CHURCH AND SOCIETY -- A STUDY OF THE SOCIAL WORK AND THOUGHT OF JAMES BEGG, D. D. (1808-1883), A. H. CHARTERIS, D. D., LL. D. (1835-1908), AND DAVID WATSON, D. D. (1859-1943)

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the School of Divinity

University of Edinburgh

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

---

by

Donald H. Bishop

December, 1953

PREFACE

This dissertation is a study of the social work and thought of three eminent Scottish ministers whose major contributions to the Church and society came in the years from 1835 to 1935. Dr. James Begg, Dr. A. H. Charteris, and Dr. David Watson lived at a time when the Industrial Revolution was bringing about many changes and upheavals in Scottish social, religious, political and economic life. Social institutions, customs, habits, and patterns of thought and behaviour were constantly undergoing transition and alteration. The new conditions created by the Industrial Revolution had an effect upon the Church as well; and her reaction and adjustment to those changes and the contributions of the three men to the Church in that process has been the central theme of this work.

A continuous social, economic, and political background has been sketched as a setting for the work of the three men and the Church from 1835 to 1935. Trends in religious thought have been considered and social and political movements and developments taken into account in an attempt to present a complete picture, so that the contributions of Dr. Begg, Dr. Charteris, and Dr. Watson could be seen in a truer perspective and in the larger setting in which they were made. The fact that Dr. Begg was in the Free Church and Dr. Charteris and Dr. Watson were in the Established Church has made this study more complicated and difficult but at the same time more comprehensive and fruitful, as it has necessitated a complete summary of the Free Church

from 1843 to 1900 (and the United Free Church from 1900 to 1929 to a small extent), as well as a survey of the Established Church from 1843 to 1900 and on past the Union to 1935.

This study has been a critical assessment and appreciation of the work and thought of Dr. Begg, Dr. Charteris, Dr. Watson, and the churches. In such an inquiry one may tend to be negative and overcritical, and in so doing overlook the positive features or aspects of an organization or a man's life. In this study a balance has been aimed at between criticism and appreciation; the good as well as bad, the successes as well as failures of the men and the churches have been pointed out. Every age has its problems, disappointments, and perplexities and, if this study has seemed to indicate that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries had a larger share than previous ones, it is only because a close scrutiny of those two has made a true perspective impossible.

To the research student an abundance of primary sources--published speeches, pamphlets, essays, and reports--are available for the years from 1835 to 1875. For example, a large number of pamphlets on controversial matters were written by Dr. Begg and his contemporaries but, by Dr. Charteris' time, the amount of such material tends to decline. In fact, difficulty was experienced in finding good primary source material for the work and thought of Dr. Charteris, the Life and Work Magazine, and the Reports of the General Assembly Committees being two main sources used. By Dr. Watson's time, an abundance of material can be found again. With the rise of the "Social

Gospel" and widespread interest in social problems around 1900, a large number of books and treatises by ministers, teachers, and philanthropists are available. The *Kirk Session Records* of the individual churches in which the men served were valuable in obtaining a picture of the personalities, and in assessing the contributions of the Church on a community or local level; a more comprehensive picture of the work of the Church as a whole has been presented as well, and for that the *General Assembly Committee Reports* were widely used. Through them the general trends and tendencies in the Church throughout the period studied are discernible. Three newspapers, *The Witness*, *The Scottish Guardian*, and *The Scotsman* offer a wealth of first-hand material on the churches and social problems in the 1840's and 1850's. Detailed reports of the meetings of Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies are given almost *verbatim*. Careful interpretation is required, however. The volumes from 1857 to 1885 of the *Transactions of the Social Science Association* are a splendid source of information on social, economic, and industrial problems. From 1880 to 1910, a number of biographies of leaders in the Free and Established Churches were published and give much insight into the life of the Church and society. The *Life and Work Magazine* beginning in 1879 is of much help in discerning the major attitudes and trends in the Established Church while for the whole period from 1835 to 1935 the numerous *Parliamentary Investigations* and *Reports* are especially valuable and helpful in shedding light on the problems and perplexities of an industrial age.

I would like to express my gratitude to my professorial adviser, the Reverend Professor W. S. Tindal, O. B. L., D. D., for his encouragement and advice in this work. For their assistance, I would like to thank also the Reverend A. T. Laurence of St. Mary's Church, Edinburgh; Dr. J. A. Lamb, Librarian of New College; Miss Erna R. Leslie, M. A., B. Comm., Assistant Librarian and Principal's Secretary; the staff of the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh; the staff of the Edinburgh Public Library; the Reverend D. Crawford Watson of Glasgow; Dr. Vernon Bodein of Hampton Institute, U. S. A.; and the ministers and officials of the London Road St. Clement's Church in Glasgow and the Liberton Parish Church for their permission to use the Kirk-Session records.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

I. JAMES BEGG, D. D., 1808-1843 1

Dr. Begg and the Wider Work of the Church 11

Church Extension 11

The Seat Rents Controversy 15

The Patronage and Non-Intrusion Questions 19

Dr. Begg and the Free Church 21

The Wider Work of the Free Church 24

Deputations to England 24

Refusal of Sites 24

Sabbath Observance 25

II. JAMES BEGG, D. D., 1843-1870 31

The Working Classes 31

Pauperism 38

Housing 50

National Education 60

The Early Closing and Saturday Half-Holiday Movements 64

The 40s Freehold Movement 67

Rural Reforms 69

Rural Housing 71

The Feeing Markets 78

Rural Education 81

Land Law Reform 82

CHAPTER		PAGE
	The Free Church from 1860 to 1900	86
III.	JAMES BEGG, D. D., 1870-1883	92
IV.	A. H. CHARTERIS, D. D., LL. D., 1835-1868	106
	Education and Parish Ministries	106
	His Work as a Professor	111
	The Tolbooth Experiment	114
V.	A. H. CHARTERIS, D. D., LL. D., 1868-1898	116
	The Christian Life and Work Committee	118
	The Young Men's Guild	119
	The Woman's Guild	128
	The Diaconate, Training Home and Hospital	134
	The Pleasance St. Ninian's Mission	138
	An Estimation	140
	Deputations	142
	Publications	146
	The Church and Social Problems	150
	The Rural Problem	151
	The Poor and Lapsed	156
	The Working Classes	162
	A Summary	169
VI.	A. H. CHARTERIS, D. D., LL. D., 1898-1908	172
	His Thought	174
	His Religious Outlook	177

CHAPTER PAGE

VII. DAVID WATSON, D. D., 1859-1890 180

Childhood and Education 181

St. Clement's Parish 183

VIII. DAVID WATSON, D. D., 1890-1935 190

The Scottish Christian Social Union 192

The Social Work Committee 198

The Presbytery of Glasgow 210

The Commission on the War 213

The Committee on Church and Nation 216

The Church, Dr. Watson, and the Working Classes . . 223

The Church, Dr. Watson, and Rural Life 232

IX. DAVID WATSON, D. D., 1935-1943 244

His Social and Religious Thought 245

X. IN RETROSPECT 253

BIBLIOGRAPHY 274

CHAPTER I

JAMES BEGG, D. D., 1808-1843

Dr. James Begg, Free Church of Scotland preacher and social reformer, was born of sturdy covenanting stock in the manse of the semi-rural New Monkland Parish on October 31, 1808. He completed his elementary education in the nearby parish school and at the age of twelve enrolled at Glasgow University where he finished his college and theological studies. At the Divinity Hall Dr. Begg was impressed deeply by the social work and philosophy of Dr. Stevenson MacGill, Professor of Theology,[1] and he developed mature views on education, housing of the working classes and the economic elevation of the people which reflected in many ways those of his teacher.

In 1828, when many students were being attracted to Edinburgh University by the dynamic personality of Dr. Thomas Chalmers, Professor of Theology, Dr. Begg went to the capital city and spent a busy and fruitful year studying under this master teacher. Dr. Chalmers' love of the old parochial system, his support of the non-intrusion principle, his fresh evangelicalism, and his strong opposition to assessments for the poor, were but a few of the principles eagerly accepted and later promulgated by Dr. Begg.

---

1 Robert Burns, Memoir of Rev. Stevenson MacGill, D. D. (W. R. M'Phun; Glasgow), passim, 1842.

Having been licensed by the Presbytery of Hamilton on June 10, 1829, Dr. Begg spent the next two-and-one-half years in three successive parishes. As assistant to Dr. James Buchanan in the notorious Peat Neuk area of the North Leith Parish,[1] Dr. Begg came for the first time in close contact with the "lapsed masses" of large cities.[2] On May 18, 1830, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Dumfries and inducted into the newly erected Chapel-of-Ease at Maxwelltown, but his short stay of seven months prevented him from developing any positive program of reform. In December of the same year he was inducted into Lady Glenorchy's Chapel in Edinburgh as colleague and successor of Dr. T. S. Jones.[3] Pastoral work, revealing the inadequate housing, widespread pauperism, and intemperance, and his acquaintance with numerous leaders in the city, helped Dr. Begg to clarify his own social and political views. At Lady Glenorchy's his many abilities, especially his preaching without manuscript or notes, soon attracted the attention of his colleagues and the public.

On November 25, 1831, Dr. Begg was inducted into the Middle Parish Church of Paisley where he tackled immediately such problems as the rising intemperance, the laxity of Sabbath Observance, and the "relaxed principles and habits of the rising

---

1 J. C. Irons, Leith and Its Antiquities (Edinburgh: Morrison and Gibb, Ltd., 1897), Vol. II, p. 362.

2 Thomas Smith, Memoirs of James Begg, D. D. (Edinburgh: James Gemmell, George IV, Bridge, 1888), Vol. I, p. 87.

3 T. S. Jones, The Life of Lady Glenorchy (Edinburgh: William White and Co., 1839), gives a good account of the Church.

generation."[1] Believing a spiritual purgative the real remedy, he started a program of church extension under the name of the Paisley Middle Parish Church Accommodation Society. Its aim was to provide additional places of worship, especially for the poorer people of the parish. Four in all were opened during Dr. Begg's ministry there. His work was so emulated by the other parish ministers[2] that the leaders of neighboring churches constantly called upon him for help and advice. Because of this his biographer in 1888 fondly described him as the "author of the Church Extension Movement of the 1830's."[3] At the time much concern was being expressed in the Synod and Glasgow and Ayr over the unchurched masses of the large cities of Scotland. A Royal Commission of Investigation reported in 1834 that in Glasgow alone the rapid increase of population had left 70,000 without church accommodation. Speaking on church extension at a public meeting in Glasgow in 1834, Dr. Begg moved the formation of a "Society for the Support of the Church of Scotland" which later became the "Church Accommodation Society" and the center of extension activity for the Synod.[4] After the creation of the

---

1 The New Statistical Account of Scotland (Wm. Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh and London, 1845), Vol. VII, p. 135. These and other characteristics along with the terrorist activities of the Chartists in the early thirties led the editor of the Church of Scotland Magazine in its April, 1834 issue to call the city "radical Paisley."

2 Dr. Begg was closely associated with Dr. Burns of the Low Church Parish in a number of activities. The Reverend Mr. Brewster of the Abbey Parish, who was considerably influenced by the Chartist Movement (being the leader of the "moral persuasion" block of the party), he describes as holding "very peculiar views." T. Smith, op. cit., p. 112.

3 Ibid., p. 254.

4 Rev. Stevenson MacGill, D. D., A Sermon Preached in Behalf of the Church Accommodation Society, with minutes of the meeting held at its formation (W. R. M'Phun, Glasgow, 1834), p. 31.

Society, Dr. Begg was its president for a short time. It was through the parish and Synod groups that he contributed much to the Church Extension Movement of the 1830's and helped to provide facilities for worship in Paisley, especially for the destitute and outcast.

Heartily supporting the furthering of both secular and religious education, Dr. Begg established a dual program of week-day evening classes for working young people and mid-week Bible classes for young men and women. Both were extremely successful. The first helped to fill in the gaps in the education of working youths forced by circumstances to leave school at an early age, and the second helped to combat the irreligion in the parish. On another level Dr. Begg supported the Glasgow Educational Society, founded in 1834 by a group of clergymen to extend and improve the educational facilities of the parish churches in the area.[1] Its efforts were stimulated by two factors; the increase in numbers and power of Dissenting groups,[2] and the growing heathenism and irreligion. The Society was part of a countrywide movement started by Dr. Chalmers in 1830 to have a school planted in every parish in the country, since educational as well as religious facilities had not expanded to keep pace with the increase in population. It was heartily backed by other Evangelicals but the Disruption interrupted its initial success and caused it to be abandoned.

---

1 The Church of Scotland Magazine, April, 1834, p. 10.
2 Of these, the Congregational Church under the leadership of Dr. Ralph Wardlaw was the most active in the field of education.

After 1800 Paisley, like many other Scottish towns, underwent a number of changes as a result of the Industrial Revolution.[1] Since weaving had been its predominant industry, a condition was created which made the town especially susceptible to trade depressions. Political agitation, demands for burgh and parliamentary reform, and an extension of the franchise resulted from the economic instability. Unsanitary housing conditions, overcrowding, intemperance, and undernourishment characterized the poorer people and led to numerous severe epidemics, such as the cholera plague of 1832.

Dr. Begg's interest centered mainly around finding ways of alleviating the poverty of the working classes. He deplored a compulsory assessment for the poor and favoured the voluntary offering at the church door. Pennies, however, continued to be the standard contribution, a practice leading Dr. Begg to realize the inadequacy of such a method; yet he could offer no other recourse at the time. He opposed intemperance on both moral and practical grounds and joined the Paisley Temperance Association founded in 1832.[2] Although concerned about burgh reform, inadequate housing,

---

1 R. Brown, A History of Paisley (J. and J. Cook, High Street, Paisley, 1886), Vol. II, passim.

2 The movement to combat drunkenness "the most evident national vice" at the time, began in the 1830's. The first Temperance Society in Scotland was started at Maryhill, Glasgow, in October, 1829. Abstinence societies were formed in Dunfermline in 1830 and in Paisley and Glasgow in 1832. Fleming, A History of the Church of Scotland, 1842-1874 (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1927), pp. 4, 77-78.

and insanitation, Dr. Begg made no pronouncements upon such problems.[1] Such reticence was a result of his inherited conservative outlook. He felt at the time that a minister should not take a partisan position on controversial questions. He had no broad program of economic reform, and he believed that the spreading of the Gospel was sufficient. The major part of his efforts was given to parish work and the Church Extension Movement. The Voluntary Controversy and the Sabbath Protection Campaign, then in its initial phase, occupied some of his time as well.

After three-and-one-half years of vigorous and prolific work at Paisley, Dr. Begg was persuaded by the church leaders at Edinburgh to become the minister of the nearby Liberton Parish Church, where his many abilities could be put to use in the wider work of the Church.

Dr. Begg was formally inducted into the Liberton Church on June 25, 1835. The parish, located about two miles south of Edinburgh, consisted of twenty hamlets and the larger villages of Gilmerton and Liberton. It was set in a fertile farming area, underlain by numerous and productive mines. Begg's work as a social reformer centered upon the problems of education, Church extension,

---

1 Two exceptions were, first, a sermon during a local election campaign on "The Choice of Magistrates," in which he reiterated the themes appropriate to such an occasion and, secondly, another sermon in which he charged the cholera plague to the visitation of God upon sinning and unrepentent men; a theme which was modified in the Edinburgh epidemics during his Newington ministry in the next decade.

seat rents, Sabbath observance, pauperism, intemperance, and housing.

Ten poorly financed district schools and one parochial school attempted unsuccessfully to meet the educational needs of the parish. Lamenting the low state of education, Dr. Begg surveyed three of the districts to find the number of children not attending school. With the results in hand he started a campaign of reform.

His progressive platform consisted of five main points: the number of schools should be in the proportion of one per five hundred population; district schools should be raised to the rank of parish schools and be suitably endowed; the salary of teachers should be raised to attract a higher type of person and raise the standards of the profession; lower fees should be charged to enable poor but able children to attend; and a proper female school should be established and endowed as a regular part of the parochial machinery. Dr. Begg was one of the first to emphasize the latter and he advocated it throughout his career.[1]

The campaign was carried on by addresses from the pulpit and public platform, and by working through the Kirk Session. Eventually a public atmosphere was created which did much to remedy the situation. During Dr. Begg's ministry, the parish school was

---

[1] The New Statistical Account of Scotland, 1845, made out for the Liberton Parish by Dr. Begg himself, contains a general analysis of the parish and describes Dr. Begg's efforts. Detailed information is found also in the Kirk Session records for 1835-1843.

reconstructed, teachers' salaries were raised, the percentage of children attending school gradually increased, and new schools were erected at two hamlets, Cameron and Burdiehouse.[1]

Dr. Begg felt that church attendance, although better than the general average of the country, was not high enough. He started a campaign of church extension to increase the average attendance, overcome the religious indifference, and elevate the moral state of the parish.[2] He effected a plan of parish sub-division, making church facilities available to people in the more remote areas. The result was the building of a church at Gilmerton in the southeastern part, the employment of a missionary in the northeastern corner of the parish, the opening of Sabbath schools in several districts, the starting of a preaching station at Niddry, and the setting up of two religious libraries. Dr. Begg also drew up a petition supporting Dr. Chalmers' campaign for national endowments of newly erected churches. This was signed by the Kirk Session and presented to the Parliament.[3]

---

1 The Witness, May 17, 1843.
2 Statistical Account, Vol. I, p. 12.
3 Dr. Begg's fondness for petitions started early in his career. Some had been sent out from Paisley. In Liberton Dr. Begg drew up several which were signed by the Kirk Session and sent to the appropriate bodies. None of his predecessors or his immediate successor did such a revolutionary thing. One wonders how he managed to convince his Session to do so. They must have been a rather conservative body, as the records for February 23, 1841, note that the precentor was dismissed for his socialistic leanings.

As a strict sabbatarian and temperance advocate, Dr. Begg opposed the custom of Sabbath funerals because they often ended in the mourners retiring to a public house. He induced his Kirk Session to petition the Lord Provost of Edinburgh to close the city's graveyards on Sundays, and he himself acted as a delegate to a meeting in Edinburgh for the same purpose.[1] As a result of the combined efforts of a number of citizens, the Town Council in 1840 was persuaded to close the city's graveyards on the Sabbath.[2] In his own parish Dr. Begg gradually overcame the tradition by a tactful but firm insistence that other days were more appropriate for the burying of the deceased.

Dr. Begg's concern for the poor led him to make a survey of the pauperism in the parish. He presented the results in a lengthy report to the Kirk Session which commended him highly for the survey. Copies were printed and sent to each heritor in the parish.[3] In his survey Dr. Begg criticized the method of supporting the poor by assessments as having the effect of "drying up the sources of charity,"[4] and favoured the old plan of voluntary

---

1 Kirk Session Records, December 15, 1839.
2 The Witness, February 18, 1840.
3 Kirk Session Records, November 7, 1839.
4 Typical of the attitude of most churchmen toward assessments is the statement found in The Witness, November 7, 1841: "Compulsory assessments ought to be regarded in the light of a moral evil. The necessity for having recourse to them ought always to be deplored, and the time when they shall be general cannot be looked forward to without the utmost alarm. Let the only rational and efficient mode for the cure of pauperism be speedily adopted. Let the means of religious instruction and moral training be multiplied in the land. Let the moral and religious condition of the population be thus elevated and the evil will be corrected at the source."

contributions as best, his good common sense leading him to add, however, that under existing conditions it was practicable only in small parishes with an efficient minister and staff of elders. He gave as the local causes of poverty the nearness to Edinburgh, the general lack of Christian principles and religious instruction, the poor houses, and the abundance of whisky shops. As a solution he advocated the sub-division of the parish, the extension of church facilities, the diffusion of religious instruction, and the closing of the public houses. Combined efforts in all these fields eventually diminished the number of people receiving aid from the parish church.[1]

Acting upon his favourite proverb, "The drunkard shall come to poverty," Dr. Begg set out on a temperance campaign. A survey, made by himself, revealed thirty ale houses in the parish in which over nine thousand gallons of whisky costing £ 4,500 were consumed annually by the labouring classes.[2] Again, through speeches from the platform and pulpit, Dr. Begg created such a strong public opinion on the matter that over half of them were closed down.[3]

Dr. Begg's attention was also directed toward a plan of cottage improvement, especially for the mine workers and farm labourers, making up over eighty percent of the parish population. In advance of his time, he advocated the construction of cottages

---

1 Statistical Account, Vol. I, pp. 26-27.
2 Ibid., p. 28.
3 Standing law permitted heritors to close down whisky shops on their own lands if they deemed it desirable. By making the heritors feel personally responsible for the degrading influence of such, eighteen of the thirty were finally closed.

with at least two apartments in each, thus permitting some degree of privacy to the inhabitants. Remedial measures consisted in focusing the Kirk Session's attention upon the problem[1] and constantly reminding farmers and proprietors of their personal responsibility for their farm servants. He obtained the Session's support for the Highland Society's scheme of awarding yearly premiums to the best improved cottages in a parish and in other ways did much to better the housing situation in his Liberton parish.[2]

DR. BEGG AND THE WIDER WORK OF THE CHURCH

Beginning in 1800, the efforts of the Church and its leaders centered around three foci of activity: the Church Extension Movement, the Seat Rents Controversy, and the question of Patronage. The first was an attempt by the Church to present a religious solution to the social and moral problems arising from the pressures and circumstances of the day; the second was a natural and inevitable accompaniment of the first; the last was the normal outcome of a turbulent and reforming age. Dr. Begg's belief in the power of religion to change lives, his popular sympathies, and his increasing identification with the masses led him to participate in all three.

---

1 It must be remembered that even as late as 1840 the power and influence of a Kirk Session, especially in rural districts, was a real one.

2 Statistical Account, Vol. I, p. 28.

Church Extension. In the eighteenth century the population of Scotland increased rapidly and thousands of unchurched settled in the large cities and new mining and manufacturing centres created by the Industrial Revolution. The failure of the Church to keep pace with such growth and movement was, in part at least, a result of an Act passed in 1706 by the Scottish Parliament prohibiting parish division and the building of new churches in a parish without the consent of three-fourths of its heritors. It was also the result of another act passed in 1798 by the General Assembly of the Established Church, which prohibited the use of voluntary contributions for the erection of Chapels-of-Ease or churches in which the people had the choice of their own ministers. The 1798 Act also excluded from church courts the clergy of the existing chapels. After 1750, the amassing of a vast new population of wage-earners into urban areas gave rise to numerous social and economic problems. The general indifference of the Church to the misery and squalor of these masses led to their alienation from religion and the placing of their faith in organizations of a secular nature.

In the early part of the nineteenth century the Evangelical Party, of which Dr. Begg was one, wrested control from the Moderates. Their attention became focussed increasingly upon the irreligion and immorality of the lower orders. Through their efforts the General Assembly of 1828 appointed a committee to investigate and appeal to the government for aid. From 1828 to 1833, little creative work was done except to make a survey which affirmed the

existence of the problem. In the 1833 Assembly, Dr. Chalmers was appointed convener of the Committee, and with a stalwart band of supporters he set to work. Popular support was gained by the passing of the Chapel and Veto Acts in the 1834 and 1835 General Assemblies, thus revoking the Acts of 1706 and 1798.[1] Vigourous appeals to the government for financial support were made in 1833 and 1834; however, the Whig Party, then in power, hesitated for political reasons.[2] Disappointed by the quick fall of the Tory government and the reinstatement of the indifferent Whigs in 1835, those trying to obtain government support abandoned their efforts and embarked on a voluntary Church Extension Scheme.

Dr. Begg was called to Liberton to help with the Extension Scheme. It had his full sympathy, as his Paisley ministry had made him acutely aware of its need. He believed that licentiousness, crime, pauperism, and intemperance were moral as well as social problems and could be solved ultimately only by bringing the inspiring and elevating influence of the Gospel to bear upon the masses. In 1836, Chalmers obtained the Assembly's approval to form a sub-Committee on Church Extension for organizing a system of meetings over the countryside. Dr. Begg and Dr. Aiton were delegated to

---

1 The Chapel Act gave ministers of Chapels-of-Ease an equal status in church courts with parish ministers. The Veto Act gave the people of a parish the right to refuse a presentee.

2 While evidencing sympathy toward the Established Church, the Whig government under Gray and Melbourne from 1830 to 1834 hesitated to extend the endowments of the Established Church for fear of alienating the political support of English and Scottish Dissenters.

speak in several of the northern counties. They visited such places as Brechin, Aberdeen, Montrose, Banff, Cullen and Inverness, where public meetings were held, local landlords interviewed, collections taken up, committees formed, and much enthusiasm generated for the Church Extension cause.

Dr. Begg's major contribution at this time was his pointed, forty-five page pamphlet which was written at Dr. Chalmers' request to awaken the lethargic clergy, answer objections which had arisen, and give the movement impetus.[1] The sub-division of overgrown parishes to a manageable size by the church courts and the erecting of churches in the new industrial areas was the central theme. The methods and objectives being used were validated by drawing similarities between them and those used of old by Henderson and Gillespie. Dr. Begg urged individual ministers to support the scheme until the two goals--a church per two thousand population, and a sanctuary able to seat sixty percent of the population of every parish--were reached. He was one of the group who urged a parliamentary investigation of the Church Extension problems. After 1840, he advocated that the government support the scheme by endowing churches already built by voluntary giving. He urged that it was the government's duty, in a land with an established church, to insure that all of the people had facilities for religious worship and instruction.

---

1 J. Begg, The Antiquity of Church Extension and Its Relationship to Other Social Problems (Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1838).

The Extension Scheme was given much support by The Witness, a paper started in 1840 through the influence of the evangelicals, its editor being the well known Hugh Miller. Dr. Begg was on the paper's Board of Management and contributed numerous articles to it. By 1843, over £300,000 had been given for the Church Extension Scheme, and over two hundred chapels erected. Because of the Disruption, however, the securing of their endowments was discontinued, and the plan itself was abandoned. It was not until 1846 that the scheme was brought forth again under the leadership of Professor Robertson.

Seat Rents. Dr. Begg was also involved in the Seat-Rents Controversy sweeping the country. He succeeded Dr. Chalmers as leader of the opposition, and presented his views in an eighty-eight page pamphlet, declaring that seat-rents should be abolished on four grounds.[1] First, the imposing of rents, thus excluding the poor from public worship, had no scriptural basis, was against the will of God, and had precipitated the feeling that the Church was only for the well-to-do. Dr. Begg quoted numerous biblical passages to support his belief that the Gospel should be preached and Christ's saving Grace be extended to all, poor as well as rich: "There is no aristocracy in the Church; the rich and the poor are bought with the same precious blood."[2] Secondly, rents had no legal basis. Seats did not exist in parish churches for many years after the Reformation. They were introduced gradually and subtly by heritors partly

---

1 James Begg, Seat Rents Brought to the Test of Scripture, Law, Reason and Experience (Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1838).

2 Ibid., p. 21.

to raise money to pay for the upkeep of the church and the stipend of the minister, a burden which the heritors should have shouldered themselves. By virtue of time, the practice had acquired the sanctity of law, even though it had no legal basis. People were either ignorant of the true facts or unable to oppose such usurpations.

Lastly, seat rents could not be validated on either of the two remaining grounds, reason or experience. Thousands of the poorer classes were outside the Church because of seat rents. The Industrial Revolution had led to the growth of a large middle class in urban areas among whom church-going was habitual. The resulting demand for seats coupled with the lack of sufficient accommodation had led to an initiation and rise in the price of seats.[1] Eventually the poor were forcefully excluded. They were unable to pay the price, and they voluntarily withdrew because of the stigma attached to those seats left rent-free for them.

---

[1] That Dr. Begg's pamphlet was widely read was indicated by a letter in the August 22, 1840, edition of The Witness from a seat factor in the north: "An honest widow woman of our parish called upon me to pay the seat rent of her family for the past year. 'Weel,' she asked, 'an isna the price comin' down? It's a great burden upo' puir bodies.' 'Your seat is not dear,' said I, 'you have not very much to complain of.' 'Dinna tell me sae, man,' she answered rather briskly. 'I've Begg's pamphlet in the house, an' I've read it twice over, an' I ken brawly that I've nae richt to pay seat-rent ava.' The widow, to my knowledge, is by no means the only person in our village who has read the pamphlet, and who has imbibed the disposition to put its doctrines into practice."

Dr. Begg believed that the system of seat rents was endangering the Church's efforts to reclaim the lapsed masses. It had made the Church congregational in form and disrupted the territorial parochial system.[1] The end result was a lower standard of morals and education among the masses and an increase in crime, intemperance, and other social problems. Dr. Begg supported the Church Extension Scheme partly because he believed that the building of new churches and the enlarging of old ones would do away with the need of seat rents. He urged all ministers to join the crusade against them. Their abolition would have several results--the defeat of the Voluntaries, increased giving to foreign missions, the alleviation of class feeling, the return of the working classes to the Church, and the raising of the social and religious level of the poorer people.

Dr. Begg's ideal for the nation was the rural parish set-up with its school, church, and fully endowed ministry, the church being free of seat rents and well attended by rich and poor alike, with a resultant high standard of morality existing among the people. He believed that the same conditions would be found in urban areas if the territorial parochial system were allowed to function unhindered by the usurping of power by civil authorities, the charging of seat rents, and the lack of accommodation.

---

1 Dr. Begg asserted that the more highly endowed churches had the more popular ministers, the practice of tenure of seats by ability to pay and not by residence being characteristic of the congregations. As a result, the pastor's ministrations were scattered throughout the city and not restricted to the territory in which the parish church was set.

In Edinburgh, the controversy centered mainly around the Annuity Tax and seat rents in the eighteen churches under municipal care. Both were, in part, a result of circumstances. A charter granted by Queen Mary in 1556, and confirmed by King James in 1852, had given the holdings and revenue of the pre-Reformation Church to the Royal Burgh to be used for providing worship facilities for the inhabitants. The Annuity Tax, passed in 1633, and seat rents, imposed in 1639, were originated by the magistrates to augment the revenue and support the new churches needed. Time had given both the sanctity of law, and also witnessed an increase in both, especially after 1800.

Dr. Begg's opposition was based on three grounds: that money taken in was not being used for ecclesiastical expenditures and church extension, but for defraying the deficit of the city budget;[1] that the high seat rents were driving the poor from the churches and thereby intensifying existing social problems; and that both were illegal in the first place, since it was the duty of the magistrates to make up any deficit caused by church expenses by using funds from the city budget instead of by imposing a tax.[2]

The steady rise in seat rents after 1800 led to a number

---

1 This was later admitted in a letter to the Scotsman by the city treasurer, Mr. M'Laren. The Case of the Tolbooth Kirk Session vs. the Magistrates, Begg, p. 13.

2 This was in line with Dr. Begg's concept of a National Church whose temporal care is the responsibility of the civil authority.

of fruitless protests until 1835, when a large body of citizens brought to the Court of Session an action against the magistrates.[1] Dr. Begg heartily supported this movement by helping to raise the money for the court expenses. He gained the backing of the working classes by numerous addresses to the Edinburgh Tradesmen's Association.[2] Alarmed by the turn of events, the magistrates in 1837 lowered the price of rents, a gesture treated with contempt and derision by Dr. Begg. The case ambled on until 1838, when Lord Moncrieff declared seat rents as a source of revenue for the city budget illegal. Dr. Begg rejoiced in the decision but declared it did not go far enough; he wanted them abolished entirely.

Patronage and Non-Intrusion. By 1840 those two issues were being hotly debated throughout the country. The passing of the reform bill led men to demand a voice in the appointment of their ministers as well as the election of their M.P.'s.[3] The extension of the franchise to the secular sphere in 1832 had its inevitable reverberation in church courts where patronage and non-intrusion had become leading questions. Most opposition came from the evangelicals who were responsible for the passing of the Veto and Chapel Acts in the 1832 Assembly.

---

1 The Annuity Tax was also opposed by the General Assembly, Dr. Begg and others inducing it, in 1830, to pass a declaration that the tax was invalid as a source of revenue.

2 Report of the Great Meeting of the Trades and Working Classes in Support of the Church of Scotland, November, 1838.

3 J. Barr, The United Free Church of Scotland (London: Allenson and Company, Ltd., 1934), p. 83.

In his Paisley ministry, Dr. Begg, as one of the Evangelicals, had spoken against patronage at numerous meetings, had gotten up a petition to parliament opposing it, had supported the Scottish Guardian, whose official policy at the time was the modification of patronage,[1] and had opposed the extreme position of the Voluntaries and their local Paisley organization. It was not the system itself but its abuses which he opposed at that time. By 1840, Dr. Begg's growing belief in "popular rights," his sympathy for the lower classes, his wish to see more power vested in each congregation, his desire to see the Church strengthened by the realignment of the working classes, and his loyalty to Chalmers, led him to go all out against patronage. In his Liberton parish he delivered a series of anti-patronage lectures which were well received.[2] He was a loyal supporter of the Edinburgh Anti-Patronage Association and spoke at a number of its meetings. In the early part of 1840, he addressed a series of meetings in Aberdeenshire, then a stronghold of Moderatism, and declared that patronage must be abolished.[3] He did, however, face some opposition. In a visit to Thornhill, he and Dr. Guthrie found that public opinion had already been roused against them by the conservative officials of the district who had publicized

---

[1] R. M. W. Cowan, The Newspaper in Scotland (Glasgow: George Outram and Company, 1946), p. 110.

[2] The Witness, February 15, 1840.

[3] "It was his firm opinion that they would never be able to combine these two elements--the people's power and the patron's rights. They must cast the patron overboard." T. Smith, op. cit., Vol. I, p. 367.

them as "the men who were turning the world upside down."[1]

In the years immediately preceeding the Disruption, Dr. Chalmers overshadowed all others and Dr. Begg was not an exceptionally outstanding leader in the Church. He played his part well, however, by agitating against the intrusionists and advocating an Establishment which was much less Erastian. It was not without emotion that he left the Established Church. Though attending the November, 1842, Convocation of ministers favouring non-intrusion and spiritual independence and pledging to come out when the time came, he hoped up to the last that such would not be necessary. The Church in which he was born and bred was dear to him and, even though outside of it, he cherished it until his death in 1883. He felt, however, that the Established Church of 1843 was a fettered and helpless institution, decadent within because of the Moderates, and bound from without by the supremacy of the state.

DR. BEGG AND THE FREE CHURCH

At the Disruption, Dr. Begg, along with several elders and a part of the congregation, withdrew from the Liberton Parish Church and formed a Free Church at Newington in the southern suburbs of Edinburgh. Here Dr. Begg's mature and most effective work was done both within and outside the Church.

---

1 The Witness, April 22, 1840.

In the Newington parish Dr. Begg's interest in social reform bore fruit in a variety of ways. An emphasis upon education was always a feature of the Church's life. A temporary school was started in 1844 and placed on a permanent basis in 1845; and in 1847 a second school was set up. They were Dr. Begg's contribution to the Free Church's drive to provide five hundred school throughout the country. Both functioned effectively until 1872, when they were taken over by the School Board under the Education Act of that year.

A mission project was started in the nearby Causewayside district early in the church's history. The area included a large number of poor people with a low level of morality, living in dwellings of a degrading type.[1] A missionary was sent into the area, and in 1849 a church was built with special emphasis upon an attractive Sabbath School. By 1850, a week-day school had been added, and in 1861 a new Causewayside premises were constructed, Dr. Begg's practical outlook leading to the inclusion of a house and industrial shops in connection with the school. By 1864 a Savings Bank had been set up with 181 depositors. The Causewayside Mission continued to be the object of the Congregation's benevolence until 1877, when the property was sold to the Grange Free Church located nearer the area.[2]

---

1 The Kirk Session Records contain numerous compearings of the wayward-servants, colliers, farm workers, and labourers living in the Causewayside district. Irregularities of conduct and illicit sexual adventures were the two most frequent charges.

2 Kirk Session Records, June, 1877.

Throughout the same period other mission work was carried on in nearby Duddingston and in the Gifford Park district.

The poor of the parish were supported by legal assessments and the voluntary offerings taken at the church door, funds and relief goods were distributed by the Kirk-Session, coal and clothing were given to the poor each winter and, on Dr. Begg's insistence, children of the poor were taken into the school without charge. Special collections were often taken for the needy, such as one taken on behalf of the survivors of a fishing boat disaster in 1880.

Now even more an enemy of intemperance, Dr. Begg in 1862 drew up a petition in favour of the Public Houses Amendment Act.[1] It was signed by the Kirk-Session and sent to Parliament, as was an earlier one in favour of the Forbes-MacKenzie Act. In 1864, at a public meeting of the local residents, he spoke against the licensing of a public house in the Grange district in which he resided. The license was not granted. Later in the year, at a meeting of the Synod, he moved the transmission of an overture to the General Assembly on local licensing of public houses. In 1872 the Session petitioned the Lord Provost of Edinburgh unsuccessfully against the licensing of a public house in the Newington district.[2]

---

1 In his Newington ministry Dr. Begg drew up a number of petitions which were signed and sent to the appropriate body by the Kirk-Session. Some examples are: 1848, petition to several companies against running Sunday trains; 1855, petition to Parliament against Sunday Post Office work; and 1861, petition against Maynooth grants.

2 Details regarding the Newington Parish Church's work in education, the Causewayside Mission, care of the poor, and intemperance can be found in the Records of the Kirk-Session for the period 1843-83, the years of Dr. Begg's ministry there.

THE WIDER WORK OF THE FREE CHURCH

The first years of the Free Church were critical ones. Congregations needed to be organized, finances secured, churches built, schools started, and the machinery of the General Assembly put into operation. This placed an extra burden upon the leaders of the Church. They had to meet the needs of their congregations and help also in the general work of the Church. Dr. Begg was not found wanting when the time and demand came.

The Committee on Deputations to England. Dr. Begg was placed on a number of important General Assembly committees.[1] As one of the Committee on Deputations to England, set up in 1843, he went several times to Manchester, York, London, Bristol, Bath, and other cities in southern England, explaining the principles of the new church at public meetings. In all, nearly £28,000 was contributed to the Free Church as the result of the campaign in which over a hundred ministers participated, most of it coming from the Dissenting Churches south of the border.

The Committee on the Refusal of Sites. Dr. Begg was a member of the Committee on the Refusal of Sites, started in 1844, which did much to call the public's attention to the injustices and hardships imposed by landlords refusing to allow Free Church

---

1 Committee on Publications, 1844-56; Home Missions, 1844-66; Foreign Missions, 1844-58; Sustentation Fund, 1844-66; Assembly Arrangements, 1849-83; Finance, 1843-78; Church Buildings, 1845-81; Popery, 1845-66. Acts of the Free Church of Scotland, Volumes 1843-1883.

sancturaries to be built on their lands. In the early part of 1845, he visited several northern counties investigating such instances and presented his findings to the August Inverness Assembly of that year. In the May, 1846 Assembly, Dr. Begg presented further evidence and moved that Parliament be petitioned.[1] The motion was heartily supported and passed. In the ensuing months much publicity was given the matter in the Scottish Guardian and The Witness and, at the instigation of Dr. Begg and the Committee, numerous petitions were sent to Parliament, urging that a restrictive law be passed. In 1847, a Parliamentary Committee, appointed to investigate the matter,[2] affirmed the complaints of the Free Church and urged landlords to be more conciliatory. By then, public opinion had been roused against the site-refusers and this, along with the threat of a stringent bill pending in Parliament, induced reluctant proprietors to make sites available.

The Sabbath Observance Committee. Before 1830, the older customs of Sabbath keeping in Scotland had remained unchanged despite influences from the south. The growth of the railway system in the 1820's and '30's as one phase of the Industrial Revolution, offered the first serious challenge. In the early 1840's, attempts to link this system with England's was looked upon with grave concern

---

1 Ibid., 1846, p. 79.
2 Ibid., 1847, p. 98.

by defenders of the Sabbath who feared that the laxity in the South might spread North in the form of Sabbath trains, a fear first realized in 1840. By then, Sabbath trains were being run on the Edinburgh-Glasgow railway, a situation later challenging the General Assembly's Sabbath Observance Committee which was started in 1843.

On the Sabbath Question Dr. Begg held a conservative view which was in contrast to the more liberal attitudes of the 1860's and after and which led then to Dr. Begg's being called bigoted and narrow-minded. In 1848, under his influence, the Kirk-Session sent a memorial to the General Assembly on the subject of Sunday trains and two years later sent a petition to the Court of Session in Edinburgh against the Sunday opening of public houses. Because of his extensive work, Dr. Begg was placed on the General Assembly's Sabbath Observance Committee from 1849 to 1872. His views were based on religious and practical grounds. From the religious standpoint the Fourth Commandment settled any argument for Dr. Begg. He said, "It is so plain and express that it is almost impossible to admit its existence and obligation, and at the same time to vindicate public traffic on the railways of our land, and the other modes of Sabbath profanation."[1] From the practical standpoint Dr. Begg opposed Sabbath desecration because the sanctity of the Sabbath was necessary for the physical as well as the spiritual regeneration of the working classes.

The increase in Sabbath trains in the first half of the

---

[1] Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1847, p. 50.

