

**WOMEN AND PRESBYTERIANISM
IN SCOTLAND**

c 1830 to c 1930

Volume Two

**Lesley Anne Orr Macdonald
Ph D
University of Edinburgh
1995**



CHAPTER FIVE
WOMEN CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE

1.Introduction

In 1851, the liberal feminist Harriet Taylor observed, in an article entitled *The Enfranchisement of Women*, that:

'To be accused of rebelling against anything which admits of being called an ordinance of society, [women] are taught to regard as an imputation of serious offence against the proprieties of their sex' ¹

It is one of the ironies of 19th century history that Victorian women, who were educated, socialised, and otherwise pressured to avoid assertion, independent thought and public activity at all costs, embarked with vigour throughout the century upon a range of campaigns directed at change in society and in their own lives. By 1930, women had expressed their moral agency by playing a central part in the transformation of social and political life, including their own roles and positions. The domestic ideology which cast them as guardians of religious values and the status quo was in fact utilised by them to justify and extol female challenges to political, social, legal and economic practices and institutions. Throughout the period 1830-1930, Scottish women expressed concern about, and sought reform of many aspects of their society. They got involved in anti-slavery action, anti-Corn Law agitation, the Chartist movement, temperance, the Social Purity campaign (against the Contagious Diseases Acts); and campaigns for women's rights to property, divorce, higher education, fair working pay and

conditions, and enfranchisement. The diversity (and incompleteness) of this list is matched by the diversity of class, circumstance and motivation of the women who were involved in these movements. The basis and extent of activity, the goals and strategies adopted, also varied considerably. But there were certain key elements which Scottish women seeking reform shared. First, they all desired change of some kind, and were prepared to give public expression to that desire. Second, their views led them (however tentatively, and sometimes militantly) to collaborate with others in some form of organised action. Third, they conducted their campaigns in the theological and cultural context of Scottish presbyterianism and British imperialism. Fourth, their gender was always a basic factor in their own, and other people's, perceptions of what constituted acceptable and appropriate behaviour. The influence of religion, in conjunction with conventional views of 'womanhood', served to confirm a traditional assessment of 'woman's sphere' for many evangelical females who accepted that their moral task was to be undertaken simply as auxiliaries to activist men. Others felt challenged to define and declare a distinctive sense of self in opposition to, or as a significant modification of, that stereotype. Fifth, the zeal for reform, the pursuit of justice and the collaboration required to engage in action for change, offered potential for the development of feminist perspectives and associations. As Philippa Levine cautions in her book, *Victorian Feminism, 1850-1900*:

'The definition of feminism in the historical context is, of course, fraught with difficulties. We must be wary of determining it by our contemporary evaluations and thus deny its particular context...None the less, women's positive identification with one another in the context of political struggle suggests that the use of the term feminism is not anachronistic'.²

Certainly the word was in currency by the closing decade of the 19th century, and while its meaning was subject to diverse interpretations and experiences, it conveyed then, as now, at least a collective commitment to change and improvement in the situation of women. Theresa Billington-Greig, who was one of the key figures in the Scottish and British suffrage movement, gave her definition of the feminist project in 1911:

'I seek [woman's] emancipation from all shackles of law and custom, from all chains of sentiment and superstition, from all outer imposed disabilities and cherished inner bondages which unite to shut off liberty from the human soul borne in her body'.³

That goal of emancipation (however defined) was not always discerned and was sometimes rejected by women seeking change, but its gradual acceptance and pursuit led to the growth of a phenomenon which was highly successful in its own terms, but also limited, partial, and containing the seeds of its own demise. It may be described as the reformist Women's Movement, which began around 1860 and had fragmented by 1920.

While in the past twenty years, a considerable body of research been undertaken about this Movement as it developed in America and England, its connected yet distinctive history in Scotland has only very recently begun to receive serious attention;⁴ (and indeed some publications make the unforgiveable error of writing as if anything which happened in Scotland may be

subsumed under England; or as if 'Britain' equates with England.) Richard Evans, in his important study *The Feminists*, claims that one of the most striking contrasts in the Western world of the 19th century was that between countries with a Roman Catholic and those with a Protestant culture: 'the one a major obstacle to feminism, the other an almost essential precondition of its emergence'.⁵ In this chapter, it is not my purpose or intention to consider fully the development and activities of the reformist Women's Movement in Scotland, or alternative forms of female struggle. Instead, I shall examine several campaigns conducted at different stages throughout the period 1830-1930 by focussing particularly on the ways in which people, policies and practices were influenced by the presbyterian church and culture which dominated the nation - and *vice versa*. I shall assess the extent and depth of female rebellion against the ordinances of society, and its consequences - both radical and conservative. I shall consider Evans' claim in the context of this Protestant country, where the vision and language of feminists was infused with religious imagery, and a supporter of female suffrage could declare:

'We are to make this world a city of God, and women, who are near God, ought to have the direct means of incarnating their ideal on the politics of their time'.⁶

I hope to demonstrate that the conjunction of liberal and evangelical influences in the social and economic climate of Victorian and Edwardian Scotland served to extend the positions and opportunities available to bourgeois women, while largely confirming the limitations and oppressions of working class women. For increasing numbers of upper-and middle class women,

the tensions between the ideal of feminine perfection, and the too frequent reality of tedious and apparently purposeless existence were worked out in a process of personal change from stoical quiescence to their male-defined role, through assertion of individual selfhood, to action for change in many aspects of life. So, for example, Frances Stoddard, born in 1843, wrote in 1867:

'My own view is - that if you have a strong mind and force of character it is a misfortune to be a woman, and no voting papers, or removal of disabilities will compensate for the mistake'⁷

But later in the same year, under the influence of her American feminist aunt, she reflected,

'Here,[Boston] as at home, I find a woman is better not to have too decided views on any matter, literary, historical, social, reform or politics, if she wishes to be a man's favourite...Well, Mamma dear, I would rather have the brains than live on empty compliments the plaything of any man.'⁸

And in 1917, looking back on her era, she wrote to Eunice Murray, her suffragette daughter:

'I have been reading a clever article laughing at the Victorian age. Though clever it is very false. I have lived through that age, and in spite of convention and narrow evangelism and puritanical morality, Britain developed in that time in a truly marvellous way...In my young days the aim of a mother was to make her daughter pretty and attractive and sufficiently accomplished to let her marry well. Few other careers presented themselves to women. The Victorian Era burst through this bondage, and now we have schools and colleges for girls and women, and everywhere women are distinguishing themselves.'⁹

But most proletarian women were unlikely to have regarded the era as one of great liberation. The opportunities presented by higher education and the vote (on the conditions granted in 1918) were, by and large, not for them; changes in property and

divorce legislation were rendered largely meaningless by their poverty, and equality of pay and employment opportunity in the industrial world were never seriously countenanced. While bourgeois reformers systematically and deliberately appealed to the notion of separate spheres to extend the 'purifying and elevating' influence of women into the world, the same ideology was utilised consistently - by reforming women and male trade unionists as well as men of the ruling classes - to ascribe to working women only one legitimate and honourable situation: as wife, mother and thrifty homemaker. As Eleanor Gordon rightly argues:

'The evidence suggests that women's experience of waged labour was mediated by these ideologies and not determined by them...the recognition that it could not always be achieved meant that separate spheres were interpreted to include work for women, provided it did not encroach on men's province or usurp men's prior rights to work, and was compatible with women's culturally prescribed role'.¹⁰

It is important not to assume that working women were passive and apathetic in accepting the limitations and hardships of their circumstances - many experienced pleasure and liberation in pursuing justice and self-determination (and also in the faith and practice of their religion). But clearly their personal and political struggles for meaning, independence and fulfilment were largely contested in different, and sometimes opposing ways to those of their well-meaning social 'superiors'. The Scottish Women's Movement was more inspired by the individualism than by the potential egalitarianism of its religious heritage. It utilised both the 'natural rights' arguments of liberalism, and also a 'social reform' ethos which had strong theoretical and experiential links with the

evangelical 'women's mission'. These roots did not naturally facilitate analysis of class or patriarchal structures as causes of female oppression. Within the socialist movement, many women accepted the argument that the class struggle had to be won before women could be emancipated, and did not campaign for female suffrage. There were some activists within the reform movement who were inspired by a combination of Christianity, socialism and feminism.¹¹ But in spite of their efforts, they remained a marginalised minority within the church, the labour movement and the Women's Movement. The romantic idea of female solidarity could on occasion inspire a truly united endeavour to improve the personal and corporate lives of women through social, economic and political activity. Too often it meant in reality that one class of women (with the best intentions) saw fit to speak and prescribe for women of a different class. While we should certainly honour the courage, energy, intelligence and positive female sense of identity of those who constituted that Movement (which was not as thoroughly bourgeois as some have asserted), we should not entirely ignore or exonerate the contradictions and failures of their means and ends. As in the presbyterian church, so in wider society, the social and political Establishment made some concessions to the demands of women, but it emerged at the end of the period with its patriarchal structures and the relations of class and gender adapted, adjusted, but largely intact.

2.'We have a great battle to fight' - Scottish women in the Anti-Slavery Movement

The movement for the abolition of the slave trade and the institution of slavery was one of the great moral crusades of the early 19th century. For many converts to evangelicalism in the English speaking world, it was the fundamental proving ground in their battle against human sin and for Christian righteousness. It also played a pivotal role in the development of the movement for women's rights - especially in the United States, where a small number of female activists perceived and argued the connections between the need for emancipation of black slaves and of themselves. For women like the Grimke sisters, Lucretia Mott and Abbey Kelly, this awareness inspired public words and actions which went well beyond the acceptable boundaries of female behaviour, and invoked much wrath and condemnation, especially from clerical upholders of religious and social propriety. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the experience of American women in the anti-slavery movement, and the bonds of friendship formed, directly resulted in the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention which marked the start of organised feminism in the United States.

The involvement of women in the Scottish movement for abolition at a time of social upheaval and religious passion, is a fascinating source for studying the interplay of gender roles, organisation and Christian ideologies in a movement for change. Although the Scottish women shared much with their American sisters - religious conviction, social class, urban location,

personal contact and friendship - their experiences and actions were also distinctive in crucial ways. As in America, abolition was one of a series of interrelated concerns which were referred to as the 'benevolent empire'. Evangelicals on both sides of the Atlantic constructed an edifice of organisations into which converts could throw their energy and money as an expression of gratitude for the gift of grace, and a commitment to do battle for good against evil. In America, the religious anxiety created by the political and economic institution of slavery was acute and focussed. In Scotland, after legislation prohibiting British involvement in the slave trade, the issue was rather more abstract. Nevertheless, as C Duncan Rice argues, the upheavals of the Industrial Revolution, and its greatly unsettling impact upon the Scottish middle class, provided the local context for engagement with this most fundamental manifestation of social evil which members of the benevolent empire perceived all around them:

'Anti-slavery was an important symbolic response to both the spiritual and social shortcomings of early industrial Scotland. Middle-class philanthropy was a response to signs that society had become irreligious and atomised. In Scotland, the home and foreign benevolent empires expressed the same concerns and were supported by the same men and women'.¹²

It was in this milieu that female societies were formed to support the 'sacred cause' of abolition. Their function was to engage in action within women's own 'sphere of influence' - fundraising, distributing literature, and 'imbuing the rising race with an abhorrence of slavery',¹³ these being tasks which they could perform 'without violating that retiring delicacy which constitutes one of [women's] loveliest ornaments'.¹⁴

The Glasgow and Edinburgh Emancipation Societies were founded in 1833. They were both dominated by members of dissenting presbyterian denominations and other voluntary churches. In Edinburgh, the Smeals and Wighams - Quaker families with English roots - were leading lights. Most abolitionists were actively opposed to religious Establishment, but also theologically and socially conservative. Female supporters, from the same background and families, joined the Edinburgh Ladies Emancipation Society and the Glasgow Ladies Auxiliary Society, and both cities were important anti-slavery centres in the 1830s and 1840s.

The splits which had emerged in the American anti-slavery movement precipitated a major division in Britain after the 1840 London World's Anti-Slavery Convention, when the question of women's rights polarised the delegates. William Lloyd Garrison refused to take his seat as a gesture of solidarity with the women who were denied the right to do so:

'After battling for so many long years for the liberties of African slaves, I can take no part in a convention that strikes down the most sacred rights of all women'.¹⁵

After the event, some the female delegates embarked on a tour of the country to rouse and consolidate support. Lucretia Mott, a Quaker from Philadelphia, commented on the status of female anti-slavery campaigners in Britain:

'[Women] had hitherto most submissively gone forth into all the streets, lanes, highways and bypaths to get signers to petitions, and had been lauded long and loud for this drudgery, but had not been *permitted* even to *sit* with their brethren, nor indeed much by themselves in public meetings -having transacted their business, as we were informed, by committees...In vain we endeavoured to have a public meeting called for women -although a few did all they could to promote it'.¹⁶

But in spite of the apparent deference of women, there were some, especially in Scotland, who were not afraid to act independently as the British movement divided in the wake of the Convention, and the pro- and anti-radical tours. Mott wrote in her letter to Maria Weston Chapman of Boston, 'Wm Lloyd Garrison will tell you what glorious meetings they had in Scotland'.¹⁷ But in 1841, following the visit of the Garrisonian John Collins, the male Edinburgh Emancipation Society remained loyal to the conservative British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, while the Ladies (who were led by Jane Smeal Wigham and her step-daughter Eliza - the wife and daughter of the EES leader John Wigham) - declared their support for Garrison. The ELES subsequently became one of the main sources of British support for American radicals. In Glasgow, however, the Ladies Society took the opposite position:

'They argued that to seat the female delegates would have been in opposition to divine teaching, and would have obscured women's feminine character, "a quality...as natural to half the human race, as masculinity is to the other"'¹⁸

Apparently, the Ladies Auxiliary thereafter lapsed, and John Collins converted the radical remnant into the Glasgow Female Anti-Slavery Society, which issued an *Appeal to the Ladies of Britain*, urging support for the Garrisonian American Anti-Slavery Society. Just how much of a remnant it was is suggested by the Dublin activist RD Webb, who commented in a cynical letter to Maria Weston Chapman decrying the lack of Anti-Slavery Support in Britain, that:

'C L Remond told me that when he was in Glasgow he could find no trace of the Ladies Society formed by J Collins, nor of Mary Welsh, who signed the address'.¹⁹

But Welsh certainly did exist, and her small group in Glasgow, with their Edinburgh counterparts, continued to provide crucial moral and financial support to the radicals - particularly by sending boxes of goods to sell at Maria Weston Chapman's Boston Bazaar, which was a major fund-raising and public relations exercise. By maintaining their forthright support of a group whose views were well known through their publications and pamphlets (especially Garrison's paper, *The Liberator*), these Scottish women were clearly associating themselves with the feminism which had precipitated schism in the movement, and which was central to the radical position. However, in their own lives and actions, they were not inclined to adopt the public strategies of their American sisters. Nor did they address the women's rights question in the context of their anti-slavery campaigning. In 1845, on a visit to Scotland, the American radical Henry C Wright commented about the Glasgow group's annual public meeting:

'Though it is a female society, they cannot act as president...read reports or make remarks...Men must do all'.²⁰

As dissenting and non-conformist Protestants, they were much more concerned, throughout the 1840s, to challenge Scottish presbyterian accommodation with slavery. The Established Church had never been a fertile source of support for the movement, but in a decade of passionate religious controversy, the two newly formed evangelical presbyterian denominations -

the Free Church (1843) and the United Presbyterian Church (1847)- were both castigated by the radicals. Since members of these churches had previously vaunted their anti-slavery credentials, the disagreements of the 1840s seriously weakened the Scottish movement, including the women's groups.

In the Free Church, the dispute concerned money which had been donated to the new denomination by the Southern Presbyterian Church of America, which included slaveholders among its membership. A 'Send back the Money' campaign was launched. In April 1844, Mary Welsh wrote of a spirited meeting held in Glasgow:

'The friendly and faithful resolution, relating to the Free Church in this country taking money from slaveholders in America was good, if they could have been induced to send back the money with friendly remonstrance to the American church'...The [male] Emancipation Society of Edinburgh exists only in name...they were quite afraid to offend the Free Church, and by some stratagem or other they slipp'd the business into the hands of the Town Council'.²¹

By December 1845, Welsh herself was in Edinburgh, and the ELES was acting where their male relations had failed to do so. She sent a letter to Maria Weston Chapman accompanying the Bazaar box:

'Our influence here is steadily expanding and it is to us a source of unspeakable pleasure thus to aid the cause of the oppressed...Henry C Wright was here last week and we expect him again tomorrow, he is giving the Free Church no rest [but] their leading men have gained so much influence over the people that they may do anything they choose be it good or bad the people will bear it. I am sick of this world's religion'.²²

Wright was one of a series of Americans, including Lloyd Garrison and freed slave Frederick Douglass, who came to Scotland to attack the Free Church. The crusade reached its

height prior to the 1846 General Assembly, which the ELES petitioned as part of its orchestrated campaign of anti-Free Church propaganda. Welsh wrote to Chapman on May 17 1846:

'We have had a set of glorious meetings here against the FC and are to have more this week. GT, FD, JB and HCW have done wonders in opening the eyes of the public to the enormous iniquity, never was there such excitement created as at present, and there is no doubt but that great good will be the result'.²³

But the Assembly would not allow discussion of any external petitions, and antipathy between the ministers and the radicals increased. In fact, the presence of Wright in particular did nothing to aid the women's cause. He was a notorious Christian anarchist and polemicist, and his attacks against religious orthodoxy ran directly counter to the prevailing climate in presbyterian Scotland. Catherine Paton of Glasgow expressed the growing isolation and frustration of the radical anti-slavery activists, in November 1846:

'The clergy with their supporters who left the Society are still as alien as ever and thus we have continually to combat with their opposition...Of all observances in Scotland [the Sabbath] is most revered and national prejudice strongest, it was a bold step by HCW to attack it...We are a very bigoted people in our religious opinions...to be members in a church and assent to an orthodox creed is with many all that is necessary to Christian character'.²⁴

From this time, the anti-slavery movement was increasingly polarised and deflected by the association of the principle of immediate abolition with the dangerously unorthodox views expressed by Garrison and his supporters. The women - mainly of Quaker background (including Priscilla Bright MacLaren, wife of the dissenting Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and Elizabeth Pease Nichol from Darlington, who married a Glasgow professor in

1846) - who remained loyal to the radical American organisation increasingly perceived their action as a fight against rising Scottish clericalism:

'We have a great battle to fight here now, and we are fully determined to gird on our armour, and never yield one inch to the enemy these Clergy, they are our greatest enemies... however we don't fear them a bit. Our hearts have been refreshed and gladdened by that noble man WLG'.²⁵

Meanwhile, there was growing unease among other women -many of them related to dissenting presbyterian clergy -who were happy to ally themselves to the radical position on immediate abolition, but who were decidedly queasy about being associated with the views increasingly expressed in the *Liberator* and elsewhere. Matters came to a head in 1850, when a number of women withdrew from the Glasgow society, issued a pamphlet, and declared their intent to establish a new society. The document made clear their priorities:

'Of late we have been surprised and grieved, by the discovery that many zealous labourers in the country have - by resolution adopted, and speeches and letters published - been making powerful efforts to propogate infidel notions...We will yield to none in the strength of our religious desires to see the slave emancipated, and elevated to the highest privileges cherished by the whole population; but we will not consent to sacrifice any part of written Revelation for this or any other benevolent object - we will not abandon Divinely-instituted ordinances - nor while resolved to have no connection with Slave-holding churches, will we allow ourselves to be mixed up with infidel attacks on the Christian church.

...Our contributions have hitherto gone to support of the society connected with the National anti-slavery bazaar, at Boston; and Christian friends have long regarded our connection with them, as an indication rather of ill-judged generosity, than of Christian discernment...and thus the anti-slavery Cause has become exceedingly weak in this country...We feel ourselves justified in terminating co-operation with the Boston Society...But we would not cease from well-doing in this field of benevolence; and we earnestly solicit the attention of our friends to the objects of "The Vigilance Committee of New York"²⁶

RD Webb in Dublin criticised the Glasgow women, and urged them to think again:

'Pardon me if I say that it seems to me a virtual abandonment of the Anti Slavery cause, and diversion of your efforts into a channel which has nothing whatever to do with the abolition of slavery'.²⁷

But there was no going back, and the New Association remained active throughout the 1850s. In 1853 it donated £400 to the non-radical Vigilance Committee (out of its total income of £711.10.6), which was five times greater than the income of its Garrisonian predecessor. Freed from the unorthodox taint of their old allies, the women apparently felt able to throw themselves into 'respectable' work in keeping with their presbyterian beliefs and social status.

In Edinburgh, the ELES, much to the chagrin of the Wighams, also resolved to withdraw its support for the Boston Bazaar at a meeting on August 1 1850. However, even the loyal remnant were unhappy with the American position. Eliza Wigham wrote:

'We are much grieved that you should have brought forward arguments and sentiments in your advocacy of questions which we deem unnecessary, inexpedient and dangerous - we think they weaken our hands, for where did our enterprise ever stand so firmly as when faithful WLG placed it in "the Bible and the Bible alone"?'²⁸

In both Glasgow and Edinburgh, most of the anti-slavery campaigners belonged to the United Presbyterian Church, which in 1847 had brought together various strands of voluntary presbyterianism. A new controversy arose in 1854 when it became known that the UP Mission in Old Calabar, West Africa, was accepting local slaveholders into communion - a move against

which the 1855 UP Synod was not prepared to act. The New Glasgow Associations -both male and female - were in the hands of UP members who had considerable financial and emotional investment in Old Calabar, and in spite of their involvement in the 1840s 'Send Back the Money' Campaign, they were unwilling to challenge their own church on this matter. In Edinburgh, a new male society had been formed in 1854, with Duncan MacLaren as president, and including both Free Church and UP clergy on the committee. In 1856, the old ELES was left completely isolated when an Edinburgh New Ladies Anti-Slavery Association was formed, by female presbyterians, as an avowedly 'Christian' society. Mrs Agnes Renton became President of the new group, and her son had no doubt as to the reason for the split:

'To no cause had she throughout life been more staunch and ardent in her attachment than that of the Abolition of Slavery; but when an influential organ lent its columns for the diffusion of infidel sentiments, she objected to the Ladies Society, with which she was connected, continuing to lend it their support'²⁹

Her biography includes a letter she wrote to her daughter on March 7 1856:

'I met Mrs M'Crie, one of the ladies who first formed the Anti-Slavery society! I told her that our meeting was to be next day...It was a full meeting, and the different views were spoken to on both sides. Mrs McL was there and made a very pretty speech. But when the votes were taken there were only Mrs P, Miss S and myself in the minority; so we all rose and left the room. Mrs McC and her sister left with us, five in all. I am thankful I was able to withstand so much fine speaking. But it was all to gloss over the _____ party. I am glad that Miss G was not in Edinburgh, for they seem to think that she was at the bottom of all this, which she is not. I love the committee that I have left, but I mourn over their blindness in crying "Peace, peace", where there can be no peace with the enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ'.³⁰

'Miss G' probably refers to Julia Griffiths, who worked as the agent of Frederick Douglass - a moderate campaigner. She founded a bazaar in Rochester, New York, to raise funds without the taint of Garrisonian infidelity. During 1855-56, she visited Britain and set up at least fourteen women's groups to support Rochester. Notwithstanding Agnes Renton's disclaimer, it was the new bazaar which the evangelical presbyterians of Edinburgh supported from 1856. Meanwhile, Eliza Wigham was clearly aggrieved at their desertion, and the imputation on the Christian character of the remnant:

'They are forming a *Christian* anti-slavery Society in Edinburgh, and leaving on the *left-hand* our poor _____ society which in truth has been innocent enough' ³¹

C Duncan Rice's assessment of the new Association is that it was

'built principally upon the suspicion of radical infidelity. It was also helped by the anxiety of the UPC to maintain clear anti-slavery credentials without the taint of extraeneous issues. The rest were members of the Free Church of Scotland who were trying to recover anti-slavery face after the events of ten years before: women who were "glad to show *their* anti-slavery in opposition to a troublesome association like ours.'" ³²

By this time, the radical abolitionist position had been well and truly superceded by societies and activities which were more acceptable to the mid-century mood in Scotland. The sentimentalism of Harriet Beecher Stowe; the sympathy offered to individual freed slaves; the new outlets for expressing general abhorrence of slavery, without having to engage in difficult and rigorous critique of the contemporary social, political and religious status quo ³³ - these responses were in

keeping with the more settled, established, bourgeois character of evangelical presbyterianism. The upheavals of the 1830s and 1840s were in the past, and for the time being, the window of opportunity for feminism, which had opened to let in a chink of light, was closed.

However, although women in Scotland may not have passed directly from anti-slavery involvement into campaigning for women's rights, circumstantial evidence suggests that the movement was very important as a training ground for forming and testing independent thought and action among Scottish women. For a small number of non-presbyterian women, the significance of autonomous action was clear: their decision to support the Garrisonians set them in opposition to male members of their own families, and to the clerical establishment of the day. Their reluctance to express that autonomy in, for example, public speaking or campaigning specifically for women's rights is perhaps understandable. Like their American counterparts, they belonged to small Christian sects in which the attitude to the role and rights of women was relatively more enlightened than that of mainstream denominations –perhaps they had less personal reason than others to perceive their own oppression. Unlike the American women, their sense of distinctiveness was compounded by being a tiny minority in a country where social, political and religious life was infused with the power of the presbyterian establishment. If they had combined their radical attacks on the clergy with 'unwomanly' behaviour like that of the Grimkes, Mott and Cady Stanton,

their ostracisation from female colleagues and society at large would have been complete. The effectiveness of their anti-slavery campaigns - already tainted by association with the American radicals - would have been totally negated.

For the presbyterian women, anti-slavery activity might be explained as a largely conservative phenomenon. It was certainly justified and encouraged as part of the womanly task to effect moral transformation in the world, and neither style nor tactics presented any major challenge to the developing ideology of separate spheres. But abolitionism at least exposed women to a theory of justice which was understood in terms of equal value and human rights. And the transatlantic nature of the movement, the events of 1840 and their consequences, meant that there must have been an awareness among women of the feminist ideas which were being expounded. Their priority was commitment to religious orthodoxy, which precluded any serious consideration of these ideas on their own merits, and the institutions and journals of Scottish presbyterianism were active protagonists of an anti-feminist domestic ideology. But at least that ideology was not completely uncontested. And while Catherine Paton of Glasgow castigated faint-hearted clergy, whose vocation gave them great scope for 'leading captive silly women'³⁴ perhaps we might at least give some women credit for the courage, if not always the content, of their religious convictions.

The anti-slavery movement, in spite of the difficulties and divisions it encountered in Scotland, did give women a sense of

purpose and achievement, and some indication of the mechanics and power of sustained pressure group tactics. The value of these, and surely also the assimilation of notions of women's rights, became apparent by the 1860s, when many anti-slavery women –including Eliza Wigham, Elizabeth Pease Nichol, and the extended MacLaren clan – got involved in a new wave of campaigns. Barbara Taylor argues that middle class feminist reformism became possible when the decline of working-class Chartism and utopian socialism erased the relationship between feminism and radicalism.³⁵ For female evangelical Protestants, the demise of Garrisonian abolitionism was surely also a factor in helping to eradicate the damaging assumption of connection between women's rights and religious infidelity, thus allowing women to voice new demands for their gender without total loss of respectability.

3.'A Great Woman's Question': The Temperance Movement

In 1829, very permissive legislation and the low duty on alcohol enabled Scots to get through an astonishing 5,777,000 gallons of spirit in one year. That marked the high point of consumption in a country which had become increasingly noted for the manner in which drink was central to the social and cultural life of all classes. It also precipitated the first public expression of concern, and determination to do something about the abuse of alcohol, for throughout the previous century the connection between drinking, conviviality and hospitality

was never seriously challenged. The Scottish church was part of that consensus - church office-bearers and ministers were themselves often noteworthy drinkers, and rarely used their authority to confront others for whom drink may have become a problem.

But in 1829 John Dunlop, a Greenock lawyer, was instrumental in establishing societies which initiated the first general temperance movement in Britain. From the outset, Dunlop was supported by William Collins, an influential evangelical Glasgow publisher. In 1834, Collins expressed the radical nature of the task which temperance campaigners had set for themselves:

'So much has spirit drinking become associated with the customs and practices in Scotland, that there is scarcely an event in life, scarcely a circumstance that occurs, not a transaction can be effected, with which spirit drinking is not associated...It struck its fibrous roots into everything so deeply, that to tear up the spirit-drinking practices is like tearing up the whole social system of society'.³⁶

This call to revolt went even further as the nineteenth century progressed. The crusade, which began with a call for moderation and against consumption of spirits, quickly sought total abstinence, and then prohibition. However, the Temperance Movement was not one unitary campaign, but a plethora of groups, committees, agencies and organisations which pursued a range of goals using many tactics and methods. By the turn of the century it was a genuine mass movement which directly and indirectly affected the lives of millions of Scots - men, women and children. Those who dismiss the movement as a curious or archaic attempt at pious social control seriously underestimate

its power and complexity as a factor impinging in different and sometimes contradictory ways on the economic, political, religious, social and personal development of the country over a one hundred year period. It is not my purpose to assess or judge whether, as Collins hoped, temperance would tear up the whole social system. But from 1830, alcohol consumption declined in almost every decade until 1930. From 1900 -1930, the reduction was remarkable: by 1930, the amount drunk was only 25% of that consumed in 1900.³⁷

Legislation played an important part in this, but so too did a widespread change in attitudes, and in the social fabric of the country. Both churches and women were significant players in the character, growth and decline of temperance activity. The churches were at first equivocal about the importance of the issue, and suspicious of what they saw as the lay, radical and proletarian impetus of the new movement. However, by mid-century, evangelicalism began to change the personal habits of church folk, swinging the institutional clout of the dissenting denominations in particular into action for the cause. And during the years when the 'Social Question' greatly exercised the church, temperance activity, (much of it conducted by women) was in effect, the main bridge between organised religion and the 'unchurched masses'. Or perhaps more accurately, none of the attempts to make contact with, evangelise, or provide entertainment for the poor failed to include some reference to the evils of drink.

The movement was of particular importance to women. They were early identified as among the sorriest victims of male alcohol

abuse, and therefore those who had most to gain from abstinence. They were invited and exhorted to play their part in bringing about reform by using their personal influence in the family home, and, if part of the ruling classes, to set an example to their social 'inferiors'. By the latter half of the 19th century, temperance, in spite of the major social implications of its goal, was seen as a most appropriate and seemly cause for Christian women - a noble opportunity for them to use the much vaunted female powers of moral suasion to improve the tone of Scottish society.

The campaign against drink was on the one hand an essentially conservative assertion of the reality and importance of separate male and female spheres -emphasising the importance of domestic competence, and reserving special condemnation for women who failed in that sphere, as well as those who were degraded enough to display themselves in the public world as drinkers or barmaids. But it also offered women (and children too) a range of opportunities to expand and enrich their experience beyond the home, and to assert a measure of pride, control and self-determination. I have stated above that temperance became a mass movement. Callum Brown argues that in fact the growth of political initiatives to control alcohol consumption, after 1880, reflected the inadequacies of the moral campaign, and its rejection by the working class.³⁸ However, from that time, and especially into the 20th century, temperance activity (whether in campaigning organisations, friendly societies, the provision of 'counter-attractions' and

important and enjoyable social networks) was central to the lives of huge numbers of women and children. For them, surely the experience was indeed of belonging to a mass movement. In assessing its significance for Scottish women, the key question is not whether it was effective in transforming national drinking habits, or forcing through prohibition, or even how many of them stuck to the pledge, lightly or solemnly made. The question is about how involvement in temperance activity affected the personal and collective lives of participants. In my view, this movement throws into sharper focus than other campaigns for change, the complex nuances and contradictions of the domestic ideology in times of change. I want now to consider the conservative and radical ramifications of the temperance movement for Scottish women.

It is easy to see the attraction of temperance to the earnest evangelical Christians of 19th century Scotland. They saw all about them devastation, cruelty, squalor and crime. Vast consumption of alcohol by the new proletariat seemed to be connected with all the evils of industrial society, while the social life of other classes (including clergy) was habitually lubricated with drink. And so they posed this question:

'How can we combat this evil? How are we to meet this giant stalking through our fair land, wasting homes, wrecking lives, making the garden a desert, the smiling land a desolation?'³⁹

The solution to this apocalyptic national disaster was to convert individuals, transforming them from violent, criminal, frightening and uncontrolled drunkards, into sober, respectable, hard-working and upright people. For evangelicals,

only the power of the gospel was sufficient to overcome a condition which was associated with feeble mindedness, weakness of will and, of course, personal sin. All the crises and wickedness of society were explained by the alarming national propensity to succumb to the temptation of intoxicating liquour, which, even if indulged occasionally, was 'quite alien to the perfect sobriety and command of mind and action, which God's children are bound to maintain'.⁴⁰ The evolving protestant notions of fitting behaviour for men and women were an integral part of the reform of national character which was sought. Men who drank were not fit to assume their patriarchal duties as breadwinner and protector of house and family. In yielding to temptation, they betrayed their divine calling to responsible and self-reliant headship over their women and children. Instead, they drank away their money and treated their wives with violence and neglect. Temperance reformers regularly highlighted this male degradation of character and dereliction of duty. Rev W Reid of the Scottish Temperance League, in his 1860 pamphlet, *Woman's Work for Woman's Weal*, recorded this first hand account among many others:

'I have seen me on hearing his foot on the stair put my infant on a pillow underneath the bed, and go in there to suckle it. Do you see these marks on the door? These are the marks of the poker when he was attempting to break the door to get out for whisky, and when I stood between him and the door, and told him he would only get out over my murdered body. I felt a razor at my throat, and lifted my child and fled as from a murderer.'⁴¹

Reid commented:

'Remove, then, this disturber of the peace of homes, extinguisher of domestic joys, this source of waste and want and woe, and social intercourse will be purified and extended...What is there worse than a bad husband, and what husband so bad as a drunkard?'⁴²

But women, too, were guilty of sin if they fell short of the model of female behaviour which was so assiduously promoted by the churches, whether by failing to provide an adequate level of domestic service for their husbands, or by drinking themselves:

'Many a husband has been driven to drinking by the negligence of an inconsiderate wife. Is it to be wondered at that a man should prefer the clean fireside of a pub, to the cold, dirty apartment at home? Or that he should turn from an ill-cooked meal to the dramshop for relief?' ⁴³

This line of argument cropped up throughout the duration of the temperance movement. The 1877 Report of the Free Church Temperance Committee to the General Assembly was much concerned with the connections between women and drinking, and in moving its adoption, Dr James Begg remarked:

'that they had heard a great deal about the rights of women; he was the last man to deprive them of any just rights, although there was no man who had a greater dislike to see an unsexed woman pushing herself into undue prominence either in the pulpit or otherwise. He should like to hear, in addition to women's rights, a good deal more about women's duties. He had noticed the evil consequences arising through many working class wives having no previous domestic experience, and as bearing on the employment of girls in warehouses, shops and factories, he urged the importance of cookery instruction. he would almost go to the length of saying that before marriage every young woman should stand an exam, and should not be declared eligible unless found competent to occupy the position of a wife.' ⁴⁴

If incompetent wives raised the indignation of churchmen, women who drank in public revolted them. In a city like Dundee, this practice seemed to be one of the more horrible manifestations of working women usurping the natural order of things - acting like men and denying the quiet, domestic modesty which should have been their feminine grace. ⁴⁵ A woman who lived near the

young Keir Hardie in Hamilton during the 1870s could 'drink, smoke, swear and fight like a man',⁴⁶ and among those with whom the trainee deaconesses in Edinburgh worked in 1891 was a fifteen year old girl who 'appeared to most people fallen and degraded beyond hope. She seemed to have supernatural strength, and would struggle through the Pleasance and stand with her arms akimbo ready to fight man, woman or child that offended her'.⁴⁷ Public houses were regarded as nothing more than drinking dens (despite Reid's rather enticing image of a clean fireside), into which no woman who valued her delicacy or respectability would dare to venture, and as the movement grew in militancy, women who worked in the licensed trade were forced out, on the grounds that they seduced working class men into their establishments.⁴⁸ So Scottish women were systematically excluded from a part of the public domain which, whatever the campaigner's objections, played an important role in social and cultural life. One effect of the temperance campaign was surely to widen the symbolic and spacial gulf between male and female behaviour – public drinking of alcohol became more closely connected with the macho self-image of proletarian men and their use of leisure time, while for working class women who cared about their respectability, such meagre leisure hours as they could save from the gruelling round of domestic and waged work were characteristically spent at meetings and entertainments provided by organisations with a temperance dimension.⁴⁹

If women who drank in public were objects of disgust, those who did so in the privacy of their own bourgeois homes were more to be pitied:

'It cannot be overlooked that as they are subject to greater variation of feeling, and to more frequent mental depression, they are liable when alone, to resort to a means so effective in affording speedy relief. Man has the busy world to occupy his mind and divert his thoughts; but woman in her retirement has often no better companion than the ghosts of her own gloomy imaginations. Do we need to wonder then at the frequency of secret indulgence?'⁵⁰

For Reid, as for most religious Victorians whose thinking was saturated with the assumptions of the domestic ideology, the solution for such women was not to challenge the lifestyle which condemned them to lonely boredom, but to use their influence for temperance:

'A cause which aims directly at preservation of female virtue, and at the rescue of the fallen, cannot fail surely of commanding their countenance and aid. It provides for that sad deficiency in so many women's lives, the want of some specific aim'.⁵¹

If one of his readers, fired up with enthusiasm for this cause, sought Reid's advice as to how she could help, his answer would be familiar to generations of churchgoing women whose gratuitous moral labour was required as a sign of gratitude for their elevated status as Christians: they were to abstain, and use their great influence to encourage family and friends; they were to collect funds for the movement; and they were to visit the dissipated to seek their reformation.

William Reid's appeal to women was made in 1860, because few were actively engaged in temperance work. From the 1860s, a number of organisations – both mixed and female – recruited

women into a movement whose dominant character was transforming from a moral campaign associated with radical political causes, into a spiritual crusade known as gospel temperance. Largely through American influence - especially the militant actions of Mother Stewart in the Ohio Whisky War - the Band of Hope, the Blue Ribbon Association, the International Order of Good Templars, and the British Women's Temperance Association (Scottish Christian Union) were established in Scotland, and drew on the active support of increasing numbers of women of all denominations. They all required total abstinence as a minimum commitment of Christian profession, and I shall say more about them below. The presbyterian denominations had, as institutions, been pretty lukewarm - especially about the politics of prohibition. But a new generation of clergy were emerging from the colleges having been influenced by propaganda funded by the Collins family. And the churches began to realise that they were in danger of losing out to other groups and denominations in directing an increasingly important movement and pressure group within Scottish society; so the evangelical language and precepts of gospel temperance carried increasing weight within the presbyterian establishment. One manifestation of this change was the attempt to draw on the active support of churchwomen.

Temperance Committees, by different names, were operational in the three main denominations by 1866, although these by no means represented unanimity of belief or practice, especially in the Established Church. But churchwomen, as such, were not organised before the 1880s. In 1882, a Church of Scotland

Women's Association for Temperance was formed, on a basis 'broad enough to include every shade of temperance opinion', declaring that 'the work they desire to do is unobtrusive and womanly'.⁵² By 1886, it had been decided to link it with 'other forms of work which are more or less directly connected' in a Women's Association for the Promotion of Temperance and Home Mission Work, thus embodying the almost universal belief that drink was at the root of every social evil. The Association, which attempted to encourage educational work among children, and dabbled in the provision of counter-attractions, was soon overtaken by the Woman's Guild (1887), and the Women's Association for Home Mission (1893), which both practised temperance work. In 1924, as part of the general reorganisation of women's work, the Women's Temperance Association was revived as an auxiliary to the Church's Temperance Committee.

Both the Free Church and the United Presbyterian Church had Manse Ladies Total Abstinence Societies. The former was set up by Helen Lockhart Gibson and Mrs Blaikie in 1882, who:

'Feeling that the influences of the Manse are very powerful and far reaching, resolved to form a Total Abstinence Society, composed of the wives and daughters of Free Church ministers, in the hope that united efforts and personal example might be greatly blessed to the people among whom they live and work'.⁵³

By 1900, when the United Free Church was formed, the united number of the two societies was two thousand. In the new church, temperance activity was conducted under the auspices of Women's Home Mission.

As I have indicated in the chapter on women's work in the churches, it was during the first decades of the twentieth century that alcohol abuse was emphasised as 'the great force of evil to contend with',⁵⁴ and a range of practical initiatives, both centrally and locally organised, were undertaken. All over Scotland, coffee rooms, barrows, New Year cafes, temperance tents were organised to provide working people in different contexts the option of liquor-free refreshments. Women addressed Sunday schools, Bible Classes and Mothers' Meetings on temperance. Social meetings for slum and lodging-house dwellers aimed at moral and spiritual reformation - they offered refreshments, concerts, an address or presentation on an improving theme, and sacred solos and hymns. The general impression from reports is that the United Free Church women were more directly involved, with greater enthusiasm, than those of the Established Church. However, the Woman's Guild organised a number of initiatives, including a cottage for inebriate women. In reports of these activities, great emphasis is laid on the warmth, the attractiveness, the good taste and neatness, and the wholesomeness of the food which women provided for body, mind and spirit. Church women were engaged in offering the comfort, refuge, solace and pleasant environment which so many women, affected directly and indirectly by poverty and drink, could not or would not provide for themselves or their men. As the Woman's Guild Supplement of the *Life and Work*, 1903, put it:

'Surely we Guildswomen, whom God has blessed with happy homes and many safeguards, might hold out a helping hand to some of these sorely tempted sisters sinning so often, against their own weak will and better judgement.'⁵⁵

In this respect, the church-based women's temperance movement was nothing if not a genteel and patronising endeavour which passed judgement on the perceived failings (for whatever reasons) of their proletarian sisters. Indeed, it is debatable whether a real campaigning *movement* truly existed within the presbyterian churches, in spite of all the counter-attractions and exhortions against drink. On the one hand, the cultural consequences of the temperance crusade told on the personal lives of churchwomen. In 1930, the secretary of the Church of Scotland WTA could write:

'It cannot be said that abuse of even use of alcohol is usual among church women. The majority are total abstainers'.⁵⁶

But she also lamented the indifference of these women to the wider issue, which they regarded as of minor importance. The pages of the Women's Guild Supplement of the *Life and Work*, and other journals throughout the period 1880-1930 reveal an ongoing concern that most women did not care to take any active part in temperance work, or to be associated with total abstinence and prohibition campaigners. I suspect that most middle and upper class churchwomen regarded temperance simply as an instrument of home mission work, and that as the direct involvement of these classes in such work decreased during the twentieth century, so too did their interest in a crusade which was becoming much more overtly political.

By 1907, the Guild leadership was calling for legislation, not just for prohibition, but to

'Distribute wealth more equally, so that all may have some leisure and some means to spare for the innocent pleasures and amenities of life'.⁵⁷

And in 1919, the female organisations of the churches made a real attempt to prepare and educate women on the duties and responsibilities of their citizenship, expressed both in the accession of six million women onto the British voting roll, and in the forthcoming voting on the Local Option provisions of the 1913 Temperance (Scotland) Act, which gave local communities the right to veto licences in their area. It was widely hoped and anticipated that women would use their new powers for the sake of temperance measures above all other social questions. Clerical support for the enfranchisement of women was most often expressed in precisely these terms. The Supplement tried to rally support in April 1920:

' On June the first, an Act comes into operation whereby all duly qualified electors will be able to decide how the liquor traffic is to be conducted in Scotland...It is a great woman's question and it falls to Temperance workers in the Woman's Guild to identify with this magnificent opportunity.'⁵⁸

But in spite of the campaign, only 584 polls took place, with 508 voting for No Change, 35 for Limitation and 41 for No Licence. There were several reasons for the lack of mass popular support, including the restrictive conditions attached to polling, and the might of the licensed trade. But the churches were clearly disappointed at the lack of impact made by female voters. The 1921 report of the Church of Scotland's Life and Work Committee acknowledged:

'It cannot be denied that the result of voting in the recent Temperance Act Poll (1920) was disappointing to Women's Guild Temperance Workers. It was perhaps too confidently expected that women would do more than they were evidently able to do.'⁵⁹

During the 1920s, temperance enthusiasts in the Church of Scotland struggled against the odds to generate active commitment to the cause. The minutes of the Women's Association for Temperance in the years before and after the 1929 Union suggest an organisation casting around for a *raison d'etre*, on the margins of Guild life, with even the old coffee stalls and barrows no longer much needed or used.⁶⁰ The United Free Church, which had a higher percentage of total abstainers in membership, and was more firmly rooted in the Scottish temperance tradition, tended to encourage participation in the movement through affiliation to non-denominational organisations. It was in such groups and their activities that Scottish women of all classes were likely to find enjoyment, opportunity and pride. The gospel temperance movement was not located within the traditional framework of the large presbyterian denominations, but cut across them and spilled over into a populist evangelical ethos with which many bourgeois churchwomen were personally uncomfortable.

The organisations which were of greatest significance to Scottish women were the International Order of Good Templars, the Band of Hope, and the British Women's Temperance Association. Earlier groups, including the Rechabites and the Sons of Scotland, which were Friendly Societies for abstainers, had sections for women. But the Good Templars, which was quasi-

masonic with secret rituals and regalia, was the first to practice gender equality in admission and organisation. It was introduced to Scotland from America in 1869 and, as Elspeth King points out, it spread like wildfire:

'It had an immediate and evangelical appeal; its uncompromisingly prohibitionist aims, its firm stance on the communion wine question, its admission of women on equal terms with men and its extensive provisions for juvenile lodges and education served to give it unprecedented popularity...and by 1876, there were 1131 lodges spread between Orkney and the Borders, with a total membership of 83,717.'⁶¹

It may seem extravagant to claim, as Tom Honeyman did in his history of the Order in Scotland, that

'No organisation has done so much for the women of Scotland during the past sixty years as the GTO. It was first to recognise and utilise the power and influence of women as a social force. Placed on absolute equality with men, entitled to the same rights and privileges, they have triumphantly justified the experiment.'⁶²

But where else in the 1870s *were* women welcomed and invited to participate in the official life of a public, mixed organisation? Apart from the opportunity women had to hold office, engage in public speaking (based on Parliamentary procedure), and take part in parades as persons accorded authority and respect, the ethos of the Order counteracted much of the ideology which was driving men and women into separate social worlds. As Honeyman wrote:

'One special charm about Lodges is that they aim constantly to overthrow drinking habits by supplying a means of social intercourse under conditions where it can be seen and felt, that both sexes can meet, and...be mostly more happy without the use of drink than with it. They seek that kind of education that may be called social culture.'⁶³

The Order also brought together people from different classes

and circumstances, and provided a clear context for political discussion. Keir Hardie, among other early socialists, was a keen Good Templar, and one biographer claims of the movement, that it was 'not quaint or puritanical, but where many learned their first political lessons'.⁶⁴

However valuable mixed organisations were, the fact that women and children had so much to gain personally from the reduction of alcohol consumption, and the spirit of sisterhood engendered by the evangelical female culture, impelled the foundation of a global women's temperance association. In 1873, Mother Stewart, a veteran Civil War nurse from Springfield, Ohio, began a confrontational campaign of direct action against the American drinks trade. Many of the women who joined her experienced a 'baptism of fire' – conversion not only to religion, but also to highly public and controversial activity. Women in Scotland responded to the Ohio campaign by forming Prayer Unions for the cause, and in 1875, Margaret Parker of Dundee met Mother Stewart at a Good Templar Convention in Chicago. Through this contact, a tour of Britain was arranged, and Stewart's six week visit, including large public meetings and hymn singing outside pubs, made a tremendous impact on the public. The gospel temperance movement had truly arrived. On April 21 1876, at the request of the American Women's Christian Temperance Union, the British Women's Temperance Association was formed at a conference in Newcastle. There were delegates from throughout Britain, and Margaret Parker of Dundee, who was elected President, expressed the fervour of the new movement in her

opening remarks:

'We trust that it will be the means of gathering and utilising the now scattered forces which already exist; and that by prayer, and effort, and purpose, such a fire may be kindled in our own hearts as will never die out until God shall wipe away from this land the evil of intemperance. We believe that there is such a power and might in the influence of women, that if it were exercised aright would shake the Kingdom to its centre on this important question.'⁶⁵

By 1879, 21 already existing and newly formed groups had become branches affiliated to the Scottish Union of the BWTA.

The organisation was non-denominational, and at least one Jewish woman was a leading member, but from the outset, it was known as the BWTA - Scottish Christian Union (SCU). Mrs Blaikie, wife of Rev Prof W Blaikie, was the first SCU president. Other prominent members were Mrs G A Miller, daughter of Duncan McLaren MP; Mrs D McKinnon, wife of the minister of Dumfries UFC; Mrs Kirk of Edinburgh; and Eliza Wigham, who had been so involved in the anti-slavery movement. Indeed most of these women were connected with a range of reform movements and campaigns, as well as their own churches. As with other religious and philanthropic activity, the SCU gave able and ambitious women the opportunity to develop skills, experience and confidence in public speaking, (at a time when such activity by women was still looked at askance), administration, journalism and pressure group politics. And likewise, it called forth gifts in women who, though initially horrified at the prospect of moving beyond the private domain, were driven to do so simply by the strength of their commitment to the cause. In 1890 Miss Wallace, a minister's daughter from Glasgow, was appointed as organising secretary, and from 1896

an official organ - *The Scottish Women's Temperance News* - was published. In 1902 district unions were established to train local speakers and workers, to devolve responsibility, and to make the Scottish Executive fully representative. So the SCU enabled women at different levels to engage in public campaigning. Most of this work was done through letters and petitions - to politicians, publicans, ministers and other key figures - and by distribution of literature. But the BWTA SCU did adopt some of the more direct tactics of its American counterpart, including visiting pubs in pairs to challenge publicans and customers about the impact of alcohol abuse on family and community life. Such action cannot have come easily, but 'it was God's way of leading them out, often unwillingly and fearfully into the strife'.⁶⁶

By 1908, there were 332 branches of the BWTA SCU, and over 80,000 members. From 1892, the BWTA affiliated to the Women's World Christian Temperance Union, co-ordinated by the redoubtable social gospel pioneer, Frances Willard. In 1900, the Biennial Convention of the WWCTU was held in the Assembly Hall in Edinburgh, and thereafter, the SCU decided to assert its independence by affiliating directly, instead of as part of the BWTA. The scale and scope of the work undertaken by the SCU after it adopted Willard's 'Do Everything' policy in 1893 is indicated by the different departments of the organisation: evangelism; youth (including Band of Hope, White Ribbon Bands etc); legal, parliamentary and municipal campaigns; bureau of speakers; education; anti-opium; counter attractions; infantile

mortality; non-alcoholic communion wine. These are just some of the twenty departments operational by 1908. In that year, after being vetoed for many years, a suffrage department was added.

The BWTA SCU, then, was an important training ground and forum for women who were keen to engage with what they perceived as the major public issue of their time. But with the impetus of an international movement which included some of the most radical women of the day, that issue was not defined in a narrow or parochial way. For the 'Do Everything' policy counteracted the rigid division of life into private and public spheres and recognised that alcohol abuse had consequences for the whole of life - personal and political. The SCU saw nothing strange or contradictory in seeking individual conversion, good family life, better social conditions, anti-drinks legislation, and (latterly) the vote for women as empowerment for more effective action. Nevertheless, it seems that evangelism took pride of place, and that gospel temperance was regarded as the most basic and important element in the Union's work. A whole panoply of meetings, groups and social events were the instruments used to communicate gospel temperance to the people of Scotland, and it was these which gave the crusade its character as a mass movement. The Band of Hope, like other groups for children and adolescents, was pivotal to the strategy of attracting people to the cause at an early age. It was introduced into Scotland in 1871, and was central in the lives of women - both the thousands who (through church or BWTA) helped to run Band of Hope groups around the

country, and those who grew up with strong and fond memories of youthful involvement. Callum Brown and Jayne Stephenson have gathered some fascinating oral testimony about the role of the Band of Hope in the lives of working class women:

'The Band of Hope was organised either in congregations or in separate branches. Its tenor was strongly religious, and...was often the beginning of a youthful career in temperance organisations in which secular entertainment became an enticement as girls entered their adult years. Mrs H.3(1902) recalled:

" The Band of Hope - well you used to have hymn-singing, and you used to get magic lanterns...And different things. Yes, we had a good time at the Band of Hope...(It) was on through the week. The same as what the [Good] Templars were, and we used to have some good nights there too...Enjoyed them, dancing and all the rest of it." ⁶⁷

Many of Brown and Stephenson's Stirling respondents recall the Band of Hope as one group on a spectrum of religious activity which provided their social life in the early years of this century. Much of it was organised by evangelical denominations and independent religious bodies, and its flavour - characterised by the Moody and Sankey songs which were so often sung - was quite different from that of the predominantly staid and respectable middle-class mainstream presbyterian worship. The tensions between different brands of protestant Christianity and the activity they sponsored, plus the importance of the temperance movement as a provider of genuine pleasure and opportunity for working class girls and women, precludes any assumption that the movement was primarily an exercise in presbyterian bourgeois hegemony. Helen Crawford, the notable suffragette and communist activist who began life in a strict evangelical Glasgow home, recalled the 1890s:

'At that time, the temperance movement was also active. It catered for the youth by giving concerts and soirees, but these mother thought dangerous. There was dancing at these temperance functions, and this was something that might lead to worldly associations. How I wished to learn dancing!'⁶⁸

As Caroline Benn points out:

'Nor was temperance a renunciatory or negative experience. Quite the contrary, it was often highly celebratory and provided a strong social network for people of all ages...The miners' social life was divided between those who went to pubs and races...and those who socialised in the temperance world...It was at temperance dances and outings that [Hardie] met his girlfriends. Girls came to all temperance events on their own, without the tedious shackle of a male escort required so scrupulously in more refined circles, or at the universities.'⁶⁹

In assessing the radical and liberating potential of this movement for Scottish women, it would be a mistake to underestimate the permission it gave to seek greater personal and social happiness. In a country where it was commonly assumed that women would uncomplainingly endure poverty and hardship, and where violence was too often the currency of family relationships, temperance offered affirmation and support in the struggle for dignity and control. It encouraged women and children to assert their right to a fair share of meagre family income, and to the time and affection of men who were too often brutal or absent. And it recognised the importance of fun and excitement in austere and dreary lives. The anti-drinks campaign also presented an analysis of the deeper social and economic malaise afflicting Scotland, and encouraged women to consider their right to political power as a means of changing lives for the better. I have already mentioned the disappointment felt after the first round of local polls in 1920. But there were signs that women could make

an impact by flexing their political muscles.

