuth as he set out on his journey of discovery and reorganization reflected the concerns of the General Committee of the Colonial Church and School Society. It wrote:

You will therefore lose no time in visiting London CW, and endeavour by patient investigation to examine thoroughly into the working of the Mission and to suggest measures by which it may be made available for the evangelization of a larger number of the Colored people and their children - not in London merely - but in the various settlements where they may be found located.²⁸⁵

Dillon made the decision to leave the community in order to restore his health, having given his all for the Mission. He needed time to try to cure the illness with which he had been stricken in Dominica and which had been exacerbated in Canada. Pride in his work would not let Dillon leave before exposing the campaign of defamation being carried out by Rev. Cronin. The General Committee was sympathetic to Dillon because of his ill health and wished him well in his journey to Philadelphia.²⁸⁶ The concern over the administration of the Mission and the growing dissension amongst the missionaries resulted in the visit of Helmuth. Helmuth was

to find a solution before the Mission collapsed and the beneficial effects they had achieved were lost. Dillon would not be replaced until Helmuth reported on the status of the mission.²⁸⁷

As a result of the constant attacks against his character and his failing health, Dillon resigned his post at the Mission; "...that on account of extreme illness he was about to proceed to Philadelphia for medical advice - that he had, in his previous communications given notice of resignation, and the reasons."²⁸⁸ Dillon had written to the Society in May of 1856 offering to continue in the post if the society could allow him a recovery period, but it appears that the Society wanted to remove him from the post. The committee offered to continue paying him while he recovered as long as he took the entire time left in his contract with the Colonial Church and School Society to recover.²⁸⁹ Dillon had asked for another posting in a warmer climate on a coastline anywhere. The CCSS informed him that there were no other available postings and if he resigned they would much regret the action but could only commiserate with him.²⁹⁰ Dillon was not in strong enough health to withstand the constant attacks being fomented by Cronyn.²⁹¹ As J.I. Cooper wrote:

In the early months of 1856, Dillon's health suddenly failed. He was not robust, he bore heavy responsibility, and he may have felt conscience - stricken at the fate of the young women he had brought from Dominica. Then there were financial worries, arising chiefly from the rapid expansion of the school itself. He suffered what would be recognized to-day as a nervous breakdown. Dillon displayed all the distressing symptoms.²⁹²

The symptoms of the "nervous breakdown" were conjured up by Cronyn's accusations and innuendo. Dillon was not displaying the symptoms of a breakdown, but rather was fighting to maintain the credibility he had worked hard to earn. Dillon was fighting the debilitating effects of his disease while warding off the attacks on his character. Dr. Brown, Dillon's physician testified that Dillon suffered from a "disease of the heart and derangement of the nervous system."²⁹³ Dr. Hooper also attended to Dillon and found that "the altered state of the circulation attending the disease fully accounted for the variable temper spoken of. The unsteady gait was also attributable to the same causes."²⁹⁴ This combination of diseases caused Dillon to seek another posting to lessen the burden on himself. The battle against Cronyn was lost when Dillon cleared his name and yet the innuendo persisted. Earlier cursory examinations of the data lead the reader to believe that Dillon was acting irrationally in his defence but careful study proves that in fact he was reacting with great energy to fight an unseen opponent. Dillon wanted to prove that he was not a blasphemous drunk as he was accused and thus demanded the commission hearing.

"We, the undersigned residents of this city having heard of your intended departure from among us, desire to present you with this expression of our heartfelt and sincere sympathy for the afflictions and trials, mentally and bodily, which you have lately had to pass", began a letter of sorrow

and appreciation signed by 124 influential members of the London community. The London Free Press printed the letter to show that Dillon had widespread support for his ministrations, it continued "...when removed from us we trust it will afford you some consolation to know that your cottage lectures and pastoral visits have been much blessed to our souls."²⁹⁵ Dillon responded to his parishioners' warm wishes:

I have had trials, sore and bitter trials, of late in body and mind; but Oh! What a pillow to rest a weary and aching heart - that there is not a drop in all the bitter cup but what a God of love saw to be absolutely necessary. Judgement is before Him, therefore, will I trust in Him? - My feelings are those of mingled gratitude for past, I hope that my labors may not prove altogether in vain as regards the future, and pain on account of our present separation. I am sure there are some who will continue to remember me when I am gone.²⁹⁶

Mary Shadd was glad to see to see Dillon go; "he would do better in the army again, in my humble judgement."²⁹⁷ "This gentleman, who figured so largely in 'colored' affairs at Toronto, London and by way of begging for his school, & c, in the United States, also, has packed up and emigrated to the far distant region of Philadelphia for the time being, though should he turn up in Richmond, Virginia, ultimately we would not be surprised."²⁹⁸ Shadd was at least partially correct in her interpretation of events as they transpired in Upper Canada:

"Mr Dillon found to his confusion, that while he could mould the coloured people and their interests into any shape be pleased, the Rev. Mr. Cronyn could not be interfered with so easily. He might have gone on until doomsday in his misrepresentation, & c., of the colored people and with impunity, but for the parties who would have suffered Mr. Cronyn..."²⁹⁹

Dillon left the colony a physically broken man. He was

not in the United States long before he applied for assistance from the CCSS to return home to England to recover from his illness. It supplied him with forty pounds which Dillon spent without returning home.³⁰⁰ He wrote and asked for an additional grant of forty pounds and the Committee replied:

...the funds of the Fugitive Slave Mission & of the Society are a little exhausted (which is always the case in the summer) - & that they are extremely sorry they have not the means of adding to the forty pounds already allowed for the purpose, you mentioned in drawing that sum vis of defraying the expenses of your homeward journey. However willing to accede to your request they are utterly unable to grant an additional as already indicated in previous letters; but they are not influenced by any unkind feelings - much less had they any idea of "grossly insulting one not present to defend himself."³⁰¹

The Committee went on to remind Dillon that it was he who tendered his resignation due to ill health and it was the Committee that provided him with the funds to return home. Dillon was to blame for using the money for other purposes and he could not accuse the Committee of acting in bad faith.

By November of 1856 the Committee relented after hearing of Dillon's complete physical breakdown and it allowed him to replace the original forty pounds and return to England.³⁰² Dillon received a leave of absence from his new Diocese in Philadelphia to return to England to regain his lost health and that of his ailing wife.³⁰³ After several months he returned home and spent time recovering.³⁰⁴ Years later, Rev. Dillon returned to Canada West to take a posting at an Anglican Church in Port Stanley and then Port Dover, Ontario. Dillon died there in the winter of 1884.

The total absence of discussion in the General Committee Minute Books and Annual Reports regarding the Mission School indicated a growing lack of interest in affairs in Canada West. The Commissioners rarely mentioned "the Mission to the Fugitive Slaves in Canada West" other than to discuss routine administrative duties.³⁰⁵ Animosity between Ballantine and the rest of the staff grew to a fevered pitch.³⁰⁶ Ballantine wanted to control the Mission and the General Committee was not prepared to ever turn the Mission over to him. Ballantine tendered his resignation on August 19, 1856. The Committee ordered that Ballantine turn everything over to the Corresponding Committee and it was to do an audit of the school possessions. If Ballantine had retained control of the Mission all the other teachers would have quit. The appointment of Hughes solved the administrative problems that were developing with the loss of Dillon. Helmuth arrived in London to investigate the Mission's condition. Cronyn and Helmuth became life long friends and associates. Helmuth saw the need for a complete break from Dillon's influence and suggested that Ballantine's resignation must be obtained to save the Mission. In 1857, Mr. Thomas Hughes was approved by the General Committee as Master of the school, London Canada West.³⁰⁷

The number of white children enrolled in the Mission school diminished when the Pensioner force in the Barracks was disbanded. The common school board intended to build and open a school in the same area as the Mission School. The

Mission School continued until 1858 when the common schools were opened to all "without qualification or segregation." Black children were allowed to pursue their education within the Common School system, and the educators were transferred to more direct missionary work in the colony.

The case of Dillon and the "Mission to the Fugitive Slaves in Canada West" is interesting to study because it clearly represents three themes in the history of race relations of this time. The first theme is that Black children were prevented from partaking of education simply because of their race. Some whites employed exclusionary practices in order to avoid close contact with Blacks. This avoidance attitude was pervasive in Canada West and confrontations occurred when Black children tried to enter the school system. No longer could racism be hidden from view. Whites did not want to associate with Blacks and as a result the missionaries came into the province to provide the service that the Black population required. Secondly, the legislation dealing with Blacks is proof that legislators of the 1800's were not concerned about the plight of Black citizens. They did not consider Blacks to be true members of the society and therefore passed laws that were not in their best interest. The Common Schools Act of 1850 legislated the segregation of Black children into inferior, separate schools. This legislation represented the first example of overt institutionalized racism in the colony. Thirdly, this case proves that the support of the leaders of white society

was necessary in order to help Black society. The approach taken by Anglican leaders was marred by internal dissension and this confusion led to the failure of the effort. When the administration of the Mission fought amongst themselves the beneficial work being accomplished on behalf of Blacks in Canada West was sacrificed.

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291. Ibid., 10 June 1856.
292. Cooper, "Mission," p. 137.
293. London Free Press, 30 May 1856

294. Ibid.
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296. Ibid.
297. Provincial Freeman, 22 September 1855
298. Ibid., 21 June 1856
299. Ibid.
300. CCSS, "Minutes," 01 July 1857, p. 154.
301. Mr Thomas to Rev. M.M. Dillon, 19 September 1856. HA, Dillon Collection.
302. CCSS, "Minutes," 04 November 1856, p. 212.
303. Open Letter by Alonso Potter, 28 June 1856. HA, Dillon Collection.
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