1840's evoked the activity of the Sabbath Alliance[1] and such leaders as Dr. Begg, Thomas Guthrie, Reverend Davidson, and Dr. M'Farlan who through speeches, newspaper articles, and special publications aroused public feeling so much that by 1848 most companies had stopped such trains, except for the North British Railway. In the latter part of the 1840's, inspired in part by the earlier efforts of the Free Church, a movement of the working men themselves was started to abolish all except the most urgent Sunday labour. Dr. Begg, who by this time was recognized by the working men as an ally, encouraged them greatly. Their activity took the form of the Working Men's Sabbath Observance Association, which became a prominent factor in the abolishing of much Sunday labour in manufacturing districts in later years.

The Church's campaign against the North British Railway continued unabated. In the late 1840's, Sabbath post office work and the sale of intoxicating beverages in grocery shops became the foci of attention. In three successive years, 1849, 1850, and 1851, the Government was petitioned by the General Assembly, and in

---

1 Dr. Begg was instrumental in the founding of the Sabbath Alliance. It was a successor of the Scottish Society for the Due Observance of the Lord's Day, begun in 1839. The Sabbath Alliance was started in 1849 on a national scale and had many branch groups throughout the country. Its objectives were "to diffuse scriptural views on the Sabbath, procure and circulate statistical information" on the forms of Sabbath desecration, agitate against Sunday trains and post office work and suppress the Sabbath sale of strong drink. The Alliance was supported by many prominent men in the Free, Established, and U. P. Churches as well as by many noted individuals outside the churches. Dr. Begg was a member of the Acting Committee of the Association. Both he and the Newington Free Church contributed financially toward its support. Narrative of the Proceedings of the Sabbath Alliance, 1849 and 1850 (Edinburgh: Johnston and Hunter, 1851).

1850 even Queen Victoria was memorialized concerning the undesirability of Sabbath post office work. The Committee's agitation continued until 1853 when an Act of Parliament in the early part of the year restricted the Sabbath sale of drink,[1] and 1855 when a major part of Sunday post office work was stopped. During the latter fifties, the Committee directed its opposition toward forms of Sunday behaviour characteristic of the temper of the day, making Sunday more a day of recreation than spiritual regeneration. The opening of the Crystal Palace and the running of Clyde steamers were two examples.

In the Free Church during the rest of the century the Sabbath Observance Committee and the Temperance and Total Abstinence Societies with their numerous local branches and Bands of Hope continued as staunch supporters of the sanctity of the Sabbath. The Committee's opposition became based more and more upon two premises; the historical one of the Sabbath being ordained by God as a day of rest, and the one advanced by Dr. Begg that Sabbath work was a violation of the dignity and rights of labour. Although victorious in regard to Sunday post office work, the battle against Sunday trains was ultimately lost. As early as 1860, the Free Church's Sabbath Observance Committee was protesting vigorously against the increasing amount of Sabbath labour in industrial areas. A typical example was the complaint of the Muchairn Free Church minister that in his parish an

---

1 This had been recommended strongly by a Select House of Commons Committee investigating the problem as early as 1834. Report of Select Committee of Inquiry into Drunkenness (printed by H. M. S. Office, August 1834), p. vii.

iron furnace was "kept working on Sabbath days just as on week days, with a most disastrous effect on the religious condition of the people in his district."[1] The same year the Committee's report condemned vigorously the Sunday labour carried on in the construction of the Glasgow Water Works, declaring the pleas advanced by the contractor "that they must have the works finished by the time specified in their engagement"[2] were no defence whatsoever. Nevertheless, the amount of Sunday labour increased steadily in the next three decades, as the Established Church was soon to discover; and while the Free Church could not prevent such work entirely, her efforts served to restrict them to a certain extent, and she fulfilled her obligation to witness against such an evil. Also in the 1860's and through the rest of the century, such secularizing customs as Sunday newspapers, Sunday concerts, entertainments, games, lectures, the opening of museums and libraries, Sunday pleasure driving, beach parties, outings, and races became the target of the Committee's attacks, again with only partial success. The Continental Sunday did spread across the channel and permeated northward to Scotland.

Outside of the church, Dr. Begg was instrumental in the founding of the Sabbath Observance Society in 1855 by the Edinburgh Cab Drivers, the first of its kind in Scotland. By 1859, the demand for cabs on Sunday in Edinburgh, mostly by people going to church, had risen to such an extent that the Sabbath Observance Committee

---

1 Report of the Committee on Sabbath Observance, 1860, p. 7.
2 Ibid., p. 5.

felt obliged to bring a petition received from the Edinburgh cabmen to the attention of the General Assembly of that year. The matter was submitted by the Assembly to the Presbytery of Edinburgh, who, on Dr. Begg's suggestion, prepared and issued an address which was read from most of the pulpits in the city urging church members to refrain from taking cabs to church unless, as in the case of the aged or infirm, it was absolutely necessary.[1] At the same time the Presbytery had started a campaign against the opening of shops in the city, feeling such to be a direct cause of Sabbath desecration. A group from the Presbytery which included Dr. Begg called on the Lord Provost and Magistrates and opposed the opening of shops so vigorously that a proclamation was issued by the civic officials which "accomplished no small amount of good."[2]

Thus far, Dr. Begg's work as a minister in four successive parishes of the Established Church before the Disruption and then afterwards as a clergyman in the Newington Parish of the Free Church has been discussed. His efforts not only in those parishes but also in the wider work of both those churches have been delineated. The next chapter will deal with the years from 1845 to 1870, during which Dr. Begg did his most notable work both within and without the Free Church.

---

1 Ibid., p. 4.
2 Ibid.

CHAPTER II

JAMES BEGG, D. D., 1843-1870

Dr. Begg's activity in social reform during this period may be discussed conveniently under two categories; the working classes and rural reforms. His efforts to uplift the working classes will be considered first.

THE SETTING

While a general assertion may overlook individual situations, it may be said that the working class movement in the first half of the nineteenth century was neither conscious nor organized. Workers were acutely aware of the degrading conditions under which they often worked and lived, but no large-scale efforts to correct those conditions were made by themselves, their employers, or outside agencies.[1] Strikes were occasionally reverted to, generally without significant results. General ameliorative activities had not yet reached the working classes. They had been directed mainly toward those at the lowest levels of society.

In the 1830's the Chartist Movement, even though it no longer resorted to violence from 1835 to 1840, failed to provide a nucleus for working class agitation. It was opposed by the

---

1 A most excellent article on the subject can be found in Blackwood's Magazine, November, 1841, entitled "The Social and Moral Conditions of the Manufacturing Districts in Scotland."

conservative operatives and the Church,[1] and many workers themselves were unsympathetic toward it. Owen's experiment at New Lanark, while attracting much attention, likewise failed to command much immediate public support or sympathy. In the political field, too, labour was powerless. The Reform Act of 1832 extended the franchise to the middle classes but not to the labourers. Locally, most town councils were self-elected and made up of the Conservative elements, a tradition overcome only slowly and reluctantly even after the Scottish Burgh Act of 1833.

In the 1840's, a few societies and individuals were becoming concerned over the plight of the workers. The Scottish Patriotic Society was set up in 1846 to alleviate their distress by improving dwellings, increasing sanitary regulations, and establishing local funds for assisting industrious workers under temporary difficulty.[2] In Edinburgh, as in other large towns, such organizations as

---

1 Indicative of the trend of thought was the thorough condemnation by the Free Church leaders, Dr. Begg among them, of the Chartism of the 1840's, which was spreading from England to Scotland. A less stern judgment was pronounced upon Christian Socialism, the criticism of a book, Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet ("associated by literary rumour with one of the most prominent names in a society which aims at promoting Christian Socialism"), being even favourable toward the social sympathies expressed but sharply critical of its anti-calvinistic theology. The Free Church Magazine, January, 1851.

2 Dr. Begg's efforts inspired the forming of the Society. It was supported by many landed proprietors and urban leaders, among them the journalist, George Troup, who had done much work in Glasgow similar to Dr. Begg's. The tone of the Society is indicated by Prince Albert being one of its patrons. The Industrial Magazine of the Scottish Patriotic Society (printed by the Society, March, 1847), Vol. I, No. 1. For the work of Troup see The Life of George Troup by G. E. Troup (Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace, 1881).

the House of Refuge and the Night Asylum for the Houseless were started to give temporary shelter to the deserving poor, one Edinburgh town councillor noting that "it was painful to witness poor people crowding beside porches and on the steps of houses for temporary refuge during the night, and this is no uncommon spectacle here."[1] By 1870, many changes had been made. Conditions under which the working classes lived and laboured had improved. The second Reform Bill in 1867 enabled them to take a more appropriate and effective role in the political and social life of the country. They were, in part at least, both organized and conscious of their power. Such progress was a result of at least two previous decades of sweat and toil by such men as Dr. Begg, whose lives were dedicated to the elevation of the working classes.

In the first five years of his Newington ministry, Dr. Begg was occupied mainly with helping to get the new Free Church solidly grounded.[2] The latter part of 1848 marks the beginning of his extensive social work. Also, it was the beginning of a movement in Edinburgh to improve the conditions of the working classes. By then, Dr. Begg had become intimately acquainted with the city, especially its older parts. Investigations of the wynds and closes off High Street led him to write a series of letters to The Witness

---

1 "Report of a Meeting of the Subscribers to the Night Asylum for the Houseless Poor of Edinburgh," The Witness, August 4, 1840.

2 Dr. Begg even made a trip to Canada in the winter of 1844-1845 to justify the position of the Free Church and gain support for it. On the same trip he journeyed south to the United States where he was invited to speak before the United States Senate.

in January and February of 1849 describing the overcrowding, insanitation, disease, poverty, crime, and drunkenness seen; conditions so distressing that he credited his pigs at Liberton "luxuriating in clean straw, and breathing the pure air of Heaven" as being "gentlemen in comparison."[1] As one sanitary measure, Dr. Begg proposed that the eastern half of the meadows be opened up free of charge as a bleaching green and place of healthful recreation for the poor and working classes.[2]

Queen's Park around Holyrood Palace had been closed earlier, preventing the washing and bleaching of clothes by people from the nearby congested areas. The Princes Street gardens, originally used for the same purpose, had been shut up as well. The lack of space for the drying and airing of clothes was certainly no incentive to cleanliness and led one doctor to lament that "we conceive it mockery to preach sanitary rules and recommendations to a man when their adoption is so difficult."[3] To make such an adoption easier was the motive of Dr. Begg's proposal to open up the Meadows. In February of 1849, a meeting was held in his Newington Church at which Dr. Begg urged the presentation of a memorial at the next town council meeting on the subject.[4] It was heartily

---

1 J. Begg, Pauperism and the Poor Laws, p. 23.

2 Conditions in the old town led Dr. Begg to note that "the poor in Edinburgh are amongst the most filthy in the world." J. Begg, How to Promote and Preserve the True Beauty of the City of Edinburgh (Johnston and Hunter, 1849).

3 R. Foulis, Old Houses in Edinburgh and Their Inhabitants (Johnston and Hunter, Edinburgh, 1852).

4 The Witness, February 21, 1849.

supported by the audience, made up mostly of working men. At the next town council meeting a delegation appeared with Dr. Begg at its head. The enthusiastic support given the memorial ("by far the largest petition which had been presented since the passing of the Reform Bill,")[1] led to the appointment of a committee of investigation. Opposition was not lacking. Lord Cockburn's letter to the Lord Provost[2] expressing their views ran into four editions when printed in pamphlet form, and evoked a pamphlet from Dr. Begg in defence of the movement.[3] By the end of the year, the objective was attained and the eastern meadows opened up. Later both the western part of the meadows and the Princes Street gardens were opened to the public as well.

In January of 1850, the movement to improve conditions was enlarged to include the whole country. Speaking in Dr. French's College Street Church, Edinburgh, where he was introduced as being "known to them all as a most zealous and able advocate of the rights and liberties of his country,"[4] Dr. Begg presented his eight-point charter and moved that a committee be formed to consider the advisability of forming a national reform association. A week later at a similar meeting, the Scottish Social Reform Association was organized. Dr. Begg and others hoped that it would become the

---

1 The Witness, March 3, 1849.

2 Lord Cockburn, Letter to the Lord Provost on the Best Ways of Spoiling the Beauty of Edinburgh (Edinburgh; Adam Black, 1849).

3 J. Begg, How to Promote and Preserve the True Beauty of Edinburgh.

4 The Witness, January 12, 1850.

center of organized philanthropic effort for the poor and working classes, a vision which was realized only in the early part of the fifties.

The eight points of Dr. Begg's charter were: (1) the improvement and increasing of Scottish education, (2) the suppression of drunkenness, (3) better dwellings for working people and the poor, (4) public wash-houses and bleaching greens, (5) reform of the land laws, (6) the simplification of land transference, (7) more rigid treatment of crime and pauperism and, (8) greater justice to Scotland in Parliament. The charter was a result of Dr. Begg's personal philosophy and the circumstances of the time. By then he was fully convinced that clergymen should take an active interest and part in social reforms.[1] Also by then he belived that social evils were traceable to both moral and physical causes and that both types of remedies were necessary.[2] In fact, at this time he was stressing the physical more than the moral causes.

While the negative features of social life may be

---

1 "He must be a hard-hearted minister who does not sympathize with the temporal sufferings and difficulties of his people at such a time as this, and he a very ignorant minister who knows not that it is his duty to do good to all men as he has opportunity, and that in the very temporal prosperity of his people, the absence of many obstacles in the way of his work, and their ability to aid in advancing the cause of God, are essentially involved." Pauperism and the Poor Laws, p. iv.

2 "Various opinions have prevailed in regard to the true origin of such evils, some tracing them exclusively to moral, and others to physical causes. The truth is that they spring from both, which plainly act and react on each other. Moral degradation leads to physical, and physical again plunges its unhappy victims into deeper moral debasement, and both causes working together soon destroy the very foundations of the social fabric." Ibid., p. iii.

over-emphasized, it is true to say that conditions among the poor and working classes had little to commend them. Pauperism and poverty were widespread, assessments for the poor increasing, drunkenness prevalent,[1] crime, especially among juveniles, on the rise,[2] and class consciousness greater than before. Such evils moved Dr. Begg deeply. His practicability saved him from over-sentimentalism, however. It led to his emphasis upon the need for dealing with causes, not results, as had been done by many philanthropists. His work became centred upon the philosophy of "self-help" and his activity directed toward the removal of obstacles and the promotion of means enabling the working classes to elevate themselves through their own efforts.

The inter-relationship of social problems makes any discussion of them individually difficult. Yet, at times it may be most expedient to do so. Dr. Begg's activity amongst the working classes may be divided into several areas--Pauperism, Housing, National Education, the Early Closing and Saturday Half-Holiday Movements, and the Freehold agitation of the 1840's.

---

1 A Select Parliamentary Committee in 1834 reported that "the vice of intoxication has been for some years past on the decline in the higher and middle ranks of society, but has increased within the same period among the labouring classes, and exists at present to a very great extent in the population of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and in the seaport and manufacturing towns, as well as in agricultural districts, including in its victims men, women, and even children." Report of a Select Committee to Inquire into the Extent, Causes and Consequences, of the Vice of Intoxication among the Labouring Classes of the United Kingdom, August 5, 1834, p. iii.

2 See Report from the Select Committee on Criminal and Destitute Juveniles. Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed. 24 June, 1852.

PAUPERISM

The voluntary care of the poor by the Church had worked tolerably well until 1800. By then, changes wrought by the Industrial Revolution were exposing the limitations of such a method. The most obvious change was the rise of a large labouring class in manufacturing areas, subject to the uncertainties of an industrial economy, and for which no provision was made during periods of economic distress. As the nineteenth century progressed, such distress was by no means unfamiliar;[1] the inadequacy of voluntary methods of relief became increasingly obvious, and the demand for a state poor law arose. In April of 1840, Dr. Alison's pamphlet and an association inquiring into pauperism[2] became the focal points for those advocating state relief. They were opposed by the majority of landed proprietors[3] and churchmen such as Dr. Begg, whose views toward compulsory assessments have already been indicated. The Disruption in 1843 and the subsequent breakdown of parochial

---

1 For an example in Edinburgh see Report of the Committee appointed by the Commissioners of the Police to inquire into the Practicability of Suppressing the Practice of Common Begging, and Relieving the Industrious and Destitute Poor (Alex Laurie and Company, 1812).

2 See Report of An Association for Obtaining an Official Inquiry into The Pauperism of Scotland (Edinburgh; Ballantyne and Hughes, 1840).

3 Cockburn in his memorials notes that the meeting at which the Association was formed evoked another meeting in the same month, chiefly of lairds who resolved that "our system was perfect," Journal of Henry Cockburn, Vol. I (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas), p. 258.

machinery made any large-scale, church-supported program impossible, and in 1845 the Poor Law Act was passed.

The Church's opposition in the 1840's was a result mainly of her belief in the moral solution as the only real one for existing social problems. Reflecting such an outlook was the statement in the report by the 1839 General Assembly's Committee on the Management of the Poor in Scotland that "the religious and moral education of the poor should be the main object of the assistance given them by the higher ranks, and that if that object be duly accomplished, the poor are most benefited by being left to themselves, when their own prudence and foresight, strengthened by the religious and moral feeling which has been inculcated in them, will form the best security against the evils of poverty."[1]

Such an assumption was the basis for at least two decades of the work of the General Assembly's Home Mission and Church Extension Committee, started by the Free Church in 1846. Though Dr. Begg did not completely agree with such an assumption, he was one of the few who supported the Committee. Actually, Foreign Missions was much more in the spotlight at the time, and Dr. Begg felt that more emphasis was needed on the conversion of the "heathens at home."[2] He was

---

1 An almost opposite view was slowly arising at the time and was brought to a head by Dr. Alison's pamphlet in 1840. Those who subscribed to his view based their stand upon the fact of recurrent periods of economic distress affecting the masses of people and upon the negligence of heritors and Kirk-Sessions in applying the old system of relief.

2 J. Begg, Drunkenness and Pauperism, p. 10.

the convener of the Home Mission Committee in 1847, when a survey of the work then being done and left undone was made and presented to the 1848 Assembly. In the 1850's, under the urging of Dr. Begg and others,[1] the Church took up the challenge of heathenism and irreligion at home and the "Golden Period of Home Missions"[2] began.

Dr. Begg's contribution to the work of Home Missions, other than his continuous efforts to gain greater popular support for it, was his success in inducing the Church to focus its energies upon the social as well as the spiritual rehabilitation of those they were seeking to reclaim. Throughout the later 1840's and the early 1850's, the spiritual supervision of the lapsed masses was almost the sole objective of the "Movement in the Wynds,"[3] despite the reprimand given in 1853 by Lord Palmerston as Home Secretary who, when asked by the Church to appoint a national fast day because of the cholera epidemic, replied that it had better turn its attention to "those gaseous exhalations which proceed from overcrowded human beings or from decomposing substances in the closes."[4] In 1857, Dr. Roxburgh, who was much influenced by Dr. Begg, became convener of the Home Missions Committee and a new spirit was breathed throughout its work. His

---

1 A number of overtures were sent in to the General Assembly on the matter in 1849 and 1850, such as the one proposed by Dr. Begg at an Edinburgh presbytery meeting on "The State of the Free Church in the Poorer Districts of Large Cities." Minutes of the Presbytery as reported in The Witness, January 17, 1849.

2 W. G. Blaikie, After Fifty Years (Thomas Nelson and Sons, Edinburgh, 1893), p. 86.

3 N. Walker, Chapters from the History of the Free Church of Scotland (Oliphant, Anderson, and Ferrier, Edinburgh, 1895), p. 86.

4 Ashley, Life of Palmerston, Vol. II, p. 265.

statement in the 1860 Assembly that "Home Mission effort and social reform must go hand in hand" reflected the sentiment of a number of others and indicated that Dr. Begg's insistence upon the Church's social ministry was beginning to bear fruit.[1]

Dr. Begg's continuous efforts from 1845 to 1870 to awaken the Edinburgh public to the degrading conditions of the old town gradually brought results. Stirred by a series of fatal cholera epidemics in the 1830's and 1840's, a combined effort to improve conditions was undertaken in the late 1840's by the Parish Boards, the Medical Commissioner, Police Commissioners, and the Town Council. The whitewashing of closes and wynds, the cleaning out of accumulated filth and trash from the inner areas, the compelling of inhabitants to clean their houses, the setting up of a system of inspection, and the putting in of an extensive drainage system were measures used.[2] Dr. Begg's specific contribution was the drive to open up several parks already mentioned.

Activity languished somewhat in the later fifties but was stirred again by the collapse of a house in High Street in 1862, killing thirty-five people. One result was a deputation of public-spirited citizens to the Town Council, Dr. Begg being one of them, under whose insistence an Officer of Health, Dr. Littlejohn, was appointed for the city. His report in 1865 aroused much attention. The report,

---

1 The contents of numerous pamphlets of the period are interesting and indicate the trend: Old Houses in Edinburgh and Their Inhabitants, 1852; How to Relieve the Poor of Edinburgh, 1867; The Lapsed and Suggestions as to the Best Means of Relieving Them, 1871.

2 The Witness, August 27, 1853.

along with widespread unemployment in 1867, led the city to undertake a second scheme of sanitary improvement in 1867[1] whose main features were the tearing down of a number of houses in the old town "so densely inhabitated as to be highly injurious to the health of the inhabitants as well as to their moral welfare," and the building of new streets and the widening of old ones.[2]

Interest in the condition of the old town continued unabated. In March of 1868, at a public meeting held to consider "the state of the poorer classes in Edinburgh," Dr. Begg seconded Sir James Simpson's resolution advocating a plan of systematic visitation of the poor by voluntary agents. As a result, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor was formed.[3] In April of the same year, following a meeting in the Council Chambers called by the Lord Provost, two committees were appointed to investigate the state of pauperism in Edinburgh. Dr. Begg was a member of one of the committees. After a period of investigation, an extensive one hundred and twenty page report dealing with the extent, cause, and remedies of the problem was handed in by the Committee and used later as a guide by civic officials.[4]

---

1 The scheme indicated two things--that there was a close correlation between unemployment and epidemics (see T. Ferguson, The Dawn of Scottish Social Welfare, p. 8ff), and that the emphasis among many even yet was not at getting at the causes of the problem.

2 An Act for the Improvement of the City of Edinburgh (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1867).

3 An educational program was embarked upon and a factory set up in which firewood making and waste paper sorting were the two main activities. J. Roxburgh, The Edinburgh Philanthropic Red Book (Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace, 1901).

4 Report on the State and Conditions of the Lower Classes of

In one sense what was a fitting climax to Dr. Begg's activities in this field came in 1869 when he was called before a Select House of Commons Committee on Pauperism.[1] The value of his evidence was noted thus by one paper: "Dr. Begg's evidence before the Poor-Law Committee is certainly the most valuable--we had almost said the only valuable--evidence which the Committee has yet got."[2] The enlightening of the public mind and the rousing of civic authorities were not the only results of Dr. Begg's activities on the local scene in this period. His efforts helped to make the Church aware of existing social problems and, further, what is often overlooked--they made many secularists and sceptics realize that the Church was not isolated from the world, as was often charged, but was deeply concerned with the temporal well-being of its people. The presence of Dr. Begg and other ministers on civic committees was living evidence of that fact.

The causes of pauperism given by Dr. Begg may be divided into two categories--the personal and the circumstantial--although the line of demarcation is often blurred. The absence in individuals of moral standards, will power, and physical stamina, and the lack of such virtues as thrift, self reliance, initiative, and independence were all causes of poverty. Whether cause or result remains doubtful

---

1 Edinburgh and of Their Dwellings, Neighbourhoods, and Families (Edinburgh: Colston and Son, 1868).

1 Report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons on the Poor Law of Scotland (London, H. M. Stationery Office, 1869). For Dr. Begg's evidence see pp. 216-235.

2 Daily Review, June 11, 1869.

at times. Dr. Begg belived that the physical state of the poorer districts of large cities; the ugliness, disease, overcrowding, the innumerable whisky shops, and the lack of education contributed greatly to pauperism on the local level; while on a broader scale the lack of political power by the masses, the locking up of the land by the laws of entail, primogeniture, and conveyance, and the recurrent trade depressions were major causes.

To Dr. Begg the last was probably the most important yet most insoluble cause. As for a remedy, private philanthropy might care for the occasional poor, sick, or out of work, but not for the masses of unemployed. This became obvious in Edinburgh during the first half of the century. A Committee for the Relief of the Labouring Classes was set up in 1815 and functioned fairly effectively until the crisis of the postwar years had passed.[1] In the early forties, when economic crises arose once more, the Town Council set afoot a scheme of public works providing employment for a fair number of labourers.[2] It lasted for only two years, 1842 and 1843, due to a shortage of funds and the reluctance of the Town Council--much to the disappointment of the working classes.[3] The existence of a large amount of improvable land

---

1 See Reports of the Committee for the Relief of the Labouring Classes in the City and Suburbs of Edinburgh (Alex Smellie, 1816, 1817).

2 The Witness, January 3, 1844.

3 Unemployment in Edinburgh in the winter of 1842 led to the formation of a voluntary committee by the Lord Provost. Funds were collected and used to employ men on such projects as improving the grounds of the charity work houses and the meadows. The same was done in 1843. In January of 1844, however, the Town Council refused to act upon a petition from a group of unemployed workers to relieve their distress, saying it "could not do consistently what it had done the last two years." The Witness, January 3, 1844.

led Dr. Begg to suggest that its reclamation would increase the national wealth and greatly alleviate the poverty and unemployment.[1] The practicability of such a scheme was the fact that the country as a whole was not self-sufficient, but an importer of much of its food. The balance between agriculture and industry had been destroyed by an over-emphasis upon the latter, thus leaving the country's economy in an uncertain and difficult state, especially in time of war.

Beginning in 1849, Dr. Begg propagandized a great deal on the subject, pointing out the successes of Dr. Duncan and others.[2] The proposals were supported enthusiastically by the influential North British Agriculturalist, which declared of unemployment that "benevolence has proved too weak for the monstrous evil," and so backed such bold and universally applicable proposals as Dr. Begg's.[3] Called "visionary and utopian," Dr. Begg hoped, nevertheless, that his scheme would be taken up by at least two groups with the necessary capital; the large estate owners, and the wealthy merchants and mill owners engendered by the Industrial Revolution. He stressed that it was not only their duty but to their advantage to do so. The improved land would yield higher rents. A new class of farmers and proprietors would arise, drawn from the ranks of the unemployed.

---

1 Dr. Begg borrowed the idea from Holland, where he had gone with a group to investigate pauper colonies.

2 The glebe improvement work of Dr. Duncan of Ruthwell, founder of the Penny Savings Banks, attracted wide attention and served as an example of what could be done in reclaiming wet, unproductive areas of land. J. Begg, Pauperism and the Poor Laws, p. 38.

3 The North British Agriculturalist, January 5, 1850.

Through loans they would buy such land at a price profitable to the investors and produce the country's much needed food. To Dr. Begg such projects were a means also of bringing forth eventually a much needed middle class in rural areas.

In the 1850's, wide consideration was given to such land reclamation projects. There were several reasons; the increasing congestion and insanitation of large cities, the extensive poverty, the increasing cost of caring for the poor, the emigration occurring, and the need to produce more food at home. A number of schemes were undertaken successfully--not on a large scale, however. The law of entail made land hard to acquire. Also, in the 1860's, general conditions improved and there was a reluctance to invest money in land, industrial projects seeming to offer more sound and profitable sources of investment.

The curbing of the excessive intemperance among the lower classes in this period was a second remedy of pauperism enthusiastically supported by Dr. Begg. He opposed drunkenness on both moral and practical grounds. Not only did it degrade character, debase the emotions, and paralyze the intellect, but it discouraged thrift and frugality and so prevented the labourer from getting ahead. A number of causes were given, the most outstanding being the abundance of whisky shops, "thus giving a large class in the community a deep interest in promoting drunkenness,"[1] the drinking customs of society,

---

[1] J. Begg, Drunkenness and Pauperism, p. 12.

the lack of proper education, especially of those "who are to be the wives of tradesmen,"[1] the absence of inducements to progress, the "filthy and pestilential houses" of many working people, the lack of public and private gardens for the people, the almost universal custom of paying wages on Saturday,[2] the absence of "sources of rational recreation and enjoyment," and the great gulf "between the two extremes of society."[3]

The Teetotal Movement of the 1830's was the first united effort against intemperance. Its conservatism and lack of aggressiveness made it only partly successful. It was succeeded by a more positive and aggressive movement which had as its focal point the Scottish Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness, formed at Edinburgh in 1850.[4] Dr. Begg was instrumental in getting that Association started. Under its auspices he sent queries to all the Poor Law Boards in Scotland to ascertain the relationship between pauperism and drunkenness. The results, which indicated a close relationship, were tabulated and published in his pamphlet, Drunkenness and Pauperism, and did much to call public attention to the problem. In the next two

---

1 Dr. Begg was one of the first to advocate what are now called Schools of Domestic Science. He maintained that an ill-managed home made a dissatisfied husband, whose retreat to the public house soon led him and his family to a state of poverty. Ibid., p. 16.

2 Dr. Begg advocated that they be paid by Friday at the latest and preferably earlier in the week to prevent Saturday night debaucheries and non-church-going on Sundays.

3 Begg, op. cit., p. 15.

4 Formed at a public meeting in the Music Hall in May, 1850. Its membership included many influential church-men and public figures. Two main objectives were a law to regulate the system of licensing and the shutting up of spirit shops on Sundays.

years the Association played a prominent part in moulding public opinion enough to have the Forbes-MacKenzie Act passed in 1853.

In the Free Church a Temperance Committee, of which Dr. Begg was a charter member, was appointed by the General Assembly in 1847. It was handicapped by a lack of funds and support in its first three years of activity,[1] but soon thereafter became a powerful organ of the Free Church. In 1849, both a Free Church Temperance Society and a Free Church Abstinence Society were formed with Dr. Begg and Thomas Guthrie as leaders of the latter. Both the Committee and the Societies heartily supported the movement in favour of the Forbes-MacKenzie Act. Dr. Begg was busy in the General Assembly as well. In 1850, he obtained its official support of the Association for the Suppression of Drunkenness despite the opposition of a number of General Assembly members who did not believe that the Church should support such secular organizations.[2] A year later he persuaded the General Assembly to commend the Lord Provost of Edinburgh for his temperance efforts as a magistrate. Continuing his efforts there Dr. Begg, in 1870, was instrumental in inducing the Assembly to set aside one Sunday in December of each year as a Temperance Sunday,[3] and, in 1863, his strong speech supporting a motion that Parliament be petitioned to set up a Royal Commission of Investigation led to the approval of the motion by the General Assembly.

---

1 Dr. MacFarlane, the convener, resigned in 1850 because of the difficulty experienced in getting committee members together for meetings.

2 Debates and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland (1850), p. 252.

3 Ibid., 1870, p. 295.

The temperance movement beginning in the 1830's rose out of the increasingly apparent connection between squalor and drink among the poorer people in the cities of Scotland. Dr. Begg's major contribution came in his making this relationship apparent to and admitted by both those within and without the Church. His speeches and writings in the 1840's, 1850's, and 1860's did much to arouse the public to the magnitude and urgency of the problem of intemperance and the need for remedial measures. Dr. Begg was on the Temperance Committee until 1879. By then a strong temperance movement had been organized on a countrywide level. The Free Church with her General Assembly and many local temperance committees was a part of it, along with such organizations as the Scottish Temperance League, the United Kingdom Alliance, and the Good Templars. By 1880, too, a change of attitudes had been effected among several groups. Within the Church itself, drinking was looked upon quite dubiously.[1] The promiscuous use of alcohol as a medicine by the medical profession no longer prevailed, and there had been a change in favour of temperance by the upper, middle, and the better working classes. To Dr. Begg must go a great deal of the credit for the last. Despite all the temperance activity going on, the battle was not won. The drink interests were too strongly entrenched, and the drink habit continued on through the century. The evaluation of the Free Church's efforts in the field by Mr. Muir of Blairgowrie, a determined fighter and convener of the Free Church's Temperance Committee in the 1890's,

---

1 For example, such a custom as drinking at ordination dinners was generally discarded at this time.

was probably accurate when he told the General Assembly in 1899 that, although the Free Church had not defeated the drink interests, she had at least limited their activity and restricted intemperance to the degree that it had been at the time. She had at least stemmed, if not stopped, the tide.

HOUSING

The laying, on October 23, 1861, at Stockbridge, Edinburgh, by Dr. Begg of the foundation stone of the first house to be erected by the Edinburgh Cooperative Building Society which he founded was both a climax and a prelude to his work in the field of housing. It marked twenty years of persistent propaganda and work on his part and was followed by twenty-two more.

Two factors stimulated Dr. Begg's efforts. The first was his emphasis upon the sanctity of the family as both a divine institution and the basic unit of society; the second was the widespread need for decent houses, especially among the lower classes. Men could not follow the biblical injunction to "enter into thy closet to pray," if they had no closet to enter. The lack of a closet was a real one indeed to many. The insertion in the 1861 census for Scotland of a column on house accommodation, the credit for such being almost wholly Dr. Begg's, showed that of the 666,786 houses in Scotland, there were 7,964 without even one window, and that there were 226,723 one-roomed and 246,601 two-roomed houses, a condition which led Dr. Begg to write that "nearly one-third of the entire population

are living in houses in which neither the comforts nor decencies of life can be secured, and which are thus totally unfit for human habitation."[1] A further breakdown showed that of the one-roomed houses, nearly one-fifth had from six to sixteen persons residing in each. The census results were eagerly seized upon by a number of interested persons and organizations, the resulting publicity doing much to awaken public opinion.

The results in regard to Edinburgh were no more inspiring, even though she was ahead of Glasgow.[2] It was found that 121 families lived in single rooms, each without a window; while 13,209 families, making up over 50,000 people, lived in houses of only one apartment each. Further, of the 13,209 one-roomed houses, 1,530 had from six to fifteen residing in each. To Dr. Begg such information was common knowledge, but to the general public it was a stark and ugly revelation.[3] His personal investigations mentioned earlier had led him up "many a dark staircase, redolent of damp and pestilential vapour" and into rooms where he was "nearly knocked down by the horrid vapour by which we were assailed, and were glad to get a bundle of rags torn out of the broken window, to secure a mouthful of fresh air."[4]

As early as 1850, Dr. Begg was being commended for his

---

1 J. Begg, Happy Homes for Working Men and How to Get Them, p. 65.

2 The Scottish Guardian of February 10, 1852, mentions a case in Glasgow where a grandfather and grandmother, two married daughters with their husbands, four children, a female lodger and her neice were found living together in an ordinary sized kitchen with a small closet attached.

3 G. D. Henderson, D.D., D.Litt., described the situation well in his book, Heritage, A Study of the Disruption (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, Ltd., 1943), p. 47 ff.

4 J. Begg, Pauperism and the Poor Laws, p. 22.

EX BIBL UNIV EDINBURGEN

activity in rousing the concern "which the present situation of the working classes as regards their dwelling houses is awakening in the minds of the upper and middle ranks of society, and the community in general," and exposing "to the light of day the miserable conditions and increasing wretchedness of the large masses of the population, who are huddled together in dens of filth."[1] Actually such concern found only limited scope. A small number of houses in the Lawnmarket and the Low Calton at George IV Bridge had been condemned and torn down by the Town Council.[2] A sufficient number of new houses had not been built for the ejected inhabitants, however. A few philanthropically minded individuals had made an attempt. A smaller number of business men had speculated unsuccessfully in the field as well, a condition which led Dr. Begg to reject both the capitalist and benevolent approaches and declare that only when "working men take it in their own hands and endeavour to build or buy their own houses" would the problem be solved.[3]

The housing movement in Edinburgh in the 1850's and 1860's follows a general countrywide pattern. The initial stage was one of education and limited response. In March of 1850, Dr. Begg, under the auspices of the Scottish Social Reform Association, delivered a lecture which was published and widely distributed on the subject,[4] in which he emphasized the advantages of home ownership and showed

---

1 The Witness, January 2, 1850.
2 D. Home, Social Reforms Needed in Scotland, p. 87.
3 J. Begg, Happy Homes for Working Men and How to Get Them, p. 18.
4 J. Begg, How Every Man May Become His Own Landlord (Edinburgh: Johnston and Hunter, 1831).

how it might be attained through building and investment companies. Two of his earlier disciples were the Reverend J. Mackenzie of North Leith and Reverend W. G. Blaikie of the Pilrig Free Church. The former started an "Industry Home Society" of working men who undertook a scheme of building their own houses in North Leith along a street appropriately called "Industry Lane." In its first year of life half an acre of land was obtained and eight self-contained houses built.[1] The Reverend W. G. Blaikie was responsible for the formation of the Pilrig Model Buildings Association in 1861, which had, by 1880, constructed sixty-two dwellings costing £7,000.

During the 1850's, Dr. Begg addressed a number of meetings and wrote extensively on the subject of home building.[2] Of his four speeches in 1858, 1859, 1863, and 1874 to the influential Social Science Association,[3] the first was the most effective. At its close

---

1 The Witness, July 27, 1850.

2 Happy Homes for Working Men and How to Get Them was the most outstanding book.

3 An association founded in 1857 to coordinate all investigations in social reforms in Britain. It held yearly meetings in the major cities of the country, the first one in Birmingham in 1857. The Right Honorable Lord Brougham was its president from its beginning until 1865. Its membership included many top ranking people in all professions in Britain. Among its foreign corresponding members were many notables from most of the European countries and the U.S.A. It was instrumental in focusing public attention and bringing legal action to bear on many social problems of the day. It had much influence as an objective, factual, educational body, carrying on its work with a scientific spirit. It undoubtedly was one of the influences which led to the making of social studies a separate scholastic science, beginning in the 1900's. Such men as Professor Muirhead, Simon S. Laurie, Sheriff Hallard, Dr. Littlejohn, and Professor MacDougall were officers of the Edinburgh branch, and Dr. Begg himself was on the Edinburgh Committee of the Association.

Sir James Stephens, Chairman of the Economy Department, expressed his "astonishment at the statements which it contained and proposed it be sent to some public body in Scotland."[1] It was further moved and seconded that Parliament be petitioned to act. Finally, an English clergyman offered to begin a subscription to have copies sent to every member of Parliament.

Dr. Begg's emphasis was upon building as contrasted to investment companies. By 1850, a fair number of the latter already were in operation. The first, according to Dr. Begg, was started in Lanarkshire in 1820; the second by a bookseller in Glasgow in 1845; and in the next five years they spread rapidly.[2] They were popular among the working classes, as private companies and banks were reluctant to lend money to workers for house construction. The first one in the old town of Edinburgh was set up in 1846 and, by 1850, four had been formed, as well as one in Leith and one in the new town. No building societies existed until 1861, however. In that year, a number of workmen, unemployed because of a dispute over working hours,[3] banded together and with Dr. Begg's help formed the Edinburgh Cooperative Building Society.[4] A number of factors made the time ripe for

---

1 Proceedings of the Association, 1858, p. 621.
2 J. Begg, Happy Homes for Working Men and How to Get Them, p. 115.
3 One of a number of such disputes in a general attempt to reduce working hours. See T. Johnston, A History of the Working Classes in Scotland, p. 302 ff.
4 It is interesting to note that Mr. George Lorimer, who was secretary of the Society, was a Chartist, a party which found no favour with Dr. Begg in his Paisley ministry. Better dwellings, national education, the franchise, and land reform were advocated by them in the 1850's.

such an occurrence. The influence of earlier societies in England had permeated northward. From 1855 to 1858 an expert from Birmingham, Mr. James Taylor, visited Scotland twice and, accompanied by Dr. Begg and Provost McLaren, spoke on behalf of the movement in nearly all the large cities in Scotland. In 1860, William Chambers, later Lord Provost of Edinburgh, visited Birmingham and, upon his return, campaigned enthusiastically for the cause. Such personal activities were supplemented by other factors. An extremely competitive market in houses, due to the larger number of investment companies, had gradually arisen. In 1860, the idea of cooperative efforts, long advocated by Dr. Begg,[1] "took strong hold of the working classes" and, as a climax, the tenement disaster in 1861 "struck a chord in the hearts of the working classes, convincing them that their lives were no longer safe in such wretched and rickety tenements as they were found to occupy."[2]

Despite the difficulty of obtaining land for sites, the Society progressed rapidly. One hundred and ninty-nine houses, at a cost of £42,000 and accommodating over one thousand people, were built by 1865. Nine hundred and nineteen houses valued at £155,900 had been built by 1872. Their success stimulated other groups in Aberdeen, Hawick, Port-Glasgow, Stirling, and Dundee, and even begot a similar society in Denmark. In Edinburgh, one society named a block of houses after Dr. Begg.[3] Less tangible but as real was the

---

1 J. Begg, "Cooperation as a Means of Securing Houses for Working Men." Speech delivered before the Social Science Association, 1863, p. 750.