James Barr, convener of the UFC's Temperance Committee, reported to the 1918 General Assembly the results of some plebiscites on prohibition. Where voting was in favour, the proportion of male voters was two to one; that of women was nine to one. In the 1920 Local Veto Polls, some small towns and residential city areas did vote for prohibition and limitation, no doubt with considerable female support. Working class areas where the worst problems existed remained heavily licensed, but the temperance movement still clung to the hope that enfranchisement of working class women would be decisive for the cause. Certainly the election of Britain's only Prohibitionist MP seemed a hopeful portent: Edwin Scrymgeour's millenarian labour sect drew its support from the millgirl culture of Dundee, and in 1922, with his slogan, 'Vote as you Pray', he defeated Winston Churchill. In 1929, Scrymgeour polled over 50,000 votes -an increase of 71%. It was no coincidence that the number of female voters on the register had gone up by 77% after the 1928 enfranchisement of all women over 21. But by then, prohibition was already a lost cause. It had been seen to fail in America, and Scrymgeour's 1923 Bill, although supported by Scottish socialist MPs (including Rev James Barr and James Maxton) was massively defeated on its second reading. The great decline in alcohol consumption during the first thirty years of the 20th century had been achieved neither by moral suasion nor by mass support for prohibition, but mainly by the increase in duties on spirits, and changes in working class social and recreational life. And despite the

personal commitment of most prominent socialists to abstinence, the labour movement increasingly regarded the temperance organisations as anti-working class. This was at least in part because these organisations had become so closely associated with the church, which in turn had virtually abandoned its pre-war social agenda. A number of social historians have pointed out that the growth and diversity of recreational opportunities which became available to the working class, and enabled them to desert the evangelical offerings of churches and sects, served mainly boys and men.⁷⁰ Women continued to rely much more heavily on religion and temperance organisations as purveyors of non-domestic or work activity (although Eleanor Gordon's research into women and the labour movement corrects any impression that these were the sole providers of social and recreational needs), and it is important to assess, in the light of my comments about the conservative and radical potential of the movement, its overall impact upon the lives of women. As a focus for the changing role and importance of women in Scottish society, temperance was firmly rooted in the domestic ideology. It emphasised the centrality of women to the preservation and improvement of the nuclear family – their transcendent functions as moral guardians and agents of purity, and their more practical housekeeping tasks. It did almost nothing (except, perhaps, by providing a social environment for men and women to mix freely, as in the Good Templars) to challenge the doctrine of separate spheres. In a study of the American Women's Christian Temperance Union, B L Epstein argues that:

'The WCTU can be seen as having pushed the women's culture of the time to its limits. The politics of the WCTU demonstrate not only the possibilities but the limits of a culture that accepted the structure of the nineteenth-century middle-class family and, by extension, the subordination of women.'⁷¹

It is doubtful whether the BWTA SCU, which largely eschewed the more radical and confrontational methods of the WCTU, could even be said to have demonstrated all the possibilities of that women's culture - the suffrage movement was more successful in that respect. Although the temperance movement included many women who were unconventional pioneers and agitators in church and society, there is little evidence that the crusade itself radicalised the attitudes and actions of the mass membership. It certainly identified one of the main manifestations of hardship, poverty and inequality in women's lives. But it tended to suggest that alcohol actually *caused* every misery and distress from pauperism and crime to lunacy.⁷² And it focussed on the responsibility of girls and women to transform the vicious habits of the menfolk in their own families. The emphasis of the BWTA, Band of Hope and other groups on individual conversion to purity and sobriety through gospel temperance largely failed (despite late adoption of the 'Do It All' policy) to submit to women analyses and alternative strategies for changing unjust social or economic structures; and the commitment at all costs to preserving the nuclear family ignored the patriarchal roots of domestic violence and abuse. Women who suffered at the hands of their partners were extended sympathy, certainly. But without challenging prevailing class and gender relations, they were offered only

one solution to their plight. If the man of the house continued to drink, or if sobriety did not end poverty or violence or female subordination, his partner was expected simply to bear it and get on with her domestic duties as wife and mother. The pivotal role of religious temperance in the lives of Scottish women during the 19th and early 20th centuries was complex and is worthy of further study, as the initial work of Brown and Stephenson indicates. They conclude that the movement was a source both of personal self-esteem, and of social control:

'The puritanical content explicit in such organisations [as the 'White Ribboners' (BWTA) and the Band of Hope] can be interpreted as inculcating 'middle class' values useful to the maintenance of good order in capitalist society, and to the recreation of a sober and industrious labour force. In this, the churches certainly looked upon girls and women as playing a crucial role. In the 'war against vice' (sexual immorality, gambling and drunkenness), women were regarded as having a moralising effect on the main source of these vices - men'.⁷³

But they also point out:

'Plainly the issue of whether or not the purity message was accepted in working class families is not a simple one, for the message had complex implications...[it gave women] a sense of pride and self-worth perhaps denied them in other spheres of activity. The pageantry of the parades and meetings, and the solemnity of the pledge-signing ceremony, could be a beacon in an otherwise bleak and perhaps mundane experience.'⁷⁴

The centrality of women to the temperance movement was largely based, as Rev W Reid perceived in 1860, on society's conviction

'that its safety depends more on the moral tone of its women than it does on either legislative enactment or well-disciplined armies...We implore her to become guardian of our virtue and promoter of all that is good and holy.'⁷⁵

4.'The day of mental daubing is over': The campaign for higher education for women

In a recent article, Lindy Moore has demonstrated that there was tension throughout the Victorian period between the idea that education as intellectual development was *per se* a religious blessing, and the notion that domestic training for one's station in life was most important for girls. She concludes:

'Those...familiar with the tradition of a democratic, classless, co-educational Scottish education may be struck by the evidence that many Scots actually supported a class- and sex-specific education intended to restrain, rather than provide opportunities for, the 'lass o' pairts.'⁷⁶

The campaign for admission to the full range of higher educational opportunities was one of the most significant elements of the Victorian Women's Movement in Britain. As the aristocratic doyenne of the Movement, Lady Frances Balfour, wrote in her autobiography:

'In the Women's Movement there were always three great fights going on. First Education, then Medicine, then the Suffrage of Women'.⁷⁷

The struggle for access to higher education was conducted with vigour and eventual success (according to the demands of the protagonists) in Scotland from 1867 until the opening of universities to women from 1892. Although there were many points of contact with the English campaign, national religious and educational differences influenced the means and ends of the crusade in the two countries. However, I believe that one crucial similarity was the militant class basis of the campaign: for it was undertaken almost wholly on

behalf of upper and middle class women. It had no place in its vision for those of the 'lower orders' - the girls and women of the labouring classes, many of whose work as servants in facilitating the bourgeois Women's Movement was crucial but ancillary. Those involved in the campaign debated whether higher education for women was important for its intrinsic or professional benefits, but it was a rare voice indeed which ventured that the new horizons of intellectual formation might be aspired to by a working class girl. The successes of the movement should therefore be considered in the general context of educational and social developments in late Victorian and Edwardian Scotland, which resulted in a more formal and wider stratification of the options available to girls and women of different classes. So I shall begin this section with a look at the provision of education for Scottish girls, and the role of the presbyterian churches in determining its ethos, content and availability. This extended digression will provide a framework for understanding the nature of the campaign for higher education, but it is also of general importance in recognising the deep involvement of presbyterianism in the process of class and gender socialisation: a process which, as Moore suggests, has been concealed beneath the potent mythology of a distinctively Scottish meritocratic system of education.

'For the business of life and the purpose of eternity'

It was an 18th century presbytery which defined the education of children as 'for the business of life and the purpose of eternity'.⁷⁸ For the Scottish reformers, the goals of education were not primarily intellectual or personal cultivation, but doctrinal understanding and Biblical literacy, which were considered to be essential prerequisites for a godly life and a redeemed after-life. John Knox held that children were born 'ignorant of godliness', and the reformers' *Scottish Book of Discipline* described it as 'utterly necessary' that 'children and rude persons should be instructed in the chief points of religion'.⁷⁹ A system of parish and burgh schools was proposed which would ground them in the elementary disciplines, provide Latin and grammar, and prepare able scholars for a higher, classically based education in colleges or universities. Although education was neither free nor compulsory, legal and fiscal policies were available, under the supervision of kirk sessions, to provide schools in every parish. Scotland, unlike England, did not have to rely on the caprices of profit or charity. By the 1820s:

'The benefits that followed for Scotland, according to the apologists, included a love of learning among all classes in the population, opportunity for everyone who had talent to make his way in the world, however humble his origin, a relative absence of social tension due to the easy mixing of children of all classes in the schools, and a literate and intelligent working class.'⁸⁰

This quotation from TC Smout's *History of the Scottish People* reflects the linguistic and conceptual ambivalence which has effectively rendered females invisible in general discussions

about education. The juxtaposition of generic words and male pronouns is both revealing and concealing. It reveals that higher opportunities, where available, were strictly confined to boys, and a tendency for male experience to be considered the norm by which education in presbyterian Scotland should be assessed. It conceals the distinctive attitudes and experiences which shaped female education before and during the period 1830-1930.

Although elementary literacy, with the Bible as textbook was in theory to be equally available to boys and girls, in practice, many factors militated against even the most basic female education. By 1820 the parochial school system was breaking down under the pressure of huge demographic changes brought about by the industrial revolution. In 1818, nearly two-thirds of Scottish children were outwith the publicly financed institutions. Those living in urban squalor or Highland poverty were especially unlikely to be receiving formal education. And the chance to go to school was even more remote for girls - if precious pennies were to be used for anyone to be educated, it would be the boys of a family. From the 1820s, the Church of Scotland's Education Scheme sought to supplement parochial schools with sessional and General Assembly schools. After 1843, the energetic devotion of Free Church adherents led to the establishment of many more new schools. But in practice, public indifference to the value of female literacy, and the competing claims of rural and industrial labour for child time, made the elementary education of girls highly precarious. In 1857, fewer than 50%

of five to ten year olds in Glasgow attended any school. Between 1857 and 1862, male child labour in Clackmannan increased by 53%; female child labour increased by 78%.

By the 1860s, educational provision was fragmented and without coherence. In 1864 there were 4450 schools in Scotland. Nearly one thousand were private 'adventure' or dame schools, with abysmal standards of accommodation and for the most part, of teaching. Another thousand were parochial or side schools. There were a number of ragged and industrial schools run by mission and philanthropic agencies. The remainder were denominational, belonging to one of the three main presbyterian churches, or to the Roman Catholics or Episcopalians. Less than 150,000 pupils were under government inspection, and only one in seven children attended school at all (this ratio varied between one in four, and one in thirty, depending on area). It took the Argyll Commission on Scottish school education in the 1860s, and the 1870 Act for England, to pave the way for the 1872 Act, which removed the privileged position of the parochial schools, and established a national system of elementary education under elected school board control.

How did these developments affect girls? Parochial schools, and denominational schools which operated on similar principles, did not exclude girls, and there are many biographical and anecdotal accounts which confirm that many girls - especially from middle class families - received

perfectly adequate basic education. But as I have already indicated, girls were less likely to get to school in the first place, or if they did attend, it was for shorter, more interrupted periods of time. Parochial and denominational schools tended to have much higher numbers of male pupils. In the North East, education was generally supposed to be of a high standard, because the Dick bequest provided for university-educated masters, and relatively good social conditions prevailed. In his 1864 Report to the Bequest, S S Laurie gave evidence that there were 154 parochial schools, and 554 other schools in the counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Moray. At the former, the average enrolment was 118.9; average daily attendance was 71.4. Of these, 52.1 were boys, and 19.3 were girls. 44.9 children attended for more than 150 days during 1864, and most of these were boys.⁸¹ The disparity between male and female attendance widened where the overall educational facilities and social conditions were much poorer - in the Highlands and Islands, and in the cities and towns of the industrial Lowlands.

During the 1840s and into the fifties, Assembly reports and church journals began to give evidence of presbyterian concern about the state of female education. What exercised church people was not the inadequacies of intellectual formation, but the need for girls to learn how to cook, clean, sew and keep house properly. This requirement for girls of the labouring classes, was closely allied to a concern for their moral and religious instruction. In an era



when the churches were assiduous in promoting a rigidly hierarchical and conservative social order, working class females who (according to their 'superiors') did not know or fulfil the tasks and responsibilities of their allotted sphere were seen to be a powerful demoralising influence. John Caird, future Principal of Glasgow University wrote in 1854 when he was parish minister at Errol, Perthshire:

'There is no existing means of female education apart from the common parish school. The result is that girls grow up utterly ignorant of the commonest sorts of household work, are unfit for domestic service, even of the rudest kind, and are still more unfit to manage their own houses when they marry. They have no habits of personal neatness, no taste for order, cleanliness, domestic comfort; they never aspire to anything beyond the mere eking out of their coarse, scanty, comfortless life, and their only pleasures are sensual indulgence and scandal. What a life! ...I seldom return from a day's visiting in our village without feeling my moral tone lowered by breathing in such an atmosphere.'¹⁸²

In 1849, an Elders' Daughters Association was founded within the Established Church to raise funds to set up female schools of industry. These separate schools were to combine basic literacy and numeracy with an emphasis on domestic education and religious instruction. The movement for such provision received impetus from the 1860 resolution of the Privy Council (which awarded state grants to denominational schools), that provision of teaching in sewing for girls in all mixed schools was henceforth to become an indispensable condition of masters receiving their augmentation. A letter from Downing Street to the church committees stated:

'My Lords have evidence before them, from persons well qualified to judge, that the education of female among the labouring classes in domestic industry is defective, and might be promoted to a much greater extent than is at present the case.'¹⁸³

However, both Free and Established Churches were alarmed at this, and sprang to the defence of the traditional mixed schools. Robert Candlish of the Free Church expressed a commonly held view that domestic work was something girls could and should learn at home, and that it was an inappropriate subject for the school curriculum.⁸⁴ But the Revised Code, which restructured funding and priorities in the 1860s by enforcing concentration on basic literacy and numeracy for the working classes, made money available to schools which employed women teachers for industrial education. Both denominations (which were directly involved in training a growing number of female teachers at their Normal Colleges) employed many more mistresses during the 1860s. Not to do so would have jeopardised funding of existing schools and training institutions. But there was also internal pressure from influential churchmen who argued, not only for domestic education, but also for the greater separation of boys and girls throughout the whole educational system, in order to improve the feminisation and moral tone of working class girls. By 1873 there were 130 sewing schools attached to Church of Scotland Assembly Schools, and over sixty separate female schools. The latter were less numerous than might have been expected, according to the 1866 Education Committee Report, because heritors were unwilling to take on the permanent burden of a mistress's salary. But although, as Moore suggests, the situation varied considerably throughout the country, the general opinion was against the imposition of an 'English' emphasis on separate

and domestic schooling for girls, especially at the expense of academic standards for both children and trainee teachers. In fact, both denominations were quick to see the economic and practical advantages of attaching a female teacher to their existing schools, not just to give industrial instruction, but to relieve the master:

'One the one hand it enables the Mistress to teach or rather to train a class of the population who have never yet received their fair share of attention in our schools - infants...On the other hand, it enables the Master to give an hour a day to an advanced class of Latin, Book-keeping or practical Maths. The Mistress overtakes all her literary instruction in the early part of the day while the senior girls are with the Master, and is then free for industrial work. Sewing and the cognate arts thus receive much more prominence and attention than they could receive in any other way.'⁸⁵

The assumption here was that female teachers were not fit to impart general education to older children. Certainly the course of instruction received by women at Normal Colleges concentrated on elementary, infant and industrial education, and omitted altogether the classical and mathematical subjects which Scots thought of as 'higher' branches of learning. Under the Revised Code, there was an increased emphasis on domestic training, and by 1872, three of the presbyterian Normal Colleges had hostels for women, within which students were encouraged to reside. In the hostels, the inmates (for as such they were known) were required, in addition to their academic work, to 'receive systematic instruction in Cookery, Ironing and Household Work', and to submit to a lifestyle of close control and drudgery.⁸⁶ Male students, on the other hand, were not subject to the severe restrictions and chores of residential life. As the Free

Church Committee commented:

'We prefer the good old Scottish plan, which has nothing in it of the monastic, or hospital character, crowding the persons under discipline into one artificial household, and subjecting them to one uniform martinet domiciliary routine.'¹⁸⁷

The distinctions between the training and socialisation developed for women and men reflected the traditional Scottish attachment to the Dominie, even when the education system was moving away from old patterns and priorities. In spite of the influx of female students, and their better overall performance in leaving exams, the churches did everything they could, including special arrangements and highly preferential bursary terms, to encourage male candidates to enter the profession. Following Laurie's recommendations to the Argyll Commission, from the 1870s men were able to combine College with University education: an option closed to women, for whom Laurie believed the limited form of Normal School training would be adequate. So until women had access to university education, the effect was to increase and formalise the distinction between male and female training and jobs. The mixed school, with master in charge and assistant mistresses, was to dominate post-1872 educational provision. But although the idea of separate female schools failed to attract sufficient financial or ideological support, middle class churchmen and women continued to promote the value of segregated training to inculcate the domestic ideology. Simon Laurie, who as secretary of the Church of Scotland Education Committee, a schools inspector, and first Professor of Education at

Edinburgh University, was one of the most influential shapers of 19th century Scottish provision, argued its benefit as the most effective means of inculcating the practical and moral 'business of life' for working class girls:

'While the actual facts acquit the mixed school system of being a positive cause of one of the prevailing vices of Scotland, it is a negative cause. To the improved demeanour and elevation of a more purely womanly class of girls, we must look for the amelioration of relations between the rustic youth of both sexes in Scotland, and this cannot be attained without surrounding the girls with gentler and softer influences than those to which she is subject when sharing with boys an education expressly arranged with view to the peculiar need of the latter...The deficiencies of "mistresses' grammar" are far more than counterbalanced by the prominence given to industrial skill - itself both a womanly accomplishment, and exercising a feminising influence on the learners.'⁸⁸

After 1872, when schools passed under the control of elected school boards, church people maintained an active involvement through membership of these. Ministers were prominent, although their main concern was to preserve traditional religious education, based on scripture and catechism, in the non-sectarian schools. They were instrumental in ensuring that the ethos of the new public schools was presbyterian. Middle-class women were also eligible for election, and a small number had illustrious school board careers. Although they were pioneers of women's rights, in their board capacity they focused on the distinctive requirements and goals of girls in elementary education. They supported the founding, during the 1870s, of Schools of Domestic Economy in Edinburgh and Glasgow. And they argued for the teaching of domestic subjects in board schools, believing that it was in the interests of working class women to maintain, and equip them

for, their supremacy in the home. While domestic education did not become universal in elementary schools until 1914, for financial reasons, ministers and other churchmen did support the theory. But it was for women that the issue was central. Helen Corr has shown that there was considerable resistance from working class women and female teachers to domestic instruction, and that female board members falsely assumed that their gender alone could act as a unifying factor in this campaign.⁸⁹ Their brand of feminism failed to understand or respond to the class tensions exposed in their approach to education for household management. They sought a full range of educational options for their own class, but thought that the best way to raise the status of working class girls was to elevate the teaching of domestic economy to academic respectability. For all their genuine concern and hard work on behalf of female elementary schooling, they confirmed the notion that its business was primarily preparation for a narrow life.

One of the main reasons for the tensions between middle class board members and those directly involved in post-1872 state education as teachers and students, was that there was an increasing divergence of female educational experience and provision along class lines. Before 1872, Scottish burgh schools were open to girls, although those in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen remained exclusively male. Most of the girls who attended them belonged to the less elevated professional and commercial sectors of their town's society.

Ayr Academy, for example, had pupils belonging to:

'the usual classes attending a burgh school or academy where the fees exclude the lower classes, while the mixed education of boys and girls...has its effect in keeping the very highest from the school.'⁹⁰

However, by mid-century there was an increasing tendency to segregate girls from boys, especially during adolescence.

Some of the burgh schools organised separate classes or 'Ladies Departments', in which the quality of education offered mostly reflected current views as to what was appropriate or possible for middle class girls to learn. Jane Waterston, the Free Church missionary who was born in 1843 and attended Inverness Academy, was certainly disparaging about her own experience there. She later argued that female education should 'do away with the old, scrappy, tinselly, slovenly kind of stuff that used to be thought enough for a girls' schoolroom'.⁹¹

In fact, in spite of the presence of girls in some burgh schools, the general standard of middle and upper class education for girls was lamentable - whether under governesses at home, or in Ladies boarding and 'finishing' schools. By the 1860s its deficiencies were becoming more widely publicised, as indicated by the absence of endowments:

'Our forebears attached so little importance to the higher education of girls as to have thought it unnecessary - probably a waste of means, to make any provision to give free or assisted education to daughters.'⁹²

The general purpose of the education provided had been to make the girls sufficiently compliant and accomplished in conventional mode to marry well, since that was their

vocation in life. The view that rigorous intellectual training was inappropriate to such an end, was effectively supported by the spurious medical and scientific claims about small female brains and the threat of sterility for girls who exercised those brains in academic disciplines for which they were not designed.

However, there was growing recognition that some middle class daughters had no choice but to work for a living, and that even those whose goal was marriage deserved something better than the desultory provision available. In 1863 a new 'College for the Daughters of Ministers and Professors' opened in Edinburgh. Its founder, Rev David Esdaile, explained its purpose:

'A large proportion of ministers' daughters must depend upon their own exertions in teaching or some other mode of employment. And society, as a whole, is interested in whatever tends to elevate their intellectual status and practical uses...It may be reasonably expected that some will manifest a desire to be employed by the Church as missionaries.'⁹³

The school was well subscribed, but remained modest in its educational outlook until the 1890s. In the early days, 'young ladies begged the Council to be allowed to give up Arithmetic.'⁹⁴ More substantial developments took place from the 1870s. In the 1871 edition of *The Attempt* the new Merchant Company Schools of Edinburgh were welcomed. The editor criticised the high fees in private schools which had made it difficult for many middle class families, 'especially in the department of girls education, which has been as superlatively expensive as proverbially superficial.'⁹⁵

Simon Laurie was behind the transformation of the old Hospital Foundations, which were charitable institutions for orphans, into large day schools for the Edinburgh middle classes. He suggested the Company use the Endowed Institutions (Scotland) Act of 1869 to turn the hospitals into schools. The Merchant Maiden Hospital became the Educational Institution for Young Ladies (later Mary Erskine's), and a completely new school -George Watson's Ladies College - was established. The two new schools offered a quality of teaching and curriculum which precipitated the largely unlamented demise of the old ladies schools. The standards attained by the Merchant Company Schools may in part be gauged by the dominance of their alumnae among the first generation of women to matriculate at university. In 1900 and 1905, of all Edinburgh female students, over 68% had attended the two schools. However, the development of such schools in Scottish cities was not enough to transform the long term professional prospects for women in Scotland. As Louisa Lumsden pointed out in 1875:

'It is no uncommon thing for girls' schools in this country to be under the headship of a master; the recently reformed Merchant Maiden School is a glaring example. I have heard this practice severely and most justly condemned in England...It is insulting to Scotchwomen. Even in our most elementary schools there is the same depreciation of woman's work and capacity.'⁹⁶

Lumsden was one of six women who had pioneered university education for women by studying at Hitchin (the forerunner of Girton College, Cambridge) from 1869. In 1872, she and Rachel Cook from St Andrews were the first women to pass the

Classical Tripos (though Cambridge did not confer degrees on Girton and Newnham students for another fifty-five years). Cook's father had been Professor of Hebrew and Ecclesiastical History; and principal of St Mary's College. His wife and daughters were at the centre of a movement in St Andrews to set up a decent girls' school, which would match the education available to the sons of the ruling classes, but using female teachers and Council members. The eldest Cook daughter, married to the minister of College Church, wrote to Louisa Lumsden inviting her to be Principal of the proposed school. It was originally planned as a day school, but some influential university men from other towns asked if their daughters could attend. It opened in 1877, and in 1882 became known as St Leonard's School for Girls. It was unusual in Scotland for its adherence to the English Public School model (for which Lumsden and many of her colleagues who had taught at Cheltenham Ladies College, had great admiration). The breadth of curriculum, and the attempt to encourage personal responsibility rather than the harassment and spying which were common in old style girls schools, aroused considerable hostility and suspicion. But it was the first opportunity for women to prove that they could organise and teach girls on the same academic and social principles as boys.

Another important development was organically connected with the vigorous Edinburgh campaign for female access to higher education. The classes which the Edinburgh Ladies Educational Association organised (see below) were very popular, but

exposed the weaknesses of preliminary learning among members. In 1876, the ELEA suggested that women ought to prepare for and sit the Edinburgh University Local Exams before engaging in more demanding study. A class was organised, meeting in St George's Parish Church Hall, to work towards the local exams. Over the next ten years, the St George's Hall Oral and Correspondence Classes became the centre of a movement to promote purposeful work and testing for middle and upper class women and girls throughout Scotland. For some older women, this was the chance which had been denied them in their youth:

'To look back is to recall wasted school days...There was no visible goal to be reached, no real prize to be won, and so I followed hither and thither the bent of my own foolish fancies...The possibilities for women appeared to be very small; for, in the range of my wildest fancy, no striving, however unwearied, seemed capable of opening a career for me. My brothers went out into the world to seek their fortunes; I stood on the threshold and said goodbye.'⁹⁷

For girls still at school in villages and towns across Scotland, it held out new possibilities which, even in the 1870s, were habitually denied:

'I lose my local pupils just when they come to an age to appreciate their lessons - either because of the idea that they must 'finish' under masters, or because parents desire their society at home. Education is not valued as it deserves...I doubt if even half a dozen subscribers (to a local bursary for girls) would be found in this neighbourhood.'⁹⁸

But the organisers of St George's classes did manage to raise bursaries and prizes which enabled and inspired girls to study systematically with a view to university standard education, and the possibility of a career. By 1883 there were 215 students attending in person, and 835 corresponding.

In 1885, Mary Walker, the superintendent of the Classes, consulted with Prof Calderwood and Prof Laurie of Edinburgh University about setting up an institute to train women teachers, and they assured her that there was a gap for training 'of a grade above those of Normal Schools'. St George's College duly opened in 1887, and remained in existence until 1940. The success of its training depended on access to proper teaching practice. They were distrusted by Board Schools for not having been through the usual channels as pupil-teachers and Normal School students. In any case, they were preparing themselves to teach a different social class. So in 1888 a day school for girls was opened. It flourished, with the support of the solid Edinburgh middle classes. Between ten and twenty per cent of all Edinburgh women attending the university 1900-1910 were former pupils of St George's.

By 1900, the reform of secondary education for girls was well underway. The new private and endowed schools (and fee-paying Board schools, like Glasgow High School for Girls) were by no means free from assumptions about female behaviour. The feminist writer Rebecca West recalled her time at George Watson's, to which she won a scholarship in 1903:

'I saw in my own education some of the things which eat the power out of women. My fellow pupils and I were not deterred from preparing to earn our livings, because it was evident that for the most part our parents would refuse to support us in idleness; but it was tactfully suggested to us that, rather than attempt to storm the world by genius and personality, we had better court it be conformity to convention and 'lady-likeness'.⁹⁹

Nevertheless, they did provide a hitherto unattainable level

of accredited academic achievement, and a measure of official encouragement. Those who wished to become doctors, mistresses in private schools, or to take up one of the other careers opening up to women, could now do so - as long as they belonged to the right class. Provision after 1872 brought new possibilities for middle class girls, but effectively closed off opportunity for all but the most persistent, able and lucky working class girls. The middle and upper class women who became increasingly active, vociferous and critical in church and society now had their own and their daughters' educational needs met outwith the State system. There was no need, it seemed, for the pioneer female school board members to argue for such provision within the free state sector. Instead, as we have seen, they concentrated on the domestic education of working class girls. And as post-elementary schooling developed after 1900, the rigid division of 'academic' and 'non-academic' children at the age of twelve militated against girls from working families. Home and economic pressures, and tenacious prejudices against book-reading females, conspired to limit the aspirations and opportunities of most. Those who, against the odds, received the benefits of a full secondary education were almost invariably channelled into a teaching profession which offered them a poor salary, low status and little career development as rewards for their commitment and capability.¹⁰⁰ For those in the private sector, there was some small chance of promotion and rank. For the legions of female teachers in the State system, there was always a man

blocking the way.

The development of female education in Scotland was based largely on the patriarchal view that the business of women's lives was essentially to provide an adequate domestic environment for men. The presbyterian churches' lack of fulsome support for the establishment of separate female industrial schools during the 1850s signified more their indifference to girls' needs than any commitment to equal scholarly opportunities, and although the traditional ethos of Scottish education preserved some measure of equality in a co-educational environment, prominent men like Simon Laurie were apparently willing to sacrifice academic standards in pursuit of well-trained and womanly working class wives formed in the bourgeois image. As a matter of more direct and personal interest, churchmen supported separate education for girls of their own social class. In doing so, they by no means rejected their fundamental beliefs about the nature and function of women, for the professional ideal promoted by private secondary education was circumscribed and channeled into work which would reflect the 'natural' vocation of women for service and sacrifice. Laurie was a true representative of his generation and his church when he declared:

'The truth is that the intellect of woman is a very difficult growth and that it is interwoven with imagination, affection and moral emotions much more intimately than in man. What the world wants is not two men, a big one in trousers and a little one in petticoats, but a man and a woman.'¹⁰¹

But at least, for and among middle class women, there was some discussion of education both as personal challenge and as intrinsic right; and from 1870 there was a systematic

campaign to extend equal provision of opportunity to that class. One of the earliest and most distinguished beneficiaries of that campaign was Frances Melville. She attended George Watson's College, was one of the first women to study at Edinburgh University, became the first Scottish female graduate in divinity, and was Mistress of Queen Margaret College in Glasgow from 1909-1935. She was acutely aware of the clash of interests between domestic and professional ideals in education, and believed that these were not in any sense inevitable, but the result of basic injustice:

'We hear much in educational talk of the great organic differences between the sexes determining the education of each, but so far many of the difficulties have been artificially imposed. What woman *cannot* or *ought* not to do in life, and therefore, what is useless to include as subject of her education, is not yet known, and cannot be known, until she has had entirely free play, and opportunity to find herself...The end of education is to fit a complete human being for life.'¹⁰²

Melville showed some appreciation of the desirability of this educational goal for girls of all social classes. However, in the preceding generation, her foresisters in the struggle for higher education generally subscribed to the view that location within the social hierarchy was an *a priori* factor in determining appropriate education. A contributor to the *Edinburgh Ladies Magazine* of 1879 at once alluded to and undermined the myth of universal Scottish education:

'North of the Tweed, the principle was early conceded that the best education should be free as air and sunlike to all alike...The question therefore becomes - what, for all classes, really is the best? and the answer seems obvious: that which best trains them for their respective position and duty in life.'¹⁰³

Working class girls were to be trained for their position which was to service their own families and those of a 'higher class'. Representatives of that class were beginning to assert their right for training which would cultivate their intellect, and prepare them for duties which were certainly moral and domestic, but might also be professional.

'Their soul's salvation'

In January 16 1868, David Masson, Professor of Rhetoric and English Literature at Edinburgh University, gave the inaugural lecture of the newly formed Edinburgh Ladies Educational Association. He began:

'Ladies - one of my earliest recollections is of an old clergyman settled in Northern Scotland...Among notions of a kind uncommon at that time and in these parts which he used to ventilate from the pulpit, was the following:"It is a shame that there are not the means for the Higher education of Women as for that of men. I do not see why ladies should not receive a thorough university education"...It is now the established conviction of a large number of people, that the time has come for a united effort to hoist the institutional means for the education far above the highest level they have yet reached. Until this is done, we persevere in the guilt of a great injustice, and we dawdle on as a nation at but half our nobleness and strength.'¹⁰⁴

Although public opinion may indeed have been moving in this direction, it was nevertheless a courageous venture, strewn with many obstructions, upon which the ELEA embarked. The Association was formed largely through the efforts of Mary Maclean Crudelius, a young English woman of Scottish parentage who married a Leith-based merchant. But she would have had a yet more daunting struggle without the existence of a small network of like-minded people, and especially the Edinburgh Ladies Essay Society (later Debating Society) which

was founded in 1865 by Sarah Elizabeth Siddons Mair, and which met once a month (usually in her house) until 1935. It took an active interest in issues affecting women: education in particular featured regularly in the debates. The Society had a journal (*The Attempt 1865-75; The Ladies Edinburgh Magazine 1876-80*) which provided a forum to record and disseminate information and discussion about the campaign. There was, of course, a significant overlap in membership of the two bodies, and many of the women involved were from prominent presbyterian families in the city. The other main source of support for the ELEA came from influential professional men, headed by the Principal and many professors from Edinburgh University. This was vital, because the whole purpose of the ELEA was to offer courses of lectures which would be equivalent to those provided by the university, and taught by the same people. As the first prospectus stated:

'It is not the aim of the Association to train for *Professions*; but its promoters desire, in the education of women, to give them the advantages of a system, acknowledged to be well suited for the mental training of the other sex. This they have endeavoured to accomplish by securing the goodwill and co-operation of the Professors and Examiners of the University, and of others interested in the higher education of women.' ¹⁰⁵

263 women signed up for the first course, exceeding all Mary Crudelius's expectations. Over the succeeding years the number of subjects on offer expanded as the Association endeavoured to match the requirements of the Arts Degree. While numbers fluctuated, and the level of commitment ranged from simply attending a few lectures, to producing all the essays and exams required of male university students, there

were enough steady and high performing workers to impress lecturers, and provide solid evidence that women (despite the inadequacies of their schooling) could cope with the rigours of higher education.¹⁰⁶ From 1873, certificates instituted by the university could be awarded to those who were examined in at least three subjects, based on the standard required for an MA. In 1879, the name was changed from ELEA to the Edinburgh Association for the University Education of Women.

There were also developments in the other university towns of Scotland. In Glasgow, 'lectures for ladies' had been offered since 1868. In 1877, a formal Association for the Higher Education of Women was formed, with Principal John Caird as President and Janet Galloway as honorary secretary – a position she occupied unsalaried with the Association and later Queen Margaret College until her death in 1909. Largely through her exertions, the Association was incorporated as Queen Margaret College in 1883, under a governing body of twelve men and nine women. In 1884, three women students were awarded MA degrees, though they had to be withheld since the College had no legal power to grant them.¹⁰⁷

In St Andrews, instruction had also been offered to women by professors, in college classrooms, and under the auspices of a Ladies Association, but they were rarely examined, and were limited to the very small number of upper and middle class women who lived around St Andrews. In 1877 the Senatus agreed to supplement these lectures with a scheme designed to

test education (however it had been acquired). The LA (Literate in Arts, later changed to Lady Literate in Arts) certificate proved popular because it offered a title – some formal recognition of achievement. Local exam centres were set up around Scotland, and much further afield. By 1896, there had been 9375 entrances, 7638 passes in one or more subjects, and 1542 had received the LLA title and diploma. From 1884, those with honours in three subjects became eligible for Headships of schools in Scotland, without requiring further examination. However, there were questions raised about the academic status and value of the LLA. As Christina Struthers of Aberdeen wrote in 1883:

'There is something almost pathetic in the eagerness with which women have realised that half a loaf is better than no bread, and have rushed to adorn themselves with the only available academic fragment. But it is not enough – the LA cannot rank with established and well understood traditional degrees.' ¹⁰⁸

But in spite of the inadequacies of the LLA, it did offer something practical for women who wanted recognition and a career – and not just for those who happened to live in a University town. The LLA Committee, convened by Prof Knight, (a parish minister in Dundee before he took up the Chair of Moral Philosophy) also raised money for a bursary fund, and planned the building of a Hall of Residence for women for the hoped-for time when they would be admitted to the university. So they were aware of, and committed to the ideal of equal access. There was also a large element of opportunism about the St Andrews scheme. The university had fallen on hard times, and was almost moribund, with a very small student

population which was in residence for only five months of the year. Knight and his colleagues hoped that by becoming a focus for the academic aspirations of women, the institution might be rejuvenated with new funding and personnel. St Andrews was often cited as the ideal place for a separate women's college or university, because it was small and quiet and the students could be under close supervision and discipline. Such a development might serve the whole of Scotland, thus leaving the male bastions untainted.

In Aberdeen, Professor Milligan of the Faculty of Divinity agreed in 1868 to give a series of lectures on the New Testament to women. He suggested that they had every right to pursue academic study according to their interest, and the local press quoted his remarks with approval. Milligan also lectured in the YWCA. In 1877, a group of male graduates of the university founded the Aberdeen Ladies Educational Association to establish a scheme of courses similar to those offered elsewhere. It provided for some favourable comparisons to be made between students and male undergraduates, and in 1882 the Aberdeen University Higher Certificate for Women was introduced. But most women with professional aspirations went to centres with larger and more developed opportunities, (especially Edinburgh, Oxford, Cambridge and London) or worked at home for the LLA, and by 1886 the ALEA was formally wound up. Whereas in Edinburgh, the Association was a focus for the campaign to open up universities on equal terms, Lindy Moore argues in her

helpful study of the Aberdeen movement that the demise of the ALEA actually led to a groundswell of support for admission.¹⁰⁹

In addition to organisations in the four university centres, there were ladies educational associations in other towns, such as Perth and Dundee, and many other more or less formal groupings of women petitioned or otherwise made known their desire for higher education to university standard.

The changes wrought by the Scottish Education Act of 1872 gave practical force to the more abstract arguments in favour of higher education. Male teaching students were entitled and encouraged to take part of their course at university, and Christina Struthers claimed in her 1883 pamphlet that it was the preponderance of women in the teaching profession which gave the movement such weight:

'It seems impossible to escape the conclusion that, whatever opportunities our Universities may offer to teachers, must necessarily be open to women equally with men'.¹¹⁰

In 1889, The Universities (Scotland) Act and its subsequent Ordinance 18 provided for universities 'to admit women to graduate in one of more faculties, and to provide for their instruction' in separate or mixed classes. On October 5 1892 the first women entered Edinburgh University. Because of their advanced studies through the EAUEW, eight were able to graduate the following year. In 1894 Marion Gilchrist (who was a doctor and later a militant suffragette) became the

first women to receive a degree from Glasgow University. Although prejudice against the idea of women engaging in academic study continued, and the early students were subjected to considerable scorn and abuse, formal restrictions had finally been removed, and the first generation of Scottish women were able to learn alongside, and test themselves in comparison to their male peers.

However, it was one thing to open academic doors, but quite another to consider that women might want to make use of such opportunities to develop professional, remunerated careers. The aims and objectives of bodies such as the EAUEW disclaimed such aspirations: they knew that the professional men of the Victorian age guarded their privileges jealously, and observed in their own city the controversial and apparently fruitless struggle of Sophia Jex Blake and her seven colleagues for the right to study, and sit exams for medical practice. In 1883, Christina Struthers clearly thought that the Edinburgh campaign from 1869–74 had damaged the cause of access to universities:

'Our Scots Universities have for long been not only places of general culture, but also schools of professional training, and it is impossible to ignore the fact...that we must meet the question of [women's] admission to the professions, and here it must be acknowledged as very unfortunate that years ago, the battle for admission to universities was in Scotland fought first from the side of medical education, as a host of difficulties and prejudices was thereby created that have greatly retarded our advance.'¹¹¹

In fact, the struggle for medical education had been brought to Scotland as early as 1862, when Elizabeth Garrett (who was the first British woman to get her name on the Medical

Register, by a loophole which was immediately closed) arrived in St Andrews and matriculated for study. Although her registration was annulled, despite legal appeals, she remained in Scotland to continue private study and practical work with the support of lecturers in both St Andrews and Edinburgh.¹¹²

However, it was the later endeavours of Sophia Jex Blake which really raised public awareness throughout Britain. A complex person, she was nevertheless publicly perceived and pilloried as that Victorian bogey, the stereotypical strong-minded woman. Many observers, both at the time and subsequently, judged that her militant image and the tactics she employed actually set back the cause for which she strived with considerable courage, energy and perseverance. This is not the place to enter into that debate, but it should be said that the entrenched bigotry and protectionism of her chosen profession and the academic establishment meant that nothing would have been acceded gracefully under any circumstances. In 1869 Jex Blake and seven other women took separate classes specially provided by teachers in the medical faculty of Edinburgh University. On November 18 1870, the antagonism of male students (and some faculty members) erupted in a riot at Surgeon's Hall. In 1872 the Senatus passed a resolution to exclude women from the university, and in 1873, the Court of Appeal withdrew the hard-won right Jex Blake had established to enter the Royal Infirmary for practice, and to sit exams. She returned to London to

continue her battle from there, but came back to Edinburgh in 1878 as a qualified doctor to practise, and later set up a women's medical college in the city.¹¹³

The medical controversy was raging during the formative years of the ELEA, and Mary Crudelius in particular was concerned that the Association should not be tainted by connection with any hint that women sought university education primarily for professional purposes. But those at the centre of the Edinburgh network were by no means unsympathetic towards Jex Blake. A review of her chapter in *Women's Work and Women's Culture*, (edited by Josephine Butler) in the 1867 *Attempt* found that:

'She proves in the most satisfactory way that the study of medicine was formerly very usual with women...the whole tone of the essay is just and high minded and thoroughly ladylike'.¹¹⁴

And in 1871, the editor commented:

'It seems fated that the study of medicine should be a lasting source of persecution to the sex...All the old objections seem merged in the objection that the education of medical ladies would ruin the University, both in prestige and popularity; but we may well doubt whether failure to perform distinct obligations undertaken by the University may not be equally unworthy of its high honour and yet more withering to its celebrity'.¹¹⁵

The same writer (Helen Reid, who later became secretary of the Church of Scotland's female missions) nevertheless seemed to believe that it would be much more seemly and appropriate for women to receive a medical education in a separate women's college, which would 'render unnecessary the undoubtedly odious incongruity of indiscriminate University

teaching'.¹¹⁶

In the second annual Report of the ELEA, which was published in March 1870, the distinction between professional training and general higher education was again clearly made, in seeking the support of the university for supplying a faculty for women:

'We feel that our hopes have a certain logic to justify them, for the University has gone considerably beyond *our* requirements, by opening its doors to women for the study of medicine. It would not be fitting in this report to say much about this concession to women. Opinions vary extremely among members on the subject; and this is no inconsistency, since to approve of high general development and attainment is one thing, and to approve of professional training, gone through with a view to its natural industrial outcome, another.'¹¹⁷

As this acknowledges, there was no unity of opinion on this important issue within the Association. In particular, Katherine Burton, who edited the *Memoir of Mrs Crudelius*, was committed to linking education with professional opportunity, and argued her case forcefully throughout her involvement with the ELEA.¹¹⁸

I concentrate on this issue because it exposes the tensions inherent in the presbyterian ideal of education as conditioned by Victorian dogmas of class and gender. I have already argued that the ideology of separate spheres rested on the presumption that women would have no personal ambition or desire to earn their own living. Within the patriarchal family their work was domestic, moral, religious - but not economic. At least that was the theory. For men of the dominant classes, however, the role of breadwinner was to be

assumed as both duty and pleasure. The increasing male professionalisation of the Victorian age was closely linked with the role and mystique of the universities, and Christina Struthers was right to insist that their educational and professional dimensions had to be considered together. During this period, there were three general positions adopted concerning women and higher education. First, there were the conservatives of both sexes who believed that females neither could nor should benefit from intellectual discipline: their physiology was designed for other purposes entirely, and it was pointless and dangerous for them to go against nature and God. Women who engaged in learning beyond that which would prepare them for their station in life desexed themselves and were accused of being infidels.¹¹⁹ Second, there were many who believed that the frivolity and ennui which characterised the lives of so many middle and upper class girls were a denial of those virtues preached from presbyterian pulpits: hard work, self-improvement, discipline, serious and purposeful activity. They were convinced that girls and women would benefit from exercising these qualities in study and learning, which would make them better helpmates and mothers for Christian husbands and children, and fit them for philanthropy. But intellectual activity and book-learning could never be an end in itself for Christian women – that would be self-indulgent, whereas the essence of true womanhood was self-denial. And third, there were those who strived to break down all barriers of law and custom which prevented women entering into professions and employment of

their choice. For them, access to special lectures, courses, and even female colleges simply was not enough, because the issue was one of power and formal equality, not just personal culture and learning. Women who sought such rights seemed to many to be in open revolt against the ideal of womanhood. By asserting their entitlement to choose and to exercise authority over their own lives, in open competition with men, they offended the modesty and subordination which were the crown of femininity. In short, they were asking to be considered as individuals with distinctive responsibilities and talents - to be freed from the category 'woman' which assumed that their life and role was determined and exhausted by their sex.

In England, although campaigners for higher education received active support from individual clergy, the Established Church as an institution was opposed to the movement, which was attacked in religious press and sermons, especially in the 1880s. By then, female students were regarded as the antithesis of Christian womanhood, and a threat to the political power of the Church, particularly in Oxbridge.¹²⁰ Perhaps the more overtly hierarchical ecclesiology and less democratic ideals of literacy within Anglicanism also militated against support for the higher education of women. The many notable achievements of English pioneers tended towards single sex institutions set up in spite of, rather than with the blessing of, the Established Church.

In Scotland, I have found no evidence of a concerted campaign by the churches against the movement. It is rarely mentioned in religious journals, until developments are well under way, and then there is advertisement and encouragement in female supplements rather than editorial comment. In all four centres of learning, individual university churchmen were actively involved in promoting the cause: William Stewart, John and Edward Caird in Glasgow; Milligan in Aberdeen; Tulloch and Knight in St Andrews; Charteris and Calderwood in Edinburgh. The Edinburgh men were among six members of the Senate who publicly protested against the 1872 resolution to exclude women from the University. In their statement, they claimed:

'We should individually feel ashamed of appearing as defenders in such action, and should account any public appearance by us in the character of opponents to women desiring to enter an honoured and useful profession, a matter to our discredit.'¹²¹

And Edward Caird recalled in a memorial of his brother John:

'He felt a deep interest in the movement for the higher education of women, and took every opportunity of pleading publicly for extending to them all the privileges of Glasgow University...Perhaps I may venture to recall the fact that many years ago, before my brother was Principal, I had the pleasure of voting with him in Senate, in a minority of two, in opposition to a proposal to petition Parliament against some Bill that favoured the admission of women to medical degrees.'¹²²

Charteris also used his position as a financial contributor to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh to propose a motion that women should be allowed to enter the hospital for teaching purposes. Many years later, he wrote to Sophia Jex Blake:

'I am glad I was always a steady, if humble adherent to the side of justice before its cause was popular'.¹²³

One of the factors which certainly increased the popularity of the medical cause was the realisation, by the 1880s, that female physicians would be a great asset to the missionary work undertaken by the churches –especially in India (see chapter three). A few pioneers (Jane Waterston, Letitia Bernard, Matilda MacPhail *et al*) had trained in London, but by 1884, the Edinburgh Extra-Mural School was seeking incorporation into the University. Jex Blake wrote in November:

'The Free Church are also willing to move, and they wish to memorialise the Privy Council direct, and to request that any charter granted may not exclude women, but make it at least optional for the College to admit them'.

The Free Church requested that Jex Blake draft the memorial on their behalf.¹²⁴

The enthusiasm of the churches was significant in a society where, as Jex Blake's biographer observed, 'piety paid, and an interest in missions was a great help to success in practice'.¹²⁵ It helped remove the tarnish of personal ambition from the desire to become a doctor, and replaced it with the womanly aura of noble self-sacrifice. It is not surprising, as Wendy Alexander observes, that a large proportion of Glasgow's first female graduates in medicine became missionaries.¹²⁶

The university presbyterians may have argued for women's educational rights as a matter of justice, but a growing number of Scotsmen, among whom ministers and teachers were

prominent, had more practical reasons for supporting the cause. For them the ideal that they should provide for all the female dependents in their family conflicted with the reality that they simply did not have the means to do so. Daughters could be a source of great anxiety to fathers who saw little prospect of them making 'good' marriages at a time when the female population significantly outnumbered the male. Lack of private means beyond the stipend; illness or death; business failure: all of these were factors which could make it imperative for young women to earn their own living. Jane Waterston had painful personal experience of this. Her banker father was impoverished by economic depressions, and she had to support herself plus her mother and four sisters. In a speech on the higher education of women which she gave at St Andrew's Church, Cape Town in 1885 she pleaded:

'Would it not be better to spend some of our money in giving daughters an education, trade or profession, that would enable them to work for a living?...We will leave you the jellies and sweets, gentlemen, if you will share with us the beefsteaks...We do trust and hope that the day of mental daubing is over, and that the era of mental training and development has begun for us women.'¹²⁷

Or as Louisa Lumsden put it in an address on the same subject:

'The mistake is to regard paid work as derogatory to the dignity of a lady...as if work were not a blessing, and idleness and dependence a curse'.¹²⁸

This necessity, combined with the evangelical sense of responsibility and service, and presbyterian heritage of respect for literacy, propelled many earnest young women into

higher education as a prelude to paid employment -almost always in jobs which were considered suitable extensions of the female caring role. Three of the first eight women to graduate from Edinburgh University were minister's daughters, and others were deeply involved in the church. Most of them developed careers and remained single.¹²⁹ In St Andrews Prof Knight claimed, in support of the proposed female residence, that:

'The class who may be expected chiefly to avail themselves of such university education and residence are those girls who intend to enter either teaching or the Medical Profession, and who often come from remote manses and School Houses'.¹³⁰

The daughters of Dr John Campbell, minister of Kirkcaldy Old Kirk, were abundant illustration of the point: there were eight of them, all graduated from St Andrews, and four became doctors. Moore's statistics for Aberdeen also show the predominance of ministers' daughters in a university which was perhaps less socially exclusive than Edinburgh or St Andrews. They were disproportionately represented in the social and activist elite during the first years of female admittance. And between 1898 and 1910, 50% of ministers' daughters went into teaching, and 22.8% into medicine; 86.4 were in paid employment - a higher than average proportion of female graduates unmarried and working.¹³¹

Among the first generation of university women in Scotland, there is little evidence that exposure to learning opened the floodgates of unbelief, as many opponents had feared. Christian societies in the universities were among the first

to become mixed, and there were also Christian Unions for female students. The background and aspirations of so many women were commonly understood and described in religious terms, and even where there may not have been deep personal faith, these pioneers were anxious to deflect and defuse the criticism which they knew their adversaries would make, given the slightest opportunity. The topics and votes of the small but important Edinburgh University Women's Debating Society (founded in 1893) indicate that a generally liberal and progressive tendency prevailed among the members, but there is absolutely no suggestion that the church or Christianity were questioned or denied *per se*.¹³²

In her 1885 speech, Jane Waterston actually suggested that it was the thwarted spirit of endeavour and call to blind obedience which might turn a woman away from the faith of her parents:

'When she expresses the desire for work, she is told that she has no need for work, and that she should be content and happy...Is it a wonder that in some cases she begins to question the Bible itself. "Can it be true? Can God have given me talents and then expect me to bury them in the earth?" ...Is it any wonder that sometimes she joins that dreary sect that believes in nothing beyond the grave, and casts off all social bondage and restraint?'¹³³

So the leaders of the presbyterian churches came, by and large, to accept the right of women to higher education – for their own class; and professional training – for unmarried women seeking religious or philanthropic employment. But what about their right to theological education, and its professional aftermath, the ordained ministry? According to Elsie Inglis, the *Glasgow Herald* was horrified at the

implications of Ordinance 18:

'The G.H seems to think this is the beginning of the end, and will necessarily lead to woman's suffrage, and will probably land them in the pulpit; because if they are ordinary University students they may compete for any of the bursaries, and many bursaries can only be held on condition that the holder means to enter the Church! You never read such an article, and it was not the least a joke but sober earnest.'¹³⁴

Apart from the spectre of women in pulpits, conservatives abhorred the idea that females, whose faith was supposed to be simple, sound, elevating and decidedly non-intellectual, might wrestle with the turbulent theories which were disrupting the calm pools of dogma and biblical interpretation at this time. No doubt most academic theologians would have agreed with Dr Dickson of Glasgow University, who spoke at the meeting to set up the Glasgow Association in 1877,

'Telling us that he was a little startled at such revolutionary theories [ie higher education for women]. However, he said that when the ladies were ready, he did not think that they would find his colleagues or himself backward in doing their share of the duty. He said all this the more cheerfully, as he did not think they would want, for some time, a full course of Dogmatic Theology'.¹³⁵

But there were at least 141 Edinburgh women who, in 1873, wanted a course in Biblical Criticism. The request, made to the ELEA in 1871, caused considerable controversy within the organisation - because it belonged within a 'professional' faculty, and because it introduced a religious element into an association which was non-sectarian. New rules were drawn up, allowing the class to be held on the understanding that it would have to be specially requested anew each session, and that it was strictly an 'outside subject', which was not

doctrinal but educational. When Professor Charteris introduced his course, it brought a huge influx of new members into the ELEA (which was the main reason the committee agreed to accede to the request). The class lists for the three sessions he taught make interesting reading - that so many of those who belonged to the city's network of campaigning women enrolled suggests a truly lively commitment to the Christian faith, and a hunger among many women to deepen their understanding, but also for access to new critical tools.¹³⁶ It is debatable whether Charteris, for all his worthy commitment to the cause, was the person to stimulate much excitement for his subject. His powers of oratory and intellect were not in the same class as his organisational skills. The *Ladies Edinburgh Magazine* takes up the story:

'He warned his students that academic lectures on Biblical Criticism were very unlike those prelections of a hortatory and expository sort which are frequently delivered to the ladies of a congregation by their pastor, and hinted that the history of codices and versions, and discussions concerning disputed authorship and doubtful canonicity, might not prove at all to the taste of the majority.'¹³⁷

Although many fell away, a committed core continued into the second session, and impressed Charteris with the quality of their work. In 1875, he had no time to take the class,

'although a knot of students professed themselves altogether free from any preconceived bias as to the authorship of Hebrews, and eager for a full discussion of its canonicity and exegesis'.¹³⁸

In each of the other centres, lectures and courses were run by members of the divinity faculties, and were credited in

the LLA and other exams. One might have thought that the general interest in biblical studies and theology would lead to significant numbers of women studying for the Bachelor of Divinity degree. In 1892, the University Courts of Aberdeen and St Andrews resolved to open classes in all faculties, including divinity, to women – where professors were willing to teach them. In 1897, Charteris instigated a discussion within the Edinburgh faculty about admitting women to classes. After consultation with the other divinity faculties, they all agreed in principle to a resolution which would allow women to be instructed 'in any instance in which a Professor is willing to conduct a class or classes to which women may so be admitted.'¹³⁹ However, very few women took advantage of this dispensation. Opinion about the ministry of women was by no means advanced enough to encourage many to hope, as Frances Melville did when she graduated BD in 1910, that such preparation might soon lead to ordination. As I have argued in chapter four, the whole concept of ministerial formation and practice was laden with patriarchal assumptions which would have made it extremely difficult for any but the most determined women to broach the threshold of that world. And contrary to the *Herald's* prediction in 1891, the legal restriction of bursaries and scholarships to men who were candidates for the ministry practically excluded most women who might aspire to theological education for its own sake. Only in 1933 did the Edinburgh Faculty secure from the Educational Endowments Commission the right to consider women as candidates for bursaries. By 1930, just a handful of women

had graduated from the Scottish faculties of divinity. The experience of Doris Webster Havice, an American who was sent by Henry Sloane Coffin of Union Seminary to New College in 1930, so that she could 'find out what it is like to live in a man-made world', perhaps illustrates why. On her first day in Edinburgh, she went for lunch in New College and sat down between two men:

'I was startled to see them both rise, pick up their plates, and go to the side of the room where they stood up to eat.'

She continues her sorry tale:

'Each professor opened his class saying, " I am verra (*sic*) sorry that there is a young woman present, but I assure you that she will not be permitted to disturb the class.'" She could not speak in classes, except for that of Professor H R MacIntosh, although he would not allow her to do so on Friday, when he taught Homiletics: 'The implication was that no woman could contribute to a class on preaching... I moved through New College like a disembodied spirit. There was avoidance of all contact. It was silent except on one occasion when the professor announced that he and his wife would like the *gentlemen* to come to tea on the following Sunday. It was clear where I stood.'¹⁴⁰

Things improved somewhat for Doris when she came top in each class, and this was announced on the first day of the second term:

'Suddenly I was included in the class and in invitations to professors' homes; even in conversations with other students. As one of them put it, "Since you are so smart we don't think of you as a woman any more".'¹⁴¹

Perhaps in that final comment lies the essence of the presbyterian response to women's struggle for higher education. There were many aspects of the campaign which could be regarded as reflecting the protestant spirit of Scotland. It was a revolt against authority - variously that of parents, churches, universities, the law, and of received

wisdom. It reflected and encouraged the growth of individualism, and it emphasised the importance of education for the development of ethical and religious life.

Protagonists like Christina Struthers cited their religious heritage in support of the cause:

'If women resolve to face the dangers supposed to beset the path of university study, it is contrary to the spirit of the time to hinder them by arbitrary exclusion, and they must be left, as our Catechism says, to "the freedom of their own will".'¹⁴²

Women involved in the struggle believed that self-improvement was a moral duty. That conviction, derived from the tenets of Calvinism, imbued their enthusiasm for educational opportunity with an existential seriousness. Frances

Melville contended:

'If women are to gain their soul's salvation they must learn to be individuals once in their lives, not constantly seeking for a prop on their weakest side.'¹⁴³

The movement also urged the recognition and use of talents for the greater good of humankind. In all of these ways the struggle was not an alien imposition on Scottish presbyterian culture, and many individual church members recognised the justice of the case, though the institutional clout of the church was rarely exercised on its behalf. But to accept that these principles might apply to women required a major readjustment of the dualism which invoked them for gifted boys and men, while assuming that the female duty was primarily to create the right environment for males at all stages on their intellectual journey.¹⁴⁴ This campaign was a major arena for testing and proving the late Victorian

flexibility in understanding 'women's sphere', but it by no means destroyed the concept of separate spheres. I believe that the extent of its success was due largely to an eventual ideological and pragmatic acceptance by the ecclesiastical and educational authorities that the protestant work ethic - expressed in both intellectual and economic labour - might apply also to women. It was compromised by a dual failure to accept the implications of equal opportunity: a failure among men to countenance that women might compete and succeed in what had once been male preserves, without being de-sexed (either metaphorically - as in the New College example, or literally, as expressed in the widely held belief that intellectual effort would make women infertile). And a failure among most of the women who took part in the campaign, to imagine that other classes than their own might be in a position to benefit from higher education. For them, working women provided the domestic services which facilitated their achievements, just as their own foremothers had been largely confined to servicing the ambitions of men. A patronising little story told by Beatrice Welsh, in her account of St George's Training College in Edinburgh, perhaps illustrates the point:

'We had a little maid called Jane...She had her headquarters in the dressing room-housemaid's pantry-coal cellar apartment. Here, when not otherwise engaged, she might be found washing the dishes or reading, or even trying to do both at once - with indifferent results as regards the teacups. She took, however, a lively interest in all our proceedings, and knew the timetable as well as we did ourselves...Frequently she was found trying to peer through the door of the lecture room to see what we were about, or applying her ear at the other side to hear what was going on. One of our number said she thought Jane, had she been born in

a higher social stratum, would have led the intellectual life. Had she belonged to the present generation I am sure she would have been found, with the assistance of a Carnegie Bursary, sitting on the University benches, where I hope her scholarship would have proved better than her housemaiding, which was very indifferent.¹⁴⁵

Is it possible that these two failures of the imagination were linked by the fact that no class in Scottish society could shake off its deep attachment to the mythological notion of womanhood? In spite of the efforts of a few pioneers to show that women should not have to choose between profession and marriage, others believed that higher education would be a blessing primarily as a way of improving the culture and wisdom of 'feminine and womanly' middle and upper class women, whose lives would continue to be dominated by the requirements of domesticity, rather than economic necessity or freedom. In so doing, they fostered the bourgeois model of family life and tended to disclaim any connection between their own struggle, and that of working class women to make ends meet. As Mary Crudelius wrote to Professor Masson in 1868:

'Societies for the Employment of Women don't aim high or straight enough...Let them fulfil their duties as register offices for the lower classes, which is about all that they are, but don't let them interfere with and be a drag upon efforts of a different kind'.¹⁴⁶

Although women like Christina Struthers and Frances Melville were prepared to argue against exclusivity in higher education, most of their contemporaries believed that there was an assumed and qualitative difference between what should be available to their own class and to the 'lower classes'. But the underlying social axiom was that girls should be

educated to fulfil their pre-ordained womanly functions according to their station in life, while those few who avowedly pursued intellectual excellence and professional parity for personal satisfaction could no longer truly be considered as women, but were to be barely tolerated under disdainful epithets. The religious institutions and culture of the time did nothing to challenge these fundamental parameters of gender and class as they shaped the educational options and experience of Scottish women.

5. The Women's Suffrage Movement

In June 1838 a female weaver from Glasgow, describing herself as a 'real democrat', addressed the women of Scotland through a Chartist journal, the *Northern Star*. She called on them to join the movement, and maintained that it was 'the right of every woman to have a vote in the legislation of her country'.¹⁴⁷

Ninety years were to elapse before that right was granted to all women over 21 in 1928. Throughout the period, there were always Scots who argued for the enfranchisement of women. But from around 1870, and especially in the first decades of the twentieth century, the clamour grew and was organised into a major campaign. During 1903-14, the militant suffrage movement revitalised the issue, which became a major political question in pre-war Britain. As Elspeth King

comments in her contribution to *Out of Bounds* (1992), 'the lack of attention given to the Scottish women's suffrage movement is a historiographical scandal'.¹⁴⁸ Only King herself and Leah Leneman have done any serious work to demonstrate the extent, enthusiasm, commitment and complexity of indigenous suffrage agitation in Scotland. Despite the considerable (and at times bitterly expressed) differences of approach which characterise their work, both Leneman and King deserve commendation and critical attention for their pioneering research. Both writers have acknowledged the importance of the Scottish church as a key public institution, and the significance of its opinions and actions (or inaction) to those involved in the suffrage movement. Leneman in particular has revealed the extent to which the issue was forced onto the agenda of institutional presbyterianism at the height of the campaign.¹⁴⁹ My intention here is not to enter the general discussion about the nature of the Scottish movement, but simply to reflect on connections, differences and departures there may have been between suffrage activists and presbyterianism. I want especially to consider these factors in the context of the doctrine of separate spheres and natures – an ideology which was malleable enough to be utilised, in different forms, by suffragists, suffragettes and anti-suffrage campaigners. But it was also deliberately attacked and subverted – in theory and in practice – by numerous women, who presented a substantial threat (sometimes from an overtly Christian standpoint) to the ideological hegemony of religious or

social patriarchy. That threat was largely neutralised, despite the concession of partial and then universal suffrage to women. The vote did not prove to be the golden key to a glorious new age, as some of the millenarian pronouncements of its protagonists had predicted. After looking briefly at the aftermath of the campaign, I shall conclude this chapter by reflecting on how the resilience of the domestic ideology affected the first wave of modern feminism which had reached the peak of its activity by 1914.

1. 'They forget to think of them as human':

The Victorian suffrage movement in Scotland

Throughout the Victorian era, as I have argued, Scotswomen were involved in a range of campaigns and actions which constituted a Movement seeking reform in female options and lifestyles. A network of women met, discussed, analysed, organised and took practical steps which were aimed at extending justice and emancipation to beleaguered people – and by mid-century there was a growing awareness among them that the female sex was the largest oppressed group, both at home and abroad. I have already mentioned the influence of Chartist, Utopian socialist, evangelicalism and anti-slavery activists on currents of thought in the early Victorian period. In that turbulent era seceding and disrupting presbyterianism also contributed to the flux of ideas concerning individual and collective rights, and whether those were restricted by social position and gender. The connections in Scotland between this early period and the

Women's Movement which emerged in the mid-1860s await proper exploration, but the individuals who pioneered that Movement were more directly associated with the evangelical and religious currents and organisations, than with the proletarian and freethinking ones, and I have acknowledged Barbara Taylor's contention that it was only when women's rights were free of the taint of earlier subversion that the middle class reform movement could develop its 'moral mission' without abandoning respectability. In 1843 a book was published in Edinburgh by Marion Reid, about whom little is known, except that she was married to a businessman and had attended the 1840 Anti-Slavery Convention. However, *A Plea for Women* was widely distributed and read, and made a reasoned and moderate case for extending the Parliamentary franchise to women.¹⁵⁰ In 1851, a Female Political Association in Sheffield, comprising women with Chartist and Quaker/anti-slavery backgrounds, presented a petition to the House of Lords, and in the same year, Harriet Taylor published an essay in the *Westminster Review* entitled 'The Enfranchisement of Women'. Taylor, who was a major influence on her second husband, John Stuart Mill, expounded a confident liberal humanist argument for the rights of women, and refuted the notion that separate spheres were essential, rather than the result of custom and prejudice.¹⁵¹

So from various sources, there were tributaries of support for female suffrage as one aspect of emancipation, flowing through Scotland and Britain. The small group of middle and

upper class women who formed the Edinburgh Essay Society in 1865 were aware of it. In 1866 (and periodically thereafter) they debated the issue.¹⁵² In November 1867, in the wake of the defeat of J S Mill's women's suffrage amendment to the Reform Bill, a Women's Suffrage Society was formed in Edinburgh, with Priscilla McLaren, her step-daughter Agnes, and Eliza Wigham as office-bearers. Duncan McLaren, the radical Edinburgh MP and United Presbyterian churchman, voted in favour of Mill's amendment, declaring: 'I don't see how a man who had a good mother can do otherwise'.¹⁵³ In 1870 and 1871 public meetings in favour of women's suffrage were held in a packed Edinburgh Music Hall. At the latter, Mill himself was the main speaker, and he argued:

'Men are so much accustomed to thinking of women only as women, that they forget to think of them as human (Hear hear) Give women the same rights as men, and the same obligations will follow. ¹⁵⁴

Edinburgh was certainly in the vanguard of support for the cause - all the MPs, the Town Council and many academics and ministers were in favour. And the Ladies Debating Society provided a forum and a journal for discussion of the issue. Societies also began in other towns and cities, and the main lobbying method was the petition to parliament. Between 1867 and 1876, over two million signatures were collected in Scotland. Support was also sought at public meetings. Jane Taylour, Agnes McLaren and Jessie Craigen went around Scotland, and reports often mentioned that meetings were held in church halls, and had ministers in the chair or on the platform.¹⁵⁵ In 1882 and 1884 large national meetings of

those from around Britain who supported women's suffrage were held in Glasgow and Edinburgh and attracted thousands.

Churchmen occasionally declared their enthusiasm for the cause. In 1884, the year of the Third Reform Act, the *U P Magazine* noted:

'The Government's refusal to include women householders within the sweep of enfranchising proposals has aroused the irritation and activity of a very formidable organisation. Leaders of the female franchise movement are women of conspicuous talent and high moral tone; and their plea that Parliament, after having conferred the educational and municipal franchises on women householders, has acted inconsistently as well as unjustly in withholding the parliamentary franchise, commands very general sympathy.'¹⁵⁶

And in 1885, in the context of a debate on the Contagious Diseases Acts, Mr Paton of Dalbeattie declared at the Free Church General Assembly:

'I do not know exactly the opinion of the members of this House regarding female franchise, but I most earnestly desire it; and one of my chief reasons for it is, that when the ladies have votes, they will be on the side of social legislation, and for sweeping away such obnoxious acts.'¹⁵⁷

In 1895, a book was published which included articles by religious leaders on the subject. John Marshall Lang, (later Principal of Aberdeen University), Principal T Lindsay of Glasgow Free Church College, and Dr Cameron Lees of Paisley Abbey and St Giles Cathedral all declared themselves in favour of women's suffrage. ¹⁵⁸

It is apparent, then, that a significant number of presbyterian women either actively or passively supported enfranchisement during the mid to late 19th century, consistent with their advocacy of extended rights and

opportunities, especially for women of middle and upper classes. And there were also many men who shared those views - some of whom were willing to declare them publicly. However, they were far from being generally accepted, or even taken seriously. As the *Ladies Edinburgh Magazine* noted in 1880:

'It is the fashion among many people to laugh at this movement, to turn it into ridicule, and to sneer at its advocates as strong-minded, unfeminine etc'.¹⁵⁹

Lady Frances Balfour, who was a prominent constitutional suffragist, joined the movement around 1887. She criticised the Church of Scotland for its lack of support of women's rights, claiming that 'it did its best to alienate all thinking women from Christianity', and commented in her autobiography that:

'No-one ever spoke to me on the subject [women's rights] except as "shocking, Ridiculous" - something wicked, immodest and unwomanly...The influences of my time and society were all without exception against the freedom of women.'¹⁶⁰

It is against that background that we should appreciate the struggles of the reformist Women's Movement for educational, legal and political rights. The franchise movement has seemed to some historians to have run out of steam after the 1884 failure, but many women by then were engaging in other forms of educational and political activity, and a new generation of activists, who were very much alive to the importance of suffrage, were already enjoying the first fruits of the Women's Movement's success. Along with some of the old campaigners, they were - consciously or otherwise -preparing for the next stage of the struggle, which marked a

qualitative change in the attitudes of women to themselves, as well as in strategy and tactics. As Teresa Billington-Greig wrote in 1911:

'The suffrage movement had been a ladies movement, conventional and punctiliously observant of a high and narrow code of honour...[It] failed to realise that the old practice of petitioning was played out...It stood in great need of the revivification which militancy brought...A change from the policy of appeal to the policy of antagonism.'¹⁶¹

2.'Building the New Jerusalem': 1903-1914

In 1903, Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst formed the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) - a new suffrage organisation which was initially linked with the Independent Labour Party. In October 1905, Christabel was arrested after the WSPU disrupted a Liberal meeting, and thus began the militant phase of the campaign. In Scotland, the first years of the new century witnessed the establishment of many new branches of organisations affiliated to the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), leading up to the 1905 General Election. The new government was formed by the Liberal party which had a huge Parliamentary majority, based largely on its strength in Scotland. The WSPU's declared aim was to force the government to concede the vote, and in 1906, Teresa Billington (a lapsed Catholic from Manchester) was sent to Scotland to establish the organisation and form branches. Among many others inspired by her, Helen Fraser was converted to the cause, and the two women were instrumental in arousing and capitalising on militant fervour around the country. The WSPU purpose was warmly supported by

Tom Johnston who, as editor of the Glasgow socialist newspaper, *Forward*, devoted considerable space to coverage of the movement's aims and activities. In June 1907, a Scottish Council of the WSPU was constituted, with Billington-Grieg (she married Glasgow businessman Frederick Greig that year and thereafter often referred to herself as 'TBG') as honorary secretary, the Christian socialist Mrs Bream Pearce as treasurer, and Helen Fraser as paid organiser. The tactics of the WSPU were confrontational and disruptive, and designed to raise the public profile of the cause. Harassment, police brutality and imprisonment out of proportion to the offences committed by suffragettes won them sympathy and inspired new recruits. They also organised major meetings and events which gave thousands the opportunity to hear powerful and persuasive female speakers. In 1907, however, TBG, who was increasingly concerned at the autocratic and centralist organisation of the WSPU, was instrumental in creating a schism. A breakaway group objected to the cancellation of the annual conference which was to debate a democratic constitution, and the call instead to pledge unquestioning loyalty to the Pankhursts and Pethick-Lawrences. They established a new militant association, which, however, renounced the more extreme violent direct action espoused later by the WSPU. The Women's Freedom League (WFL) was disproportionately strong in Scotland – in part, no doubt, because many had been brought into the movement by TBG rather than the Pankhursts. However, the WSPU retained many able Scotswomen (including committed socialists, in spite of

Christabel's rejection of all original ILP connections and her ever-narrowing focus on the vote). In Scotland, the WSPU and the WFL co-operated, or at least enjoyed peaceful co-existence, to the extent that many women belonged to both. Indeed, until the final phase of the campaign, the constitutional groups associated with the NUWSS did not express public antagonism towards militancy, and especially in the years of truce while the Conciliation Committee was meeting (1910-11), there was shared action across the spectrum to a greater or lesser extent in different parts of the country.

Presbyterian (and other) churchwomen were deeply involved in both constitutional and militant suffragism. Among those who espoused the former, Lady Frances Balfour and her sister-in-law Lady Betty Balfour, Lady Ramsay, and the Marchioness of Aberdeen were prominent aristocratic supporters: as office-bearers in NUWSS branches, and as busy public speakers. Dr Elsie Inglis was an executive committee member of the NUWSS, and secretary of the Scottish Federation of Woman's Suffrage Societies. Inglis was one of five Edinburgh graduates who, having been refused voting papers to participate in the election of a university MP, took the case to the Court of Session in 1906. The others were Margaret Nairn, Frances Simson, Frances Melville and Chrystal MacMillan - all Christians, and later members of the Scottish Churches League for Woman Suffrage (founded 1912). The case went to appeal before the House of Lords in 1908, and MacMillan spoke for

several hours. As Leah Leneman observes:

'Although defeated by the law, the women's perseverance must have caused many to ponder that the Lords were denying the vote to women while admitting them competent to plead a complex legal case before the highest court in the land. Chrystal MacMillan became a heroine to all three suffrage organisations in Scotland.'¹⁶²

One of MacMillan's school friends from St Leonard's was Eunice Murray. She has already been mentioned in a previous chapter as an ardent supporter of the ordination of women. She belonged to the WFL from the outset, and was secretary for 'scattered members', which involved considerable organisation, and an exhausting routine of speaking tours. Murray was a highly effective propagandist, in person and in writing. A letter to the *Glasgow Herald* in July 1913 described the impact she made during one of the WFL 'Clyde campaigns':

'Once I heard her convincing, eloquent and logical speech I was quite delighted, and feel persuaded if people had the opportunity of hearing her, and if cabinet ministers had that privilege, the vote would be won without delay.'¹⁶³

By this time, Eunice Murray was the Scottish president of the WFL.

Within the ranks of the WSPU, some of the most interesting participants had strong religious convictions and connections with the institutional church. Mary Dickie, daughter of Rev Alexander Kennedy DD, and wife of the minister of New Kilpatrick, Bearsden, served as Scottish Provincial Local Secretary. Agnes and Elizabeth Thomson were involved in the first recorded arson in Scotland, when an attempt was made to burn down the new grandstand at Kelso racecourse in April

1913. They were already veterans of the campaign, having been in Holloway prison in 1911. But they were veterans in another sense, because they were aged 67 and 65, and had worked for some time as missionaries in India.

May Grant was also an ex-missionary, and daughter of the minister of St Mark's Parish Church in Dundee. She was a skilled publicist, and after imprisonment under an assumed name in Aberdeen in 1912, she revealed her identity at a public meeting after arousing great curiosity in her home town:

'Some of her hearers, she thought, had known her since she was a little girl, as the daughter of a clergyman, and as having taken part in mission work. Now she appeared on the platform as a gaol-bird! Perhaps some of them had not heard the call of the oppressed, sweated, betrayed women. Nothing but political power would give their sisters the help they needed in the struggle for existence.' ¹⁶⁴

Helen Crawford was brought up in a strict evangelical atmosphere, and as a young woman, married the much older minister of her church - Brownfield Parish - in Glasgow. By a long, slow process, she began to question and then to challenge the subordinate role of women in church and society. Although she later became a committed communist, she was steeped in religious culture, and her speeches retained a rich element of biblical imagery. At the time of her involvement with the WSPU, she worked with the United Evangelical Association, and described herself as a Christian socialist. In 1912 she travelled to London to take part in a window-breaking action, for which she was arrested and sent

to Holloway. In her unpublished autobiography she recalled:

'On the Sunday before making up my mind to undertake the job, I went to Church and prayed that I would get a message in the sermon. Little did my husband realise what he was doing...His sermon was about Christ making a whip of cords, and chasing money changers out of the temple. This I took as a warrant that my participation in the raid was right. If Christ could be Militant, so could I.'¹⁶⁵

Dorothea Chalmers Smith was another minister's wife who took a leading part in the final phase of militancy. She was one of the first women to qualify in medicine from Glasgow in 1884. She married the minister of Calton Parish Church in 1889, and had six children. In 1913 she was imprisoned for attempted arson, went on hunger strike, and was subject to the notorious Cat and Mouse Act.

Her husband was a traditionalist in his attitude to women, and she later left him.¹⁶⁶ But there were other ministers and churchmen who offered moral and practical support to the movement, including a group of Glasgow clergy who appeared on the platform party when Mrs Pankhurst addressed a meeting in St Andrew's Hall on March 13 1913. They were roundly condemned by correspondents to the *Glasgow Herald*, but on March 25, James Gray of Berkeley Street UF Church wrote in their defence:

'We are men and citizens as well as ministers and must be allowed the ordinary right to think and act for ourselves... the Women's Movement is, in my mind, the greatest question of the day, and the first practical attempt in this country to realise the kingdom of God on earth.'¹⁶⁷

At a meeting held in Edinburgh on March 11, 1912 'to express recognition by the Churches of the spiritual equality of the

sexes, and the justice of the principle of their political equality', a Scottish Churches League for Woman Suffrage was constituted. Lady Frances Balfour was President, and the Vice-Presidents were Rev CM Black, Rev Robert Craig DD, Rev RJ Drummond DD, Rev CM Grant DD (May Grant's father), Rev John Hunter DD, Very Rev P McAdam Muir DD, Miss SES Mair (founder of the Debating Society), Louisa Lumsdem, and Lady Ramsay. The names of a number of prominent ministers and female activists appear on the list of the General Council.¹⁶⁸ The SCLWS distributed literature to church guilds and societies, arranged special services and meetings, and sent resolutions to politicians.

These indications of support from the religious community were welcomed by suffrage campaigners, but they by no means represented a consensus within the churches. There were many anti-suffrage church ministers and members, both male and female. Some were content to grumble about the disreputable actions of suffragettes, and the fact that 'respectable' church women could be mistakenly identified as such.¹⁶⁹ Others got involved in the Scottish League for Opposing Woman Suffrage, or used their position to denounce 'such disruptive influences'. William Knight of St Andrews was a prominent opponent - proof that involvement in one women's campaign (higher education) was no guarantee of support for others.¹⁷⁰ The attitude of the church as an institution was almost wholly negative. Although the suffrage question was one of the major issues of the day, the Edwardian denominational

press scarcely referred to it, even obliquely or in passing. General Assemblies of the main presbyterian denominations did not debate it, although the UF Church did not hesitate to eject the suffragettes who interrupted the fathers and brethren when they discussed women's work in 1914. In the context of his account of this disturbance, Rev G M Reith betrays a mindset which was no doubt shared by many of his contemporaries:

'A minor political trouble was vexing the country at this time - the extraordinary behaviour of certain women who were clamouring for equal privileges with men, as they put it, especially for the parliamentary franchise and the right to sit in the House of Commons...Something like a bitter sex war might have developed if the national peril had not opened another channel for their undisciplined energies, and if post-war sentimentalism had not yielded the claim.' ¹⁷¹

Leneman's research has revealed that efforts were made to have the issue aired in the Assembly Halls. In the autumn of 1913, the Northern Men's Federation for Women's Suffrage (in which the moving force was actually the actress and businesswoman, Maud Arncliffe-Sennett) wrote to every Church of Scotland and UF Church Presbytery, asking them to pass a resolution in favour of women's suffrage, and to overture the Assembly to do likewise. Some local constitutional societies also approached their own presbyteries. In the Established Church, only Glasgow and Irvine expressed sympathy with the cause and agreed to send overtures to the Assembly (although there is nothing in the official records to suggest this was actually done). None of the UF presbyteries was willing to do likewise. Perhaps the motion passed by the Church of Scotland Edinburgh Presbytery exemplified the church's

general equivocation and unwillingness to take a stand on contemporary political questions, in spite of its much vaunted concern over the 'Social Question'. The motion:

'deplored the social and economic evils from which so many women suffered, sympathising with them in their efforts towards amelioration, and expressing no opinion on the question of political enfranchisement.'¹⁷²

And May Grant no doubt spoke for many disenchanted Christian suffragists when she deplored the inaction of Dundee presbytery by recalling that women did most of the work, and raised most of the money for their churches:

'As one who is deeply, passionately attached to the Auld Reformed Kirk o' the realm, and who has served her for ten years at home and for four and a half years abroad, I protest against the attitude of her ministers - an attitude as banal as it is insulting.'¹⁷³

The WSPU, meanwhile, employed a new strategy - in Scotland, as throughout Britain, members interrupted church services to pray for women who had been imprisoned and subjected to forced feeding. This action was surely a fascinating combination of calculated public drama, heartfelt intercession, and a daring direct challenge to the rigidly controlled masculine ethos of public Sabbath worship. On 15 March, just after Mrs Pankhurst had been arrested in Glasgow amid scenes of chaotic violence, some WSPU members approached Dr McAdam Muir, minister of Glasgow Cathedral, and asked him to pray for imprisoned suffragettes. Notwithstanding his membership of the SCLWS, he was willing only to pray for prisoners in general, and during the service, a group of women prayed aloud, 'Oh Lord, save Emmeline Pankhurst, Helen Crawford, and all brave women suffering for their faith.

Amen.¹⁷⁴ After most of these incidents, the women involved were either left alone or went away quietly, but on one occasion women who interrupted a service at St Giles' Cathedral were arrested and found guilty of causing a breach of the peace. The WSPU distributed a pamphlet entitled '*The Appeal to God*' to justify their interventions in worship, and in it, Christabel Pankhurst claimed:

'[Christ] would not question their right to offer up prayers in their own behalf at a time when men are letting great women be done to death. Worldly justice is not as yet given to women, but Divine justice is their's, and if the recognised ministers of religion will not ask it for them, then women will ask it for themselves. The appeal they make is from man (*sic*) to God.'¹⁷⁵

3.'We preach glad tidings of a new gospel to humanity': The ethos of the women's suffrage movement

Many historians of this campaign have noted the deep sense of spiritual yearning which imbued its pronouncements and actions, especially in the years immediately preceding the Great War. I have mentioned in chapter four that the movement was perceived in some ways to be an alternative female religion (see page 304 and footnote 92). Clearly the passion and commitment it aroused, allied to the personalities and organisation especially of the militant wing, gave to many women a deep sense of meaning, purpose and challenge in their lives, and inspired tremendous, courage and solidarity. (In certain instances, it also seemed to evoke some of the less attractive characteristics of religion: blind devotion, personality cults, schisms, and an unwillingness to grapple with complex questions about social

and economic order). The cause also inspired direct attacks on organised religion for its sexism in theology and practice, and for its failure to uphold a righteous struggle for justice.¹⁷⁶ This sustained willingness to confront and upbraid the religious as well as the political establishment was, I believe, one of the significant innovations of the suffrage movement. It was one manifestation of a new willingness to challenge male authority; to assert discontent and anger; to display a self-conscious irreverence. By thus contradicting the stereotypical female attributes of politeness and passivity, many women declared in word and deed their personal autonomy:

'The feminists found in this abandonment of the worship of propriety the great cause of rejoicing. Militancy interpreted itself to them not as the mere expression of an urgent desire for political rights, but as an aggressive proclamation of a deeper right - the right of insurrection..."I disavow your authority. I put aside your cobweb conventions of law and government. I rebel. I claim my inalienable right to cast off servitude. I emancipate myself.'" ¹⁷⁷

But suffrage campaigners, like socialists and members of other progressive movements, employed Christian language, symbol, imagery and drama in support of the cause and of their emancipation. Some did so, having rejected the institutional church, to indicate their belief that they were the authentic keepers of a message which had been betrayed and misrepresented by the churches. As in the *Appeal to God*, women invoked Divine approbation and justification for their beliefs and deeds, and pronounced God's judgement on those who opposed or obstructed them. This may have been partly a matter of tactics and strategy, with suffrage leaders

employing every available weapon in the fight, including the ontological and teleological appeals with which opponents of women's rights had concluded their arguments for centuries. But many activists were evidently committed Christians, and devoted (though often frustrated) church members, and it was a matter of great importance to them that vindication of the cause should ultimately come from the tenets, if not the institutions, of their faith. Much of the movement's literature emphasised that the struggle was not just political, but of deeper significance for humankind. So the character of the 1912 Women's March from Edinburgh to London was described as 'distinctly more religious and spiritual than political'¹⁷⁸

And Lady Ramsay declared at a SCLWS meeting to consider the religious aspect of the movement:

'They [women] are naturally susceptible to religious and spiritual impressions. The Divine call has reached them, bidding them rise and do the work God requires of them, and everywhere they are responding to the call.'¹⁷⁹

This kind of language had strong resonance for women, because the struggle for enfranchisement was - at least in part - the latest, if most acute, development of a notion which was deeply rooted in evangelical protestantism: that of women's special mission. And that notion, I have argued, rested on an assumption which the movement in general did not refute - that men and women had distinctive natures and qualities determined by their biological capacity. Both wings of the movement drew strength from this essentialism, arguing that women were by nature more caring, religious, altruistic and

moral than men, and therefore that their enfranchisement would improve the quality and tone of national political life. This represented a significant evolution of the 'Women's Mission' idea, for it fundamentally challenged the separate spheres which had previously been delineated for men and women. As I have tried to demonstrate, earlier changes in both church and society had shown the elasticity of the concept, but now the basic distinction between domestic and public; the realm of women and of men, was denied. As Holton has argued in *Feminism and Democracy*:

'British feminists insisted on both the necessity of increasing state intervention in areas which had previously been part of women's domestic preserve, and the concomitant need for women's participation in the work of the state. In asserting both, they challenged the notion that domestic and public spheres could be kept apart as separate concerns of women and men.'¹⁸⁰

The radical significance of these insights should not be underestimated. For generations, British society had been plagued with a dualistic patriarchal ideology of marriage and of the political state which, though not in total ascendancy, had served to confine and oppress women. It had helped to facilitate all the worst excesses of *laissez-faire* capitalism, and the social horrors which dislocated and disgraced the nation. It also placed pressures and constraints on men to conform to the requirements of 'true manliness'. To suggest that the domestic sphere might be a model and agency for change, rather than simply a place of retreat, was to take account of the possibility that compassion, relational values and high moral standards of

personal behaviour might be fit precepts upon which to base legislation; that the autonomy of private and political realms was a modern development, rather than an immutable fact. And to believe that women could initiate major changes in both the style and substance of national government was potentially revolutionary. Indeed, many suffragists were committed to a millenarian belief that the old male order was almost played out, and that a Golden Age would be ushered in by 'the expansive power of woman's idealising instinct':¹⁸¹

'There has come one of those great spiritual awakenings that from time to time have carried the human race forward to a higher plane of life. The soul of woman has heard the call of destiny, has awakened and is now standing upright...It bids her to...work out the salvation of generations to come...It is not only political reform we are called to accomplish, but a moral revolution. We preach the glad tidings of a new gospel to humanity.'¹⁸²

For those who saw the vote primarily as the means by which women could fulfil their unique social mission, the campaign was clearly understood in religious, quasi-sacramental terms. Even the down-to-earth Elsie Inglis

'spoke joyfully of the time coming when we, the women of Edinburgh and of Scotland, would help to build the New Jerusalem, with the weapon ready to our hand - the Vote'.¹⁸³

Underlying this perspective was a matriarchal vision of social transformation which could be accomplished by strong, caring, co-operative women. It is likely that it was shaped by, but also in opposition to, the dominant Social Darwinism of the time, which was giving a virulent Machiavellianism a new lease of life. In political and economic life, ruthlessness, aggression and war were justified as irresistible and progressive laws of nature. As one critic

has written:

'War became the symbol, the image, the inducement, and the language of all human doings on the planet. No one who has not waded through some sizeable part of the literature of the period 1879-1914 has any conception of the extent to which it is one long call for blood.'¹⁸⁴

But, as I have suggested in chapter two, another aspect of Social Darwinist thought - utilised especially by theologians such as Henry Drummond - emphasised the evolution of the human race towards co-operation and altruism, and this was the strand which appealed to suffragists. Phrases such as 'spiritual motherhood' came into vogue, urging the importance of developing supposedly innate biological characteristics in the service, not just of one's own family, but of the whole nation and race.¹⁸⁵ But in this symbolism there lurked seeds of danger and sabotage for the movement. Teresa Billington-Greig became disillusioned with it: she shocked her WFL colleagues by leaving in 1911, and widely publicising her reasons for doing so. Some of her comments about motives and tactics were justifiably considered unfair by those she abandoned. Nevertheless, there is much perceptive analysis in *The Militant Suffrage Movement*, which she wrote that year:

'The claim that women will purify politics...is often based merely upon the old sickly sentiment which has survived from the days when men in search of self-approval promulgated the angel-idiot theory. There are suffragists who claim that women have a higher moral nature, and who will accept any statement, however extreme, based upon that assumption.'¹⁸⁶

TBG gave ample evidence to indicate that caution should be exercised by any who believed that 'The Women's Age' would actually transform the human faults and failings of political

life, and criticised the potential conservatism of basing arguments on the premise of the existing domestic model:

'The customary line of argument is that politics needs the purification that women alone can bring and the home is quoted as an exemplar of what ought to be in the political world. This dragging in of the home is often a platform trick employed to awaken sentimentality in the audience, but it is as often a proof of the crude and limited rebellion that has been kindled by suffragette methods. The home of today is commonly far from perfect. From its evil traditions of women's subjection and inferiority come some of the worst of our social and economic evils. The suffragette who is content with the home as it is...is not a true rebel but the victim of superficial emotion. Any woman who is really a rebel longs to destroy the conventions which bind her in the home as much as those which bind her in the State.¹⁸⁷

Of course there were many Scottish suffragists on both wings who were well aware of injustice and cruelty in the home, and who actively campaigned against such abominations as domestic violence. One effective debating tool of the movement was to highlight the hypocrisy of men who proposed chivalry rather than equality as the basis for gender relations, but failed to protect those women who endured exploitation and abuse as wives, prostitutes or in sweated labour. But TBG's general point was well made: without a critique of the patriarchal organisation and inequity of both public and private spheres, the 'special mission' of women would pose no real threat to upholders of the established order. Highlighting widespread individual examples of abuse was important, but what was really required was an awareness of the structural conditions under which such relationships were the logical outcome rather than regrettable deviations.

While reactionaries were railing against 'the unholy sisterhood', some of the men who belonged to presbyterianism's 'progressive' wing were extolling the potential virtues of enfranchised women based firmly on the moral and religious sensibilities of their distinctive nature. So the social reform UP minister A Scott Matheson wrote:

'Woman has not turned out such a dangerous creature in any of the other provinces of her emancipation that we should be afraid to extend her electoral privileges, or even allow her to sit as a member of Parliament...The State is an aggregate of families, and the qualities for government of the home might fit her for the larger service of the State...It will not turn woman into an abortive man, but give her an opportunity to purify, soften and refine the asperities of party warfare. Especially in Social Questions, which are coming to the front as the chief political factors of the future, woman's influence will tell most happily...By this enlargement of her sphere, a conservative influence would be brought to bear upon the most important question of all - the future of religion in our land...We cannot doubt that if admitted to the councils of the nation, the cause of pure and undefiled religion would be exalted to a safer and more eminent place in the land. ¹⁸⁸

This, of course, was one of the arguments used by socialists to oppose the movement's aim of suffrage parity with men. As William Stewart, unsuccessful Labour candidate in Glasgow Dalrnock, complained after the 1904 municipal elections:

'In reality we did win on the men's vote. There are 1200 women voters, mostly controlled by the churches and the most of them voted against Labour.'¹⁸⁹

The Labour Movement, it has to be said, was (with some notable exceptions) lukewarm in its support of universal suffrage, and did little to demonstrate any practical commitment to real sexual equality. In truth, it too was in thrall to the patriarchal assumption that the role of women

was domestic and auxiliary, and female socialists who opposed the limited goal of the suffrage movement in order to wait for the revolution to usher in a new age of female liberation, must have done so more in hope than expectation.

The major problem with the essentialist arguments for female suffrage was that they were based on the same assumption as those of their opponents. Bolstered by religious, scientific and medical dogmas, the anti-suffragists maintained that the highest evolution of the species depended on increasing differentiation and specialisation, and that women were physiologically unsuited to the demands of politics and statecraft. As long as individual women were subsumed under the abstract (and quasi-religious) category of 'Woman', it was (as Mill had pointed out) very difficult for them to be considered simply as human beings, without all the ideological baggage of conjecture about what 'Woman' could or should do. That baggage made it very difficult for a significant proportion of the population to think of women as uniquely striving and thinking individuals, rather than in terms of a generic symbol fulfilled in physical or spiritual motherhood.

Of course there was a strong element within the agitation for enfranchisement which appealed to gender-neutral individual privileges as the basis for political freedom - whether those derived from the natural rights of social contract liberalism, or from the Christian idea that each soul is

equal before God. Louisa Lumsden claimed:

'The root idea of Christianity is the value of the individual, and it regards women as full individuals, setting before them equally with men, its high and stern vocation and its glorious hope.'¹⁹⁰

But Chrystal MacMillan, who later practised as a lawyer, recognised 'the yawning gap between "women" and "all human beings" [which] continued to thwart this defiant liberalism'.¹⁹¹ As the main advocate for the Scottish Women Graduates, she argued in 1909:

'The House of Commons presumes to legislate for the people without having asked the consent of half the people...Women are only considered of value in so far as they promote the interests of men...This fallacy of assuming that woman is of no value in herself is the assumed major premise of much writing, legislation and judicial decisions...[In the Scottish Graduates Case] 'women' are not 'persons'. Here again we have the purely arbitrary setting aside of the obvious interpretation of the law. The interpretation of the House of Lords when applied to the statutes in question produces contradictions and absurdities.'¹⁹²

The problem for the suffrage movement was that these contradictions and absurdities shadowed every effort to understand, explain and promote the importance of enfranchisement. Women were caught in a double bind: in order to escape from the restrictions imposed upon them because of 'woman's special nature', they extolled the political and national benefits of that very nature. Attempts to shift the terms of the debate onto the social construction of 'male' and 'female', and the recognition of basic human rights were rebuffed in law, and compromised in public opinion by the pervasive power of the separate spheres doctrine. For all the developments and adaptations in that doctrine, and its effects on women's lives, the basic question for those who held

political power in 1909 was the same as for the Free Church ecclesiastical authorities in 1843 – were women really people? But the intervening years had made the question seem even more absurd, for 19th century political reform had shifted the emphasis from the family as basic social unit, to that of the individual citizen, who had intrinsic, rather than representative political rights. Whereas in 1843 it was still acceptable to argue, as many in the Free Church did, that male heads of households could vote on behalf of their families, this was intellectually anachronistic by 1909. As Susan Moller Okin writes:

'Behind the individualist rhetoric, it is clear that the family, and not the adult human individual, is the basic political unit of liberal as of non-liberal philosophers. In spite of the supposedly individualist premises of the liberal tradition, John Stuart Mill was the first of its members to assert that the interests of women were by no means automatically upheld by the male heads of families to which they belonged. That these proposals should have appeared so dangerously radical in the climate of late 19th and early 20th century opinion is ample testimony to the limitations of previous liberal individualism.'¹⁹³

In discussing the ethos of the suffrage movement, I hope at least to have shown that it was complex and many faceted, but strongly shaped and influenced by the protestant female culture which had developed throughout the Victorian era. That culture endowed the movement with many positive resources, including a powerful sense of solidarity and commitment; of hope and expectation. These were often expressed in language, imagery and ritual which were redolent of the Christian tradition. Suffragists also found strength and courage in what they regarded as the divine affirmation

of human equality, confirmed by Jesus' actions and relationships as recorded in the gospels. This encouraged them to appeal to a higher court of divine support and justice in the face of institutional obstruction - one of the fundamental and potentially revolutionary rights asserted by the reformation tradition. But at the height of suffrage agitation, the Scottish emphasis was less on female political rights as ends in themselves, and much more on their importance as a means to achieve social change. Although by no means all churchwomen believed they should have the vote, this position was a logical extension of 'women's mission', because it was based on the premise that female moral agency required the expansion of their familial responsibility to promote human happiness and welfare. In this way, I believe, the Movement (and women's philanthropic work in general) made an important contribution to a change in British political culture, from the practice of a restricted citizenship based on rational self-interest, to a much richer and more complex view of collective responsibility and social welfare.

But there were also drawbacks in the appropriation of religious heritage. The suffragists' interpretation of scriptural sources which supported respect and equality was far from being universally accepted, though it was shared by some ministers. It was counteracted by the weight of church tradition and literal biblicism, including the pronouncements of Calvinism's founding fathers against the public rule or role of women.¹⁹⁴ Much of the movement (militant as well as

constitutional) was too concerned with the need to appear respectable, womanly, not neglectful of the domestic sphere to tackle either the religious or the philosophical commitment to, and adulation of, the patriarchal marriage and family. However, a look at some of the virulent anti-suffrage propaganda, which depicted suffragettes as negligent mothers and their husbands as pathetic hen-pecked creatures, indicates that such a critique would have been tactical insanity.

It is possible also to discern, in some of the extreme actions of the militants, some traces of a legacy which has been much criticised by recent feminist theologians: that Christian women have for centuries been socialised to accept self-immolation as the appropriate mode of female religious behaviour. One hesitates to demean the bravery of militants who were imprisoned and tortured, but their actions were perhaps an uneasy combination of new virtue -self-assertion, and that old vice. In spite of the harshness of her denunciation, there is still something that rings true in these words of Billington-Greig:

'They did not seek for true cases of victimisation caused by the conditions of which we complained, but set out to create an arbitrary supply of artificial victims...Nothing but the enthusiasm of the few has been proved by self-sacrifice, and that has come to be looked on as an emotional craze...The movement is still separated from the real life of the women of the nation.'¹⁹⁵

In one sense the militants chose to subvert the old image of woman-as-victim by deliberately choosing martyrdom as an expression of their self-determination; but possibly, as TBG

implies, that image deflected the public mind away from the real injustices suffered daily by women through poverty, violence and structural prejudice.

Whatever the complexities of the suffrage movement, it is apparent that its supporters valued the support of clergy and other church members, but perceived the institutional church in Scotland (as in England) to be either implacably opposed to their cause, or unwilling to commit itself to any constructive advocacy of it. And Scottish women, in or out of the church, were no longer willing to remain silent. Some were forthright in their condemnation of the church and all its doctrines. Others tried to galvanise it into supportive action, or reflected, more in sorrow than in anger, on lost opportunities:

'The truth is that much as our movement would benefit by the co-operation of the Church, the advantage to the Church itself would be even greater. Its current decadence...is due entirely to the fact that it has become divorced from the great social problems of the day.'¹⁹⁶

In a country where patriarchal presbyterianism had been such a dominant cultural force - especially among women of the class from which so many suffrage activists were drawn - this public willingness to denounce its failings was a major psychological and social innovation. This was, perhaps especially true for women who did not wish to apostasise, but who felt able to criticise the church while remaining committed to the practice of their faith. It denoted an abandonment of that male (and clerical) approval which women had for so long been taught to regard as their aim in life,

and a commitment to personal autonomy which was both the way and the goal for female emancipation. The writer Rebecca West was involved with the suffragettes as an adolescent in Edinburgh. The following extract from her novel, *The Judge* eloquently expresses the irreverent spirit which (along with its effective deployment of drama, ritual, symbol and advertisement) must have been one of the most refreshing contributions made by the suffrage movement to disrupting the stifling conformity of pre-war presbyterian culture. In this passage, the seventeen year old heroine Ellen Melville is selling *Votes for Women* on Princes Street:

'She caught sight of a minister standing a yard or two away and giggling 'Tee hee' at her. It was too much. She darted down on him. "Are you not Mr Hunter of the Middleton Place United Free Church?" she asked, making her voice sound soft and cuddly. He wiped the facetiousness from his face and assented with a polite bob. Perhaps she was the daughter of an elder. Quite nice people were taking up this nonsense. "I heard you preach last Sunday" she said, glowing with interest. He began to look coy. Then her voice changed to something colder than the wind. "The most lamentable sairmon I ever listened to. Neither lairning nor inspiration. And a *read* sairmon too!"'¹⁹⁷

6. The Aftermath

With the outbreak of war in 1914, Scottish suffrage activists graphically demonstrated that the oft assumed and argued homogeneity of 'women' as inhabitants of a separate culture and sphere was a myth. Women were ranged along the spectrum of responses to the conflict: from the pro-war fervour of Helen Fraser and Lady Frances Balfour, through the determined and remarkable service of Scottish Women's Hospitals, initiated by Elsie Inglis, to the active peace campaigning of Chrystal MacMillan (who was one of the key players in the

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom) and Helen Crawford (who co-ordinated the rent strikes and mounted the Women's Peace Crusade in Glasgow, as well as being involved in the international peace and socialist movements).

Personal response cut across organisational lines and required realignments. The WSPU, under Pankhurst influence, ceased activity in favour of an incredible outburst of militaristic chauvinism; the NUWSS diverted energies into all kinds of practical caring and voluntary agencies; the WFL maintained pressure on the government for the vote as well as on other women's issues. As the war progressed, it seemed as if the anti-suffragists were having the rug pulled from under them as women workers demonstrated their competence in an ever-increasing range of paid and *ex-officio* occupations which had previously been the jealously guarded preserve of men. Elsie Inglis was surely entitled to her cynicism in June 1917:

'So the vote has come! and for our work. Fancy its having taken the war to show them how ready we were to work! Where do they think the world would have been without women workers all these ages?'¹⁹⁸

It certainly took the war to alert presbyterian churches to the changing position of women in society - mainly because of the threat which they perceived to their ertswile supply of unpaid and underpaid female labour. As the war ended and the new era of female enfranchisement dawned, the fathers and brethren benevolently welcomed the six million new voters: not in belated acknowledgment of a just cause, but because they continued to subscribe to the essentialist argument that

'the female vote' would support the conservative values espoused by the churches.¹⁹⁹ Churchwomen, meanwhile, were seeking to inspire their sisters (and brothers) with a new vision of citizenship. One Edinburgh woman called on the church to organise and utilise the 'great latent power' of womanhood, by teaching those newly enfranchised 'how to use their citizenship to accomplish the highest spiritual aims'.²⁰⁰ She probably belonged to the Women's Council of St George's UF Church, which successfully petitioned the General Assembly to authorise the Home Mission Committee:

'To employ one or more temporary woman agents for the purpose of presenting the higher aspects of their electoral duty before the women electors of the Church and country'.²⁰¹

I have not been able to ascertain what action, if any, the Home Mission Committee took, but there is no evidence that women who were enfranchised under the limited terms of the 1918 Act demonstrated any of the strong gender-based sectionalism so vaunted and feared by different camps in the pre-war years. Only in the interesting but hardly typical 1922 and 1929 return of Edwin Scrymgeour as Dundee's Prohibitionist MP was the female vote apparently decisive. And the general impact of women on the political scene, both numerically and in terms of issues, must be judged (then as now) to be marginal. Eunice Murray was the only Scottish female candidate in the 1918 election. Standing as an Independent in Bridgeton, Glasgow, she polled 900 votes. The Pankhursts' Women's Party folded after 1922, and the first woman MP in Scotland was the anti-suffrage Marchioness of Tullibardine, who took over her husband's seat for the

Conservatives in 1923. Catriona Burness's article in the *Out of Bounds* collection: 'Scottish Women MPs 1918-45', describes the initial enthusiasm within all parties for recruiting women voters, but their ambivalence in encouraging equality of opportunity, and their unwillingness to adopt policy suggestions from their female members into manifestos.²⁰²

In the previous chapter I have described the churches' internal response to the new demands and circumstances of women. During the same period, presbyterian ministers assumed a prominent role as spokesmen for the patriarchal family in other areas of life. By the 20th century, the teaching profession had come to be regarded as that for which academically able girls of aspiring working-class and middle class origins were eminently and naturally suited, and thousands had taken up teaching posts. But their usefulness in the post-1872 era of State-provided school education did not negate the public attitude that marriage, home and family were the essential business of life for women, overriding all other activities. In 1915, a Church of Scotland minister on Glasgow School Board requested details of married female teachers, and proposed that a 'resign on marriage' clause be included in each contract from September 1915. He also managed to persuade the Board to introduce a means test on married women already employed, whereby those whose husbands could not support them, through ill-health or desertion, were employed only on temporary contracts. Dundee followed suit, but within seven months, the Scottish Education Department

urged the re-employment of married women for the duration of the war.

However, the attack on employed married women resumed with a vengeance after the war. In general, women were exhorted to return to the home and give jobs back to men, and childcare facilities were removed. The church used every opportunity to promote an exalted view of marriage and motherhood as the true vocation of women - especially for those of certain classes. The predominant presbyterian church attitude is well expressed in the Report of the Church of Scotland's Commission on the War, entitled *Social Evils and Problems* (1919). It reaffirmed the traditional understanding of the family, and warned of 'a company of sinister forces' which were attempting to 'weaken or destroy the all-important institution of the home'. In the chapter entitled 'Decline of Discipline', Rev W S Bruce cited the growth of the democratic spirit, socialism and higher criticism as causes of the perceived decline, and was nostalgic for that pre-feminist era when the man ruled supreme:

'Even fifty years ago one remembers but few families where the father did not govern with authority...The War has sucked into its vortex many husbands and fathers, and has deprived homes of their proper guardians...It is difficult to explain the recent increases in juvenile delinquency and hooliganism, and alleged drinking of wives and young women, apart from the patent absence of the head of the house.'²⁰³

Rev Norman MacLean expressed concern about the falling birthrate in Scotland:

'It is the elements in the race that are the best and healthiest which are ceasing to multiply, while the unfit hand down in proportionately far greater degree, and heredity morally and physically diseased. The future of the race, forecasted in the light of these facts, is ominous.'²⁰⁴

MacLean then gives some statistics of baptisms in working class, lower middle class, and 'the best residential' congregations:

'For the Church these statistics are startling. They show that the congregations on whom the work of the Church largely depends for financial support are destined to steadily diminish. Diminishing baptisms means diminishing Sunday schools and fewer Catechumens and slowly emptying pews. The materials out of which the Church was built and by which it maintained itself are in many places crumbling away. The Church is faced with no grimmer fact than that of the rapidly decreasing birthrate.'²⁰⁵

These comments reveal the extent to which the eugenics movement was infiltrating public attitudes, with its 'scientific' claims of the links between inherited inferiority and moral degeneracy. Women who belonged to the 'superior' classes were castigated for their selfishness if they wanted to enjoy the benefits of paid employment and birth control. Maclean's suggested remedies for this 'disease of the soul' are predictable: that the Church should teach the sacredness of marriage and the sanctity of the family. Other articles in the Report berate the intellectual development of girls, when they should be trained 'for their predestined sphere as wives and mothers'.²⁰⁶

The post-war atmosphere was full of this kind of talk - of duty to the home, to the country, to the Empire, and above all to God and the church. Churchwomen who spoke with hope about their citizenship were at the same time under intense pressure (especially if they belonged to the 'superior' classes) to give precedence to their womanly duties to replenish the religious and racial stock, over self-centred greed and ambition. In this context, ministers on School

Boards across Scotland, from 1922, lobbied successfully for the introduction of a marriage bar on teachers.²⁰⁷

The return of women to the domestic sphere was a crucial element in the conservatism of Church and society in the post-war years. Of course for some women there was no going back to a mythical past, and they enjoyed a significantly extended public life. But although the WFL and new Women's Citizens Associations continued to campaign on issues of concern to women, their agenda was largely set by the old assumptions about female duties and responsibilities. They concentrated on seeking amelioration of the appalling conditions under which so many women performed their domestic responsibilities, and focused especially on child welfare. Seeking 'such reforms as are necessary to secure a real equality of liberties, status and opportunities'²⁰⁸ receded in the face of the pressing needs of so many women. With enfranchisement, the focus and impetus of the Women's Movement was dissipated. Hopes of a Golden Age did not last long, under the weight of male protectionism, conservatism, and class divisions. After the 'War to end all wars', feminism was rapidly and roundly condemned as being petty and divisive in the face of a national crisis which was to be dealt with, as I have indicated, by devotion to old certainties and duties. In the end, despite their 'special mission', women wanted and used their vote for different things, and those who really believed in change found that in any case it was a desperately inadequate weapon for tackling the immense social, economic and health difficulties of the

time. Although further research is required, my impression is that there were substantial numbers of churchwomen who had their consciousness raised and their consciences challenged through involvement in political and social issues. They channelled their post-war energy increasingly into specific social agencies which were, on the whole, neither religious nor political, and so the collective power of their experience was not widely shared or exercised within traditional church, political or feminist institutions. However, enfranchisement was a necessary, if not sufficient condition for liberation, and the movement was right to make it a priority. If there was a subsequent fragmentation of solidarity and loss of feminist consciousness, perhaps it should be understood, not so much as a failure of female imagination or engagement, but as a reflection of the adaptable tenacity of institutional male supremacy.

7. Conclusion

By 1930, the world inhabited by Scottish women was considerably different from that of their foremothers in 1830. Many more had received education and were able to pursue careers - or at least to find employment outside the home. It was possible for them to graduate from universities, and at least some of the ancient professions were open to women. There were no legal restrictions on their participation in the political arena - at local or national levels. They had more substantial property and family rights, and no doubt for many, the quality of personal and domestic life had improved because of changes in drinking habits, and awareness of birth control. However, the benefits of these changes were not spread equally among the female population of the country. In practice, it was the women of the ruling upper and middle classes whose life choices differed most significantly from those of their grandmothers. In 1917, Frances Stoddard Murray, whom we met at the beginning of this chapter, reflected on her long life:

'In my young days the aim of a mother was to make her daughter pretty and attractive and sufficiently accomplished to let her marry well. Few other careers presented themselves to women. The Victorian era burst through this bondage...and everywhere women are distinguishing themselves.'²⁰⁹

Frances, born in 1843, was the daughter of a Glasgow businessman, and married a lawyer. She had been educated at home and 'finished' at a ladies boarding school. As an intelligent and restless young woman, she found it difficult

to accept an aimless life in her parents' home. She got involved in church and community activities, but above all she made every effort to develop her mental and physical faculties. In 1877 she attended lectures organised by the Glasgow Association for the Higher Education of Women - English Literature, Astronomy and Maths. She was a friend of Janet Galloway, and supported the establishment of Queen Margaret College. Her three daughters attended St Leonard's School for Girls, One went to Girton College. They were all involved in the struggle for women's rights - especially Eunice Murray of the Women's Freedom League. For Frances, the latent potential she had striven to develop in herself sprang to life in her daughters, for whom she was able to purchase and nurture the best available opportunities.

For others, the struggle for survival continued to be the main determining factor in their experience of life. Also in 1917, Mary Coull, the daughter of a Peterhead fisherman and a domestic servant, left school:

'When I was fourteen I had qualifications for the Academy, but they had 21 shillings to pay for books, and couldn't afford it. But I got a merit certificate and 'Very Good' in every subject - that would have taken me into a good job. When I left school I worked in the house...I was a servant. I was disappointed. I would have liked to go to school for more, just general learning. What I got was "Hing in noo Mary, grow up a big quinie and be a servant to your mother", so that was my ambition...There was always plenty to do at home, because we were learning to be housewives.'²¹⁰

For Mary, the change which had most affected her was enforced attendance at elementary school. She had glimpsed what might have been possible, but the realities of class and gender denied her the right to individual achievement and

independence. Her life choices, in spite of a century of campaigns, were as limited as her mother's.

The new opportunities were largely won as a result of struggles which women had engaged in with hope, perseverance and fortitude. In the process, a Women's Movement emerged and developed, which inspired confidence and self-awareness, and demonstrated the pleasure and value of collective action. One of the strengths of the Movement was that it encouraged and enabled so many women to assess and assert their identity as autonomous human beings whose economic, social and spiritual existence did not depend wholly upon their relationship with men. I referred at the beginning of this chapter to Richard Evans' statement that Protestantism was almost a necessary precondition for the emergence of 19th century feminism. Certainly, in the Scottish context it is possible to identify several factors which contributed to both the strengths and the limitations of the Movement. The theological belief that each individual was directly accountable to God for his or her actions and salvation encouraged a general attitude of seriousness and responsibility. The importance of literacy and intellectual formation, though far from being desired or fulfilled by or among all Scotswomen, at least set the tone for the aspiration, effort and achievement of significant numbers of women throughout the period in question. The presbyterian churches were historically committed to the general principle of 'reformed and always reforming'. So the desirability of

major change in the past, and the possibility of continuing change in the present and future was theoretically respectable. This was clearly a major difference from those who belonged to the Catholic tradition. The turbulent and schismatic history of the reformed church in Scotland must surely have affected, consciously or otherwise, the attitude of those whose enthusiasm for the church was matched by their passion for change in the situation of women. And in spite of the inadequacies of institutional presbyterianism, it offered an organisational model which was unlike the blatantly hierarchical ecclesiology of Catholicism or Anglicanism. A number of female activists certainly made reference to the more democratic traditions of the Scottish church in their appeals for equal rights. Although they had virtually no access to positions within church courts, the church women's organisations did give equivalent practical and business experience to many. Those whose self-definition was strongly flavoured by their protestantism were inclined to attack the Roman Catholic Church for its 'degrading conception of women', which was unfavourably compared with their elevated status within protestant churches.²¹¹

Certainly the papacy of the era extolled, as part of a general conservatism, the traditional female roles and images, and women who rejected them often had to break entirely with the Church, which remained committed as a matter of dogma to the theological tradition, rooted in Aristotle and refined by Aquinas, of congenital female inferiority.

In addition to these factors which gave a Scottish flavour to the Women's Movement, there was also the ideology to which I have referred throughout this thesis as one of the defining principles of social and political life. Separate spheres increasingly led to the development of a bourgeois female world with distinctive outlook and culture, centred on the domestic sphere. But the evangelical notion that women had a special mission, so characteristic of the English-speaking protestant countries, encouraged an outward focus, a solidarity and a willingness to take organised action. It also helped foster a belief in the desirability, as well as the possibility of change – even of perfectibility. This was especially true for those who experienced the contradictions between spiritual equality and female submission most acutely. It would not do to overestimate the extent of this response; for many presbyterian women, (and for all sorts of reasons) the physical and emotional space of domesticity was completely absorbing, if not as satisfying as it was made out to be. So Protestantism in itself is not a sufficient explanation of the emergence of a feminist consciousness and movement. Anderson and Zinsser write, in their history of European women:

'Protestantism, while no more favourable to women in its ideology or institutions, created an atmosphere more conducive to feminism...[But] in every Protestant nation...feminist claims met with massive opposition, and women had to organise themselves to fight for their rights.'²¹²

The distinctive features of Protestantism also help to

explain the extent to which the rebellion of women against the ordinances of society was circumscribed. For the matrix of religious, social and economic factors which encouraged the development of the 'female sphere' also gave rise to a class-ridden capitalist society in which the basic division between women of different classes was between those whose men were able (by virtue of wealth and status) to secure their essentially domestic and moral role, and those who had to sell their services in the economic marketplace. A feminism rooted in evangelical essentialism and liberal humanism was inadequate to the task of constructing realistic cross-class alliances and demands. There *were* some women whose vision of transformation was rooted in an appreciation of the inequalities of experience and opportunity between women of different circumstances, as well as between women and men. But the Movement in general was constrained by an ideology which was inextricably tied up with the cultural and economic *status quo*, and it had inadequate resources to comprehend or withstand the class conflict and conservative reaction of post-war Britain. By seeking to domesticate the public sphere, or to enter that realm as isolated and autonomous beings, the reformist Women's Movement left the pervasive patriarchal structures of home, church and state largely unchallenged.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

'The farther away the Church gets from the ideal that in Christ there is neither male nor female, and that there is a glorious liberty granted to the children of God, the less living will its hold be on the Christianity of the world.'¹

At the beginning of this thesis, I suggested that Scottish women throughout the period 1830-1930 should not be characterised simply as victims of, nor as absentees from, the complex experiences and processes of change which constitute the nation's history. Rather, I proposed, they had the capacity to respond critically to their situation, and to change it in various far reaching and sometimes contradictory ways. The main task of the thesis has been to demonstrate some of the ways in which women exerted their moral agency, and to discuss evidence for this activity in the context of the presbyterian institutions and ideologies which were dominant cultural forces throughout the period. I also stated my intention to assess the significance of presbyterianism as a source of oppression or liberation in the lives of Scottish women, and that shall be my concluding task.

In posing that question, and in those terms, my starting point (as I have confessed) is personal experience as a Scottish woman in the presbyterian tradition, and political commitment to the freedom, equality and empowerment of women in all aspects of human life. That is the interpretative key I have used throughout the process of

historical investigation. The language of liberation is central to late twentieth century discourses and movements in feminism and theology, and I admit to being a child of my time!

But it is fair to ask whether such vocabulary is appropriate in assessing the lives of women who, by and large, would not themselves have used its terms to evaluate their experiences and aspirations, and therefore some definition of terms is in order. As a way into this I shall consider briefly two positions which seem to be quite clear about the effects of the Christian religion on the lives of women, and on their position as agents of history.

1. Throughout the thesis I have discussed the related notions of 'True Womanhood' and separate spheres. These were not immutable, natural truths, although they were typically described as such, but were subject to considerable development and contestation. However, most of their advocates would have agreed that Christianity - and in particular western Anglo-Saxon Protestant Christianity - was responsible for the elevation and emancipation of 'Woman' from heathen degradation and brutality. This is certainly the oft-repeated theme of most prescriptive writing about the appropriate roles and responsibilities of 'Woman'. Those few women who had the temerity to cast public doubt on the benefits of religion were condemned out of hand on both sides of the

Atlantic, for they presaged

'the destruction of the domestic constitution, the prostration of all decency and order, the reign of wild anarchy and shameless vice.'²

Writers like Rev Hubbard Winslow believed not only that in social terms their civilisation had reached its apotheosis in the recognition and elevation of women, but that, more importantly, the real issue was about eternal salvation - and that was available to women, and people of every rank and station, who had faith and lived according to the precepts of the church.