2 J. Begg, Happy Homes for Working Men and How to Get Them, p. 23.

3 Dr. Begg's Buildings, Abbeyhill.

happiness of working men whose life-long toil had been secured at last in a home for their families. The building of houses in the outer areas of Edinburgh accelerated the program of street widening and house demolishing started in the sixties by the city magistrates. It led one minister to state that "our common Christianity is no longer scandalised by a state of things more compatible with barbarity and heathenism than Christianity and civilization."[1] The statement, made by a witness to a House of Commons committee, that such societies had contributed greatly toward "encouraging provident habits, diminishing drunkenness, and inducing the working classes to invest their earnings, and behave better" was not an exaggeration.

Dr. Begg had foreseen and prophesied such results much earlier. The helping of the mass of working people to realize them was a basic motive of his life. Throughout the forties and fifties, he had pointed out that good houses were an antidote to the public house. If a man could contemplate home ownership, he would much more likely save the money otherwise spent on drink. Particularly important was the moral value and elevating influence of having one's own cottage. Such attitudes as frugality, integrity, independence, good citizenship, a diffusion of comfort, and a decrease in crime, pauperism, and disease would result.[2] Further, home ownership by the working classes would help to bridge the gulf between the lower and

---

1 John Pirie, The Lapsed, with Suggestions as to the Best Means of Raising Them, p. 13.

2 "The possessory feeling within certain limits is a power for good; while degrading social arrangements are always the parents of vice." J. Begg, op. cit., p. 60.

upper groups and decrease class feeling and strife, a fact of major importance to Dr. Begg. He felt that one result of the industrial system, with its highly congested urban areas, was the breakdown of family life. Resigned to the inevitability of that economy, he believed that its debasing features might be recompensed somewhat by a suburban movement and a large-scale housing program which would safeguard family life, promote religion and ensure a stable society.

The campaign for better houses was carried on also in the Courts of the Church. In an 1858 meeting of the Edinburgh Presbytery, Dr. Begg was successful in getting through an overture on the subject, which he heartily supported in the General Assembly of that year. As a result, a Committee on the Housing of the Working Classes was appointed, with Dr. Begg as its Convener. For a long time the state of the dwellings had occupied the attention of city missionaries and evangelists--visiting in "wretched hovels in which so many drag out a joyless and reckless existence"[1]--and they heartily supported the Committee's efforts.

In the eight years of its life the Committee presented the Church with an overwhelming mass of evidence on the notorious housing conditions of the multitudes they were seeking to reclaim, demonstrating without a doubt the Church's need for supporting practical as well as spiritual efforts. In fact, these were the two major contributions of Dr. Begg and the Committee: the clear and constructive

---

1 Report of the Edinburgh City Mission, 1861.

presentation of the problem, and the persuading of the Church to adopt a more positive attitude toward social reforms. In 1859 a number of Synod and Presbyterial committees were set up to investigate local conditions and report. In 1860 the Assembly was induced to support Dr. Begg's census effort and petition Parliament, Dr. Roxburgh's commendation of Dr. Begg's work and his statement that "Home Mission efforts and Social Reform must now go hand in hand" reflecting the more progressive thought of the Assembly.[1] Two years later, Dr. Begg's suggestion that all ministers direct their special attention to the problem, that masters who were church members be admonished to give greater attention to their servants' comforts and that a Parliamentary Commission be set up to investigate housing conditions were all accepted and passed by the Assembly. Such incidents indicated the change being wrought in the Church's attitude toward her own mission, the overcoming of the indifference of "comfortable and refined professing Christians" and the dispelling of the notion that the "Church has nothing to do with such matters" having been fairly well accomplished by 1864.[2]

Model Lodging Houses. Dr. Begg had included in his earlier investigations a number of the poorest lodging houses in the Old Town. Subsequently, in letters and speeches, he exposed their wretched and insanitary conditions and their demoralizing influence upon the

---

1 Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1860, p. 71.
2 Housing Report, 1864, p. 5.

poor and working classes. These were the two grounds of his opposition and much could be found to substantiate his views. Numerous investigations by medical commissioners in Edinburgh and elsewhere had confirmed Dr. Begg's assertion that the lodging houses were the source of the epidemics characteristic of the early 1800's. The dirt, overcrowding, and insanitation could not help but make them such.[1] The morals of the occupants were no better. In Edinburgh the houses were described as being dens for theives, beggars, criminals, and prostitutes.

In Edinburgh the publicity given the situation by Dr. Begg and others resulted in a system of control and supervision of the lodging houses by civic authorities.[2] A Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh Committee was appointed to consider means of improving the condition of the disease-ridden lodging houses. Dr. Begg's contribution came in awakening the Church and the public to the immorality which resulted from those conditions. As one solution, the Edinburgh Association for Improving the Lodging Houses of the Working Classes was set up.[3] By 1850, it had opened three houses, two for men and one for women and married people. The small charge, less than three-pence per night, combined with the cleanliness, comfort, and social facilities

---

1 This aspect of the movement is discussed in T. Ferguson, The Dawn of Scottish Social Welfare, pp. 60-63.

2 This has been discussed previously on pp. 41 and 42.

3 An association started in Edinburgh in 1841 by "some influential clergymen and gentlemen of this city " (Dr. Begg was one of them), following investigations exposing the wretched and unwholesome conditions of the lower lodging houses in the old town, and the demoralizing influence they had upon the poor and working classes, especially workers coming to the new and strange environment of Edinburgh from the surrounding rural areas. The object was to "establish and encourage lodging-houses, which being conducted on right principles, should counteract the great evils, moral and

made them immensely popular among honest working men temporarily out of work or traveling in search of employment. In 1851, over eighty thousand nightly accommodations were made in the three houses.[1]

Dr. Begg's interest in the Association prompted him to give a speech at its annual meeting in 1853, in which he noted the improvements already made in lodging houses in the city. Much remained to be done, however. At the Association's request, he moved a resolution that the Association petition the city magistrates either to give them financial aid or to build lodging houses themselves. The motion was passed and the petition presented. The result was a number of grants by the City Council enabling the Association to open other houses. In the years after 1860, both the physical state of the lodging houses and the moral level of the occupants were gradually raised due to the continued efforts of such men as Dr. Begg.

NATIONAL EDUCATION

Dr. Begg heartily supported the program started by Dr. Chalmers in 1844 to erect five hundred schools under the Free Church. The ejection of over four hundred teachers from the Established Church because of their Free Church connections and the pressing

---

physical, of the existing system, and serve as models for imitation." Its first house was opened in the West-Port in 1844 and a second one in the Cowgate in 1847. Both sexes were housed. In 1849 a third house was being started, part of it for single women and part for married persons. <u>Fourth Report of the Edinburgh Association for Improving the Lodging-Houses of the Working Classes</u> (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable, 1849).

1 <u>Ibid</u>.

need for more educational facilities throughout the land had made such a program necessary. The goal was more than realized. By 1851, seven hundred and twelve schools had been set up. Their support after 1847 came partly from the government and, while for a time it seemed that there may have been duplication in some localities, the demand soon absorbed all existing facilities. Dr. Begg's contribution in this field was his leadership in the promoting of a national system of education.[1] He and Hugh Miller are described by one historian as "voices crying in the wilderness for such a scheme."[2] Dr. Begg had always put much faith in education as a means of social advancement and self-elevation,[3] and he wanted to see its benefits made available to all. In declaring that "no child was to grow up without receiving the elements of a common education," he had in mind the congested urban areas and poor rural districts, where ignorance and vice were most prevelant.[4] Dr. Begg felt that only a national system, with all the funds it would have at its disposal, combined with an improvement in working and living conditions could raise the social and moral standards of the working classes in such areas, and enable the residents to contribute more effectively to the nation as a whole.

Dr. Begg had supported the Free Church Scheme in the 1840's. Closer acquaintance with social problems in the 1850's led him, however,

---

1 An action which evoked praise for Dr. Begg, for once, from The Scotsman, May 6, 1850.

2 J. R. Fleming, A History of the Church of Scotland, 1843-1875.

3 J. Begg, National Education for Scotland Practically Considered, 1850, p. 4 ff.

4 Transactions of The Social Science Association, 1858, p. 282.

to declare that the Church-supported systems, handicapped by the lack of funds, sectarian rivalry, and local outlook could not meet the urgent need for a universal and more intensive educational system. Such views did not meet with unanimous approval at the time. A motion made by Dr. Begg in the 1850 General Assembly favouring a national system received only sixteen affirmative votes. Dr. Candlish and his followers offered the most opposition. Consistent propaganda and the financial difficulties of the Church's Educational Committee led to a more favourable reception later. Outside of the Church, Dr. Begg was busy as well. At a crowded public meeting in April, 1850, in the Music Hall at Edinburgh, James Crawford, Sheriff of Perthshire, moved that the National Education Association of Scotland be formed. The motion was seconded by Dr. Begg and passed enthusiastically by the assembly. The Association became the focus of sentiment favouring a national system of education. Its membership consisted of men from various denominations and civic groups, including Lord Brougham and Dr. Thomas Guthrie, who were both ardent supporters. Dr. Begg was a member of the Association's Edinburgh Council, and his pamphlet, National Education for Scotland Practically Considered, became almost a bylaw of the organization. The Association was instrumental in arousing public opinion in favour of a national scheme, and its wide influence was one of the factors responsible for the passage of the 1872 Education Act.

By 1860, the majority of Free Church opinion, in contrast to that of the Established Church, had finally favoured a national scheme of education. The problem defying solution for the next

twelve years was the teaching of religion in the schools. Dr. Begg believed firmly that the teaching of the Bible and Shorter Catechism should be continued. He stoutly reprimanded Professor Pillans at the 1857 Social Science Association meeting in Birmingham, saying that "the practice in question had been the chief means, under God, of elevating and consolidating the Scottish character into that godliness which conduces as much to the worldly prosperity of the people as their heavenly; and that especially the Scottish custom of reading Proverbs much in the schools had been the source of the national shrewdness which characterizes the people."[1] On the matter, Dr. Begg advocated a system of "use and wont," believing that local boards would be a sufficient guarantee of religious education. That Dr. Begg's views were well grounded was indicated by the findings and recommendations of a Royal Commission set up in 1864, before which Dr. Begg testified.[2] The managing of education by popularly elected boards, the uniform standardization of knowledge, the adoption of "use and wont," were some of its recommendations included in the Education Act of 1872, which led to the taking over of all the schools in the country, except the Roman Catholic ones, and the setting up of a state-controlled education system.

In the field of education, the main factors were the low educational level of the working classes which contributed to social evils in the early part of the nineteenth century, a growing

---

1 The Witness, October 24, 1857.
2 First Report by Her Majesty's Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Schools in Scotland (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable, 1865).

recognition of the need for more education, a rising demand by workers themselves and others interested that such be secured, and a period of confusion and delay in the 1850's and 1860's. The achievement of the objective finally came in 1872. In this setting, Dr. Begg's contributions were his awakening of the public to the lack of education as a cause of social evils; his stimulating of workers to demand more education; his rousing of the Church, making it one of the pressure groups responsible for the 1872 Act; and his contributing to the formation of the Scottish Association for National Education in 1850, which thereafter became the strongest pressure group in the field.

THE EARLY CLOSING AND SATURDAY HALF-HOLIDAY MOVEMENTS

Dr. Begg's activity in these two movements, which brought down upon him "both scoff and scorn" from employers,[1] started in 1848 and reached a climax in the early 1860's. The Church's failure in this period to interest herself in shorter working hours, child labour, and improved working conditions was one of her most obvious faults. She was too reluctant to interfere with the supposed rights of capital. The Free Church Commission in 1846 commended Lord Ashley for his work in factory legislation, at the same time not expressing any opinion _pro_ or _con_ on the Factory Bills then before Parliament.[2] Earlier, Lord Ashley had complained that "the saints

---

[1] T. Smith, _Memoirs of James Begg_, Vol. II, p. 230.
[2] J. R. Fleming, _op. cit._, Vol. I, p. 99.

who agitate against negro slavery abroad seem indifferent to the hardships endured by the children of British artisans."

However, Dr. Begg showed no such reluctance and came out boldly on the side of the worker. At a public meeting on early closing held in the Edinburgh Music Hall in 1847, he spoke out against "the grasping disposition even among many professed Christian shopkeepers." This speech was a prelude to Reverend Mr. Davidson's declaration, seven years later, that "covetousness was the sin of the present day."[1] Dr. Begg's statement at the 1847 meeting that earlier closing of shops would increase attendance at Sabbath services, indicated another of his reasons for supporting the cause. The Early Closing Movement in Scotland came first, starting in the late 1840's,[2] while the Half-Holiday Movement began in the fifties. In 1853, Dr. Begg spoke at another public meeting and advocated a policy of boycotting those merchants refusing to cooperate. This excited a number of vehement statements against him. He also wrote a letter to The Witness urging ministers to get behind the movement and advocating the Saturday

---

1 Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1854, p. 178.

2 The Early Closing Association was founded in London in 1841. It had a four-fold aim: abridgement of the hours of employment, abolishment of Sunday trading, payment of wages on a night earlier in the week, and a Saturday half-holiday. At first, it was looked upon with much suspicion and horror by employers. Eventually, however, it did much to improve employer-employee relationships, reduce working hours, and secure better working conditions. In Edinburgh workers in the drapery trade, where working conditions were the worst, started an association in 1853 with the two objectives of a Saturday half-holiday and earlier closing hours. Its objectives were attained in a fair measure. Transactions of The Social Science Association, 1863, p. 776.

afternoon two o'clock "chiming of the bells as of old as a token that the labours of the week should cease."[1]

In 1863, Dr. Begg presented his views at the Social Science Association meeting urging a united effort by all interested, a less prejudiced outlook by both employers and employees, a greater interest on the part of the general public, and the discovery of more profitable ways of using the free hours secured.[2] The inability to do the last had been a major criticism by opponents and an apprehension on the part of some supporters. Their fears were alleviated by the starting of special activities, Saturday evening concerts being one of them. These, too, were sharply criticized. The statesmanship of Dr. Candlish in one General Assembly prevented the breaking out of a discussion upon them which would have been neither "profitable or pleasant."[3]

Both the Early Closing and Saturday Half-Holiday Movements were a significant part of the working class movement of the nineteenth

---

1 "The earlier class of Protestant ministers, including the reformers, were sensitively alive to the connection between things temporal and spiritual. But we have passed through a cold period since, and a mawkish notion of spirituality has led many of our modern ministers to stand aloof from all such movements, and allow the people to be gradually enslaved. This, again, is naturally breaking out in a contempt for religion itself, and a profanation of the day of rest. Nothing could tend more to sweeten the breath of society, and protect the day of God than for every minister at present to throw his influence into the movement in favour of the Saturday half-holiday, and all similar wholesome movements on the part of the working classes." The Witness, September 21, 1853.

2 The providing of lectures, concerts, and "pleasing modes of recreation" during the winter months was carried on by the Saturday Half-Holiday Association, started in 1857. They were a prelude to the coffee houses and reading rooms for working men in the next decade. The Witness, November 4, 1857.

3 Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1856, p. 110.

century. The demand for shorter hours and a half holiday came as a result of the workers' desire to be less of a machine and more of a human personality. They felt that more leisure time was necessary for personal development. Both movements were successful, but only after a long struggle and sacrifice. Other than Dr. Guthrie and Reverend Davidson,[1] Dr. Begg was the only minister who supported the movements wholeheartedly. Dedicated laymen, in fact, were much more active than clergy.[2] Dr. Begg's contribution was his gaining public support for the workers and his arousing of the Free Church to the problem.[3] In the 1860's, she heartily supported both causes.

THE 40s FREEHOLD MOVEMENT

The extension of the franchise to the working classes was the main object of the 40s Freehold Movement, which was started by Dr. Begg in the 1850's.[4] His sympathy for rural and urban workers, his faith that they could be entrusted with political power, and his desire that more rights be secured by them through the enlargement of such power impelled his activity. Dr. Begg was indeed infected by the reform spirit of the day. His ideas and proposals on

---

1 He was Convener of the Sabbath Observance Committee for twelve years, from 1848 to 1860.

2 The Proceedings of the General Assembly for 1850 to 1858 illustrate this.

3 At the annual meeting of the Saturday Half-Holiday Association in 1856, Professor Miller commended Dr. Begg's work in bringing the Church's attention to the problem.

4 Called the 40s Freehold Movement because 40s was set as the minimum rent a man must pay annually for his holding or home in order to be eligible to vote. It had already been granted in England on that basis.

the matter were embodied in a pamphlet written in 1857 which became the Bible of the Movement. A series of meetings in March of that year led to the formation of the Scottish 10s Freehold Association, proposed by Dr. Begg. It became the center of the movement and the target of considerable opposition.[1]

A committee of men from a variety of groups and interests was set up to guide affairs. The climax came at the end of 1857, when Dr. Begg, Mr. Mc'Laren, and Baillie Grieve of Edinburgh journeyed to London to interview government officials and press the matter on the Lord Advocate. He, however, could not be moved and the cause was lost. Although it failed in its immediate objective, the movement, in its wider aspect, was not in vain. It strengthened the political consciousness and sense of solidarity of the working classes. It was one part of the franchise agitation which followed the 1832 Reform Bill and culminated in 1889, when rural workers were given the right to vote. Town workers had been granted it in 1867 by the Second Reform Bill.

As for Dr. Begg, his popularity among working people was immensely increased and he became more and more recognized as their leader. He was too honest to use such admiration for his own advantage and refused to be the leader of a "people's party" which had been proposed by the more radical groups.[2] Instead he used his popularity to remind the workers themselves that the doors of the

---

[1] One writer called their propaganda "philosophic reek about freeholds and freehold leases." The Witness, March 21, 1857.

[2] R. Cowan, The Newspapers in Scotland, p. 337.

Church were open to them and to remind the Church that she should hold out a welcoming hand from the doorstep. Dr. Begg's regret over the failure of the movement was more than a superficial one. He believed that a 40s franchise would be an immediate inducement to working men to become proprietors and home owners. It would stimulate frugality and thrift, decrease intemperance, and promote independence and better citizenship; goals toward which he constantly worked.

RURAL REFORMS

The first half of the nineteenth century witnessed a number of changes in the rual areas of Scotland, only some of which will be mentioned here. Rural depopulation was an outstanding characteristic and was caused by a number of factors. The amalgamation of holdings under the "High Farming" system, characteristic especially of the Lothians, and the increasing mechanization decreased the number of labourers required. The absorbing of small acreages into larger farms led to a shortage of houses, especially for farm workers, as it was no longer profitable to maintain the cottages on the farms absorbed. In the Highlands, emigration and destitution occurred on a much larger scale as a result of the Clearances. The condition of the hind and ploughman was intensified by the injustices of the tenure system under which the farmer himself laboured. The insecurity of tenure, the short term of leases in many cases, and the improbability of being compensated for improvements made were no incentive to improve or keep up workers' cottages or to improve the land to its maximum capacity. While at Liberton, Dr. Begg had found "not a

single ploughman's cottage that had two apartments," and had been told by one labourer that "he was afraid to remove the bed-posts lest the whole rickety building should collapse about his ears."[1] In areas where leases were more secure, the large amount of capital required to start on one's own made the rise from a labourer to tenant or owner nearly impossible. The liklihood of becoming an owner was much less remote than tenantry.[2] The land itself was held in large estates owned by a relatively small number of proprietors, many of whom were non-resident. They themselves were handicapped by the outdated laws of entail, hypothec, primogeniture, and conveyance.[3]

A number of other significant changes may be noted. The homogeneity of the older village life was breaking down.[4] Group and class distinctions were intensified by dissension rising from economic causes. An increasing restlessness among the lower classes occurred. A growing indifference to religion, the increasing immorality in many

---

1 Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1859, p. 60.

2 In one publication Dr. Begg wrote: "Since the large farming system has become so general, requiring great capital, a hind has scarcely any prospect ahead of him but a life of toil, and an old age in the poor's house. In all my observation, I have only known of two hinds that have ever risen above the rank, whilst industry and sobriety are rewarded with immediate advancement in most other countries." Drunkenness and Pauperism, p. 15.

3 The increasing pauperism in the large cities was felt by one town councillor of Edinburgh to be due to the "starvation system" of poor relief in country parishes, which drove thousands into the larger cities to seek relief. Two reasons were given: the absence of gentry-owners who were "enjoying their rents at London or Paris, free from any deduction for supporting the poor on their estates," and also a change in the former custom among proprietors and farmers of "keeping about them their old and decayed servants." The Witness, August 15, 1840.

4 Jean Watson, Bygone Days in Our Village, pp. 1-23.

districts which was reflected in a greater number of illegitimate births, and rising intemperance, caused alarm both to churchmen and civic leaders. Important also was the growing desire for a less burdensome and more wholesome life among all classes in rural areas, and a demand for more social and recreational outlets as well. The latter was a result of urban influences permeating landward; the former was associated with the ideas of freedom, equality, and individual worth especially conspicuous after 1832.

Rural Housing. The narrow escape of several Irish ploughmen and the fatal burning of two Highland girls in an East Lothian bothy in October, 1857, turned public opinion to the Bothy System, against which Dr. Begg had fulminated for a number of years.[1] The system itself was introduced from England into the southern districts of Scotland in the 1820's and spread northward in the 1830's. In his Liberton ministry Dr. Begg had been on a Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale Committee, appointed in 1840 to "investigate into houses of the working classes within its bounds, with special reference to the Bothy System and its bearings upon the morality of the people."[2] A survey was made of Peebleshire and presented to the Synod; however, nothing was done. Unfortunately, interest in rural areas lagged in the 1840's with the turning of the Church's attention to congested urban localities. However, by the end of the forties, the conditions of

---

1 A plan of lodging a number of ploughmen and labourers, generally unmarried and of either sex, in a hut or outhouse called a bothy.
2 The Witness, ibid.

farm servants and the bothies were given increasing publicity in the religious press--The Guardian, The Witness, and the Free Church Magazine--while a number of organizations springing up came to their aid. The Scottish Patriotic Society, formed in 1847, sought to elevate the rural as well as the urban worker. Cottage improvement, under Dr. Begg's insistence, became one of the objectives of the Scottish Social Reform Association. By this time, the houses of the upper levels of rural society had been improved greatly, and they served as an example of what could and should be done for the lower groups. The formation in 1854 of The Association for Promoting Improvement in the Dwellings and Domestic Condition of Agricultural Labourers in Scotland[1] indicated the real concern, and marked the beginning of a period of constructive effort by the higher classes of alleviate the lot of the rural labourer.

The October incident led to the appointment of a Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale Committee with Dr. Begg as its Convener. An investigation of the problem in the Lothians was undertaken immediately. The findings were presented to the Synod, causing much surprise and concern among clergy and laymen alike and leading to the presentation of an overture to the 1858 General Assembly on the matter.[2] Dr. Begg's

---

1 It was formed on January 10, 1854 at a meeting of interested landlords, proprietors, tenants, ministers, and others. Its membership included such men as the Duke of Buccleuch and the Duke of Hamilton. Its objectives were indicated by its title. The Reverend Henry Stuart of Oathlaw was its secretary for many years, and it did much to promote better housing for farm workers. The Scotsman, January 11, 1854.

2 Mr. David Home, in his pamphlet Social Reforms Needed in Scotland, notes that he himself was unaware of the conditions in his home county of Berwickshire until his attention was called to them by Dr. Begg. p. 8.

speech in support of the overture led to the appointment of the Housing Committee mentioned previously. For the next eight years the Committee, under Dr. Begg's able leadership, worked vigourously to present the problem and propose solutions to the Church. A number of Synod and Presbytery Committees were set up under its guidance. Surveys were made enabling a large amount of facts and information to be gathered and presented to the Church.

In its eight years of life the Committee's contribution was its inducement of ministers to investigate the problem in their own parishes. It stimulated a number of laymen-landowners to act.[1] On local levels the publicity given the problem and the pressure exerted did much to alleviate sore spots. The Committee's efforts inspired a number of other investigations and publications.[2] Lastly, not to be outdone, the United Presbyterian Church in 1863 appointed a committee to investigate rural problems.

Dr. Begg had always been fondly attached to rural life. His desire to see its values and satisfactions shared fully by the rural workers motivated his efforts to improve their lot. His charges that bothies made the "humanizing influences of domestic life impossible,"[3] that they were conducive neither to health nor comfort, and

---

1 Among them were the Earl of Aberdeen, the Duke of Northumberland, Mr. Stewart of Hillside, and Mr. Wanchope of Niddry, all of whom started housing projects on their estates.

2 The Society for the Promotion of Social Morality and the pamphlet, _The Rural Labourers of the North of Scotland_, by Dr. Gerrard are two examples.

3 _Report on the Houses of the Working Classes to the General Assembly_, 1859, p. 2.

that they were centers of immorality, crime, drunkenness, and irreligion were indeed true ones. The reports in the 1860's of the Registrar General on illegitimacy indicated a higher proportionate rate in the northeastern counties where bothies were prevelant. As early as 1834 witnesses before a House of Commons Committee on Intoxication among the Labouring Classes had testified to the widespread drinking habits among labourers in the rural areas of Scotland.[1] Answers given by ministers to the queries sent out by Synod Committees pointed out the increasing religious indifference of bothy inhabitants. Even more distressing to Dr. Begg were the effects of bothies evading calculation. The perverting of the minds and attitudes of their inhabitants, their crudeness, coarseness, and isolation were all the more to be regretted when all around them the outlook and atmosphere of rural life was being softened and raised.[2]

As for the cottages of married workers, there was still much to be desired. In many instances[3] they were small, seldom with more than two rooms, and dependent for repair upon the ingenuity of the inhabitant. It was not to be wondered at that the ploughman was reluctant to board a farmhand when already two or three children filled the nooks and crannies. The cottages' disrepair and lack of privacy were the two features criticized most by Dr. Begg. He advocated that

---

1 See especially the evidence of John Dunlop of Greenock, pp. 394-415, who was associated with the Teetotal Movement in the 1820's.

2 Report of the Scottish Land Enquiry Committee, 1914, p. 216.

3 See J. H. Clapham, An Economic History of Modern Britain, pp. 29-36, for a good general summary, and the Statistical Accounts for primary references.

more of them be built to permit earlier marriage and so decrease illegitimacy, that adequate sanitary facilities be provided, and that a minimum of two, and preferably three, rooms and a garden be attached to each. He also advocated a system of cottage inspection by government officials, an investigation by a Parliamentary Commission, and a change in the system of land tenure.

Progress in rural housing was slow. Hamilton in 1822 had sketched plans for ideal farm cottages. Two of them were printed and circulated.[1] An impetus was given by the Royal Highland and Agricultural Society beginning in 1825,[2] and a further stimulus came in 1854 with the formation of the Association to Improve Labourers' Dwellings, mentioned previously. Their efforts were especially instrumental in reaching the upper strata of rural society but unfortunately they did not touch the lower, as intended. Several plans were drawn up by the Association, widely circulated, and put into effect by a number of landlords. Dr. Begg's contribution to the rural housing movement was the giving of widespread publicity to the problem from 1850 onward, both within and without the Church. A system of cottage inspection was set up in 1884. Beginning in 1885 a series of Parliamentary investigations occurred. The Crofter Act of 1886 led to "great improvements in dwelling houses by even the poorest crofters in the most

---

1 T. Ferguson, The Dawn of Scottish Social Welfare, p. 46.
2 Premiums for improved cottages were first given out in 1825 on a county basis; in 1837 on a parish basis. In 1837 also, premiums for gardens were given and, in 1847, for the proper accommodation of farm servants. Beginning in 1843, sets of model plans for cottages were published in the transactions of the Society.

stricken parts of the country."[1] Yet much remained to be done even as late as 1917, as the Report of the Royal Commission on Housing of that year indicated.

Dr. Begg's statements to the General Assembly were criticized as well as supported, especially in 1862 when, after his speech, an elder from Fife arose and pointed out that good as well as bad bothies existed, and suggested that "Dr. Begg might in the future direct his artillery more against the farmer than the system."[2] The elder's statement that "in the course of thirty years' experience, he could not state above three or four, or at most a half-dozen visits from a clergyman" to his bothy had occurred, certainly reflected the apathy of many ministers, an attitude against which Dr. Begg continuously fought. The defense of the Bothy System was carried forward in the same Assembly by the Earl of Dalhousie, who declared that "the bothy system was not so bad as has been represented here today, and that it might be guided and wrought with great advantage."[3] The grounds of his defense weakened his argument, however. His statement that "preaching to their people on the subject of the improvement of their condition," as done by Dr. Begg, might "run the risk of making them discontented"[4] with their lot, was no deterrent to Dr. Begg. To him the risk of discontentment was a much lesser evil than the evils which already existed because of the bothies.

The Earl was not the only one to charge that Dr. Begg's

---

1 Report of the Scottish Land Enquiry Committee, 1914, p. 75.
2 Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1862, p. 196.
3 Ibid., p. 197.
4 Loc. cit.

statements were exaggerated generalizations based upon limited and extreme samples. In 1863, Lord Kinnaird carried on a spirited controversy with Dr. Begg in the columns of the North British Agriculturalist. The Lord's optimistic description of Scottish bothies led Dr. Begg to comment that "he is defending an imaginary more than a real state of things."[1] Earlier, in 1861, Dr. Begg was invited to discuss the rural question at a "very interesting and important meeting" of the East Lothian Agricultural Club. Some of the members were "of the opinion that the Doctor's views, expressed before the General Assembly of the Free Church and elsewhere, were at variance with fact."[2] Dr. Begg was not one to refuse such a challenge and opportunity. He modestly noted that as a result of the meeting "the matter was pretty fully canvassed, and a good deal done to dispell erroneous impressions."[3] Undoubtedly, a more accurate estimation was given by his biographer, who wrote that Dr. Begg's "visit to the county on that occasion had certainly a good deal to do with the supply of such deficiency of accommodation as then existed."[4]

In reality, Dr. Begg's efforts in this field did not lead to the abolishing of the Bothy System itself; it was too deeply grounded in the whole rural economy and so continued on through the century.[5] What he did accomplish was the focusing of public attention upon one aspect of rural life long left unheeded. His efforts led to

---

1 Report of the Housing Committee to the General Assembly, 1863, p. 17.
2 J. Robb, The Cottage, the Bothy, and the Farm Kitchen, p. 80.
3 Report of the Housing Committee to the General Assembly, 1863, p. 17.
4 T. Smith, op. cit., p. 305.
5 See the 1914 and 1926 Land Reports, passim.

the initiation and direction of a movement which cleansed the system of its more notorious evils and raised the standard of bothies throughout the country.

The Feeing Markets. Associated with the Bothy System were the feeing markets, stigmatized by Dr. Begg as a kind of "slave market, a most degrading form of rural economy."[1] They consisted of yearly gatherings, usually in May, at the large towns of the major agricultural areas, when dissatisfied farm servants came in and sold their services for the coming year to the highest bidder. Attributed to them were "brutalizing scenes," and the "total disregard to moral character on the part of many masters, if only they can secure physical strength;"[2] features not only giving a bad impression of rural life but even more, being degrading and destructive of the human personalities involved. To Dr. Begg, the claim of expediency advanced by those favouring feeing markets did not, in itself, justify the resultant evils. When in Liberton, Dr. Begg had been on a Synod Committee on the Welfare of Farm Servants and had suggested that as an alternative a central register for each district be made up, containing the names of labourers looking for new positions and farmers wanting to hire new hands.[3] The idea did not spread very quickly, however, as

---

1 Report of the Housing Committee to the General Assembly, p. 10.
2 Ibid., p. 12.
3 The Royal Highland and Agricultural Society was also concerned over feeing markets in this period. The Bothy System had been condemned by them several times in the 1840's as a result of investigations, and through the efforts mainly of Sir John Forbes, a Committee of Inquiry was appointed in January, 1849. Minutes of the General Meeting, as reported in the Scotsman, January 9, 1849.

old habits were hard to change.[1]

The "heavy and riotous drinking" characteristic of feeing markets was the main feature which led Dr. Begg to oppose them so violently. Such intemperance was accentuated by custom, by the lack of any legal measures restricting the sale of drink outside the public house, by the unscrupulousness of many masters who realized that the price for the labourer decreased as the amount consumed increased, and by the absence of any alternative. The lack of the last led a minister in Peebleshire to set up a Temperance Bar which was successful despite the "threats and opposition" of publicans. It was highly commended by Dr. Begg and given much publicity in the General Assembly.

Feeing markets as a phase of the rural economy had been introduced from England in the early 1800's and spread rapidly through the Lothians and northward to Aberdeenshire. They came under criticism soon, however. As early as 1849, the North British Agriculturalist, one of the outstanding agricultural journals of the time, had featured a series of articles bewailing the intemperance and rowdyism associated with the markets. The Highland and Agricultural Society had even appointed a committee to look into the matter in the same year, but little action was taken.[2] It remained for Dr. Begg in the sixties to produce results by taking up the matter with vigour and force. The problem was widely publicized in the Church through the General Assembly. This lead many rural laymen and ministers to probe their consciences--and their back yards--on the matter. Dr. Begg carried the

---

1 The Witness, August 24, 1842.
2 The Guardian, February 6, 1849.

cause outside the Church as well. He wrote a number of articles on the problem for The Witness and made numerous speeches to farm groups in the Lothians and northward.

Two factors led to the decrease of intemperance at the feeing markets: the spread of the Temperance Bar Movement (for which the Free Church is to be given the credit), and the repeal, in 1878,[1] of the Act earlier styled by Dr. Begg as "the one which allows publicans to leave their premises and gather like a flock of crows at every fair."[2] Subsequent to the work of Dr. Begg, the evils of the feeing markets continued to be exposed in the 1880's and 1890's by at least two Free Church committees; that on the State of Religion and Morals and the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee. The findings on the problem by the deputies from the Religion and Morals Committee were presented to the General Assembly annually, almost half of the 1887 Report being devoted to the matter. Likewise, deputies from the Home Mission Committee noted continually that the degrading effects of the bothies and feeing markets were hindering her efforts in rural areas. The feeing markets as a feature of rural life gradually, but not completely, disappeared. The Scottish Land Enquiry Committee in 1914 reported that it was "still to a certain extent in use," and that some rural workers questioned had called them "relics of barbarism."[3] The most important factors causing their disuse were the work of such reformers as Dr. Begg, the improved means of communications

---

1 The repeal of the Act was a result mainly of the propaganda put out by Dr. Begg's Housing Committee.

2 Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1859, p. 64.

3 Report of the Scottish Land Enquiry Committee, pp. 191-192.

in rural areas, the widespread use of newspapers as a medium of securing employment, a changing attitude on the part of the rural worker himself which led to his refusing to being used like an animal for chattel and, lastly, a general change in the attitudes and outlook of rural society inhibiting such uncouth exhibitions and degradation of human beings. Certainly to the churches, both Free and Established, must go much credit for the bringing about of the last two.

Rural Education. The Synod of Lothian and Tweeddale's suggestion in its 1841 report on farm servants "that the education of farm servants be encouraged" may have come from Dr. Begg. In any case, it certainly reflected his sentiments. Their elevation was one reason for his early advocacy of a national system of education. He realized that the enfeebled condition of the Established Church and the greater attention given to urban areas was disadvantageous to rural areas. He believed that a national system would help equalize rural and urban schools by increasing the facilities of rural schools and by raising the pay of their teachers. Dr. Begg's plea for a "much extended and enlightened system of education" for rural areas was presented to the Social Science Association in 1858,[1] to the General Assembly in the Reports on Housing, to the North British Agriculturalist in a long letter in February of 1864, and elsewhere. The Educational Act of 1872 fulfilled his expectations in many ways. Its failure to distinguish sharply enough between the needs of rural and

---

[1] Transactions of the Society, 1858, p. 282.

urban education and to modify the content of instruction given for the former were its disturbing faults.[1]

Land Law Reform. The reform of the "antiquated" land laws of entail, primogeniture, and hypothec, a proposal looked upon with much alarm in not a few quarters, was constantly advocated by Dr. Begg as the basic means of reconstructing rural society. An analysis of these laws, as well as later events, indicates the soundness of his views. The law of entail prevented the burdening of an estate with the erection cost of labourers' cottages even though "dog-kennels and horse stables" could be, a situation which Dr. Begg criticized in the spirit of Adam Smith and exploited with vengeance and delight.[2] In reality, the absurdity of such a law became apparent increasingly as the condition of rural housing worsened. That the law was futile and a source of social problems was first pointed out by Dr. Begg in his 1849 pamphlet, Pauperism and the Poor Laws. At that time, it was an obstacle to a scheme he had proposed of moving pauper work-houses into rural areas where the inhabitants could be put to work on the land, making such houses self-supporting and much less of a public burden. During the 1850's, he had opposed the law because it prevented the easy acquisition of land needed for workingmen's houses on the outskirts of cities and also because it was a hindrance to his plan of reducing unemployment through land reclamation projects.

---

1 Report of the Scottish Liberal Land Inquiry Committee, 1928, p. 264.
2 Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1860, p. 238, gives a typical example.

Through Dr. Begg's efforts, the public had been awakened to the problem by the late 1850's and was ready to support any sound remedies suggested. The opportunity came through Mr. Dunlop, M.P., an earnest churchman and temperance reformer and a delegate to a number of General Assemblies, who was persuaded by Dr. Begg to propose a scheme of reform.[1] In 1860 he introduced into the House of Commons a measure to modify the existing law of entail and permit the erection cost of cottages to be burdened on entailed estates. The bill was passed. The result was the starting of numerous efforts by individual landlords to make cottage improvements on their estates. Agitation for more modifications followed and were granted by acts in 1892 and 1911. As a climax, the Law of Property Act of 1925 did away entirely with the Law of Entail and stated that, with minor exceptions, no legal estate tail could exist or be created after that year. The law of primogeniture, which was a cornerstone of the old rural hierarchy peculiar to Britain and also a hindrance to progress in rural areas,[2] followed a more or less similar course. After continued agitation and modifications, it was abolished in 1925 by the Administration of Estates Act.

Reform of the laws of tenure, especially the law of hypothec, was long overdue. Agitation against it, coupled with a series of bad harvests in the 1870's, led to the appointment of a Royal Commission of Inquiry in 1879. The Commission's work resulted in the

---

1 He and Dr. Begg were on an Assembly committee appointed in 1859 to consider whether an inquiry by the Church into the causes and remedies of the chief social evils of the country might be undertaken profitably. Proceedings of the Assembly, 1859, p. 71.

2 See L. J. Saunders, Democracy in Scotland, 1815-1840, p. 14 ff.

Hypothec Abolition Act of 1890 which, as its title indicates, did much to strengthen the position and improve the lot of the tenant. The Agricultural Holdings Act of 1883 and subsequent extensions in 1900, 1908, and 1920 gave greater security to tenants by allowing compensations for improvements made during a period of tenure.

The simplifying of the "feudal system of conveyance,"[1] as with the law of entail, was advocated by Dr. Begg because it greatly handicapped the acquiring of land for building sites either by individuals or building societies.[2] The Edinburgh Cooperative Society had been hampered by it, and Dr. Begg felt that it might defeat the whole house building movement. The drive to change the law was given wide publicity by Dr. Begg and others, and was taken up enthusiastically by the working classes. However, it was not until 1881 that the first simplifying and codifying act was introduced by Lord Cairns and made law. Amendments were made in 1882, 1892, 1911 and, finally, in 1925, all with the object of simplifying the documents used in the transfer of land.

The passage of such laws beginning in the 1880's is indicative of at least two things: the long-term effect of Dr. Begg's work in the elevation of rural society, and the general trends occurring in rural life. This period witnessed the breakdown of the old rural structure with the landlord or large estate owner at the apex. The spirit of progress, freedom, and individual rights had made its debut

---

1 The Witness, January 12, 1850.
2 For a house costing £80 to £100, conveyance would cost £10.

in rural areas at last. One of its manifestations was the growing belief in the freedom of the land, the concept that land itself should be an object of free barter and accessible to all.[1] The growing desire of the lower levels of rural society to acquire land, attain a sense of freedom, independence, and self-respect became obvious at this time and was supported by a religious concept of man as a free, responsible, inviolable being.

In this area of land law reform, Dr. Begg's contribution came certainly in his placing reform agitation on a universal and popular footing. Previously, individuals had taken up the fight, but with only limited success. David Wemyms, in 1822, had published a pamphlet on how entails might be abolished gradually and, in 1830, Patrick Irvine wrote along similar lines. Such efforts brought about a slight relaxation in the law after 1849. Widespread publicity was given the subject by Dr. Begg from 1849 onwards. Victory came at last when popular demand was so great that legislators were unable to resist and succumbed to it. To Dr. Begg must go the credit for stimulating and directing that widespread demand and the many benefits to rural life which the abolition of the laws brought about.

Shifts in the centers of political power in rural areas in this period become apparent also. Formerly, control, either real or persuasive, had been in the hands of the upper classes and thus restricted to a relatively few. Now, however, the base was broadened.

---

1 "Under a free trade in land a host of real proprietors would spring up, capital would rapidly be absorbed in the soil, and the people, instead of being swept into the cities as paupers to eat up the shopkeepers, would become their best customers." Speech by J. Begg, "The Elevation of the Working Classes," as recorded in The Witness, January 12, 1850.