According to this position, the liberation of women was a function of their obedience, within a 'Christian civilisation' to the tenets of Christian religion, and as I have pointed out in chapter 3, this was the burden of 'women's work for women' in the foreign mission fields.

If this was an unproblematic assertion, then it would be pointless for me to pose my own question. However, I hope that I have demonstrated some of its inadequacies, as well as its merits, in discussing the situations and struggles of women within the domestic, ecclesiastical, educational and political structures of the times.

Writing in 1953, from a different religious milieu, Simone de Beauvoir identified the dangers when religion creates the delusion of a liberation already attained:

'Woman is asked in the name of God not so much to accept her inferiority as to believe that, thanks to him, she is the equal of the lordly male: even the temptation to revolt is suppressed by the claim that justice is overcome. Woman is no longer denied transcendence, since she is to consecrate her immanence to God; the worth of souls is to be weighed only in heaven, and not according to their accomplishments on earth.'¹³

As so many Scottish women discovered, equality and natural justice for their gender were equated with a socially subordinate and strictly circumscribed sphere, and their heavenly value, they were told, depended upon self-denial of wider personal ambition. Writing in the *Christian Journal* of 1853, one woman was happy to accept these limitations:

'When I hear females, as I sometimes do, deprecating the contractedness of domestic life, and eagerly panting after the employments and publicity of philosophers, statesmen and legislators, I am led to think that my life, in the little sphere of my family, must be more varied than their's...If mere human applause [is sought], the female part would have but little opportunity to shine; and might justly complain of the narrowness of her sphere. But when it is considered that quality of actions is determined by God...how is the case altered? The woman, therefore, who complains of the obscurity of her condition, feels and talks like a heathen. She virtually professes to value the praise of men before the praise of God, and is likely, by impiety and folly, to forfeit both...The natural effect of public applause is to produce self-ignorance and deception, for the standard of morals is extremely low and defective in the world...O, that in humility of mind, I may ever prefer that condition which leads me to the most intimate knowledge of self, and rejoice to become nothing.'¹⁴

However, there were many other Scotswomen throughout the period 1830 - 1930 who (consciously or otherwise) could not assent to this paradoxical definition of self-realisation, and its apparent denial of constructive participation in the public historical process, in return for heavenly favour.

2. Mary Daly, a contemporary post-Christian feminist, believes that language, as interpretation and legitimisation, is central in the social construction of reality. She argues that the androcentric language system of the Christian tradition is not accidental, but has served to maintain and justify the patriarchal order. In so doing, it has erased women from history and consciousness. Daly believes that feminists must name and so create their own world. She is not interested in restoring women to history or in reconceptualising history as *human*. Women, she maintains, are non-beings in patriarchal culture and have been eradicated from its discourse. For Daly, only women who make an existential leap into a new 'sacred feminist space' can be historical subjects, for they

'constitute an ontological locus of history...in this very process women are the bearers of history.'¹⁵

According to this definition of liberation, the patriarchal Christian tradition is irredeemably oppressive, and women who live, or have lived, in this territory of 'non-being' are excluded from participation in history.

This definition of liberation implies that women must completely disown all expressions of patriarchal culture and history. It denies the experiences and struggles of women who, in spite of their absence or misrepresentation in the records, nevertheless were

really present - and not just as victims - in that history. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese warns that feminists should not

'jettison all claims to the product and record of so many centuries of collective life. To the extent that men have spoken they have done so on the basis of the privileged access to history and rule, not on the basis of intrinsic personal and sexual merit. Their social representation and social institutions belong however to *our* collective past. The lords of creation do not exist independently of those they oppress.'¹⁶

I repudiate both the uncritical and unqualified assertion that the Christian religion emancipated women, and the argument that it has done nothing but turn them into non-beings with no history. Neither of these positions does justice to the paradoxical complexities of individual and collective experience. In order to undertake a fair assessment of the relationship between women and presbyterianism, a more expansive and rooted definition of liberation is required. The work of feminist theologians such as Letty Russell, Rosemary Radford Reuther and Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza suggests several features which might be included in such a definition. Liberation includes the quest for independence, power and freedom -not understood solely in individualist but also socio-political and spiritual terms. It is rooted in the discernment of sin and oppression, which is understood as whatever denies, constrains, or destroys the space and potential to be fully human. There are two crucial elements in this - liberation is not just a goal, but a dynamic process which affirms the possibility of personal and social transformation; and that

process, by demonstrating the exercise of agency, humanises those who struggle to transcend the givenness, the objectivity, the 'non-being' state of their existence.⁷ William Storrar, who proposes a 'warm claes' liberation theology for the Scottish nation, describes the starting point for contextual theologies of liberation as being 'the oppression of the non-person whom Christ liberates into history and humanity', and includes women amongst those who been relegated to that status by the historical models of church and state.⁸ My present purpose, of course, is not to develop a feminist theology of liberation, but to describe in general terms an understanding which resonates with my own experience and which helps me to interpret the mass of material I have encountered, and I find these suggestions helpful. My definition is not all-inclusive, and I don't want to apply it dogmatically to pass inappropriate judgement on the lifestyles, beliefs and choices of women in Scotland's past. But it offers a framework for a critical analysis of the Scottish presbyterian church's function as the established religion of the dominant social order, and for consideration of resources within their religious tradition which were usable by, and supportive of, women seeking autonomy and justice. It will also help to explain why social class was a key (though never absolute) factor in determining the extent to which liberty and self-assertion would be possible for individuals and groups.

In truth, I have already engaged with the question whether institutional presbyterianism has contributed to oppression or liberation in each of the preceding chapters. I have argued that it performed a crucial ideological and practical function in developing a patriarchal system of rule in family and state. As Scottish Calvinism accommodated the evangelical revival, it (in common with other parts of the English-speaking world) became increasingly enthusiastic about 'woman's mission'. This encouraged expanding opportunities for female service, but the church felt threatened by requests for real responsibility and status. Although the presbyterian ethos was concerned to promote literacy, the fundamental reason for such female education as was provided was so that girls and women might read and obey scriptures which seemed to confirm their subordinate status in creation, and their culpability for human sinfulness. Its main purpose was not to develop independent thought and action: many individual parents, teachers and ministers did value and promote such benefits, and some of the girls and women encountered in these pages found their education (or even frustration at its inadequacies) a source of challenge and liberation. But for many more, especially from working class backgrounds, the effect was to cramp and confine both potential and expectations. The presbyterian denominations did not lead, and rarely supported (notwithstanding committed individuals), campaigns for women's rights, but were powerful protagonists of a religious and domestic

ideology which, throughout the period, presented the suppression of personal ambition and growth, in favour of service to husband, family, church and God as the approved Christian state of existence for women.

However, in these chapters I have mainly been concerned with presbyterianism in its socio-cultural role, as creating, adapting or resisting the conditions within which Scottish women had to act. As such, I have suggested, it was not uniformly or simply an instrument of domination and reaction, but provided some fertile ground for seeds of change – personal, spiritual, social and political – to take root. I have said much in passing about the scriptural, doctrinal and structural elements which, in symbiotic and ever-changing relationship with the socio-political context, give presbyterianism its identity. But now I want to look at these elements more systematically, to aid a fuller understanding of its potential as liability and resource for women seeking humanisation. In reality it is not always possible to separate the negative and positive manifestations of the presbyterian ethos, but for the sake of clarity I shall consider first those features which have tended to act in an oppressive way, and then those which have affirmed and enabled the liberation of women.

'Denied the capacity to become': oppressive establishment church and theology

'During the Christian ages, the church has not alone shown cruelty and contempt for women, but it has exhibited an impious and insolent disregard of her most common rights of humanity. It has robbed her of her responsibility, putting man in place of God. It has forbidden her the offices of the church...It has denied her independent thought, declaring her a secondary creation for man's use...It has anathematized her sex, teaching her to feel shame for the very fact of her being.'⁹

Throughout the one hundred year period between 1830-1930, and despite schism, reunification and the social reform movement of c1880-1920, Scottish presbyterianism functioned as the established religion - the sacred ideology of the dominant social order. It was not a sect or community on the margins of Scottish life, but a belief system (embodied in several distinct institutions) which either had a privileged situation and relationship with the political state, as the legally established church; or made claim to such a relationship; or maintained a voluntary position, but was still closely related to the Scottish political world. The self-conscious perception of the institutional church (in its different and changing guises) was as a central player in the national ethos and destiny. William Storrar has written that

'The establishment theology of Scottish nationhood was grounded in the dominant reformation model of Church and Nation, when the former was a power in the land. It was static, institutional, exclusive.'¹⁰

I have already spoken, in chapter 4, of the paradigm of domination which shaped Scottish presbyterianism at local level. But, derived from Calvinist theology, it influenced the whole structure and culture of Scottish religious life.

And it affected people at the deepest emotional and psychological levels, as well as in social terms. What were the elements of this paradigm?

First, there was the patriarchal-monarchical model of God. The Reformers insisted on the absolute sovereignty of God as a monarch ruling over his kingdom and demanding total obedience and submission of will. As supreme ruler, this God legitimised other hierarchical forms of power as expressions of divine intent for the life of the world. The response evoked by this God was a sense of awe, reverence, fear and humiliation. Since he had total control over the eternal destiny of human beings, it was appropriate to feel abject dependence. It has been suggested that the Scottish adoption of ultra-orthodox federal Calvinism, with its doctrine of double predestination, elicited a particular lack of assurance of worth and salvation. For God was loving only towards the arbitrarily chosen elect, but not essentially in his Being.¹¹ The harsh twin doctrines of natural human depravity and accountability for sinfulness meant that many devout people simultaneously felt unable truly to change, and yet held themselves responsible for their failure. The resulting acute anxiety remained a distinctive feature in the religious experience of many Scots, even after 19th century evangelical arminianism challenged its doctrinal supremacy. Eliza Fletcher was a Glasgow woman, apparently converted during the 1859 revival (though she rarely felt

secure about the veracity of this), who was noted in the 1870s and 1880s for her inspirational Bible classes and talks for working people. In many ways she was characteristic of the style of active female evangelicalism encouraged by the idea of 'woman's mission' - a person of 'masculine intellect, yet with all a woman's tenderness and keen sensibility. We remember well her ready wit, her unselfish generosity, her courageous spirit.'¹²

But she was plagued throughout her life with a desperate, often self-indulgent anxiety about the state of her soul:

'Is it a sign that God does not wish me to be saved? Am I condemned already; am I *never, never* to be truly saved?'¹³

She attributed her overwhelming conviction that she was reprobate to the doctrine of election, and especially to a sermon she had heard in early childhood. In 1875 she wrote:

'I have never, never felt his love...I feel as if He was my enemy; and yet oh! I know He is so worthy of love and trust...It's here that dark, and stern and awful election comes in, and from my earliest childhood I've kicked at the doctrine of election. But I don't want to. I want to get to Him, but only He can bring me; and if I can't go, isn't it because I'm not divinely drawn?...I'm very, very vile.'¹⁴

And in the final year of her life the sense of foreboding was tangible:

'Another thing which has been greatly overpowering me, and is still, is the almost constant and awful realising of eternity...I seem to be held over the edge of the world to come, and made to see its awfulness. This clouds one, and causes a sadness and depression which I cannot describe.'¹⁵

In Eliza Fletcher's life we see something of the tension logically inherent in a theology unable to guarantee the salvation for which so many heroically strived. Her experience suggests that Calvinist doctrines held powerful sway despite the growing attractions of a simple

evangelicalism which Eliza herself preached.

Mary Ann Rogerson's diary, kept from 1853-58 (when she was aged 20 - 25), is an example of the introspective examination encouraged by Calvinist faith. She was a farmer's daughter and wife whose own children included several ministers, and she meditated on Sabbath evenings on the sermons she had heard, and upon the condition of her soul. Her reflections too are riddled with feelings of unworthiness, guilt and shame, and with constant allusions to the 'dangers and snares' of everyday life:

'Oh poor sinful worm of the dust as I am, still I would seek to cast myself upon thy care for the future...My life is fast passing away and I am nearing a dark futurity...Oh how much reason I have to fear I am not in Jesus a new creature.'¹⁶

Like Eliza, Mary Ann's emotional state seemed to lurch between long periods of anxiety and self-distrust, and less frequent 'seasons of peaceful calm'. Both refer often to the need of complete and passive submission to God's will; but also to the awful obligation to show evidence of holiness in well-doing. But the inner debate continues to torment, with fears that worthy actions depend too much on their own strength, and are cause for wicked pride. A battle between free will and predestination seems to rage unresolved in their souls. If the voices of these women are representative of others, then the inner life and outward actions of many Scotswomen were shaped by a troubling, paradoxical faith which counselled self-doubt and denial, and yet required long hours of introspection, the strain of which could seriously impair physical and mental health.

And the outward demonstration of evangelical fervour might be accompanied by powerful feelings of despondency and hostility to God.¹⁷ This framework, with a focus on death and its aftermath frequently verging on the obsessional, must have been at least as debilitating as it was empowering for women who sought to be agents for God in the world.

Mary Slessor, as a young girl in Dundee, began to have nightmares after she visited an old widow who took her hand and held it near the fire:

'If you were to put your hand in there, it would be awful sore. But if you don't repent your soul will burn in blazing fires for ever and ever.'¹⁸

Slessor often said that it was the fear of hell fire that drove her into the Kingdom. For every woman, like her, who was able to transform that fear into a creative and loving life, there must have been others paralysed – inwardly at least – by apprehension and confusion. The disquiet which arose out of efforts to conform to the precepts of Calvinist doctrine affected men and women alike. But women also had to contend with the injunctions regarding the appropriate modes of female behaviour, and to square the latter with the former. In chapter one, I quoted Neal Ascherson's comment about the Scottish tension between self-assertion and self-distrust. I suspect that his evaluation is based largely upon male experience. For centuries, ministers preached against the besetting human sins of pride and self-assertion, and men battled with

those while striving - as they were encouraged to - for worldly success. But for many women, who had been enjoined, socialised and often coerced to accept that they were weaker, dependent and subject always to the requirements of others, the problem was not so much pride but an excess of humility and self-negation. By its very nature, the extent and effects of this phenomenon are difficult to substantiate and evaluate, because women who doubted their own value, and found it difficult to perceive themselves as having an independent identity, were unlikely to be involved in exercises of self-promotion. However, there is, I believe, some evidence that women were psychologically inhibited and disempowered by the combination of religious doctrine and cultural convention. The great diffidence of so many Woman's Guild members, for example, in relation to assuming public or leadership roles; the letters of application from prospective missionaries who, paradoxically, seemed to think that self-deprecation and disclaimers as to their right or ability to preach the gospel (except as humble instruments of God, who might use them in spite of all their failings); the constant reproaches against forwardness and ambition found in diaries and memoirs of women; the widespread principle and practice (from which men undoubtedly benefited) that women would sacrifice their own interests entirely in order to serve the needs of others. These perhaps suggest that the tension Ascherson identifies was even more acute for women striving for a sense of their own

identity and worth, than for men who were encouraged to develop singularity, control, and other active qualities associated with Christian 'manliness'. Women who displayed such qualities to any significant degree were not only exposed to conventional accusations of masculinity, but also had to cope with inner spiritual wrestling against the temptations of self-assertion.

The image of an omnipotent, distant God, whose real kingdom is other-worldly, who has the power to exclude his creatures from it, and who uses whatever means are necessary to accomplish His divine will, was rarely described as oppressive. Rather, it was seen as the natural and scriptural understanding of the relationship between God and the world.¹⁹ But it produced, not only enervating, self-destructive anxiety (and, on the opposite pole, self-regarding relief which could readily issue in arrogant self-righteousness), but also the conviction that grief, sorrow and injustice in this world must ultimately, and sometimes against all the evidence of experience, be justified and accepted as the will of a righteous God. The writer Margaret Oliphant struggled painfully with this after the death of her young daughter:

'Where are you, oh my child, my child. I have tried to follow her in imagination, to think of her delight and surprise when from the fever, wandering and languor of her bed she came suddenly into the company of angels and the presence of the Lord. But then the child was but a child and death is but a natural event; it changed her surroundings, her capabilities, but it could not change the little living soul. Did she not stop short there and say, "Where is Mamma?" did not the separation overwhelm her?

This thought of very desolation. Did she not think of the sad horror, the heart that was breaking for her? God knows. All this is fanciful, perhaps wrong, but I cannot help it...She is with God, she is in His hands. I know nothing, cannot even imagine anything. Can I trust her with Him? Can I trust Him that He has done what was best for her, that He has her safe, that there has been no mistake, no error, but only His purpose in all, and that He is keeping her now in the position most happy for her, that even my own human judgement, when enlightened, will approve as the best? This is the question that He puts to me and keeps putting to me through all these weary nights and days. This is the faith He demands of me.'²⁰

The notion that 'God's purpose' must override any human challenge or sense of injustice, and is intrinsically good, was also used to maintain social and domestic hierarchies: to close off any discussion or subversion by subordinate groups. In 1850, the *Free Church Magazine* claimed:

'For the purpose of maintaining society in a state of peace and happiness, the creator has established a variety of *relations* among men, principle of which are - husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant, magistrate and people...these are characterised by a manifest *inequality*. The principle is that of physical inequalities with moral compensations, lest the greater measure of power belonging to one party should become an instrument of oppression and misery to the other.'²¹

Just as slaves had been told in the American South, so servants and the poor of the Scottish working classes were exhorted to accept their lowly status and lack of material comfort as divinely ordained, to be rewarded in heaven. Church publications were full of condescending articles written by ministers and 'ladies', with advice for the poor. An 1886 'talk with working girls' counselled against envy of 'superiors' and concluded:

'Be glad, then, if you have hard work to do, for it gives you the chance to do it cheerfully and please Him. Be thankful, too, if you have a crowded home, that honest hands can make it comfortable, and a loving spirit can make it happy. Thank Him for every mercy, and never forget to thank Him for the gift of life, power and loving, and the

hope of immortality.'²²

And a book entitled *The High Estate of Service*, (1898) dedicated to the servant members of St George's Free Church in Edinburgh, extolled the virtues of their position:

'I doubt if in any book the duty of serving is so emphasised as in the New Testament...The Bible, with its insistence on universal brotherhood, yet knows nothing of the equality which some demand and which would reduce all to a dull, hopeless, lifeless uniformity...Christ will make us sufficient, not for the spheres we fancy and covet, but for those He places us in.'²³

It is evident that in spite of a marked change of attitude after 1880, when some presbyterians were much more aware of, and concerned about, social inequality, others were all the more determined to maintain the class hierarchy. It is hardly surprising that Christian Watt, who came from a fishing background in the north-east of Scotland, and spent much time in domestic service, but was never less than direct in expressing her opinions of the prevailing social order, should write in her remarkable recollections:

'The kirk had become an organisation to suppress the working class...If you had no profession you were of no consequence to the minister, save only to fill the kirk on Sundays.'²⁴

If upper and middle class women colluded with this static paradigm of authority in their relationships with the working classes, most were also willing to submit to the consequent doctrine of female status. The reformed affirmation of *sola scriptura* made it particularly difficult to challenge a subordinate existence which was apparently enshrined in the Word of God; for to do so was regarded as defiance of God Himself, and tantamount to

heresy:

'I cannot help thinking that, though the possibilities of our nature may be as great as those of man's, yet as a consequence of the Fall, our place now is one of comparative lowliness...But if instead of vainly struggling against all that would remind us of our position, we quietly take the places assigned us by God, not man...perhaps we shall one day discover that our primeval sentence is as mercifully suited to the present needs of our nature as man's is to his.'²⁵

The radical assertion of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, in her introduction to *The Woman's Bible* (1895,1898) that the Bible is not a 'neutral' book, but a political weapon used against women's struggles for liberation, was hinted at in the comment by Lady Frances Balfour, that

'the ecclesiastical mind has never shaken off its belief that [women] are under a special curse from the days of Eden, and that St Paul's outlook on women in his day was the last revelation as to their future position in a jealously guarded corporation.'²⁶

There is no shortage of evidence that the accumulative socialising effect on many, if not most Scotswomen, of the Genesis stories, the Levitical codes of the Old Testament, the Household Codes of the New Testament, and other scriptural material pronouncing the inferior status of women, was to encourage acceptance of social limitations and subordination to husbands as normative. When such ideas began to be challenged, religious people were ready to leap to their defence. As the editor of the *Woman's Guild Supplement* wrote in 1906:

'It is not easy nowadays to fulfil [our divinely appointed mission as helpmeet] when the spirit of unrest is all pervading, and we are far too ready to seek 'larger spheres' and 'greater opportunities' quite outside our own little niche.'²⁷

But some of the patients Elsie Inglis encountered in Glasgow were in no mind (or no position) to seek anything outside their 'own little niche' in the patriarchal household. She got very angry with husbands who came into the Infirmary and insisted their wives went home to look after their children, in spite of the women's considerable pain and illness, and their need to have operations:

'I wonder when married women will learn they have any other duty in the world than to obey their husbands...They will come in the day before the operation, after the woman has been screwed up to it, and worry them with all sorts of things, and want them home when they are half dying. Any idea that anybody is to be thought of but themselves never enters their lordly minds, and the worst of it is these stupid idiots of women don't seem to think so either...They don't seem to think they have any right to any individual existence.'²⁸

The point of such examples is not that the decent Victorian Christians of Glasgow, or anywhere else, would necessarily have condoned such male behaviour (which many would have ascribed to the congenital moral defectiveness of the urban poor), but that some of the beliefs, traditions and structures of their religion were key contributing factors to its prevalence. Likewise, no doubt there was much sorrow when women died as the result of excessive childbearing, but the presbyterian church adhered consistently to the reformed estimation of a woman's main duty and privilege as motherhood. That duty which was recast in disturbing mould during the early decades of the 20th century, under the influence of Social Darwinism and the eugenics movement. Churchmen endorsed these theories in their call to middle class churchgoers to replenish the superior Christian stock, which they thought was in danger of being

overwhelmed by a tide of breeding moral and racial defectives (see chapter 5). Birth control; the right of women either to affirm and enjoy sexual relationships, or to choose the size of their families, were denied and abhorred almost unanimously by church courts and representatives right up to 1930. The fictional examples of Margaret Darroch and Jean Guthrie, whose husbands represent very different types of pious presbyterian men, suggest the most destructive consequences of the negative and hypocritical attitude to sexuality which patriarchal religion could foster. The creators of these characters may have had a jaundiced view of the church, but there is no doubt that plenty of real women died from the exhaustion of excessive childbearing and rearing.²⁹ J W Coutts of Milngavie, writing on *The Church and the Sex Question* in 1922, waxes lyrical:

'Anyone who has read a fairly representative series of 19th century biographies...will not fail to remember the picture made time after time...of an exhausted mother condemned to spend the even of her days upon a sofa, or quietly surrendering the unequal struggle somewhere about the middle span of her life...All of us know instances in the humbler walks of life of women whose struggle with poverty and an ever increasing family has made them take rank as among the supreme heroines of life...Yet among them too the exhorbitant price of such a life has resulted...in premature break-down or death.'³⁰

A central feature of presbyterianism has been a powerfully masculine language and ethos for imaging the divine, and the accompanying exclusion of women from the male chain of command from God the Father, through Christ the Son to their male representatives in the world - rulers, ministers, husbands, fathers. As Sally McFague notes,

'This model could have gone in the direction of parent (and that is clearly its New Testament course), with its associations of nurture, care, guidance, concern, and self-sacrifice, but under the powerful influence of the monarchical model, the parent became the patriarch, and patriarchs act more like kings than like fathers: they rule their children and they demand obedience.'³¹

The doubt already cast on the equality of human creation by certain scriptural texts and their interpretation (Gen 2-3, I Cor 11: 1-15) must, for many women, have been confirmed by the psychological experience of worshipping a male God who was represented, in all ecclesiastical positions of status and power, by men. After the Reformation, a comprehensive attack on mariolatry and veneration of saints removed access to any female symbolism in relation to the divine. Women, by creation and intent, were secondary creatures, while maleness was the normative condition of humanity. As a woman writing in the *UFC Record* of November 1913 observed:

'We have evolved an elaborate civilisation upon the conception of a man race and a woman race; nor, even in this late year of grace, 1913, has our consciousness of the purpose of God for the social order been clear enough to prevent the reproach that only through a contest within the twofold unity of the race can ancient and grave wrongs be righted.'³²

In this context, women, subject to definitions of their role and purpose which were devised in the interests of the ruling order, had an 'otherness' and invisibility foisted upon them. They were excluded from, or failed to recognise their own experiences in, descriptions of the generic 'man'. Or they had to redefine their life and witness using masculine language and concepts. There were at least two

possible consequences of this for women who struggled to become fully 'human' within the terms of Scottish presbyterian society. One was, as I have suggested in chapter five, that such efforts were interpreted (and actively criticised or patronisingly tolerated) as female attempts to become more 'masculine'. Mary Daly perceived (in the days before she entered the 'sacred feminist space'):

'The formula is very simple: once the *a priori* norms of femininity have been set up, all of the exceptions are classified as 'de-feminised'. Criticism is directed exclusively toward individuals who fail to conform; never is it directed to the assumptions of the ideology itself.'³³

The second, and connected outcome was that, since 'human' equated with white, rational, active, controlling, body-denying man, the dominant model of 'humanisation' available to women was a transcendent dualism which operated by conquest and control - of one's own carnality; of emotions; of sensual pleasures; of other classes, races and cultures; of nature. The pugilistic and triumphalist tone of so many hymns which became popular during the latter part of the period, when an imperialistic worldview was prominent, testifies to this.

There were many who participated in different ways and to different extents within this imperialist framework. The salvation they sought for themselves, and preached to others, was *from* their complex, embodied situation as women, rather than *of* women (and other subordinated

peoples) as a social group. In the context of a religious masculinism (which evidently survived and thrived in the structures, language and symbols of the churches, even when perceived to be under attack from a sentimental feminisation), I suspect there were numerous women who, like Alison Cairns, experienced confusion and self-
abhorrence in relation to their female sexuality and identity. Born in 1901, she was the daughter of Prof David Cairns, who was United Free Church Moderator 1923-24. For a long time she deplored having been born a woman, and expressed a general discomfort with her body:

'The Bible, Spenser and Bunyan had created for us a parabolic conception of self as triumvirate - mind, soul and heart - living uneasily together inside the body (something not quite right, but exonerated by clothing).'³⁴

From the myriad examples which could be cited of the ways in which a repressive and life-denying creed was used to judge and control human lives, I choose one which (as an enthusiastic dancer) strikes me as a good illustration of the poignant absurdity of so much which was solemnly believed, and exhorted in a genuine spirit of loving concern. Helen Lockhart Gibson of Kirkcaldy had a Sabbath School pupil who was fond of going dancing:

'The last time I saw her, I told her she could not have both Christ and the dance. She said, "I can't give up the dancing". "Then", I said, "you must lose your soul". Very soon after she was suddenly cut down by smallpox.'³⁵

Perhaps the logical coherence of all these elements in the presbyterian experience might be appreciated by seeing them in the cosmic framework which Calvinism constructed.

Medieval Christianity was ambivalent about nature. From one

perspective it was a sacramental embodiment of the invisible God which was the ground of its being. But a darker tradition believed that nature was possessed by demonic powers seeking to destroy human beings through sexual temptation – women, as Tertullian had famously stated, were the gateway of the devil. Calvinist doctrine dismembered the more positive sacramental view of the cosmos with its dogma of the total depravity of nature. Only the Word could communicate the saving knowledge of God. Beyond that, everything was fallen, unable to bear the divine presence, and subject to the devil. No natural and sensual experience or joy could truly be trusted. And for Knox and his witch-hunting successors, the nature of women remained especially corrupt and dangerous, unless subdued by surveillance and control. The psychological residue of this legacy affected women in Scotland long after the grimmer aspects of Calvinist cosmology began to be challenged. ³⁶

Nevertheless, as we have seen, institutional presbyterianism was not static or unitary. Operating in the socio-political context of Victorian and Edwardian Scotland, different theological and structural expressions of the reformed tradition developed. They were sometimes in competition with one another, and often in opposition to new trends in science and politics. There were elements within the presbyterian tradition which were positive about changing and expanding roles of women in church and

society. They had some influential advocates - men like Archibald Charteris, the Caird brothers, Dr Corbett of the *United Presbyterian Magazine*, J H Oldham. But the cumulative impact of presbyterian structures and ideologies did not positively advance the situation or independence of most Scottish women. Traditional scriptural interpretation and theology defined them as subordinate and requiring control. Church courts largely failed effectively to challenge the underlying factors which condemned the majority to lives of poverty, drudgery and abuse. Church practice and preaching encouraged both the real class divisions between different women, and also a facile essentialism which purported to define 'Woman' for all time. Church law denied them equal power and freedom within its own institutions. In all of these ways, presbyterianism (as a respondent to the 1915 UFC questionnaire on women's place in the church put it), denied women 'the capacity to become'.

But I do not believe that to be the whole story. The presbyterianism of 19th and early 20th century Scotland was certainly a patriarchal religion within a patriarchal society. Helen Crawford described the women of the nation as being 'bound hand and foot to the Church in its various forms', and characterised the mass of women as 'so harassed and burdened with the struggle for existence, their lives so circumscribed and stunted by obsolete domestic drudgery, that they took little interest in wider issues, or were too tired to take part in the changing of irksome conditions.'³⁷

But such a statement, though perhaps understandable as a general description and criticism of the reality she observed around her in the Glasgow slums, does not do justice to the diversity of female experiences and actions, cutting across boundaries of class and time and belief. This study has told of women who *did* take an interest in wider issues, and who acted, as they saw fit, to change conditions. The cultural power of the church was extensive, but its impact was by no means always or totally repressive. Resistance to the dehumanising tendencies in ecclesiastical, domestic and social structures broke through in many ways: occasionally (as with utopian, socialist and suffragette feminists), and especially during periods of social flux, in conscious opposition to the church; more often in the mundane daily process of struggling to create and sustain life and hope for themselves, their families, their workmates and their communities. In that process, women paradoxically drew on elements of the same religion which had provided such effective tools for their oppression.

**'It is not Christ who is barring the way':
Resources for liberation**

'We in Scotland have always prided ourselves on liberty, the facility with which we can adapt our traditions and practices to the demands of the time, on freedom from superstition and convention, on the desire to get down to foundational truth, on our willingness to follow the spirit of Christ. Are we going to betray all these in this question of the equality of women?'³⁸

Brown and Stephenson have noted that Scottish women, well into the 20th century, grew up and lived in a highly

religious environment. They also suggest that the influence of Christianity in its establishment presbyterian form was (especially after 1870) 'diffusive rather than enforced'.³⁸

One way in which women exerted some independence and choice was in their personal religious lives. Brown and Stephenson themselves give some evidence of working class women who resisted compulsion to adhere to their local presbyterian church, or who (more commonly) supplemented its dull diet with the more engaging worship offered by smaller denominations and sects:

'The bland hymns and socially ordered snobbery of morning worship at the Church of Scotland was compensated by attendance at more evangelical, emotional and rousing evening services at minor churches.'⁴⁰

This comment, based on the experience of women in the Stirling area during the first decades of the 20th century, received assent from a group of women who were children and young working women in Linktown, an industrial part of Kirkcaldy, during the same period, who found worship in their local Established Church worthy but dull. They enjoyed accompanying each other to a wide range of populist and recreational religious gatherings - many of them held in the open air, where these oral respondents recalled a greater psychological sense of equality and independence than at public worship in the parish church.⁴¹

Christian Watt rejected the established church as oppressive and hypocritical, but not the Christian faith. Indeed, she believed that she had a God-given mission which

gave purpose to her difficult life.⁴² Also in the north-east, with its strong tradition of anti-establishment pietistic evangelicalism, Mary Coull was a regular attender at the Church of Scotland, but was converted by a woman preacher of the Faith Mission:

'Now this craiter, Stir-Alice was her name, and she held meetings in the Baptist church hall. Every night I was enthralled with her speaking: there was just something about her different from the minister, and she got through to me..[That night] I walked along a lonely road myself...And you know this, my burden was away and it never came back...After that, my mother's roarings and fightings of me hadn't the same effect, for I had more strength than my own...That's never left me.'⁴³

Stir-Alice and her fellow Faith Mission preachers were part of a distinctive tradition of women following their own light to spread the good news at revival meetings (see chap 4). They touched and changed many lives.

But biographies, testimony and other sources bear ample testimony to the fact that, not just on the fringes, but also within the presbyterian establishment there were women whose faith was not something imposed simply by force or fear or convention. They had thought, and considered objections, and still asserted the deep and personal resonance of the reformed Christian tradition with their experience. Jeanie Morison, daughter-in-law of Hugh Miller, wrote in 1874:

'In spite of difficulties I still believe the Bible to be indeed the Word of God. We must always fall back for the reason of our belief on *internal* evidence. 'The spirit witnessing with our spirits that we are sons of God'. I recognise my father's hand - in this God who reveals Himself to me in this book, the Being whom I was made to worship and to serve...I read my own history in its pages...The promise and gifts of salvation, beginning with pardon, and going on to perfection.'⁴⁴

It is important to acknowledge the strength and meaning which individual women derived from their faith, and to respect that. As Mary Coull said (and as many others would have said, if asked), 'It's my faith that's kept me going'.⁴⁵

But there is more involved in my working definition of liberation. However significant it may have been for individual lives, a Christianity failing to challenge the conditions which impoverish and dehumanise is no more than Marx's

'Sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions'.⁴⁶

There were many Scotswomen who confronted oppressive conditions with compassionate hearts and souls. The pages of their books and magazines and journals tell of genuine concern and care for others – even when their actions were motivated in part by anxiety about their own sanctification. Religious commitment encouraged numerous women beyond the conventional show of charity to demonstrate heartfelt love and service. For most, that meant personal giving, or working for church and philanthropic organisations, or sharing what little they had with neighbours and friends. This effort was usually couched in terms of personal faithfulness or evangelical concern to save souls. But especially during the first decades of the 20th century, some perceived that Christianity called for justice, and the transformation of social structures as well as individuals. The evangelical

revival of the early 19th century did inspire some Christians with a vision to transform the whole sinful world (e g the anti-slavery movement), and gave many their first experience of political activity. But the momentum of that vision was lost during the mid-Victorian period, when the evangelical emphasis was on individual salvation. It was particularly under the influence of major theological and intellectual developments in the latter half of the 19th century that some groups of Christian women sought to develop coherent self-understanding and strategies for change. For them, as for other concerned people, what brought faith into tension with the establishment religion of the *status quo*, was a new awareness (backed by scientific study) that it was no longer possible simply to blame social evils on personal immorality or the providence of God. They were influenced by

'the emergence, in the wake of the Enlightenment and Romanticism, of a new *historical* way of looking at life, and the rapid development of the attitudes and techniques of religious scholarship.'⁴⁷

No doubt there were many women in the presbyterian tradition who, like Jeanie Morison, were able to use their own intelligence and selective perception to 'read their own history' in the androcentric scriptures, doctrines and practices of the church, without damage to their personal integrity. But the whole 19th and early 20th century debate about women's mission and women's rights was generated by a perceptible shift, for increasing numbers of women, from passive acceptance (or individual transcendence) of

inferior status, to active and collective challenge. They were no longer prepared to receive as immutable facts the limitations of sphere and opportunities into which they had been socialised.

The Women's Movement was part of a complex of challenges to the unquestioned authority of establishment religion, which have been lucidly discussed by A C Cheyne. In his article, 'The Bible and Change in the 19th century', he notes the following:

'Account should...be taken of the heightened moral sensitivity of the Victorian age, which made it difficult to maintain that every part of the Bible was equally authoritative. A new spirit of tolerance and tentativeness which, along with a growing preference for the apologetic as opposed to the dogmatic spirit, rendered the hard-line orthodoxy of the traditionalists increasingly uncongenial, was also a factor. Most important of all was the scientific revolution associated with the writings of Charles Lyell and Charles Darwin, which provided a picture of man and his environment difficult to reconcile with the statements of Scripture if literally understood.'⁴⁸

In this context, many women developed a more self-conscious understanding of themselves as women (and not just as 'Woman'), and they became willing, in varying degrees, to use their experience and aspirations as a measure of the validity of religious dogma and tradition, rather than *vice versa*. There must have been some psychological release for women who were able to reflect on the more colourful utterances of the reformers in that light: like Frances Stoddard, writing to her fiancé, David Murray, in 1869:

'I thank you for the pamphlet on the women's question. I note you are their special champion. Have been reading 'Knox's blast' agin the sex; at first it produced in me feelings of pity and sorrow for such strange

misunderstandings of the noble functions and capacities of my sex. Towards the end I became irritated and resolved henceforth to have nothing to do with men who award such slander to one of their kind.'⁴⁹

In Scotland, this involved growing numbers of presbyterian women in confronting 'the fact that the Reformation Churches failed completely to take account of women.'⁵⁰ It is difficult to assess the extent of this perception, and whether there emerged a systematic critique of that failure. Obviously, the exclusion of women from the faculties of divinity, from the ministry and from the courts of the church denied them the opportunity to conduct a public theological debate of the kind which raged around men like William Robertson Smith and George Adam Smith.⁵¹ Church women's organisations such as the Woman's Guild were by no means promoters of controversy. And I have discovered no erstwhile missing radical feminist polemics from the period of the Women's Movement and critical scholarship, to match the biting eloquence of Elizabeth Cady Stanton or Matilda Joslyn Gage in America. If moderate and devoted churchmen could be put on trial for heresy, one can imagine the kind of venom which would rain down upon any women who dared publicly to challenge the infallible truth and divine authority of the faith - especially as it pertained to their own condition. Indeed, as I have already mentioned, among the dangers believed to be inherent in the higher education of women was its potential incitement to heresy and rebellion. There were anxious Victorians who believed that, like Eve, it was the aspiration of the 'New Woman' to

become like God.

However, there is some evidence that those involved in the Women's Movement did reflect upon and discuss critically the tenets of their religious heritage. The Ladies Edinburgh Debating Society, (and the pages of its journal) was an important early forum for an influential group of women to expound and test new ideas and theories. The demand for classes taught by Divinity Professors within the various higher education associations also suggests that theological issues were not just a matter of academic speculation, but regarded as of vital relevance in the contention over the 'Woman Question'. Even the exhortatory writing produced by leaders of the emerging female church organisations bore periodic witness to significant changes of emphasis as to what parts of Christian tradition were regarded as authoritative and persuasive for women. By the twentieth century, more systematic and radical approaches - focussing more on a 'usable past' which had specific liberating potential - emerged. Entry into universities was one reason for this: not so much the formal teaching offered, since so few women studied theology, but access to the academic environment and resources, and also involvement in groups such as the Student Christian Movement, made an impact on thinking and experience. From 1894 the Women's Missionary College, too, rooted critical reflection in a community committed to the empowerment of women. But the wider context of unrest,

action for social reform and increasingly militant suffrage agitation confronted progressive women with the need to assess their beliefs in the light of compelling issues.

It is an interesting sign of the loosening of orthodox bonds on the presbyterian tradition, that by the 1870s women like Frances Murray could resolve to have nothing to do with the slanderous Knox, yet did not feel constrained to abandon the church which he had founded. No doubt there were women who remained members out of duty, habit or propriety. But on the whole, those who tried to square their feminism with their religion did not desert the church because they did not believe that their challenges were inimical to the spirit of the Reformation. Indeed, there were some who asserted their Pentecostal right to prophecy (Acts 2:16-18) in proclaiming that they were part of a movement of the Holy Spirit to call the church back to the central truths of its reformed heritage. Among those (especially in the suffrage movement) who did cast off their church membership, the majority distinguished between the reactionary oppression of the institution, and the liberating example and intent of Jesus. But wherever they chose to draw the line, they all challenged one of the most intransigent elements of Calvinist orthodoxy - the assertion that the Bible was totally, infallibly inspired, and that it gave unequivocal guidance on every subject.

Historical criticism introduced the possibility of an alternative hermeneutical principle: that not all biblical statements have equal claim to truth and authority, and that it was legitimate to discern the heart of the Christian message from textual material which exhibited internal inconsistencies – a canon within the canon.

A writer in the 1869 edition of *The Attempt* shows the influence of these new ways of thinking in her review of *Women's Work and Women's Culture* – a landmark collection of essays edited by Josephine Butler:

'There is great confusion in the minds of many as to the doctrines which Christianity really teaches. Many laws instituted by man have received the sanction of the world for so many centuries, that we have at last come to believe that they are laid down in the Gospel...There is an instinctive dread of letting ourselves in any way doubt their propriety. But men nowadays are beginning to break through some ancient trammels...and are daring to read for themselves the Gospel, not fearing to let reason shed its brightest light on the teaching therein contained. The result of this is a great widening of religious views.'⁵²

She then discusses Butler's argument that theories about women should be judged in the light of Christ, and not just upon the exigencies with which Paul had to deal, and quotes the author with approval:

'I appeal to the open Book and the intelligence of every candid student of Gospel history for justification of my assertion, that in all important instances of His dealings with women, His dismissal of each case was accompanied by a distinct act of *Liberation*.'⁵³

In the debate about women and the Bible, most did not claim (as the *Woman's Bible* did) that the scriptures were actually androcentric – written by and for the benefit of men – but rather that they had been mistranslated and misunderstood. In general, it was argued that the

injunctions of Paul and the pastoral letters about the role of women in the early church were culturally conditioned by specific circumstances. This was the approach of Isabella Armstrong (who certainly believed that she stood firmly in the evangelical tradition of adherence to the Word) in her *Plea for Modern Prophetesses* (1867).⁵⁴ But Jesus' own words and example were considered to provide a standard from which universal ethical principles could be derived. In biblical studies and devotional life, the historical figure of Jesus was becoming much more central. As Kay Carmichael observes:

'Victorian times saw an outpouring of what the insensitive describe as mawkish sentiment over the Christ figure. For those who needed it, and it was not only women, Jesus became the symbol of loving, tender care as an alternative to the cold, harsh, unforgiving image of God being presented in the pulpit on Sundays, week after week.'⁵⁵

But Jesus was important not simply as a private source of comfort and compassion. He was also perceived as revealing the quality of right and equal relationship between women and men. For he had defied the clerical establishment and conventions of his day, affirmed the individual character, dignity and worth of the women he encountered, and refused to regard them in terms of some symbolic, archetypal

'Woman'. As Isabella Armstrong tartly observed:

'The disciples marvelled that Jesus talked with the woman at the well (John 4:27)...and it is evident that the disciples still marvel, that the Great Shepherd speaks so graciously to the female members of His body, though it is to be regretted that they do not evince the same circumspection in allowing Him to manifest in His own time His own God-like purposes.'⁵⁶

Mary Slessor's strong faith was rooted in the conviction

that she had a direct relationship with Jesus of Nazareth, who empowered his followers so that they could engage in a life of active, loving service. She wrote once to a friend, 'Creeds and books and ministers are all good enough but look you to Jesus'.⁵⁷ Certainly her own life bore ample witness to her conviction that this discipleship relativised all other claims and conventions.

In reformed, and especially in evangelical Protestantism, Pauline texts had been paramount in shaping doctrine and practice. Christ had been significant above all in his symbolic, representative character as sacrifice to atone for human sin, and as Head of the Church. The new interest in him as historic figure, seeking radical transformation of the world, brought a freedom and dynamism to the faith of many. Jane Waterston claimed in 1885:

'We have read the Bible with women's eyes, and if Christianity is true at all it is a living thing, growing with the growing years, and not a lifeless form which at best can give us but dead women's clothes of fifty or sixty years after Christ. It is surely not the letter that giveth life, and yet you would give to women letter and tradition as their sole portion. Much harm has been done by false ideas of what Christianity taught concerning women.'⁵⁸

Waterston recognised that reading the Bible involves an interaction between the text and the context: that the circumstances and concerns of the reader make a difference to the message which is received. It is noticeable that during the 1880s and 1890s, much more attention was paid in religious press and publications to women. There were numerous articles and books about Women of the Bible. The content and conclusions of these articles tends to confirm

traditional teachings about the nature and role of women. But they appeared, I believe, as a response to the growing female self-consciousness; as an apologetic attempt to demonstrate that women were significant participants in biblical history, which therefore retained its relevance for women in a changing world.⁵⁹

Further evidence of a paradigm shift in understanding of Christianity was the recovered importance (linked to that of the historical Jesus) of the Kingdom of God. This underpinned the outlook of those who sought to restore or enliven the church's social witness in the years c1880-1920. Under the influence of historical criticism, German idealist philosophers, and with the decline of classical *laissez-faire* political economy, the rigid scholasticism and pietism which maintained a clear distinction between sacred and secular; church and world, began to break down. The Kingdom of God was the focus for a religious commitment which no longer accepted the *status quo* as divinely ordained. Referring to the Old Testament prophets, and to Jesus' core message, (as summarised in Luke 4:16-19) a significant number of churchmen and women embarked upon a critique of structures and conditions which denied the progressive plan and purpose of God for humankind. They regarded salvation, not as an escape *from* the sin and misery of the world, but as the power and possibility of individual and collective transformation *in* the world. The protagonists of this Christian ethos argued that they were

simply reclaiming the reformation heritage of seeing the whole world – spiritual and material; personal and political – as under the sovereignty of God. And they recalled that the Scottish reformation was initially a movement of rebellion, change and concern for all aspects of human life in the 'godly commonwealth'.⁶⁰

It would be foolish to suggest that a facile equation can be drawn between presbyterian women seeking equal rights, and adherence to this theological viewpoint. Though they belonged mainly to the respectable urban middle classes, yet there was diversity of circumstance, political and religious beliefs (as even the genteel debates of the Edinburgh Ladies Debating Society suggest). Helen Reid, for example, used her position as editor of *The Attempt* to disseminate sternly conservative views about both theology and politics, complaining in 1870

'Such are the attractions of Germanism for the Scotch mind, that free-thinking tenets walk about under the mask of liberality, to the endangerment of steady principles such as our noble reformers rooted in their country's heart.'⁶¹

and in a 'valedictory' to 1873:

'Grave cause for anxiety is ever increasingly evident in the turmoil of class legislation, out of which have arisen those giant spectres of Trades Unions and strikes, which keep up the unfailing antagonism of capital and labour, and by propagation of a spirit of moral cannibalism...threaten the disintegration of that national and Christian unity which has been Britain's bulwark for centuries.'⁶²

But although some reacted with fear and panic to social unrest, others, as I have indicated, were inspired by a vision of the coming Kingdom of God to exercise what they

had been encouraged to think of as their especially feminine powers as moral regenerators. This potent mixture was a real source of strength and confidence for a significant minority of churchwomen. By the 1920s, there was an evident disparity of theological and social perspective between the conservative men who led the postwar retrenchment within presbyterianism, and the leaders of the women's organisations. People like Elizabeth McKerrow of the UFC continued to use the vocabulary of the Kingdom to speak of the gulf between the way things were, and the way God intended them to be, to inspire their more conventional sisters:

'The Christian woman who sets herself to do her part in the building of the Kingdom of God on earth, will bring more than knowledge or service. Faith too she will bring - faith in God and His power to achieve the impossible. And what does the world need more today than just this - the certainty that in the end Righteousness will conquer Evil, Love will burn up Hate, and that Jesus shall reign.'⁶³

Helen Crawford lost faith in the Kingdom of God as a liberating principle for the poor, and turned instead to the communist vision of scientific materialism. But she continued to acknowledge the tremendous cultural, emotional and literary power of the Bible:

'My early religious upbringing made me familiar with Biblical stories, upon which I put my own interpretation. The Lamb dumb before her shearers, represented the uncritical exploited working class. The wonderful imagery of the Book of Revelation...conveyed to me a picture of the wrath of an indignant wronged working class against their exploiters, rising in revolutionary masses to deal with them.

Queen Vashti, in the book of Esther refused to come in and parade herself before the King, her lord and master, and his nobles. She was my first suffragette or feminist, and a rebel. She lost her position but she kept her soul.'⁶⁴

The consultation process upon which the United Free Church embarked in 1914, when it began considering the place of women in the church, provides the earliest direct evidence I have found of presbyterian women appealing to elements of their Christian heritage specifically to challenge the church's structural inequalities (although articles such as the leader in the May 1914 *UFC Record* indicate awareness of that challenge). Prior to this, women were invoking aspects of religion to demonstrate that it was compatible with the emancipation of women; or (in the suffrage movement) they were critical of sexism within the tradition, and their primary concern was not the reform of the church.

But women who, after the Union of 1929, organised an official movement for equal opportunity within the Church of Scotland, were already campaigning during the 1920s. Central to their arguments was the contention that the institutional church was actually guilty of betraying the chief tenets of its faith, and that only by being open to the Holy Spirit, at work in the world, could it avoid decay and eventual dissolution. Eunice Murray warned:

'If the Church refuses to hear the message women have to give, they will find other channels through which to speak...Let men ask themselves not how they can silence the legitimate demand of women for recognition within the Church, but how they can utilise the enthusiasm, talents and devotion of these earnest women who, feeling they have a call, desire to serve humanity and Christianity.'⁶⁵

And Elizabeth McKerrow, who later became President of the post-Union Woman's Guild, pointed out that the message

conveyed to women by their subordination in church had wider implications:

'The Church's view of women affects the whole social fabric. The principle of the sacredness of human personality is derived from Christianity...Society requires both encouragement and example, and these should be found in the Christian Church. It is very difficult for the ordinary person to understand 'spiritual equality' when for man it means determining women's contribution, and for woman it means conformity or repression. Spiritual equality *involves* equal opportunity.⁶⁶

'She must not soar too high'

I must acknowledge that this discussion about the resources of presbyterianism which had potential for the liberation of Scottish women, has largely focussed on the privileged, relatively powerful individuals who had access to various ways of recording their views. The working class Stirling respondents whose oral testimony forms the basis for Brown and Stephenson's research apparently made no allusions to Jesus as subverter of patriarchy or oppression. The Kingdom of God did not offer them a potent vision to inspire rebellion against their masters in home or workplace.

I have spoken with women from similar backgrounds in the Linktown area of Kirkcaldy, and their recollections of religious life during the early decades of the 20th century were primarily of its social and cultural role in their lives. None had derived any sense from ministers or church organisations that Christianity proclaimed a message about social justice. Most were conscious of a general 'invisibility' as girls and women in church, based on the prominence of male figures in church organisation and

Biblical stories. None could recall hearing sermons or messages offering unusual or challenging models of women, or about Jesus' relationships with women.⁶⁷ And Helen Crawford clearly came to the conclusion that the kind of Christianity to which she believed Scottish women were in thrall did not have the capacity to offer freedom and justice. To return to the language of liberation theology, even the most progressive and courageous women and men struggling to make the church reckon with structural sin and evil, imagined a Scottish church *for* rather than *of* the poor. By 1930, their progressive and inclusive vision was marginal to the witness and preoccupations of most ministers and laypeople.

One of the most characteristic legacies of the Reformation was the work ethic, and I think there is evidence that this was an important source of empowerment for many Christian women. But on examination, it appears that it was experienced rather differently depending on social class and opportunity.

An article appeared in the 1855 *North British Review* entitled 'The Non-Existence of Women', in which J W Kaye argued that that the right to work was a human right of self-definition, by which it was possible to move from private, passive suffering, into active doing in the 'real' public sphere. The cultural restrictions on women working, he maintained, denied their human identity and declared their psychological and social non-existence.⁶⁸ This is an

exposition of the idea that work liberates, through personal dignity, creative production, freeing of aptitude and capacity, the community of sharing a common task, and the engagement of body, mind and soul. The evangelical idea of woman's mission contained all of these ideas (even, to some extent, when applied only to home duties). At its best, it transcended the patriarchal exploitation of female ministrations: the provision of services which the dominant group in society does not wish to perform for itself, and which women were conditioned to accept as 'natural' and virtuous. For many Christian women, the new opportunities to work (in religious, philanthropic or professional activity) were seized upon as a matter of personal decision and choice, rather than compulsion. They might describe their motivations in terms of self-sacrifice and Christian usefulness; and their hopes for success might be subverted by religious self-doubt. But the humanising value of their productive activity could be, I have suggested, a really life-changing experience - especially when it included the possibility of transcending the psychological or economic dependence which were central features of 'true womanhood'. Perhaps, too, the daily experience of attempting to relate some of the harsher Calvinist precepts to their own situations contributed to the historical process of theological challenge and transformation.

However, here I reiterate my introductory caution about careless use of 'women' as an inclusive category. The women

who seized upon the liberating potential of such work were rarely those who already had to grind out long hours in factories and sweatshops, in domestic service and on the streets in the exhausting struggle to maintain the basic conditions of existence. For too many, labour extracted effort which diminished and dehumanised them. It did not value and nourish gifts, but ignored minds and trampled upon individual identity and dignity. For the majority of working class women, work violated their health and wellbeing, and was experienced, to some degree, as alienating and exploiting. For women of all classes, but especially the poor, domestic labour was undervalued, sentimentalised or disregarded. In discourse, such work was either stripped of its weary, backbreaking tedium and presented as the maudlin *sine qua non* of female fulfilment. Or, when domestic servicing failed to meet the requirements of husband or society, (as was so often judged, by representatives of the church, to be the case in the homes of the poor - see chapter 5, sections 2 and 3) the provider was subject to condemnation and chastisement for her failure to perform adequately as wife and mother.

In work, the freedom of choice which some middle and upper class women were able to exercise depended on the provision of a network of domestic support by other women whose ancillary function, it was believed, was established by the simple fact of their birth into a certain class and gender. The morality of this practice was rarely questioned by

those whose own quality of life was thereby improved - even when in a general way they condemned the sufferings of their sex. Much of 'women's work for women' was devoted to social and moral progress, but it often had the effect of stereotyping and objectifying other women - of confirming their dependence and inferiority, even although the concern was genuine. The class consciousness and social snobbery of many otherwise progressive women is quite striking from a late 20th century vantage point.

The corollary of this was that the freedom to transcend the givenness of a situation, to exercise significant life choices, was severely constrained, if not wholly denied, for most poor women. Economic and social privilege clearly underpinned the liberal moral theories of individual freedom and responsibility by which middle class women typically attempted self-assertion.

There were also other notable differences which were used to allege the superiority of certain Scottish women over others, and gave them the right, as they saw it, to pass judgement on the way those others led their lives. I have already discussed this in relation to the foreign missionary movement, and the imperialist ethos which informed much of that endeavour. It should also be noted that many devout presbyterian women shared in the shameful demonisation and bitter attacks on the Scoto-Irish Roman Catholic population in which the Scottish churches indulged

in the inter-war years. *The Banner of the Covenant*, the organ of the Scottish Women's Protestant Union (including Lady Frances Balfour and her sister Lady Victoria Campbell among its luminaries), of which copies from 1908-24 are lodged in the NLS, reveals a degeneration from what might be considered the legitimate (if intemperate) defence of Protestant principles - often couched in terms of women's rights - to the thoroughly unpleasant racist fearmongering which had its counterpart in the General Assemblies.⁶⁹ It has been beyond the scope of this thesis to consider the effect of presbyterianism on the growing female Catholic population of Scotland, but I have read and heard enough to realise that it has been a major source of division - in lifestyle and attitudes - between women. Kay Carmichael comments:

'As a child, growing up in the east end of Glasgow in the first half of this century, the community in which I lived demonstrated significant differences between Protestant and Catholic families. It was the Protestant women who transmitted awareness of the differences...In my experience [they] saw themselves as in every way superior to Catholic women whose religious roots lay in the Roman catholic areas of southern Ireland.'⁷⁰

These issues are surely worthy of further investigation, and serve my present purpose primarily to emphasise that that the experiences of women in Scottish society were affected and conditioned by a whole range of factors, some of which I have not touched on at all, and that gender, though basic, does not operate in isolation. It is also important to recognise that hypotheses, though helpful, cannot be used exhaustively to explain and contain

real lives which elude tidy categorisation. For every example I have given, in such a wide ranging thesis, it would probably be possible to cite a counter-example. So, for instance, the general conclusion of this chapter is that resources for liberation and agency were more accessible to middle class than to working class women. Yet lives are many faceted, and women drew strength and pleasure from various sources. Doris Webster Havice's recollections of meeting Edinburgh women from different social milieux around 1930, though anecdotal, give a quite different impression of relative emancipation and restriction. She was invited to speak to a group of Newhaven fishwives:

'I found them marvellously alert and very interested in the status of women in America. They impressed me...as being completely untrammelled by the class structure of society. The fishwives were loud and lusty and inquiring, and we enjoyed each other very much.'⁷¹

She continues:

'Contacts with the so-called upper class were interesting also, but not as much fun. Many of these women were in difficult marital situations, and they saw me as an outsider to whom they could speak frankly. They hoped because of my theological interests that I could counsel them. The lack of communication between husbands and wives was appalling among this group. Communication between parents and children was also very inhibited. In this class the impact of 'proper' behaviour patterns had the effect of making communication very superficial'.⁷²

Working women could find, in the midst of their material hardships, great sustenance and enjoyment in the solidarity of each other's company - perhaps a sense of community and of humour above all had the potential to transcend the limitations of their lives, and affirm them as human

beings. And there is no reason why history should not acknowledge that women could be oppressed, circumscribed, victimised - yet also (and sometimes the very same women) 'loud and lusty and inquiring'. Middle class women who developed their own communities - as students, professionals, philanthropists - tended to be single. For them, the decision to pursue careers and independence often included a conscious choice not to marry, and to endorse the exclusion of those who did. Women who were wives and mothers were possibly more physically and emotionally isolated. The church at least provided a setting where all women could meet, and its women's organisations offered an important basis for social intercourse, though the quality of community therein must have varied considerably in different times and places.