This was accomplished, in part, by the Freehold and Small Holdings Movement with which Dr. Begg was closely associated. The 40s Freehold Movement in its urban setting has already been discussed. The movement for small holdings of five to forty acres was its equivalent in the rural areas. Dr. Begg supported it heartily for at least four reasons. Each would be a unit of political power. They were needed to balance the large holdings and so stabilize the rural economy.[1] They were a way of promoting the spirit of thrift, independence, and self-respect which Dr. Begg valued so highly, as a small holding was the means by which the rural labourer might rise from lowly beginnings to the top of the social and economic scale. Lastly, they would give rise to a much needed middle class of proprietors and so help to stabilize the rural scene.[2]

THE FREE CHURCH FROM 1860 TO 1900

The work of several of the General Assembly's committees affords the best basis for a summary of the Free Church's efforts in the field of social reform in the latter part of the nineteenth century. By 1860, through the efforts of such leaders as Dr. Begg, a fair number of Free Church people had been awakened to the moral and social evils prevailing. Especially alarming to Free Churchmen were the annual reports of the Registrar-General during the 1850's,

---

1 This was especially true in reference to the labour situation. Dr. Begg believed that the interspersing of small holdings would make the needed labour available even during the rush periods of the farming season and so do away with the necessity of employing seasonal labour and the evils of the Gang System.

2 "We have far too few proprietors of land in Scotland, and hence one great source of danger." J. Begg, "The Rustication of the Poor," The Witness, February 10, 1840.

indicating an increasing illegitimacy rate mainly in the large cities, although to a certain extent in rural areas, especially where new mining and manufacturing towns dotted the countryside. Beginning in 1860, there was a growing desire among Free Church people to get at the causes and sources of the social evils demoralizing the nation. Investigations were called for and special groups were set up. A Committee on the Causes and Remedies of Social Evils was appointed by the General Assembly in 1859, mainly as a result of Dr. Begg's efforts. It lacked vigour and force, however. Dr. Begg was unable to be a member because of the burdensome work of the Housing Committee, and so the Committee on Social Evils lasted only two years. However, its two brief reports indicated the Church's growing interest in and awareness of social problems, her sense of responsibility for their solution, and the need for united effort by all the denominations.

The statement in 1865 by the Presbytery of Aberdeen's Committee on the State of Religion within its bounds that "there was much reason for deep humiliations because of the many evils which abound in the midst of us, such as the desecration of the Sabbath, the rage for questionable amusements which seem to prevail in an increasing degree, the want of Christian principles in conducting commercial transactions, the general conformity to the world which characterizes so many members of the Church, and other sins too obvious not to meet the eye of any observer,"[1] may be taken as a classical example of the

---

1 Report of the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals to the General Assembly, 1865, p. 6.

problems the Free Church felt she must face in the years from 1860 to 1900.

In 1860, a Free Church Committee on the State of Religion and Morals was appointed by her General Assembly.[1] The Committee was instructed to hold meetings with as many presbyteries as possible each year on the state of religion and morals within each. This marked the beginning of the collecting, digesting, and presenting to the General Assembly yearly of a mass of information on the moral, religious and social conditions prevailing. Such data were always informative and sometimes even startled and aroused the Church to a fighting pitch. The Committee was instructed also to cooperate with similar committees from other churches and a combined meeting was held in 1865 with members of the Established and United Presbyterian Churches' Committees on Social Morality. Though nothing noteworthy resulted, it was the first meeting of its kind and so set a valuable precedent.

In the 1860's, the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals was concerned with the spiritual condition of local churches as reflected in Sabbath attendance, the state of the Sunday School and Bible classes, and the number of prayer meetings held. During the 1870's and after, the Committee's solicitudes were broadened to include analyses of the social as well as religious state of the Presbyteries. The statement by the Committee, in 1873, that "the interests of religion are so closely intertwined with the social condition of the people that the Church must ever feel a lively interest in all that concerns their social welfare,"[2] was the philosophical basis of

---

1 Dr. Begg was a member of that committee.
2 Report of the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals, 1873, p. 19.

the new trend. By this time, Dr. Begg's earlier pleadings were having an effect. The Committee on the State of Religion and Morals was one of the committees which took up many of the reforms promoted earlier by Dr. Begg. In the 1870's, the Committee made a comprehensive analysis of the problem of church extension in the newly created mining villages in Scotland and presented it to the General Assembly. As a result, a miner's fund was set up in 1881 to build churches and church halls in mining areas. By 1898, twenty-two had been built by means of the fund.

Rural districts were not forgotten. In its reports the Committee reminded the General Assembly that bothies still existed, that the older farm labourers were not bringing up their sons to be farmers because of the inaccessibility of small holdings, and that the rate of illegitimacy was still high in many rural areas.[1] Other evils caused the Committee concern. A sub-committee to investigate the nature, extent, and effect of betting and gambling throughout the country was appointed in 1889 and, after a year of extensive work, presented a comprehensive report on the matter to the 1890 Assembly. Though it was given much publicity, the report did not have far-reaching effects. The Committee noted with accuracy in its 1899 report that "recent years have seen a remarkable development of the practice of betting and gambling."[2] In the late 1850's, Dr. Begg had become concerned about the large amount of cheap literature scourging the country. He

---

1 The Committee's report in 1887 is one of the best examples. Over half of it was devoted to the problems of rural areas.

2 _Report of the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals_, 1899, p. 4.

induced the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals in 1863 to send out a query to the presbyteries on the matter, but it was not until the 1890's that the Committee turned its full attention to the problem. A special statement summarizing the nature, extent, effects, and possible remedies of the problem was handed in to the 1899 Assembly and was used for action later by the United Free Church.

The activities of the Temperance, Housing of the Working Classes, Sabbath Observance, and National Education Committees in the latter part of the nineteenth century have been discussed previously. The Welfare of Youth Committee was started in 1872. It followed the precedent set by the Established Church's Life and Work Committee and organized a Men's Guild in 1885. A Women's Guild was started the same year. Here a final note may be made of another important committee of the Free Church. The Home Mission and Church Extension Committee was set up in 1844, was reactivated by Dr. Crawford in 1853 and, by 1860, was beginning to acknowledge that social as well as moral evils were hindering its efforts. In this period, from 1860 to 1900, the Committee attacked the problem of the lapsed masses by granting funds for the construction of buildings and the appointment of missionaries to mission stations in the poorer districts of large cities and in the new mining and industrial towns.[1] The Home Mission Committee

---

[1] Mr. Howie, Convener of the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee, reported in 1899 that the Committee's largest expenditure had been in the thirteen Lowland presbyteries containing mining districts and in the seven presbyteries containing the eight principle towns. In these twenty presbyteries three-fourths of the population was concentrated.

also directed specific efforts toward the rural areas. Special deputies were appointed to visit bothies, farmsteads, and rural villages.[1] Beginning in the 1880's, deputies were also sent to fishing stations along the coasts, and in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, the growing suburban areas of large towns also received special grants for the construction of churches and halls and the employment of probationers.

Thus, in numerous ways and in many areas, the Free Church of Scotland in the last forty years of the nineteenth century continued to carry on the battle against irreligion and vice. Free Churchmen, as well as members of the Established Church, became interested increasingly in social problems and recognized more and more that the evils wrought by the Industrial Revolution were blighting and enervating the religious beliefs and spiritual lives of the people. Throughout the country in the parishes of the Free Church, the clergy were becoming interested more and more in the social as well as spiritual dilemmas of their people and were speaking out against the evils, injustices, and inequalities of the time.

---

[1] The 1888 General Assembly directed the Home Mission and Church Extension Committee to take specific action on the problem. The Reverend J. Wallace was appointed as the first rural deputy. His success in the parishes of Cruder, Old Deer, New Deer, and Longside led the Committee to report, in 1890, that "a wonderful effect has been made on the country round about."

CHAPTER III

JAMES BEGG, D. D., 1870-1883

While Dr. Begg's interest continued, any major efforts on his part to promote social reform ended in the early 1870's. From then until his death in 1883, ecclesiastical matters absorbed his attention increasingly, especially the questions of innovations in the forms of worship and union with the United Presbyterian Church.[1] By 1870, nearly all of the founders of the Free Church were dead. One of the few left, Dr. Begg saw himself as a champion of the original principles and orthodoxy upon which that Church was founded. All through the union negotiations Dr. Begg feared lest that orthodoxy be sacrificed and the more liberal theological outlook and voluntaryism of the United re[illegible] Church prevail. To him union could be accomplished only at the surrender of basic principles, something he would never do.[2] Without entering into the manifold complexities of the question, one must admire Dr. Begg for adhering to his profound convictions[3] and refusing to

---

1 It was in connection with this latter problem that Dr. Begg was called "the evil genius of the Free Church." A. Stewart and J. Cameron, <u>The Free Church of Scotland</u>, p. 37.

2 "Dr. Begg's honesty and transparency of character were recognized even by those who differed most widely from his views on public questions. Because he was a man of unconquerable integrity, he remained until the last the leader of a dwindling minority, and the champion of causes that were generally unpopular." <u>Ibid</u>., p. 35.

3 "It is only simple justice to his memory that it should be known to all concerned, that the views which he defended on the vexed question of Union, the question of Education, the question of Disestablishment, the Bible question in connection with the Robertson Smith case, and that of purity of Worship, were so defended by him because he was solemnly convinced that they were in accordance with the Word of the living God." <u>The Free Church Monthly and Missionary Record</u>, December, 1883.

sacrifice them on the altar of public approval and personal glory. He could easily have done this, as his earlier work had given him an immense popular following outside the Church, the real friendship of a fair number in the Church, and the admiration of a larger number of the brethren who, though slowly and grudgingly, nevertheless did realize the importance and significance of Dr. Begg's social philosophy.

Dr. Begg's outspoken antagonism toward innovations in the forms of worship resulted in his becoming the leader of a minority party in the Church opposing such changes. From 1870 onwards, he wrote numerous articles and made many speeches on the subject. The introduction of hymn singing and the organ, and a change in the posture of worship evoked the most opposition.[1] For Dr. Begg, only the Book of Psalms and the human voice were divinely sanctioned while the addition of hymns and organs would evoke divine displeasure and minimize congregational participation and interest in the services. Much opposition to change came also from the Purity of Worship Association, a non-denominational group formed in 1875 and heartily supported by Dr. Begg. They fought a losing cause, as the trend of the times was against them. By the 1880's, hymn singing and organ music were standard practice in most churches.[2]

Dr. Begg's ecclesiastical conservatism became increasingly pronounced in his latter years and was apparent in his antagonism toward the Higher Criticism Movement beginning in the 1870's and his

---

1 Formerly it had been the custom to sit while singing and stand while praying. This practice was reversed.

2 The 1872 General Assembly sanctioned a hymn book containing 417 hymns.

reaction in the Robertson Smith case. He supported the motion that the charge of libel against Professor Smith be carried through. Dr. Begg's conservatism and his orthodox opposition to union and innovations in forms of worship were in contrast to the broader and more compromising thought of the day. They and his life-long struggle against Romanism gained him much notoriety and led many to overlook his earlier successes in social reform.

A review of Dr. Begg's life would be incomplete without any reference to his anti-Roman Catholic Church activities. In the Free Church he was the acknowledged leader of the anti-Romanist movement from 1845 onwards. Dr. Begg was instrumental in the founding of the Reformation Society in 1850, an organization set up to oppose the "popish aggression" of the period.[1] For twenty-one years he was editor of The Bulwark, a monthly magazine started by a group of men from several denominations to propagandize against the Catholic Church. In 1855, his proposal to the Edinburgh Presbytery that a Protestant Institute be formed by them was accepted and effected. Buildings for the Institute were opened on George IV Bridge in 1863 and the Reformation Society taken under its wing. Dr. Begg was active in both organizations until his death. In their early stages, the Protestant Institute and the Reformation Society received strong support from the Church; by 1870 its glow had cooled, however. The support once given Dr. Begg had dwindled and he was left as the leader of a small group considered by the rest as "narrow-minded bigots."[2]

---

1 T. Smith, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 193.
2 Ibid., p. 220.

Any evaluation of Dr. Begg's work must begin by acknowledging the multitude of activities in which he was engaged and organizations with which he was associated. Only part of them have been referred to. The majority of clergymen would have been contented with the work and round of activities in their parishes, but not Dr. Begg. His interests were too extensive; his Christian sympathies were too wide; his concern and convictions were too deep. One secret of his success in public life was his outstanding ability as a platform speaker. After his death the Free Church Monthly noted that "As a platform speaker he had few superiors at any time, and for many years has had no equal. This is admitted as freely by those who differed from him in the views he advocated as by those whose views he expressed."[1] Discarding the prejudice behind this and similar statements, the truth still remains, as the reading today of any of his numerous speeches will reveal. But Dr. Begg was not popular simply because of his own personality and abilities, outstanding as they were. The "thousands of solemnized spectators" watching his funeral procession had gathered for other reasons as well. The basic reason was that Dr. Begg had dedicated his life completely and unselfishly to the service and welfare of his fellow men. It is not to be wondered at that he was known in Edinburgh as "the tribune of the people."[2]

---

1 Free Church Monthly Magazine, December, 1883.
2 "Dr. Begg was pre-eminently a man of generous outlook and social sympathy. Scarcely any name within his generation was more associated with movements for the social benefit of the country than his. He was a philanthropist who earned the lasting gratitude of his countrymen. One cause after another that had as its object the well-being of the common people enlisted his interest and commanded his strength.

Dr. Begg advocated what he believed were the rights of the people as well as their Christian good, and here is a real distinction and contribution. Any number of ministers, complacent and self-satisfied, were ready to proclaim what was the Christian good of the people. A much smaller group sought, through participation in organizations, to extend the rights and benefits of the masses and by so doing make their proclamations a living reality. Throughout this period the means of political expression were being expanded gradually. The masses, before the Reform Bill of 1832, had very little political power and limited rights. Even that measure reached only the middle classes. Dr. Begg's Franchise and Freehold movements were a part of that continued agitation whose object was the extension of political power to and the freeing of the labouring man.

One must ask, however, why Dr. Begg sought to extend the rights of the people, and here we see the deeper springs of his vitality. Dr. Begg was motivated by his belief in men, even the lowest of them. In each person he saw a semblance of the Master, hidden by dirt and covered by rags perhaps, but nevertheless there. This is why he strove and fought to improve the lot of those whom many others were content to pass by. Dr. Begg was not without the stern Calvinism which said that man was indeed a sinner, sorely in need of regeneration through the Grace of Christ. To Dr. Begg there was no advantage in changing a man's environment if the inner man was not changed. The Globe, a London

---

To such an extent was this the case that in Edinburgh he was known as 'the tribune of the people.'" Stewart and Cameron, op. cit., p. 33.

newspaper, was deeply perplexed by Dr. Begg's "political radicalism and ecclesiastical conservatism." Such an apparent contradiction was not a real one, however. Dr. Begg's political views appeared and were radical compared to those of his time. To himself, they were simply the means by which the lower orders of society might be freed from those elements in their environment which prevented the fullest expression of individual personality and made men like either animals or machines. Unlike many others, Dr. Begg did not believe that social evils were a part of the divine dispensation and, so, inevitable in an industrial society.[1]

The predominant economic philosophy of the day, that of laissez-faire capitalism, as it worked out in practice failed to reach its ideal, at least for the lower masses of people. It may have provided an abundance for a part of society; but the poverty and insecurity so blighting and devastating to the rest led to a questioning of the system itself by at least a few. Dr. Begg was one of these few. His acknowledgement of the sinful nature of man helped him to realize the dangers of the unchecked competition which was a part of the reality. He recognized the inequalities existing in society, and the fact that, after 1850, he stressed the idea of "advancement by cooperation," indicates his reaction to it.

Dr. Begg was no revolutionist, and he abhorred force and violence. When he suggested to working men that they build their own houses through a Cooperative Building Society, he was trying to raise

---

1 J. Begg, The Health and Homes of the Working People (Speech at City Hall, Glasgow, 1875), p. 7.

them from the conditions smothering human initiative and personality, and he was also questioning the basic economic tenets of his society. In this period, we see the beginning of the cooperative emphasis and movement. It is in this area that one of Dr. Begg's important contributions came. From 1840 to 1870, he was instrumental in spreading through Scotland the idea of "self-help by cooperation," and that he was successful is indicated by the increasing number of cooperative societies in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Dr. Begg certainly helped greatly to integrate and deepen the working class movement then appearing.

Before the 1850's, the Church also was dominated by the laissez-faire economics of the time. She too believed that social evils, as the product of inflexible economic and theological laws, were inevitable. One result of this belief was her failure to take full advantage of the challenging opportunities presented by contemporary social problems. In that period, the stress as to causes was still upon the immorality and heathenism of the masses. The effect of a deplorable environment received little consideration and the solution presented was still the moral one, the multiplication of churches and extension of the parochial system. This, in itself, was commendable but not inclusive enough. It was not until after the mid-century that a two-fold attack was made by such men as Dr. Begg. The improvement of conditions or environment was stressed and acted upon, as well as the religious or moral solution.

The Church's failure, especially on the part of the Established Church in the last half of the nineteenth century, to relieve the dis-

tress of the poor and submerged alienated many from her. The religious attitudes of these thousands was well expressed in an article in The Witness in 1841: "Large masses of the lower orders in every part of the country begin to burn with revenge against the classes above them, to whom they attribute the oppression which crushes them and makes life a burden; they come to doubt if the ruler of the universe in which such misery prevails be a God of goodness and mercy, or if there be a God at all; they become insensible even to the most unwearied kindness and benevolence on the part of their fellow-creatures, and reckless, depraved, hating men and with no fear of God, impatient of the present world, and having neither dread nor hope as to that which is to come--they present an immense living mass, morally corrupted, quivering throughout with intense suffering, borne as yet with sullen endurance and fraught with fearful vengeance--an object at once of the deepest compassion and the most urgent alarm."[1] Dr. Begg was both disturbed and moved by such masses. He himself believed in a God of goodness, and he wanted to convince others of that truth. He engaged in philanthropic efforts to remove the burdens and lighten the suffering of the lower orders so that they might believe in a good and just God and integrate their lives and actions around such a principle.

In this period the exaltation of the individual and the premium placed upon him led to a sense of urgency in social reforms. Men must be saved. In 1841, one author wrote that "the present age is,

---

[1] The Witness, December 29, 1841.

in a peculiar manner, distinguished by the interest which the social and moral condition of the working classes generally awakens. Political economy, with its rigid maxims, its cold indifference to human suffering, and its exclusive attention to national wealth, has ceased to present its wonted attractions to the great majority of readers. It is felt that there are other things of moment in human affairs than the nature and causes of the wealth of nations; that the most splendid growth of national opulence may be co-existent with the greatest debasement in national character; that wealth may indeed accumulate and men decay."[1] Goldsmith's lines, "Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey, where wealth accumulates and men decay," were a favourite of Dr. Begg's. He declared that the true wealth of a nation was not necessarily the abundance of material goods but its people. The true source of national greatness and prosperity was the moral and religious character of the population. When Dr. Begg judged his country upon that basis, he felt that much was lacking.

The materialistic temper of the day, when carried over into the field of social reform, had at least one benefit. The test of utility, when applied to existing institutions, facilitated the discarding of many of these institutions and so accelerated the tempo of reform. It gave a whole new spirit and outlook to philanthropic movements and enabled greater efficiency and results to be secured. The happiness of the individual was a further test of any reform. In this Dr. Begg was certainly a Benthamite. He declared, in a speech before the Half-Holiday Association in 1857, that "the question of how we shall have the greatest possible happiness extended to the greatest

[1] Blackwood's Magazine, September, 1840.

possible number is, in my opinion, the most important of all public questions, except the question of religion itself."[1] Dr. Begg was a critic of Jeremy Bentham as well. Like James Martineau, he saw the limitations of Bentham's emphasis upon the consequences rather than the motives of actions. When applying this principle to social problems Bentham's influence upon Scottish thought may be greater than is realized. Certainly the emphasis in philanthropic efforts before 1860 was upon dealing with the consequences rather than the causes of social problems. Philanthropy often was like the people who went with ambulances to the bottom of the cliff to pick up those who had fallen over rather than going to the top and building fences to prevent them from going over in the first place. It was different with Dr. Begg, and here we see another major contribution to the social work and thought of his time. His major emphasis was upon dealing with motives and causes rather than with results. When confronted with a social problem he asked what its causes were and how they might be remedied. When carried to its logical consequences, we can see why he suggested so many basic changes in the social and economic system itself and why he was labelled indeed "an ecclesiastical conservative and political radical."

As to the causes of social problems, Dr. Begg divided them into two categories: environment and human sin. In order of importance he put human sin first; yet environment followed closely behind and gave rise to his social and political activity. He realized and

---

1 The Witness, November 4, 1857.

proclaimed that the effects of degrading social conditions were not limited to the body alone but affected the character, morals and spiritual life of the individual also. While it was not as apparent to others, Dr. Begg realized the deadening effect that the machine had upon the souls of men. It was this, for example, which led him to emphasize a decent home as a counter-balance to such a condition. Even at this time the tendency of the machine age was to make men things, impersonal objects, not human beings. In the 1854 General Assembly the Reverend Mr. Thomson of Paisley, referring to the members of a number of railway companies, declared that they "acted in their corporate capacity such a part as they would not act as individual members of the community, thus proving the old saying that corporations had no conscience."[1] It was Dr. Begg's belief in the integrity and worth of the individual which led him to oppose such a tendency.

The "Gospel of Work" was one inheritance from the eighteenth century. By Dr. Begg it was given a new interpretation and application. Eighteenth century Calvinism, especially among the manufacturing classes, exalted thrift and hard work as ends in themselves and in so doing deceived only itself. Dr. Begg agreed upon the value of thrift, frugality, saving, and perseverance, but as means, not ends. Throughout his speeches and writings we find him exalting those virtues as the means to the fulfillment of life, and in particular the lives of those to whom those values were proclaimed. If we may apply our interpretation, we see here an earthly paradox. The urging of these

---

1 Proceedings of the General Assembly, 1859, p. 182.

virtues upon the workers by the manufacturers was effective for a time but, when coloured by the ideas of freedom, equality, liberty, and independence of the early nineteenth century, they reverberated upon their former advocates. More and more the working classes realized that those virtues should be used to the fulfillment of their own lives, not only those of their employers. In his helping them to realize this, Dr. Begg contributed to the working class movement.

It was not until the nineteenth century had reached its middle years that there was any recognition, except by a few churchmen, that such things as social problems existed. Dr. Begg was one of those few. Moreover, he was one of a still smaller number who proposed not the "individualistic" solutions which characterized the temper of the day but programs of reform on an inclusive and national level. Here we see a real distinction and forwardness in his work. The earlier philanthropic efforts had been isolated attempts by individuals or small groups. This is well illustrated in the case of Edinburgh. The Lord Provost's Committee in 1868, of which Dr. Begg was one, was appointed, because of the lack of cooperation between the various philanthropic bodies, to seek out means by which "economical action" might be undertaken. Dr. Begg realized the limitations of individualistic activity and sought continuously to enlarge the base of operations. This is why he formed the Scottish Social Reform Association and also joined in the work of the Social Science Association. We have not said enough of the effect of Dr. Begg's work upon the members of such groups. He realized that many reformers based their activity upon a vague humanitarianism and that some were even anti-Christian because of what

they believed was the smug hypocrisy of the Church. Perhaps that was one reason for Dr. Begg's extensive activity outside her walls. He wanted to demonstrate to them the Church's concern and by so doing induce them to become Christians themselves. That this actually happened we have no doubt.

To Dr. Begg the Church had a twofold function; the salvation of the individual and that of society. Historians agree that the Church in the earlier part of the nineteenth century still saw her task as the salvation of the individual. It was in the latter half of the century that the Church undertook a second function; the redemption of society or environment. This was a result of the work of such individuals as Dr. Begg. As the basis of this change was a development toward a more optimistic view of human nature shared by many. Historically, men were regarded as prone to deceit, laziness, and wickedness, redeemed by Grace from an evil within, not without. The newer view of human nature tended to emphasize the sins from without. Formerly, the poverty of individuals was attributed to their irreligion, while virtue was rewarded with an opulence of worldly goods. Gradually, however, it was realized that poverty might not necessarily indicate irreligion; the part played by environment was seen as well.

In closing these remarks on Dr. Begg, we must remember to commend him for his fearless love of truth, his fighting spirit, and unconquerable soul. Because he was ahead of his time, Dr. Begg became the advocate of many unpopular causes, yet he never lost faith in them. His deep religious feeling and fervour made him realize that social evils in a land which claimed to be Christian was both an anomaly and

a challenge. He was one of those who accepted the challenge. He was rightly called "the man who knew not the meaning of the word 'defeat'."[1]

Two honors conferred upon Dr. Begg were the Doctor of Divinity degree in 1847 by Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, U. S. A.,[2] and the Moderatorship of the Free Church's General Assembly of 1865. Dr. Begg had a most happy family life. He was married twice; first to Margaret Campbell of Renfrewshire who died of a sudden illness in 1845 and, a year and a half later, to Maria Faithfull, daughter of a Surry clergyman.

---

1 He was called thus by the Birmingham Building Society expert, Mr. Taylor, in a speech at Edinburgh. The Witness, May 6, 1857.

2 Lafayette College was a Presbyterian school and Dr. Begg had been associated with it on his visit to the United States and Canada in the winter of 1844-1845.

CHAPTER IV

A. H. CHARTERIS, D. D., LL. D., 1835-1868

Dr. A. H. Charteris was born on December 13, 1835, in the quiet little town of Wamphray in Upper Annandale, Dumfriesshire, where his father was master of the parish school. Formative influences upon him were the peaceful unity of the parish church which became for him the ideal of the country, the village debating society and evening school from which came the idea of the Guilds,[1] his father, from whom he received a vision of what education might be--"the founding of character as well as the furthering of scholarship,"[2] and his mother, whose gentleness, sympathy, and love inspired him to give women their rightful place in the Church. His university and divinity training was taken at Edinburgh. At its close he was licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, in February, 1858. His first charge was the Parish Church of St. Quivox in Ayshire into which he was inducted in April of that year.

The need for a man with "youth, vigour and enthusiasm, who could fan afresh the flame of religion, which in that Parish was then very low"[3] was easily met by Dr. Charteris. He had early dedicated his

---

1 A. Gordon, Life of A. H. Charteris (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1912), p. 7. "Realizing that education was not finished when a boy left school at twelve or fourteen, he [Charteris' father] instituted a debating society, locally styled the 'Gabbing School,' which was attended by all classes, and which greatly elevated the standard of local intelligence among farmers, shepherds, tradesmen, and labourers, who were all active members. It became a center of social life, and may be said to have antedated the Young Men's Guild."

2 K. M'Laren, Memoir of Professor Charteris (Edinburgh: Rand R. Clark, Ltd., 1914), p. 13.

3 Gordon, op. cit., p. 43.

life to the Master and looked forward with joy to serving him at last. The "mass of heathenism, illiterate and unassailed," mainly among the miners offered an immediate challenge.[1] Dr. Charteris was greatly distressed by their ignorance, the majority of them being unable even to read, but was captured by their earnestness and desire to set a good example for their children. He deplored the conditions in the pits which made the miners' lives toilsome and weary and was struck by the barrenness and lack of accommodation and comfort of their homes.

To help them he started a weekly class of religious instruction. At the end of his thirteen months' stay attendance had grown to over sixty. His teaching had an uplifting effect upon the miners' character and was rewarding in a practical way. The manager of the nearby mine in which the men worked told Dr. Charteris that some of them had been promoted to oversmen and bosses as a result of the steadying effect of the instruction upon their character.[2] Dr. Charteris was at St. Quivox for only thirteen months when a change became desirable for the sake of his health. In July, 1859, he left for the rural Parish of New Abbey where he was to minister for the next four years.

At New Abbey, Dr. Charteris' outstanding work was his successful support of Dr. Robertson's Endowment Scheme. He preached and addressed a number of meetings on its behalf. In his own parish it was

---

1 M'Laren, op. cit., p. 69. "He had been deeply impressed with the mass of heathenism, illiterate and unassailed, in his first parish, and that impression had remained with him, filling him with a consuming desire that the churches should sink their differences and give their whole strength to the promotion of the Kingdom of Christ."

2 Gordon, op. cit., p. 52.

so well supported that Dr. Robertson wrote: "I expect nothing more from New Abbey. It has done remarkably well already."[1] Dr. Robertson died an untimely death because of overwork and Dr. Charteris was commissioned to write the story of his life, which he did during his New Abbey ministry.[2] The quiet simplicity of the rural parish appealed greatly to Dr. Charteris. The charm and friendliness of the people and their integrity and determination evoked his admiration. In a review in the Edinburgh Evening Courant of Dean Ramsay's "Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character," Dr. Charteris noted: "There is one aspect of Scottish character which the good Dean does not portray; we mean the independence and honest ambition of our Scottish poor. Now we see it pinching a family to give the clever boy his 'schulin,' that he may wag his pow in a pulpit; now suffering in silence the extreme pangs of want rather than utter a word of complaint; and now giving from scanty means a voluntary contribution to keep some distant relative off the parish."[3] It was his admiration for the common man which led Dr. Charteris to declare that "every effort must be exerted by the younger ministers to rouse the Church of Scotland to a sense of duty to the masses in the sight of God."[4] Near the end of his third year at New Abbey, Dr. Charteris received and accepted a call from the Park Church, Glasgow. He was formally inducted in June, 1863, as the successor of the distinguished Dr. John Caird.

The Park Church was one of the most desirable parishes in

---

1 Gordon, op. cit., p. 75.

2 A. H. Charteris, The Life of Reverend James Robertson, D. D. (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1863).

3 Quoted from The Edinburgh Evening Courant in Gordon, op. cit., p. 74.

4 Ibid.

Scotland at the time. Located in a residential neighborhood, the congregation consisted of well-to-do merchants, businessmen, teachers, lawyers, and bankers whose broad sympathies and wide outlook attracted and suited Dr. Charteris. Through his efforts the church was soon endowed and erected from a chapel into a parish church.

Both Dr. Charteris and the Kirk-Session wished to include within the church a district occupied by the labouring classes and poorer people of the city, but this could not be done without intruding on the fields of other churches. During this period, from 1850 to 1900, it was customary for many churches to have missions in the poorer areas of large cities where Christian benevolence and concern could find expression. Previous to Dr. Charteris' coming, Dr. Caird had arranged, in 1859, with Dr. MacLeod of the Barony Church to set up a small mission in the Port Dundas district of Glasgow's East End. Dr. Charteris' first step was to survey the district. It was found that of 772 families there forty percent "were living in an appalling neglect of religion,"[1] and so work was quickly sped up.

Missionary and Sunday School activities were started in the Mission Hall. Two probationers were engaged and through a grant from the Home Mission Committee a church was eventually built. Mothers' meetings to teach household crafts were conducted by ladies of the Park Church. A Working Men's Institute with games, reading material, and refreshments was set up. Dr. Charteris gave as much of his time as

---

[1] A Chronicle of the General Assembly, 1870, p. 198. Speech by Dr. Charteris on Home Missions.

possible to the mission and during his five years in Park Church much was accomplished there of both a practical and evangelistic nature for residents of the area.[1] The mission provided Dr. Charteris with the cherished opportunity of putting his Christian beliefs into practice. It was an avenue of Christian service to members of the Park Church and was one way of bringing about a much needed, closer relationship between the two classes.[2]

In his work Dr. Charteris was greatly inspired by Dr. Norman MacLeod, who was doing much to bring the Church to the working people.[3] Dr. Charteris became his youthful defender in the "Sabbath War" then raging in the Glasgow Presbytery. He stood by Dr. MacLeod when the senior members of the presbytery, who held to an extremely strict interpretation of the Sabbath, were attacking him.[4]

In November of 1863, Dr. Charteris was married to Miss Katie Anderson, elder daughter of the Lord Provost of Aberdeen. She was destined to become one of the leading workers and inspiring forces of the Church. Life in the Park Church was a busy one; visiting, preaching, Sunday School, and mission work occupying most of the time. A Literary Society was set up, attracting many outside the congregation.

---

1 Dr. Charteris' pamphlet, An Appeal in Behalf of the Endowment Scheme (Wm. Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1865), gives data of a statistical nature, p. 22.

2 Dr. Charteris, like Dr. Begg, was greatly concerned over the disastrous and disintegrating effect class divisions were having upon Scottish life.

3 He was one of the first to hold special services for working people in working clothes. He started the magazine, Good Works in 1860 with the object of mixing interesting secular with religious literature and so providing profitable reading for the average reader.

4 See Speech Before the Glasgow Presbytery, The Christian Sabbath in its Relation to Christian Liberty, by Dr. Charteris.

Among them was Dr. George Matheson, later the blind poet-preacher of St. Bernard's, Edinburgh. Dr. Charteris' work in the Park Church was not a one-man ministry. His organizing and administrative ability and his emphasis upon work as well as worship were evident here as in his former parishes. Of him Reverend Gordon wrote: "The mainspring and regulator he might be, but he taught his people to play the part of all the rest of the machinery. Each member of the body of Christ should be a worker as well as a worshipper. . . .Under Dr. Charteris' direction the congregation soon ceased to be a fortuitous concourse of atoms, and came increasingly to resemble a busy hive of workers."[1]

The strain of church work led to Dr. Charteris' breakdown eighteen months after his arrival. A nine-months' release ensued with a trip to Italy and Switzerland for the sake of his health. Still intermittently in poor health, Dr. Charteris, in 1868, resigned from Park Church and accepted the Professorship of Biblical Criticism and Biblical Antiquities in Edinburgh University. Dr. Charteris occupied that post for thirty years, from 1868 to 1898. It was a very desirable teaching position, and one from which much influence could be exerted upon the thought and work of the Church. During his professorship there, Dr. Charteris' most outstanding work for the Church was done. The General Assembly's Christian Life and Work Committee was started and developed, the Young Men's Guild initiated, and the women's work of the Church organized and promoted.

---

[1] Gordon, op. cit., pp. 91-92.

Dr. Charteris' relationships with his students was always cordial. He took a personal interest in each and often invited students to his home.[1] His teaching was evangelical and orthodox but not dogmatic, and it was fortunate for the Church that a man with such convincing but not imperious views held the important post of Biblical Criticism at that time. In these years from 1860 to 1900 German thought, with its emphatic rationalistic basis was having often a devestating effect upon the views and beliefs of students. Theological views were changing rapidly. It was a time when science and the scientific method, reflected in the theological world in the rise of Higher Criticism, was given priority; skepticism and a materialistic view of the universe was in vogue, and only a teacher who had a depth of convictions, an inclusiveness of outlook, and a willingness to keep abreast of current thought could influence and gain the respect of his students. Dr. Charteris had those characteristics, as the testimony of such students as Reverend Kenneth M'Laren and Dr. J. A. Fleming shows.[2] To keep pace with current thought Dr. Charteris studied at Tubingen in the summer of 1869 and at Bonn in the summer of 1870. His lectures were rewritten yearly, and Dr. Charteris was readily conversant with, although not greatly sympathetic toward, the methods and results of Higher Criticism.

Dr. Charteris was the Croall lecturer in 1882[3] and Baird lecturer in 1887.[4] His most important contribution to the scholastic

---

[1] The Reverend Duncan Campbell noted the pleasant hours spent as a student in the home of Dr. Charteris. Gordon, op. cit., p. 180.

[2] M'Laren, op. cit., p. 18; J. A. Fleming, The Church in Scotland (Edinburgh: Clark, 1927), Vol. I., p. 237.

[3] The lectures were published under the title, The New Testament Scriptures, Their Claims, History, and Authenticity (London: Nisbet & Co., 1882).

[4] The lectures were published in 1905 under the title, The Church of Christ (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1905).

world was his work, Cannonicity.[1] From the standpoint of the Church, however, Dr. Charteris' most important contribution was his lasting influence upon the thought of his students, and the practicability of his teaching. He guided his students safely through the currents of agnosticism and cynicism which an overrated science and naturalism had procreated. His warm evangelicalism and orthodoxy, proclaimed without trace of dogmatism, was absorbed readily by his students and thus helped the Church to make her message acceptable to the liberal and open-minded spirit of the day. The practicability of his teaching led to an unprecedented emphasis upon "clinical divinity," the giving of practical as well as theoretical training to Divinity students. As the Reverend A. Gordon has indicated, Dr. Charteris was most at home with his students when "he was expounding the Pastoral Epistles, and bringing their teaching to bear upon the work of the ministry."[2] The Epistle of St. James with its claim that "Pure religion is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep himself unspotted from the world" was Dr. Charteris' inspiration, while the Tolbooth Church with its surrounding "no man's land" provided the opportunity.[3] Dr. Charteris had discovered by personal visitation that many poor orphans and widows lived in the Lawnmarket and his sympathies were aroused. The Tolbooth

---

1 In his New Testament classes, Dr. Charteris used as a basis of study Kirchhofer's Quellensammlung. He found it insufficient and not too popular among students, however, and set out to write a more readable and complete book. Cannonicity was the result. It was published in 1890, was widely received by German, French, and British scholars, and was used regularly for a number of years by students in their New Testament studies.

2 Gordon, op. cit., p. 178.

3 W. S. Bruce, Reminiscences of Men and Manners during the Past Seventy Years (James S. Bisset, Aberdeen, 1929), p. 106.

Parish with its "teeming population of non-Church-going people"[1] was like many others in the old town. The former inhabitants, wealthy, respectable, and comfortable, had moved to the new town. Their places were taken by numerous poor and irreligious, for whom the houses were sub-divided and let.[2] Unable to support itself the Church, under the Annuity Tax Abolition Act of 1860, was about to be suppressed and added to another parish.

Through Dr. Charteris' persuasion the University Missionary Association volunteered to take up the cause of reviving the work in the parish.[3] The consent of the presbytery was gained. Home visitation by divinity students was started. Sunday services were conducted regularly by a licentiate acting as parish missionary; Dr. Charteris himself preached in the evenings and administered the sacraments regularly. By the end of two years, full parochial machinery had been put into operation, a congregation of over a thousand assembled, and the church erected into a quod sacra parish. The work of evangelization was carried on through a Sabbath School, Children's Church, weekly prayer meetings, stair and open meetings, working people's services, Sunday Bible classes, and a Young Men's Fellowship. On the practical side, much was done to raise the social level and welfare of the inhabitants through Saturday evening musical entertainments, a clothing society, a work society, a savings bank, and a congregational library. The result of such inclusive work was that "many words of counsel and encouragement

---

1 Gordon, op. cit., p. 155.

2 William Brown, Notes and Recollections of the Tolbooth Church, Parish, and Congregation (Edinburgh: printed privately, 1867).

3 The Tolbooth Parish Magazine, July, 1891.

were spoken to the perplexed and the tempted, vice and sin were attacked in their strongholds with the persistency of Christian zeal and love."[1]

A new feature of the Tolbooth experiment was the "Holly Tree," a nearby house bought by a benevolent supporter, let to the church, and made over into club-rooms for residents of the Lawnmarket. The object of the scheme was to provide a wholesome and congenial atmosphere for youths and adults. Cleanliness and attractiveness were emphasized to give the frequenters a change from the barrenness of their own homes. A cafeteria was set up and a reading room with numerous papers and magazines included, as well as a large room for musical entertainments. Both the musical entertainments and the reading room proved exceptionally popular, as this was the pre-cinema and pre-public library era.

The "Holly Tree" was started in 1876. The first year's report declared that the experiment was a success and had shown that "a public house without drink may be made popular in Edinburgh."[2] The second year's report stated that "several unhappy slaves of drink have been benefited, and many others owe to it the possibility of keeping sober in the Lawnmarket."[3] The "Holly Tree" was a new and much needed type of mission work. Its success inspired a number of others in the city. It added much to the Tolbooth experiment and provided still another setting for Dr. Charteris' "Clinical Divinity."[4]

---

1 Gordon, op. cit., p. 162.
2 M'Laren, op. cit., p. 55.
3 Loc. cit.
4 Bruce, op. cit., p. 108.

CHAPTER V

A. H. CHARTERIS, D. D., LL. D., 1868-1898

Before turning to Dr. Charteris' major work it is necessary to point out that he was a man who differed greatly from Dr. Begg. Dr. Begg was involved in a large number of secular as well as religious organizations and activities. Dr. Charteris, on the other hand, confined his efforts to the Church and her problems, working mainly through the General Assembly and its Life and Work Committee. Dr. Charteris played a leading role in the negotiations leading to the abolition of patronage in 1874; he stoutly opposed those seeking to disestablish the Church of Scotland in the 1860's and 1870's; he was on the General Assembly's Committee on Union and active in the union negotiations from 1878 to 1895, but we do not find him exhorting large public audiences on social evils, heading reform movements, or writing innumerable pamphlets on controversial matters as did Dr. Begg. This has made it more difficult to get a comprehensive or intimate picture of the man and his personality. He was a person who worked quietly and behind the scenes, and yet in that way had a tremendous influence for good upon the Church and society.

The history of the Established Church from the Disruption to 1900 may be divided into three periods: 1843 to 1854, 1854 to 1869, and 1869 to 1900. The Church after 1843 was a severely wounded institution, yet with hidden sources of vitality upon which she could draw in the following years. Most of her outstanding leaders had gone into the Free Church; but nonetheless she struggled on and in the next decade

a new generation arose to carry her banner forward. She was still the custodian of the national parochial economy and, despite criticism and abuse, she set resolutely about her work.