We should be alert to the dangers of accepting at face value so much of what was written in church circles about women. First, because far too many women - especially working class - remain hidden from history, as people who did not have the opportunity or inclination to record their thoughts, beliefs and experiences. Secondly, because there was such a tendency among those who did have access to public media, to contort reality so that it would conform to the mythological images of 'true womanhood'. After her death in 1915, the *UFC Record* eulogised Mary Slessor as 'above all a saint. Her devotion and self-sacrifice was absolute'.⁷³ But Charles Ovens, a carpenter who had worked

with her, and knew the intensely practical quality of the life she had lived, commented, 'Aye!...But she was nae jist a' that holy!'⁷⁴

The struggle for women in Scottish church and society has to a great extent been a struggle to affirm their personhood (individually or collectively) in its embodied particularity, against a prevailing tendency to reduce real human beings to symbols and stereotypes: defined primarily in terms of their genetic sex and the services which they are to provide as a matter of biological destiny and divine command. The beliefs and structures of the presbyterian church have been used on both sides of that struggle. David Watson, the founder of the Church of Scotland social work movement, who claimed to support the emancipation of women, nonetheless revealed himself as an ardent fan of that 'Perfect Womanhood' which is always defined in terms of its relationship to the male sex. He wrote in 1905 of the 'defects which hinder' such perfection:

'Nothing so much handicaps a woman as oddity, eccentricity, peculiarity. Nothing assists her so much as that grace, charm and ease of manner which men everywhere and instinctively expect in woman.'⁷⁵

But Jeanie Morison, like many others, asserted her characteristically protestant right to individual choice as at root a religious freedom:

'I am responsible to none but God, and my own conscience, for my opinions...No man can come to me and take my burden of responsibility on his shoulders; and therefore no man has a right to dictate to me in what manner I am to discharge myself of that responsibility.'⁷⁶

In the complex processes which wrought change in Scottish society from 1830-1930, women (within or outwith presbyterianism) were both agents and objects. Some felt a powerful sense of injustice or limitation, and resolved to overcome those. Others changed their attitudes and lifestyles without realising it. Yet others had changes forced upon them. The possibility for change existed in many aspects of women's lives - spiritual, relational, educational, economic, political. The extent to which that possibility could be realised was affected by the interaction of class, gender, geography, ethnicity and other circumstances. There were many for whom freedom of choice in virtually all aspects of life was effectively denied.

The presbyterian form of Christianity provided social and cultural conditions which helped facilitate and shape the processes of change. But as a patriarchal institutions within a hierarchical class society, the churches' organisation showed, in relation to women, 'evidence of considerable rigidity which sometimes breaks down but which rarely yields without a real struggle.'⁷⁷ As a shaper of Scottish culture, it remained committed to a conservative domestic ideology, acting (though by no means always deliberately) to hinder the full and egalitarian recognition and nurture of personhood which has often been proclaimed as a distinctive feature of presbyterianism. As a faith, through which the deepest meaning and purpose in

human life is apprehended and declared, its ambivalent potential for Scottish women is perhaps expressed better in personal reflection than academic speculation, and so I conclude with a poem written by a young woman in the newly formed ladies Debating Society, and who published in *The Attempt*, 1867:

Notes in Church

These four stone walls, they seem too close together

What is it I hear? - strange words concerning
The souls of men - Thou Who art Love
Art thou hate also? Art Thou Revenge?
I had deemed it not so.

Is Faith here? I know that she is here
But bounded by the four stone walls
She must not soar too high
She must not hope too much
And he (God's messenger) is bounded too
And they, the worshippers, worship with placid brow
Content it is so

"Miserable sinners!" I wonder why
My lips refuse the words? I, made, and loved
And sent by God to fill a little space,
Dare I be miserable?

They stoop so low, these worshippers
But do they stoop to rise? And unto what?
Is their God bounded too?
Ye four stone walls
I dream ye'll crumble into dust
The preacher's voice be silent
But all men know their God
For His great music sounding through the world
Shall hush the discords here
Give us, O God in Christ! The wide, wide heart
That we may take each sister, brother, in -
For failing this, we hinder Its approach. ⁷⁸

APPENDIX I

A COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF TWO LOCAL BRANCHES OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND WOMAN'S GUILD, c1894 - 1930:

ST MARY'S CHURCH, BELLEVUE PLACE, EDINBURGH, AND RAITH PARISH CHURCH, KIRKCALDY

1. Introduction

The Church of Scotland Woman's Guild, which I discuss in chapter two, was founded in 1887, and quite quickly grew to become the largest national organisation for women in Scotland. Most of what I have written about the Guild is based on published material: General Assembly records, the *Life and Work Woman's Guild Supplement*, and biographical accounts of those involved in its establishment and development as an officially sanctioned organisation within the Church of Scotland. I have also referred to the minutes of the Central Committee and other elements of the national structure.¹ These sources give valuable information about the ideas, attitudes and activities of individuals and groups who were responsible for evolving the principles, ethos and elements of the Guild as a national movement. They yield, at best, second hand data about the ways in which the Guild took root and grew at local parish level, but individual congregations were the basis of the organisation, and the main arena within which membership was expressed. Women who became members committed themselves to individual prayer, and to a parochial union which would undertake work and service (although for a while it was possible to be an 'auxiliary member' if there

was no local branch). Dr Charteris' vision of the Guild was inspired both by the fact that women were already engaged in a range of congregational and parish activities, and also by a theological understanding of the Church as the body of Christ, in which different tasks and functions were delegated to different members. ² In order to develop a fuller apprehension of how the Guild functioned, and to analyse whether its significance was more than simply numerical, it is important to study the local dimension of Woman's Guild organisation and operation. In different geographical and social circumstances, to what extent did individual Guild branches fulfil the declared aims and objectives of the organisation? Were these developed, modified or changed over time, and if so, why? What impact did the Woman's Guild make on local church life, and on the activities, options and self-perception of women themselves? And how did individual branches and members react to the changing religious, social, political and gender issues of the period? These are some of the questions which might usefully be discussed and perhaps answered in a comparative case study, and they indicate the purpose of this appendix.

However, it is important to note here the severe limitations imposed on such a study by the paucity of available primary archives, and to exercise due caution with regard to the findings of the study.

1. Although contemporary reports confirm that there were hundreds of local Guild branches affiliated to the national organisation from the earliest years (by 1900 there were 529 registered), very few branch records are lodged in publicly accessible archives, and virtually nothing which dates back before 1930. Since I began my research, I have endeavoured to locate local Guild records with a conspicuous lack of success! In the Scottish Record Office, where so many parish and presbyterial church records are kept, I was able to find only two local parish archives which included a full set of Guild minute books dating back before 1900. The SRO also has information about church records which are now stored in regional archives, but I could identify none from among these which would fulfil the requirements of this case study. Under the separate SRO index heading, 'Woman's Guild', there are quite substantial resources relating to the national structures of the Guild, and a few post-1929 Union branch minute books, but nothing of direct relevance to this study. ³ It is possible that many local Guild branches may still possess their own historical documents. Due to constraints of time and finance, I restricted my general enquiries about these to branches in the Fife and Edinburgh areas (although I used personal contacts to ask about individual branches in other parts of Scotland). Apart from minute books for Liberton Guild, dating from 1914 (which was long after formation of the branch), to which I was kindly given access by current office-bearers, no other sources came to light.

My efforts were by no means exhaustive, and it is quite possible that primary records for long-standing branches do still exist, and are known about. But I would speculate that much local recording relating to the earlier years of the Guild has either been lost, or was done, if at all, in very informal or unofficial ways. The apparent lack of such records may relate to the local diversity of form which characterised the very early years of the Guild; or to the apparent widespread difficulty experienced in finding effective office-bearers; or to the fact that many branches had very few Guild meetings (whether committee or general) in the first years of their existence, and sometimes no written constitution. These suggestions about sources await further and more detailed investigation of the Woman's Guild to be tested against a broader base of evidence than I have been able to uncover.

2. Not only is there a problem of quantity, but also of quality. All of the Woman's Guild minute books which I have seen generally give brief and formulaic information, with little detail or discussion of the activities, work, results, opinions or individuals involved in local branches. What they provide tend to be short accounts of occasional *meetings*, rather than of the *work* women did for the agencies and concerns of their local church, and it was the latter which was promoted as the *raison d'être* for the Guild from its inception. As Charteris liked to remark, 'Our Guild is not a guild for meetings but for service'.⁴

Kirk Session minutes likewise usually constitute a formal record of parish statistics, with little to suggest that session meetings were fora for wide-ranging or theological discussion about the life, organisation or purpose of the parish church. Since their function was oversight and discipline, most ministers and sessions would not have regarded such debates as appropriate. The fact that Woman's Guilds are rarely mentioned in the minutes of Raith and St Mary's churches should not be taken as firm evidence that they lacked recognition or significance within these churches, because hardly anything appears about other organisations either. In this and other instances, some of the conjecture contained in the case study is based on *absence* of information and comment, rather than on clear or positive evidence.

3. I have made use of some supplementary material relating to the two parishes which form the basis of this study. These include parish newsletters, local press reports, local and church history contained in published books and pamphlets, and conversations with individuals who have had personal involvement in the parishes concerned.⁵ Again, it is important to note that the quality of information available from these sources is variable, but they have been useful for cross-checking facts, and for developing a picture of the ecclesiastical and socio-economic contexts of the two parishes.

In summary, this case study is potentially problematic for several reasons. The comparisons made are based on two branches which have been selected, not because they fulfil certain criteria for being representative of many other branches, but simply because no other choices were available. For that reason, I am reluctant to extrapolate any more general conclusions about the state and development of the Guild throughout Scotland from the material considered here, although in conjunction with the Guild sources referred to above, some speculation may not be unreasonable! I also fear that the nature of the sources may not bear the weight of some of the issues under consideration - questions about class, power, authority, and the relationship between church and society. Nevertheless, I hope that the study will yield some useful information and insights about women in two very different parishes, and about the organisation which has played a key role in shaping the image and experiences of women within presbyterianism during the past century.

2. The Local Context

It is fortunate that the two parishes for which I have found enough materials to conduct a study exemplify very different social, historical, geographical and ecclesiastical manifestations of the national church at local level. In this section I shall give a brief historical description of St Mary's Church, Bellevue Place, Edinburgh, and of Raith Parish Church, Kirkcaldy.

St Mary's Church

The church, which was originally known as Bellevue Church, was opened for public worship on Sunday 12 December 1823. It was designed by the Town Master of Works, Thomas Brown, and built to serve the community formed by the second extension of Edinburgh New Town, which was developed east and north of Heriot Row from 1802. The Acts of Parliament extending the Royalty of the burgh required the provision of a building for the Established Church, at the city magistrates' expense, whenever there was a population of five thousand in an area. Bellevue (which was renamed St Mary's in 1825) was the third church of Edinburgh New Town, following St Andrew's and St George's. Money for erection was raised, in part, by loans which, on a sliding scale, entitled donors to rent pews in the best parts of the church. The parish was mainly upper and middle class in composition, and office-bearers were drawn from the large ranks of wealthy and professional families. Lawyers, merchants and bankers dominate the Kirk Session rolls of St Mary's. Robert Stevenson, lighthouse builder and grandfather of R L Stevenson, was an elder in the early years. Leading members during the period of this study included the Miller family (which owned one of the largest building companies in Scotland) and the Murray family, one of whom, Sir Andrew, became Lord Provost of the city from 1947-51. But there were also poorer residents - mostly artisans and servants. In 1827, the Kirk Session reported that 'the meaner part of the parish lay west of Union

Street and north of Picardy Place...three hundred children of the labouring and lower classes reside in the parish, and weekday schools exclusively for the higher classes do not meet the needs of the parish.¹⁶ A parochial school was built at Canonmills, and among other staff, Miss Joan Tait was appointed as sewing mistress in 1850. She served in that capacity, for a salary of £25 per annum, until the school closed in 1875. She was also required to teach in the Sunday Evening School, and to attend services to assist with the oversight of children. In 1876 she was appointed to work as Bible Woman and Assistant Almoner in the parish, and she continued working with the poor of the parish until 1887. The writer of a pamphlet on the history of St Mary's discovered that of the whole parish, only Abercromby Place and Great King Street had no resident on the Poor Roll, or had no children educated in whole or part at the Kirk Session's expence. ⁷

St Mary's Parish Magazine, November 1888, gives an impression of church life just at the time when the Woman's Guild was being sanctioned and established at a national level. There were fifteen elders to serve a congregation of around 1500, and the minister appealed for more men to consider accepting office. There was a Literary Association and a Fellowship Association, both apparently restricted to male membership. The latter, meeting on Sabbath mornings before worship, was intended to issue in 'nobler, manlier lives'. For women, there was a monthly Mission Work Party,

but concern was expressed that it was not as widely supported as it might be:

'There must be many ladies in the Congregation who are able to spare two hours once a month to show practically their sympathy with its objects. Will they come and see for themselves whether they cannot in this way promote the cause of Missions, while their own interests in our congregational agencies is also increased.' ⁸

The magazine also lists an afternoon Mother's Meeting, and encourages members to attend the Parish Work Society Sale, which sold garments made by the poor of the parish and congregation. A lack of enthusiasm for this venture is also implied:

Surely they ought not to be crippled in carrying on so good a work, through lack of purchasers. If members of the congregation would only take a little interest in the matter there would be no such lack.' ⁹ There is a report of

a course of health lectures given by Dr Catherine J Urquhart, which were intended for the working class of the district, but 'were largely taken advantage of by all classes'. Another series of lectures was planned. The minister in charge was Dr Cornelius Giffin. In 1896, Rev Thomas Martin was appointed as his assistant and successor. In 1901, Rev John Findlay was inducted, and in 1915, he was succeeded by Rev Andrew Laurence, who remained at St Mary's for many years.

In the late 19th century, St Mary's was a church with a large and wealthy, mainly upper and middle class congregation. It had an organ installed in 1880 (a congregational vote in favour was the first to ballot women), and worship was led by a choir which included paid

singers. The presence in the parish of a substantial service and working class is evident from the above sources, and from occupations listed in the baptismal register. ¹⁰ But church archives suggest that attitudes towards the poor in the church and area ranged from concerned paternalism to indifference, rather than evangelical enthusiasm. The impression is that lay participation in church work and organisations was generally undertaken as a matter of convention (if at all). There is little indication of members undertaking such work within the positive ecclesiological framework propounded by Charteris.

Raith Parish Church

Raith church was founded in 1875 as a mission to serve the needs of Linktown - an area to the west of Kirkcaldy which experienced rapid industrial expansion and diversification during the nineteenth century. The population of Kirkcaldy grew from 8000 in 1801 to 30,000 by the end of the century, and Linktown, which had been a separate Burgh of Barony, was incorporated into the Royal Burgh of Kirkcaldy in 1876. The area fell within the bounds of Abbotshall Parish Church, and minutes of a meeting of the Kirk Session held on February 2 1875, report that it had long been convinced of the need for a missionary and mission church in Linktown where the population of over three thousand was mostly non churchgoing. Abbotshall Session gave hearty approval to a scheme to purchase the old Linktown Free Church building,

which had been vacant since 1869, (when that congregation moved to the High Street and was renamed Abbotshall Free Church).¹¹ The General Assembly Home Mission Committee agreed to pay £59 per annum to enable the appointment of a missionary. The first service was held in the building on September 26 1875. Dr Begg of the Home Mission Committee presided at a celebration of the Lord's Supper, and sixty people attended. In 1877 Linktown Mission obtained a Chapel Constitution, which meant that the missionary could be ordained. In 1878 Rev Thomas Scott became minister, elected by a roll of eighty-five communicants. In 1883 considerable alterations and additions were made to the building, and in 1884 the church was erected into the parish of Raith. In September 1888, Rev David L Francis was ordained, and he remained at Raith until his illness and death in 1927. He was succeeded by Rev William Conway.

Linktown is a long, narrow westward extension from Kirkcaldy High Street towards Seafield, where two failed attempts to work a colliery have been made. The main thoroughfare is Links Street, which runs parallel with the Esplanade (known before 1922 as Sands Street). Numerous narrow wynds connect them. By the late nineteenth century, the district was crowded with small terraced houses, which provided accommodation for people employed in a range of industries. The oldest of these were the linen mills, dyeworks and bleachfields, including those belonging to Robert Philp, who left a trust fund for the education,

books and clothing of children from Kirkcaldy and Linktown, and Lockharts linen factory. A Brick and Tile Works was started in 1714 by William Roberston and William Adam (father of the architects Robert and James - they designed a fine house in Links Street for a local linen manufacturer). In 1810 a pottery was built, which produced fine ware until its closure in 1928. The mills and pottery gave employment to many who lived in Raith Parish, including women. But other businesses and industries were also located in Linktown - breweries, lemonade bottling, tallow works, leather works, gas works, ropeworks, footwear, clay pipe factory and a cycle factory. There were many shops, co-ops and small businesses along the length of Links Street. The stands at Stark's Park, home of Raith Rovers FC, were built in Pratt Street between 1896 and 1914. In 1922-3, a government-sponsored scheme used unemployed men - including many itinerant Roman Catholic labourers who lived in what was known as 'Irish Close' - to erect the Esplanade Wall, with the intention of turning Kirkcaldy seafront into a Scottish Blackpool - a plan which never materialised!

Raith Parish was located in an industrial working class area, but there were some large houses erected by earlier manufacturers and entrepreneurs, and some middle class residential property in the streets around the boundary between Raith and Abbotshall parishes - particularly Milton Road, where a manse was built for Raith in 1895. However,

oral testimony confirms the strongly working class character of the rows and wynds - some of which were regarded as slums and 'no go' areas, and were 'cleared' in the 1920s.¹²

On the communicants roll of those eligible to vote in the first call in 1878, all listed occupations for men and women were industrial or commercial - shoemakers, potters, grocer, tailor etc. Most of the families which played a prominent role in the life of the church were involved in business, clerical and artisan occupations, eg the Brodie family, which owned a shoemaking and leather business; the Christie family - father was a builder, son a master butcher (and session clerk for many years); the Archibald family - father was employed in the ropeworks, son was a lawyer's clerk. Apart from Rev David Paterson, who was a town councillor and first session clerk, I have found no evidence of any pre-1930 office bearer who belonged to a profession. The Thomsons, a prominent local legal family, were involved in the church from the 1930s. There is some evidence of social aspiration and upward mobility within many stalwart church families, between first, second and third generations. A number of families who moved out of the parish to newly built owner-occupied and rented accommodation in other parts of the town during the first decades of the new century retained membership of Raith Church.

Unlike St Mary's, during the period of study, almost all of the unmarried women of the parish were employed - most

commonly as weavers, millworkers and in the potteries, but also as servants, shop assistants, bottlers, clerkesses and brickworkers.

A *Life and Work* parish supplement, dating from November 1888, includes a message from the new minister, Rev D L Francis, who speaks of the 'deep waters of trial and struggle' through which the congregation had just passed. The Church calendar lists worship, Sabbath school, a Young Men's and Women's Guild, meeting on Sabbath mornings at 10 am, the Band of Hope, a weekly prayer meeting, and the choir. The tone struck is earnestly evangelical.¹³

Oral testimony suggests that Mr Francis was apparently held in high regard for his commitment to, and intimate knowledge of, all his parishioners.

3. Origins of the Woman's Guild

The rules and regulations of the Church of Scotland Woman's Guild, which were approved by the 1887 General Assembly, laid down that

'The general object shall be to unite together all women who are engaged in the service of Christ in connection with the Church, or desire to give help to any practical Christian work in the parish, as well as all who are receiving Christian teaching and looking forward to Christian service.

Parish branches, therefore, may take whatever form may seem most desirable to the minister and Kirk Session for making a parochial union with the above-named object in view. It is intended that the Bible class, congregational associations, work party, Dorcas society, tract distributors, Sabbath School teachers, choir and others similarly occupied, shall be incorporated in a branch, or in separate branches, and members regarded as individual members. Other workers might also, in special circumstances, be enrolled as individual members, though there is no branch in their parish or congregation.'¹⁴

It is clear that Charteris and the other founding fathers believed that the congregation was to be the keystone of the Guild organisation. On the basis of individual commitment to prayer and service, branches would be a source of fellowship, training, devotional life, practical work and the development of female leadership. As I have argued in chapter two, the union envisaged was to be grounded in a kind of conservative maternalism, which did not challenge the ranks and orders of society, but would infuse these with a spirit of concerned benevolence. So young women would find within the Guild

'teaching for themselves, work they can do for others, friends in those above them in social rank, ahead in the experience of life, and especially of Christian life.'¹⁵

How did these objects and organisational principles influence and shape the establishment of the two local branches in this study?

a) St Mary's

The minute book for St Mary's branch of the Woman's Guild opens with an entry recording that on January 11 1898, a meeting was chaired and addressed by Rev T Martin, minister, on the aim of the Woman's Guild. It was thereafter resolved to form a branch in connection with St Mary's Church. A committee of ten women was appointed: Mrs Martin was president, Mrs Frazer of Canonmills Lodge was secretary, and eight others represented the following bodies of church workers: district visitors, missionary work party, choir, children's church monitors, collectors,

Sunday School teachers, magazine distributors. The meeting resolved to have a voluntary annual subscription, limited to one shilling, and to hold one or two General Meetings of the Guild annually. At the close of the meeting, about sixty members were enrolled.¹⁶

Although the Kirk Session had met on January 10, there is no record from this or previous Session meetings to indicate that the setting up of the Guild, and the particular form it should take, were discussed by the ruling body of the church. And there is no way of knowing whether the inauguration of the new branch represented a groundswell of enthusiasm among women workers of the church; or the personal initiative of Mr Martin; or perhaps pressure from the General Assembly's Life and Work Committee, which (through the Woman's Guild Central Committee) by 1898 had several approaches for encouraging the formation of new branches. However, the minute book reports of the first (and subsequent) year of St Mary's Guild suggest that the impetus came largely from the national organisation, supported by the minister. There were three general and three committee meetings held, and all were concerned, in different ways, with drawing St Mary's WG into the ethos and structures of the movement. At the first branch meeting on March 7 1898, Miss Anderson, DCS, a national deputy for the Guild,

'spoke earnestly on the advantages to be derived from the Guild, amongst others of its being a means of drawing together different branches of workers and thereby widening their sympathies, and of enabling every member to find some

work to do, however small, not merely for her own congregation or parish, but for the Church of Christ.'

At the next meeting, on May 18, Christian Martin, branch president and wife of the minister, gave a report of the WG Annual Conference, which had been held in Perth. The committee, meeting in October, elected three delegates to attend meetings of the Edinburgh Provincial Council, and received a request, made through the Kirk Session, to support the Guild's Deaconess Hospital. In November, the general meeting was addressed on various branches of WG work by Miss Johston, who was the national secretary. Those present resolved that the branch should raise £20 per annum to defray half the expenses of maintaining a bed at the Hospital. It was agreed to hold an annual sale of work for that purpose, and to raise funds for foreign missions.

At the first Annual Meeting, in November 1899, it was reported that there were 108 members, and a balance of £3.19.9. Three delegates had attended monthly meetings of the Provincial Council, and members were involved in working for the range of congregational agencies represented on the committee. The guest speaker, Miss Anderson DCS (sister-in-law of Dr Charteris), impressed upon members not to forget the promises on the Guild membership card.¹⁷ And the report concluded, with a note of satisfaction and optimism, that 'The success of our branch may be gratefully regarded as a sure augury of its increasing success and prosperity in the future.'

b) Raith

The origins of this branch of the Guild were rather different. It had its roots in the Young Men's and Young Women's Guild. The minute book held in the SRO dates from 1891, but the YM&YW Guild existed in 1888 (see reference above to parish supplement). This organisation was like a Bible Class or Fellowship Association for young men and women, chaired by the minister and meeting at 10 am on Sabbath mornings, before public worship. It began with praise and prayer, then members, both male and female, read papers on Biblical and devotional topics, and there was some response and comment from others. Occasionally business was discussed, and there was a group of office-bearers. For the session 1893-94, Rev D Francis was the honorary president, Thomas Clifton was president, Miss Watson was vice-president, and Miss McGregor the secretary.

The group apparently maintained links with the emerging national organisation of the Guild, although it did not really fulfil the 1887 objectives for the Woman's Guild. On November 22, 1891, it is reported that Miss Duncan read a report of the first conference of the Young (*sic*) Woman's Guild, which had been held in Edinburgh. On April 2 1893, a quite detailed account is given of the report submitted by the Misses Watson, Barclay and McGregor, who had been delegates at the Young (*sic*) Woman's Guild Conference in Glasgow. They comment that 'Mothers Unions have been taken up, which are much the same as the 'Kitchen Meeting' work

we are at present conducting', and that a paper was read on "What may be done by girls of leisure", which was interesting but 'not of much practical use to us'. It concludes:

'I regret that we are unable to put into our report what was the best part of the Conference, the information, the spiritual uplifting and the definite blessing given by it to all who were present. We hope however to share that with in being more diligent and enthusiastic Guildswomen.' ¹⁸

In February 1894, David Francis married Katherine Pollock, from Co Monaghan in Ireland, at Keswick (where perhaps they met at the annual evangelical convention). Her arrival in Kirkcaldy marked the beginning of a significant and extensive female ministry. The parish supplements for that year show that Mrs Francis lost little time in assuming responsibility and taking new initiatives. By September she was in charge of the flower mission, the formation of a new work party, a new Junior Guild for senior members of the Band of Hope, and was announcing the introduction of an afternoon Mother's Meeting.¹⁹ The change is also evident in the minute book of the YM&YWG, which, from session 1894-5, becomes that of Raith Parish Church Woman's Guild. But the emergence of the WG as a discrete organisation took some time. During the first session, with Mrs Francis as president, the minutes report that the fellowship branch met at 10 am on Sundays, and followed the same pattern as before, but with only female attendance (presumably the young men also met separately). On September 17 Miss Duncan, the secretary, read a paper on 'The Guild and our

position as Guildswomen', and after discussion, it was agreed to hold a business meeting during that week to make arrangements for organised work as a Guild, during the winter months. At that meeting, Mr Francis chaired, and there was 'good attendance of members from various sections of the Guild'. It was agreed that the President plus two members would constitute a quorum, and that a work party should be formed, whereby each member would make and donate one article of clothing to be distributed to the poor of the parish. Members were appointed to report this to the sections: Sabbath school teachers, choir, tract distributors, sewing meeting, *Life and Work* distributors, and the prayer meeting. It was also agreed that all members of the Guild should form a general visiting committee, that prayers should be offered for a definite object, and that a 'Look Out' Committee be formed to report on irregular church attenders.

Throughout the rest of the session, the fellowship meeting had discussions on prayer, and Old Testament Women. There were joint meetings with the YMG, with speakers on India, Gospel Temperance and Sunday School teaching, and also for a social. The Guild arranged a Gospel Temperance Service to which sixty non-churchgoing women were invited.

At the start of the next session, on October 13 1895, the fellowship meeting reverted to being a mixed group. Women contributed with solo singing, occasional prayers and

essays, but most of the papers and discussions were sustained by the male members. However, another attempt to organise the WG on a sound footing was made at a meeting of women workers held in the manse on December 8 1896. Mr Francis explained the composition and methods of work of the WG, and those present agreed to form a branch, uniting workers from the fellowship meeting, Sabbath school, sewing class, Band of Hope, parish and foreign missions. A committee of management was formed, with Mrs MacPherson as president, Miss MacGregor the vice-president, and Mrs Francis the secretary. The roll of the re-organised Guild was taken, and included sixty-one members. A united meeting with the YMG was held on 22 December, addressed by Miss Johnston and Mr McAlpine, the national secretaries of the respective Guilds. And on 22 February, the WG appointed delegates to the national conference, agreed to hold meetings once a quarter, and that each member should subscribe one shilling per annum. Even after entering into this new phase, the two Guilds continued for several years to have joint quarterly meetings.

Both St Mary's and Raith WG were established through the agency and support of the strengthening national organisation, and as a means of bringing together women already involved in different aspects of church life and work. My perception is that the Raith Guild emerged more organically from a rather evangelical ethos, within which the concept of lay work and service was enthusiastically

promoted by the minister and his wife. In general, the women of the church appeared eager to respond to their call. The notion of devotional life and Christian fellowship seems at the outset to have been more central at Raith than St Mary's, where (according to the impression conveyed by minutes) the formation of the Guild was more to do with imposition of a super-structure which was accepted willingly but fairly lightly by those involved. To explore these impressions more carefully, and the extent to which each branch took seriously the development of training and leadership among women, the next section considers the growth and activities of the two branches during 1900 - 1930, in the context of national Woman's Guild trends.

4. The development of the branches, 1900 - 1930

1900 - 1910

The new century heralded a consolidation of the Guild. The national structures of the organisation (Central Committee, Annual Conference, *Life and Work* Supplement) developed in efficiency and purpose, and represented an emerging network of women around Scotland who were drawn into an established pattern of communication, events, concerns and fundraising. The national leaders suggested an agenda for the Woman's Guild which focussed on women of all social classes who would be 'not passive units, but centres of spiritual force in every congregation'; who were rooted in the parish, but not merely parochial in their activity and vision; who would act as 'an advance in Foreign Missions, an assault

upon intemperance, a union of womanhood against impurity'. Charteris declared 'We should aim to see all women trained to work Christian work, all workers trained to nurse, and every parish Woman's Guild a model'.²⁰ In the second half of the decade, the Conference and Supplement often voiced concern that local Guilds were in danger of being regarded mainly as fundraising bodies for congregational purposes, and that devotional life should be much more important. Social issues were also addressed in these fora, especially the huge scale of poverty and economic depression, and the church's duty both to relieve and prevent these ills.²¹

The women of St Mary's branch would certainly have been aware of these issues and concerns, for they received regular reports from their delegates to the National Conference and Provincial Council, and most would at least read, if not purchase, the Supplement. However, the minutes give no indication about how (if at all) members responded. In 1900 Mr Martin was called to the Barony Church in Glasgow, and his wife was replaced as President by Miss Jopp. Her father was a Writer to the Signet, and became an elder in 1843. The Jopps were a wealthy and prominent family, whose donations to the church included a baptismal font. Mrs Mungle (who was married to a surgeon, and whose daughter was a missionary in Calcutta) was vice-President, and Miss Agnes Lauder was the secretary. These three held office throughout the decade. By 1909 there was a committee of around twenty members, not all of whom

directly represented different aspects of women's involvement in the church. Guild membership each year was around 120, although a much smaller number paid the voluntary subscription (71 in 1901, 58 for 1906-7, only 20 for 1908-9). The average attendance at branch meetings was rarely above thirty. At these meetings, which happened two or three times in the year, addresses were given on Foreign Mission themes, and on variations of the topic, 'The Guild - its aims and work', by missionaries, national officials and deputies, or by Mr Findlay, the St Mary's minister. While there is no way of knowing the exactly what went on in the Dorcas society and the work parties, or how much visiting of sick and poor was done, the only mention of temperance is a note that tracts were given out at the end of one of the meetings. The impression conveyed by the limited evidence contained in the minutes is of a congregational organisation which was more passive than active in support of the national WG agenda - and without a particularly strong identity. Committed members were in the minority (if judged by attendance at meetings and payment of subscriptions). Leadership positions, once filled, did not change, and during this decade, only Miss Jopp, the president, received official recognition in the form of a Guild leader diploma and badge, in 1905. There is no indication of training of the kind which Charteris envisaged. Branch meetings, infrequent as they were, (and usually chaired by the minister) were about hearing of other people's work, and other people's views as to what

the Guild could or should be. Nor is there anything in the minutes to suggest much devotional fervour. These impressions may be quite erroneous and unfair, but the sources give no indication to the contrary.

The distinctive new activity which St Mary's Guild undertook was the annual Sale of Work, which raised substantial sums for church initiatives at home and abroad. The first sale, in 1899, raised £73.10.7, which was disbursed as follows:

bed in Deaconess Hospital	20
Women's Association for Home Missions (WAHM)	12
Women's Association for Foreign Missions (WAFM)	10
Women's Association for Jewish Missions (WAJM)	3
Kalimpong Mission	2
Bonnington Church Building Fund	5
Parochial objects and general expenses	21.10.7

During the decade, the Sale raised up to £90 each year, and added to the list of recipients were the Guild Temperance Cottage, the Robertson Orphanage (managed by the WG) and the Social Work Committee of the Church, which was constituted in 1904. The Kirk Session received regular donations for parish purposes.

It is somewhat easier to assess the activities and ethos of Raith WG 1900-1910 because the minutes are not devoid of all detail, but are a bit more discursive than those of St Mary's. They also include some references to the ongoing work of Guild members, and are couched in language which

indicates the ideological and devotional framework within which the leaders understood the nature of the Guild. There also exists a minute book for the Sewing Class, which was one of the most important and enduring groups in which Guild members were actively involved.

Raith WG began the new century in poor shape. Mrs Francis was president and Mrs MacPherson (who also came from Ireland and joined the church in 1893) was vice-president - positions they occupied for many years. There were sixty-six names on the WG roll for 1900-1. Quarterly meetings were still held jointly with the YMG, and during 1900, attendance struggled to attain double figures, while only five or six people were in the habit of going to the weekly fellowship meetings. This may have been due in part to Mrs Francis's severe illness, which had prevented her husband from taking up a six-month secondment by the General Assembly's Life and Work Committee to be a Mission Preacher. However, by 1901, things were picking up. Thirty-five people were present in July when Miss Todd's report from the Annual Conference at Stirling, which had focussed on temperance, 'aroused warm discussion'. Those who contributed with suggestions about what could be done in Raith were mainly men, but Miss Trotter ventured that the WG could do far more, and proposed that it should meet monthly. While this was not taken up, the women did begin to meet separately, except for a united social each December. From 1902, attendance at the meetings ranged

between 35 and 55. They followed a common pattern of praise, prayer and Scripture reading, business (including reports from provincial council and annual conference), and then an address on a religious theme. This was usually given by Mrs Francis, but occasionally by her husband, another member or guest. There were solos and recitals by members, and tea was usually served. Unlike St Mary's, outside speakers were the exception, and the quarterly meetings attended more to the work in which members were engaged, or were planning. The areas of concern identified at national level were picked up locally, although it is not always clear whether proposed action was sustained. For example, temperance was obviously a living conviction, both personally and collectively, within Raith church. During the closing years of the 1890s, the Central Committee of the WG had incorporated the work of the Women's Temperance Association of the Church, and established a Joint Temperance Council. During 1900 and 1901, the Council actively encouraged local branches to pledge that they would engage in 'some definite aggressive temperance work'.²² Raith responded by suggesting that a united temperance meeting be held once a month at the weekly Prayer meeting, and that temperance should be part of the Sabbath School programme. On March 24 1902, the minutes note that 'the Coffee Barrow was brought up and discussed amongst us'. This no doubt refers to an idea which, in different forms, was mooted as part of temperance work by many church agencies (see chapter 5). Nothing more is

mentioned about these initiatives. In July 1904, a special Guild meeting was held to arrange for members to help with the work at the Guild Temperance Tent, which was to be present as a counter-attraction to the beer tents at Thornton Games. Mrs Braid reported on the occasion to the September meeting and was mandated to propose to the Provincial Council that religious meetings should be held in the tent the next year. However, that is the last mention of the Temperance Tent. In March 1907, 'a few words were spoken on temperance and leaflets given out'. In March 1909, it was 'decided to have a counter-attraction at the Links Market [a fair held annually in Kirkcaldy, and dating back to the medieval period], and arrangements were made'. So the general impression is conveyed of an ongoing gospel temperance concern (and this is supported by a glance at the programmes of the Sewing Class, and by personal recollection of members who had 'signed the Pledge and were very strong on Total Abstinence').²³

As well as inviting foreign missionaries to speak on occasion, the Guild expressed its interest in this aspect of women's work in other ways. In September 1907, it was agreed to purchase four dozen dolls for members to dress, which would then be given for sale at the Edinburgh Bazaar which was held to reduce the WAFM deficit. In March 1908, they decided to help the mission at Blantyre by making children's garments. In March 1909, missionary letters were read at the meeting, and there was much interest in these,

which 'showed the great need for the work'.

Support for the wider Scottish work of the Guild was demonstrated - in attending and hosting provincial council meetings, sending delegates to the National Conference, visits and donations to Deaconess Hospital. In 1909 Mrs Francis told members about a visit she paid to Robertson Orphanage, and the following year two children were hosted for a fortnight's summer holiday at the expense of Raith WG. Although the minutes for September 1910 record that they 'decided if possible to continue this little bit of work' there are no subsequent entries to confirm the intention.

Regular reports to branch meetings give an idea of the local work which women did in Raith parish. They were involved in the Band of Hope (a children's temperance organisation), the Kitchen Meeting (a small, quite informal gathering in the kitchen of a church member -sometimes the minister and an elder would attend, and communion distributed), Flower Mission (taking flowers and visiting old and ill members), Cripple League and Mothers' Meeting (held in the afternoon in the church hall). In June 1904, a Dorcas Society was formed, whereby members would do sewing and knitting at home which would then be given away as Christmas presents to some 'deserving members of the congregation.' The secretary reports that 'this new branch of Woman's Guild work was entered into in a heady manner by the members.' No other details of these agencies for

service are given, but there is a separate minute book for Raith Sewing Class, which gives a helpful insight into one important channel of communication between the women of Raith church, and the working girls of the parish.

Raith Sewing Class

The book begins with a page of rules for the class, which was instituted in October 1889, for the 'social, moral and spiritual improvement of the young women of Raith Church and Parish'. A note from Mr Francis declares that 'the same rules have been used till now - June 13 1901, when this minute book was obtained and written up'. It is clear that the minister was directly involved in the class -especially in its first years, and considered it to be an important influence on the young women of the parish.²⁴

Those who joined the class ordered and bought materials by instalments and sewed garments, with assistance from leaders, during the weekly meetings. Each week there was also some 'improving content' - speakers, prayers, music etc. The rules state that 'no member shall be allowed to remain idle, but must be occupied with work during the meeting', and 'no member must persist in talking during the opening and closing exercises or while the speaker is speaking.'

The first report of the class was made for session 1894-95, when Mrs Francis took over as president. There were eleven

office-bearers (all Guild members) and eighty members. £36.15.11 passed through the treasurer's books, and £1.2.6 surplus (after paying suppliers) was donated to church funds. By 1901-2, there were 20 committee members and 100 class members. 150 garments were cut out, and £72.12.0 received. After paying bills, £7.5.7 was disbursed to Kirkcaldy Female Mission, Open-air Organ Fund, linoleum for church pews, rebinding of pulpit Bible, purchase of scissors, cups and saucers, and to the church Fabric Fund. The President's report for the session gives a typical impression of what the class did, and how it was perceived by those responsible for its organisation:

'If the class fails [in its moral and spiritual aims] it cannot be held to be a success. There were twenty-five meetings and not a dull one among the lot. There was Bible reading and exposition every night. Nine addresses were given on, for example, Bible topics, Temperance, Social Purity and Home Nursing. There was one musical evening by the church choir, and several 'free and easy ' meetings in which solos and recitals were given by class members, with intervals for conversation. On the remaining evenings, wholesome stories were read. Such a course could hardly have been gone thru without someone receiving blessing and help...I am very hopeful that those who have attended have received impressions and thoughts that, lingering in their memories it may be for years, may save their souls from death, their eyes from tears, and their feet from falling.'

The class continued to increase in numbers and income until 1904-5, when a deficit is reported, and the committee of Guildswomen were apparently dissatisfied with the behaviour and attitude of many members. Indeed, the impression conveyed is that the sewing class had become a mainly social club which was veering out of the control of the committee. People were coming from beyond Raith, not much

work was being done, payments were not fully made, materials were being used for purposes other than members' own garments, and girls were coming and going throughout meetings and throughout the session. It would be interesting to know about all of this, and the resulting tensions, from the perspective of class members, but it is clear that those in charge felt their objectives were being subverted, and more stringent rules were introduced for the next session. These had the effect of greatly reducing the membership, but the president was happy that the committee had regained moral and fiscal control. In 1906 she reported:

'Every article is paid for - something unheard of in any preceeding year. A further improvement was the increase in plain sewing done. A new element in the programme was one or two recipes of useful household matters which were given each night, and I have no doubt that our purpose was accomplished.

In 1908, when concern about the 'Social Problem' was exercising the institutional church, Mrs Francis' president's report offered a response which was characteristic of the individualistic evangelical Protestant tradition which had tended to dominate Scottish church life since the Disruption. (Though of course there were also Scottish evangelicals who were committed to the importance of collective social or political change). For Mrs Francis (and by extension, for Raith WG), the issues were not to be addressed by engaging with social structures and political processes, but rather by shaping and saving the lives of individual working women. On April 2 1908, she declared at the annual meeting of the class:

'In the *Scotsman* of yesterday, the president of the Woman's Guild, the Hon Mrs Scott, speaking at the Conference in Paisley, urged members to take an interest in the many social problems coming before the country, such as Morality, Sweating and Temperance. As Christian women, she said, we had a special responsibility towards young people. As a committee we have not failed in this, but by providing healthy stories to be read, the gospel, addresses which included temperance and morality, solos and recitatives - all of which, if allowed to sink into the heart, cannot fail to produce a harvest of holy and pure living.

In the material part of the class, through which we have the opportunity of showing how true Christian character can reveal itself in practical work, each member can purchase any article of underclothing, at the same price she would pay in the shop, with the advantage, she is taught how to cut it out and put it together and finish ready for use, and when paid for it becomes her own. In this way we seek to lay the foundation of honesty, thrift and economy, which in the future we trust will prove the basis of a Godly character.'

The sewing class continued to produce a regular financial surplus, which was used to support various church and other agencies. The Guild branch, as such, was less enthusiastic about organising regular fundraising events. In 1901 a Jumble Sale was held in October, and in 1905, a note mentions that the Dorcas Society are to hold a Sale of Work. In September 1906, as part of a general discussion about the work and progress of the Guild, some consideration was given to what might be done to add to funds, but 'no definite plan was formed'. In March 1908, the possibility of holding a Cake and Candy or a Jumble Sale was raised, and a Jumble Sale was held in May 1908. At the Executive Committee meeting on August 30 1910, it was decided not to run a Cake and Candy Stall that year, because some members considered it 'to be under the standard of true Christian giving.' Indeed, when requests

for money were made to the Guild, they were likely simply to give envelopes to members, with a direct appeal for help. The minister and his wife set the tone for this approach. At the branch meeting in September 1910, Mr Francis opened with an address on Christian Liberality, and Mrs Francis ended by talking about Christian giving, 'her words were inspiring, leading up as they did to the high standard of self-sacrifice as seen in the life and death of Christ.'

Concepts of work and leadership similar to those expounded by Dr Charteris informed the structures and development of Raith WG. The Guild Roll for 1900-01 notes which areas of church service each member is involved in. A book of church statistics, kept by Mr Francis and begun in 1903, similarly includes lists of helpers in church work. It includes 50 men, and over 100 women.²⁵ In leadership Mrs Francis, supported by Mrs MacPherson, was clearly the driving force, and she was decorated with the Guild Leader's Diploma and Brooch at a service in December 1903.²⁶ Mrs McPherson received the Diploma in 1905. But other women also shared in organisation, administration, planning and worship. At the meeting on September 26 1909, Guild members were given the opportunity to vote for those they felt ought to be added to the number of Guild Leaders. At the evening service on December 1, after delivering an address on Women's Work, Mr Francis awarded the diploma and badge, on behalf of the Kirk Session and the Life and Work Committee,

to Mrs Braid, Mrs Campbell, Mrs Martin, Miss McGregor and Miss Russell.

1911 - 1920

During the pre-war years, the national Guild leadership, as part of the Life and Work Committee, continued to co-ordinate a range of agencies and initiatives in training, home mission and social work. They also used conferences, Supplement pages and travelling deputies in attempts to promote a general interest in the educational, industrial and (to a lesser extent) political situation of women, without ever asserting specific positions or opinions on major issues such as the women's suffrage campaign.²⁷

But the guiding principle for the Guild seemed to be a focus on the duty of women as homemakers and the 'binding force' in family, church, nation and empire. This reflected the widespread Edwardian interest in extending women's domestic role into the social domain, and to couch that role in terms of citizenship, responsibility, philanthropy. So Miss Martin, editor of the Supplement, in an address on 'The Imperial Work of the Guild' argued that

'The one great duty of the Woman's Guild was to create a 'home atmosphere' in churches. This was essentially women's work and service which they - and they alone - could render in sweetening and brightening lonely lives in our parishes. Men were as incapable of making a *home* in church as in ordinary life, and without this atmosphere young people would never be drawn into vital contact with the Church...Scots sons and daughters have a great imperial part to play, and for this, women at Home must prepare them with care and diligence.'²⁸

With the advent of the First World War, the Guild encouraged members to demonstrate their patriotism and faith in work, prayer and attitudes. In 1914, when there was general concern about drinking, and especially among wives of servicemen, a special effort was made to recruit Guildswomen into the League of Honour for Women and Girls of the Empire, which pledged purity and abstinence from alcohol during hostilities. The Central Committee also recommended that branches work to provide garments and comforts for those in action, and to support various relief agencies, for example the Red Cross and the Belgian Refugee Fund. A Guild League of Intercession was established to replace the annual conference, which was suspended during the war. Branches were encouraged to hold local prayer meetings, and resource materials were made available. Towards the end of the war, a sub-committee on War Work was set up, to organise huts, canteens and other recreational facilities for women serving in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, and other forms of military or munitions work. Such efforts required the voluntary help and financial support of local Guild members.

Although the organisation of the Woman's Guild was considerably disrupted, and membership fell slightly, the national income actually increased, and all the agencies were maintained. Local branches, and individual members, were asked to make special efforts through the Halfpenny League, which was established to meet any shortfall in

funds.

One obvious impact of the war on the Guild was a heightened awareness of the potential of young women, and also the danger that those who had experienced a whole new world of work, relative prosperity and freedom, might turn their backs on Church work and organisations. In 1917, the national Guild structures were reviewed and re-organised to include a Girls' Section for those aged fifteen to thirty, based on the model of the UFC Girls' Auxiliary. The Central Committee also undertook hospitality work, in Edinburgh and other university towns, in an effort to sustain church contact with students away from home. And in 1919 the War Work Committee was dissolved and re-appointed to conduct Welfare Work by establishing hostels and residences for young single women.

It is difficult to assess to what extent all of this made an impact on the Guild at St Mary's. There were few obvious changes, either in leadership or activity, during this period. In 1910, Miss Lindsay replaced Miss Lauder as secretary, but otherwise the office-bearers continued unchallenged, and in 1911 the whole committee, with one exception, remained unchanged. There was apparently some dissatisfaction with this situation, because Mrs White gave notice of a motion that in future three committee members retire annually, and three new members be elected. However, when the motion was discussed, in February 1912, equal

numbers voted for and against, and so 'matters remain as formerly'. Meetings up to and during the war years usually had speakers on some aspect of the Guild or women's work. In February 1911, Miss Irvine, secretary of the WAHM, spoke about the social work being done by Parish Sisters in Police Courts and Lodging Houses. In November, Miss Martin gave an address on Individual Responsibility in the Guild - a theme which the Central Committee were keen to promote - and urged each to 'service, self-sacrifice and prayer'. In November 1914, Miss Dods, DCS spoke about different branches of Guild work at home and abroad, and encouraged members to support the League of Honour for Women and Girls of the Empire. There were also foreign mission evenings, social meetings, and the usual reports from Council and Conferences. In 1913, at Mr Findlay's suggestion, a delegate from the Guild was sent to an interdenominational summer school at Dollar. A home baking competition was organised that winter. During session 1913-14, three committee and two general meetings were held. There were 155 women on the Guild roll, and the annual Sale of Work raised £82.15.

The war impinged on the Guild in some direct ways. In October 1914 the committee discussed the possibility of organising congregational work on behalf of soldiers and sailors from the church. It was agreed to ask the Kirk Session for money to buy materials, and that work (sewing and knitting) would be given out on Thursday evenings. In

1916, it is recorded that the Guild organised the sending of Christmas gifts to members in action. A substantial proportion of proceeds from the annual sale (which in 1916 raised 110.18.3) was given to different purposes connected with the war. And in May 1916 the guest speaker was Miss Mulligan, who told members about her visits to military hospitals in France. Many Guild members from across Scotland volunteered to serve in hospitals, canteens, and other ancillary services at the Front, although there is no indication as to whether, or which, St Mary's members were directly involved in this. The Guild met even less frequently during the war years, and discussed whether to continue the monthly evening work party in blackout conditions. If any impression can be drawn of the impact which war had on the Guild, it is that there was a diminution of collective activity, although individual members were active in paid and voluntary war work. This at any rate is implied in the report given of a social meeting held on February 4 1919, chaired by the minister, Mr Laurence. He explained that the purpose of the meeting was 'to try to draw members together again, since War Work was nearly over, and he asked for suggestions of how the work of the WG might be improved. Various plans were discussed in a friendly and informal manner'.

In fact, it may be that the arrival of Mr Laurence in 1915, and his marriage in 1917 to Charlotte Mackenzie, was of more immediate consequence to the organisation of the Guild. He seemed to take a much greater direct and proactive role in proceedings than his predecessor. And in

May 1918, calling attention to the fact that the Guild had operated for twenty years without a constitution, he submitted a draft for approval. The terms of this perhaps indicate what Laurence perceived as some of the shortcomings of a body which, he believed, was failing to utilise its resources or achieve its potential. It stated that the Guild would

'consist of all women connected with the congregation who, in loyalty to Jesus Christ, seek the highest development of their own spiritual life, promotion of Christian fellowship, and furtherance of the Kingdom of God, by all such means as the needs of the times suggest'.

A slimmed down committee was proposed, from which three members would retire each year in rotation, and be ineligible for re-election for one year. Due intimation and notice was to be given of both annual and committee meetings, and the Guild 'shall meet at regular intervals in pursuance of its devotional, social and practical aims.'

The secretary records that 'after a little discussion, it was agreed to adopt the proposed constitution as a whole'.

At this meeting the usual office-bearers were re-elected, but it seems that the president, Miss Jopp was from this time frequently ill and absent, and that her responsibilities were increasingly assumed by others - in particular by the minister's wife. Oral recollections suggest that Charlotte (Lottie), who was a schoolmaster's daughter from Thurso, came to Edinburgh to attend University, and befriended Rodney Murray, daughter of a leading (if sometimes truculent) elder and lawyer, A A A Murray W.S, and sister of Andrew who was later to become

Lord Provost. She attended church with Miss Murray, and married Andrew Laurence in 1917 (when he was thirty-four). Although she was not yet an official of the Guild, but simply a member of the committee, Mrs Laurence's name crops up in connection with a number of suggestions made for developing the work of the branch. At a committee meeting in May 1919, she proposed that a branch of the Girls' Guild should be started in the church. In October she suggested that the afternoon work party should meet fortnightly instead of monthly, 'as there was a great need for work for our Sale of Work'. Although the General Meeting in May that year returned the usual office-bearers, Mrs Mungle announced her retirement in February 1920, and Mrs Laurence was recommended as the new vice-president.

The following month's general meeting was an 'informal and friendly' discussion about how the Guild as a whole could be improved. At the AGM in May, it was decided that during the following session, there should be tea, music and talks on subjects of interest at the monthly evening work party. In October 1920, an idea which the Laurences had pursued was accepted, and a plan was drawn up to visit absent Guild members. Their arrival at St Mary's apparently acted as a catalyst, boosted by the constitutional changes at national level, for reconsideration of the structures, role and activities of the Woman's Guild, and for a shift in gear which was quite marked during the 1920s.

The Guild at Raith continued to respond to the needs and concerns of the time, as perceived by the members, in the context of prayer and evangelical instruction. During 1912, meetings seem to have focussed particularly on Foreign Missions, and in December, there was an evening of intercessory prayer:

'We prayed for the foreign missions of the church, each of twelve members taking up in prayer one particular part of the field. Then we held in remembrance friends who have left the congregation and gone abroad. There was a good attendance and a rich consciousness of the Holy Spirit's presence'.

In March 1914, Mrs Martin, retiring treasurer, gave an address on the text, 'A wise woman buildeth her house', which was found to be 'instructive, and full of solemn warning. The meeting closed with members 'joining hands and fervently repeating the words, "The Lord watch between me and thee while absent one from the other". On September 28 that year, the meeting was given over entirely to prayer - considered 'necessary and fitting as we are passing through a time of war'. This rapid response to the suggestion from Guild headquarters was not surprising for a branch which took its spiritual role very seriously. In December 1915, the annual church workers' social was replaced with a gathering of praise and devotions, during which prayers were led by different workers. Other meetings are reported to have included 'much prayer' and exhortations for women to be strong at this time (of national crisis).

The content and format of quarterly meetings continued along the same lines as before. The AGM on March 14 1914 was typical. Forty-one members were present, and the meeting opened with the Guild hymn, prayer offered by Mrs Francis, and a Bible lesson. Then the office-bearers were re-elected, with Mrs Alexander replacing Mrs Martin as treasurer. A leaflet was read on Temperance, 'illustrating the power of personal influence, and urging members to become Total Abstainers'. A letter was read out from a missionary at Chamba, thanking the WG for dresses which had been sent. Appeals for Jewish Missions, and for Dr Graham's (of the Guild Mission at Kalimpong) semi-jubilee, were intimated. And the evening closed with the prayer mentioned above.

Although no details are given of the work, it seems from the regular reports and entries in the treasurer's accounts, that there was a branch of the British Women's Temperance Association attached to Raith Guild, which Mrs Baillie served as secretary. As with other concerns, temperance was given added impetus during the war years, when it was promoted as a great patriotic duty, as well as a sign of moral self-control.

One interesting event was the visit of Dr Elizabeth Smith from Glasgow on June 12 1913. In addition to speaking at the evening WG, (when all business was postponed) she addressed a special afternoon meeting for women of the

parish. The *Fife Free Press*, June 14, commented

'She charmed and elevated her audiences as she dealt with the physical, moral and spiritual side of woman's life, and handled the difficulties that beset her...Many waited behind at the end of the meeting to talk to her privately.'

The minutes record that

'Both meetings were largely attended and the address was most instructive and much appreciated, many expressing pleasure in listening to her. It was earnestly hoped to have the Doctor pay a second visit very soon.'

Surely this Dr Smith was the same person as Dr Elizabeth Dorothea Chalmers Smith, wife of the minister at Calton Parish Church and mother of five children. If so, it is not surprising that the return visit was never made. For she was arrested on July 24 1913 and imprisoned for a notorious act of arson which she had committed as part of the suffragettes' militant campaign.²⁹

During the war years, Raith WG, like St Mary's, met even less frequently than usual. But they were involved in some practical activities - mainly provision of comforts in support of service personnel in the congregation, and of Belgian refugees. In March 1918, the Kirk Session minutes refer to a letter from Rev Dr McClymont, seeking information about what Raith Church was doing in relation to sailors and soldiers dependants:

'The Session decided to reply that a meeting for women was conducted by the ladies of the church once a week: that dependants were visited by these as well as by the elders: that ladies from the congregation took charge of one of the local YMCA canteens every fifth week.'³⁰

In April 1918, a report was given to a Guild business meeting of women's Government work, but no details are

recorded. (This probably refers to a badge which was awarded to women who made a designated number of articles for the war effort). Members agreed to give £1 to an appeal from the WG national secretary, Miss Dods, on behalf of the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps. And in March 1919 the Kirk Session appointed a committee, including Mrs Francis plus two representatives from the Guild and from the Sewing Class, to arrange welcome home meetings for demobilised men. The annual reports of the Sewing Class give a fuller (and more subjective) impression of the manner in which churchwomen, and those who belonged to their organisations, responded to the War. This is how Mrs Francis addressed the class on April 1 1915:

'We opened the session amid the awful darkness of War. As the hall was likely to be commandeered for the use of troops, it seemed at first as if we were not to have any class at all...This present class has proved to be the largest and most enthusiastic and most helpful which we have ever had. (133 members, 33 office-bearers, income £145).

Our interest in the present war has been very personal, as most of us have loved ones engaged in it at home or at the Front, and our work...was interwoven with golden strands of our woman's affection. We have done our share by knitting mufflers, socks, belts, mittens, cuffs, helmets, and sewing day and night shirts.

We also cut out and made up eleven complete layettes for Belgian Refugee mothers in Glasgow, and made a start in regular contributions to the care of Belgian Refugees in Glasgow. In this way we have...helped to keep Britain true to her promise, and cheer our Soldiers and Sailors to fight their best.

...The Committee has arranged that every member will be called upon to contribute according to our promise to support mothers and children. Each visitor will have a box covered with Belgian colours. Kitchener's Pledge of Total Abstinence has been taken by almost all the class, and the pledge of purity of the League of Honour taken by scarcely fewer members. They are binding upon us and the faithfulness with which we keep them will prove a strength to our own character, to our nation, and to the cause of God and his Righteousness. This war with all its horror, has sprung from broken vows, torn treaties and national

pride, and we are learning now through bitter experience, the value and sacredness of a promise'.