The years from 1843 to 1854 were ones of groping and uncertainty, yet not without hope. The inherent strength of the Church was indicated by the tenacity with which she prosecuted the "Five Schemes" started earlier as the backbone of the Church. Contributions to the Committee on Home Missions, the India Mission, Education, the Colonial Scheme, and the Conversion of the Jews were slightly lower in 1844 than 1843 but thereafter continued slowly to rise. The increase in population and shifts in its location caused some concern to the Church in this period, although the response was not as quick or as great as with the Free Church.[1]

Beginning in the mid-fifties a new spirit took hold of the Established Church. Sir James Graham's Act in 1844 allowed for the disjoining or dividing of extensive or populous parishes and the erection of parishes <u>quod sacra</u> on the condition that certain endowments be procured. From 1843 to 1854 only thirty such were erected, however, and these chiefly in wealthier centers. This delay called forth the energies of Professor Robertson, a man of indomitable courage and wide social sympathies. Mainly through his efforts nearly £ 4,000 had been contributed, and over sixty new parishes had been added to the Church at his death in 1860, the groundwork having been prepared for many more.

---

[1] The Free Church was a new church and so more mobile. She did not have buildings already long-erected and so could set up churches wherever the need was greatest.

The Reverend William Smith of North Leith then took up the cause and, by 1886, 356 new parishes had been erected. Thus, by the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the Established Church had fairly well regained its feet. She was the guardian of over a thousand churches, each with its clergy and workers, all helping to promote the cause of Christ throughout the land.

There was much lacking still, however. Despite the advances made, there were countless thousands sunk in a state of apathy and indifference. Within the churches themselves there was a lack of integrated effort and skilled and trained workers. Such a condition inspired Dr. Charteris' efforts; to him the Church's failure to reclaim the masses was due, at least in part, to her inefficiency and failure to use fully all of the resources available to her, especially the human resources within her walls. His work beginning in 1869 marks the beginning of the third period in which the Church gathered her forces together for the attack upon the irreligion and immorality surrounding her.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND WORK COMMITTEE

Dr. Charteris' greatest contribution to the Church was the creation of the Christian Life and Work Committee. It was appointed by the General Assembly of 1869, mainly as a result of his influence. He was convener from its beginning to 1894 and served as honorary convener until his death in 1908. In its early years (1869-1878) the Committee's primary objective was to discover how the spiritual life of the Established Church might be furthered and deepened through

organizing and integrating into the Church the scattered activity of lay workers and evangelists.[1] A number of queries were sent out to the presbyteries to ascertain the spiritual and social state of the Church and country. The answers received elicited much information and served as a guide for the activities started in the second phase of the Committee's efforts. As its work evolved, four main areas were delineated: the Young Men's Guild, the Woman's Guild, Deputations, and Publications; with a multitude of activities under each.

THE YOUNG MEN'S GUILD

For many years after the Disruption the Established Church did little specifically for her young men. A small number of fellowships in local churches existed, of course, but among many of the young men vigour and enthusiasm was lacking. At perhaps the most critical time in their lives the Church offered little organized work for or oversight over her young men.[2] One result, as the queries brought out, was an increasing indifference toward the Church on the part of many youths and a constant drifting away of them from her. This was most disturbing to Dr. Charteris and it became his major incentive for starting the Young

---

1 Because of her conservatism the Established Church had hesitated to use and give official sanction to the work of lay evangelists and missionaries, Bible-women, and itinerant ministers, many of whom were inspired by the evangelical revivals of Moody and Sankey in the early 1870's. Dr. Charteris felt that by encouraging, training, and giving official sanction to their efforts and incorporating such personnel into the Church, her outreach and effectiveness could be greatly extended.

2 In the late 1860's and early 1870's the Y.M.C.A. was gaining a foothold in Scotland and was undoubtedly a further incentive to Dr. Charteris to start the Guild. Gordon, op. cit., p. 334.

Men's Guild.[1] When, in 1881, he proposed to the General Assembly that a Men's Guild be started to bridge the gap between the Sunday School and the Communion Table, his proposal was heartily received and accepted. The objective of the Guild was a dual one--fellowship and service.[2] Dr. Charteris believed it might serve the Church in at least three respects: as its reclaiming agent, as a unifying force, and as a contributor to the social work and life of the Church.

In its early years the major stress was upon fellowship. The aim was to have a Guild in every church where young men might meet for study and spiritual enrichment.[3] One outgrowth of the former was the setting up of numerous literary societies in local churches. Such an introverted emphasis upon fellowship alone could not persist, however. The queries were revealing the existence of numberless thousands outside the Church and Dr. Charteris pleaded incessantly for the cause of the wanderer and downcast. It is not to be wondered at that many Guildsmen became stirred by the call of the submerged masses around them and saw,

---

1 "It is the constant complaint of country ministers that young men are not easily induced to join the Bible class until they have been long in the parish. It is quite as constantly the complaint and regret of ministers of towns that young men in offices and in service do not attach themselves to the Church or congregation in such a way as to receive influence for good, beyond what they derive in public church services." Reports on Schemes, 1881, p. 437.

2 Article II, Constitution, states that the objective shall be to "stimulate the spiritual and intellectual life of young men and to encourage them to undertake works of Christian usefulness."

3 Also, Dr. Charteris, as a minister in both a rural and an urban parish, had seen the migration of numbers of young men from the country to the towns in pursuit of employment and fortune. He realized that they were exposed often to evils and enticement and he believed that a Guild in every church might be a centre of fellowship and a haven from temptation for many lonely youths.

much to Dr. Charteris' joy, that Christianity meant, in its highest sense, not only the development of self but the self helping in the development of others. It was felt on all levels that only by a real emphasis upon service could the Guild's motto, "We seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness" become a reality.

A true estimation of the Young Men's Guild must be based upon consideration of the work done on various levels: locally, by Provincial Councils, at annual conferences, and on a national basis. In 1882, there existed eighty-three Guilds with 2,787 members. By 1900, under the encouragement and able leadership of Dr. Charteris, Reverend William Robertson, George M'Alpine, and others, this number had grown to 595 with 26,521 members. As important as numbers were the types of work carried on, both of a spiritual and social or philanthropic nature. The local guilds contributed much to the religious life of the parishes. The weekly meeting had as its focus the discussion of a biblical topic, a religious theme, the life of a great Churchman, or perhaps a basic tenet of the Christian faith. The literary societies helped acquaint members with the best in classical and contemporary literature. They helped to deepen feeling, broaden horizons and, very important, to retain the centrality of the Bible not only as literature but as the living word of God. A devotional exercise was always a part of each meeting. Through such gatherings, as Dr. Charteris wisely foresaw, the evangelical faith was strengthened and the religious life succoured on the local level.

As individual guilds grew in numbers and strength, the range

of action was extended. The value of the Savings Bank Movement, founded as indicated earlier by a clergyman of the Established Church, was being recognized by the Church in this period and was evidenced in the starting of Savings Clubs by many guilds.[1] Debating societies became popular increasingly at this time and were formed in many guilds also. They became a nursery for many later leaders of the Church and country. In numerous guilds an emphasis upon temperance became a part of the program and found expression in the promotion of Bands of Hope, Saturday evening concerts, temperance bars, coffee houses, and temperance dinners. Such efforts contributed greatly to the general Temperance Movement of the period. Many guilds became aggressive instruments of evangelization also. The annual dinners for farm servants, sponsored by the Guild of the Logie parish, led to the gathering into the Church and the real conversion of many farm labourers in the district and thus were effective enough to be given much publicity in the Life and Work Committee's annual reports and to be emulated by many groups elsewhere. The Arbroath Men's Guild in 1894 raised funds for a "fine oak pulpit of Gothic design" for the Church.[2] The support given Foreign Missions on the local level cannot be overlooked; needless to say, there would have been no Foreign Missions Movement without such. A number of other activities undertaken by local guilds may be enumerated, all stimulated by the particular needs and circumstances of society in the pre-cinema time

---

1 The Motherwell Young Men's Guild is typical. It started a Penny Savings Bank in 1889 for people in one of the poorest districts of the parish. In eight months, 4,371 transactions were made and £ 236 deposited. Life and Work Magazine, January, 1891, p. 8.

2 Ibid., May, 1894.

and all a manifestation of Dr. Charteris' emphasis upon work as well as worship. Among those of both a social and religious nature were the conducting of prayer and cottage meetings, children's services, railway mission work, poorhouse services, mission work among fisherfolk, the setting up of parochial libraries,[1] the superintending of clubs for working boys, visiting the sick and poor, the providing of entertainments and free breakfasts for the poor, the arranging of lecture courses--then a popular part of social life, and the formation of Purity or White Cross groups.[2] In such ways the spiritual and social life of many communities was raised by the guilds, and the religious impulse found positive social expression.

As the number of local guilds increased, Dr. Charteris and his associates found it desirable to set up Provincial Councils to coordinate and supplement the activities of existing guilds and help in the formation of new ones. Thirteen councils were in operation by 1887. Their work was effective in two ways: the building of a real sense of unity and fellowship within the Guild as a whole and so overcoming the sense of isolation or narrowness handicapping many local guilds, and, secondly, in the undertaking of religious and philanthropic work on a

---

1 It should be remembered that in this period before public libraries became numerous the parochial libraries were, in many areas, the only centre of light and learning in a district, especially in rural areas and in the North of Scotland.

2 Two examples may be given. The Cumberland Men's Guild for a number of years held winter entertainments for old people in the village. In 1894, the Inverness West Parish's Men's Guild held a concert, the proceedings of which were given to the victims of a fishing disaster.

much larger scale than could have been done by any single guild. Annual Provincial Council meetings helped greatly to build a sense of unity. It was done in other ways also; the Glasgow Council in 1885 was the first to set up a hospital visitation scheme under which Guild members who had come from the country to a city hospital or infirmary for treatment would be visited and consoled by Guild members in that city. A number of examples of work by Provincial Councils may be given. A Provincial Council was organized in Edinburgh in 1882 and Temperance and Home Mission work undertaken. Dr. Charteris was especially interested in the latter and helped the Council to set up three home mission projects in the Fountainbridge district of the city. Both the Edinburgh and Glasgow Councils had Committees on Social Reform; the Glasgow Council's Committee for a number of years held winter entertainments in the Church's Labour Homes in the city; in 1909 ninety-five of them were given, while at Aberdeen, beginning in 1895, the Provincial Council undertook similar work in the Boys' Home connected with the Church.

On a country-wide basis, the two major activities of the Young Men's Guild were the promotion of Foreign Missions and the support of the Temperance Movement. The Temperance and Foreign Mission Schemes were first proposed and accepted at the Annual Guild Conference in 1888 at Kirkcaldy. The Guild's furthering of temperance was a part of the general movement of the time. From 1888 to 1891, forty-seven local Guild Temperance branches were formed. A great stimulus was given by the appointment of the Reverend Mr. Ramsay of Portobello in 1891 as Convener of the Guild's Committee on Temperance. In 1892 alone, owing to his

exertions, sixty additional branches formed temperance sections. Illustrated lectures were given and tracts published and distributed. By 1899, 451 branches were undertaking temperance work of one kind or another due to Mr. Ramsay's efforts. With the turn of the century, under the newly formed Guild Council for Temperance and Social Work, volunteer and territorial camps became the centres of operation. In 1909, a Gospel Temperance tent, the first of its kind, was set up at the Stobs camp and in it meetings of both a social and religious nature were held, non-alcoholic drinks served, and reading and writing facilities provided.

In succeeding years the work was considerably extended, leading one newspaper to comment that "it may be doubted if the Church of Scotland Guild has undertaken any movement which has proved such a brilliant success."[1] When the Volunteer Movement gave way to the Territorial Army, the Guild continued its work there, setting up, in 1913 alone, temperance tents in six different camps. Consequently, during the 1914-1918 war, temperance activity was carried on by the Guild in the Scottish Churches' huts both at home and behind the lines. At the end of the War, territorial camp work was taken up again and with success; the Brigadier of the Elie Camp in 1926 at its close expressed "the thanks of the whole brigade for the work the Guild Tent had done."[2] Similar activity was carried on at a number of agricultural fairs from 1890 onwards and was effective in overcoming the intemperance often connected with such events and serving as a stop-gap until a later date when the sale of non-alcoholic

---

1 Reverend M. B. MacGregor, Towards Scotland's Social Good, p. 135.
2 Report on the Schemes, 1927, p. 686.

refreshments was taken over by commercial interests. The impact upon society of such work through the years is an obvious one. The era from 1870 onwards saw a more positive and aggressive temperance attitude in the numerous counter-activities[1] provided to keep the tempted from going astray in strange and distant surroundings. The work of the Guild was of this nature and so served, as Dr. Charteris envisaged, as the Church's and God's reclaiming agent.

The Foreign Missions Movement of the Guild was born amidst an enthusiastic scene when its first Guild missionary, Reverend J. A. Graham, volunteered, in 1888 at the Guild's annual conference held at Kirkcaldy, to "go down into the mine if the Guild would hold the ropes."[2] That such support was adequately given was indicated by the contributions of the following years. They increased from £ 379 in 1889 to £ 1,146 in 1896, while in 1890 alone, under Dr. Charteris' instigation, a special fund of over £ 1,000 was raised toward the construction of the Kalimpong Church in India. The Foreign Missions enthusiasm sweeping the Church in that period was permeating the Guild as well. Erection of the Kalimpong Church was started in 1891 and completed the following year, thus becoming the focal point for the nine centres of work in the surrounding area.

---

1 Temperance bars, workingmen's clubs, coffee bars, social institutes, and reading rooms are a few examples.

2 As a close friend of the Reverend J. A. Graham, Dr. Charteris was largely responsible for inspiring him with missionary zeal and urging him to volunteer as the Guild's first missionary. Mr. Graham was ordained in St. George's Church, Edinburgh, in January, 1889, in the presence of over a thousand Guildsmen, the same church in which Alexander Duff had been ordained sixty years previously. Reverend Graham became one of the greatest missionaries of the Church of Scotland.

Dr. Charteris' work did not stop there. With youthful enthusiasm he set about encouraging the guilds to give even more, and enough funds were raised so that, in 1894, a medical missionary, Dr. Roy MacDonald, was sent out to the Guild's station in Kalimpong. In 1896, Mr. MacKenzie was deputized as a lay evangelist and sent to Kalimpong also and, in 1899, the Reverend D. Macmichael was sent out as the Guild's missionary-minister to the Dooars.

The Guild's emphasis upon Foreign Missions had a dual result. Foremost was the bringing of Christian influence to bear upon a land blemished by paganism. Mission work had positive results upon the Guilds at home, as well. Having a tangible outlet for their Christian sympathies and impulses helped greatly to strengthen the sense of unity and to stimulate the growth of the Guild. It provided a field of service for no small number too; by 1892 twelve Guildsmen were on active service in the mission field.[1]

The history of the Young Men's Guild is one of unobtrusive beginnings, rapid expansion, integration, contraction, and finally, absorption. The maximum growth was in urban areas from 1875 to 1890. Following that year a process of unifying and consolidation set in. The first serious blow came in the 1914-1918 war, when the majority of the country's youth entered the armed services and many guilds were disbanded. The movement never recovered. Gains were made in the 1920's but other youth organizations--Young People's Fellowships for both sexes, the

---

1 By 1910 seventy-two Guildsmen in all were or had been on service in the foreign mission field.

Y. M. C. A., TOC H, and rural youth groups were then entering the field. The Second World War also dealt a devastating blow. In its day the Guild contributed greatly to the work of the Church at home and abroad.[1] The Guild served as a means by which the Church met youth's innate need for friendship, fellowship, and service. The individual guilds, as Dr. Charteris had predicted, became centres of Christian life throughout the country. Through them the evangelical impulse found expression and especially in the later stages, the social gospel was carried on, helping to pave the way for the social work of the Church in the twentieth century.

THE WOMAN'S GUILD

One of Dr. Charteris' greatest contributions was his revival, through the Life and Work Committee, of women's work in the Church and the setting up of an organization enabling them to contribute to and find an appropriate place in the Church. Before 1886, little recognition had been given to women and little attempt made to organize and increase the service of women members of the Church. Under the superintendence of the Foreign Missions Committee, a Scottish Ladies Association for the Advancement of Female Education in India had been started in 1838. Eight years later, a Ladies Association for the Christian Education for Jewish Females was organized under the Jewish Mission Committee. A

---

1 This is not to say that the Young Men's Guild has been dealt a final death blow. While outside the scope of this work, it should be noted that the Guild continues today, that efforts to revive it are being made, and that certainly there is still a need and a place for the Young Men's Guild.

Ladies Gaelic School Society had been set up in the same period as well but all three organizations were limited in scope because of the lack of support on the local level and also because they were not self directed and organized. Thus, up to 1886, women had no organization in the Church they could really call their own and it is not to be wondered at that Dr. Charteris' suggestion of a separate body, the Woman's Guild, was called "one of the most startling innovations ever proposed in the work of the Church."[1]

Dr. Charteris was distressed not only by the lackadaisicalness of the three associations but also by the draining off of many church women into other organizations of a secular and religious nature. Branches of the Young Women's Christian Association were appearing in the larger towns of Scotland in the 1870's and 1880's. A somewhat similar organization, the Haddo House Association, was also forming local groups at the time. In the north, competition from the Lady Aberdeen's Society for Young Women was causing the churches some concern. The report of the State of Religion and Morals Committee of the Free Church in 1887 noted that the local branches of the Society were not connected with church congregations, although often "taking the place which a congregational association should occupy."[2] Lady Aberdeen's Society and the Scottish Girls' Friendly Society came under the surveillance of the Established Church in 1886. The Life and Work Committee noted that their success in

---

1 MacGregor, op. cit., p. 78.
2 Report of the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1887, p. 58.

the northern counties indicated the great need for a women's organization on a national scale. Dr. Charteris realized that all such societies were good, yet he recognized that they were subtracting from the effectiveness and outreach of the Church and assuming one of her functions. To overcome that tendency was one reason for his proposing the Woman's Guild.

The Life and Work Committee's investigations in the 1870's had revealed a fair number of home mission activities being undertaken by women in various parishes, especially in densely populated areas where overworked ministers were aided by lady helpers in the visiting and care of the poor and sick, in the conducting of Bible and Sunday classes, and in numerous other ways. The lack of unity and organization of such work and the little if any training of the workers had long impressed Dr. Charteris and led to his assertion that only through efficient organization and training would substantial results follow.[1] A trip to London by Dr. Charteris in 1885 to visit such institutions as Harley House, Dr. Barnardo's Homes, the London Bible-Women's Mission, and the Kilburn Orphanage of Mercy only confirmed Dr. Charteris' beliefs in the need for a women's organization and in the 1886 General Assembly he presented his scheme of a Woman's Guild. It was to include all women workers and women's church organizations already existing and would set up new ones where not. Three levels of personnel were to be recognized: women who

---

1 While in Germany Dr. Charteris had become acquainted with Pastor Fliedner's great work at Kaiserwerth in the organizing, under Church auspices, of a hospital, an orphanage, rescue homes and the order of the Deaconess.

were members but who performed no special duties in a church group, those engaged part-time in doing Christian and philanthropic work in a parish, and, lastly, those giving themselves full-time to such work. For the training of the second and third groups, or Deaconesses as they were called, Dr. Charteris envisaged a Training Institute or Home.

THE WORK OF THE GUILDS

The history of the Woman's Guild from its beginning to 1900 is one of continued progress and expansion both in numbers and work. Under the inspiration of Dr. Charteris and the wise counsel of his wife, who was the president of the Guild from 1894 to 1913, the number of local branches increased from thirty-two with 2,087 members in 1888 to 529 with 36,646 members in 1900. Even more impressive were the many good works in local parishes undertaken by the guilds. They raised funds through annual sales, work parties and bazaars to support the local church and guild schemes. As one example, the Killearn Woman's Guild at its second annual sale in 1900 realized a profit of £ 45, which was distributed among the Deaconess Hospital, the Women's Association of Home Missions, the Plague Orphanage at Poona, the Killearn Home, the Children's Orphanage at South Queensferry, and the Smyrna Hospital. Most heartening to Dr. Charteris was the large amount of benevolent work carried on by local guilds. The Penninghame Parish Woman's Guild for a number of years held annual entertainments for the aged poor at which parcels of clothing were distributed. Similar work was done by the Glasgow Cathedral Guild for the Church's poor Sunday School children.

In 1909 the Woman's Guild of Kincardine-in-Menteith affiliated with the Woman's Guild of an Edinburgh church in the Grassmarket district and in succeeding years sent gifts for distribution to the district's poor.

Collectively, the Guild's work was as impressive. Interest in the temperance cause led to the forming, in 1892, of a temperance organization within the Guild. By 1896, it had 1,120 members and was doing much to oppose intemperance on the local level. In 1897, it joined hands with the Woman's Association under the Temperance Committee to form a new and much stronger association. After 1900, much support was given to legislative proposals before Parliament aimed at restricting the sale of drink. The first of these was the 1901 "Sale of Intoxicating Liquors to Children Bill" which was made a law in that year as a result of the efforts of numerous pressure groups such as the Guild. Temperance sentiment found concrete expression in 1903, when a Cottage for Inebriate Women was set up at Polton by the Women's Guild. In conjunction with the Men's Guild, agricultural fairs also were a centre of operations. Beginning in 1891, the Angus and Mearns Guild Council provided a temperance tent at the annual shows of the Angus Agricultural Association. In its first six years profits amounted to £ 76, part of which was given to the Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Association and the other part to the Guild's Temperance Cottage. By 1910, the Woman's Guild had such tents at ten different fairs.[1] A new and important kind of work

---

[1] An elderly shepherd noted that "the showyards are different places since the ladies began these tents" (1904 Temperance Committee Report, p. 823), and a fitting tribute was paid the Guild by the Temperance Committee in 1906 when it wrote: "these tents are found very helpful

was the Coffee House set up in the Pleasence by the Edinburgh Provincial Council in 1900, a forerunner of the coffee-bar era in the early 1900's.

The general interest in Foreign Missions in the latter part of the century permeated the Woman's Guild as well. A proposal in 1891 to send out and support a woman doctor at the Kalimpong Mission was eagerly accepted. No qualified woman doctor could be found, so in 1893 a man was sent. The Charteris Memorial Hospital at Kalimpong was built in that year by Guild funds and afterwards maintained by the Guild. As with the Young Men's Guild, Foreign Missions work helped to strengthen and deepen the life of the Woman's Guild. It provided a field in which Christian sentiment could be expended upon a noble and worthy cause; in 1899 alone £ 8,307 was raised by the Woman's Guild for home and foreign missionary work.

At the home base a project to set up a Scottish Home for the Children of Missionaries was started in 1897 by Dr. and Mrs. Charteris and heartily supported by the Guild. A special appeal to local groups for funds was made by Dr. Charteris and enough was secured by 1899 to purchase and open a house at Duddingston. The tribute paid him later at his death indicated Dr. Charteris' personal interest in the home: "His tender heart went out in pity also to the little ones of our missionaries, sent home to the care of strangers, while their parents are fighting the Church's battles in far-away lands, and the Home-house at

---

in promoting sobriety at the different fairs, and also in providing wholesome food for the crowds who visit the fairs." Report on the Schemes of the Church of Scotland, 1906, p. 851.

Duddingston is the tangible result of his sympathy."[1] Nor did Dr. Charteris' and the Guild's interest stop with the home. The Life and Work Committee in 1896 had issued a query to discover the extent to which the orphans and widows of deceased Church of Scotland communicants were being cared for by individual parishes. The following year the Committee reported that "while in many parishes the Church is at present exercising a kindly and beneficent care over those widows and orphans who have special claims upon her, there are still many cases in which the Church's care and help to such are less effective than they might or ought to be."[2] Such a condition distressed Dr. Charteris deeply and when, in 1898 an opportunity came to take over an orphanage started by Dr. Robertson of Greyfriars, he urged the Assembly to permit the Guild to do so. Consent was given, premises were acquired at South Queensferry, and the orphanage became a centre of Guild activity and interest.

THE DIACONATE, THE TRAINING HOME AND HOSPITAL

The work of women in the early Church at Jerusalem was Dr. Charteris' inspiration for the order of the Deaconess[3] and his acquaintance with the work being done by deaconesses in Germany and England

---

1 Life and Work Magazine, Woman's Guild Supplement, June, 1908.
2 Report on the Schemes...1897, p. 743.
3 "Readers of the New Testament know that many women had a definite official position in the Church of the apostolic age. We read of them in I Timothy, vs 9-14, and we know that they long continued in the Church." Life and Work Magazine, July, 1887, p. 4.

convinced him of its practicability. Persistent propaganda by Dr. Charteris in 1887 resulted in the Assembly's sanctioning, the following year, of a training home in Edinburgh for women. The first step was to rent a small house at Mayfield Gardens. Eight ladies were enrolled as participants. Lecture courses by Dr. Charteris and others on home and foreign missions were given and practical experience gained through a mission project in the Pleasance. Realizing the need for such in Glasgow, Dr. Charteris arranged for the giving of the lecture courses there as well, beginning in 1889. In the opening lecture at Glasgow, he suggested that a home with special emphasis upon nursing training be opened. He believed such training to be of primary importance, especially for the deaconesses working in poorer districts.[1] Through Dr. Hawthorne, arrangements were made with the Glasgow Infirmary and a home was started in 1890. This continued for two years when facilities for training became available at the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and the Glasgow home was closed.

Inspired by Pastor Fliedner's work at Kaiserswerth, Dr. Charteris, in 1892, started a drive to raise funds for the building of a small hospital in the Pleasance district. He foresaw several benefits;

---

1 This was not the first time Dr. Charteris had become interested in the medical training of women. When the University of Edinburgh refused to admit nine women students to the medical school, legal action was brought against the University in 1872. Dr. Charteris was one of a minority group of six faculty members who believed that the University should not defend itself against the action but should, instead, admit the women to the school. The case received widespread publicity and was won by the pursuers. See _Closed Record in the action of Sophis Lorisa Jex-Blake against the Senatus Academicus of the University of Edinburgh_ (Colston and Son, Edinburgh, 1872).

the training of the deaconesses, the giving of hospital care to needy persons in the districts and also to Church of Scotland members from the parishes, and the providing of an opportunity for churches and local guilds to witness to their faith by endowing a bed. In 1893, Dr. Charteris appealed to the general public through the Life and Work Magazine and by the end of the year a sufficient amount had been raised to ensure it con[illegible]tion. The hospital was named the Lady Grisell Baillie Memorial Hospital in honour of Lady Grisell Baillie, the first Church of Scotland deaconess. It fulfilled all of Dr. Charteris' expectations; the 1899 report to the General Assembly noted the great joy and happiness of Pleasance residents admitted to the hospital, who had been unable to afford medical care previously. By 1900 ten beds had been endowed by churches or local guilds, 119 branches having sent in donations in 1899. The small size of the hospital served as an ideal training place for the deaconesses whose future work would be not in a large hospital but in homes.

The hospital quickly appealed to the imagination and sympathies of the Christian public. A number of generous financial gifts were given by individuals. Guilds and provincial councils responded heartily. By 1896 demands upon the hospital had become so great that a renovation and extension of the building was needed. In complete sympathy with the project, Dr. Charteris himself set out with a band of faithful supporters to raise the funds required. Their appeals were quickly answered and, in 1897, the building was modernized and extended, and the staff increased. District nursing in the Pleasance was started in 1897 and had increased to such an extent that in 1899 3,733 visits to homes

had been made. The work in the hospital continued steadily throughout the first part of the twentieth century. In the First World War it was evacuated temporarily to make room for war casualities and the hospital was ultimately taken over, in 1948, under the National Health Service Act of the previous year.

In its lifetime the hospital played an important part in uniting and deepening the work of the Woman's Guild. It offered a medium through which the Christian sentiments of women throughout the country could find expression by gifts and donations. It proved of great benefit to the Pleasance district and needy Church of Scotland members. Most of all, it was an integral part of the deaconesses' training and fitted them much more adequately and effectively for their work in the parishes.

Only a word needs to be said of the great contribution to the Church and society made by the deaconesses in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In lonely and distant rural parishes, in crowded, festering slums, wherever broken bodies needed healing and disconsolate, despairing souls restored to health, the deaconesses went. Sympathetic, understanding, and with a store of practical knowledge, they taught cleanliness, thrift, self-care, and sobriety and spread the light of Christianity in many a dark and dirty hovel. Ministers quickly realized the value of their work and the demand for deaconesses soon exceeded the supply. By 1900, over forty deaconesses were at work in the parishes of Scotland and, by 1925, the number had risen to fifty-five.[1]

---

[1] It should be noted that the success of the Deaconess Home and Hospital

THE PLEASANCE ST. NINIAN'S MISSION

To supplement the lectures and give residents of the home practical parochial training, a Home Mission project was started in the Pleasance.[1] Rooms were rented in a house, groups and activities organized, and home visiting started in the area by the trainees. The immediate success of the experiment made an expansion of facilities desirable. A campaign to raise funds was undertaken by Dr. Charteris in 1890, the objective being to purchase and rebuild an old tenement into a large hall for evangelists' meetings and other activities. By 1892, the premises had been acquired and renovated. The more spacious quarters allowed many projects to be carried on: Sunday evening services for adults, a morning service for children, meetings for "waifs and neglected children" in the afternoon, Monday sewing classes, Tuesday mothers' meeting, Wednesday Girls' Club aimed at "directing aright the lives of young girls at a period of life when they are exposed in such a district as the Pleasance to many and varied temptations,"[2] Thursday industrial training classes, Friday Band of Hope, and a Saturday night Temperance Meeting Entertainment to "diminish the awful drunkenness which submerges the greater part of our poorer population."[3]

The variety of activities undertaken was a result, in part,

---

and the order of the Diaconate led the Irish Presbyterian Church to set up similar organizations in 1908.

1 The Pleasance district, containing about three thousand inhabitants, poor and degenerate, was formerly a part of St. Cuthbert's Parish in Edinburgh and was given over to the care of Dr. Charteris and the mission in 1888.

2 Report on the Scheme to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1894, p. 518.

3 Ibid., 1892, p. 531.

of Dr. Charteris' insistence and also rose from the needs of the district. The Sunday afternoon children's hours were a special favourite of his and Mrs. Charteris'. They had gone through the area and noted the aimless and undirected activities of the many children and felt that much good could be accomplished if they were brought under the guidance of kind and trusted leaders. When effected, the idea was immediately successful; on an average Sunday between two and three hundred children were thus occupied by games, readings, and singing. Actually, such afternoon meetings became fairly widespread through Scotland in the 1890's and had even taken on the nature of a movement. Opponents referred to them as the P.S.A.'s, i.e., Pleasant Sunday Afternoons, and denounced them as being sacreligious and detracting from the regular church services. Mr. Morgan, as Convener of the Sabbath Observance Committee in the Free Church staunchly opposed them in the 1899 General Assembly, saying that "it was a great pity that the Church should be committed to what were called Pleasant Sunday Afternoons."[1] Nevertheless, such afternoon meetings for children did become quite popular and were made a part of the program in many churches. As in the Pleasance Mission, they did much to educate and brighten the lives of innumerable children.

Throughout the 1890's, the scope of the Mission's work continued to increase. New features were a scheme started in 1891 to find suitable jobs and make sets of clothing for especially deserving and qualified young people in the district,[2] a working men's club open nightly

---

[1] Proceedings and Debates of the Free Church of Scotland, 1899, p. 204.
[2] A Central Free Registry for Girls was set up through which country girls coming to Edinburgh seeking jobs would be helped and Edinburgh

with its own rooms,[1] a wood carving class in 1892,[2] and subsequently a savings bank, sewing classes, and a Total Abstinence Society which was especially effective. The practicability of the Pleasance Mission under Dr. Charteris' direction was its use as a training ground for the deaconesses and its contribution to the people of the district as a religious and social centre. Its significance lay in the wide scope of its activities which distinguished it from the usual mission with its emphasis upon the spiritual only and its success led to its wide emulation in parishes elsewhere.

AN ESTIMATION

Any general evaluation of the Woman's Guild through the years must note, first of all, that, as Dr. Charteris prophesied, it gave to women a needed, rightful, and recognized place in both the Church and society. The need for trained workers to supplement the activities of harried and over-burdened ministers became increasingly obvious with the growing irreligion of the latter part of the century. The rise of

---

girls desiring to find work in smaller towns would also be helped to find work, lodgings, and suitable friends. A tremendous amount of good was done in this way. See Woman's Guild Life and Work Supplement, July, 1891.

1 In the 1893 Report, Dr. Charteris noted that "The bright rooms are appreciated, and the working men and lads of the district are, we think, beginning to find that a pleasanter evening can be spent in the Club either with newspaper or magazine, or in a quiet game with a companion, than in a public house or loafing about the street corners."

2 The class was held in the winter months on Saturday evenings from six to seven, boys from fifteen to twenty being members. Stools, pipe-racks, blotters and frames were made and easily sold, some even to the Queen at Balmoral. See Young Men's Guild Supplement, May, 1900.

secular philanthropic groups and official social agencies and the failure of the Church to meet the social needs of the masses was characteristic of the day and led to a growing alienation of many from her. Dr. Charteris recognized the trend and believed that the Woman's Guild might be one means of combating that tendency. That it was at least partly successful was indicated in 1893, when Dr. Charteris wrote: "Many who were tired of the listlessness of things in organized churches, and who had therefore rushed out to ally themselves with the vigourous working parties and societies and unions that ignored all churches, are now thankfully finding a sphere for their energy among those who sit down with them at the same communion table."[1]

The instituting of the Diaconette came at a time when a general emancipation of women was occurring and so, in part, insured its success. Wide opportunities for women were being opened up; a career replaced the role of housewife for many. One charm of the Diaconette was its offering to women a career which was attractive, satisfying, and rewarding; one of which each member could be proud. The training given helped to enhance the lives and accelerate the efficiency and usefulness of deaconesses. It helped many people to realize that the Church was aware of the material as well as spiritual needs of the lowly and downtrodden. The starting of a hospital in the Pleasance under Christian auspices, it being the first of its kind in Britain, came at a time when much attention was being given by the general public to health and sanitation, and so enabled the Church to keep pace with another trend of the day.

---

[1] The Life and Work Magazine, February, 1893, p. 5.

People's lives become meaningful only when they have a cause they can give themselves to, a deep loyalty to which they can pledge themselves. Dr. Charteris realized this and, with true insight, envisaged the Woman's Guild as an abettor of causes around which allegiances and lives could be centred. Wherever found, the guilds became nuclei of fealty and devotion; they promoted a spirit of fellowship within congregations; their multifarious work alleviated much distress among the poor, aged, and infirm; they kept the flame of spiritual life burning strongly, and increasingly in many instances contributed much to the financial support of parish churches.

DEPUTATIONS

From 1825 onwards the Scottish fishing industry expanded rapdily and, by 1850, was employing over 66,000 persons. Its main centres were along the east coast at Fraserburgh, Wick, Peterhead, Yarmouth, Stonehaven, and Aberdeen.[1] The catching season itself lasted usually from eight to ten weeks, a period during which the coastal towns were besieged by large numbers of fishermen, their families, and seasonal labour. Such congestion created serious problems. The moral and religious one was first brought to the attention of the Church through the efforts of Dr. Charteris and the Life and Work Committee.

Answers to queries sent out indicated the inadequacy of existing religious facilities and personnel in such centres and, in 1872, the

---

1 James Mackinnon, The Social and Industrial History of Scotland (London: Longmans, Green, 1921), pp. 156-158.

Life and Work Committee was delegated by the General Assembly to send deputies to Wick to strengthen the efforts of local clergymen. The initial success led to the expansion of activities. In 1880, seven ministers were sent to the various centres. Five years later, Dr. Charteris appealed to churchwomen to aid the program[1] and that year four ladies went to Wick and Fraserburgh to help the deputies. Already, devoted laymen were participating. In 1884, a layman had been sent to Fraserburgh and a married couple to Baltasound.

In its initial stages the emphasis was upon meeting the spiritual and religious needs of the fisherfolk. Sanctuary and open-air services were conducted, prayer meetings held in houses, the sick visited and comforted, Bible classes started,[2] and religious and temperance tracts distributed. In Baltawood a mission house was erected and at Barra a church was constructed. With the coming of lay workers, efforts became more heterogeneous. The physical needs of the folk were given greater consideration and methods adopted to better the environment and enhance the social as well as the religious life of the people. Conditions at one place were described by Dr. Charteris thus: "The sanitary arrangements are demoralizing, the girls a rowdy lot--hard whisky drinkers;

---

1 In an article in the January, 1885 issue of Life and Work Dr. Charteris wrote: "There is a great field for Christian ladies and gentlemen in elevating the tone and moving to good the hearts of the toilers in these crowded fishing towns, who are often pulled down by the influences of the dreadful barracks in which they are compelled to herd together."

2 Writing in 1886, Dr. Charteris noted of one centre: "Each visitor gradually went over the district. In one case, a large Bible class of more than a hundred was formed, in another a series of House Prayer meetings to which women came from neighboring houses, in another a large Gospel temperance meeting." Our Mission to Fisher Folk, Life and Work Magazine, June, 1886.

wild doings and wicked goings-on had occurred among the men and women."[1] These circumstances were met by the starting of such centres as the "Rest House" at Yarmouth where recreation, rest, and health services were provided and gratefully used. In commenting on the valuable work done in the Rest House at Yarmouth Dr. Charteris noted that "The Rest House was again the centre of a great work where the fisher girls find warmth and welcome, cheap and wholesome meals, rest and recreation, and healing for the many cuts and hand-sores which are their inevitable portion. The walls of the Rest House are seldom silent, for when the clatter of dishes has died away, and Miss Davidson has seen that all are served and satisfied, then she or one of the other ladies opens the organ, and the strains of some favourite hymn are sung with sweetness and fervour, as only our Scottish fisher girls can sing."[2]

The emphasis upon medical aid became a predominant one in many places. At Lowestoft a centre called "The Shelter" was opened and such services provided. Its good work was brought to the attention of the General Assembly in 1911 when the Committee noted in its report the varied work of its deputies: "For the first week or two in October, not having many patients to attend to we embraced the opportunity to speak to many of the girls in groups on the streets, telling them of our 'shelter' and showing a kindly interest in them. Then by the third week we were busy with the girls' strained wrists; then came the sea-boils and poisoned hands among the men; and later on the girls came with

---

1 Ibid.

2 Report on the Schemes... 1908, p. 502.

their poor finger joints covered with little abscesses. This means many dressings, beside the men getting lint away with them to continue the treatment themselves when out at sea. They were all most grateful, and many expressed themselves in such terms as 'What wid we dae if we hadna the shelter tae come tae?"[1]

In some centres educational work was carried on. The day schools at Unst directed by the Committee's deputies were outstanding and were highly commended by Dr. Charteris.[2] Beginning in 1872, the Life and Work Committee's deputations to fisherfolk with their wide range of activities became a traditional part of the Church's life. The first phase was one of continual growth and development. By 1885, the upper limit of expansion had been reached and the work leveled off to a consistent pace. The deputies' ministrations throughout the years served as a living symbol of the Church's acceptance of her responsibility toward her people. In this area also we see Dr. Charteris' emphasis upon work as well as worship manifested. The spiritual nourishment given helped many "to stand fast amongst the many perils and temptations that beset them,"[3] while the emphasis upon advancing the physical welfare of the fisherfolk was the medium through which many hardened lives

---

1 Report to the General Assembly, 1911, p. 53.

2 "Our deputies in Unst, where the season was long, had two day schools, one with fifteen, one with forty scholars, as well as four meetings a week on week-days for women, with thirty or forty in attendance; and on Sundays had a school, a prayer meeting, and a share in the ordinary services of the Parish Church." A. H. Charteris, "Our Mission to Fisher Folk," Life and Work Magazine, 1886.

3 Report on the Schemes, 1922, p. 410

were softened, consecrated to the Lord, and brought within the fold of the Church. Her service to the "toilers of the deep"[1] bore a rich harvest.

PUBLICATIONS

For several years answers to the Committee's queries had indicated the desire of many ministers for some magazine which they could circulate in the name of the Church of Scotland in their parishes. Dr. Charteris had long realized the need and value of such. He was deeply convinced of the power of the Press and felt that the Church had not made complete use of that power.[2] Dr. Charteris' conviction was solidly grounded indeed; by 1870 the Press had become a powerful instrument in the moulding of public opinion.[3]

The publication of the magazine, Life and Work, with its symbol of the plow and anchor on the front page, was authorized by the 1878 General Assembly and the first issue was printed in January, 1879. The magazine's objective was a dual one; to stimulate the spiritual life of the Church and to further her practical efforts. Dr. Charteris was its editor for the first twelve months and a fellow student, Dr. M'Murtrie

---

1 Ibid., 1930, p. 396.

2 In the 1879 Report to the General Assembly he wrote: "The Christian Church has probably never yet made full use of the mighty powers of the press; certainly the Church of Scotland never has. The press has made a revolution in every family in the land; it is, for good or ill, teaching every responsible member of the community every day. But the Christian Church is only beginning to see what could be done with its help." p. 468.

3 G. D. Henderson, Heritage, A Study of the Disruption (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, Ltd., 1943), p. 1.

until 1889. The magazine was an immediate success; within five months a circulation of 72,000 had been reached. In many parishes supplements with items of local interest were added by the ministers. In 1880, a special Gaelic and a Soldiers and Sailors supplement was printed by the Committee and distributed in areas where those groups were numerous. By 1881, the average monthly circulation had reached 85,000 copies distributed in 647 parishes, with supplements in many of them. Four years later, circulation had reached the 100,000 mark in an estimated one thousand parishes with supplements in three hundred of them. A Young Men's Guild supplement was added in 1887 and, three years later, the Woman's Guild did likewise. In 1901, the magazine was merged with the Mission Record, a missionary publication, and was called the Life and Work and Mission Record of the Church of Scotland. Subsequently its effectiveness and outreach became even greater.

From its beginning the Life and Work Magazine was effective in a number of ways. To awaken and deepen the spiritual lives of its readers, a portion of each issue was devoted to the publication of sermons by leading clergymen, religious articles by prominent authors, and poems and meditations by well known people.[1] Its quality and high literary standard made the magazine publication an effective educational instrument; for many years several well known Scottish artists contributed to it.[2] Being read by over 500,000 people monthly, the magazine made

---

1 At least one sermon was included each month by such men as Dr. Norman Macleod, J. Marshall Lang, and Bruce W. Begg. The blind poet-preacher, Reverend George Matheson, was a literary contributor for many years.

2 The 1889 Report notes the following "eminent artists" as illustrators

the general public aware of the numerous activities and concerns of the Church. Under Dr. Charteris' insistence many social and economic difficulties facing various groups in society were presented on its pages. This, in fact, became a definite trend in the last decade of the nineteenth century. Some examples of problems presented are temperance (March 1879), the working classes (May, 1879), Girls Griendly Societies (July, 1879), family life (February, 1880), working girls (September, 1880), farm servants (May, 1881), the aged (March, 1882), while in 1895 alone the difficulties of the crofter, fisherfolk, farm servants, the city poor and juvenile delinquents were considered. The discussions of problems relating to these groups did much to rouse public interest and educate public opinion on them and so helped in their eventual solution.

One of the magazine's main objectives was to build up a true spirit of fellowship and break down the class antagonisms and prejudices characteristic of nineteenth century society or, in Dr. Charteris' words: "to do something to unite rich and poor, town and country, in mutual interest and sympathy, this has been the Committee's aim."[1] It was accomplished by the publication of specific articles on the lives and problems of members of each group intended to arouse sympathetic understanding from people in the others. As one example, an article entitled "Hard Times," dealing with the poverty and unemployment of the working

---

of the magazine for 1888: Sir W. Fettes Douglas, President of the Royal Scottish Academy; Robert M'Gregor, R. S. A.; Waller H. Paton, R. S. A., and others.

1 Life and Work Magazine, January, 1885.

classes due to the trade depression of the previous winter, was printed in the July, 1879, issue of Life and Work in order to acquaint the public with the hardships facing industrial workers. Many of the articles mentioned above might be cited as examples also.

The publication of the Life and Work Magazine came at a time when general education had become widespread enough to create a large reading public demanding reading material of an interesting, informative, and inspiring nature. Under Dr. Charteris' influence, the Magazine proved to be of sufficient quality to meet that demand. To the miner, the lonely crofter, the office lad, the aged, and the sick the magazine came with the Christian message of hope, inspiration, and salvation, an array of facts and information, and a word of encouragement and understanding. For the Church it became, as Dr. Charteris had hoped it would, an agent of evangelization and unification, a channel by which the eternal gospel of Christianity was spread throughout the land.

Two other schemes effected by Dr. Charteris in this area deserve notice. Eighteen hundred and eighty-five saw the first publication of the informative and instructive Church of Scotland Year Books and, in 1890, a Guild Text Book Scheme was put into operation, whose ultimate success was due, to a great extent, to the determined and persevering work of Dr. J. A. M'Clymont. Previous to 1890, the Free Church had done much in publishing popular textbooks for guilds and Bible classes. Established Church people felt, however, that something especially for them should be published and, under Dr. Charteris' initiative, a plan was set up. Among the early publications which sold widely both at home

and abroad were: A History of the Church of Scotland by the Reverend P. M'Adam Muir (17,000 copies), A Handbook of Christian Evidences by Professor Steward, D. D., of Aberdeen University (15,000 copies), and An Introduction to the New Testament by Dr. M'Clymont (25,000 copies). By 1900, over twenty such books were published under the Committee's auspices and were valuable both in reaching the general public and serving as textbooks for participants in the Committee's annual essay competitions.[1]

THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Dr. Charteris' realization that there was a great need for detailed information about the religious and social state of the people led to the sending out of numerous queries by the Life and Work Committee.[2] By the 1870's, the Established Church was awakening to the need for intelligent action on socio-religious problems and recognizing that, as a basis for such, accurate information was needed. Thus the General Assembly, in 1870, readily concurred with Dr. Charteris' suggestion that queries be sent out. During the Committee's first fifteen years, many social evils were investigated, the religious state of parishes assessed,

---

1 Started in 1885 to encourage reading and literary efforts among young people, these competitions in the areas of Church History, the Bible, and Religious Thought stimulated an enormous amount of interest and activity among young communicants and guildsmen and women, especially in the years from 1885 to 1910, when literary societies were prominent throughout the country.

2 The query method which Dr. Charteris popularized in the Established Church may have come from the Free Church's Committee on the State of Religion and Morals which, in the 1860's and 1870's, gathered and assessed information from the presbyteries through such a technique.

and the relationship between the two determined and clarified. Investigations into intemperance in 1877, licentiousness in 1878, immorality in rural areas in 1881, the effect of seat rents in 1886, Sunday labour in 1892, and gambling in 1894 may be cited as examples of evils investigated. At the same time questions about the state of family religion, Sunday school work, the extent of non-churchgoing and the misuse of the Sabbath were being asked. Dr. Charteris hoped that through such a procedure a complete picture of the social and religious state of the country might be obtained, somewhat on the lines of the older Statistical Accounts.[1] Here, the Church in relation to three major concerns will be discussed: the rural problem, the poor and lapsed, and the working classes.

The Church and the Rural Problem. A contemporary of Dr. Begg's, the Reverend Harry Stuart of Oathlaw, had attempted, in the 1850's, to awaken the Established Church to the difficulties facing rural people, but without success. He then devoted his energies to secular organizations seeking to enhance rural life.[2] The queries sent out by the Life and Work Committee in 1871 mark the beginning of a real effort by the Church to understand rural problems. The answers given indicated that the Church's attention should be centred upon the rural labourer mainly, as among this group the greatest intemperance, illegitimacy, and religious indifference was found.

---

1 The amount of work given the Committee prevented this from being realized. The "query" method perfected by Dr. Charteris was adopted and used later by the Home Missions, Temperance, Religious Condition of the People, Social Work, and Church and Nation Committees.

2 See p. 72.

The solutions advocated by Dr. Charteris and the Committee followed mainly along the lines demarcated earlier by Dr. Begg: the setting up of parish libraries, the giving of lectures and readings by ministers, the starting of Bothy schools[1] and week-night evening classes, the making available, as much as possible, of interesting and instructive literature, cottage improvement through legislative action,[2] a more stringent enforcement in smaller towns of the Forbes-Mackenzie Act, the issuing of commendatory certificates by ministers, the giving of more frequent holidays to farm labourers,[3] and the taking upon themselves by employers of more responsibility for the spiritual and moral welfare of their workers.

The queries led also to the embarrassing discovery that, in many parishes, little contact existed between the minister and rural labourers. The minister's lack of time and often interest, the migratory habits of the workers themselves, their shyness and reticence because of social differentiation and other factors, and their indifference to religious ordinances and things divine were all contributing factors. The

---

1 This had already been done in parts of Aberdeenshire.

2 The Committee in its 1872 Report stated that "merely calling the attention of noblemen and landowners" to deficient housing was not enough and suggested that "nothing short of a Land Act will secure that rural workers be provided with what are really homes." p. 441.

3 In 1873, the Committee asserted that "more frequent holidays or days of respite from toil, on which it would be possible for farm servants to have family and friendly intercourse, are a necessary preliminary to a more religious observance of the Lord's Day. As things are, their spiritual natures are often left uncared for and uncultivated, and a growing hardness of character and roughness of manner are necessary results for which they are to be pitied rather than blamed." Report on the Schemes, p. 429.

bothy system itself was still by no means an inducement either to churchgoing or the finer things of life, as both the Life and Work Committee and the Commission on the Religious Condition of the People discovered. To strengthen the ties between minister and farm servant, Dr. Charteris and the Committee suggested that individual consultation with the minister, classes in the houses of the better-liked employers, special Sunday services, talks and sermons, and invitations to the manse for tea and special social gatherings would be helpful. Dr. Charteris strongly urged that lay workers and other members of individual congregations take it upon themselves to look out for the social and spiritual welfare of the young rural worker.[1]

Of the results of Dr. Charteris' and the Committee's investigations, the major one was the awakening of the Church to the special needs of rural areas and the initiating of at least three schemes to meet them. The "commendatory certificates" plan, an improvement by Dr. Charteris on the old Disjunctive Certificates, was effected first.[2] The new certificates were printed by the Committee first in 1874 and, by 1877, were in extensive use throughout the Church. They were given to

---

1 In the 1873 Report, Dr. Charteris wrote: "A large class exists owning little or no allegiance to the Church of Christ, and receiving very little help in contending with those passions of our humanity which start into life at the very time when young men and women leave home for a state of existence in which employers seem to do little or nothing for their spiritual good, and ministers are unknowing and unknown. Very much more personal trouble and personal care must be given, not only by ministers, but by other experienced Christians, to endeavor to bring these young men and women to a better way of living." p. 442.

2 The certificate consisted of three sections, with the name, address and other information about the individual on each. One section was retained by the minister, another was taken by the individual leaving for a new parish, and the third section was sent to the minister of the parish to which the individual was going.

workers going to farms in different parishes or to people leaving for employment in the cities. Their immediate popularity was evidence both of their value and need. The Committee's statement in 1895 that they had often prevented "the poor wanderer from being an unbefriended stranger in his new place,"[1] denoted the restlessness and migratory habits of the rural worker in this period and served as an example of how the Church, through the ingenuity of Dr. Charteris, adopted herself to the new situation.

A second scheme was started in 1893 when Dr. Charteris persuaded the General Assembly to permit the appointment of a "Welfare of Farm-Servants" subcommittee under the Life and Work Committee. This subcommittee's efforts took two forms: publications and deputations. In its first year a circular containing "a number of practical hints and recommendations" for ministers working with farm servants was drawn up and distributed to clergy in rural parishes and was instrumental in stimulating and guiding fresh effort. Two books were printed and issued by the subcommittee; the first in 1898 entitled, _The Best I Know for a Happy Life. A Word to Ploughmen_, by Reverend Dr. Robertson of Whittinghame, the second in 1900 called _The Hame Kirk_ by the Reverend Thomas Hardy of Foulis-Wester. By 1900, over two thousand copies of the first had been sold. The latter consisted of a complete service for the use of persons prevented from attending church and was of special value in rural areas.

The work of the subcommittee's deputies was of a varied nature:

---

[1] _Report on the Schemes_, 1885, p. 423.

the visiting of employers in their homes and workers in the bothies, the distributing of literature, the starting of Church of Scotland ploughmen's unions in a number of parishes, addressing meetings of farm servants, and conducting special services on Sundays for labourers. The first deputy was appointed in 1894. In 1897, the number was increased to three and in 1901 Dr. Charteris persuaded the General Assembly to appoint a woman deputy to work especially with female farm workers. The deputies' efforts had at least three results: the overcoming of the sense of isolation from the main current of church life felt by many rural churches, the breaking down of class barriers,[1] and the giving of much publicity to the difficulties facing rural labourers.

The adapting, in part, of the Life and Work Magazine to rural areas was a third method used by Dr. Charteris. Special features for rural readers were included, an outstanding one being a series of articles from 1879 to 1881 entitled, "An Old Farm Servant," which were later published in book form and sold widely.[2] A number of articles on the rural worker were published and were valuable in helping workers to realize that the Church was concerned for their welfare. A typical example was a long article written by Dr. Charteris in the August, 1885 issue which

---

1 In the 1899 Report to the General Assembly, Reverend Robertson, Dr. Charteris' successor as Convener of the Life and Work Committee, described the Annual Guild Social for ploughmen of the Logie Parish thus: "Nearly all the landed gentlemen are members of the Church, and never did their position become them better than on that evening, for they were all represented personally by their families taking an active part in the proceedings. It was most charming to see laird, tenant, and servant meet in peace and goodwill under the presidency of the parish minister." p. 605.

2 Alexander Gray, D. D., Talks With Our Farm Servants (Edinburgh: R. and R. Clark, Ltd., 1906).

GILBERT BOND 25% COTTON FIBRE

brought forth many "letters and suggestions."[3]

The queries and subsequent activities of the Life and Work Committee stimulated greatly the interest and concern of urban churchmen over rural life and furthered understanding between rural and urban people. In the years from 1860 to 1900 more and more attention was paid by political and social groups to raising the status, broadening the outlook, increasing the opportunities and giving the franchise to the rural labourer. The agencies set up under the Life and Work Committee contributed to that uplifting process as well. Through the Life and Work Magazine, the commendatory certificates, the Committee's deputations, and its investigations and exposure of rural problems, the ministers of rural parishes were stimulated, encouraged, and helped in their task of proclaiming the Gospel and ministering to the religious and social needs of their parishioners, and rural life was influenced and enhanced by the Church.

The Church, the Poor and the Lapsed. The care of the poor had been a function of the Church in Scotland since the Reformation. The widespread unemployment, which was a part of the industrialization process after 1800, placed too great a burden on the Church, however, and the care of the poor was taken over by the State under the Poor Law Act of 1845. From then until 1900, the State became interested increasingly in the social welfare of the people and usurped many functions previously undertaken by the Church, that of education, in 1872, being an outstanding

---

[1] A. H. Charteris, "Farm Servants," Life and Work Magazine, August, 1885.

example. Private philanthropic organizations, such as those discussed in the former section under Dr. Begg, multiplied as well, however, as the plight of the poor and lowly was brought increasingly to the fore. Lapsing had never been unfamiliar to the Church, but the new conditions created by the Industrial Revolution, especially, as indicated earlier, the change from small communities to large urban centres and the miserable conditions under which the majority of the lower classes lived, intensified the plight and increased the number of irreligious and indifferent. By 1860 the term "the lapsed masses" was in wide use in Church circles and the existence of numberless thousands outside the influence of Christianity was causing all churches much concern. In the Established Church the religious and social state of the poor and lapsed was investigated first by Dr. Charteris and the Life and Work Committee in 1872. Answers to its queries revealed the existence of "thousands who live practically outside all churches,"[1] in both rural and urban areas. In the continued search a milestone was the 1887 Special Report on the Lapsed Classes. In it Dr. Charteris reminded the General Assembly that the "time has now fully arrived when the Church should earnestly devote herself to the solution of this important problem."[2] Even more significant was the Committee's recognition and assertion that the physical and social condition of the majority of the churchless and lapsed hampered greatly the Church's attempts to evangelize and redeem them.

In the 1887 Special Report Dr. Charteris strongly criticized

---

1 Report on the Schemes. . . 1872, pp. 420.
2 Ibid., 1887, p. 444.

the Established Church for failing to adapt herself to the times; the old parochial system remained inflexible and unyielding. Even the hybrid growth of Home Missions had been impeded by the inefficiency and rivalry common to many.[1] Seat rents in parish churches were found to be a major cause of lapsing, a condition which led Dr. Charteris to suggest that the seat rents of the middle and upper classes and the well paid artisans be increased to provide free sittings for the destitute and poor. When, in the 1880's, the question of seat rents became acute in church courts, a special committee of investigation was appointed. Its report in 1888 to the General Assembly followed a conservative line. The Committee advocated that in regard both to seat rents and the allocation of seats[2] it be left up to individual ministers to check abuses rather than having the Assembly attempt to induce Parliament to pass legislation on the matter, as some thought should be done. The Committee believed that on both questions a solution would come gradually through the growth and education of public opinion.

Although the Free Church led in the field,[3] by 1860 many Established churches were supporting missions in poor areas. To Dr. Charteris their inefficiency and competitiveness were their most distressing

---

1 In the Life and Work Committee's 1873 Report, Dr. Charteris wrote that it had become "doubtful whether Home Missions are doing any good; and it is not doubtful that they are failing to reclaim the lapsed."

2 The allocation problem was most acute in the old burghal landward parishes where new industries had created a sudden growth of population and where the sale of seats by heritors instead of the allotment by the Kirk-Session was most offensive.

3 A Committee on Missionary Operations of the Free Church of the Edinburgh Presbytery reported, in 1871, that all of the forty-one Free churches in Edinburgh and Leith had missions connected with them.

features.[1] He made five suggestions: that individual missions have a more varied and activity-centred program; that more laymen be recruited for evangelistic work in connection with missions; that parishioners not only attend church but devote a part of their Sundays to work among the poor; that parishes be divided into districts; that a process of evangelization be carried on in each, and that the transformation from a meeting in a poor home in a close to attendance at the parish church be accompanied by measures promoting the social and physical welfare of the poor as well. Dr. Charteris advocated further that ministers themselves, especially those of large city churches, give greater superintendence and attendance to their missions, the 1881 Report noting the stigma and reproach felt by the poor that "they are relegated to the cheap advantages of a mission."[2]

To have a complete picture of the work of the Established Church among the poor and the lapsed in the last half of the nineteenth century, the efforts of the Home Mission Committee must be considered. It was formed in 1842 but was comparatively ineffective until 1858 when Dr. T. S. Crawford, who was influential in the formation of Dr. Charteris' views on the practical work of the Church, was appointed Convener. His first move was to call the General Assembly's attention to the need for churches in three areas; the rapidly growing cities, the new mining localities, and the new manufacturing towns.[3] At the same time he

---

[1] Dr. Charteris was a member of the General Assembly's Home Mission Committee from 1864 to 1885.

[2] Reports on the Schemes. . . 1881, p. 487.

[3] Reports of the Home Mission Committee to the Church of Scotland, 1861, p. 14. One of the most poignant of Dr. Crawford's statements is found

insisted strongly and with success that more funds be made available to his Committee. Beginning in the 1860's, the Committee's efforts and finances were relegated to three areas; the endowment of churches, the appointment of probationers, and the building of churches and mission stations. Despite their shortcomings the Committee's mission halls and churches were especially effective in bringing the Gospel, promoting spiritual regeneration, giving new hope, and raising the moral and social level of thousands of the poor and working classes among which they were set. The Robertson Mission in the Grassmarket, Edinburgh, serves as an outstanding example. The district covered by the Mission was one of the poorest and most necessitous in the city, having a population of sixteen hundred, most of whom dwelt in common lodging-houses or dirty, unkempt tenements. A staff consisting of a minister, probationer, Bible woman, lady visitors, and Young Men's Guild workers carried on the work of physical and spiritual uplift. Five different services were held on Sundays, with twelve organizations carrying on activities during the week. Multiplied a thousand times, the work of such missions through the years was far-reaching.

Under Dr. Crawford and Dr. Phin a number of special projects

---

in the 1867 Report: "But beyond and behind all such cases of local and temporary need as they have referred to, there is a great population in our midst, near us and yet not of us, separated from us not by speech, nor by professed religion, nor by distance--at our doors, within sight and hearing--'another nation' as they have been called, within our borders, for whom none but the Church of Christ is caring, families to whom even stated employment is a luxury unknown, to whom the interior of a church and its services is utterly strange, who use the name of God only to take it in vain."

were undertaken by the Home Mission Committee. Beginning in the 1860's, the trek by many during the summer to seaside resorts became a familiar part of Scottish life and so a summer seaside mission was started at Strathglass in 1866. Dr. Crawford was succeeded by Dr. K. M. Phin in 1869, a man who devoted the best years of his life to the Home Mission Committee's work, and he was succeeded, in 1889, by Dr. Donald Macleod, Dr. Charteris' successor in the Park Church. Under Dr. Phin and Dr. Macleod, the summer missions were extended to a number of resorts in the west and north. Nor were the navvies overlooked. A railway mission, which attained a fair success, was started by Dr. Crawford in 1867 in the parishes of Levingston and West Calder. One of the Committee's major successes was the initiation of the Women's Association for Home Missions in 1893, under whose direction parish sisters[1] were sent out to aid harassed ministers in overgrown and understaffed parishes.

The trend in home missions work from a purely evangelical and Gospel emphasis to a broader and more inclusive one became more definite by the close of the nineteenth century. It was such men as Dr. Crawford, Dr. Phin, J. Marshall Lang, Lord Polwarth of St. Boswells, Dr. Norman Macleod and especially Dr. Charteris[2] who, by their foresight and initiative brought about that change and roused the Church to the need for the physical and social amelioration of the masses in conjunction with their spiritual elevation. The Home Mission, Life and Work and, after

---

1 The United Free Church in 1916 initiated a similar order called the Church Sister.

2 A typical statement by Dr. Charteris is found in his Baird lecture of 1887: "I do not see how the Christian Church can ever expect to raise a fallen population until it recognizes, when conducting a mission, that it is its duty to relieve alike the bodily and the spiritual needs of the lowest classes."

1904, the Social Work Committee, were the means through which that need was met.

Dr. Charteris' and the Life and Work Committee's efforts to rouse the Church to her duty to the poor and lapsed finally bore fruit. Following its special report in 1887, a subcommittee on non-churchgoing was appointed. Its reports during the next two years revealed the acuteness of the problem and led the Assembly to set up a separate Committee on Non-Churchgoing with full powers of its own. The next year it was replaced by a Commission on the Religious Condition of the People, made up of members from the Home Mission, Endowment, and Life and Work Committees, with Dr. J. Marshall Lang as its Convener. Its vigourous and comprehensive efforts from 1890 to 1896 confirmed the earlier findings of the Life and Work Committee and brought the problem all the more forcibly to the Church's attention.

The Church and the Working Classes. The Committee's queries into the state of the working classes revealed a number of factors degrading their lives and alienating them from the Church. The increasing amount of Sunday labour, much of it unnecessary, in mining districts and other centres of industry became so apparent to the Committee that a special investigation was made in 1892. Four remedies were suggested by Dr. Charteris and the Committee: legislation prohibiting certain kinds of Sunday work; the bringing of public opinion to bear upon offending employers; the sending of a pastoral letter by the Assembly to employers; and, lastly, a more faithful testimony by the Church of the value of Sabbath keeping to men's physical, moral, social, and spiritual well-being.

There were other causes than Sunday labour of the desecration of the Sabbath, the lower moral standards of the working classes, and their drifting from the Church. Recurrent trade depressions resulting in widespread poverty led the more proud and sensitive to shrink from attending church in their ragged clothes. The rising secularism of the day was evidenced in the contemporary carelessness and indifference on the part of many of the working classes toward the reverence and religious habits of the older people.[1] This was an age in which the "gospel of wealth" overshadowed all; in the drive to amass wealth and worldly goods spiritual values were often lost sight of. The change from small-scale home industries to large-scale factory production had done much to break up the family as a unit, and that disintegration was reflected in the decline of family worship among manual labourers. The family altar as well as the church sanctuary was being foresaken. The dullness, monotony, and routine of the mechanical labour performed under the new system deprived most workers of creative expression and hope, for which the prospects of eternal life suggested by the Church could not compensate. In fact, often such recompense was sought in an earthly form, usually in the public-house. This was confirmed by a special query on intemperance sent out by Dr. Charteris in 1876. He found that the almost inevitable resignation to a life of drudgery by

---

1 In many cases what actually happened was that a family with a fairly sound religious background from a rural area moved into a new centre of industry; the parents kept to their religious practices but the children and successive generations gradually lost contact with the Church, either because there was no church there or because other groups and interests were more attractive.

the mass of workers, the lack of rational amusements,[1] the want of education, the increased wages, and the availability of intoxicating drink were all causes of intemperance and thus alienation from religious influences.

Three other special queries were sent out by Dr. Charteris to determine the extent and effect of licentiousness, gambling, and the popular literature read by the working classes. The extent of licentiousness was investigated in 1878, when it was found to be the least in the Highlands and most in the northeastern and southwestern counties. These were the areas where the larger centres of population were found, where industries had sprung up and agriculture was most affected by the introduction of modern techniques; in short, where the Industrial Revolution had made its greatest impress upon the country. Here the migratory habits of the working classes, their irreligion, and the lack of any public opinion on the question had resulted in a "tolerance of licentiousness and houses of ill-fame, and of the temptations

---

[1] An amusing statement is made earlier by Lord Cockburn on the subject: "Whisky is certainly one of the curses of Scotland. But in blaming the people for their addiction to it, we should recollect that we leave very little other amusement. A Frenchman, a German or an Italian have their warm blue sky, their music, and their public walks and exhibitions. An Englishman has a climate in which he can often sit in the open air, his ale--a slow and rather soothing luxury--and his path through every field. A Scotchman's weather does not admit of his taking much of his pleasure with only the heavens above him, and when he does he finds himself sulkily excluded from every place of rational recreation. Not merely house and house-covered curiousities are locked against him, but field and gardens are fenced and barred, and his recreation must be confined to the hard highway. The tippling-house is his natural refuge against a system of moral Calvinism which considers the social and public recreation of whole families as dangerous and shameful." Journal of Henry Cockburn, 1831-1854, Vol. I, p. 187.

which are permitted to abound in the streets of large cities."[1]

A query in 1893 on gambling elicited similar results. Card playing for money, betting at horse races and football matches, games of chance in public houses and betting at cock-fights were all found to be more prevalent in urban than rural areas. The demoralizing effect of both the betting and the surroundings in which it was carried on was noted; in his 1894 report to the General Assembly Dr. Charteris stated that betting was "grievously affecting the moral character of the people in the great centres of industry, mining districts, ship-building, engineering, and other public works."[2]

Answers to a query sent out in 1875 on popular literature indicated that, while the standard of literature read by the working classes was higher than thirty years previously, there was much of the cheap London journal type being read. Dr. Charteris described their contents as being "confessedly secular, almost nothing in way of fact or useful information, fostering a spirit of social and even national discontent, and presenting life as a rash adventure without need of personal discipline and patient effort."[3] The type of literature read no doubt was an indication of the degree of education of the working classes, its dearth making them insensitive to the values and standards of the upper classes, unable to employ their leisure time profitably, appreciate the finer elements of religion fully, or enjoy their lives completely.

---

1 Report on the Schemes. . . 1878, p. 540.
2 Ibid., 1894, p. 540.
3 Ibid., 1875, p. 462.

Since his ministry in the parish of St. Quivox, Dr. Charteris had been extremely sensitive to the relationship of housing to the state of religion. Thus he welcomed the opportunity to investigate the housing problem and to bring it before the General Assembly. Through the Life and Works Committee a number of queries were sent out revealing the insufficient number and inadequacy of the houses of the working classes and their undesirable effect upon the moral and social life of the inhabitants. The Committee found that such housing conditions caused intemperance and illegitimacy, delayed marriage, made privacy impossible, increased family discord and took away incentive and industry on the part of many. While presenting the plight of the workers to the Church, the Committee also presented a number of remedies. The cooperative method was suggested as one remedy for the housing situation.[1] Ministers were urged to stress from the pulpit the value of family worship and to suggest suitable literature for family reading and worship. To raise the educational level of the working classes such measures as week-night lectures in churches on subjects not strictly religious but treated in a religious spirit, week-day evening classes, the distribution of penny readings and other literature, the recommending of good secular literature from the pulpit, and the printing of cheaper editions of religious and other books were suggested by the Committee.

---

[1] In the 1887 Special Report it was urged that "in all attempts to improve the physical condition of this class, they should be encouraged to cooperate in their own material improvement, and that any benevolent scheme for the improvement of their dwellings should be made, eventually at least, self-supporting, and a safe business speculation, in the line of the operations so successfully carried out by Miss Octavia Hill in London."

A number of ways were proposed to decrease licentiousness, gambling, and intemperance among the working classes. More adequate housing was a major one. Others included a stricter observance of the Forbes-Mackenzie Act, more enthusiastic support of the Church's Temperance Society, the promotion of Bands of Hope, the earlier closing of shops, the abolishing of bazaar raffling in churches, the setting of a better example by the upper classes, the providing of wholesome recreation, and the starting of workingmen's clubs with a newspaper room, library, and game room. In many parishes the Committee's suggestions were carried out and produced positive results.[1]

Little was said of two major problems facing the working classes; recurrent unemployment and the dull monotony of most manual work. Dr. Charteris and the Committee realized that the latter drove many to the bright lights and excitement of the public house, and workingmen's clubs were suggested as a catharsis. This failed to get at the real problem, however. How, if at all, could the jobs themselves be made more interesting, more satisfying, and more demanding of personal initiative and ingenuity? The Church did not answer that question. Many strong statements were made by the Committee on the effect of unemployment on the morale, family life, and social habits of working people. The relationship of intemperance to unemployment and poverty

---

[1] Three examples may be given. The Kippin Young Men's Guild started a football club in 1889 to provide wholesome recreation for the members. A Fifteen Club was started at the Pleasance Mission in 1900 for "suppressing the gambling and unseemly language among young people," and lastly, a Working Men's Club was started in 1901 by Dr. Watson in St. Clement's Church, Glasgow, to combat the intemperance in the parish.

was often noted. Again the Committee failed to get at the root of the problem. If depressions were an inevitable result of the contemporary economic and industrial system, was not a change in the system itself necessary? The Church failed to consider and answer this question. The Committee did not recommend, for example, that the Church support labour unions and their demands for greater security, for to do so might mean the taking of a partisan position and so her alienation from the upper managerial and owning classes.

The significance of the Committee's queries and findings on the working classes is more apparent when it is realized that it was the first time any deliberate effort had been made by the Established Church to expose the social evils which modern industrialism had created and to determine their effect upon the religious and social life of the masses. No one had set out on such a task previously; thus the Committee's findings were both all the more startling and welcomed, at least by a few. Dr. Charteris is to be commended for his realization of the need for such investigations and for the energy and thoroughness with which he set about undertaking them. It was the first time such information had been brought forward since the Statistical Accounts and the findings were important because the period from 1850 to 1900 was still dominated by the middle classes, even though legislation and philanthropic efforts were directed more and more towards the amelioration of the masses. The Committee's discoveries helped to stir up the lethargic and conservative elements within the Church and so awakened her to a fuller sense of her responsibility toward righting the wrongs of the Industrial Era.

In their wider setting the Committee's queries and investigations of the various problems were significant in several other ways. The universal acceptance of queries as a technique, despite initial opposition,[1] made them important as a method of gathering necessary, valuable information. They were adopted and used by a number of other Assembly committees. For the first time since the Disruption, the queries made available to the Church and the public a large amount of information on the social and religious state of the country. That data helped the Church greatly to see her weaknesses. It revealed large areas of need yet untouched by her and so indicated where she should concentrate her forces. The Committee's investigations stimulated similar efforts by other groups in the Established Church, the Commission on the Religious Condition of the People from 1890 to 1896 and the Glasgow Presbytery's Housing Investigation from 1889 to 1890 being two outstanding examples. As Dr. Charteris anticipated, a large amount of activity on local levels was evoked; clergymen, presbyteries, and synods were made to realize their shortcomings and so incited to positive effort.

THE LIFE AND WORK COMMITTEE--A SUMMARY

The Second Reform Bill (1867) was a part of a general movement in the second half of the nineteenth century which was likewise

---

[1] In his biography of Dr. Charteris, the Reverend A. Gordon notes that no committee probably "ever endured such a fire of criticism as that of Life and Work during its early years. It was denounced as inquisitorial, meddling, and interfering. One or two presbyteries were recalcitrant and at first declined to circulate the schedules but. . . ," p. 313.

manifested in the Patronage Abolition Act of 1874. The latter gained for the Established Church a stronger hold on the loyalty and affections of the common people. Dr. Charteris envisaged the holding and strengthening of that loyalty by enlisting the people in a common task and goal. The Life and Work Committee with its numerous organizations provided the channels through which it was done. The popular democratic sentiment of the day led men to desire a greater part in the life and activity of the Church. Participation in leadership roles was desired by many. The uniqueness of Dr. Charteris' Life and Work Committee lay in its providing a place, the guilds in local churches, for example, where such desires might find expression, where individuals could find themselves and serve their Lord at one and the same time.

The period from 1850 to 1900 saw a change in the role of congregations from a company of hearers to an active body, a fellowship for carrying out in society the evangelizing objectives of the Church. The responsibility for this new attitude or position may be traced to a single source; Dr. Charteris' insistence upon each church member being a doer as well as hearer of the word.[1] The various projects he proposed for the Life and Work Committee were a fruit of that assertion and the Committee was the medium through which the seed was scattered over the country.

---

[1] In his Baird lecture Dr. Charteris said: "These are no longer days in which one man (the minister) in a congregation can speak and others listen.... If the poor are to be lifted, the good Samaritans who sustain the wearied head and steady the faltering steps will be members of the congregation." The Church of Christ, p. 237.

The rise of the "social gospel" at the end of the nineteenth century may owe its origin, in part, to that emphasis. If the individual church member was to be a worker as well as worshipper, he must have something to work on. The most natural object would be the religious and social problems at hand; bringing in the unchurched thousands, renewing their spiritual vision, and nurturing their physical needs. It is not to be wondered at, then, that the innumerable guilds throughout the land, for example, undertook deeds of kindness and mercy on behalf of the unfortunate about them, or what we would classify as social or philanthropic work. The Life and Work Committee, as many in twentieth century testified, indeed stirred up the life of the Church at a time when it was badly needed. It awakened the Church to her real task in society and provided the means by which the mission of reclaiming human lives could be carried out. At a time in the nineteenth century when the Church was becoming less and less the focal point of community life and the tendency to separate religion from morality and everyday life was increasing, such agencies as the Diaconette, the guilds, and the *Life and Work Magazine* directed by Dr. Charteris and the Life and Work Committee, helped the Church to combat irreligion and immorality and to retain her central role in community life. The Committee's organizations were of service to the Church in building up a spirit of unity and fellowship, and thus overcoming the individualism of the Victorian era, and in awakening among many a deeper sense of personal responsibility for the religious and social welfare of the masses at home and abroad.

CHAPTER VI

A. H. CHARTERIS, D. D., LL. D., 1898-1908

The exacting toil as Moderator of the General Assembly in 1892 took much out of Dr. Charteris. He gave up his professorship at Edinburgh University in 1894 because of ill health. This was followed four years later by his resignation as Convener of the Life and Work Committee: his interest in its work did not cease, however, and he continued as Honorary Convener until his death in 1908.

In his latter years, other than the Life and Work Committee, Dr. Charteris supported three of the Church's schemes--foreign missions, social work, and the Church Congresses. Following the initial impulse in the 1870's, interest in foreign missions had languished by 1890. To get both moral and financial support, Dr. Charteris started a scheme called "The Mission Advance." However, it failed to gain the backing of church people, both lay and clergy, and so was only a partial success. Undaunted, Dr. Charteris, in 1897, started a "substitute fund" campaign under which he alone, from 1897 to his death, raised £20,000.

Dr. Charteris' interest in the Church's social work found two outlets. He was a vice-president of the Scottish Christian Social Union, heartily supporting it at its beginning in 1901 and in its later work. Dr. Charteris was a committeeman and staunch supporter of the Church's Joint Committee on Social Work, appointed by the 1903 General Assembly, and the Church Congresses started by the General Assembly in 1889, which will be discussed later, received his wholehearted backing as well.

Every age has its features tending to debase as well as enhance life; the years from 1860 to 1900 were no exception. With the increasing mechanization and industrialization, life for many became more and more impersonal and cheap; the conviction of the worth of life was slowly being undermined; men were tending to lose faith in its meaning and significance. In this period men became obsessed increasingly by a desire to forge ahead through commerce, trade, and industry, even at the sacrifice of both religion and culture. To Dr. Charteris such a sacrifice was unthinkable. The evils of industrialization were offensive to him because they violated the dignity, sacredness, and worth of human personality. In his scale of values this was basic. Man was made in the image of God and so was of infinite worth; therefore, conditions which prevented men from fulfilling themselves and growing in their Maker's likeness ought never be tolerated, but should be vigourously opposed. The uniqueness of Dr. Charteris' efforts and the organizations he set up lay in their providing channels through which the best in men might find expression and grow.

The Church, from 1850 to 1900, if we are to believe the statements of many of its leaders,[1] was not making great progress in reclaiming the masses, even though its machinery was extended and increased. It must be remembered that the population was multiplying rapidly as well, especially in those very areas which were giving the Church the most concern. Also, the quarrels and divisions between and within

---

[1] Typical of such was Dr. Smith of North Leith's lamentation in the 1886 General Assembly that about one-sixth of the whole population had no contact with any church.

denominations did much to alienate many from the churches and prevented Dr. Charteris' ideal of a Church as "a brotherhood embracing all ranks and conditions of men,"[1] from being reached. Dr. Charteris himself played a leading role in efforts to unite the churches, mainly because he felt that such disunity was a denial of the two basic Christian principles of the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Men.[2]

Discord between and within the churches was having other effects as well. Dr. Charteris' fear that "people's faith in an organization to advance their lives, rights, and welfare is no longer entrusted in the Church but in organizations of a social and political nature" was a well-grounded one, indeed. Increasingly, religiously motivated people were demonstrating their benevolence through philanthropic organizations with a somewhat nebulous humanitarian basis, in part, at least, because the Church offered no channels through which such sentiment could be expressed. The organizations set up by Dr. Charteris remedied this to a certain extent; a multitude of benevolent activities undertaken by local guilds could be listed. Dr. Charteris' efforts, although they certainly conditioned her to such a task, were hampered, however, by the reluctance of the Established Church to proclaim any progressive and aggressive attitude toward social reforms until the beginning of the twentieth century. By then, Dr. Charteris' conviction

---

1 A. H. Charteris, "A Young Man and His Faith," 1884 St. Giles Lecture, p. 17.

2 Dr. Charteris was a member of the Assembly's Committee on Union for a number of years and did much in an unofficial way to promote the cause. His views on the subject were embodied in his opening lecture for the 1874 term of the Divinity School which was printed under the title, The Church of Scotland and Spiritual Independence (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1874).

that Christian principles should be applied by the Church to social and industrial as well as individual life was shared by a fair number of churchmen. Dr. Charteris and Dr. Watson both believed, and rightly so, that the starting of projects in the social work field by the Established Church would provide a wider goal for and help to bring together those who quarreled over minor and unimportant differences in creed and doctrine.[1]

In this period from 1860 to 1900, the hopes of many were placed in the political arena as the battlefield upon which victory over obstacles to a better life might be won. This was especially true of the lower classes and was, as might be expected, one result of the extended franchise. Labour as a political unit was coming to power, and it is not to be wondered that it was sought as a refuge of hope by many, especially when the Church held out no such promise. No doubt, had the Church accepted the "social gospel" socner and taken upon herself a greater responsibility for the evils of the Industrial Revolution, many would have come to her solace rather than turning to other havens of hope. Dr. Charteris, unlike Dr. Begg, took no active part in the many political movements of his time. Such reluctance did not come from an antagonistic attitude toward them; indeed, he favoured and saw behind all efforts tending to elevate and free the masses

---

1 Two noteworthy assertions made by Dr. Charteris in his address as Moderator of the General Assembly in 1892 were, first, "that it is not good for mankind that the religion of the Son of Man should be so much left out in social disputes and arrangements," and secondly, that "the cause of social reform will one day unite those who quarrel over creeds and doctrinal differences."

a practical application of the principle of the equality of man. Dr. Charteris was one of those instrumental in getting the Act in 1874 abolishing patronage passed. To him, patronage was abominable both in theory and practice. It was anti-democratic in spirit, had precipitated class feeling and caused many to turn from the Church.

In estimating Dr. Charteris' work we must not overlook those personal characteristics which made him such an effective servant of the Lord. A most obvious one would be his ability to work with and through people with varying beliefs and backgrounds. This was noted in his biography by Reverend M'Laren: "His influence was felt by all classes, cultured and ignorant, powerful and lowly. . . .In his relations with them there was no hint of superior wisdom, but always a happy interchange of ideas. His may have been the responsibility of launching a new scheme, but to them was given the opportunity of contributing to the making of it."[1]

His deep belief in the spiritual values as the ultimately worthwhile ones motivated all Dr. Charteris' efforts. In 1892, in an article for the Life and Work Magazine, he wrote: "What benefits a man or nation is what makes spiritual hope, a happy home, an honest life, a chaste conversation, a peaceful passage at death into the kingdom prepared for believers; and those things are not the fruits of mere commerce, but they grow upon the spot where the blessed feet of them that bring glad tidings of Christ have been set down."[2] Always men have needed to be awakened to the higher reaches of life.