There was apparently less than universal enthusiasm for supporting Belgian refugees, for in her next report, Mrs Francis feels enjoined to comment:

'[Some of them] are no doubt by no means all that could be desired but this can be said of all people. There are really good people amongst them and is it right for us, because some of them are not desirable, to leave all in their exile and suffering without sympathy and help? Surely no person of Christian feeling would do that. Let us therefore continue to help them.'

The class flourished throughout the war years, and was probably given renewed sense of purpose, for a good deal of the sewing and knitting done was for hospitals and the Front. In 1917-18, 300 articles were knitted and sewn for the war. Meanwhile, most of the garments for members' own use were bought ready made. Towards the end of the war, numbers fell off as members went to work in munitions factories, or were prevented from attending by commitments at home. But during 1919-20, there were 175 members and 32 committee members (whose various responsibilities were to buy, cut and tack garments, and to lead one of up to 20 classes on Thursday evenings). That year, £478.11.6 went through the books, and after bills had been paid, donations were made to blind soldiers, Save the Children Fund, Fisher Girls work, the British Women's Temperance Association, Kirkcaldy Hospital, and to a Sale for WG funds. As Mrs Francis declared in her annual report,

'We do not want any of the bad spirit of "all for ourselves" which is doing so much harm today in the world...It is well for us to remember that material needs last but for a little, but the soul and its needs remain

and will press on us forever.'

While the sewing class provided a regular (and increasing) source of fundraising within Raith Church, the Guild itself did not, at this time, develop a tradition (so common in other Guild branches) of running events to make money, although there were, from time to time, small scale Cake and Candy or Bring and Buy Sales. However, the Kirk Session appeared to accept the common wisdom that the Guild would take on responsibility for raising money, by the long established practice of relying on 'lady collectors'. In March 1911, the meeting was informed that the Kirk Session had decided that the WG should take in hand the work of taking up subscriptions from the congregation in aid of funds to have the church building properly cleaned and renovated.

Raith Guild continued its practice of encouraging and recognising the participation of women in different aspects of work. Mrs Francis remained the lynchpin of the Guild and most of its agencies, and there was only one change in the Guild executive during the decade. Indeed, a policy decision seems to have been taken that there should be no change during wartime, and this is referred to in the Business Meeting minutes of 1917 and 1918. But others were clearly involved in more than passive membership - especially as delegates for wider Guild work, and as public participants in the devotional life of the Guild. And from

the beginning of the Sewing Class Session 1911-12, different committee members, in turn, took responsibility for the programme of music, readings etc which constituted the didactic, moral and entertainment element of the Class. Mrs Francis hailed the success of this experiment in her 1912 report, claiming that

'Besides being a great relief to me, it has vastly increased the interest of the Committee and lent greater variety to the nightly programme. The plan has so increased the number of helpers - singers, readers, speakers etc - as to make it impossible for me to name every individual.'

The importance accorded to participation in leadership continued, and in 1915 Mrs Robb, Mrs Baillie and Miss Blackwood were added to the roll of Guild Leaders.

1920 - 30

The post-war decade presented challenges and opportunities of increasing complexity for women - both inside the church, and in national life. A substantial number had taken advantage of higher education and professional training. Many more had enjoyed the relative freedom and prosperity of war work. Those who were not already enfranchised looked forward to that prospect in the foreseeable future. The main presbyterian churches in Scotland were moving closer to official union. At the same time, Scottish society was confronted with postwar exhaustion and moral uncertainty. It was shadowed by unemployment, poverty, social unrest and all the attendant ills of the Depression. Women who, on the one hand, had been granted enlarged citizenship were, on the other,

exhorted by church and State to relinquish economic independence and resume their domestic and childbearing duties. The threat of 'the Other' was no longer the Hun but the Tim - Irish immigrants who were demonised as moral and racial inferiors polluting Scottish stock, or the 'enemy within' - working class agitators who threatened that old order (real or imagined) to which Guild leaders appealed from time to time as the essence of their movement.³¹

The Guild as a national movement reflected some of these trends and tensions. During the 1920s, it continued the process begun during the war of reviewing and changing its structures to make it more efficient and representative, and to give it a foothold within the official committee structure of the General Assembly. The national leaders also began a process of negotiation with counterparts in the United Free Church, which would lead to the adoption of the Guild as the model for organising women in the post-1929 Church of Scotland, thus consolidating its numerical and strategic importance.

At conferences and in the Supplement, there is evidence of enthusiasm for the concept of women as citizens, with a distinctive moral role to play in public life. As one woman wrote in the WG Supplement of 1920:

'We must take upon ourselves our share of responsibility for things not being as they should be, now that we have a vote for municipal and Parish councils, for Education Authorities, and for Parliament...Something higher [than prudence] should appeal to the Christian citizen. We are members one of another; the care of the community is laid upon us.' ³²

The Woman's Guild Central Committee worked hard to get members to demonstrate that sense of responsibility in one particular campaign, which had for long been characterised as of special concern to women. On June 1 1920, the Temperance (Scotland) Act of 1913 came into operation, and gave all electors the opportunity to exercise powers of 'Local Option' by voting to make their own community 'dry'. The Supplement attempted to enthuse Guildswomen for this cause:

'We hope that the apathy so painfully evident during the election of Education Authorities will be abandoned in the great centres...But in country parishes we must not fall behind. It is a great woman's question and it falls to Temperance workers in the Woman's Guild to identify with this magnificent opportunity...If no committee for propaganda work exists make up your minds to have one...There is much 'spade-work' to do.' ³³

Another concern which exercised the leadership towards the end of the decade, was the inability or reluctance of too many Guildswomen - even local leaders - to speak in public. As the 1928 report said, 'The Guild has grievously felt the want of human wireless sets with loud speakers attached to broadcast its messages'.³⁴ A sub-committee was set up, and study schools arranged, to train members in public speaking and voice production, and to give them practice in group discussions.

The Guild perceived that the natural development of its war work was in attending to the welfare of young women who were living away from home. Hostels were established in Edinburgh and (less successfully) in Glasgow for those working in business or studying. Parties and other

gatherings were arranged for students and girls at boarding schools. The Church of Scotland's scheme for Social work (which ran various residential and therapeutic institutions for unfortunate or 'inadequate' females) was supported, and also the campaign for women police officers and working in Juvenile Courts. There was a more general concern that those young men and women who were returning from war service found churches to be too formal, unfriendly and stuffy, and that the 'social side' of church and Guild life required development.

However, in other respects, the ethos of the Guild remained rooted in traditional ideas of 'women's work'. Programme suggestions offered to branches revolved around the standard work parties, Mother's Unions, visiting, choir, Sunday School, collecting and first aid. But at the same time, the 1920s witnessed three concerns which indicated something of a crisis for a national movement which purported to be for women of all ages and classes. There was a decline in the popularity and purpose of the work party, which had been the mainstay of practical work and meetings for so many branches, and also some disquiet that the new Women's Rural Institute might displace the Guild as the group of choice for women who were interested in social and practical activity. There was the oft-expressed fear that the Guild was regarded mainly as a congregational money-making machine, with no clear sense of its wider responsibilities and religious ideals. And by 1928,

special meetings were being called to discuss why members of the Girls Guild, which had been set up to train and encourage younger women in the movement, were so reluctant to move on to the Woman's Guild. It was widely regarded as an old-fashioned organisation, limited to groups of older women who sat knitting and sewing to no great purpose, except to run Sales of Work. And younger women - even those who had enjoyed the Girls' Guild - were rejecting it in droves.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the 1920s witnessed a quickening of pace, and expansion of concerns, for St Mary's Guild. The influence of the youthful Mrs Laurence, with her MA degree, and interest (along with her friend Rodney Murray) in the Edinburgh Women Citizens Association, which in some respects was the successor to the suffrage organisations, was apparent throughout the decade. At the committee meeting in September 1921, she proposed that there should be a printed syllabus, with names and addresses of office-bearers, and dates of meetings, which would include monthly speakers at the work party. 'After some discussion' notes the secretary, 'this was agreed to, the dates and printing being left in Mrs Laurence's hands'. Around this time, she also began to preside at Guild meetings, instead of her husband, or the usually absent Miss Jopp. On October 18 the speaker was Mrs Hannay OBE, a member of the Central Committee, and her theme was 'Our Wider Responsibility'. In May 1923, Mrs Murray took over

as secretary and treasurer from Jessie Lindsay, who had wanted to resign for some time. Subsequent minutes for the Guild certainly give the impression that thereafter its organisation was very largely left in the hands of Mrs Laurence and Mrs Murray (who became President in the 1930s).

The increased level of activity may be indicated by the frequency with which the committee met during a session. In 1921-22, three committee meetings were held; in 1923-24, there were five meetings, and the following session, there were seven. During session 1926-27, the committee met nine times. Part of the increased workload was simply the business of arranging many more speakers and programmes for evening meetings. There was also the ongoing commitment to raising funds for local and wider church and Guild work, and during the 1920s, the annual Sale of Work was supplemented by Jumble Sales, Cafe Chantants, Whist Drives and Musical Teas. The financial high point for the Sale of Work was reached in December 1924, when £181 was raised. In 1926, the total was £163, of which £113 was disbursed. The annual report comments that this was 'as successful as we could expect considering the depressing times we had passed through'. But thereafter the income continued to fall away, and reduced donations had to be given to Women's Missionary Associations. Some concern and dissatisfaction was expressed, and in 1929, 'the general feeling was that the few did everything and so many in the church did not

respond.' A special general meeting in January 1930 met to discuss whether the Sale of Work should be continued, and what alternatives there might be. A vote was taken to continue, but proposals were made about involving a wider group of women in its organisation. However, the 1930 sale was also rather disappointing, and although it was agreed to hold one in 1931, there was still a concern that the burden of work was falling unfairly. At the December 1930 committee meeting, the secretary was mandated 'to intimate to the Kirk Session that a men's stall was desirable, and ask them to take up the matter in conjunction with the deacons'.

The committee also took a number of other decisions with financial implications. In January 1924 they committed the branch to work for 'Save the Children Fund' (which was established in the aftermath of the Great War). In September 1924 they agreed to purchase china for Guild use, which would also be available for hire by other church organisations. Money raised by the China Fund was used, among other things, to support a local Toddlers' Playground, and to assist when special requests came from the Guild Central Office. The Guild took on collective responsibility for the weekly purchase of flowers for the communion table. A new carpet and basin for the vestry were gifted by the Guild as part of St Mary's centenary celebrations in 1925. In 1930 the Kirk Session requested that the Guild provide the new Revised Hymnary for the

choir, at a cost of £12. After considerable discussion, the committee agreed to give this sum. All of this seems to confirm the anecdotal impression of an oral witness who has been a lifelong member of the church, and became an elder in the late twenties, of the Guild as an organisation whose main value to the church was perceived to be their role as 'money spinners'.³⁵

Much of the work during the 1920s was delegated to sub-committees: to plan the annual Guild picnic or outing; to visit members at the start of each new session, and also women who were not involved in the Guild; to buy materials for the work party. There was also regular contact, and occasional joint meetings, with the Girls' Guild. And in 1926 it was decided to resuscitate, and place on a proper footing, the Junior Guild, for girls aged 10-15.

One innovation was the introduction of occasional practical craft demonstrations - of toy making, leather work, wicker work and so on. These were apparently geared to the production of goods for the Sale of Work, and their introduction perhaps supports the theory that work parties, in an age when the 'ready-to-wear' market was rapidly growing, were struggling to find useful things to do. As one woman wrote in the 1928 *Women's Work Supplement*:

'Many work parties have found no outlet for their goods, which go out of fashion or depreciate and have to be sold at less than cost price...But the work party can decide to take up some special novelty line each year - raffia, basketry, paper work, leathercraft etc.'³⁶

The programmes arranged for evening (and occasional afternoon) work party meetings included a quota of speakers on traditional Guild themes - foreign mission, fisher girls, Guild aims and work, reports from conferences and provincial council. But others reflect two characteristic and inter-related concerns of the post-war decade: children and motherhood, and the public role of women. There were addresses on Co-operation between Home and School, Health and Behaviour (personal and social purity), The Adolescent Girl, Child Psychology, Juvenile Delinquency, Nursery Schools, Little Children and Their Right to Play, The Mother as Citizen. There were also several talks given by women prominent in church and public life: Bailie Mrs Millar (a city magistrate) on 'Justice', Mabel Cornwall of the Women Citizens' Association on 'Some Modern Heroines' (she chose Elsie Inglis, Madame Curie and Nurse Lilian Starr), Dame Louisa Lumsden on 'Vivisection' (her favoured cause in later life), Councillor Mrs Somerville on 'the Development of Public Health as a Communal Service', and Parish Councillor Sara Munro on 'The Price of Citizenship'. This address, in 1929, emphasised 'the duty of every woman to make use of the vote so hardly won, and for which some had even lost their lives. She suggested that housing, education and temperance should be specially interesting and vital subjects for women'. In 1924, Elizabeth Hewat brought 'the message of COPEC (Conference on Christianity, Politics, Economics and Citizenship)' to the women of St Mary's. And in 1928, Grace Drysdale of Edinburgh

University Settlement spoke about 'Christianity and Social Problems'.

The use of an expanded programme of addresses to broaden and inform the concerns of Guild members was laudable. It is impossible to assess the impact which this made on individual Guild members, and almost as hard to judge whether it changed the perspective and activities of this local branch in its collective life. Other than reporting that these meetings were held, there is almost nothing recorded in the minutes to indicate that St Mary's Guild engaged in particular responses to the changing social and political circumstances of the times. The only reference anywhere to the Depression is that already mentioned about its impact on the Sale of Work. Although the No-Licence Convention was one evening topic in 1923, there is no indication that the Guild took any part in the kind of propaganda work called for by the national leadership, on temperance or any other contemporary public issue.

It is far from obvious that local and national constitutional changes made much difference to the power structures within St Mary's Guild, although the key personnel certainly changed during the 1920s. The constitution which Mr Laurence had devised was amended so that only one committee member was obliged to retire each year. The office bearers were re-elected annually until 1928, when Miss Jopp (who had played little active part for

several years) died, and Mrs Laurence finally became President, a post she had practically occupied for several years. Mrs Murray, who intimated that she wished to resign her post as secretary/treasurer at the 1928 AGM, was persuaded to continue. In March 1929, Miss Brabner became the new vice-president, but she died unexpectedly in October, so in 1930 her place was taken by Mrs Murray, with Mrs Burnett taking over as secretary. However, the latter resigned that September, 'owing to a complete breakdown in health', and Mrs Murray again took on her former duties on an interim basis. In October 1924, Miss Jopp presented Mrs Laurence with the Guild Leader diploma and badge. In 1920 Miss Lauder, Mrs Murray, Miss Brabner and Miss Lindsay had been similarly recognised.

There are no direct references to the national structural changes introduced throughout the period, although an annual subscription to the new Presbyterial Council is mentioned in 1926, and the committee agreed in 1930 that each of the three delegates (Home Mission/Temperance, Foreign Mission, Jewish Mission) should give regular reports about their own branch of work at afternoon and evening work parties. In February 1927 the committee appointed four members to represent the branch at a meeting on March 18 'to discuss the question of Guild unity in the Church'. At the Annual Meeting four days later, it is reported that 'Mrs Laurence and Mrs Murray have been elected to the General Guild Committee, which has just been

formed'.

In fact, St Mary's had several personal connections with central staff and leadership. Miss Jopp was one of the longest standing members of the Central Committee, and belonged to the Temperance and Guild Cottage sub-committee, as well as the WAHM Committee, although she was hardly an active member of any of these during this decade.

Elizabeth Cunningham, who was set apart as a deaconess at St Mary's in 1916, served first as the Women's Association for Jewish Missions general secretary, and then in the same capacity for the Woman's Guild itself from 1920. Lily Mungle, who worked as a missionary, a Guild deputy, and as secretary to the WAFM, also belonged to a prominent St Mary's family. Mrs Laurence was appointed to the Hospitality sub-committee in January 1919. These appointments indicate the strong Edinburgh and upper-middle class bias of the national Guild leadership. To be more charitable, they also suggest an ongoing commitment to the movement by those individuals - or at least a recognition that the Guild offered some employment and other opportunities. But it is hard to say, simply from these bare facts, how significant it was for ordinary members that some of their fellow members and leaders belonged to the Guild 'establishment'.

In 1929 and 1930, there are mentions of visits paid to other Guild branches, and a Guest Night, to which representatives from Guilds in North Edinburgh were

invited. There are no specific references to the 1929 Union of the Churches.

Membership of the branch remained fairly steady throughout the 1920s at 100 - 120. Attendance at work party meetings, outings etc was between thirty and fifty. Special social nights, 'At Homes' and mixed evenings (eg Burns Supper) could attract anything up to 150. However, the Annual Report for 1930-31 voiced concern that there had been 'a decided falling off in attendance at both afternoon and evening meetings'.

For Raith Woman's Guild, the 1920s brought no major changes in perspective or activity, although the secretary's report for 1921, which begins a new minute book, seems to proclaim new developments:

'At our first meeting, Mr Francis spoke very forcibly on the power that now lay in women's work and through the vote etc, and then showed forth in these words - "The love of Christ constraineth us" - the motive that should lie behind Christian work...The Guild has been what we might say re-organised. All members have and are being re-involved, membership cards given to each, and as it were a new start made. It was not thought desirable to change all of the present officials, even although they had been in office a good number of years, rather to increase interest, to bring forward to share somewhat more in the work, assistants were given to the present officials. ³⁷

Mr Francis also suggested that more frequent meetings might help to kindle and keep up interest in both Guild and Church. The 'new start' made at Raith was clearly instigated at the behest of the Central Committee, which was beginning to implement major constitutional changes, and which had requested that each individual member of

every branch should receive the new membership card, with its simplified statement of Guild commitment, and sign an enrolment form which set forth the aim of the Guild. ³⁸

At the committee meeting held on 16 October 1921, there seemed continuing desire to sweep through the Guild with a new broom, as those present affirmed that members be re-enrolled, and all office-bearers changed, with no-one retaining office for more than two years at a time.

The business at Raith was done by an executive committee of indeterminate size, which included all of the growing roll of Guild leaders. There were three occasions when diplomas were presented, so that by 1930 a further twelve members had been recognised as Guild leaders. This was a number far higher in proportion than in most Guild branches. However, the emphasis seems to have shifted so that these had become long-service awards, for women who had been Guild members for up to 33 years. The *Fife Free Press*, February 16 1924, carries pictures and a report of four rather elderly women being thus honoured. Mrs Francis held to the original estimation about the role and value of Guild Leaders as senior members whose social position, experience and wisdom would be used to support others, when she expressed, in 1922, the hope that 'any member in difficulty would make use of them, perhaps thereby they might prove to be a blessing to each other.'

Unfortunately, the constitutional changes proposed at the beginning of the decade (which did not appear to exist in written form) were not observed. In January 1923, Mrs Francis, Mrs Braid, Mrs Alexander and Miss Russell were re-elected as office-bearers, 'it having been decided at the last business meeting that they remain for two years in succession.' The following year Jane Russell retired and was replaced by Helen Brodie, and in 1925 Mrs Ross replaced Mrs Alexander as treasurer. Otherwise there was no change until April 1927, when Mrs Francis resigned, upon the appointment of a new minister to the charge. Her place as president was immediately taken by Grace Conway, the new minister's wife. Other officials were re-elected year after year, although there was another secretarial change in 1929.

The Guild had several sub-committees, and there was considerable overlap in membership among the Dorcas, Tea, Musical and Sewing Class Committees. However, at least these, and the wider representative duties in connection with the national movement, gave a substantial proportion of the active membership some particular responsibility. The business meeting held in February 1922 apparently agreed that the Guild should meet monthly, but in fact the quarterly pattern remained. Since the December gathering was a social for all church workers, in effect there were only three general meetings for the Guild each year. In 1923 the national secretary for the Girls' Guild gave 'an

inspiring address...discussion followed as to the forming of a Girls' Guild', and a branch was indeed established. There were occasional joint meetings and outings, and in 1927, it is reported that the GG helped the 'Senior Guild' to decorate the church for Harvest Thanksgiving.

There was a discernible increase in business relating to Fife (later Kirkcaldy) Presbyterial Council (of which Mrs Francis was Vice-President) and national initiatives. In March 1920, at a meeting addressed by Miss Gray of Leven, about war work in France, a request was made 'for helpers for some bits of work needed to be done in connection with the Temperance movement (No Licence Campaign)'. This oblique reference may not be a ringing call for propaganda work, as encouraged by the national leadership, but at least the work was being done - probably by the BWTA branch which operated in Raith, and which was represented on the Guild Committee. This was apparently a place with a livelier commitment to temperance than St Mary's - a fact perhaps connected with the relative social composition and theological persuasion of the two churches.

Otherwise programmes followed the tried and tested model, with praise and prayer, address on a religious theme (topics included 'Consecration and Sacrifice', 'Lydia's Conversion' and 'God's Garden'), reports and business. There were occasional special events, such as a limelight lecture entitled 'Canada Thrice Visited', given in 1924 by

a minister from Buckhaven. On September 1929 three members of Inveriel United Free Church ladies work party were specially invited to be present, and a paper on the Union of the Churches was read. And at the executive meeting in December, Mrs Brown gave a report of a United meeting held in Kirkcaldy Old Church.

Reading through the minutes of Raith Guild for the 1920s, what emerges as the most obvious change from previous years is a greater emphasis on finance and fundraising, and an increase in both local and national requests for fiscal and material help. The Guild continued to help pay the wage of Miss Rodger, who worked for the Kirkcaldy Female Mission. Appeals were made by the Deaconess Hospital Extension Fund, and for 'children's woollies' for the hospital; for a 'Christmas Box' to be sent to the Guild Central Council and distributed among the poor; for members to make bandages which were used by fisher girls on their cut and chapped hands. Special donations were made to the Maintenance of the Ministry Committee, the Scottish Churches Memorial Fund in Jerusalem, and to the WAFM. Local requests came from the Gladney Lodging House Mission, (conducted by an elder, Mr Balfour) and for old clothing for girls' hostels. In June 1929, the WG had a joint meeting with the Kirk Session and Church Managers, to discuss how the church cleaning deficit might be cleared. Two Guild members were appointed treasurers of the Deficit Fund, and charged with raising £100 by voluntary subscription. In 1925 Fife Nursing

Association held a fete in the Raith Estate grounds, and WG members were asked to convene a team of helpers. In 1927 the Guild began collecting silver paper to raise funds for Deaconess Hospital, and a Christmas gift was donated to a girl at Robertson Orphanage. In the second half of the decade, the Guild arranged several fundraising events - Cake and Candy Stall, Garden Fetes (though the one planned for summer 1926 was cancelled owing to the Depression), Bring and Buy Sale.

These raised sums between £10 and £70, which were used for Guild expenses, the Church Cleaning and Fabric Fund and to make donations (of between £1 and £5) to various local and Guild causes. The minutes record a fruitful Garden Fete, held on June 27 1928 in the Manse Garden:

'Lady Victoria Wemyss opened the fete. The weather was all that could be desired, and the Fete was a social success as well as proving a highly financial one. £67.17.4 was realised, and Mrs Thomas Christie, convener, thanked all workers, congregation and friends, especially Mrs J Christie for lending a gramophone, and Mr Kirk for bringing the Boys Orchestra in the evening.'

But the Guild still emphasised the voluntary giving of members, by box or subscription. This would certainly have met with the approval of Mary Lamond, the National President, who criticised the general over-reliance on Sales of Work to raise church funds, and called for more direct giving. During the 1920s, donations ranged from the minimum one shilling, to much larger sums from a few members. Mrs Christie junior, who was Kate Alexander when

in 1913 she married Thomas Christie in the first wedding to be held in Raith Church itself (rather than at home, or the manse), was consistently the largest contributor. Her husband, a master butcher, was the session clerk during the twenties.

The Sewing Class remained the main regular source of fundraising, but through the 1920s it continued to evolve into an organisation rather different from the one which began in 1889. By 1923, when there were 190 registered members and 34 class leaders, £444 went through the books, but only 21 garments were cut. The work element was probably of more symbolic than practical importance, and the money was raised simply by the Class committee buying up clothes and then selling them, in instalments, to members. In her 1924 report, Mrs Francis acknowledged

'It may seem strange, now that so little actual sewing is done, to name the class a sewing class...It has been said that this Class is just a 'Menage'. Well! What if that be so! The meaning of the French word is housewifely thrift and economy, and surely that is something of a virtue worth cultivating. But it is much more than that. Week after week for six months almost 200 women and girls are spending half an hour in the business of thrift, and the next hour being cheered and encouraged in every good way by addresses and music and readings, in what is as good as a Church Service. Surely it is a really good work on which the Master Himself may well look with approval.'

However, the innovation of the previous decade, when organisation of the programme was delegated to different committee members, was abandoned during session 1920 - 21. The report for that session records thanks to Miss Wardlaw (who was employed as Biblewoman/missionary in Raith):

'For relieving committee members from the duty of providing the weekly programme. We all recognise that she has done, with much success, that somewhat trying work, and that the programmes have been of high excellence.'

This retreat from an admirable policy of shared responsibility, to be replaced by the efforts of a paid worker, perhaps suggests that the aging committee members were rather running out of steam, and may be illustrative of a general point made several years later by A H Dunnett in his book, *The Church in Changing Scotland* (1934), when he criticised the tendency for female paid employees to relieve guildswomen of their service responsibilities.³⁹

During 1927-28, the size and income of the class suffered from the effects of economic depression, but members made a particular effort to help raise funds for the major programme of Church cleaning. They held two Bring and Buy Sales, and regularly made and sold toffee, calendars, bread and flowers. By 1929, they had raised over £105 for the cleaning fund. But by 1930, the class itself had entered a steady decline, on which Mrs Conway commented in her third year as President:

'A personal visit was paid to some who had not turned up, and some did come back. Among the reasons for non-attendance were that chums were not coming, or that they had been for so many years that they thought they should have a little rest. I found these excuses both disheartening and discouraging.

But thanks for the loyal support of members. Were it not for the sewing class where would the Church be when anything special requires to be done. The women's work party is the backbone of the Church; when financial aid is required it is to us they turn when they want to raise money and receive other assistance.

But it also brings us together once a week in a social capacity, and we are enabled to know one another better and develop a spirit of friendship and goodwill...Let us

therefore endeavour to add to our numbers and make the class a greater centre of friendship and help. We have listened to many fine gospel addresses and received blessing and help in Christian service, and returned to our homes greatly comforted. This is the side of our work we should endeavour to develop.'

These words are a restatement, from the end of the period of this study, of the justification and role of a national church organisation which by this time had a membership of nearly 70,000. During these forty odd years, the Guild had developed an impressive infrastructure and raised a huge amount of money for the concerns of the Church of Scotland. In the two very different parishes of Raith and St Mary's, the WG branches were established and matured as local groups with distinctive identities, activities, and theological perspectives. But they both were discernibly and firmly rooted in one movement, and shared many features in common. By the end of the period, source materials (supported by oral evidence for both places) indicate that the Guild was perceived as a rather genteel, if worthy, organisation which was mainly for older women, and whose main contribution to church life was estimated in financial, rather than spiritual terms. It was also, in both places, expressing concern about falling attendance and commitment to aspects of its work. In an attempt to ponder these general trends over the whole forty year period, I shall consider patterns of leadership, class, and influence as they were evident within the Guilds, in relation to congregational power structures, and in the light of changing social circumstances.

1. Who was in charge?

Although much was made (and no doubt genuinely experienced) of the Guild as a source of fellowship and friendship, in which women of all classes and conditions could come together with a unity of purpose, it was also unashamedly hierarchical. Charteris set the tone with his pyramid structure for the new movement, and by particularly encouraging and appointing women of the upper classes to assume key roles. The perceived value of patronage and direct involvement by women of the aristocracy and ruling class, persisted throughout the period under consideration. Lady Polwarth was the National president until 1920. The Marchioness of Ailsa promoted a scheme for turning kilts into childrens clothes after the war. Local gentry were sought out by Guild branches for honorary positions and to open sales. St Mary's Guild had its own quota of such women, and as a New Town branch, was involved in what might be described as the 'inner circle' of the national movement. Raith's situation, in a working class area of a provincial town, was rather different - both socially and geographically it was removed from that 'circle'. But the national structure of the Guild ensured that it too was entitled to be represented in different aspects of the wider work, and the Raith women took their responsibilities as delegates to Provincial/Presbyterial Council, Conference, and on special committees, very seriously. The power base of the national Guild did have a strong Edinburgh and upper middle class bias (which the

constitutional changes of the 1920s recognised and sought to eliminate), but this was mitigated by the regional structures, and the national conference which moved around the country annually. So there were significant opportunities and experiences of responsibility and networking available to guildswomen of diverse backgrounds and locations. I believe this was one of the most positive features of the Woman's Guild's contribution to the lives of Scottish women.

In both Raith and St Mary's, considerable power and responsibility for the working of the Guild resided in a few individuals, who often held office for over twenty years. Katherine Francis, in particular, was clearly the central influence at Raith. She established and exemplified the pattern of meetings, service and conduct which defined the parameters of, and attitude to, women's work within the parish. She must have devoted many hours every week to preparation of prayer and addresses, to administration, to meetings and to personal dealings with a wide range of girls and women. Without reading too much into the sources, it is reasonable to surmise that her motivation went far beyond the performance of conventional duty as the minister's wife, and that she had a clear sense of her own Christian vocation. Hints of this emerge in her letter of resignation, written on April 12 1927, when she was in her mid-sixties, and had been president for twenty-eight years. But in it she also seems to assume that the

roles she had occupied went, as a matter of course, with minister's wifehood, regardless of the particular interests and circumstances of the individual:

'The time has come when I must ask you at your next meeting of the Executive, if the Committee would kindly release me from the Presidentship of the Guild. It is only fair to the new minister and his wife, and to yourselves that there should be no barriers in the way, and that every door of work should be open so that they may be free to act in their own way.

I have carried on almost to heartbreaking point... At any rate I will work in prayer that this change may bring renewed life and blessing to the Church, and to all the women's work especially.'

It is more difficult to evaluate the role of Mrs Francis's successor. Her husband, William Conway, originally came from Ballymena, Ireland, and was ordained by Edinburgh Presbytery of the Free Church of Scotland in 1909. What prompted his move to the national church is not known. He was not elected unopposed by the congregation, but after a quite close vote. Grace Calderwood was his second wife (the first, from Antrim, having died after bearing nine children) and was considerably younger than her husband. A member during the 1930s recalls that Conway was a very quiet man and an uninspiring preacher; she felt that Mrs Conway and the family seemed to keep themselves aloof.⁴⁰ Perhaps Mrs Conway was a much more reluctant president and focus for women's work than her predecessor had been. Without the benefit of clear evidence, here is a speculative suggestion as to some reasons for the apparent stagnation (if not decline) of Raith Guild and sewing class during the 1920s and into the thirties: Mrs Francis was less dynamic and involved in the life of the Guild because

she was aging, had lost her only son at Ypres, and had to nurse her husband during a long illness from which he never recovered. A relatively youthful Mrs Conway was thrust into the presidency while she was still new to the parish, surrounded by an executive which had got stuck in something of a rut, and was burdened with the necessity to clear debts which the major church cleaning had incurred.

Others who were drawn into the leadership of Raith Guild came from mixed class backgrounds. Using standard indicators, such as parentage, address, their own and their husbands' employment, the majority certainly began their Guild life as working or artisan class. Others had fathers who were craftsmen and ran businesses, and lived in the pleasant residential streets near Beveridge Park. These included Mrs MacPherson (whose son was a doctor), Annie McGregor (whose father was a grain merchant, and who married a photographer and moved to St Brycedale UFC - the wealthiest congregation in town) and Mrs Braid, whose husband was a woodturner. Mrs Ross's husband was a plumber, and Miss Wardlaw was the local Biblewoman. None of the Guild leaders lived in what were considered 'slum' areas, and by the 1920s, a discernible 'embourgeoisment' had occurred within their (mostly aging) ranks. By 1930, of seventeen office-bearers, only four lived in the working class heart of the parish around Links Street. (On the other hand several widows who had been active in the Guild were on Kirk Session 'Poor Lists' as recipients of aid

towards their rent from a church bequest ⁴¹).

It would be interesting to discover the class dynamics operating within the traditional 'mission' agencies run by women of the church - the Mothers' Meeting, Kitchen Meetings, Sewing Class etc. These are sometimes described, using the conventional signifying language of the times, as run by 'ladies' for women and girls, and I have already suggested that there seem to have been periodic tensions between the organisers and attenders of the sewing class. But there was certainly some overlap of class background and work experience between the two groups, and perhaps the simple fact that some women went to church, and others did not - that the former were therefore more 'respectable' than the latter - was enough to warrant some distinction being assumed. I have been unable to speak to anyone who belonged to the sewing class, but a conversation with working class women who were children and adolescents in Linktown during the 1920s and 1930s (some churchgoers, some not) indicated that the general impression of the Guild at that time was of a group mainly for older women, among whom the leading lights were quite wealthy, but were not thought of as 'snobs'.⁴²

At St Mary's, it is generally more difficult to ascertain the precise background of members and leaders, but there is quite a lot of evidence to suggest that the congregation perceived itself to be pretty solidly conservative and

respectable, with a reputation as one of the City Churches to maintain. Several wealthy and powerful families - Jopp, Murray, Bryson, Miller et al - carried a good deal of weight in church life at different times.⁴³ Miss Jopp's tenure as president of the Guild almost exactly corresponds to that of Mrs Francis, but the brevity of St Mary's minutes makes it difficult accurately to assess her power and influence. However, she was much less involved than her Raith counterpart in the symbolic and devotional functions of her post. Up to the 1920s, it was the norm for the minister to occupy the chair at quarterly meetings. Thereafter, Miss Jopp was so often absent that it was Mrs Laurence who gradually assumed that responsibility in place of her husband. Nor was Miss Jopp (from what we can tell) in the habit of addressing meetings, or leading worship. And there is nothing to suggest that she gave clear guidance or direction to the infrequent committee meetings which were held under her reign. These comments may do an injustice to the extent and value of Miss Jopp's leadership, but my impression is that she was mainly a figurehead in a congregational organisation which had little internal sense of its own authority or direction. The fact that she was re-elected year after year in spite of her age, illness and frequent absence, suggests that her position was more honorary than effective. And who can say whether that was not in deference to her family's prominence within the church.

Lottie Laurence, and to a lesser extent Mrs Murray, were much more proactive in shaping the ethos and direction of St Mary's Guild during the 1920s, and one gets the feeling that they were, by and large, asked just to get on with it by other committee members.

2. Who had the power?

In formal, and also in practical terms, it is absolutely clear that the minister, and to a lesser extent the Kirk Session, were ultimately responsible for the establishment and continued existence of local Guild branches. In the early years of the movement, Charteris and his team of officials and deputies invested a lot of time and energy in encouraging ministers to support and enable the setting up of branches in their churches. The Life and Work committee were at pains to emphasise that the Woman's Guild was officially sanctioned by the General Assembly, and that its development would only proceed under the control of Church courts. During the 1890s, the Guild Central Committee had to deal with some correspondence from ministers complaining about women acting without due authorisation, and on April 4 1898, the Committee agreed to include the following at the end of their pamphlet, *What is the Woman's Guild?* :

'All the work of the Woman's Guild in each parish, whether carried out by a Branch, or by auxiliary members, Guild leaders or associate Guild leaders, is subject to the authority of the Kirk Session and other Courts of the Church'.⁴⁴

When the WG was properly established at Raith, in 1896, Mr Francis presided and explained what the Guild was all

about. At St Mary's, Mr Martin chaired and addressed the inaugural meeting about the aims of the Woman's Guild. His successor Mr Findlay took an active role as honorary Guild president. It is inconceivable that these branches would ever have begun or continued without the support of their ministers. And in the highly unlikely event of their getting involved in activities which would have been considered unseemly, inappropriate or damaging, there is no doubt that sanctions would have been imposed, changes made, or the organisation disbanded. The Kirk Session had a supervisory responsibility towards the Guild, and in Raith church, an elder was delegated to visit and report back each session. This arrangement, needless to say, was not reciprocal: in the hypothetical case of elders and Kirk Sessions likewise acting against what women members considered to be the interests of the church, no such powers would be available to those women, and in that sense there was a structural inequality built into the constitution of the local church. It is much more speculative and difficult, of course, to construct a picture of the degree of influence which the Guild (as individuals and collectively) had in the life of its parish. I think the most helpful approach is to understand that life in terms of the phrase 'subordinate parallelism', which I use in chapter 4 (see page). By this I mean that it was generally accepted that men and women had different spheres and duties in relation to church life, and that the Guild was an organisation established to draw efficiently

on the resources for characteristic female activity. The task of oversight and leadership was a male duty - regardless of the weakness or inadequacy of some of the individuals available to perform such functions. There is nothing in the records of either church to suggest that Guildswomen challenged the conventional understanding of their work and potential - and certainly nothing which implies that women actively campaigned for or sought the positions held exclusively by men. Given this situation, and without testimony to the contrary, one can only assume that there were no major tensions, conflicts or power struggles between the Guild and other parts of the parochial set-up. Only at the very end of the period, in St Mary's, do the minutes carry some suggestion of friction between the Guild and the Session. At the committee meeting on September 10 1930, there was 'considerable discussion' before it was agreed to give £12 as requested for the Revised Hymnary. That meeting also noted that improvements were to be made in the kitchen, 'as a result of interviews with Kirk Session members', and mandated the secretary to write to the Session 'drawing attention to the unsatisfactory state of the hall tables'. In December she was to ask the Session to take up the matter of a men's table at the Sale of Work. These are the first and only instances in either branch minutes of the Guild taking the initiative and requesting the response of the Session. Is it reading too much into these bare records to suggest a simmering frustration about inadequate facilities, male

apathy and lack of support, and being taken for granted as 'money spinners'? Women who belonged to the Guild in the 1930s and 1940s have suggested to me that there was an underlying annoyance that the Session had all the power in the church, while the women who did so much of the practical work were made to feel somewhat inferior; and a sense of irritation that all the decisions were made by men, regardless of who was affected. Perhaps these sentiments (which apparently did not issue in any organised rebellion!) began to rise to the surface in the preceding decade. ⁴⁵

It would be difficult to derive any impression of the Guild simply from reading the Raith Session minutes, while from St Mary's minutes, only very careful scrutiny would reveal that a Guild branch even existed. In both churches, for the first decade or so, references to women are largely confined to cases of fornication, adultery or requests for Poor Law assistance in divorce cases (which the Session had to support). At Raith, the Kirk Session were regularly called upon to authorise the appointment of Guild Leaders, and in 1910, they resolved 'to revive the Young Men's Guild, and put it on as good and successful footing as the Woman's Guild'. The sewing class were occasionally thanked for gifts to the church, and visiting elders reported that all was satisfactory in women's and other church organisations subject to supervision. St Mary's minutes rarely mention the Guild, and only in connection with

authorising Miss Jopp as Guild Leader, and hire of the hall for meetings. There is no acknowledgement of, or even allusion to, the annual Sale (which was a significant social as well as fundraising event in the church calendar) and the substantial sums raised by Guildswomen. And nothing about any other aspect of work in which women were engaged. As I suggested in the introduction to this study, I don't think any particular conclusions can be drawn from this apparent invisibility - except that neither Guild caused the kind of major problem which would have required discussion by the Session, and that Kirk Session minutes were little more than formal records of membership statistics. What these minutes do sometimes suggest is a recurring problem, in both churches, with the standards and commitment of the *male* leadership: a surprising number of elders resigned, often over petty or ridiculous matters, and others failed to perform their duties adequately. At Raith, after the death of Rev David Paterson, Mr Francis himself acted as Session Clerk for many years - presumably because none of his elders felt able or willing to take on the position. There is an interesting issue here about the balance and effectiveness of ministerial and lay leadership within a presbyterian polity, but in the context of this study no useful conclusions can be extrapolated concerning the relative situations and attitudes of men and women in the church.

The Woman's Guilds had little power in relation to male

office bearers, and their service, while materially important to the church, was not well acknowledged or valued in official records. It is hard to say how much *influence* the existence (and developing traditions) of the Guild organisation had in shaping the corporate life of these churches. The group of Linktown women with whom I have spoken (though some are currently Guild members) recall that in their youthful perception, it was not particularly significant. Another, who was of the third generation in her family to attend Raith, had a mother and grandmother – both committed and involved in a range of religious activities, but neither a Guild member. These comments are anecdotal, but first hand impressions, certainly from the 1920–30s, do not attest that the Guild *per se* permeated the life of Raith members in a central way, although perhaps particular aspects of its service did. At St Mary's, the repeated suggestion made to me was that the Guild was perceived mainly as the organisation responsible for the Sale of Work. So although the branches were receiving information, suggestions and challenges from the regional and national structures of their movement, these did not seem particularly to inspire either Guild to seek to influence or change their own church communities. Perhaps also the Girl's Guild, which was supposed to involve younger girls and women in the movement, and thus strengthen its presence within the local church, served more to siphon off youthful enthusiasm and stigmatise the Woman's Guild as an older women's group. Certainly the

special meeting called by the Guild central Committee in 1928, to discuss this, suggested that it was a widespread problem:

'The difference in types of meeting in the two organisations made it difficult for a girl to say "goodbye" to her youthful company, and to enter instead an organisation, the membership of which seemed to consist of becoming a member of the work party, where everyone was much older, and where she seemed to have little or nothing in common with the others.'⁴⁶

3. The impact of social changes

The period 1900 - 1930 witnessed major social and political changes in Scottish life. There was cyclical economic depression, which directly affected the employment and life options of huge numbers. There was political unrest and upheaval: the suffrage movement, the rise of socialism, the change in class dynamics. There was a cataclysmic World War, which destroyed millions of lives and upturned old values and certainties. It also brought new experiences, opportunities and challenges to women. There was imperialism, conservatism and aggression. And also widespread concern for the poor, for social welfare, for the benefits of modernity.

From the vantage point of our two Woman's Guild branches, the events, ideologies and situations which presaged such major change in Scotland are barely noticed, hardly mentioned. Of course the wider world did impinge on the conscious life and work of the Guilds. They heard tales from mission fields in Africa and India; they listened to

parish sisters and deaconesses tell about the poor and 'careless' in urban Scotland ; they raised money and donated goods in support of local missions and the Guild's panoply of worthy causes. They attended conferences and read articles which, if not rousing calls to radical action, at least suggested that Guildswomen should be concerned about wider social issues. And the War could not but overshadow the everyday experiences of all Scottish women. But as I have indicated, the sources give little sense of change and progression in society having much bearing on the structures and activities of these organisations. This does not entitle a simple deduction that social change did not impinge on the Guilds, but gives clues about the extent to which they were aware of such change, or felt it appropriate to address the issues raised within their particular forum. I think it is evident (at least until the 1920s) that the Guild in neither place was an organisation which deliberately considered the value or possibility of engaging in collective action which was not either 'spiritual' or practical. In Raith, this was largely a function of the theological perspective promoted by the Francis partnership, and others in the church. The consistent message received in worship, talks and meetings, emphasised a gospel of personal salvation, thrift, purity and the development of a 'Godly character' as the way to change lives. This need not have excluded the possibility that other approaches were taken by Guild members in other situations - although I think it unlikely that the Guild

leaders would endorse the strike action and other political activity in which many women working in Kirkcaldy factories took part in during the Edwardian era, and I have found no familiar Raith names among those mentioned in connection with Kirkcaldy women's suffrage organisations.⁴⁷ But the written and oral sources I have consulted concur that both congregation and local community perceived the church's role as religious in a fairly narrow sense.⁴⁸

In St Mary's, there is less to indicate the theological complexion of the congregation and Guild, but in a church with such a high proportion of members belonging to Edinburgh's dominant social and political class, one would not, perhaps, expect to find much evidence of progressive attitudes. To do the Guild justice, the 1920s certainly seem to have introduced a somewhat broader perspective and expanded view of what it meant to be a woman. There was an extension of the social side of Guild life, more 'informal' discussions and so on. This, I have suggested, owed much to the input of Lottie Laurence - a teacher's daughter, and a young woman who had been to university (a world still distant from the experience of almost all her colleagues at St Mary's); her friendship with the Murray family, and the 'Women's Citizens' dimension they brought to bear. But that in itself is not sufficient evidence to counteract the probability that conservative values (in the social if not necessarily the political sense) were espoused by most of the women. The Murray family were in one sense the epitome

of the solid Edinburgh legal establishment although Andrew was a leading light in the Scottish Liberal Organisation, and, like his sister and mother, demonstrated an interest and concern about social issues. However, there is no way of knowing the extent to which the broader concerns presented by speakers to the Guild made a general impact - there is no direct evidence of this in the corporate life of the organisation.

But in any case the ethos and framework of the national Guild organisation certainly did not offer any individual branch a positive commission for developing progressive or radical analysis of their situation as women in church or in society. The emphasis was consistently on service, sacrifice, welfare, class harmony, home values, and devotion to spiritual life. Appeals to widen horizons, extend abilities, and to public-spirited citizenship were usually made to Guildswomen as individuals, to preserve these values, rather than as a means to transform the Guild into a campaigning agency.

My discussions with a group of women who have been lifelong members at St Mary's indicate that, by mid-century (1940-50s), the church in general was a major focus for social and recreational activity among all age groups. There were musical associations, a dramatic society, a strong badminton club, a large and lively Girls' Association which enjoyed a range of activities, including regular hikes, and

so on. The Guild fitted into this scheme of things as a group for older women. My tentative suggestion is that this trend towards church as provider of leisure facilities, was under way by the 1920s, with the Guild as a significant element in that structure. The religious or service dimension was not lost, but was practised within a recreational ethos which writers like Callum Brown have identified as characteristic of comfortable middle class congregations. Guilds of this period were perhaps most successful (in numbers and vitality) where they were open to development along these lines.

At Raith, the social and religious milieu led the Guild in a somewhat different direction. Brown and Stephenson (1992) have emphasised the role of religious bodies as leisure providers for working class women and children in the early years of the 20th century. The Guild, and activities within its ambit, should be considered in this wider context. My own respondents from Linktown substantiate the view that women developed a recreational life, when time, money and options were extremely limited, through involvement in a range of religious agencies. One woman, Mrs C, recalls of her mother, a linen weaver born in 1893, that in addition to church, she attended meetings of the Gospel Union, the Scottish Coast Mission, Hodge's Meeting, and was involved in temperance activities. As a child in the 1920s and 1930s, her daughter [Mrs C] recalls enjoying the lively Sunday School of the Evangelical Union Congregational

Church, which had 'very good trips and soirees'. Another group of women remembers with affection a variety of religious-based popular activity: attending a number of different Sunday schools with friends (across the denominational range from Baptist to Catholic); Girls' Clubs; the Salvation Army band parading round the streets; preachers competing with bands and political speakers for public attention in Beveridge Park. Later (1940-50s) they recall country dancing, keep fit, concert parties and other communal pleasures in some of the area's church halls.

My interpretation of what happened at Raith (again rather tentative) is that it was quite successful in attracting girls and women until the 1920s. But then its rather old fashioned Calvinist-evangelical ethos put off a lot of girls and women for whom more leisure and populist religious alternatives were becoming available. Mrs C contrasts Raith Sunday School, which she attended from age 7 - 13, unfavourably with the Evangelical Union:

'I did not know the other children, apart from my brother and two cousins. I am sorry to say I found it very dull and inhibiting'.

Some entries in the Session Minute Book give the impression that the church perceived itself as fighting a rearguard battle against the forces of irreligion: by holding regular 'special missions' and evangelical campaigns; by petitioning the Town Council against the running of tram cars on the Sabbath (which nevertheless 'failed to prevent this flagrant act of desecration'); by refusing to allow

the Girl Guides to practise folk dancing in the church hall (although one elder offered to pay for the hire of another hall specially for this purpose).⁴⁹

Perhaps an increasing number of girls and women from the church and local community simply began to reject the package offered by the Guild. There wasn't the same need to learn and practice sewing and knitting, and the Woman's Guild seemed too narrow, too dull, too 'religious', too patronising, too out of touch with the lives of young working women, and not enough fun.

Instead, they enjoyed the more lively activities provided by voluntary agencies and sects; or open air music and street life; or parading in groups on the promenade; and, of course, going to the pictures.

6. Conclusion

While I repeat my introductory caution about the legitimacy of assuming that these two Guild branches can be taken as broadly representative of the movement throughout Scotland, this case study tends to substantiate the general comments made about the Woman's Guild in chapter 2. As a national movement, it did bring benefits to the lives of many women in their local contexts. It gave work which they did in church a sense of purpose, structure and recognition. It united them in a spirit of sisterhood with others around the whole country. The conferences and councils literally

broadened the horizons of those who participated. Speakers brought intimations of the scope of women's work in and for the church. Many women discovered and developed gifts, not just for sewing, baking and collecting money, but also for organising and running meetings, conducting worship, sharing resources of music and creativity.

As a means of utilising and encouraging the service of women in the church, the Guild was probably more successful in some places than in others. In Raith, it was obviously seen as important to sustain the connection between Guild membership, and the notion of being workers with particular jobs to do in the life of the church. Since the emphasis of the founders was on a Guild of service rather than of meetings, we should not necessarily judge the liveliness or otherwise of a branch on the number of its meetings. But if that service was to demonstrate a spirit of purpose, development and dynamism, then the meetings which *were* held ought to give some indication of women grappling critically and constructively with their aims. Apart, possibly, from the first few years of Raith Guild, and the programme development at St Mary's in the twenties, I am not persuaded that the evidence points to such engagement in either branch. While it would be unrealistic to expect the Guild to take up causes and actions which would challenge conventional expectations of Christian or female service, local branches seem often to have been reluctant even to pursue those which were promoted and encouraged by the

national leadership in their efforts to maximise the potential of the growing movement.

As a forum for enabling and training women for effective and assertive leadership, my judgement is that the Guild was not very successful. Local branches were excessively dependent on ministerial support and the efforts of a handful of women whose personal qualities (as opposed to social status or relationship to minister) may or may not have suited them to the responsibilities they assumed. Until the late 1920s, I do not think the national leadership seriously addressed the need for properly developed training programmes. In the early years, all the emphasis was on Charteris' great hope at the apex of the movement - the order of deaconesses, and their training programme at Deaconess House in Edinburgh. But there are no signs that the order offered any meaningful inspiration or leadership to the massed ranks of ordinary Guild office bearers and members, although the original vision was to have women in every parish trained in the practical and leadership skills expected of deaconesses. Of the two branches being considered, I surmise that Raith probably exhibited a greater spread and level of participation than many other branches - especially in the devotional life of the Guild. But given the infrequency of meetings, and the general predominance of Mrs Francis, this probably did not amount to a sustained policy of testing and extending the abilities and scope of those who formed the core of local

activity. The experiment introduced from 1911-20, whereby Sewing Class committee members took responsibility for organising the programme content, perhaps indicates both the potential and the limitations of effective member participation in creative and organisational work.

A writer in the early years of the Guild expressed the hope that it would enable women to be, not passive units in church membership, but 'centres of spiritual force in every congregation'. This may indeed have been the experience in some places, but a more honest assessment would probably recognise that passivity remained a characteristic of many nominal Guildswomen. Others, who may certainly have entered into Guild work with generosity and enthusiasm, nevertheless were simply doing as they were told - and that rarely extended them beyond the conventional spheres of practical female activity. And during the first 40 years of the Guild's existence, it developed, (despite some noble efforts to counteract this), an attendant reputation and image which would probably have made it all the more difficult for local branches to swim against the tide. The unwillingness among so many women to take on tasks and positions which required them to speak and conduct business in public was, I am sure, due at least in part to the reformation legacy of submission: The absolute submission required of all believers to the will of God, and the submission of women to the demands and requirements of men. This tradition did not encourage self-confidence,

assertion, or trust in one's own right and ability, as a woman, to develop a public persona. The double bind, imposed by Calvinist doctrine and cultural formations of acceptable womanhood, was a formidable barrier which most women found really hard to overcome.

There are features of any human structure or organisation which remain virtually inaccessible to a study which depends mainly on official written records. These are the personal and group dynamics which throw up a range of attachments, friendships, rivalries, hostilities, tensions, jealousies and ongoing problems. Only the merest hint of these elements may occasionally be glimpsed in reading through minute books, but it is as well to remember that they can form an important, though hidden agenda, in the development of an organisation like the Guild, operating within the hierarchical and patriarchal structures of a local and national church, and so the story told here, which has no access to these realities, is of necessity highly partial and impressionistic.

In studying the records of St Mary's and Raith, I got little sense of the positive, self-aware agency of women acting collectively. At Raith, a religious language of striving and high standards and spiritual potential may have been inspiring, encouraging and motivating in ways which are not susceptible to evaluation, and this should certainly not be downplayed. But in practical terms, the

language used to assess what the Guild did was much more modest - there were 'little bits of work' and 'not much business'. At St Mary's, even that level of self-assessment is largely missing, so it is really hard to make any meaningful comment about what inspired the women there - whether it was a clear vision of their Christian responsibility; or a pleasant opportunity to get together as women; or the burden of convention and expectation.

The two branches have offered some interesting and suggestive elements of similarity and of divergence for a comparative study. I hesitate to make general judgements, but my own opinion is that St Mary's represents a rather more 'typical' model of Guild origins, development and activity. It was a group which was imposed upon an existing base of conventional rather than widely enthusiastic women's work in the congregation and parish (if the 1888 parish magazine is anything to go by). And it developed its strongest identity and purpose in raising funds for the local and national church. It received an injection of vigour in the 1920s, and developed quite a strong social aspect within a large, mainly upper and middle class congregation. Within the Guild, there were individuals who were able to attain wider opportunities for work and service, but most members seemed not to be stirred with any real passion for the concept of lay service. And it is virtually impossible to comment on the significance of the Guild to their personal and spiritual growth.

Raith Guild was much more of an organic development within a local and (youthful) faith community which was already committed to active lay participation. For twenty years at least, connection with a national movement gave added impetus and resources to a network of women's service within the church and parish. But, given the theological and pastoral commitment of David and Katherine Francis, that network would probably have been sustained even without its links to the Woman's Guild. While St Mary's presented a successful facade, with many members and lucrative sales, Raith perhaps conformed more faithfully to the vision which had inspired Charteris and his supporters. But by 1930 both local branches showed signs, in different ways, of departure and degeneration from the dream of the Guild as a revitalising force within the local and national church.

In a sense, it seems as if the Woman's Guild functioned at two levels: as an official and national movement of Scottish women, it provided a forum and opportunities for many competent people in both local and national contexts to express their sense of vocation and to achieve influence, personal satisfaction and a public role when the church excluded women from other structures. It also gave career opportunities (paid or honorary) to a small number. But as a mass movement it tended to accommodate itself to, rather than transform, the attitudes and lifestyles of its members. Those two levels of operation, and the historical

legacy of widespread acquiescence and lack of initiative among the majority of members, continue to affect the contemporary Woman's Guild. In 1995, its one hundred and eighth year, it has committed and quite progressive leadership. It has imaginative schemes and an excellent network for sharing Guild and church concerns. But still it struggles to encourage members to consider themselves as 'Women - Agents for Change', still it has difficulty in encouraging enough women to assume leadership, still it is beset by a rather negative public image and aging membership. Now it awaits the conclusions and recommendations of an in-depth research and development study of the organisation, which may yet result in the most radical proposals for change since Charteris endeavoured to utilise the potential of women in his church. ⁵⁰

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

- 1 S Davies, *Arms and the Girl* (1992) 69–70
- 2 L M Russell, *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective – A Theology* (1974) 85.
- 3 For methodological approaches to women's history, see e.g. Joan Kelly, *Women, History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly* (Chicago 1984); L Nicholson, *Gender and History* (New York 1987); L Nicholson (ed) *Feminism/Postmodernism* (New York 1990); M Boxer and J Quataert, *Connecting Spheres: Women in the Western World, 1500–present* (1987), introduction, 3–17; E Weed (ed) *Coming to Terms: Feminism, Theory, Politics* (1989) especially section 3, 'Writing History', 81–143
- 4 E Breitenbach and E Gordon, eds, *Out of Bounds: Women in Scottish Society 1800–1945* (1992) 1
- 5 *Cencrastus* No 46 (Autumn 1993) 3
- 6 C Lerner, *Enemies of God* (1981)
- 7 L Leneman and R Mitchison, *Sexuality and Social Control* (1990)
- 8 R Dobash and R Emerson Dobash, *Violence Against Wives: A Case Against the Patriarchy* (1980) 55
- 9 J D Young, *Women and Popular Struggles* (1985)
- 10 K Carmichael, 'Protestantism and Gender', in G Walker and T Gallacher (eds) *Sermons and Battle Hymns: Protestant Popular Culture in Modern Scotland* (1990) 226
- 11 Callum Brown argues persuasively for the enduring cultural significance of presbyterianism for all social classes, and especially for women in Scotland. See 'Religion and Secularisation' in A Dickson and J H Treble (eds), *People and Society in Scotland Vol III* (1992) and 'Sprouting Wings' in *Out of Bounds* 95ff
- 12 Women in Scotland Biography Group (1988) 51
- 13 *Out of Bounds* 96
- 14 D Riley, *Am I That Name? Feminism and the Category of 'Women' in History* (1988) 2–3
- 15 G Rubin, 'The Traffic in Women' in ed R R Reiter, *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (1975)
- 16 *Out of Bounds* 95
- 17 R L Smith, 'Moral Transcendence and Moral Space in the Historical Experiences of Women' in *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* (Fall 1988) 24
- 18 M Caird, *The Morality of Marriage* (1897) 207–8
- 19 *Scots Confession of Faith* (1560) chap 18, quoted in J MacLeod, *Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History* (2nd edition 1946) 15
- 20 see A C Cheyne, 'Thoughts on Confessional Subscription' in *Theology in Scotland*, Vol II, 1 (1995) 5ff
- 21 A C Cheyne, Ian Henderson, Christopher Harvie and others have made this point. It is one of the main themes of W Storrar's *Scottish Identity: A Christian Vision* (1990)

- 22 N Ascherson, paper for Church of Scotland Colloquy on Devolution, 1976. Published in *Games with Shadows* (1988) 63
- 23 W Storrar, *op cit* 192
- 24 J Calvin, Institutes (1536 edition), quoted by J Dempsey Douglass, *Women, Freedom and Calvin* (1986) 46
- 25 *ibid*
- 26 J Knox, 'First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women' in M A Breslow (ed) *The Political Writings of John Knox* (1985) 43
- 27 e.g. Calvin's interpretation of I Cor 11:4-10; 14:34, and Knox on Romans 16:13. See D Howerda (ed) *Exploring the Heritage of Jean Calvin* (1976); *The Place of Women in the Church* (1959) Church of Scotland Study Document 29-31
- 28 'First Blast' *op cit* 45-6
- 29 Calvin felt obliged to write in 1559 to Elizabeth I's secretary, distancing himself from the heated and downright offensive tone of the tract. But although he differed from his colleague in believing that female rulers should be patiently tolerated, he still considered that they were, not just unnatural, but a punishment from God for the wickedness and blindness of men.
- In defence of his position, Knox cites Aristotle, Cicero, Roman Law, Tertullian, Augustine, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Basil. See W Hazlett, 'Jihad against female infidels and Satan', in *Calvin:Erbe und Auftrag* (1991) ed W van Spijker.
- On his opinions and relationships with women in personal life, the evidence is mixed! He corresponded with and counselled several, and seemed to have a reasonably high regard for their abilities and spiritual maturity. On the other hand, his unusual household arrangements (he had two very young wives in succession, and was close to his mother-in-law Mrs Bowes) aroused suspicions, and accusations of adultery and incest. His friend Archibald Hamilton referred to Mrs Bowes as Knox's 'concubine'. See John Durkan, 'Scottish Reformers', *Innes Review* XIV 1 (1994) 13ff
- 30 See S J Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth in Scotland* (1982); A C Cheyne (ed) *The Practical and the Pious: Essays on Thomas Chalmers* (1985) I Henderson, *Power without Glory* (1967) M Fry and S J Brown (eds) *Scotland in the Age of Disruption* (1993)
- 31 In Scotland, campaigns for women's rights, especially in politics and education, were underway by the 1860s. Throughout the English-speaking world, women collectively seeking change achieved their most notable victories during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, culminating in the extension of franchise (in Britain 1918 and complete in 1928) to women. Thereafter, most historians note a fragmentation in the women's movement, as different groups identified different priorities in the new political situation.