---

1 K. M'Laren, op. cit., p. 43.
2 The Life and Work Magazine, December, 1892, p. 5.

Dr. Charteris realized this; he recognized it as being one of the Church's tasks, and the organizations he created helped the Church provide the means by which men could realize their best selves and rise to nobler heights of living. Dr. Charteris lived close to Christ and tried to guide his own life by Christ's teachings and example. In 1893, he wrote in the Life and Work Magazine: "We are to try to do with our lives, with our means, what we should have had to do had we spent our days in his presence, going his errands among men. I know no height of altruism, of sacrifice for others, to which he has not called us; no personal exertion to make the world better and happier which he has not by precept and example set before us as our duty."[1]

In his religious life Dr. Charteris was somewhat of a Romanticist, as can be seen by his emphasis upon the inward approach to religion in contrast to its external observances, and in his emphasis upon the Gospel as contrasted to the Law. A number of honours were bestowed upon him. He was chaplain to Queen Victoria and King Edward; he was one of the Deans of the Chapel Royal of Scotland, and he was Moderator of the General Assembly of 1892. The Doctor of Divinity degree was conferred upon him in 1868 by the University of Edinburgh, the LL. D. in 1899 by that same institution. In 1906, the University of Aberdeen, at its Quartercentenary celebrations, also bestowed the Doctor of Divinity degree upon Dr. Charteris. Yet, in spite of them all, the humility of Dr. Begg was found in Dr. Charteris also. The difference was an external

---

[1] Ibid., May, 1893, p. 14.

one; Dr. Begg was a man of rough but not coarse exterior; driving, forceful, dynamic. Dr. Charteris worked as effectively, but more quietly and unobtrusively. He was rightly called by the press "the gentlest man in the Assembly."[1] Perhaps a statement in the last article he wrote for the Life and Work Magazine paints the most adequate picture of himself: "I know not how it is with you, but for myself, I must own to being often frightened when I see what stress is laid upon disposition. I find it easier to be bustling and active. Yet what we are is infinitely more important than what we do. We can do so little, but we may be so great in our humbleness.... Expect to be directed, to be purged of selfishness, to be delivered from fears, to be elevated into high aims, to be made willing to work, so that you will with violence possess the kingdom of God."[2]

IN MEMORIAM[3]
The Very Reverend Professor Charteris, D. D., LL. D.

When the earth from its wintry sleep awoke,
When the spring-time had come to the land,
In the sweet o' the year, when Nature's glad,
He was touched by His Father's hand.
In the sweet o' the year.

Kind, loving eyes, that looked love every day;
Firm hands that grasped yours with a will;
He is from our sight until we too shall win
To the shelter'd side o' the hill.
In the sweet o' the year.

---

1 Gordon, op. cit., p. 313.
2 Life and Work Magazine, Young Men's Guild Supplement, June, 1908, p. 4. That same emphasis upon character, work, and redemption is found in the hymn for the Young Men's Guild, written by Dr. Charteris, Believing Fathers Oft Have Told.
3 Ibid., June, 1908.

Earth was the brighter, the better for him,
For bravely he toiled without faltering or fear;
This be the verse I would grave 'neath his name:
God called him Home in the sweet o' the year.

Charles Aitken
Jamestown

CHAPTER VII

DAVID WATSON, D. D., 1859-1890

Thus far, through the study of the lives and efforts of Dr. Begg and Dr. Charteris, a picture has been presented of the work both of the Free and Established Churches during the greater part of the nineteenth century. That century was one of constant flux; and changes and alterations in the outlook and activities of the churches were required if they were to fulfill their true role of the evangelization of society. Dr. Begg and Dr. Charteris saw the need for continuous adjustment on the part of the churches, and the organizations they set up and promoted helped the churches to better fit themselves to the demands of the time and to be a more efficient and effective instrument in the christianizing of the society in which they were set. The task of the churches in the first thirty-five years of the twentieth century, with which this study deals also, was the same. Those years, too, saw a number of developments in both Church and society. The review of Dr. Watson's life, to be presented next, will indicate those trends in both areas and will describe Dr. Watson's contributions to society and to the Established Church in the years up to 1935.

Dr. David Watson, one of "seven sturdy children,"[1] was born at Alva, Clackmannonshire, in the foothills of the Ochills on February 6, 1859. His father, a shopkeeper, died when Dr. Watson was only

---

[1] David Watson, Chords of Memory (Edinburgh and London: William Blackwood and Sons, Ltd., 1936).

eleven, making it necessary for the youth to go out to work. He became an apprentice in the provisions trade and continued his education by attending night school. When sixteen, Dr. Watson's goal in life became clear. His resolution to enter the ministry was a result of the evangelistic mission of Moody and Sankey in 1875, a decision he describes as being, for him, not "violent or catastrophic" but like "the opening of a flower to the sun or the dawning of a new day."[1]

Of the experiences of his youth, three were outstanding. The first was a winter of trade depression in 1875 causing much suffering and hardship. His sympathy for the people of Alva led him to write a poem for the local weekly.[2] The second was a prolonged and bitter strike of the handloom weavers of Alva. It is not to be wondered at that Dr. Watson was to place so much emphasis on the "social gospel." The third was a Sunday Foreign Mission's service, the first of its kind in the parish church, conducted by the missionary Reverend William Macfarlane of Darjeeling.

Following his decision to enter the ministry, Dr. Watson helped to start a Sunday morning fellowship and a week-night Literary Society under the Young Men's Guild. Participation in both gave him practice in public speaking and essay writing. Under the tuition of

---

1 Ibid., p. 19.

2 "An' seventy-five has gane at last,
I'm gled the weary year is past,
Lang has oor hoose bin overcast
Wi' dule an' care,
An' o' misfortune's with'rin' blast
We've had oor share." Ibid., p. 12.

his minister, Reverend Andrew Kelly, Dr. Watson learned Greek and Latin in preparation for the University. He matriculated at Glasgow in 1877.

There Edward Caird, Professor of Moral Philosophy, and John Bright, who became rector in 1877, influenced his outlook most. The former he described as a man who "awakened thought and stirred the minds" of the students. The latter impressed Dr. Watson greatly by his rectoral address, "a poignant appeal on Behalf of the Millions Who Lived in One Room."[1] His speech was one factor stimulating Dr. Watson's later efforts to improve public housing.

In March, 1884, Dr. Watson finished his course in Divinity and was licensed by the Presbytery of Stirling. He was then appointed assistant to the Reverend A. Fyfe Barnes of St. George's Parish, Paisley. It was during his two and one-half years there that "the social implications of Christianity" began to dawn upon him. The slums were at Paisley still, for Dr. Watson noted that while visiting from door to door in the parish he came up against "the housing problem and the slums of Paisley, which were terrible beyond anything I had seen in Glasgow."[2] His experience with the inadequate housing and poverty of the people led him to write a series of articles for the Paisley Gazette on "How the Paisley Poor Live." The articles provoked a long discussion in the Town Council and stirred up public opinion on the subject.[3]

---

1 Ibid., p. 45. This is a good example of the long-range effect of Dr. Begg's work, in this case his success in getting a column on housing included in the 1861 Census.

2 Ibid., p. 57.

3 Dr. Watson noted that as a result "the social conscience awoke and insisted that these plague spots should be rooted out. And in time they were." Ibid., p. 58.

In November of 1886, Dr. Watson received and accepted a call to St. Clement's parish church in Glasgow. The church had been started as a mission station and was located in an area called Mile End, one of the oldest and poorest parts of Glasgow's East End. Though the congregation consisted mainly of "working folk, mostly poor but staunchly loyal,"[1] Dr. Watson was not deterred. In fact, he chose such a situation purposely for he had decided to dedicate his life to the elevation and christianizing of the lower classes. Through the loyalty of his people and his own herculean efforts, the church was endowed and raised from a chapel-of-ease to a parish church fifteen months after his arrival.[2] This was the parish in which Dr. Watson laboured for the rest of his life.

During Dr. Watson's ministry, many new features were added to the program of the church. A lover of the out-of-doors himself, Dr. Watson introduced a "Flower and Fruit" service in September, 1894. It was the first ever held in Mile End and some of the older people looked askance at it, but not the children, and so it thereupon became a regular part of the yearly schedule. Continuing the emphasis, a Saturday afternoon Rambling Club for youths was started and quickly became popular.

Through Dr. Watson's youthful energy and enthusiasm, the church grew steadily in numbers. To promote a deeper spirit of fellowship

---

1 Ibid., p. 65.
2 Records of the Kirk Session, February, 1888. These records give complete and valuable information on the work of the church during Dr. Watson's ministry.

and friendship, a series of district social meetings was started. Members from each elder's district were invited in turn to an informal social evening of songs, recitations, and brief addresses in the church hall. Such meetings were held weekly until all the districts had been gone over and resulted in a "warmer spirit of fellowship throughout the entire congregation."[1]

A number of new organizations were set up in the church. A Young Men's Guild was started in 1889, service and personal growth being two main emphases. Saturday evening entertainments and services were held for children and youths, with elderly people coming as well. As evidence of their value Dr. Watson noted how, one day, a poor, hard-working woman said to him, "I just aweary for Saturday night."[2] A literary society was started as a part of the Guild's activities also but had dwindled away by 1894 and, to turn the tide, Dr. Watson suggested an athletic section which became popular immediately.[3] In fact, in this period we see the rise of the "recreation" mind throughout the country as a whole, and many Men's Guilds followed the same course as the one in Dr. Watson's church, with beneficial but detrimental results as well, for, as many foresaw, the crave later for recreation, amusements, and spectator sports often rendered infertile any tendency toward religious contemplation and practice.

In this latter part of the nineteenth century the concern and care of the poor had not reached the more impersonal, systematized,

---

1 Ibid., January, 1890

2 Ibid., February, 1891.

3 Dr. Watson reported proudly to his Kirk Session that the Guild's football club had won seventeen and drew one of its eighteen league games in 1917.

official state it was destined to in the next century. Thus in Dr. Watson's church we see the older, more friendly, unregimented, voluntary type of care persisting. A coin box for the poor had its place in the back of the church still; concerts for the poor's funds were held by the guilds. The Woman's Guild assembled and donated clothes to the deserving poor. Profits from the district social meetings were given to the poor's fund. A mangle was bought for a woman with two children so that she could earn her own living. Starting in 1895, a Christmas treat was given annually to the poor in the parish. Through the kindness of Dr. Macleod, the Park Church associated itself with St. Clement's and sent money, food, and clothing for the poor. This, of course, was quite customary for many larger churches during this period.

Being set in a working class district it was only natural that the church was concerned for her people during times of economic distress. Special services were held and offerings taken during a winter depression in 1884. In October of 1908 projects to raise a special fund for the poor and unemployed were undertaken because of a slack in industry. Again in 1912 relief funds were collected during a coal strike in April of that year. Reminiscent of Dr. Norman Macleod's services for working men were Dr. Watson's services for destitute children started in 1896. By then he had an assistant, Mr. Macfarlane, and a parish sister, Miss Hutchinson, trained in the Deaconess Home, to help round up children in the area. Actually Dr. Watson's ministry was directed more than the average one to the needs and welfare of the

children in the parish. Under his urging a Children's Choir was started in 1899, and he was able to report at the annual meeting a year later that they had improved the services and taken part in special concerts to raise money. Following the example of Dr. Charteris in the Pleasance, afternoon meetings for ragged children were started in 1896. Thrift was taught through a Savings Bank Scheme inaugurated in 1883.[1] Its success was a continuous one; in one year alone (1906) £ 422 were deposited and 9,674 transactions were made. Beginning in 1895, the church's halls were kept open during the Christmas season as a "holiday resort" for children and youths under the direction of the Woman's Guild. This activity was taken over in 1904 by the Glasgow Council's Social Reform Committee of the Christian Social Union, whose representative reported the following year that over three hundred children had attended the daily children's hour with its games, food, and fun. A club for the young men of the neighborhood "who hung around the street corners" was opened also by the Union in 1902.[2] Previously a club for men had been organized by Dr. Watson in a tenement across the street from the church, in an attempt to combat intemperance in the parish. These various clubs for children, youths, and men became a major emphasis in the church program and met a clamant need of the day. They exemplified the progressiveness of both Dr. Watson and his church. The Guilds of Play for children in the church's halls were especially valuable, for they took children from their dingy and dirty

---

1 Records of the Kirk Session, October, 1883.
2 Watson, op. cit., p. 80.

home surroundings, even if only for a few hours, to a bright and wholesome atmosphere where cleanliness was emphasized, good habits inculcated, and songs and games taught.

A continuous battle against intemperance in the parish was waged by Dr. Watson. A Band of Hope was started in 1887 and rapidly grew in numbers. In the 1895 annual meeting of the church, Dr. Watson proudly claimed that "it was second to none in the East End of Glasgow."[1] A Women's Temperance Society was also set up and the Total Abstinence Society revived. Dr. Watson's interest in promoting temperance led to his being appointed Convener of the presbytery's Total Abstinence Society from 1902 to 1907 and Honorary Convener until 1925. A basic reason for opening the church's halls during the Christmas season was to combat intemperance. Concerted effort was also undertaken; in 1903, with the aid of the nearby London Road United Free Church, enough influence was brought to bear that the nearby William Street Sunday Drinking Club was put down.[2] A number of such clubs existed throughout the country in this period and were staunchly opposed by the Church. Led by Dr. Watson, the Kirk Session at a later date protested to the magistrates against the granting of a license for the sale of intoxicating liquor to an Olympia Music Hall at nearby Bridgeton Cross.[3] Such halls were also typical of the day and a target of the Church's artillery.

Dr. Watson's broad outlook was reflected in the church's participation in a number of general movements of the day. In 1885 and 1886

---

1 Records of the Kirk Session, January, 1895.
2 Ibid., May, 1903.
3 Ibid., April, 1902.

temperance soirees and meetings were held in St. Clement's in connection with the General Assembly's temperance drive. In this period there was a growing emphasis and concentration on home missions. A Home Missions Society was formed by Dr. Watson in the church in 1888, just soon enough to cooperate with the Life and Work Committee's investigation of non-churchgoing a year later. Intemperance and poverty were noted as two basic obstacles to church attendance in St. Clement's parish. Non-churchgoing was a concern with which Dr. Watson dealt continuously. As a prelude to a parish evangelization campaign in 1902 he made a survey, with the aid of the church sister, of the families in the parish unaffiliated with the church.[1] The Charity Organization Society was another outside group with which the church cooperated. The church's halls were used by the Society for its district meetings beginning in 1907 and Dr. Watson himself acted, for eleven years, as chairman of the Mile End district. Under the Society's sponsorship penny savings banks were started, children's clinics set up, a welfare centre and nursery school opened, and systematic investigation and help given the poor in the area. Dr. Watson's statement that "great good was accomplished in Mile End as a result"[2] was perhaps even an understatement. A healthy interest in foreign missions was perpetuated by a Missionary Society in the church; in 1891 the Society held a sale of work to raise funds to support Dr. Charteris' Forward Movement Scheme on behalf of foreign missions.[3]

Thus through her manifold agencies St. Clement's Church was

---

1 Of the 1,460 families in the district it was found that 313 were unaffiliated with any church.

2 Watson, op. cit., p. 84.

3 Kirk Session Records, August, 1891.

meeting the needs of the people in the parish. The nurturing of both the spiritual and social realms of life was accomplished. Group activities effected the latter and Dr. Watson himself the former. His messages from the pulpit were evangelical and inspiring, aimed at uplifting the heart and soul through the presentation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER VIII

DAVID WATSON, D. D., 1890-1935

The work in St. Clement's having gotten well under way, Dr. Watson began, in 1889 to turn his attention more and more to country-wide problems needing furtherance. He heartily participated in a series of Church Congresses sponsored by the General Assembly, the first of which was held in Glasgow during October of 1889. The Congresses were well attended and roused much public interest. Prominent speakers were engaged and pressing moral, religious, and social problems discussed in an atmosphere of mutuality and freedom. Professor Robert Flint, a great leader of the Established Church, who was active for many years in furthering social reforms, set the precedent by speaking before the first Congress on "The Church's Attitude to Social and Economic Movements." The second Congress was held at Aberdeen in 1901 when Dr. Watson spoke on "The Wasteful Use of Wealth." A third was held at Edinburgh in 1904 before which Dr. Watson lectured on "Organized Social Work; Its Aims, Methods, and Possible Dangers."[1] Dr. Charteris and Professor Patterson were both active in supporting these Congresses, and much of their success was due to the thorough and persistent efforts of their conveners, Principal Marshall Lang and Principal Story.

---

[1] The official reports published by W. Gardner Hitt, Edinburgh, give detailed summaries of the Congresses.

The Congresses supplemented the work of the General Assembly by providing an opportunity, which the crowded agendas of the Assemblies themselves made impossible, for full and frank discussion of the Church's problems. They served to broaden the base of popular support given the Established Church and manifested the Church's interest in the everyday problems and concerns of the people. Their early success led to the setting up of similar ones by the United Free Church. The First World War interrupted their progress in both churches. They were started again in the Established Church by her Committee on Church and Nation. From 1918 to 1929, four Joint Congresses on social and moral problems were held in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee and Aberdeen by the Established and United Free Churches. Unfortunately, they were not continued after the union, in 1929.

During the 1890's, Dr. Watson was busy speaking before civic and religious groups stimulating interest in social problems. He realized that there was a great reservoir of zeal and enthusiasm to be tapped. The Men's and Woman's Guilds offered one fertile field of exploitation. Already a fair number of local guilds and provincial councils were doing social work although it was not thought of as such. Those efforts needed to be encouraged and multiplied, however, and so we read of Dr. Watson, in 1894, speaking at Dundee before its Provincial Council on "The Guild and Social Reform," urging greater support for the temperance movement, clubs for workingmen, and guilds of play for children. During this decade, Dr. Watson did much to arouse needed interest in social reform among Guild groups.

In 1901 Dr. Watson's enthusiasm for social work led to the setting up of the Scottish Christian Social Union. He, along with Dr. Charteris, had realized for a long time the growing need for an organization which would stimulate and integrate the social interests and activities of Christian groups throughout the country and enable coordinated action to be taken by them. Dr. Watson's immediate inspiration was a visit by Dr. J. B. Paton, eminent English social worker and founder of the Nottingham Congregational College. For an hour he talked to Dr. Watson "in the most fascinating way about the larger Gospel, the social mission of the Church, and the need for union in social redemptive work," a visit which Dr. Watson described as making himself feel in the "presence of an apostle."[1]

The result of the visit was an article written by Dr. Watson, which was published in Saint Andrew, proposing the formation of a Union on the lines of the older Anglican Christian Social Union.[2] Encouraging replies came from J. Marshall Lang, George Matheson, Cameron Lees, and Dr. Charteris, and others. A meeting of those interested was called in April, 1901; Dr. Watson was appointed chairman, and the Union was officially formed. Its object was fourfold: "to claim for the Christian law the ultimate authority to rule social practice, to affirm and to put into effect the social mission of the church, to investigate and study social problems, and to take actions furthering specific reforms."[3] A

---

1 Watson, op. cit., p. 89.
2 Saint Andrew, February 14, 1901. (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier).
3 David Watson, The Scottish Christian Social Union and How It Came to be Formed (David J. Clark, Glasgow, 1901), p. 1.

second meeting followed in May. Dr. Watson was made the Union's executive chairman and Dr. Charteris one of the vice-presidents.

The organization grew rapidly as by 1901 there were a number of men in the various denominations willing to respond to an appeal which went beyond denominational lines. By the end of the year, branches had been set up in all the major cities of Scotland. Child life and welfare was the first problem tackled. In June of 1901 Dr. Watson started the campaign to focus attention on the plight of children in poor urban areas by speaking at a Glasgow meeting of the Union. His speech was printed in pamphlet form and widely distributed.[1] Other local and national groups quickly took up the cause. Combined efforts led to the passing by Parliament in 1903 of an act empowering the regulation by school boards of the employment of children under fourteen and the control by town councils of consistent street trading by youths under sixteen. Dr. Watson was especially interested in the curtailing of such street trading. He felt strongly that it was detrimental to the developing of skills or the securing of regular, gainful employment by youths. His work at Barlinnie prison later confirmed such a conviction,[2] and the inclusion of the street trading regulation in the 1903 Act was due, in large measure, to Dr. Watson's efforts.

The elevating of child-life proved of continuing interest to the Union.[3] A number of Guilds of Play for children were set up by the

---

[1] David Watson, Child Life in Cities and Some Aspects of the Social Problem (Glasgow: Begg, Kennedy and Elder, 1901).

[2] In his book Social Advance, Dr. Watson declared that "seventy-five percent of our juvenile street vendors find their way to prison." p. 189.

[3] In the first and second decades of the twentieth century a large number of philanthropic groups was dealing with the problem of child welfare.

Union in various centres in Glasgow and Edinburgh and their success led to their emulation by groups in other cities. Church halls were often used to gather in children and teach them songs and games, thus counteracting the evil influences of the streets and keeping the children from mischief and harm. By 1908, Dr. Watson could testify that the Union's guilds had "brought sunshine into many grey and sunless lives, and improved the health, manners and morals of hundreds of the very poorest children."[1] Nor was interest on the part of the churches lacking. The progressiveness of the United Free Church in such matters was indicated by their Congress on Social Problems held in 1911, at which Mrs. G. Kerr, Secretary of the Edinburgh branch of the Social Union, was invited to speak on "The Moral and Religious Bearings of Housing on Child Life."[2] Without doubt, the Scottish Christian Social Union's interest and activity in this field during the first fifteen years of the twentieth century contributed much to the alleviation of the problem.

In its early years the Union pioneered also in Social Institutes and clubs for lads and men. The Institutes met a major need of poorer youths and men for wholesome recreation and social relaxation. By this time working hours had been shortened, giving people more free time in the evenings. The cinema as a haunt for youths had not yet become widespread and such clubs filled the gap before the cinema era. The success of the Institutes in the halls of churches and civic organizations resulted in the granting to the Union, in 1903, by the Glasgow

---

1 David Watson, Social Problems and the Church's Duty (London: A. and C. Black, 1908), p. 32.

2 Report of the Proceedings of the United Free Church Congress on Social Problems (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson, and Ferrier, 1912), pp. 46-55.

School Board of the use of twelve of the city's best schools as centres. They were equipped by the Union and opened to both youths and men. "Thrift, self-control and self-reverence" were virtues emphasized, and hours were from six to ten nightly with special Saturday night entertainments. Their success led Dr. Watson to commend them highly and say of others: "Many a fine school throughout the land stands dark, cold, and locked all winter, when they might be the centre of bright, joyous life."[1] The clubs continued in the twelve Glasgow schools for seven years until evening classes were started by the School Board and the centres had to be given up. The loss was not a total one, however; a number of the clubs were taken over and continued by the churches in the city.[2] Also, by then evening classes were being taken advantage of more and more by youths, and cinemas were becoming popular as well.

In other of the Union's centres throughout the city recreational facilities were made available also. There again "thrift, self-control and self-reverence" were emphasized. In many cases financial aid and moral support were given by the church's Young Men's Guilds and Councils. The Guild Supplement of October, 1905, noted that "entertainments by the Glasgow Council were arranged to be held during the winter in Hyde Park Street Model Lodging House, the Moncur Street Home for Women, and in several of the social centres connected with the Christian Social Union."[3] Thus in another area society was being purified by the leaven of Christianity.

---

1 Young Men's Guild Life and Work Supplement, December, 1904, p. 4.
2 Life and Work Magazine, April, 1932, p. 8.
3 Young Men's Guild Life and Work Supplement, October, 1905, p. 6.

Dr. Watson's success in promoting institutes and clubs through the Union evoked the praise of numerous authorities. Speaking before a gathering of churchmen in 1905, the Lord Provost of Glasgow said: "I am convinced there is no movement full of greater promise along the social plane than that of the Scottish Christian Social Union. It is delightful to go to any of our industrial centres and find that the palatial buildings erected by the School Board are now crowded by the youth--the hope of the city--who, not only through physical exercise, rational and reasonable amusement, but also through study, are seeking to make themselves worthy citizens of the future."[1] In this pre-cinema era the Union's clubs were a haven from trouble and temptation for many youths. Through them many were saved from crime and delinquency. Delinquency was a growing concern to both church and civil authorities in this period,[2] and the clubs played an important preventive role in that area.

Alleviating the plight of the unemployed and down-and-out was a further interest of the Scottish Christian Social Union. At Dr. Watson's suggestion, a committee was set up in 1904 to explore the feasibility of undertaking rescue work among men by starting Labour Homes; however, the starting of Labour Homes by the Social Work Committee in 1905 made such plans inexpedient for the Union, and the matter was dropped.

Another of the Union's efforts deserves mention. In 1905 it

---

1 Ibid., December, 1904.

2 See The Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics edited by James Hastings, Vol. V, pp. 777-778, article entitled "Hooliganism" by Dr. Watson (Charles Scribner and Sons, New York, 1928).

sent a commission to Germany to investigate two subjects then arousing much interest in Britain; the Elberfeld system of poor relief and the German Labour Colonies. Dr. Watson was a member of the visiting group. Numerous cities were inspected including Kaiserwerth, the famous centre for the training of Deaconnesses and Christian social workers, and also the Krupp works with its welfare centres, baths, libraries, and aged workmen's homes. On its return the Commission published a report which "attracted widespread attention and received warm praise for its lucid and interesting account of a difficult subject."[1]

The pioneer efforts of the Scottish Christian Social Union in child welfare and Social Institutes and clubs was rewarding and constructive, Dr. Watson's personal interest in children and youth accounting in part at least for their success. The decline of the Union in the second decade of the twentieth century was due to a number of reasons. Unfortunately, the general public was not ready then for such a united movement. The unbrotherliness, ill-feeling, jealousies, bitterness, and sometimes open hostility which the Disruption provoked was slow in dying out. There was still much animosity and estrangement between denominational groups and, as it was from these bodies that the social impulse came, fully integrated effort was impossible. Also, the first World War drained off the youths and resources of the Christian Social Union and contributed greatly to its dissolution. The War retarded the momentum and impact of the organization to such an extent that in the post-war years it gradually faded out or was absorbed by other groups.

---

[1] Watson, Chords of Memory, p. 94.

Then too, many of the reforms it worked toward were brought about by preventive and ameliorative legislation and an enlightened public conscience, for which the Union, in part at least, was responsible.

THE SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE

While promoting the activities of the Scottish Christian Social Union, Dr. Watson realized at the same time the need for organized social work by the Church of Scotland. Dr. Charteris had been aware of such a want for a long time and had done what he could. By 1900, a younger group of men were coming to the forefront who were firmly convinced of the Church's duty in promoting social reforms. Dr. James Paton, first convener of the Social Work Committee, Lord Polwarth, its second, Professor W. P. Paterson, and Theodore Marshall were among this group. They were not without opposition, however. Many held that the Church's duty was simply to preach the Gospel, forgetting that the Gospel could be preached by acts of loving-kindness as well as the spoken word. In his memoirs, Dr. Watson relates how, one day, when about to address a class of Divinity students on social work, he was warned by the professor "to tell them it is not Socialism"[1] he was to talk about.

However, in the 1903 General Assembly a special joint committee of members from the Temperance, Life and Work, and Home Mission Committees, was appointed to consider and report on the advisability of the Church's initiating such centres as homes for the inebriate,

---

[1] Ibid., p. 151.

labour colonies, and rescue homes for women. This special committee met twice. Dr. Watson and Dr. Charteris were both on it and a unanimous agreement was reached that a report in favour of such proposals be given in. It was with fear and trembling that the sub-committee presented its findings to the General Assembly in May, 1904. A warm discussion followed. The majority opinion was favourable, however; Dr. Charteris' and Dr. Watson's earlier efforts had borne fruit. The Committee on Social Work was appointed. The Assembly had reached a mile-stone in its progress, indeed.

In the early 1900's, the greatest need lay in the three areas indicated previously, ameliorative efforts for men being the most urgent. No large-scale public assistance existed at the time and, with the close of the Boer War in 1901, the streets were flooded with returning soldiers, many in a state of destitution. As its contribution to relief efforts the Social Work Committee started two Labour and Lodging Homes, one in Edinburgh and one in Glasgow at No. 52 Whitevale Street.[1] The puritan virtues of thrift, sobriety and cleanliness were made obligatory and the making of firewood or paper sorting was required in exchange for a bed and food. In addition, during the severe winter of 1904-1905, the Committee set up a feeding station under a railway arch at Bridge-gate in Glasgow, where each night after midnight over five hundred cold men were provided with hot soup and bread. In twelve weeks nearly thirteen thousand meals were given out, sustaining many men through

---

[1] Dr. Watson was chairman of the House Committee for the Glasgow home for twenty-three years; 1904 to 1929.

the dark winter until spring came and industry revived. Thus the Committee's first trial-run was a success. The initial triumphs of the homes along with a continued need for such prompted the Committee to set up similar ones elsewhere. By 1910, Labour Homes were in operation at Ayr, Dundee, Perth, Peebles, and Paisley; the Church, while not preventing the unemployment problem, was doing her best to counteract its devastating effects upon the lives of at least a few of its victims.

Even as late as 1905 there was much room for improvement in many of the common lodging houses for labourers throughout the country. Dr. Begg had wrestled with the problem and continued investigations by both the Free and Established Churches only confirmed the need for improvement.[1] Unscrupulous landlords were not slow to take advantage of migratory workers, and such movement was necessary in an expanding, industrial economy. Dr. Watson's sympathy for such men and his experience with their needs led to the setting up of a number of lodging homes in the years prior to the First World War. The first one was opened in Edinburgh in 1907 and, by 1911, the Social Work Committee had set up others in Glasgow, Peebles, Perth, and Dundee, their object being "to provide for working men a comfortable lodging with good food at moderate prices, where they might escape the temptations and degrading influences of common lodging houses."[2] The number of both Labour Homes and Lodging Houses increased steadily during the years 1904 to 1914, not

---

1 Report of the Home Missions Committee to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1899, p. 12.

2 Yearbook of the Church of Scotland (Edinburgh: Church of Scotland Committee on Publications, 1917), p. 85.

without opposition, however. In Peebles, for example, the Committee's proposal of a Labour and Lodging Home aroused considerable opposition which was based on the fear that the number of strangers frequenting the town would increase. The abundance of employment and the inducting of men and boys into the services during the years 1914-1918 made the curtailment of lodging houses expedient until the late 1920's, when unfavourable economic conditions made their reinstatement imperative.

For destitute men interested in agriculture the Cornton Vale Farm, Bridge of Allan, was acquired in 1907, mainly through the efforts of Lord Polwarth and Dr. Watson. Ex-prisoners, moral degenerates, and the inebriate were taken in. Spiritual and physical regeneration were aimed at and with success, for the Committee's report in 1909 noted that "the results, both physically and morally, upon the men sent there have been most marked."[1] The farm was of educational value as well; a number of men were given enough intensive, agricultural training to be sent to Canada as immigrants in the years prior to the First World War, where they became successful farmers. Much to the joy and pride of Dr. Watson and Lord Polwarth, the Cornton Vale farm was used by the Board of Agriculture in 1918 and 1919 as a training centre for discharged soldiers. With improved economic conditions after the war the nature of the work changed. For the next twenty years it became a centre for training delinquent lads for settlement on land overseas and achieved such success and recognition that at the close of the Second World War the Scottish Home Department purchased the farm for an experiment with selected Borstal lads.

---

1 Reports on the Schemes of the Church of Scotland to the General Assembly, 1909, p. 1,114.

The Committee's concern for the plight and problems of women took several forms. Through Dr. Charteris' influence, a Bureau was set up at Edinburgh in 1905 to help unemployed women find work. Because of the hard times the Bureau was an immediate success and built up a good reputation. From then until the present time it has helped hundreds of necessitous, respectable women find much needed work and inspired the setting up of a similar one in Glasgow in 1929 when, due to depressing economic conditions, the woman was in many ways the sole supporter of the family.

Nineteen hundred and seven marked the Committee's first efforts to establish Rescue Homes for women. One was opened at Morham for fifteen-to nineteen-year-old girls "who had got among bad companions and were in danger of going astray, or had taken the first step on a downward path."[1] In the same year a large Industrial and Lodging Home accommodating one hundred women, formerly run by the city of Glasgow, was taken over by the Social Work Committee. Laundering, sewing, and weaving were carried on within the house, while the more responsible women were permitted to work outside. Again emphasis was placed upon maintaining a wholesome, Christian atmosphere so that a thorough regeneration of the women ex-prisoners, moral degenerates and police court cases might be accomplished. The setting up of the two homes was welcomed eagerly by deaconesses and parish sisters. They had long realized the need for homes to which "friendless and erring girls"[2]

---

1 Ibid., 1908, p. 1,186.
2 Ibid., 1907, p. 1,112.

could be sent and had urged the Social Work Committee from its very beginning to undertake the task.

The reclamation of girls and young women proved to be a continuing emphasis by the Committee. In its first year of life the Committee was recognized as a Discharged Prisoners Aid Society, enabling it to receive financial assistance for expenditures on discharged prisoners taken into their homes. The Committee was very sympathetic toward such prisoners, both women and men, and claimed that "without homes, such as the Church is establishing, into which they can be received, discharged prisoners have humanly speaking little chance. They must seek shelter in the common Lodging Houses, or in their old haunts; and so they are thrown at once amongst vicious and criminal companions, while they have as yet no means of gaining an honest livlihood."[1] Certainly the need for such work was great enough, as many sources indicated. The Free Church's Committee on the State of Religion and Morals reported blushingly in 1899 on prostitution in the streets of Glasgow that "the detailed facts in this section could not, with wisdom, be reproduced here."[2] In his book, Social Advance written in 1911, Dr. Watson noted that of the sixteen thousand lads and girls leaving Glasgow's schools yearly "one-fifth are convicted before reaching twenty-one," while of the 120,000 lads and girls between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one living in Glasgow in 1910, twenty-three thousand "have gone astray and been convicted."[3]

---

1 Ibid., 1905, p. 1,205.
2 Report of the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland, 1899, p. 12.
3 Watson, Social Advance, p. 306.

The Committee's large Industrial Home in Glasgow was moved to Uddingston in 1912 and replaced by a small receiving home. Many women were sent by the Glasgow Lodging House Mission Organization which Dr. Watson was instrumental in forming and which was especially busy from 1908 to 1920 rescuing women from the most notorious lodging houses of the city. The Uddingston home was transferred to Pollokshaws in 1914 and called the Rescue and Industrial Home for Babies and Unmarried Mothers. A year later a much needed Maternity Home was opened in Glasgow "to provide a temporary residence for respectable girls who had been led astray, and are about to become mothers for the first time."[1] Moved by the gratefulness of the girls, the Committee erected two more houses, one at Edinburgh in 1918 and one at Paisley a year later. Thus the Church in still another area was meeting a clamant need of the day, and her endeavors to purify and elevate society were bearing fruit. Her rescue homes were among the first of their kind in Scotland and, because of the Christian spirit of love, fellowship, and forgiveness permeating them, they did not fail as did many others.

Police work and hostels for girls as two other phases of the Committee's work with women deserve special mention. Dr. Watson's interest in helping prison inmates was largely responsible for the starting of police court work among women at Edinburgh in 1908 when the Committee appointed the sister of Lord Polwarth as its first police court worker in Edinburgh. She attended the Police and Sheriff Courts daily to help women handed over to her by those courts. Because many

---

1 <u>Reports on the Schemes</u>. . . 1916, p. 511.

of the women and girls who came before the court had no homes, a flat in Atholl Place was provided the deaconess that she might give immediate attention and temporary shelter to needy cases. Later, with a greater demand for space, a club-room and more temporary quarters were added. Much to Dr. Watson's delight the residence after 1915 was used also as a court work training centre for deaconesses and church sisters. In this field of activity the Church of Scotland was a pioneer. Paid probation officers and services were not started until the second decade of the twentieth century and then followed lines demarcated earlier by the Social Work Committee.

The opening of a hostel for working girls in Glasgow in 1912 marked a new departure in preventive social work for women. Changing conditions had given rise to such a need. The emancipation of women and the expansion of industry had led to an increasing number of women being employed in industry without, however, their being particularly well paid. Girls coming from rural areas with no relatives or friends in the urban centres especially felt the need for a good home and happy companionship and surroundings at a cost which they were able to meet. The problem was of concern to all churches. As early as 1899 it had been reported in the Free Church Assembly by her Committee on the State of Religion and Morals that girls going to the city and failing to get decently remunerative work, and sometimes no work, had gravitated down to the common lodging houses so rightly deplored, and a plea was made that "the construction of Lodging Houses suited to the circumstances of a young woman of the poorer classes seeking work and

where she would be much less exposed to temptations" be undertaken.[1] In 1913, a year after its first home was opened, the Social Work Committee opened others in Edinburgh, Dundee, and Aberdeen. By 1920, the number had risen to nine, housing over two hundred girls who deeply appreciated the security and hospitality such homes provided. A similar home for students, Lister House in Edinburgh, was opened in 1919.

In reality the earlier success of the homes for working boys had given the Committee confidence and experience in the field. In 1905 the Committee had taken over the Humble Agricultural Labour Home for Boys started in 1865 by Lord Polwarth. Dr. Watson felt that homes should be started in industrial areas as well, for he had seen even in his own parish that many working boys left their crowded homes and moved into lodgings which often had little to commend them. Maberly Street in Aberdeen was the scene, in 1905, of the first working lads' home, a hearty response and generous financial aid having been given by the citizens there to the Committee's appeal.[2] The success of the Aberdeen home led to the setting up by 1912 of similar ones in Glasgow, Gowan and Paisley providing much homey comfort and shelter for over one hundred youths. The Social Work Committee's report in 1910 on the youths in the Herbert Street Boy's Home, Glasgow, that "we can say with utmost confidence that during the year at least twelve boys have been rescued

---

1 Report of the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals, 1899, p. 13.

2 While outside the scope of this study, it is interesting to note that the house continued in Aberdeen until 1944 when it was destroyed by enemy action. Again the citizens of the city responded nobly and gave £ 2,500 for the purchase of a new home and the city itself £ 100 in recognition of the good work the home had done through the years.

from utter hopelessness and ruin and planted on the road to industry,"[1] indicated that the Church again in another area was meeting and continued to meet the challenge of the Industrial Age.

One of the most prized successes of the Social Work Committee was its work with the aged. An orphanage for boys was started at Morham in 1913 on the same lines as the Life and Work Committee's orphanage for girls. Dr. Watson felt that a home for elderly people might well be opened up also, and in the same year an experiment was tried in Glasgow. The time was not ripe for such a test, however, and it was not until 1926 that another attempt was made. That year the Powfoulis Home for Aged Persons was started near Falkirk and became an immediate success. In 1931 Belmont Castle near Meigle was opened by the Duchess of York to be used similarly, and a year later Dalry House, Loanhead, was also put into operation. The Eventide Homes marked a distinct and continuing phase in the Church's social work. The care of the aged appealed strongly to the heart of the Church and certainly strengthened the bond of fellowship and friendship throughout. It was only appropriate that one was named after Dr. Watson, the David Watson Eventide Home, Gargunnock, opened in 1950.

Dr. Watson served as vice-convener of the Social Work Committee from 1906 to 1927 when he was made its Convener, a position he held until his retirement in 1935. During his eight years at the helm the number of institutions under the Committee's care increased from twenty-eight to thirty-nine. A Women's Employment Office was opened in Glasgow

---

[1] _Report on the Schemes_. . . 1910, p. 988.

in 1929. Florentine House, a training home for orphans and destitute girls, founded in 1861 and directed by the Glasgow Elders' Wives and Daughters Association, was handed over to the Committee the same year. In 1929 also the Sabbath Breakfast and People's Palace Mission was given to the care of the Committee. Since 1885, when the Mission had been formed by a group of businessmen influenced deeply by Moody and Sankey, the Mission had provided free Sunday breakfasts for the vagrant and poor of the Cowgate. Its building in that deteriorated area had become a great centre of evangelistic and social activities, and its Sunday Evening Service was one of the few where more men than women could be found worshipping together.