Governments and their cultural allies (including the church) also attempted to reassert the traditional roles and functions of women; to limit and even to reverse some of the gains made before and during the First World War. I discuss this in chapter 5. Although there is debate about the extent to which the 'feminist agenda' was continued, defeated or abandoned, most writers agree that by 1930 the Women's Movement, *per se* had run out of steam. See, e.g. O Banks, *Faces of Feminism: A Study of Feminism as a Social Movement* (1986); C Bolt, *The Women's Movements in the United States and Britain c1790 - 1920* (1993); R J Evans, *The Feminists: Women's Emancipation Movements in Europe, America and Australasia 1840-1920* (1979); D Beddoe, *Back to Home and Duty: Women between the Wars 1918-1939* (1989)

- 32 The 'hermeneutics of suspicion', expounded by, for example, E Schussler Fiorenza, 'Emerging Issues in Feminist Biblical Interpretation', in J L Weidman (ed) *Christian Feminism: Visions of a New Humanity* (1984) proposes as a starting point the assumption that biblical texts and their interpretations are androcentric and serve patriarchal functions. From that perspective, feminist critical interpretation searches for lost traditions and visions within that androcentric inheritance. It questions the underlying presuppositions, models, theories and unarticulated interests and motives of the texts and writers. The method also analyses the history, concerns and biases of translation and interpretation. In short, a hermeneutics of suspicion entails a refusal simply to read and accept something at face value. This approach is surely similar to that proposed by feminist historians. Joan Scott writes: 'If we treat the opposition between male and female as problematic rather than known, as something contextually defined, repeatedly constructed, then we must constantly ask not only what is at stake in proclamations or debates that invoke gender to explain or justify their positions, but also how implicit understandings of gender are being invoked and reinscribed...Investigation of these issues will yield a history that will provide new perspectives on old questions, redefine the old questions in new terms, make women visible as active participants, and create analytic distance between the seemingly fixed language of the past and our own terminology'. (from *Coming to Terms*, *op cit* 100).
- 33 A number of literary critics and scholars have done work on the historical significance and development of female writing in Scotland, and of writing about women. There are also many biographies, criticism articles dealing with particular authors, which throw light on their historical context, and the ways in which their work both shaped and reflected the reality of women's lives.

- For brief introductions to this topic, see C Craig, (general editor) *The History of Scottish Literature* Vol III 19th century, and Vol IV 20th century (1989) Margery Palmer McCulloch, 'Opening the Door: Women, Carswell and the Scottish Renaissance'; Catherine Kerrigan, 'Nationalism and Gender: Scottish Myths of the Female'; (both in *Scottish Studies - Proceedings of the Scottish Workshop of the E S S E Conference*, Bordeaux 1993); Dorothy Porter McMillan, 'Heroines and Writers' in C Gonda (ed) *Tea and Leg-Irons* (1992). M Burgess (ed) *The Other Voice: Scottish Women's Writing Since 1808* (1987) is an enjoyable anthology of fiction
- 34 J Stephenson and C Brown made extensive use of the Stirling Women's Oral History Archive, kept in the Smith Museum, Stirling, for their article in *Out of Bounds* (*op cit*), and also 'The view from the workplace: women's memories of work in Stirling c1910-1950', in E Breitenbach and E Gordon (eds) *The World is Ill-Divided: Women's Work in Scotland in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* (1990). The collection by Glasgow Women's Studies Group, *Uncharted Lives: Extracts from Scottish Women's Experiences 1850-1982* (1983) includes the results of research based on oral testimony. In recent years there have been several interesting television series dealing with aspects of 20th century social history- most recently on BBC Scotland, celebrating the 75th anniversary of female enfranchisement. They have all relied heavily on 'talking heads' sharing personal memories and stories.
- 35 Helen Crawford from Glasgow was an evangelical minister's wife who became an active suffragette, peace crusader, and latterly a communist. Unpublished autobiography (nd) is in the William Gallagher Memorial Library, STUC, Glasgow. Christian Watt, from the North East of Scotland, wrote a remarkable memoir of her eventful and tragic life during her long years as an inmate in a mental hospital. She was of fishing stock married to a seaman and worked as a servant, though there were also more lofty social and family connections. D Fraser (ed) *The Christian Watt Papers* (1983)
- 36 *The Innes Review*, which is the journal of Catholic history in Scotland, has, to my knowledge, carried no articles about the general situation, concerns, organisations etc of Roman Catholic laywomen, although there are some recent ones about female teachers and their training, and several dealing with women religious. Books about the history of the RC Church in Scotland are similarly neglectful. Social histories are scarcely more enlightening, e g the articles about Scotland in R Swift and S Gilley (eds) *The Irish in the Victorian City* (1985). Dr Mary McHugh in the offices of Glasgow Archdiocese has been helpful, but unable to find many indexed or centrally available sources which would form the basis of such research

- 37 P Gay, *The Cultivation of Hatred: The Bourgeois Experience, Victoria to Freud* (1993), ch 1, 4
- 38 *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland* (1858-63) 489
- 39 See B Gottlieb, *The Family in the Western World from the Black Death to the Industrial Age* (1993) 99-104
- 40 J Calvin, *Commentaries on Genesis* quoted in K Boyd, *Scottish Church Attitudes to Sex, Marriage and the Family 1850-1914* (1980) 6
- 41 *Christian Journal* (1840) 10
- 42 M Caird *op cit* 81
- 43 For a brief and well-illustrated survey of the methods used to impose patriarchy in post-Reformation Scotland, see E King, *The Hidden History of Glasgow's Women: The Thew Factor* (1993) 25ff
- 44 See Boyd, *op cit* (part one); Leneman and Mitchison, *op cit*; in an article based on urban sources, 'Acquiescence in and Defiance of Church Discipline in Early Modern Scotland', in *Scottish Church History Society Records* vol XXV, I (1993) 19ff they show there was evasion of discipline in cities too, although also harsh treatment by Kirk Sessions, especially of women, who were less able to avoid the consequences of extra-marital sex; Leah Leneman's most recent research into divorce in Scotland in the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries (publications forthcoming) apparently provides further evidence of both men and women contravening and subverting the moral standards laid down by the Kirk.
- 45 quoted in J Anderson, *Ladies of the Covenant* (1857), introduction xxvi
- 46 For discussion on the common roots of the private and public spheres, see L Nicholson, *Gender and History: The Limits of Social Theory in the Age of the Family* (1986) ch 1,2,5
- 47 See A Phillips, *Engendering Democracy* (1991) 23ff; L Clark, 'Women and Locke' in L Clark and L Lange (eds) *The Sexism of Social and Political Theory* (1979); *Gender and History* 133-167
- 48 Barbara Benedict quotes a satire written by William Creech of Edinburgh in 1791: 'I have a wife, Sir, who has contracted a *habit* much more pernicious to me than the habit of swearing...I mean the habit of *reading and writing*...from morning to night she sits poring over some book or other, which may be very entertaining for aught I know, as I make it a rule to look into none of them. But of what use is all this to me? If I set her down to mend my stockings, she is reading *Locke upon the Human Understanding*...' As Benedict notes, this allusion is to essential reading for the male literati of the time. Her article highlights tensions between aspirations to cultivation and gentility, and concerns about the moral dangers of women extending beyond their traditional spheres, among Edinburgh publishers of the 18th century: 'Service to the Public: William Creech and Sentiment for Sale' in J Dwyer and R B Sher (eds) *Sociability and Society in 18th Century Scotland* (1993)

- 49 *ibid*, Introduction by John Dwyer 18
- 50 *ibid* 106-108
- 51 *ibid* 158
- 52 see G Lloyd, *The Man of Reason* (2nd ed 1992) 50ff; S A MacLeod Burns, 'The Humean Female'; L Marcil-Lacoste, 'Hume's Method in Moral Reasoning' both in *The Sexism of Social and Political Theory* (*op cit*). The Hume quotation is from his *Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals*.
It is interesting to note that Thomas Reid, the great 'commonsense' philosopher, opposed Hume's view of artificial justice. He believed that it was natural, and the concept of justice was founded upon the awareness of rights which had been violated. However, in making this point, Reid seems to adhere to the assumption that the 'person' who has this rational conception is a man:
'A man may be injured, first in his person; second in his family by robbing him of his children, or in any way injuring those he is bound to protect.'*(Works 656)*; Reid also maintained, *contra* Hume that rudeness and civilisation, ignorance and knowledge, were equally 'natural', but that the Family was the one 'Government that can be said to be purely the institution of Nature.' (Manuscripts 3061/6)
- 53 Hume, *Enquiry...* quoted by Macleod Burns, *ibid* 54
- 54 *ibid*
- 55 see Marcil-Lacoste, (*op cit*) 66-8
- 56 For further reading on the relationships between Enlightenment philosophy, liberal politics, and gender issues, see L M G Clark and L Lange eds, *The Sexism of Social and Political Theory* (1979); S Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (1979); G Lloyd, *The Man of Reason: 'Male' and 'Female' in Western Philosophy* (1984); A Phillips, *Engendering Democracy* (1991); *Gender and History* (*op cit*); *Am I That Name* (*op cit*); L Anthony and C Witt (eds) *A Mind of Her Own* (1992) J Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman* (1981) presents a case for maintaining the liberal distinctions between private and public, and for avoiding any state intervention in the 'private' realm, whether economic or domestic; see also Sarah Coakley's article, 'Gender and Knowledge in Western Philosophy: The "Man of Reason" and the "Feminine" "Other" in Enlightenment and Romantic Thought' in *Concilium* (1991/6): *The Special Nature of Women?*
- 57 On connections between evangelicalism and Enlightenment ideas in Scotland, see e g N Landsman, 'Presbyterians and Provincial Society: The Evangelical Enlightenment in the West of Scotland 1740-1775', in *Sociability and Society* (*op cit*) ; T C Smout, *A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830* (1969) 470-483, assesses the contribution of the changing Scottish religious ethos to the cultural achievements of Scots after 1740; M Fry, *Patronage and Principle* (1987) on the achievements and legacy of Moderatism

- 58 see Nicholson, *op cit*
- 59 E Gordon, 'The Scottish Trade Union Movement, Class and Gender 1850-1914', in *Scottish Labour History Society Records* no 23 (1988).
- 60 *The Family in Western History (op cit)* 46
- 61 See T C Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (1986) Chs I, X
- 62 B Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Socialism and Feminism in the 19th century* (1983) 126
- 63 W Muir, *Mrs Grundy in Scotland* (1936) 109
- 64 A typical, if anecdotal, comment about 'the servant problem' may be found among the records of the Ladies Edinburgh Debating Society: 'In February we took up the question of deterioration of the servants of the day as compared with those of former times, a subject on which we were all qualified to speak. We only regret that no servants were present at the lively discussion, from which they might have taken some useful hints.' *Ladies Edinburgh Magazine* Vol V (1879)
- 65 See A Clark, 'Humanity or Justice? Wife beating and the law in the 18th and 19th centuries', in C Smart (ed) *Regulating Womanhood: Historical Essays on Marriage, Motherhood and Sexuality* (1992). J S Mill made the connection between wife abuse, the myth of male protection, and the absence of female suffrage, when he addressed a meeting at the Music Hall, Edinburgh on January 12 1871. (The text is included in a Woman Suffrage scrapbook presented by Helen Baillie to the National Library of Scotland).
- 66 For example, see the article in *United Presbyterian Magazine* (1879) 33
- 67 Little work has been done on the history of domestic violence in Scotland. See Dobash and Dobash, *op cit*, King *op cit*. Also Frances Power Cobbe's influential article, 'Wife torture in England' in the *Contemporary Review* (April 1878) 55-87
- 68 see *The Cultivation of Hatred (op cit)* chap 4. The quotation is from Rev Wallace Williamson, sermon preached at a commissioning service for Church of Scotland Deaconesses, October 16 1892.
- 69 on the connections between female occupation of public space, and accusations of immorality and prostitution, see Littlewood *op cit*; L Mahood, *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the 19th century* (1990)
- 70 *A Century of the Scottish People (op cit)* 164. On the links between prostitution and the bourgeois 'double standard' of male and female morality, see Mahood (*op cit*); W Tait, *Magdalenism: an Inquiry into the Extent, Causes and Consequences of Prostitution in Edinburgh* (1842).

CHAPTER TWO

- 1 S Lewis, *Woman's Mission* (1839) 11-12
- 2 Larger Catechism, Westminster Confession (1647). The Confession shaped the doctrine, polity, education and worship of Scottish presbyterianism after its legal restoration in 1690
- 3 quoted in D Mackichan, *The Missionary Ideal in the Scottish Churches* (1927) 80
- 4 See T C Smout, *A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830* (1969) part two
- 5 J MacLeod, *Scottish Theology in Relation to Church History* (1943) 315
- 6 C Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (1987) 136
- 7 *ibid* 141
- 8 Leneman and Mitchison *Sexuality and Social Control 1650-1780*, (1991) and K Boyd *Scottish Church Attitudes to Sex, Marriage and the Family 1850-1914* (1980) chart the diminishing exercise of Kirk Session public discipline
- 9 *Acts of the Free Church General Assembly 1858-63* 491
- 10 W Wilberforce, *Practical View* 453, quoted in B Taylor *Eve and the New Jerusalem* (1983) 126
- 11 *Christian Journal* (1840) 17
- 12 *ibid*
- 13 *Watchword* (1871) 81
- 14 *Life and Work* (1890) 51
- 15 A series of Acts in the second half of the 19th century transformed the dependent chattel status of married women. The 1861 Conjugal Rights (Scotland) Amendment Act declared that after judicial separation, or a protection order granted to a deserted wife, all property acquired by the woman thereafter belonged exclusively to her. The Married Women's Property (Scotland) Act 1877 gave wives the right to keep their own earned income, unless from a business owned jointly with the husband. By the 1881 Married Women's Property Act, 'the whole moveable or personal estate of the wife, whether acquired before or during the marriage shall, by operation of law, be vested in the wife as her separate estate and shall not be subject to the *jus mariti*.' However, the husband retained power of administration, and his consent was required if she wished to dispose of her property, until the Married Women's Property (Scotland) Act of 1920. (see *The Law of Husband and Wife in Scotland* eds E M CLive and J G Wilson (1974) 287-9)
- 16 M Reid, *A Plea for Woman* (1843 reprinted 1988) 14 See Helsingier Sheets and Veeder, *The Woman Question* vol I, 'Defining Voices' for more on Sarah Lewis's influential text and Marion Reid's critique.

- 17 See E Gordon and E Breitenbach, (eds) *The World is Ill Divided - Women's Work in Scotland in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries* (1990); E Gordon, *Women in the Labour Movement in Scotland 1850-1914* (1990); R Rodger, 'Employment, Wages and Poverty in Scottish Cities' in G Gordon (ed) *Perspectives of the Scottish City* (1985); A J McIvor, 'Women and Work in 20th century Scotland' in *People and Society in Scotland Vol III 1914-1990* (1992)
- 18 See Gordon (1990) for statistics. Rodger (1985) gives detailed tables which demonstrate the regional variation in female employment over a 90 year period
- 19 *Edinburgh Review* (1859) 293 ff
- 20 *The Attempt* (1872) 30
- 21 W R Greg 'Why are Women Redundant?' in *National Review* (1862) 454-5 quoted in M Poovey, *Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in mid-Victorian England* (1986) 4
- 22 *Edinburgh Review* (1859) *op cit*
- 23 See Gordon (1990) *op cit*, and 'The Scottish Trade Union Movement, Class and Gender 1850-1914' in *Scottish Labour History* 23 (1988) on trade union attitudes to female labour
- 24 H Renton, *Memorial of Mrs Agnes Renton* (nd) 2
- 25 *People's Journal* Oct 14 1922, quoted in W M Walker, *Juteopolis: Dundee and its Textile Workers 1885-1923* (1979) 40
- 26 See J Stephenson and C Brown, 'Women's Memories of Work in Stirling c1910-1950' in *Out of Bounds Life and Work Woman's Guild Supplement* (1914) 67
- 28 Stephenson and Brown, *op cit*, see also *Uncharted Lives: Extracts from Scottish Women's Experiences 1850-1982* (1983); T McBride, *The Domestic Revolution* (1976) E Higgs, 'Domestic Service and Household production' in A V John (ed), *Unequal Opportunities* (1986)
- 29 L Lumsden, 'The Position of Women in History' in *The Position of Woman, Actual and Ideal* (1911) 63
- 30 J Melling, *Rent Strikes: Peoples' Struggles for Housing in West Scotland 1890-1916* (1983) and Edward Gaitens' novel of life in the Gorbals, *Dance of the Apprentices*, (1948) give some flavour of this.
- 31 Rev G Lewis 'The Tavern Bill of Dundee': Course of lectures on the physical, educational and moral statistics of Dundee (1840) 3, quoted in W Walker *op cit*
- 32 G Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (1986) 139
- 33 Middle class feminists who were pioneer members of the state school boards from 1872 campaigned vigorously for the teaching of domestic education to working class girls. See chapter 5
- 34 *Life and Work* (1894) 116
- 35 For a helpful outline of different formulations of the ideology of 'true womanhood', see Helsing, Sheets and Veeder, *The Woman Question: Society and Literature in Britain and America 1837-1883* (1983)

Vol II, introduction. They have identified four 'competing, though not mutually exclusive myths or models for woman's place in society' – Angel in the House, Angel Out of the House, the Female Saviour, and women as free and equal agents. 'Angel in the House' is the title of a mid-century poem by Coventry Patmore.

- 36 See e g *Autobiography of Mrs Eliza Fletcher of Edinburgh* (1877) ed Lady Mary Richardson. She belonged to the liberal/intellectual milieu of Enlightenment Edinburgh
- 37 For discussion of the political situation see T C Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People 1830–1950* (1986) Chap I, X
- 38 *Christian Journal* (1840) 213–4
- 39 *ibid* 214
- 40 *The Attempt* (1869) 159
- 41 Sermon preached by Rev W Williamson, at a service to commission deaconesses, at St Cuthbert's Church Edinburgh, October 16 1892
- 42 *Edinburgh City Mission Annual Report* (1834)
- 43 *Home and Foreign Mission Record* (1850) 263
- 44 *ibid*
- 45 *HFMR* (1845) 13
- 46 L Mahood, 'The Domestication of 'Fallen' Women: The Glasgow Magdalene Institution, 1860–1890', in D McCrone, S Kendrick and P Straw (eds), *The Making of Scotland: Nation, Culture and Social Change* (1989) 150
- 47 *ibid* 158
- 48 W Blaikie, *An Autobiography* (1901) 314
- 49 *ibid* 327
- 50 *Reports of the Schemes of the Church of Scotland* (1871) 396
- 51 *Reports of the Schemes of the Church of Scotland* (1884) 371 ff
- 52 *ibid*
- 53 C A Salmond, *A Woman's Work: Memorials of Eliza Fletcher* (1890) civ (not the same Eliza Fletcher as cited in note 36!)
- 54 *Reports of the Schemes of the Church of Scotland* (1875)
- 55 A Gordon, *Life of Archibald Hamilton Charteris* (1912) 162
- 56 *Reports of the Schemes...*(1884) *op cit*
- 57 *Life and Work* (1884) 33
- 58 H Renton *op cit* 84
- 59 *ibid* 66
- 60 W Gibson, *Not Weary in Well-Doing: The Life and Work of Helen Lockhart Gibson* (1888) 32
- 61 *ibid* 96
- 62 *ibid* 66
- 63 Renton *op cit* see 127
- 64 *Life and Work* (1894) 116
- 65 *United Presbyterian Magazine* (1890) 70

- 66 See S J Brown, 'Reform, Reconstruction, Reaction' in *Scottish Journal of Theology* (1991) 489-517
- 67 See Helen Crawford's unpublished autobiography 46 (copy held in the William Gallacher Memorial Library, STUC Headquarters, Glasgow. I am very grateful to Audrey Canning for her interest, help and cups of tea.)
- 68 *ibid*
- 69 See M A McCabe's unpublished PhD thesis *Evangelicalism and the Socialist Revival* (Edinburgh University 1992) for discussion of the connections between evangelicalism and socialism during this period
- 70 C Brown *op cit* 179ff
- 71 Glasgow Presbytery Report on The Housing of the Poor (1910) 10
- 72 see S J Brown *op cit*
- 73 A Scott Matheson, *The Church and Social Problems* (1893) 12
- 74 *Life and Work* (1882) 75
- 75 *Life and Work* (1884) 33
- 76 *Church of Scotland Year Book* (1887) 73
- 77 *Life and Work* (1888) 108
- 78 See WG Central Committee minutes, April 8 1897 (SRO CH1/38/1/1)
- 79 *Life and Work* (1893) 27
- 80 See WG Central Committee minutes, June 9 1896
- 81 *Life and Work* (1892) 48
- 82 M Anderson, *Memories of 50 years Mission Work in the West Parish of Greenock 1863-1913* (1914) 56-7
- 83 See *Church of Scotland Year Book* (1912) for details of Woman's Guild initiatives
- 84 *Life and Work, Woman's Guild Supplement* (1901) 95
- 85 *WG Supplement* (1906) 97
- 86 *WG Supplement* (1906) 73
- 87 *WG Supplement* (1908) 57
- 88 *ibid*
- 89 For example, Dalkeith Parish Church Ladies Work Party, founded 1904, stated in its Constitution that 'the minister and Kirk Session alone shall decide how to allocate the funds' raised at the annual Sale of Work. In 1907, the minister 'was asked to impress on the Kirk Session the desire of the ladies that part of the contribution should be allotted to the Social Scheme of the Church of Scotland'. And in 1908, he informed the Work Party that 'the Kirk Session desired the Work Party to allocate £20 amongst Church schemes as the members might feel inclined.'
See Dalkeith PC Ladies Work Party Minute Book: SRO CH2/84/78
- 90 See eg articles in Supplement: (1906 86,95) on the need, not just to relieve poverty, but to prevent it through education and public service; (1912 69) on the National Insurance Act and its effect on women; (1920 31) on women's new civic

responsibilities: 'The training and education of women especially, have tended to foster in them a habit of deploring existing evils and of labouring to mitigate their effect on individuals without any effort to remove them. "They" ought not to allow such things, they remark, without considering who "they" may be. Now "they" has become "we" and the sooner we women recognise that the better'.

- 91 *WG Supplement* (1906) 97
- 92 *ibid* (1914) 103
- 93 *Reports of the Schemes of the Church of Scotland* (1916) 416
- 94 *WG Supplement* (1918) 56
- 95 See minutes of WG Central Committee and Constiution sub-committee, 1919 - 1920
- 96 *Life and Work* (1930) 28
- 97 *Life and Work, Women's Work in the Church* (1928) 59
- 98 Comments to this effect feature in WG Committee minutes, and also in a number of articles which appeared in the Supplement during 1928
- 99 Professor Martin Pugh made this point at a conference on 'The March of the Women', held in St Andrews, April 29 1995
- 100 J W Robertson Scott, *The Story of the Women's Institute Movement* (1925) 236
- 101 *ibid* 238; See also the articles in *Women's Work in the Church* (1928) 5,
- 102 *WG Supplement* (1920) 39
- 103 WG Central Committee minutes, April 11 1928
- 104 See e g *Women's Work in the Church* (1929) 17:
'It may be that the future will even see women ministers everywhere! Without entering into the controversial, surely spiritually minded and studious women, who look on the ministry as a 'vocation', not merely as a 'profession', could be a great power for the good. Many are 'ministering' now in the truest sense of the word, and nobody can afford to ignore the divine call if it comes.'
- 105 A H Dunnett, *The Church in Changing Scotland* (1934) 127ff
- 106 *UP Magazine* (1890) 51
- 107 *United Presbyterian Church Synod Report* (1898) 29
- 108 *Youth Magazine* (1897) 13
- 109 *Free Church of Scotland Yearbook* (1888) 99
- 110 *Reports of the Free Church of Scotland* (1887) XX 34
- 111 *ibid*
- 112 See *Reports of Free College Church, Glasgow* (1880s)
- 113 *United Free Church Record* (1901) 333
- 114 *UFC Record* (1903) 321
- 115 The Report of Women's Home Mission (1916) gives descriptions of the characteristic initiatives undertaken during the war years
- 116 *UFC Record* (1909) 312
- 117 *ibid*
- 118 See *Reports of Lansdowne United Free Church, Glasgow* (1912-18)

- 119 *ibid* 1915
- 120 Reports of the *UF Church* (1915) XXVIII App 1 11-17
- 121 *UFC Record* (1914) 151
- 122 *HFMR* (1865) 146. In a further article, the same author calls for 'Christian ladies to arouse themselves from that epicurean selfishness which is the besetting sin of the age...In their attempts to reach and purify the home life of the people, ladies would have in many ways the advantage over their poorer sisters who have to work for their daily bread. To their efforts no mercenary motives could be attributed' 220
- 123 *Reports of the Schemes...* (1881) 359ff
- 124 *Life and Work* (1884) 33-4
- 125 See correspondence in *HFMR* (1868) 61, 90. Also *Life and Work* (1886) 97
- 126 *Life and Work* (1892) 94
- 127 *Life and Work* (1893) 212
- 128 *UF Church General Assembly Proceedings and Debates* (1905) 253
- 129 Some women with no personal means were supported through training at the Missionary College. The Girls Auxiliary sponsored a few parish sisters in later years
- 130 *UFCGAPD* (1909) 220
- 131 *UFC Record* (1929) 419
- 132 *Life and Work* (1890)
- 133 *WG Supplement* (1906) 73
- 134 *HFMR* (1893) 3
- 135 *Life and Work* (1892) 48
- 136 J A and Mrs Thomson, 'The Position of Woman Biologically Considered' in *The Position of Woman Actual and Ideal* (1911) 4. J Arthur Thomson, working with Patrick Geddes, wrote, *The Evolution of Sex* (1889), which was almost as influential as Herbert Spencer's work in popularising sociobiological theories of gender differentiation
- 137 H Spencer, 'A Theory of Population Deduced from the General Law of Animal Fertility', *Westminster Review* (1852) 498. Quoted in J Sayers, *Biological Politics* (1982) see Chapter 3: 'Social Darwinism and the woman question'.
- 138 H Drummond, *The Ascent of Man* (1889) 278
- 139 P Geddes and J A Thomson, *The Evolution of Sex* (1889) 247. In spite of the implications of their views, these men, and certain other theorists, were not by any means totally opposed to women's rights. Geddes was a real polymath who made a considerable contribution to Scottish intellectual and cultural life.
- 140 See e g E Pearson, 'Spiritual Motherhood and Philanthropic Service' in *The Position of Woman...* *op cit* 135-148.
- 141 *UFC Record* (1918) 87
- 142 *WG Supplement* (1919) 179
- 143 *WG Supplement* (1906) 96

- 144 *Reports of the UF Church* (1915) XXVIII
145 *UFCGAPD* (1917) 264
146 *Life and Work* (1931) 138
147 *UFC Record* (1929) 468
148 *ibid*
149 It is difficult to establish how many women actually left the church, or for precisely what reasons. Helen Crawford, Helen Fraser and some others who were involved in the suffrage movement did so (though not always at the time of that campaign), and expressed resentment and rejection of the constraints under which women were placed by institutional religion. Many within the churches who sought more equality and latitude argued consistently, especially into the 20th century, that the church was losing intelligent and capable women members, though they gave no names or figures. I make further reference to these in chaps 4 and 5. Whatever the reality, there was a widely held perception that some women left the church for these kinds of reasons.
150 *UFC Record* (1928) 312
151 See, e g David Watson, *Perfect Womanhood* (1906), A Scott Matheson *op cit* chap 12
152 *Life and Work, Women's Work Supplement* (1929) 25
153 See e g *WG Supplement* (1902) 57f
154 See Dunnett (1934) *op cit* Ch XI 127-134
155 Lewis Grassie Gibbon, *Cloud Howe* (1933)
156 *Life and Work* (1931) 145

CHAPTER THREE

- 1 Emma Raymond Pitman, *Heroines of the Mission Field* (1880) 1
- 2 Parliamentary speech, 1793. See R Coupland, *William Wilberforce* (1945)
- 3 For changing models of missionary work, see e.g Philip Curtin, *The Image of Africa* (1964); T Christensen and W R Hutchison (eds), *Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era 1880-1920* (1982)
- 4 Quoted by Olive Wyon in her biography of Small, *The Three Windows* (1953) 51
- 5 J W Jack, *Daybreak in Livingstonia* (1901) 332
- 6 Minutes of the UP Foreign Missions Board (1882), Appendix 18 (NLS Dep 298/70)
- 7 Wyon *op cit* 24-5
- 8 J B Cobb, 'Feminism and Process Thought: A Two-way Relationship' in Sheila Greeve Davaney (ed) *Feminism and Process Thought*, (1981) 37
- 9 Jack *op cit* 333
- 10 *Report of the World Missionary Conference*, Vol VI (1910)
- 11 *The Scotsman*, May 31 1884
- 12 The huge Church of Scotland foreign missionary archive is now kept at the National Library of Scotland. See *Catalogue of Manuscripts Acquired since 1925* (1985) Vol 6 (MS 7530-8022)
- 13 J Wilson, *Memoir of Mrs Wilson of Bombay* (1838) 631
- 14 quoted by EGK Hewat, *Vision and Achievement* (1960) 11
- 15 J Wilson *op cit* 515
- 16 quoted in Free Church of Scotland *Women's Work in Heathen Lands* July 1885 14
- 17 Minutes of the Edinburgh Ladies Association March 8 1837
- 18 A Swan, *Seedtime and Harvest* (1937) 104
- 19 *ibid* 63
- 20 *Women's Work* July 1885 6,8
- 21 *HFMR* (1852) 276
- 22 *HFMR* (1843) 67
- 23 C Rainy 'Our Jubilee' in *Women's Work* July 1887 11
- 24 quoted in 'The Story of our Madras Mission' 94 in *Our Church's Work in India* (1910)
- 25 quoted in 'Women's Work in Bengal' 77 *ibid*
- 26 *HFMR* (1848) 20
- 27 'Zenana Missions in Bengal' *Women's Work* (1885)
- 28 *ibid*
- 29 *ibid*
- 30 Wyon *op cit* 49-50
- 31 *HFMR* (1876) 324
- 32 R Balfour and M Young *The Work of Medical Women in India* (1929) 14
- 33 *Free Church Monthly* (March 1889) 30-32

- 34 Duff wrote to Dr Burns Thomson of the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society, 'I am not at all in favour of the movement for mixed medical classes in our universities'. see J Lowe, *Medical Missions: Their Place and Power* (1886) 178. See also W Burns Thomson, *Reminiscences of Medical Missionary Work* (1885) Ch XVIII
- 35 L Bean and E van Heyningen (eds) *The Letters of Jane Elizabeth Waterston 1866-1905* (1983) 127-8
- 36 *FCM* (1889) *op cit*
- 37 J Lowe *op cit* 185-186
- 38 *UFC Mission Record* (June 1929)
- 39 Balfour and Young *op cit*
- 40 Glasgow Missionary Society *Summer Quarterly Intelligence* (1839) 7-8
- 41 A Waddel, *Memorials of Mrs Sutherland of Old Calabar* (1883) 26
- 42 W Marwick, *William and Louisa Anderson* (1897) 410,592
- 43 Waddel *op cit* 60
- 44 *UPMR* (1852) 174
- 45 *Women's Missionary Magazine* (1904) 295
- 46 see J Buchan, *The Expendable Mary Slessor* (1980) 195
- 47 *Women's Missionary Magazine* (1918) 52
- 48 R Shepherd *Lovedale, South Africa 1841-1941* (1941) 153
- 49 Jack *op cit* 132
- 50 Bean and van Heyningen *op cit* 114
- 51 *ibid* 22
- 52 quoted in Mrs H E Scott, *A Saint in Kenya: Marion Stevenson* (1932) 241
- 53 N J Njogore, 'Women of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kenya:1891-1991' in *Reformed World* Vol 42 (1992) 129
- 54 *ibid* 133
- 55 E G K Hewat, *Vision and Achievement* (1960) 265
- 56 *Women's Missionary Magazine* (1918) 108-9
- 57 *United Presbyterian Mission Record* (1884) 205
- 58 E Raymond Pitman *op cit* 21-22
- 59 *United Presbyterian Magazine* (1895) 446
- 60 Report of the Committee for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, *Church of Scotland Reports* (1855)
- 61 *UPMR* (1877) 379
- 62 *The Helpmeet* (1891) 2
- 63 *Women's Work* (July 1887) 13
- 64 *Women's Missionary Magazine* (1918) 83
- 65 *HFMR* (1877) 516
- 66 G Gollock, *CMS Missionaries at Work* (1898)
- 67 Edinburgh Missionary Conference Report *op cit*
- 68 On March 9 1864 Govan wrote to Stewart, 'I do not think it would be advisable that the Institution should be placed wholly under a lady. It is evidently most desirable - I would say almost indispensable - that it should be presided over by a male head' (Bean and van Heyningen, 15)

- 69 *ibid* 73. The Ladies' Association office was at 15 North Bank Street, at the top of the The Mound in Edinburgh, and next door to New College and the Assembly Hall
- 70 *ibid*
- 71 *ibid* 32
- 72 *ibid* 120. See also H McIntosh, 'Contracts of Employment and the influence of class in the first thirty years of Livingstonia' in *Records of the Scottish Church History Society XXIII* (1989) 96-112
- 73 *ibid* 164, 166
- 74 *ibid* 167
- 75 *ibid* 180-1
- 76 *ibid* 265
- 77 Item four of plaint filed March 21 1883 in the High Court, Fort William, Bengal
- 78 *ibid* item eight
- 79 D Macmillan, *The Life of Professor Hastie* (1926)
- 80 Private Letter Book of J T MacLagan, secretary of the Church of Scotland Foreign Mission Committee, 1882-4 (NLS Acc 7555)
- 81 see transcript of Libel case, August 28 to September 15 1883; also *Life of Prof Hastie* 166
- 82 Memorandum on the Calcutta Branch of the Church of Scotland Female Mission, May 17 1882
- 83 Item two, Finding of the Consulting Board to the SLA, June 19 1882
- 84 Letter to Calcutta Corresponding Board, August 23 1882
- 85 *ibid*
- 86 Concluding judgment in libel case, September 15 1883. A transcript of the case, including relevant documents, is held in the NLS (*Report on the Pigot Case, Calcutta 1884*)
- 87 *Scotsman* May 30 1884
- 88 *Scotsman* June 2 1884
- 89 *Women's Missionary Magazine* (1904) 295
- 90 J Buchan, *The Expendable Mary Slessor* (1980) 180
- 91 The Place of Women in the Church's Life and Work, Appendix 2: 'The Position of Women in the Organised Foreign Mission Enterprise of the Church, *Reports of the United Free Church* (1915)
- 92 M Gollock 'The Share of Women in the Administration of Missions' *International Review of Missions* (1912) 674ff
- 93 From 'Doubts and Difficulties Dispelled' *Women's Work* pamphlet (1885)
- 94 *Women's Work* (July 1885)
- 95 D Smith Cairns, *Autobiography* (1936) 49
- 96 *The Helpmeet* (1900) 79
- 97 quoted in Wyon *op cit* 54-5
- 98 see Waddel, *op cit* 135-148
- 99 *The Helpmeet* (1896) 241
- 100 Report of the UP Church Jubilee Conference, 1897
- 101 *UPMR* (1884) 207
- 102 *The Helpmeet* (1900) 351

- 103 Foreign Mission Committee, *Reports of the United Free Church* (1901)
- 104 The Place of Women in the Church's Life and Work, *Reports of the UF Church* (1916)
- 105 *The Helpmeet* (1894)
- 106 quoted in O Wyon *op cit* 70-1
- 107 K Young, *Our Sail We Lift: History of the Girls' Association 1901-1951* (1951) forward
- 108 Woman's Guild Supplement, *Life and Work* (1918) 38-39
- 109 See *Missionary Ideologies in the Imperialist Era (op cit)*
- 110 *Proceedings and Debates of the Free Church General Assembly* (1884) 93
- 111 Extracted from the *Women's Work* pamphlet, 'Doubts and Difficulties Dispelled' (1885). There are several characters in the dialogue, each representing different attitudes and factions within the church. For simplicity, I have just used W and M to indicate whether a woman or a man is speaking
- 112 *Women's Missionary Magazine* (1918) 84
- 113 Frances Balfour, *Dr Elsie Inglis* (1918) 107
- 114 A Cunningham, letter of application to become a missionary, (NLS Acc 7991-2)
- 115 Address given at meeting of the Scottish Churches League for Woman Suffrage, March 12 1913
- 116 From Report of the Girl's Auxiliary Conference, 1919. *Women's Missionary Magazine* (1919) 87-88
- 117 J M Mackenzie, 'David Livingstone: the construction of the myth', in eds G Walker and T Gallacher, *Sermons and Battle Hymns* (1990) 26
- 118 *ibid* Mackenzie here refers to the romantic prototype as described by Jenni Calder in *Heroes from Byron to Guevara* (1977)
- 119 J J Ellis, *Two Missionary Heroines in Africa* (nd) 32

CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 *United Free Church Record* (1928) 40
- 2 John Knox et al, *First Book of Discipline* (1560)
see J Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland* (1960)
163-176
- 3 *ibid*
- 4 *ibid*
- 5 R. Mitchison and L. Leneman, *Sexuality and Social Control, 1660-1780* (1991) 16
- 6 Willa Muir, *Mrs Grundy in Scotland* (1936) 49
- 7 *ibid* 113
- 8 see e.g P Hillis, 'Presbyterianism and Social Class in Mid-19th Century Glasgow' in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* vol 32 (1981) 47-64
- 9 *United Free Church General Assembly Proceedings and Debates (UFCGAPD)* (1915) 216
- 10 see L Russell, 'Women and Ministry: Problem or Possibility?' in J Weidman (ed), *Christian Feminism, Visions of a New Humanity* (1986)
- 11 John Knox, *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558) in M A Breslow(ed) *The Political Writings of John Knox* (1985)
- 12 A H Gray, *About People* (1934) 148
- 13 Mrs Meredith, *Life and Work* (1931) 146
- 14 The presbyterian church does not consider the minister to be an icon of Christ - in particular during the sacrament of communion - and has not utilised the Catholic argument that in this representative capacity the celebrant requires to be male. However, many personal comments addressed to or about women ministers suggest that ancient ideas of female uncleanliness and fertility contaminating 'holy places' were atavistically powerful for some presbyterians.
- 15 Frances Melville (1910) and Elizabeth Hewat (1926) were the first presbyterian Scotswomen to graduate in divinity before 1930. Olive Winchester from USA was first to graduate BD in Glasgow (1912). She was ordained to the ministry of the newly formed Pentecostal Church of Scotland, and returned to the States to work for the Nazarene Church. Vera Findlay was awarded a BD from Glasow in 1929, and was ordained in the Congregational Union of Scotland - the first Scottish female minister.
- 16 See, for example, the debate in the United Free Church General Assembly, 1926.
- 17 *UFCGAPD* (1917) 313
- 18 See chapter on Lady Glenorchy in P D Thomson, *Women of the Scottish Church* (1985) 122
- 19 See R Small, *History of the Congregations of the United Presbyterian Church*, Vol I App V 711-716
- 20 *ibid*
- 21 *Free Church of Scotland General Assembly Proceedings and Debates (FCSGAPD)* (1843) 139ff
- 22 *ibid*

- 23 *The Present Crisis of the Free Church* (1843)
- 24 *ibid* See Appendix B
- 25 *ibid*
- 26 *ibid*
- 27 *FCS Reports*, October 1843
- 28 *FCSGAPD* (1843) 132
- 29 *ibid* 131
- 30 *ibid* 136
- 31 *ibid* 140
- 32 *Parliamentary Papers* (1847) XIII 133
- 33 The guidance given on rules for the election of office-bearers makes it clear that the desire and expectation was that there would be no public controversy over the name of a nominee. Candlish also placed his remarks on the particular problem of female voting in the context of general procedure: 'There is difficulty felt by many as to the way and manner in which females should be asked to signify opinion, when the question comes to a hard run and close division...with all the technicality of "roll called and votes marked"...The whole subject of determining questions in Christian assemblies by vote demands reconsideration.' (*FCSGAPD*, 1843, 143)
- 34 *Christian Journal* (1840) 17
- 35 Quoted in C Midgley, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns 1780-1870* (1992) 160
Elizabeth Cady Stanton recalled in her *Reminiscences*, 'The clerical portion of the convention was most violent in its opposition...in agony lest the women should do or say something to shock the heavenly hosts...Deborah, Huldah, Vashti and Esther might have questioned the propriety of calling it a World's Convention, when only half of humanity was represented, but what were their opinions worth when compared with those of Revs G Harvey, C Stout or J Burnet, who, Bible in hand, argued women's subjection, divinely decreed when woman was created' *Eighty Years and More* (1898) 81
- 36 Lucretia Mott and her husband James travelled extensively in Scotland. Her diary notes that she was not allowed to address a meeting of the Glasgow Emancipation Society, but spoke in the Society of Friends meeting house. (See A D Hallowell, *James and Lucretia Mott*)
- 37 E Cady Stanton wrote, 'As the convention adjourned, the remark was heard on all sides, "it is about time some demand was made for new liberties for women". She and Lucretia Mott 'resolved to hold a convention as soon as we returned home, and form a society to advocate the rights of women'. The proposed meeting, held at Seneca Falls, inaugurated the beginning of organised feminism in the United States.
- 38 B Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem* (1983) 129
- 39 *ibid* 128

- 40 See E King, 'The Scottish Women's Suffrage Movement' in *Out of Bounds: Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945* eds E Breitenbach and E Gordon 121ff. Barbara Taylor also mentions Mrs Hamilton, who 'delivered feminist harangues against the clergy from a pulpit, dressed in "official white robes"' *op cit* 129
- 41 Quoted in Taylor 150
- 42 *ibid* 152
- 43 *ibid* 152-4
- 44 The utopian socialist view of marriage opposed the contract whereby a woman in legal wedlock thereby renounced all rights over property, her own person, her children. She was also subject to the double standard which allowed her husband to commit adultery with impunity, but if she was adulterous, she lost all maintenance rights and was liable to be abandoned. The Owenites believed this state was a form of slavery - domestic, sexual and civil. They promoted instead free unions of love, mutual independence and respect, and argued that these were not possible until the economic and personal dependence of women was eliminated. Their solution was the development of communities which would collectivise and remove the sex-division of domestic labour and childcare. They campaigned for immediate marriage reforms in society, and also for communal family life within their own 'utopias'. See Taylor, 32-48
- 45 Olive Anderson, 'Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain' in *Historical Journal*, (1969) 468
- 46 Isabella Armstrong, *Plea for Modern Prophetesses* (1866) 62
- 47 *ibid* 39
- 48 Minutes of Brechin Free Church Presbytery, April 9 1867
- 49 *The Watchword*, (1869) 328
- 50 O Anderson *op cit* 478
- 51 I Armstrong, *op cit* 23
- 52 *ibid* 20
- 53 *The Watchword* (1867) 92
- 54 W Cunningham, *Historical Theology* Vol I (1870, 3rd edition) 162
- 55 see N Dickson, 'Modern Prophetesses: Woman Preachers in the 19th century Scottish Brethren', in *Scottish Church History Society Records* XXV, I (1993) 89ff, and especially 109. Many writers have made the general point about periods of openness to the public ministry of women, followed by institutional retrenchment and exclusion. See eg K Armstrong, *The End of Silence* (1993), J Field-Bibb, *Women Towards Priesthood* (1991), R Radford Reuther, 'Prophetic Tradition and the Liberation of Women' in *Feminist Theology* 5 (1994) 58-73
- 56 Mary Coutts, one of the interviewees in Anne Smith's collection, *Women Remember: An Oral History* (1989), recalls being converted by a female Faith Mission

preacher in the North East of Scotland in the 1910s. Within the Salvation Army, Catherine Booth, co-founder and the best known female preacher of the 19th century, is a good example of public activity in spite of personal trepidation. The editor of the *United Presbyterian Magazine* (1893) wrote an article about her:

'Mrs Booth had come forward as champion of women's rights to preach the gospel, though it was only after a severe struggle with her own unwillingness and fear that she ventured, under what she felt to be divine compulsion, to open her lips in public [in 1860]...When once her power as a speaker asserted itself in the teeth of ingrained timidity, her labours increased a hundredfold, and the record is scarcely less than marvellous of her indefatigable energy, her well-nigh ceaseless activity' (166ff).

The tone of the whole article is one of enthusiastic approval, in keeping with Dr Corbett's support for women's rights in church as well as State.

- 57 Rev J Gibson, *Not Weary in Well-Doing* (1888) 117
 58 Anderson *op cit* 481
 59 *A Consecutive Narrative of the Remarkable Awakening in Edinburgh* (1874), which is a contemporary account of the Moody and Sankey campaign, edited by Mrs Peddie, mentions that up to three hundred waited behind after evening meetings in Broughton Place Church, and 'that the persons who conversed with the perplexed and inquiring were ministers, elders and deacons, and qualified private members of our various churches; and also Christian matrons and Bible-women, as far as their valuable services could be secured' 18
 60 *Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Mission Record* (1877) 424
 61 M Levison, *Wrestling With the Church* (1992) 135
 62 *The Present Crisis...* *op. cit.* App B
 63 J Ludlow, *Women's Work in the Church* (1865) see 214, 301
 64 See *Church of Scotland Christian Life and Work Committee Reports 1870-1884*
 65 A H Charteris, *The Church of Christ: its Life and Work* Ch 7 & 8 (Baird lectures, delivered 1887, published 1905)
 66 *ibid* 144
 67 *ibid* 163
 68 *ibid*
 69 Levison, *op cit* 32
 70 *ibid* 161
 71 Rev A Wallace Williamson, sermon preached in St Cuthbert's Church, October 16 1892
 72 *Life and Work* (1884) 33
 73 See *Alice Maxwell, Deaconess*, (1917) by Mrs Horatio Macrae, for details of deaconess training
 74 *Church of Scotland Year Book* (1888)

- 75 The Woman's Guild institutions, publications and organisation offered scope for the development of personal skills and responsibility. Some of the more prominent early deaconesses included Katherine Davidson, Ella Pirrie, Dr Mary Dodds, Mary Lamond
- 76 *Life and Work* (1904) 106
- 77 Rev D Butler DD, address to the Scottish Churches League for Woman Suffrage, March 12 1913
- 78 *UFCGAPD* (1914) 230
- 79 *ibid*
- 80 For example, Annie Small: 'Conditions of church service at home amazed and shocked me...The great proportion of work in many congregations was being done by women, silently and unobtrusively with little acknowledgement, without even a pretence of comradeship...' (*L&W* 1931 143). Eunice Murray: 'Without women the Churches would be in a sorry plight...They have worked in the background, unrecognised and often unhonoured and, of course, unpaid. They have freely offered their service, love and money. Now that those who feel the call are asking for recognition, is it not ungenerous and disloyal to the teaching of Christ to deny the right to women?' (Women's Freedom League pamphlet 1923)
- 81 E Cady Stanton, *The Woman's Bible* (1895) 71
- 82 *UFC Record* (1914) 151
- 83 *Report of the Special Committee on Recognition of the Place of Women in the Church's Life and Work*, UFC Reports (1915) XXVIII
- 84 *ibid*
- 85 *ibid*
- 86 *UFCGAPD* (1915) 216
- 87 *ibid* 282
- 88 1915 Report, *op cit* Appendix I
- 89 *ibid*
- 90 *ibid*
- 91 *ibid*
- 92 The militant suffrage organisations in particular used quasi-religious language, symbols and methods. A note in the June 1914 *UFC Record* observes, 'The article on 'Women and the Church' (April) has drawn a number of letters remarkable for their deep feeling...One writer says that the Movement has become the religion of many women. Tens of thousands of pounds donated to the Women's Movement must affect the funds of the Church'. See chap 5 section 5 for more on the connections between religion and the suffrage movement.
- 93 Women's Missionary College House Guild Letter (1916) 22
- 94 The *UFC Record* (1916) included the following observation in its report of that year's Assembly: 'The Moderator's gallery was crowded with ladies who, with grim tenacity, had waited throughout the day for the debate...When the doctor [Henderson] finished,

one woman turned to me and said with a sigh, "What is it all about? he has never reached the real question at all."

- 95 G M Reith, *Reminiscences of the United Free Church General Assemblies* (1935) 95
- 96 *UFCGAPD* (1916) 335
- 97 *ibid* 324
- 98 *UFCGAPD* (1915) 281
- 99 *ibid* 283
- 100 Report of the Special Committee on Recognition of Women, *UFC Reports* (1916) XXVIII 7
- 101 *ibid* 6
- 102 *UFCGAPD* (1916) 324
- 103 *ibid* 325f
- 104 Rev R Forgan, *UFCGAPD* (1917) 308
- 105 *ibid* 307
- 106 *UFCGAPD* (1916) 336, (1917) 313
- 107 *UFC Record* (1918) 79
- 108 Church of Scotland, *Report of the Special Commission on the War* (1919) 649
- 109 *ibid* 666
- 110 *ibid*
- 111 *Glasgow Herald* May 20 1920
- 112 Church of Scotland, *Church and Nation Committee Report* (1920) App II 511-524
- 113 Church of Scotland, *Church and Nation Committee Report* (1921) 574-8
- 114 *ibid*
- 115 *Church of Scotland Layman's Handbook* (1921) 151
- 116 *ibid*
- 117 *ibid*
- 118 James Francis continued his forthright advocacy of equal rights for women. In 1933, he pursued this intent with a long and witty speech, prefaced by a declaration that he was 'insistent, persistent and consistent', and including a description of John White as a 'malevolent fairy'! (see *Church of Scotland Acts, Proceedings and Debates* (1933) 325
- 119 G M Reith, *op cit* 292
- 120 *UFCGAPD* (1926) 228
- 121 *ibid* 224-230
- 122 Dr J Knight, *ibid* 229
- 123 Rev R Adamson, *ibid* 226
- 124 Rev T Napier, *ibid* 226
- 125 *UFC Record* (1926) 311
- 126 *CSAPD*, October 1929
- 127 *ibid*
- 128 Vera Findlay MA BD had an illustrious school and university career. She attended the Scottish Congregational College 1926-28 and her preaching so impressed the deacons at Partick Congregational Church, Glasgow, that she received a call before completion of her BD. She was ordained there in November 1928, and in May 1929, the Congregational Union of Scotland carried an amendment to make 'Minister' apply equally to men and women. Findlay

- was subsequently admitted to the Union without opposition. The main difficulty she faced with regard to acceptance of her ministry was when she married, and in particular when she had a child. See A Escott's article about her, 'True Valour', in McCarra and Whyte, eds, *A Glasgow Collection: Essays in Honour of Joe Fisher* (1990)
- 129 J Barr, *The United Free Church of Scotland* (1936) 269
- 130 For comparative studies of the struggle for official recognition in different denominations, see J Field-Bibb, *Women Towards Priesthood: Ministerial Politics and feminist Praxis* (1991); R B Edwards, *The Case for Women's Ministry* (1989) K Armstrong, *The End of Silence: Women and Priesthood* (1993)
- 131 Between 1918 and 1929, Parliament passed 21 pieces of legislation which might be construed as responding to the claims of the women's movement. These included equal terms for divorce and guardianship, and the introduction of widows' pensions. However, in other respects, women's votes failed to make an impact. The Sex Disqualification Removal Act (1919) did not stop discrimination against women, not just in churches, but in terms of equal pay, the Marriage bar, and other areas of concern. But there was a definite retreat from pro-women legislation after 1928.
- 132 From 1931 until 1968, there was a succession of commissions, committees and reports which dealt with the role and ministry of women in the Church of Scotland. From the 1930s, their recommendations were in favour of extending the eldership to women. In 1944, in response to the Baillie Commission, Presbyteries voted to accept this, but most unusually, the 1945 refused to adopt and make the Act a standing Law. Consultation with Kirk Sessions and Congregations led to a reversal of the proposal. In 1959 a study document on *The Place of Women in the Church* was published. In 1960 the Panel on Doctrine was asked to consider the whole question, but in 1962 it reported that it did not expect to take up the remit concerning women in the Ministry 'for some time'. In 1963 Mary Lusk petitioned the General Assembly to have her call tested and, if satisfied, to proceed to her ordination. To cut a long and complicated story short, in 1966 the General Assembly agreed to open the eldership to women, and in 1968, women became eligible for ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacraments on the same terms and conditions as men. Mary Lusk (Levison) tells her own story in *Wrestling with the Church* (1992).
- 133 *CSAPD* (1931) 63
- 134 Lady Frances Balfour, *Dr Elsie Inglis* (1918) 87
- 135 John White, MS notes for speeches, papers etc. See John White Papers, Box 93, 'Women in the Church'. In the extensive collection of material held in New College Library, Edinburgh, there is little evidence of any thought processes or development in White's

ideas about women. The same phrases, word for word, are repeated over and over again – sometimes even on the same page, during a period of more than twenty years. Perhaps the words of James Weatherhead, (from a memorandum in support of women ministers prepared for the 1931 Committee) are apposite:

'I am not disturbed by the somewhat dilapidated maxim that equality of status does not necessarily mean identity of function. To urge it here is simply to reveal a mind ready to grasp at any straw to support a prejudice.'

136 John White papers Box 93

137 John Stuart Mill, *On the Subjection of Women* (1869)

138 A Phillips, *Engendering Democracy* (1991) 31. A growing body of research gives evidence from individual Enlightenment theorists, and for the philosophical movement in general, of a deeply embedded male disposition. Genevieve Lloyd has written:

'The maleness of the Man of reason...is no superficial linguistic bias. It lies deep in our philosophical tradition...Our trust in a Reason that knows no sex has been largely self-deceiving...Our ideals of Reason have historically incorporated an exclusion of the female, and that femininity itself has been partly constituted through such processes of exclusion.' *The Man of Reason* (2nd edition 1992) preface xviii. See also LMG Clark and L Lange, *The Sexism of Social and Political Theory* (1979)

139 *Life and Work*, (1931) 143

140 Eunice Murray, lecture delivered in Govan, 1923 and published by the Women's Freedom League (of which Murray was Scottish President)

141 1915 Report on Recognition of Women *op cit*

142 Memorandum prepared for Committee on Place of Women in the Church, 1932. (Among John White's papers, NCL)

143 See 'Beliefs concerning citizenship' – article by an 'Edinburgh Churchwoman' in *UFC Record* (1918) 87

144 *Reformed and Presbyterian World* (1960) 185

A conversation with Miss Barr confirms that she was not self-consciously 'feminist' before or throughout her ministry, though always aware of and concerned about the importance of opening doors of opportunity.

145 quoted in Olive Wyon, *The Three Windows* (1953) 37

146 *ibid*

147 *ibid*

148 *Life and Work* (1931) 143

149 *ibid* 144

150 E Hewat, *ibid* 139

151 *ibid*

152 Zoe Fairfield, who worked for the Student Christian Movement (which was influential in the lives of many progressive Christian women), recognised this in her 1913 book, *The Woman's Movement*. She wrote:

'There has been so little sympathy between leaders of

the Church and Women's Movement leaders, that very few have realised their common purposes. Many of us whose lives, for what they are worth, are given to distinctively Christian work, have until lately often turned to those outside organised Christianity for sympathy and understanding about women's questions. Many women have been conscious of an attitude of disapproval, and of prejudice in many quarters, and have found very little serious attempt to understand what they believed and desired. So many women go to Church, that the absence of others is not much noticed, but it is doubtful whether the absence of men is much more general than that of more thoughtful and stronger women.'

153 See Helen Crawford's unpublished autobiography (nd)

154 Elizabeth McKerrow, *Perfect Love Casteth Out Fear*, Pamphlet 5 of series published by The Fellowship of Equal Service in the Church. This organisation was formed after the 1929 Union, bringing together supporters of women's rights from both wings of the reunited church

155 *Life and Work* (1931) 145

156 *UFC Record* (1918) 87

CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 H Taylor, 'The Enfranchisement of Women' in *Westminster Quarterly Review* (1851)
- 2 P Levine, *Victorian Feminism 1850-1900* (1987) 14
- 3 T Billington-Greig, *The Militant Suffrage Movement* (1911) see *The Non-Violent Militant: Selected Writings of Teresa Billington-Greig* eds C McPhee and A FitzGerald (1987) 137
- 4 Recent works include R K Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos* (1983); *Out of Bounds: Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945* eds E Breitenbach and E Gordon (1992); L Leneman *A Guid Cause* (1991); E King *The Hidden History of Glasgow's Women: The New Factor* (1993); L Moore, *Semolinas and Bajinellas* (1991)
- 5 R Evans, *The Feminists* (1979) 237
- 6 Rev D Butler, speech made at a meeting of the Scottish Churches League for Woman Suffrage, March 12 1913
- 7 E Murray, *Frances Stoddard Murray* (1920) 76
- 8 *ibid* 79
- 9 *ibid* 263
- 10 E Gordon and E Breitenbach, (eds) *The World is Ill-Divided* (1990) 6
- 11 For example, Mrs Bream Pearce who belonged to the Christian Socialist League in Glasgow and was a prominent member of the WSPU. Elspeth King claims that she was 'Lily Bell' who wrote regularly for *Forward*, and developed a distinctive socialist-feminist perspective See *The Hidden History of Glasgow's Women* (1993) 94-98. Also Helen Lintell 'Lily Bell' MA Thesis, Bristol Polytechnic 1990
- 12 C Duncan Rice, *The Scots Abolitionists 1833-61* 34
- 13 Quoted in L and R Billington, 'A Burning Zeal for Righteousness: Women in the British Anti-Slavery Movement' in J Rendall (ed), *Equal or Different: Women's Politics 1800-1914* (1985) 85
- 14 *ibid*
- 15 see C Taylor, *British and American Abolitionists: An Episode in Transatlantic Understanding* (1974) 110
- 16 *ibid* 104
- 17 *ibid* 110
- 18 Billingtons *op cit* 97
- 19 Taylor, *op cit* 157. Webb described Glasgow as being under 'a thick cloud of bigotry'
- 20 *ibid* 231
- 21 Taylor, *op cit* 217
- 22 *ibid* 245
- 23 *ibid* 261
- 24 *ibid* 298-9
- 25 *ibid* 320
- 26 *ibid* 342-44
- 27 *ibid* 344
- 28 *ibid* 347-8
- 29 quoted in H Renton, *Memoir of Mrs Agnes Renton* (nd) 90

- 30 *ibid* 127-8
- 31 quoted in Rice *op cit* 160
- 32 *ibid* 160-1
- 33 In the 1850s, most anti-slavery societies moved away from direct involvement in campaigns to end the institution, in favour of amelioratory activities, such as the New York Vigilance Committee, which organised emigration for escaped slaves in the North who, under the Fugitive Slave Act (1850), were liable to be hunted down and sent back South
- 34 Taylor *op cit* 312
- 35 See B Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem* (1983) 275f
- 36 W Collins, *Parliamentary Papers* (1834) VIII 402
- 37 See T C Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (1986) 133ff
- 38 See C Brown *The Social History of Religion in Scotland since 1730* (1987) 203-207
- 39 Woman's Guild Supplement of *Life and Work* (1907) 86
- 40 *Acts of the General Assembly of the Free Church* (1858-63) 182
- 41 W Reid, *Woman's Work for Women's Weal* (1860) 4
- 42 *ibid* 5
- 43 *ibid*
- 44 *Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Free Church* (1877) 229
- 45 see *Juteopolis* esp chap 1
- 46 C Benn, *Keir Hardie* (1992) 12
- 47 Mrs H MacRae, *Alice Maxwell, Deaconess* (1917) 115
- 48 See N Denny, 'Temperance and the Scottish Churches' in *Scottish Church History Society Records* (1989) 217ff
- 49 See Stephenson and Brown, 'Sprouting Wings' in *Out of Bounds op cit* 95ff; W H Fraser, 'Developments in Leisure' in *People and Society in Scotland Vol II* eds W H Fraser and R J Morris (1990) 242-243
- 50 W Reid *op cit* 22-23
- 51 *ibid* 34
- 52 *Reports of the Schemes of the Church of Scotland* (1883) 538
- 53 J Gibson, *Not Weary in Well-Doing* (1888) 140. See 130-142 for details of the Manse Ladies Abstinence Society
- 54 *Reports of the United Free Church of Scotland* (1903)
- 55 *Woman's Guild Supplement* (1903) 9
- 56 *Life and Work* (1930) 210
- 57 *Woman's Guild Supplement* (1907) 86
- 58 *Woman's Guild Supplement* (1920) 31
- 59 *Reports of the Schemes of the Church of Scotland* (1921) 301
- 60 See minutes of the Women's Association for Temperance (1928-32) held in the Scottish Records Office
- 61 E King, *Scotland Sober and Free* (1979) 16
- 62 T Honeyman, *Good Templary in Scotland 1869-1929* (1929) 45
- 63 *ibid* 32

- 64 C Benn *op cit* 13
- 65 *The British Women's Temperance Association - Scottish Christian Union: Its Origins and Progress 1878-1908* (1908) 28
- 66 *ibid* 26
- 67 Brown and Stephenson *op cit* 105
- 68 H Crawford, unpublished autobiography, 29-30
- 69 C Benn *op cit* 14
- 70 See W H Fraser, *op cit*; C Harvie and G Walker, 'Community and Culture' in *People and Society in Scotland Vol II* 336ff;
- 71 B L Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelicalism and Temperance in 19th century America* (1981) 146
- 72 See eg *Social Evils and Problems* (1919) Ch II, 'Intemperance', in which Rev R Menzies Fergusson wrote: 'Drunkenness has been a blot upon the fair name of our country, and, as will be seen, the noxious habit...has filled our prisons, poorhouses and asylums...The poverty and squalor which meet the eye in slums...in provincial towns and country villages, are mostly traceable to drink' 49
- 73 Brown and Stephenson, *op cit* 114
- 74 *ibid* 116
- 75 W Reid *op cit* 37
- 76 L Moore, 'Educating for the Woman's Sphere' in *Out of Bounds* 32
- 77 F Balfour, *Ne Obliviscaris;: Memoir* (1930) Vol II 120
- 78 quoted in T C Smout, *A History of the Scottish People* (1972) 422
- 79 First Book of Discipline (1560)
- 80 T C Smout, *A History of the Scottish People* (1969) 423
- 81 S S Laurie, *Report on education in the parochial schools of the counties of Aberdeen, Banff and Moray addressed to trustees of the Dick Bequest* (1865)
- 82 see J Caird, *Fundamental Ideas of Christianity* (1899) introductory memoir by Edward Caird xxv-xxvi
- 83 *Reports of the Schemes of the Church of Scotland* (1860) Education Report 13-16
- 84 *Reports of the Free Church of Scotland* (1860) XXII 13-14
- 85 *Reports of the Schemes of the Church of Scotland* (1866)
- 86 see M Cruikshank, *History of the Training of Teachers in Scotland* (1970) 69
- 87 *Acts and Proceedings of the Free Church of Scotland* (1849) 259
- 88 *Dick Bequest Report (op cit)* 187
- 89 See H Corr 'The schoolgirls' curriculum and the ideology of the home 1870-1914' in Glasgow Women's Studies Group (ed) *Uncharted Lives: Extracts from Scottish Women's Experiences 1850-1982* (1983); H Corr, 'An exploration into Scottish Education', in Fraser and Morris *op cit* 290-309

- 90 The Argyll Commission, Quoted in R D Anderson, *Education and Opportunity in Victorian Scotland* (1983) 136
- 91 Bean and E van Heyningen, *The Letters of J E Waterston 1866-1905* (1983) 176
- 92 R Grant, *History of Burgh Schools* (1945) 530
- 93 *Home and Foreign Missionary Record* (1862) 181-2
- 94 *Esdaile School 1863-1963* (centenary pamphlet)
- 95 *The Attempt* (1871) 27
- 96 *Ladies Edinburgh Magazine* (1875) 209
- 97 *Ladies Edinburgh Magazine* (1877) 347-8
- 98 Letter from Auchindoir Manse, 1875 in response to ELEA seeking entrants to the local exam.(In archive of the Edinburgh Ladies Educational Association, Edinburgh University Library)
- 99 *The Clarion* February 14 1913, quoted in D Spender, *There's always been a Women's Movement this Century* (1983) 52
- 100 There are fictional accounts of rural working class girls' attempts to secure higher education for teaching, and obstructions, in Nan Shepherd's *The Quarry Wood* (1928) and Lewis Grassie Gibbons' *Sunset Song* (1932)
- 101 S S Laurie, *Report to the Merchant Company of Edinburgh* (1868) quoted in E Towill, 'Merchant Maidens' in *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* Vol XXIX (1956)
- 102 F Melville, 'The Education of Woman' in *The Position of Woman, Actual and Ideal* (1911) 132-3
- 103 *Ladies Edinburgh Magazine* (1879) 513
- 104 quoted in K Burton, *Memoir of Mrs Crudelius* (1877) 57-8
- 105 *ibid* 33-4
- 106 *ibid* passim: see comments made by lecturers in the Annual Reports of the ELEA
- 107 For information about developments in Glasgow, see *Janet Galloway: A Book of Memories* (1914); S Hamilton *Women and the Scottish Universities c1869-1939* (PhD thesis, Edinburgh University 1987); G Mackie, *University of Glasgow 1451-1951*(1951) 303-4
- 108 C Struthers, *The Higher Education of Women* (1883) 16
- 109 L Moore, *Bajanellas and Semilinas: Aberdeen University and the Education of Women 1860-1920* (1991) 10
- 110 Struthers *op cit* 8
- 111 *ibid* 6
- 112 See J Manton, *Elizabeth Garrett Anderson* (1965)
- 113 See M Todd *Life of Sophia Jex Blake* (1918)
- 114 *The Attempt* (1867) 270
- 115 *The Attempt* (1871) 5
- 116 *ibid*
- 117 Burton *op cit* 100
- 118 *ibid* see eg 106
- 119 For concern about the desexing and unbelief of educated women, see Moore *op cit* 23-29.

- 120 See J Burstyn, *Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood* (1980) 99ff
- 121 quoted in Todd *op cit* 360-1
- 122 E Caird *op cit* cviii
- 123 see Todd *op cit* 300. This also mentions Elizabeth Pease-Nichol, the anti-slavery campaigner, as a representative of the 'old type of Victorian womanhood', courageously arguing on behalf of female students for entry into the Royal Infirmary. A list of Edinburgh women who supported the medical cause includes many of older and younger generations who were involved in all the campaigns referred to here, and also in church work.
- 124 *ibid* 491
- 125 *ibid* 457
- 126 see W Alexander, *First Ladies of Medicine: The Origins, Education and Destiny of Early Women Graduates of Glasgow University* (1987)
- 127 Bean and van Heyningen *op cit* 283
- 128 L Lumsden 'The Higher Education of Women in Britain and Ireland' (pamphlet, nd, c1883)
- 129 see W Boog-Watson, 'The First Eight Ladies', in *Edinburgh University Journal* vol 23 (1967-8) 227-34 S Hamilton, *op cit*
- 130 W Knight, Circular written to solicit funds for the proposed University Hall of Residence (in 'University Hall Scrapbook', St Andrews University Library). The Residence actually attracted English women, rather than those for whom it was intended. Scots found it too expensive and snooty.
- 131 Moore *op cit* see Ch 9, 120-131 for statistics
- 132 The Minute Books of the EUWDS are held in Edinburgh University Library. Some of the topics debated were: Dress Reform, Are Strikes Justifiable? The Theological Novel, Should Missionaries be Celibate? Female Suffrage, Vivisection, Should Questions of the Day be discussed in the Pulpit?
- 133 Bean and van Heyningen, *op cit* 281
- 134 F Balfour, *Dr Elsie Inglis* (1918) 53-4
- 135 *Ladies Edinburgh Magazine* (1877) 63
- 136 Class lists are included in the ELEA archive, EUL
- 137 *Ladies Edinburgh Magazine* (1877) 92-3
- 138 *ibid* 94
- 139 Senatus minutes, Edinburgh University Faculty of Divinity (1898) NCL
- 140 *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* Vol XXXV (1979-80) 62
- 141 *ibid*
- 142 Struthers *op cit* 7
- 143 Melville *op cit* 124
- 144 This idea was persistent, even among those who were seeking equality of educational opportunity. Christina Struthers wrote, 'It seems that parents who dread exposing their sons to the dangers likely to arise from female incursions into universities, are strangely blind to the facts of life...when instead of sending the lad to dingy and comfortless lodgings,

- he might go accompanied by his sister who would share studies and, at the same time, promote his comfort, and save him from risk and sore temptation'.
- 145 B Welsh *After the Dawn* (1939) 26-7
- 146 Burton *op cit* 104-5
- 147 *Northern Star*, June 23 1838 quoted in J Schwarzkopf, *Women and the Chartist Movement* (1991) 40
- 148 *Out of Bounds* Gordon and Breitenbach *op cit* 122
- 149 see L Leneman, 'The Scottish Churches and Votes for Women' in *Scottish Church History Society Records* Vol XXIV (1991) 237ff
- 150 M Reid *A Plea for Woman* (1843) reprinted 1988
- 151 *Westminster Quarterly Review* (1851)
- 152 See L Milne-Rae *Ladies in Debate* (1935) and minutes of the Edinburgh Ladies Debating Society in EUL
- 153 J B Mackie, *The Life and Work of Duncan MacLaren* (1888) 102-3
- 154 Speech delivered in Edinburgh Music Hall, January 12 1871
- 155 See L Leneman, *A Guid Cause* Ch 1 11-31
- 156 *United Presbyterian Magazine* (1884) 332
- 157 *Free Church General Assembly Proceedings and Debates* (1885) 56
- 158 see 'The Scottish Churches and Votes for Women' 237
- 159 *Ladies Edinburgh Magazine* (1880) 109
- 160 *Ne Obliviscaris...* 114
- 161 McPhee and FitzGerald, *op cit* 149
- 162 *A Guid Cause* 69
- 163 *Glasgow Herald* July 17 1913
- 164 *Dundee Advertiser* December 18 1912
- 165 Crawford *op cit* 89
- 166 see *A Guid Cause* 159
- 167 *Glasgow Herald* March 25 1913
- 168 Material relating to the Scottish Churches League for Woman Suffrage is included in a scrapbook entitled 'Votes for Women' (NLS)
- 169 For instance, the Woman's Guild Supplement, 1908, carried a report of a Summer School of Mission Study: 'Each delegate received a label on which she wrote her name. Our labels...were rather puzzling to some of the dwellers at Bridge of Allan, one of whom was heard confiding to his friend that he thought we must be Suffragists! I do not think we took this as a compliment.' (L&W WG Supp 1908) 122
- 170 see *A Guid Cause* 100
- 171 G M Reith *Reminiscences of the United Free Church General Assembly* (1933) 152
- 172 Minutes of Church of Scotland Edinburgh Presbytery January 7 1914
- 173 *Dundee Advertiser* December 10 1913
- 174 see 'The Scottish Churches and Votes for Women' 243, 247-50
- 175 *The Appeal to God* (1913) WSPU pamphlet
- 176 eg Helen Fraser, during the 1907 Aberdeen by-election campaign, spoke at a crowded and noisy meeting to consider the ethical side of the Women's Movement, of

- 'the importance of women working for their own liberty, and of sexism in the teachings of the Church' *Aberdeen Free Press* February 18 1907
- 177 McPhee and Fitzgerald *op cit* 147
- 178 *Suffrage Annual and Women's Who's Who* (1913) 145
- 179 Speech given at meeting of Scottish Churches League for Woman Suffrage, March 12 1913
- 180 Holton, *Feminism and Democracy* 15
- 181 *United Free Church Record* (1918) 151
- 182 E Pethick Lawrence, *Women as Persons or Property* (1913) WSPU pamphlet
- 183 *Dr Elsie Inglis* 100
David Watson, leader of the social work movement within the Church of Scotland, adhered to this kind of view too. He wrote, 'One thing we may be sure of - that when she wins the franchise...her influence will always be cast on the side of religion and purity, temperance and peace...No one can doubt that she will play an important part in social regeneration, reconstruction, in bringing in the new day, the golden year. For love and pity are hers'. *Perfect Womanhood* (1905)
- 184 J Barzun, *Darwin, Marx, Wagner: Critique of a Heritage* (1958) 92
- 185 Olive Schreiner's *Women and Labour* (1911) was a highly influential feminist work written in the context of Social Darwinism. She was close to Herbert Spencer, and especially to Karl Pearson
At the UFC Women's Missionary College Retreat in July 1915, 'Our meditation in Chapel focussed upon our calling as women. The crown of a woman's life is wifehood and motherhood, but that in the ordinary sense, especially in days of warfare, is denied to so many. Is what is left only a second best? Surely not. There must be a 'motherhood' open to all women, as full and rich a possession as that which is unattainable by the many...Miss Small reminded us of the call that comes to all...To be foster-mothers of the babes of Christ, upbuilder-mothers of His Church, and interior mothers, speaking from our own deep experience of the things of God.' (WMC House Guild Newsletter, 1916)
see also E Pearson 'Spiritual Motherhood and Philanthropic Service' in *The Position of Woman Actual and Ideal*
- 186 McPhee and FitzGerald *op cit* 198
- 187 *ibid* 197
- 188 A S Matheson, *The Church and Social Problems* 287 (1893) see also D Watson, *op cit*
- 189 quoted in J Smyth, 'Rents, Peace, Votes' in *Out of Bounds* 188
- 190 Address given at meeting of Scottish Churches League for Woman Suffrage, March 12 1913
- 191 D Riley, 'Am I That Name?' (1988) 83

- 192 C Macmillan 'The Struggle for Political Liberty':
address given to mark the opening of Parliament,
16 February 1909
- 193 S Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*
(1979) 282
- 194 While in some respects the 16th century reformers
held more positive views about women than those which
had characterised Roman Catholicism, they offered no
countenance to women seeking the right to public and
political activity. Calvin himself was most
interested in whatever would benefit the church, and
believed in the freedom of the Holy Spirit to break
through the 'normal' order of Creation. This, along
with his affirmation of essential spiritual equality,
was certainly a resource for those (in his own time
and later) who longed for a more expansive religious
or secular role. However, Calvin also argued that
'common sense dictates that the rule of women is
defective and unseemly', and in a sermon on I Cor 11,
he maintained that Paul's injunction to subordination
referred to all women: 'I say this for the benefit of
any unmarried man, lest he at any time abandon his
privilege by nature, namely, that he is the head. Of
whom? Of women, for we must not pay attention to this
only within the household, but within the whole order
that God has established in this world.' (quoted in D
Howerda, ed, *Exploring the Heritage of John Knox*
(1976). Calvin himself felt obliged to disavow some
aspects of John Knox's notorious and vituperative
First Blast Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women
(1558). Even if we grant that the tract was written
in the heat of trying circumstances for the community
of English reformers, its tone and target is
unequivocal. Knox piled up Biblical and patristic
references to argue that Eve's malediction had made
all women subject for all time. The place ordained
by God for women was one of submission and service to
men. Therefore the rule of women in any form was
repugnant to the law of God, and without legitimacy
or justice. Although women campaigners could (and
did) argue for political enfranchisement and equality
as something consistent with reformation principles,
they could adduce no positive evidence from the
founding fathers to counter these negative
pronouncements. Their views were entirely supportive
of patriarchy in home and state
- 195 McPhee and FitzGerald *op cit* 242
- 196 *Forward*, 6 December 1913
- 197 R West, *The Judge* (1922) 46-7
- 198 *Dr Elsie Inglis* 100
- 199 See *UFC Record* (1918) 112
- 200 *ibid* 87
- 201 *UFCGAPD* (1918) May 25
- 202 see C Burness, 'The Long, Slow March: Scottish
Women MPs 1918-45', in *Out of Bounds* 151-73

- 203 Report of Church of Scotland Commission on the War:
Social Evils and Problems (1919) 148
- 204 *ibid* 96
- 205 *ibid* 97
- 206 *ibid* 199
- 207 see C Adams, 'Teaching - a Celibate Profession: a
Study of The Marriage Bar on Women Teaching in
Scotland 1915-1945 (M Ed Thesis, Glasgow University
1987)
- 208 The third aim of the Edinburgh Women's Citizens'
Association. See papers in Scottish Record Office
- 209 Murray, *op cit* 264
- 210 A Smith, *Women Remember: An Oral History* (1989) 131-2
- 211 see *The Banner of the Covenant* (organ of the Scottish
Women's Protestant Union) November 1911 46-7
- 212 B Anderson and J P Zinsser, *A History of Their
Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present*
Vol II (1988) 255-6

CHAPTER SIX

- 1 F Balfour, introduction to E Picton-Turbervill, *Christ and Woman's Power* (1919) xi
- 2 *Christian Journal* (1840) 19
- 3 S de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (1953) 589
- 4 *Christian Journal* (1853) 70
- 5 M Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Towards a Philosophy of Women's Liberation*(1973) 35; see also her *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism* (1978)
- 6 E Fox-Genovese, 'For Feminist Interpretation', in *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* (1979-80) 9
- 7 See eg L Russell, *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective - A Theology* (1974); E Schussler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her* (1983); R Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology* (1983); 'Prophetic Tradition and the Liberation of Women: Promise and Betrayal' in *Feminist Theology* No 5 (January 1994) 58-73
- 8 W F Storrar, 'Liberation and Identity: Towards a New Practical Theological Paradigm of Scottish Nationhood' PhD thesis, Edinburgh University (1993)
- 9 M Jocelyn Gage, *Women, Church and State* (1893, reprinted 1980) 241
- 10 W Storrar *op cit*
- 11 see eg articles by J Torrance in *Evangelical Quarterly* (1983) 89ff, *Scottish Journal of Theology* (1981) 225ff
- 12 C A Salmond, *A Woman's Work* (1890) 170
- 13 *ibid* 1
- 14 *ibid* lxxv
- 15 *ibid* cxvii
- 16 *Mother's Diary: Sabbath Evening Meditations of Mary Anne Paterson (nee Rogerson) 1853-58* (nd privately published c1907)
- 17 Eliza Fletcher had a breakdown following a particularly agonising and extended period of spiritual desolation, c1876 and she went on a long trip to Australia to recover. She also wrote bitterly against God, feeling angry about the 'dark decrees' which offered no assurance, and that God was unjustly hard on her. (Chap 8 *op cit*)
- 18 quoted in J Buchan, *The Expendable Mary Slessor* (1980) 13
- 19 see S McFague, *Models of God* (1987) 63ff
- 20 E Jay (ed) *The Autobiography of Margaret Oliphant* (1990) 6-7
- 21 *Free Church Magazine* (1850) 298
- 22 *Life and Work* (1886) 80
- 23 I Cowan, *The High Estate of Service* (1898) 90
- 24 D Fraser (ed) *The Christian Watt Papers* (1983) 24
- 25 see *The Attempt* (1867) 145ff
- 26 F Balfour, *Dr Elsie Inglis* (1918) 107
- 27 Woman's Guild Supplement, *Life and Work* (1906)
- 28 *Dr Elsie Inglis* 88-9

- 29 see Robin Jenkins, *The Awakening of George Darroch* (1985); L Grassic Gibbon, *Sunset Song* (1932).
- 30 J W Coutts, *The Church and the Sex Question* (1922) 172-3. Coutts was a minister from Milngavie. He challenged Christians to take a more just and enlightened view of sex and relationships. On Birth Control, he rejected the 'snobbery and class discrimination' of those influenced by the eugenics movement.
- 31 see Mcfague, *op cit* 66. Perhaps the influence of the monarchical model made fathers act like kings!
- 32 *United Free Church Record* (1913) 547
- 33 M Daly, *The Church and the Second Sex*(1968) 113
- 34 L Irvine, *Alison Cairns and her Family* (1967) 76
- 35 J Gibson, *Not Weary in Well Doing* (1888) 29
- 36 I have found Rosemary Radford Reuther's critical and constructive work on the history and future of theology helpful in understanding the importance of the way humans and their religious doctrines perceive and relate to the natural world. See, e g *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing* (San Francisco 1992)
- 37 see Helen Crawford's unpublished autobiography, 49, 75
- 38 *Life and Work* (1931) 145
- 39 C Brown and J Stephenson, 'Sprouting Wings'in *Out of Bounds* (1992) 99
- 40 *ibid*
- 41 Linktown Action Centre Ladies Group (see appendix for further details of my interviews with this group)
- 42 see *The Christian Watt Papers (op cit)* introduction and *passim*
- 43 A Smith, *Women Remember: An Oral History* (1989) 134
- 44 *The Attempt* (1874) 244-5
- 45 A Smith *op cit*
- 46 K Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1844) ed SB O'Malley Joseph (Cambridge 1970) 131
- 47 A C Cheyne, 'The Bible and Change in the 19th century' in D F Wright (ed), *The Bible in Scottish Life and Literature* (1988) 199
- 48 *ibid*
- 49 E Murray, *Frances Stoddard Murray* (1920) 102
- 50 quoted in O Wyon, *The Three Windows* (1953) 111
- 51 William Robertson Smith was the most celebrated of the theologians who shocked the Free Church by using critical scholarship in their teaching and writing. In 1881, his tenure of the Old Testament Chair at Aberdeen Free Church College was terminated because his work on the Pentateuch was considered to be heretical. In fact, this was the last victory for the traditionalists, and further complaints against others were dismissed. In 1892 a Declaratory Act recognised diversity of opinion on some points of the Westminster Confession, and theology was free to develop along critical lines.
- 52 *The Attempt* (1869) 266
- 53 *ibid* 267

- 54 I Armstrong, *Plea for Modern Prophetesses* (1867). She makes extensive, and quite sophisticated use of linguistic and contextual tools in her exposition of biblical passages most frequently used to impose female subordination and silence.
- 55 K Carmichael, 'Protestantism and Gender' in G Walker and T Gallacher (eds), *Sermons and Battle Hymns* (1990) 222
- 56 I Armstrong, *op cit* 3
- 57 quoted in J Buchan, *op cit* 13
- 58 speech to St Andrew's Church Literary Society, Cape Town, 1885. Quoted in J Bean and E van Heyningen, *The Letters of J E Waterston 1866-1905* (1983) 288
- 59 The quantity of discursive and biblical interpretation dealing with, or about women greatly increases from around 1880. In the Scottish church press, the format and perspective of the *United Presbyterian Magazine* particularly lent itself to long articles on women of the Bible, eg Phoebe (1888) 385; Hagar (1889) 453; the Woman of Samaria (1896) 529. Shorter pieces also appeared in the *Woman's Guild Supplement of Life and Work*, from 1891. There were also numerous books on the subject, eg Henry McCook, *Women Friends of Jesus* (1889). The content of these tended to affirm the newly recognised usefulness and honour of women in the service of the church, as being a restoration of scriptural practice.
- 60 see D C Smith, *Passive Obedience and Prophetic Protest* (1987), and contemporary books, sermons and articles (of which Smith gives some details)
- 61 *The Attempt* (1870) 5
- 62 *The Attempt* (1874) 2 The opinionated Miss Reid, the daughter of a Leith publisher, must have been in her mid-twenties when she wrote these articles. She began co-editing *The Attempt* when she was seventeen years old.
- 63 E McKerrow, *United Free Church Record* (1928) 209
- 64 H Crawford, *op cit* 49
- 65 E Murray, *The Ministry of Women* (speech given in Govan 1923). She also published other pamphlets: *The Power of Women in the Church* (nd); *Women's Place in the Early Church* (1928); *Women and the Church* (nd)
- 66 E McKerrow, 'Perfect Love Casteth Out Fear' (nd), pamphlet published by the *Fellowship of Equal Service* - a Church of Scotland organisation whose objective was to secure the ordination of women, and equal opportunity in all aspects of church life. The Marchioness of Aberdeen was Hon President, Mary Lamond and Frances Melville were hon vice-presidents, and Elizabeth McKerrow was hon secretary. Prof G Henderson of Aberdeen University was President. Probably founded c 1930-1
- 67 Brown and Stephenson, *op cit*. Perhaps the Prohibitionist Party, which returned Edwin Scrymgeour to Parliament in the 1920s, on the strength of the female working class vote in Dundee, ('Vote as you

- pray'was his winning slogan) was most effective in evoking a collective political response to millenarian religious beliefs. See W Walker, *Juteopolis* (1980)
- 68 *North British Review* (1855) 559ff
- 69 See S J Brown's discussions of anti-Irish racism within the presbyterian churches during the 1920s, in *SCHSR* (1990) 72-96, *SJT* (1991) 489-517 *Innes Review* (1991) 19-45. Surely these attitudes were deeply influenced by Social Darwinist views on race, just as ideas about women's nature and capacity were shaped by the pseudo-science of sex differentiation
- 70 K Carmichael, *op cit* 213-4
- 71 D Webster Havice, 'Roadmap for a Rebel' in *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* (1979-80) 71
- 72 *ibid*
- 73 *UFC Record* (May 1915)
- 74 quoted in J Buchan *op cit* 243
- 75 D Watson, *Perfect Womanhood* (1905) 101
- 76 *The Attempt* (1871) 78
- 77 Revised Interim Report of a Study on the Life and Work of Women in the Church (World Council of Churches, Geneva 1948) 19
- 78 *The Attempt* (1874) 8

APPENDIX

- 1 See M Magnusson, *Out of Silence: The Woman's Guild 1887-1987* (Edinburgh 1987); A Gordon, *Life of Archibald Hamilton Charteris* (London 1912); Mrs H Macrae, *Alice Maxwell, Deaconess* (London 1919); Annual Reports of the Church of Scotland Woman's Guild, contained within the Life and Work Committee Reports to the General Assembly; *Life and Work*, including the *Woman's Guild Supplement* (1891-1924) and *Women's Work* (1928-1930); Minutes of the Woman's Guild Central Committee/Council, and other official papers, held in the Scottish Record Office, CH1/38/1-13
- 2 See especially the series of Baird Lectures given by Charteris in 1888, and published in 1905 as *The Church of Christ* (London 1905)
- 3 Most Woman's Guild papers are catalogued under CH1/38/1
- 4 *Life and Work* (1884) 156
- 5 Supplementary information came from J W B Caldwell, 'A Short History of St Mary's Church' (nd) draft manuscript in SRO: CH2/139/168, and from conversations with Mr Caldwell, Mrs Barbara Brown, Miss Margaret Lambert and Mrs Hunter - all members of the Church. For Raith: *Kirkcaldy Walkabouts - Links Street* (1986, published by Kirkcaldy Civic Society); conversations with Linktown Action Centre Ladies Group (an informal morning gathering for senior citizens, most of whom have lived in the area all their lives. They are involved in a local oral history project), and with other individual ex-members of Raith Parish Church.
- 6 St Mary's Kirk Session minutes, CH2/139/1; see also 'Short History...'
- 7 *ibid*
- 8 St Mary's Parish Magazine, 1888, CH2/139/164
- 9 *ibid*
- 10 St Mary's baptismal register, CH2/139/50 - occupations listed include joiner, engineer, blacksmith, solicitor, gardener, coachman, railway clerk, grocer, station inspector, doctor, merchant, sea captain
- 11 see Kirkcaldy Civic Society booklet, *op cit*
- 12 oral evidence suggests that the area around Neilson Square was known as 'Irish Close', and was a notorious 'no go' area. Other parts were also considered to be slums. But much of Linktown is recalled, in spite of its inadequate sanitation and bare earth floors, as comparatively decent working class housing. Almost all of the housing in the Wynds off Links Street was demolished and replaced, in phases, by post-1945 council housing developments
- 13 Raith Parish Church monthly *Life and Work* supplement 1888, CH2/834/38
- 14 See *Church of Scotland Yearbook 1887*, 73 for Woman's Guild regulations
- 15 Charteris, 'Letter to Workers'(1890), quoted in Mrs H Macrae, *Alice Maxwell, Deaconess* (London 1919) 71

- 16 St Mary's Woman's Guild Minutes. All references in the study are for Books held in SRO: CH2/139/40-41
- 17 Central Committee minutes throughout the period confirm that the leadership strove (not entirely successfully) to make individual commitment and personal devotions a basic premise upon which the movement was built.
- 18 Raith Woman's Guild Minutes: CH2/834/35, 37. (Treasurer's book, 1915-63, is item 36 in this accession)
- 19 Raith Parish Supplement, 1894, CH2/834/38
- 20 *Life and Work* 1897 94
- 21 For more details, refer to monthly series of *Life and Work, Woman's Guild Supplement*
- 22 WG Central Committee Minutes, 1900, CH2/38/1/1
- 23 Notes from Mrs Elizabeth Coutts, Kirkcaldy
- 24 Raith Sewing Class Minute Book CH2/834/34
- 25 Book of parish congregational statistics kept by Rev D L Francis CH2/834/33
- 26 The Guild Leader's Diploma and Brooch was introduced in 1895
- 27 For further information on Guild schemes and activities, refer to Supplement, Central Committee minutes, annual reports contained within Report to General Assembly of the Life and Work Committee, etc
- 28 Supplement, 1914 68
- 29 For information about Dr Chalmers Smith's suffrage activities and subsequent career, see L Leneman, *A Guid Cause* (Aberdeen 1991)
- 30 Raith Kirk Session Minutes, March 1918, CH2/834/3
- 31 On the perceived threat of industrial agitators, and call to preserve spirit of harmony, see e.g Supplement, 1920 39. See articles by S J Brown on the presbyterian campaign against Scoto-Irish Catholics, eg *Innes Review* (1991) 19-45
- 32 Supplement, 1920 31
- 33 *ibid* 7
- 34 *Reports of the Schemes...*(1928)
- 35 conversation with John Caldwell
- 36 Women's Work Supplement 1928 59
- 37 Raith Parish Church Woman's Guild minute book, 1921-1937 CH2/834/37 for this and further references
- 38 See Central Committee minutes 1919-20 for constitutional changes in Guild structure and membership
- 39 A H Dunnett, *The Church in Changing Scotland* (London 1934) 127-134
- 40 conversation with Mrs Coutts, Kirkcaldy
- 41 see Raith Kirk Session Minutes for details of the Forrester Bequest. His widow also donated money to build the manse for Raith.
- 42 Linktown Action Centre Group
- 43 Testimony from St Mary's members
- 44 Woman's Guild Central Council Minutes, 1898
- 45 St Mary's Guild members were quite animated in response to the issue of relative power within the church

- 46 Special meeting held on February 28 1929
see minutes CH1/38/1/
- 47 I have referred to the *Fife Free Press* for information about local labour unrest, suffrage activity and so on. Suggestions about lack of overlap between these activities and membership of Raith WG are tentative!
- 48 A characteristic debate took place in the pages of the *Fife Free Press* during January and February 1913, initiated by a report of a joint churches service held in the Adam Smith Hall on January 25, at which an address on 'The problem of non-churchgoing' was given. Correspondents expressed their anger at the 'superficial and unfair' presumption made by the speaker that a 'sinful life' was the cause of the 'lapsed masses'. They suggested that the church was a comfortable place in which clerical apathy and lay self-seeking combined to ignore the social and economic conditions causing poverty and unrest. In May, after a speech at the UFC General Assembly in which a prominent elder described the 'four deities of Fife' as whippets, football, drink and the devil, a riposte was published criticising ministers for preaching 'all about Jews and other irrelevant matters, not about the concerns of today's men and women'. *FFP* May 31 1913. But positive coverage of local church life and activities also concentrated on strictly religious and parochial activities. And people I have spoken to were clear in their memories that the church was not a forum for reflection, preaching or prayer on wider local or national contemporary issues.
- 49 see Raith KS minutes *passim*, especially 1902 (petition against Sabbath trams), 1928 (request for folk dancing to be allowed)
- 50 see Woman's Guild Report in *Reports to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland* (1995) 73 -81, for information about the most recent activities and developments within the organisation

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Church Records

Reports of the Schemes of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland 1830-1930
Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (including Reports) 1843-1900
United Presbyterian Church Synod Papers 1847-1900
Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland 1900-1929
Reports of the General Assembly of the United Free Church of Scotland 1900-1929
Church of Scotland Layman's Handbook 1903-
Miscellaneous Presbytery Minutes 1830-1930
Miscellaneous Congregational Reports and Records
Minutes, Correspondence and other archive material relating to the Foreign Missions of the Scottish presbyterian denominations (see *NLS Catalogue of Manuscripts Acquired since 1925* (Edinburgh 1985) Vol 6 (MS 7530-8022) for details)
Miscellaneous minutes and other records relating to the Woman's Guild and other women's organisations of the Scottish presbyterian denominations (Scottish Records Office CH1/38 and under parish classifications)
Church of Scotland Commission on the War Report: *Social Evils and Problems* (Edinburgh 1919)
Reports of the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference 1910 Vols IV-VI (Edinburgh 1910)

Other records and pamphlets

Minutes of the Edinburgh Ladies Education Association/
Edinburgh Association for the University Education of Women (Edinburgh University Library Special Collections)
Minutes of the Edinburgh University Women's Debating Society (Edinburgh University Library)
Material relating to the LLA Diploma and University Hall, St Andrews (St Andrews University Library)
Material relating to the Suffrage Movement (National Library of Scotland)
Material relating to ordained women ministers in Scotland (in private hands)
Edinburgh University Faculty of Divinity: Senatus Minutes
John White archive (New College Library)
Miscellaneous material (New College Library)
The Present Crisis of the Free Church of Scotland (1843)
Women and the Church in Scotland (1912)
E Murray *The Ministry of Women in the Church* (WFL 1923)
The Pigot Case (Calcutta 1884) Transcript of Pigot v Hastie libel case, Bengal 1883.

Papers and Journals

Christian Journal
Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Mission Record
United Presbyterian Mission Record
United Presbyterian Magazine
The Watchword
Free Church Monthly
Life and Work 1887–1931 (including Woman's Guild Supplement 1891–1924 and Women's Work Supplement 1928–1930)
United Free Church Mission Record 1900–1929
'Youth' Magazine
Eastern Female's Friend
News of Female Missions
Women's Work Among the Heathen
The Helpmeet
United Free Church Women's Missionary Magazine
International Review of Missions
UFC Women's Missionary College House Guild Letter
The Banner of the Covenant (Paper of the Scottish Women's Protestant Union) 1908–1924
The Attempt 1865–1874
The Ladies Edinburgh Magazine 1875–80
Miscellaneous issues of other journals as cited in text

SECONDARY SOURCES

Biographies

M Anderson, *Memories of Fifty years Mission Work in the West Parish of Greenock* (Glasgow 1914)
W Marwick, *William and Louisa Anderson: A record of Their Life and Work in Jamaica and Old Calabar* (Edinburgh 1897)
Lady Frances Balfour, *Ne Obliviscaris Dinna Forget* (London 1930)
Countess of Ashburnham, *Lady Grisell Baillie, A Sketch of Her Life* (Edinburgh 1893)
L Irvine, *Alison Cairns and her Family* (Cambridge 1967)
A Gordon, *The Life of Archibald Hamilton Charteris* (London 1912)
Helen Crawford, unpublished autobiography (nd) copy of typescript MS in W Gallagher memorial library, STUC, Glasgow
Lady Mary Richardson ed, *Autobiography of Mrs Fletcher with Letters and Other Family Memorials* (Edinburgh 1875)
C A Salmond, *A Woman's Work: The Life of Eliza Fletcher* (Glasgow 1889)
W P Livingstone, *Christina Forsyth of Fingoland: The Story of the Loneliest Woman in Africa* (London 1918)
J Gibson, *Not Weary in Well-Doing: The Life and Work of Mrs Helen Lockhart Gibson* (Edinburgh 1888)
F Barbour, *Dr Elsie Inglis* (London 1918)
M Todd, *Life of Sophia Jex-Blake* (London 1918)

- Louisa L Lumsden, *Yellow Leaves: Memories of A Long Life* (Edinburgh 1933)
- Mrs H Macrae, *Alice Maxwell, Deaconess* (London 1919)
- Eunice Murray, *Frances Stoddard Murray* (London 1920)
- Elizabeth Jay (ed) *The Autobiography of Margaret Oliphant* (Oxford 1990)
- H Renton, *Memorial of Mrs Agnes Renton* (nd, privately published)
- J Buchan, *The Expendable Mary Slessor* (Edinburgh 1980)
- W P Livingstone, *The White Queen of Okoyong: Mary Slessor, A True Story of Adventure, Heroism and Faith* (London 1916)
- O Wyon, *Three Windows: The Life of Annie Hunter Small* (London 1953)
- E T MacLaren, *Recollections of the Public Work and Home Life of Louisa and Flora Stevenson* (Edinburgh 1914?)
- Mrs H E Scott, *A Saint in Kenya: The Life of Marion Scott Stevenson* (London 1932)
- A Waddel, *Memorials of Mrs Sutherland of Old Calabar* (Paisley 1883)
- J Bean and E van Heyningen (eds), *The Letters of Jane Elizabeth Waterston 1866-1905* (Cape Town 1983)
- D Fraser (ed) *The Christian Watt Papers* (Edinburgh 1983)
- E G Murray, *A Gallery of Scottish Women* (London 1935)
- D P Thomson, *Women of the Scottish Church* (Perth 1975)

General

(These works have been referred to in the general preparation of the thesis)

- B S Anderson and J P Zinsser, *A History of Their Own: Women in Europe from Prehistory to the Present Vol 2* (London 1990)
- K M Boyd, *Scottish Church Attitudes to Sex, Marriage and the Family* (Edinburgh 1980)
- E Breitenbach and E Gordon, (eds) *Out of Bounds: Women in Scottish Society 1800-1945* (Edinburgh 1992)
- C G Brown, *The Social History of Religion in Scotland Since 1730* (London 1987)
- S J Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth of Scotland* (Oxford 1982)
- S J Brown and M Fry (eds) *Scotland in the Age of Disruption* (Edinburgh 1993)
- S J Brown, 'The Social Vision of Scottish Presbyterianism and the Union of 1929' in *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* (1990) 72-96
- S J Brown, 'Reform, Reconstruction, Reaction: The Social Vision of Scottish Presbyterianism c1830-1930 in *Scottish Journal of Theology* (1991) 489-517
- J H S Burleigh *A Church History of Scotland* (London 1960)
- N de S Cameron (ed) *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh 1993)
- A C Cheyne, *The Transforming of the Kirk* (Edinburgh 1983)

- L Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (London 1992)
- J W Coutts, *The Church and the Sex Question* (London 1922)
- A L Drummond and J Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland 1843-1874* (Edinburgh 1975)
- A L Drummond and J Bulloch, *The Church in late Victorian Scotland 1874-1900* (Edinburgh 1978)
- A H Dunnett, *The Church in Changing Scotland* (London 1934)
- R Evans, *The Feminists: Women's Emancipation Movements in Europe, America and Australia* (London 1979)
- W H Fraser and R J Morris (eds) *People and Society in Scotland Vol II 1830-1914* (Edinburgh 1990)
- A Dickson and J H Treble (eds) *People and Society in Scotland Vol III 1914-1990* (Edinburgh 1992)
- P Gay, *The Cultivation of Hatred* (London 1994)
- A H Gray, *Men, Women and God* (London 1923)
- R L Greaves (ed) *Triumph over Silence: Women in Protestant History* (Westport 1985)
- W Knox (ed) *Scottish Labour Leaders* (Edinburgh 1984)
- J Lewis, *Women in England 1870-1950* (Brighton 1984)
- J Lewis (ed) *Labour and Love* (Oxford 1986)
- A A MacLaren, *Religion and Social Class* (London 1974)
- G Malmgreen, (ed) *Religion in the Lives of English Women 1760-1930* (London 1986)
- R K Marshall, *Virgins and Viragos: A History of Women in Scotland 1080-1980* (London 1983)
- A S Matheson, *The Church and Social Problems* (1893)
- S Mechie, *The Church and Scottish Social Development 1780-1870* (London 1960)
- W Muir, *Mrs Grundy in Scotland* (London 1936)
- J Rendall, *The Origins of Modern Feminism* (London 1985)
- D Riley, *Am I That Name?: Feminism and the Category of 'Women' in History* (London 1988)
- J Sayers, *Biological Politics: Feminist and Anti-Feminist Perspectives* (London 1982)
- C Smart (ed) *Regulating Womanhood: Historical Essays on Marriage, Motherhood and Sexuality* (London 1992)
- D C Smith, *Passive Obedience and Prophetic Protest: Social Criticism in the Scottish Church* (New York 1987)
- T C Smout, *A History of the Scottish People 1560-1830* (London 1972)
- T C Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People 1830-1950* (London 1986)
- T C Smout (ed) *Victorian Values* (Oxford 1992)
- W Storrar, *Scottish Identity: A Christian Vision* (Edinburgh 1990)
- B Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem: Feminism and Socialism in the 19th century* (London 1983)
- G Walker and T Gallacher (eds) *Sermons and Battle Hymns: Protestant Popular Culture in Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh 1990)
- D Watson, *Perfect Womanhood* (Edinburgh 1905)
- D Withrington, 'The Churches in Scotland c1870-1900: Towards a New Social Conscience' in *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* volxxix (1972)
- D F Wright (ed) *The Bible in Scottish Life and Literature*

(Edinburgh 1988)

J D Young, *Women and Popular Struggles: A History of British Working Class Women 1560-1984* (Edinburgh 1985)
The Position of Woman, Actual and Ideal (London 1911)
A Woman's Claim of Right in Scotland: Women, Representation and Politics (Edinburgh 1991)

The following sources have been useful in the preparation of particular chapters of the thesis

Chapter One - Introduction

M Boxer and J Quataert, *Connecting Spheres: Women in the Western World, 1500-the present* (New York 1987)
S J Brown and M Fry (eds) *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption* (Edinburgh 1993)
M Caird, *The Morality of Marriage* (London, 1896)
L M G Clark and L Lange (eds), *The Sexism of Social and Political Theory: Women and Reproduction from Plato to Nietzsche* (Toronto, 1979)
L Davidoff and C Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (Chicago 1987)
J Dempsey Douglass, *Women, Freedom and Calvin* (Philadelphia 1986)
R Dobash and R E Dobash, *Violence Against Wives: A Case Against the Patriarchy* (New York 1979)
J Dwyer and R B Sher (eds) *Sociability and Society in 18th Century Scotland* (Edinburgh 1993)
B Gottlieb, *The Family in the Western World from the Black Death to the Industrial Age* (Oxford 1993)
E Helsing R Sheets and W Veeder, *The Woman Question: Society and Literature in Britain and America, 1837-1883* (3 Volumes) (New York 1983)
J Kelly, *Women, History and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly* (Chicago 1984)
E King, *The Hidden History of Glasgow's Women: The Thenev Factor* (Edinburgh 1993)
C Larner, *Enemies of God: The Witchhunt in Scotland* (London 1983)
R Mitchison and L Leneman, *Sexuality and Social Control - Scotland 1660-1780* (Oxford 1989)
L J Nicholson, *Gender and History: The Limits of Social Theory in the Age of the Family* (New York 1986)
L J Nicholson (ed) *Feminism/Postmodernism* (New York 1990)
A Phillips, *Engendering Democracy* (Cambridge 1991)
M Poovey, *Uneven Developments: The Ideological Work of Gender in Mid-Victorian England* (London 1989)

Chapter Two - 'Woman's Mission' and Women's Work

S Burman (ed) *Fit Work For Women* (London 1979)
O Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland* (Edinburgh 1980)
E Gordon and E Breitenbach (eds) *The World is Ill-Divided: Women's Work in Scotland in the 19th and 20th centuries* (Edinburgh 1990)

- E Gordon, *Women and the Labour Movement in Scotland 1850-1914* (Oxford 1991)
- G Gordon (ed) *Perspectives of the Scottish City* (Aberdeen 1985)
- M Magnusson, *Out of Silence: The Woman's Guild 1887-1987* (Edinburgh 1987)
- L Mahood, *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the 19th Century* (London 1990)
- L Mahood, 'The Domestication of 'Fallen' Women: The Glasgow Magdalene Institution 1860-1890' in D McCrone, S Kendrick and P Straw (eds) *The Making of Scotland: Nation, Culture and Social Change* (Edinburgh 1989)
- F Prochaska, *Women and Philanthropy in 19th century England* (Oxford 1980)
- W Walker, *Juteopolis:Dundee and Its Textile Workers 1885-1923* (Edinburgh 1979)

Chapter Three – Women and the Foreign Missionary Movement

- R Balfour and M Young, *The Work of Medical Women in India* (Bombay 1929)
- W Burns Thomson, *Reminiscences of Medical Mission Work* (Edinburgh 1885)
- T Christensen and W R Hutchison (eds) *Missionary Ideologies in the Imperial Era 1880-1920* (1982)
- R Compton Brouwer, *New Women for God: Canadian Presbyterian Women and India Missions 1876-1914* (Toronto 1990)
- E G K Hewat, *Vision and Achievement 1796-1956: The History of the Foreign Missions of the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh 1960)
- M Hunter, *The Gospel of Gentility* (New York 1986)
- J W Jack, *Daybreak in Livingstonia* (1901)
- J Lowe, *Medical Missions: Their Place and Power* (Edinburgh 1886)
- E Raymond Pitman, *Heroines of the Mission Field* (London 1880)
- Kwok Pui-Lan 'The Image of the "White Lady": Gender and Race in Christian Mission', in *Concilium 1991/6: The Special Nature of Women?*
- R Shepherd, *Lovedale, South Africa* (Cape Town 1941)
- A H Small, *St Colm's College: Memories of Fifty Years 1894-1944* (Edinburgh 1944)
- M Stewart, *Training in Mission* (Edinburgh 1972)
- A S Swan, *Seedtime and Harvest: The Story of the Hundred Years Work of the Women's Foreign Mission of the Church of Scotland* (London 1937)
- K Young, *Our Sail We Lift: The Story of the Girls' Association 1901-1951* (Edinburgh 1951)
- Our Church's Work in India: UFC Missions* (Edinburgh 1910)

Chapter Four – The Position of Women in Scottish Presbyterian Polity

- I Armstrong, *Plea for Modern Prophetesses* (Glasgow 1866)
- K Armstrong, *The End of Silence: Women and Priesthood*

(London 1993)

O Anderson, 'Women Preachers in Mid-Victorian Britain: some reflections on feminism, popular religion and change' in *Historical Journal* Vol xii (1969) 467ff

J Barr, *The United Free Church of Scotland* (London 1934)

A C Charteris, *The Church of Christ* (London 1905)

R Edwards, *The Case for Women's Ministry* (London 1989)

J Field-Bibb, *Women Towards Priesthood* (Cambridge 1991)

M Levison, *Wrestling with the Church* (London 1992)

J M Ludlow, *Women's Work in the Church* (London 1865)

D Havice Webster, 'Roadmap for a Rebel' in *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* XXXV (1979-80) No1-2 70ff

N Dickson, 'Modern prophetesses: Women Preachers in the 19th century Scottish Brethren', in *Scottish Church History Society Records* XXV I 89ff

Chapter Five - Women and Campaigns for Change

Anti-slavery

L and R Billington, 'A Burning Zeal for Righteousness': Women in the British Anti-slavery Movement 1820-1860' in J Rendall (ed) *Equal or Different: Women's Politics 1800-1914* (Oxford 1987)

D Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress* (Oxford 1984)

C Midgley, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns 1780-1870* (London 1992)

C Duncan Rice, *The Scots Abolitionists* (Baton Rouge 1981)

E Cady Stanton, *Eighty Years and More* (London 1898)

C Taylor, *British and American Abolitionists: An Episode in North Atlantic Relations* (Edinburgh 1974)

Temperance

British Women's Temperance Association - Its origins and Progress 1878-1908 (Edinburgh 1908)

N Denny, 'The Scottish Churches and the Temperance Movement' in *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* (1989) 216ff

B L Epstein, *The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism and Temperance in 19th century America* (Middletown 1981)

T Honeyman, *Good Templary in Scotland 1869-1929* (Glasgow 1929)

E King, *Scotland Sober and Free: The Temperance Movement 1829-1979* (Glasgow 1979)

M B MacGregor, *Towards Scotland's Social Good: One Hundred Years of Temperance Work in the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh 1948)

D Paton, 'Drink and the Temperance Movement in 19th century Scotland' (PhD Thesis, Edinburgh University 1977)

W Reid, *Woman's Work for Women's Weal* (Glasgow 1860)

Education

W Alexander, *First Ladies of Medicine: The Origins, Education and Destination of Early Women Graduates of*

- Glasgow University (Glasgow 1987)
- R D Anderson, *Educational Opportunity in Victorian Scotland* (Oxford 1983)
- W N Boog Watson, 'The First Eight Ladies' in *University of Edinburgh Journal* vol 23 (1967-8) 227ff
- K Burton, *Memoir of Mrs Crudelius* (Edinburgh 1879)
- J Burstyn, *Victorian Education and the Ideal of Womanhood* (New Jersey 1984)
- M Cruikshank, *History of the Training of Teachers in Scotland* (London 1970)
- J Fewell, F Paterson and H Corr (eds) *Girls in Their Prime: Scottish Education Revisited* (Edinburgh 1990)
- J Grant, K McHutcheon, E F Sanders (eds) *St Leonard's School 1877-1927* (Oxford 1927)
- S Hamilton, 'Women and the Scottish Universities c1869-1939: A Social History (PhD unpublished thesis Edinburgh University 1987)
- W H Humes and H M Paterson (eds) *Scottish Culture and Scottish Education 1800-1980* (Edinburgh 1983)
- W Knight, *History of the LLA Exam and Diploma for Women, and of University Hall for Women Students at St Andrews University* (Dundee 1896)
- L Milne-Rae, *Ladies in Debate, Being a History of the Ladies Edinburgh Debating Society 1865-1935* (London 1936)
- C Struthers, *The Higher Education of Women* (Aberdeen nd)
- B Welsh, *After the Dawn: A Record of Pioneer Work in Edinburgh for Higher Education of Women* (Edinburgh 1939)

Women's Suffrage and Feminism

- O Banks, *Faces of Feminism: A Study of Feminism as a Social Movement* (London 1981)
- C Bolt, *The Women's Movement in the United States and Britain 1790-1920s* (Hemel Hempstead 1993)
- D Beddoe, *Back to Home and Duty: Women between the Wars 1918-1939* (London 1989)
- R First and A Scott, *Olive Schreiner* (London 1980)
- B Harrison, *Separate Spheres: Opposition to Women's Suffrage in Britain* (London 1978)
- S S Holton, *Feminism and Democracy: Women's Suffrage and reform Politics in Britain* (Cambridge 1986)
- E King *The Scottish Women's Suffrage Movement* (Glasgow 1978)
- L Leneman, *A Guid Cause: The Women's Suffrage Movement in Scotland* (Aberdeen 1991)
- L Leneman, 'The Scottish Churches and 'Votes for Women' in *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* volxxiv (1991) 237ff
- J Liddington and J Norris, *One Hand Tied Behind Us* (London 1978)
- C McPhee and A Fitzgerald (eds), *The Non-Violent Militant: Selected Writings of Teresa Billington-Greig* (London 1987)
- M Reid, *A Plea for Woman* (1843, reprinted Edinburgh 1988)
- J Rendall (ed) *Equal or Different: Women's Politics 1800-1914* (Oxford 1987)

- D Rosen, *Rise Up Women!* (London 1974)
 S Rowbotham, *Women in Movement: Feminism and Social Action* (London 1992)
 D Thompson, *The Chartists* (London 1984)
 A Wilson, *The Chartist Movement in Scotland* (Manchester 1970)
 A Wiltsher, *Most Dangerous Women - Feminist Peace Campaigners of the Great War* (London 1984)

Chapter six - Conclusion

- L Boff, *Church, Charism and Power* (London 1985)
 M Daly, *The Church and the Second Sex* (London 1968)
 M Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston 1973)
 M Daly, *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism* (Boston 1978)
 S de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex* (London 1953)
 E Fox-Genovese, 'For Feminist Interpretation', in *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 35 (1979-80) 5-14
 S McFague, *Models of God: Theology for an Ecological, Nuclear Age* (Philadelphia 1987)
 R Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a feminist Theology* (Boston 1983)
 R R Ruether, 'Prophetic Tradition and the Liberation of Women: Promise and Betrayal' in *Feminist Theology* 5 (January 1994) 58-73
 L Russell, *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective* (Philadelphia 1974)
 E Schussler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (London 1983)