The late 1920's and early 1930's was again a period of economic distress presenting a challenge to the Committee. Nineteen hundred and thirty-two saw the presentation to the Committee of Craigilinn Farm near Paisley by its owner Dr. Cossar. On Dr. Watson's suggestion, it was put to immediate use as an agricultural training centre for jobless youths placed on probation by the police courts. A year earlier the Committee had opened three halls in Glasgow as reading and recreational centres for unemployed men "to preserve their morale and prevent that deterioration of manhood which is apt to follow long-continued unemployment."[1] The halls were carefully chosen at centres where men congregated in large numbers, and soon the halls were crowded, the men showing a keen appreciation of the Church's efforts to ameliorate their

---

[1] Ibid., 1932, p. 478.

lot. Their popularity led the Committee to set up four more in Glasgow the following year and also to help finance others in Aberdeen and Ayr. The Committee's Labour Homes were also in greater demand at this time of unemployment. A most successful instructional centre for jobless young men was opened up at Whitwale, Glasgow, and placed under the charge of the Reverend Harry Law. Handicrafts and trades were taught. The idea spread and the centre became the pioneer of the community service movement in the late 1930's.[1]

Because of the strain of work and advancing age Dr. Watson, then seventy-six, resigned from the Convenership of the Social Work Committee in 1935. As one of its founders and life-long members, Dr. Watson had seen and helped it progress for thirty-one years. Its work had expanded from very small beginnings into a large and varied scheme of social service; in fact, the largest carried on by any voluntary institution in the country, and Dr. Watson was proud of his share in it. Only a part of the Committee's efforts and successes have been mentioned here, much less the good fruit it bore in the saving of human lives. Through the Social Work Committee the Church was testifying that she had accepted the challenge of alleviating the plight of the lowly and redeeming the changing society in which she dwelled. It was with much satisfaction that Dr. Watson, in his last speech to the General Assembly, said: "it was heartening to him to know that the Church had now accepted and rejoiced in its social work....He had given in his

---

1 Watson, Chords of Memory, p. 156.

last report. Younger hands than his must carry on that work, and they would not fail."[1]

THE PRESBYTERY OF GLASGOW

Dr. Watson's efforts in the Courts of the Church were not limited to the General Assembly's Social Work Committee. Fortunately he was a member of the progressive and forceful Glasgow Presbytery. For twenty-four years he served faithfully on many of its committees, was convener of several, and did outstanding work on its Committee on Social Problems. In reality this Committee's work helped greatly in this period to supplement the more orthodox efforts and emphasis of the powerful Glasgow United Evangelical Association.[2] Not that Dr. Watson himself was not evangelical, but his belief in the necessity of social work by the churches led him to restrict his efforts mainly to the Presbytery's Committee on Social Problems.

Disturbed by the evils and licentiousness of many of the lodging houses in the city, Dr. Watson in 1907 moved in the Presbytery that an investigation be made. That body readily concurred and Dr. Watson was put in charge. He had heard the common lodging houses denounced as "plague spots and dens of iniquity" and, impelled by a passion for facts at first hand, he visited nightly for a week with a police inspector from 9:00 P.M. to 2:00 A.M. a number of houses, and thus was satisfied that the rumours could be fully verified. Even

---

1 Proceedings and Debates of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1935, p. 322.

2 In 1898 alone, the Association spent £ 32,000 on evangelical work in Glasgow.

worse were the farmed-out houses, which Dr. Watson described to a Royal Commission of Investigation in 1914 as being "in many instances a brothel pure and simple," and in which he saw "dozens of young girls from sixteen to twenty years of age who admitted that they were living on the proceeds of sin."[1]

Dr. Watson's findings, when presented to the Presbytery and the public, made a deep impression upon civic leaders, members of the Presbytery and other church officials. The problem was taken up by a number of Glasgow Corporation officials who subsequently insisted at corporation meetings, and with success, that improved management and stricter supervision of lodging houses be observed, that boys be excluded from men's lodging houses, and that a provisional order for the control of farmed-out houses be passed. This was done within a year through the instrumentality of Mr. Myles, the Town Clerk, who drafted a control bill which was supported by the Convention of Royal Burghs and the Secretary of State for Scotland and which was made into a law.

Meanwhile the Presbytery had been diligently at work. A Lodging House Mission was started in 1908 which took over a station in the Candleriggs and began rescue work among the women inhabitants of the lodging and farmed-out houses. A year later Dr. Watson brought the matter to the attention of the General Assembly with the result that a chaplain and parish sister were appointed to devote their full

---

1 Evidence before the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Industrial Population of Scotland, Rural and Urban (Edinburgh: H. M. Stationery Office, 1917), p. 893.

time to the mission and to lodging house dwellers. Their work proved invaluable in the next two decades in the redeeming of broken and diseased women. The success of the scheme was the inspiration for a similar one by the United Free Church in 1915. With the Union of the churches in 1929, the two missions were integrated, a second chaplain and sister were appointed, new and larger premises were acquired in East Campbell Street, and the work continued at an accelerated pace. The efforts of civic groups, commercial interests and the Presbytery's mission through the years led Dr. Watson to state, in 1936, that "both the lodging-houses and the farmed-out houses in Glasgow today are very different from what they were in 1907."[1]

By 1916, Dr. Watson's work and writings had made him well known as an effective social reformer. Up to then he had written five books as well as numerous articles for journals. _In Life's School_, _Perfect Manhood_, and _Perfect Womanhood_ were of a semi-inspirational nature, touching somewhat on social problems but using a personal approach with less emphasis upon the role of environment in determining personality. The books, _Social Problems and the Church's Duty_ and _Social Advance, Its Meaning, Method and Goal_, dealt specifically with current social problems, their effect upon the individual, and the Church's role in solving them. The former book was written for the Life and Work Committee's Guild Library Series and was distributed widely in church circles throughout the country. Four of Dr. Watson's favourite problems were dealt with; child-life, housing, poverty, and

---

[1] Watson, _Chords of Memory_, p. 101.

industry, and a number of solutions were offered. The book, Social Advance, was an outgrowth of the Gunning Lectures given by Dr. Watson at Edinburgh in 1910-1911 and was a distinct contribution to the social science literature of the day. It was aimed at a wider circle of readers, gave a theoretical as well as practical approach to social problems, and dealt more comprehensively with the role of the Church in society and in regard to social evils.

In this period from 1900 to 1916, Dr. Watson continued to speak before numerous civic groups and church groups on the application of Christianity to current social and industrial problems. The organization of Provincial Councils and Annual Conferences of both the Men's and Woman's Guilds was well under way by then and Dr. Watson was invited often to speak at their meetings. Articles written by him were being published regularly in such magazines as St. Andrew and Life and Work. His interest in prison work had led to his being appointed, through the instrumentality of Lord Polwarth, to the chaplaincy of Barlinnie Prison, Glasgow, in 1910, a post he held for five years. His work and writings led to the conferring on him of the D. D. degree by Glasgow University in 1913. That same year he was made a Justice of Peace for the County of the City of Glasgow; the appointment required him to preside in court as a Magistrate, and he described the experience as a "welcome opportunity of doing something for the delinquent youth of the city."[1]

THE COMMISSION ON THE WAR

It was only natural, then, that Dr. Watson, with his background

---

[1] Ibid., p. 116.

of experience and understanding, was asked to help direct the work of the Commission on the War in Relation to its Spiritual, Moral, and Social Issues, set up by the General Assembly in 1916. As an associate he had Professor W. P. Patterson, a close friend, whom he describes as a person with "the spiritual fervour of a Loyola and the social enthusiasm of a Keir Hardie."[1] Rising out of the Church's concern for the grave spiritual, social, and moral problems accentuated by the war, the Commission was in many respects another landmark in the social history of the Church.

The two men set to work immediately. As the Commission's primary task was to educate the people on the social and moral issues and problems involved and accentuated by the war, a decision was made that a group of experts be asked to contribute and a book be printed and distributed on the most urgent problems of the day. As a result, in 1918 the comprehensive volume, Social Evils and Problems was published. Such detestations as crime, gambling, and intemperance, and problems such as rural depopulation, industrial unrest, and Christianity in business, politics, and international relations were dealt with. Dr. Watson himself contributed chapters on Housing and Social Disintegration. A copy was sent to every minister and probationer in the Established Church and was warmly received. Its use as a basis for study by a number of "study circles" formed in local congregations led the Commission to state in its 1919 report that "this is a most hopeful

---

[1] Ibid., p. 103.

sign, and marks the growth of an earnest desire within the church both to know the facts of the present social situation and to find a Christian solution to all our problems."[1] The book had repercussions outside the Established Church. A prominent layman of the United Free Church was so impressed by the chapter on gambling that he arranged to have it printed and sent to every minister in Scotland. The book was one major fruit of the Commission's labour.

A second was the holding of two country-wide conferences, as well as a number of local ones, between representatives of church and industry on social and industrial problems. They were important because they cut across denominational lines, because of the subjects discussed, and the attention the conferences received. The first one was held in conjunction with the United Free Church in December of 1917, when the main subject discussed was the Report of the Royal Commission on Scottish Housing given out that year. The conference was exceptional because of its twofold emphasis on both evangelical and practical Christianity. It was evidence that, to a majority of minds in the Church, the two phases could no longer be separated. The second conference was held in December of 1918 at Glasgow, when the Church and Industrial Reconstruction was the main theme, Dr. Watson himself speaking on one phase of the problem. Aside from their real value the two conferences served as a good example of the increasing cooperative effort by the denominations elicited by the social needs of the day.

---

[1] Reports on the Schemes. . .1919, p. 635.

In the spring of 1919, sensing that the time was ripe for such, the Commission carried through a Mission of National Rededication with its central theme of "the supremacy of Christ in all spheres." A feeling of gratitude and relief had swept the country with the ending of the war, and it was felt that people should be called upon to dedicate their lives once more to God and the building of a better social and industrial order. Led by ministers and members of the Commission, impressive meetings were held all over Scotland. Congregations stood up and pledged themselves in a vow of fresh consecration to the service of God. The Mission proved a fitting climax to the Commission's work. The members were highly commended and the Commission discharged by the 1919 General Assembly.

THE COMMITTEE ON CHURCH AND NATION

Realizing the value of the Commission's efforts and also the need for continued study and guidance on national and international problems, the General Assembly immediately authorized the formation of the Committee on Church and Nation. Its task, like the Commission's, was to "watch over those developments of the Nation's life in which moral and spiritual considerations especially rise, and to consider what action the church from time to time might be advised to take to further the highest interest of the people."[1] The appointment of the Committee in 1919 was another milestone in the Church's social history

---

[1] Loc. cit., p. 490.

and was an open acknowledgment by the Church of the need for continuous investigation and exploration of the social problems and concerns of the people and the establishing of a consistent policy and approach to them. Under the convenership of Dr. White and his successors, Dr. Cockburn and Dr. Chisholm, it became and continues to be one of the most influential committees in the Church of Scotland.

Three sub-committees were set up under the Church and Nation Committee; the Life and Efficiency of the Church, Empire Problems, and Social and Industrial Life, Dr. Watson being made Convener of the last, and the first task undertaken was an investigation of current industrial problems and the relevance of the teachings of Christ to their solution. Here again we see a new emphasis in the Church's life. For the first time she had authorized a formal, thorough, and continuous investigation of the whole industrial system in an attempt to relate Christianity to the real life of the society in which she was set. Such a challenge was undertaken with much zeal and enthusiasm by Dr. Watson and his associates.

After a year of intensive work, a report was handed to the General Assembly in 1920. The positive thesis was presented that only Christianity could furnish a solution to "the prevailing unrest and the severely strained relations between the representatives of Capital and Labour."[1] A number of claims were made, the most important being the supremacy of Christ in all spheres of life, the applicableness of the Christian ethic to social and industrial relations as well as to

---

[1] Reports on the Schemes. . .1920, p. 525.

individual conduct and, lastly, the new emphasis upon the necessity of the Christian faith finding fuller expression in the social and industrial life of the nation.

Six teachings of Christ were presented by which it was felt that the industrial system should be tested and judged. These included the infinite value of every soul in the sight of God, the subordination of material gain to the sacredness of personality, the honour of labour and its adequate remuneration, fidelity and loyalty in word and work as an imperative moral duty and, lastly, the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. Dr. Watson felt that a number of industrial conditions made the proclamation of such teachings imperative then. Numerous demands were being sought by the labouring classes, partly as a result of society's failure to act on such teachings. These demands included better housing, security from unemployment, improved conditions of labour, more leisure for family life, self culture and social relaxations, a fuller recognition of personality, a higher status as producers, some voice in the control of industry, and a larger share of the wealth produced by Capital and Labour. Such demands seemed revolutionary to many churchmen, but Dr. Watson felt that only when they were fulfilled could it be said that Jesus' teachings were being applied to the industrial life of the nation. While unfortunately never put into practice fully, the sub-committee predicted that if such were done "a brighter industrial era in fuller accord with Christian principles, an era of real brotherhood instead of class warfare, would soon dawn."[1]

---

[1] Ibid., p. 528.

The sub-committee's initial efforts had at least five results. The report aroused much interest and, naturally, controversy. It was circulated throughout the country and used as a basis of discussion at various local conferences of workmen and employees. It was used later in discussions and reports by church groups and committees and served as a guide for Dr. Watson and the three other delegates representing the Committee at the British Preparatory Conference at Birmingham in 1924.[1] Lastly, it led to the setting up of a conference, mainly through Dr. Watson's efforts, in Glasgow in 1921 between the Established and the United Free Churches. A continuation of the earlier conferences between the two groups, its aim was "to give ministers and church members an opportunity of discussing modern social and industrial problems in the light of our Lord's teaching."[2] Dr. Watson himself preached the opening sermon in Glasgow Cathedral for the conference. The United Free Church in this period was becoming also more and more aware of the need for the Christianizing of the industrial order. That emphasis was carried over into the United Free Church in the formation of her General Assembly's Committee on Social Problems. Thus both the Established and United Free Churches had a background of interest and experience on which conferences could be held after 1918, and both were becoming aware increasingly that the growth of social problems and the development of an indifferent and even anti-Christian attitude constituted a challenge

---

1 The British Conference on Christian Politics, Economics, and Citizenship, held at Birmingham in April, 1924.

2 Reports on the Schemes. . .1921, p. 582.

which made united efforts both imperative and expedient.

It was not until the latter part of the 1920's that the problem of Christ in industry was taken up again. In the meantime, the sub-committee on Social and Industrial Life, headed by Dr. Watson, had set to work investigating the extent of gambling throughout the country, a task it pursued vigorously for the next eight years. Following the example of the Life and Work Committee, queries were sent to the Presbyteries in 1920 on the nature, extent, and effect of the practice. In its first report to the General Assembly a year later it was pointed out that gambling was largely, if not solely, a vice of industrialism, and a disease of the city, town, and mining village, while in purely rural districts it was practically unknown. Later replies, however, did not uphold the purity of the landward areas, as farm labourers were becoming contaminated increasingly by the habit as well. Various types of betting were listed at such organized sports as horse racing, football, and whippet racing; games of chance such as pitch and toss, card betting, credit and coupon betting, sweepstakes, and lotteries. Especially alarming was the effect of gambling upon the participants. Commenting on the returns received, Dr. Watson in the 1921 report claimed that "vast and widespread misery in lives and homes is caused by gambling. The moral havoc it works is incalculable; it is a moral and spiritual as well as social evil."[1] Three years later the Committee in its report noted the immoral effect upon children employed by gambling establishments, and in 1928 it warned the Assembly that the introduction of

---

[1] Ibid., p. 583.

greyhound racing and the use of the totalizer at race tracks would have dangerous results.

The Report in 1902 of a House of Commons Committee on Gambling indicated that the gambling habit had increased greatly from 1870 to 1902. By the end of the First World War, professional sports had become both widespread and commercialized, and betting had reached such an extent that labour leaders themselves were becoming alarmed and concerned. Dr. Watson's sympathy for the plight of the working classes, as well as his own moral standards, led him to oppose vigorously all forms of gambling. He realized that other factors than simply the excitement of activities in which the element of chance is involved were at work, among them being the dullness of much manual labour, the barrenness of many homes, the scarcity of inducements to and often the means of progress, as well as the lack of suitable outlets for personality expression. He believed that, while the Church might help individuals to overcome the habit, other large-scale, legal measures were needed for a full solution.

Remedies suggested by Dr. Watson and the Church and Nation's sub-committee fell under two main categories; legislation and education. Legislative measures to restrict the operations of bookmakers, suppress betting odds in the press, withdraw Post Office facilities for the transmission of betting literature, and exclude bookmakers' agents from public works were suggested.[1] The recommendations were approved by the General

---

[1] Dr. Watson in his visits to public works had seen the widespread activity of such agents in those places.

Assembly in 1923 and sent, along with the sub-committee's findings, to the Secretary of State for Scotland.

Feeling that, while legislation might accomplish much in suppressing the more glaring and ruinous forms of gambling it should be supported by an enlightened public opinion, a special educational drive was organized by the sub-committee in 1923. The crusade was carried out in conjunction with the United Free Church. A pastoral letter on the matter was sent by the General Assemblies of both churches to their ministers. Sermons and addresses by ministers and others were made, especially to youth organizations. Joint meetings were held and civic groups stirred up, resulting in the sub-committee being able to report that "wherever it had been taken up, much good had been accomplished in the way of forewarning and safeguarding our young people."[1]

In general, the sub-committee's work in this area was successful in keeping church people from the gambling habit; however, the evil was too deeply embedded in the background and frustrations of the working classes for the Committee's drive to have much effect upon them. The educational program was adequate to reach church youth and inoculate them, but the germ continued to spread among those outside its reach. In the decade of the 1920's a strong enough public opinion favouring gambling reform could not be generated, nor could enough pressure be exerted upon legislators to enable the passage of effective prohibitive legislation. However, the efforts of the sub-committee and the extensive support given by the General Assembly to solve this one social problem,

---

[1] Reports on the Schemes. . .1925, p. 715.

even if not fully successful, indicated the forwardness of the Church at the time in the field of social reform. She was willing to fight the battle not only through exhortation but also legislation. The Church could be accused no longer of retiring to her ivory tower to watch the world go by. Instead, she had taken her place in the world, yet at the same time not becoming a part of it. Her people were ready to respond, indeed had responded nobly, to an appeal against the immorality of the day.

The sub-committee's probe of gambling ended in 1928. An investigation into the problem of rural life had been carried on concurrently; however, it will be discussed later. Dr. Watson retired in 1930 as Convener of the Sub-Committee on Social and Industrial Life. The burden of other work, especially that of the Social Work Committee, made it necessary for him to do so.

THE CHURCH, DR. WATSON, AND THE WORKING CLASSES

Dr. Watson was active in a number of organizations and activities outside the Church and his major contribution came in two general areas; the housing of the working classes, and rural life. His work in those two areas will be discussed now. From the very first years of his ministry, Dr. Watson encouraged all movements and societies which he felt were sincerely and wisely working for the uplift and improvement of the working classes. He joined the Rechabites, Foresters, Gardeners, Oddfellows, and Ancient Druids, and for a quarter of a century was chaplain of the Masonic Lodge Union and Crown 103 in Glasgow. Dr. Watson steadfastly conducted the Dedicatory Service at the opening of the

St. Mungo Halls of the Cooperative Society, even though it incurred the wrath of some private traders in his parish. His sole contact with the veteran labour leader, Kier Hardie, came at the time and he was greatly impressed by him. During the first twenty years of his St. Clement's ministry, Dr. Watson visited regularly and gave brief addresses at many of the iron, brass, electricity, cotton, and jam factories in his parish. The addresses were heartily welcomed by the employers, one of them actually delaying the blowing of the whistle when Dr. Watson ran over his allotted time. The workers responded readily and attended the meetings, leading Dr. Watson to report to the Kirk Session that his "visits to the Public Works in the district had been very successful, the members present and attention given being most encouraging."[1] Thus, through both unofficial and official first-hand contacts, Dr. Watson grew more and more familiar with the problems of the working classes. He was acting upon the admonition of one worker who said to him: "You should come often. We have many speakers here asking our votes for Parliament, Town Council, and Parish Council, but no one comes to speak a word for the Church."[2]

Dr. Watson soon recognized that the housing problem was a basic one, as its history indicates. As early as 1833, a Municipal Corporation Act had been passed by Parliament granting to corporations much greater power to deal with the housing problem. Little was done, however, either by Edinburgh or Glasgow, much less the smaller cities

---

1 Kirk Session Records, May, 1906.
2 Watson, Chords of Memory, p. 72.

of Scotland. Labour was too mobile and did not want to be tied down, and besides there was the matter of expense involved, an item which town councils were quick to consider. As indicated earlier the housing problem was brought before the public increasingly in the middle of the nineteenth century by Dr. Begg, W. S. Blaikie, Duncan M'Laren, D. M. M. Crichton, and others, but it was not until two decades later that real power came into the hands of the workers enabling them to make their voices heard enough in civic affairs to frighten town councils into action.

Lord Shaftesbury was instrumental in the passage of the Common Lodging-Houses Act and the Labouring Classes Lodging-Houses Acts in 1851. The main problem was their enforcement however, as Dr. Watson was to find out as much as fifty years later. The Torrens Act followed in 1868 and was an improvement; however, the enforcement problem still persisted. Next came the Cross Acts from 1875 to 1882, the first to give local authorities compulsory powers to purchase, reconstruct, or demolish insanitary and structurally defective houses. This had been done locally to some extent. Edinburgh's Lord Provost, William Chambers, had been instrumental in the passage of the Public Health Act of 1867 which enabled the city to undertake a scheme of slum clearance. Nearly three thousand houses were demolished in the Cowgate and the Cannongate at an expenditure of over a quarter million pooundss; rebuilding was left to private enterprise, however, which unfortunately proved inadequate. A year earlier a similar chain of events had taken place in Glasgow. A City Improvements Trust was set up; ninety acres of its worst slums in

the Gallowgate, Trongate, and Saltmarket were razed, thirty thousand people being dislodged. Again reconstruction was left to private enterprise which failed once more, this time because of the financial crisis of the late 1870's.

A Royal Commission was appointed in 1884 to investigate the Scottish problem, and its findings were not especially encouraging. Its work and discoveries did arouse public opinion, and subsequently Parliament, enough to allow the passage of the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890, which became the first real measure of reform. It provided not only for the clearance of slum areas in large cities but in smaller ones as well. Dr. Watson had propagandized vigorously on the need for the latter. He realized that many of the less populous industrial and mining towns of Scotland were being overlooked, even though they also had slum areas about which the people could do little. The 1890 Act also enabled local authorities to purchase land and erect workmen's dwellings and, most important of all, financial provisions were included facilitating such action by corporations.

Much was hoped for by Dr. Watson and other proponents of the Act, part of which at least was realized. From 1890 to 1907, Edinburgh expended £ 100,000 on the purchase and clearance of slum areas and £ 87,970 to erect houses for the dispossessed. Concurrently the St. Giles Dwelling House Company and the Cockburn Association were doing much as private, voluntary associations. Glasgow, having recovered from the depression, began again, in 1889, to clear a slum area of eighty-eight acres and eventually built thirty new streets of houses at

an expenditure of two and one-half million pounds.

Nor was the Church asleep, at least in Glasgow, in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. While the housing scheme of 1889 was in progress, a campaign was undertaken by the Presbytery's Social Reform Committee, of which Dr. Watson was Convener both before and after the Union, to insure that no public houses were opened in the rebuilt area. Enough public support was gathered that vote-conscious corporation officials forthrightly saw that no public houses were allowed. In 1888, the Glasgow Presbytery appointed a Commission to make a detailed inquiry and analysis of the housing of the poor in the city.[1] It too was a landmark in the history of the Church and received widespread attention. An enormous amount of information was gathered and presented to the Presbytery in 1891, following which the Commission's findings then were taken to the Glasgow Corporation officials with two recommendations. First was the conferring upon the corporation of immediate power to close insanitary and decadent houses and to compel landlords to make alterations and improvements on houses when necessary; public opinion was stirred so deeply by the report that this was done within a matter of months. The second recommendation was that a Glasgow Workmen's Dwelling Company be formed to purchase and reconstruct existing tenements which were insanitary and in disrepair. The result was the formation on a private basis of the Glasgow Workmen's Dwelling House Association with a capital of £ 4,000. In the next two decades it bought and renovated twenty-six blocks of slum property and built six new blocks

---

[1] Dr. Watson was a member of the Commission.

of buildings. Thus, in one more area, the Church through one of her courts had provoked a chain reaction of progress in the society in which she was set.

With all this legislation and action the problem was not fully solved but lingered on into the twentieth century, as the Report of the Royal Commission on Housing, issued in 1917, showed. The steady increase of population made a complete solution difficult and economic fluctuations were of no help either. Also, people were demanding more; the standard of life had risen and more was expected in the realm of housing. The beginning of the twentieth century saw the birth of the Town Planning Movement, garden cities, and a mature, scientific approach to the problem while, increasingly, government stepped in to fill the breach left by private enterprise and to provide needed housing for the lower classes.

It was John Bright's rectoral address at Glasgow University which first aroused Dr. Watson's interest in housing reform. He had pointed to the thousands in Glasgow crowded into single rooms or living in hovels, a sight with which Dr. Watson familiarized himself immediately as a student, and a problem on which he became an expert later as a minister. Dr. Watson's short ministry at Paisley only whetted his appetite and the housing problem was tackled almost immediately after his appointment to St. Clement's.

While visiting in the parish his belief was confirmed in the immediate and degrading effect of poor housing and environment upon a person, especially children and youths. A survey of the parish taken

by himself and the church sister in 1896 showed that about thirty-seven percent of the houses were of one apartment and fifty-six percent of two. He found a large proportion of the houses either too draughty or stuffy, thus unwholesome from a sanitary and health point of view. Many homes were overcrowded, defective in light, cheerless and uncomfortable, and such conditions forced the men to go outside for animation and comfort, usually to the public house, a path often leading to drunkenness and other evils. Youths were also affected; pleasure and excitement sought outside the home led in many cases to hooliganism, crime, immorality, and prostitution. Most pitiful to Dr. Watson was the degrading effect of slums and poor housing upon little children. The spiritual and religious life of the inhabitants of all ages suffered inevitably. Only a few could rise as heroes, unscathed by such an environment.

It was not to be wondered at that Dr. Watson promoted vigorously two types of remedies. He joyfully welcomed to his parish the Workman's Dwellings Company mentioned previously. Through his persuasion the company acquired across from his church a block of tenements described by Dr. Watson as a "hideous insanitary rookery."[1] The buildings were renovated, the back court cleaned, grass sown, and trees planted. Window gardening was encouraged by giving seed and plants to the tenants. Good tenants were rewarded by a reduced rent and the incurably bad ones gotten rid of. Much to Dr. Watson's delight it was

---

[1] Watson, Chords of Memory, p. 78.

decided that the property should be managed by the Kyrle Society's Housing Committee for Glasgow of which he was a member and, on principles laid down by Miss Octavia Hill, a housing reformer in London. As a result of combined efforts, the tenement in Dr. Watson's words, "was transformed beyond description."[1] In actuality the Kyrle Society was a successful counterpart to the Workmen's Dwellings Company, managing with unsurpassed success a number of its tenements and following Octavia Hill's methods. As a second measure, if not preventive at least ameliorative, Dr. Watson started a number of clubrooms in the parish. The main one was in the renovated tenement and was an immediate success. A bookcase, piano, games, and magazines were furnished by ladies of the church. In the afternoons wives of the court used the clubroom as a meeting place, while in the evenings it was reserved for men and boys. Sunday morning and evening religious services were held and a Sunday afternoon Sunday School was conducted for children. Dr. Watson found such clubs to be invaluable in combatting intemperance and providing a congenial meeting place and a wholesome atmosphere for young and old alike.

Dr. Watson, like Dr. Begg, placed much emphasis upon the need and value of better dwellings for the working classes. Good housing, he believed, would do much to combat intemperance, immorality, profanity, and irreligion. Though by this time the working classes had their own organizations promoting better housing, they were glad to have the support of such men as Dr. Watson. He himself felt that the Church had not

---

1 Ibid., p. 79.

done what she might in identifying herself with the lower classes, a severance which handicapped her effectiveness greatly in slum areas. Undoubtedly Dr. Watson was right, although it must be remembered that by this time (1900) the Church was more and more gaining popular support and coming into the hands of popular control.[1] It was in this period and through the efforts of Dr. Watson and a few others that the Church as a whole was beginning to acknowledge the effect of environment upon personality or, as in this case, the close relationship of poor housing and irreligion and immorality.[2] In this respect the Church was behind, as by then the evil influence of poor housing upon health, morals, and character was realized and publicly acknowledged outside the Church. This recognition of the effect of environment on personality was one result of the growth of social studies and the coming of social science into her own in this period. Of course, many of the working classes themselves had recognized such a relationship long before, but their sentiments had not been publicly acknowledged nor action undertaken by the controlling power groups of society to correct conditions.

Dr. Watson was impressed greatly by a number of cities he had seen on his trip to Germany in connection with the Christian Social

---

1 Dr. Charteris' wide sympathies had led him to advocate constantly a greater democratization of the Church. Such a process as a technique to strengthen the Church was advised strongly by the 1896 Commission on the Religious Condition of the People and Dr. Watson was a staunch supporter of the belief in putting the Church in the hands of more popular control. The trend toward democratization in the Established Church in the latter part of the nineteenth century is discussed by J. Mackinnon in his book <u>The Social and Industrial History of Scotland</u> and by G. Henderson in his book <u>Heritage</u>.

2 That the Church should acknowledge and act upon the fact of the close relationship of environment and personality was the main thesis of Dr. Watson's book, <u>The Social Expression of Christianity</u> (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1919).

Union, especially Dusseldorf which, he wrote, "proudly calls herself the garden city," with its cleanliness and beauty, and also by Essen, the centre of the Krupp works where he saw workers housed "in beautiful dwellings outside the town, amidst lovely gardens and stately trees."[1] This was one of the factors which led him to support scientific planning and the Garden City Movement made possible by the Town Planning Acts of 1909 and 1919.

Though coming from a semi-rural background, Dr. Watson did not advocate, as did some, a return to the country and a complete abolishing of cities, even if such were possible. "The city," he declared, "has come to stay, and we must bend our energies into making every city a garden city."[2] Dr. Watson did not believe that the industrial system was so irremedial that it should be sacrificed and society go back to the pre-industrial era; however, he did think that through intelligent planning and good will the cities might be rid of their slums, smoke, consumption, filth, intemperance, insanitation, and disease. Industry, he believed, might move outward as a part of the suburban movement and improved transportation. The wisdom of such a view became apparent later when smoke filters, the replacement of coal by gas and electricity, the setting up of health services, and greatly improved sanitation did much to improve and brighten urban life.

THE CHURCH, DR. WATSON, AND RURAL LIFE

The years from 1890 to 1935 saw continued changes and a number

---

1 David Watson, Social Advance, p. 236.
2 Ibid., p. 231.

of clearly defined trends in Scottish rural life. Much was being done to improve conditions in rural areas through legislation and government in this period, as by then small landowners, rural labourers, and tenant farmers had much more political power and were using it constructively. The raising of the general level and tone of rural life was reflected in a great increase in the number and quality of farm journals and other literature, along with the rise of a number of exclusively farm organizations enhancing rural life. More and more agriculture was being run on a scientific basis. Rural education was being revived and deservedly coming into its own, while the more brutal features of rural life, such as the earlier degrading scenes of the feeing market, were silently stealing away. Beginning around 1910, a rural recreation movement became fairly well defined, and in that same decade, 1917 to be exact, the Women's Rural Institute was started through the efforts of a Lothian farmer's wife, Mrs. Catherine Blair. Improved rural roads and means of transportation helped insure the success of both the Institute and the recreation movement, thus taking from rural life a portion of its isolation and loneliness. The spread of the wireless into rural areas and a rural electrification program after the First World War also helped greatly to brighten and enhance rural life.

Nevertheless, the country had its seamy as well as sunny side. Through this period the rural exodus continued. Dr. Watson was greatly disturbed by what he called "the decay of village life." The increasing mechanization of the rural economy had undermined village industries, causing the blacksmith and joiner shops to almost disappear from the

rural scene. The housing problem still remained, as was indicated by the 1896 Report of the Commission on the Religious Condition of the People, the Parliamentary Commission's Report in 1917, Dr. Watson's investigations from 1921 to 1923, and later surveys by both church and civic groups. The same reports indicated that the bothy system, while not as widespread or insidious, still persisted.

That system was one of the causes of the continued restlessness among farm labourers, the ambulatory habit being especially detrimental to the efforts of the Church. A second cause was the growing impersonality of rural life, although still minor in comparison to urban centres. Dr. Watson reported to the General Assembly in 1923 that class distinctions were being accentuated even in rural areas, for the close friendship between labourer and owner was slowly but surely disappearing with the growing commercialization of rural economic life. Most discouraging to the rural labourer still was the improbability, although not an impossibility, of rising to the envied position of ownership.[1] The years from 1890 to 1935 witnessed also a steady increase in the number of small mining villages to which dirt, disease, dullness, and spasms of unemployment were certainly no strangers. Nor had conditions in the Highlands improved outstandingly, either socially or economically. The Parliamentary Commission's Report of 1917 noted the plight of the lonly crofter, the barren and dismal homes of many and their suffering and hardships, through all of which the heart of the true Highlander

---

[1] A policy of creating small-holdings was adopted by the Government after 1900, the Small Landholders' Act of 1911 and the Small Holdings Acts of 1916 and 1918 doing much to make that policy effective.

was still kind and warm.

Though his mature life was spent in a Glasgow east-end parish, the memories of youthful days exploring Alva Glen, crossing the Ochills, or fishing in the Devon remained always with Dr. Watson. In his heart he loved rural life and he gave himself, as much as time and energy would allow, to its improvement.

Dr. Watson was greatly distressed by the backwardness of rural housing, despite the Workmen's Dwelling Act of 1890. Like many others he had hoped its provisions for improving rural villages would be taken advantage of. He sympathized greatly with the need for more wholesome and available recreation and from 1900 onwards propagandized widely on the matter. He advocated the construction of village halls as centres of recreation and social gatherings, and, after the Union, urged that a number of churches be made over into halls for such. Dr. Watson's efforts contributed much to the success of the rural recreation movement in that period. He supported the Women's Rural Institute Movement as well, realizing its value in broadening and brightening the social and mental outlook of rural women. Still he regretted that its success was due, in part at least, to the failure of the Church to meet those same needs.

Dr. Watson advocated also a more comprehensive school system for rural areas. Though their curriculum was already somewhat rurally centred, he believed that it should be even more so. He was attracted by the Danish Folk Schools and advocated that rural schools in Scotland be set up on similar lines. To Dr. Watson the ideal rural life was a

combination of town and country, the taking of the best from both and applying it to each; in actuality that process was occurring more and more after 1900. To Dr. Watson the Rural Development Act of 1909 was a great step forward, as it made provisions for scientific research in various branches of agriculture, for the purchase and preparation of land for afforestation, a school of forestry, the improving of rural transport, and for schemes to attract labour back to the land. Though never fully realized, the way toward such goals was opened at last by the Act. Dr. Watson heartily supported such measures as the reviving of village industries, reforestation, land reclamation, and the more intensive cultivation of land to raise the economic level of rural life. He realized that the lack of a choice of economic opportunities was one cause of the trek urbanward. His interest in the economic aspects of rural life led to his organizing in 1916 of a National Scottish Conference on Employment on the Land. At the time he was chairman of the Scottish Council for Women's Trades. The conference was held to encourage women to seek employment on the land, to suggest ways of enhancing rural life, and to present and publicize technical methods of increasing agricultural production. Of it Dr. Watson wrote: "It was a most successful conference and was attended by over five hundred delegates from all over Scotland."[1]

Beginning in the 1920's the movement to set up workingmen's institutes and clubs in urban areas, which owed its success in large measure to Dr. Watson's pioneering efforts, spread to rural areas as

---

[1] Watson, Chords of Memory, p. 300.

well. Dr. Watson was quick in seeing the possibilities of such a movement and supported it heartily. He was busy in the late 1920's and the 1930's writing articles[1] and speaking before rural organizations on the great value of such institutes in raising the social and cultural level of rural life. Dr. Watson felt that rural as well as urban areas should have playgrounds, clubs, libraries, and community centres. The urbanization of rural life, reflected in the Institute and Community Centre Movement, continued steadily after the First World War. Urban values spreading landward was evidenced in the demand by rural workers for shorter working hours, higher pay, and the desire for a more wholesome and less burdensome rural life.

As for the Church, Dr. Watson believed it could be a greater cultural as well as religious force in rural life. Probably his ideal was the Church in Europe at an earlier date when she was the guardian of culture and art. Dr. Watson urged rural ministers not to think disparagingly of themselves or their task but rather to look upon it as a real opportunity of serving the Lord and raising the whole level of community life. He saw in the Union of the Churches a promise of overcoming the narrow dogmas and sectarian views and prejudices often found in rural church life. Dr. Watson's numerous writings and speeches helped much after 1900 to focus the attention of the Church and the public upon the problems of rural life. His outstanding contribution was a comprehensive

---

[1] A typical article was one entitled "Village Halls" in the Life and Work Magazine, Young Men's Guild Supplement, December, 1932.

investigation undertaken in 1921 as Convener of the Sub-Committee on Social and Industrial Life under the Committee on Church and Nation. Its investigation was the first of its kind since 1896, when a section of the Commission on the Religious Condition of the People's final report was devoted to rural problems. Dr. Watson's report was presented to the General Assembly in 1923 and used as a guide for action by the Life and Work, Home Mission and Social Work Committees. At the same time a copy was sent to the Secretary of State for Scotland who commended Dr. Watson highly for its clarity and thoroughness.

In this period, as formerly, the Church was nurturing the spiritual life and welfare of the rural inhabitant. In contrast to urban areas we do not find the Church as much concerned over the economic problems of the ruralite, and perhaps rightly so, for by this time farm organizations had risen to insure the economic welfare of the farmer. The Church was more concerned with his spiritual, cultural, and social welfare, and in most rural communities, although by no means all, she was the centre of much of the village's social and cultural life. True to Dr. Charteris' insight, the Woman's Guild continued to be a focal point of religious and social activities, and the same was true of the Men's Guild, especially up to the First World War. In these years from 1890 to 1935, the influence of the churches was extended to secular organizations through the membership of its ministers on county councils, educational boards, and health and service projects in rural areas. In the Free Church a minister, the Reverend Mr. Pollock of Dunscore, noted that he had been on the school board in his district for seventeen years and he urged

his fellow-ministers to follow his example.[1]

Despite her successes many things in rural life were of grave concern to the Established Church. She could not overlook the rural depopulation, the isolation and loneliness of rural life, the farm workers' migratory habits as related to gambling, illegitimacy, and non-churchgoing, the intemperance and immorality in many areas, the competition between churches, and the decline of the Men's Guild. When the time came, she responded nobly with the limited forces at her command. The years from 1893 to 1914 saw a rise in the number and effectiveness of the deputies of the Farm Servants Sub-Committee under the Life and Work Committee. The number of meetings held, bothies visited, and youths saved increased steadily, and rural workers recognized increasingly the Church's concern for their welfare.

Inspired by the success of the Farm Servants Sub-Committee, the Home Mission Committee in 1902 started a mission to berry pickers in East Perthshire. The queries of the Life and Work Committee had unearthed the need for such missions and the job was given to the Home Mission Committee. The missions were extremely successful in upholding the morals and morale of the pickers and giving help of a practical nature. The work of evangelism was carried on also; of her 1904 mission to pickers on the farms surrounding Blairgowrie, the Committee reported that one, and often two, services were held on weekdays and always three on Sundays. Attendance on the part of the general public was discouraged, the Committee feeling that "the pickers were not assembled to provide a

---

1 Reports on the Schemes of the Free Church to the General Assembly, 1880, p. 193.

summer spectacle for well-dressed visitors or an opportunity for loud-voiced commiseration."[1] Describing the mission's work of a practical nature, the Committee noted that the season that year was late; the pickers arrived earlier than they should have, many of them were near the verge of destitution upon arrival, with the result that after a few days their condition became pitiable, and they were saved from starvation only through the mission's efforts in conjunction with a local church. In subsequent years mission workers were sent to such other areas as Rottray, Forfar, and Auchterarder. Thus through the years from 1902 the Church contributed to the uplifting of another realm of rural life.[2] The same area of work with berry pickers was one in which combined efforts with the United Free Church were carried on. She too had a mission for berry pickers and after 1903 a policy of co-operative efforts was carried on between the two churches to prevent duplication and overlapping.

Other efforts to raise the level of Scottish rural life may be noted. During the 1890's and after, coffee bars at feeing markets became increasingly popular and were instrumental in combatting intemperance. Temperance refreshment tents at county fairs started by the Woman's Guild in 1891 spread to plowing matches which were an integral part of current Scottish rural life. Thus the machinery of the Life and Work Committee was put to good use more and more. The efforts of the Social

---

1 Reports on the Schemes to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1905, p. 338.

2 While outside the scope of this work, it is of worth to note that the mission to berry pickers continues to the present day.

Work Committee through her Cornton Vale and Humbie barns have already been noted.

In many ways one is tempted to say that the Church in general failed to meet the challenge of rural life after 1900. Certainly, the city overshadowed the farm more and more, as was reflected in the attention and emphasis given the urbanite by the Church and her General Assembly. In urban centres nearly every church had its clubs, experienced or semi-experienced helpers, and auxiliary organizations, but such manifold, special agencies failed to develop in rural areas even though needed. In too many instances the Church failed to be a cultural centre for the rural community as she had been at an earlier stage in Europe. Her view was often a narrow one, especially before the Union, and she failed to be a progressive, broadening, educational agency, as the success of the Women's Rural Institute indicated. Yet certainly life in the rural areas was more pure and higher, less stained and tainted by current evils, and the credit for this must go most emphatically to the institutional Church and the efforts of such men as Dr. Watson.

The Established Church is to be commended for the frankness with which she faced the urban problem in the first three decades of the twentieth century. The investigations of social and religious conditions by Dr. Charteris' Life and Work Committee in the 1870's, the 1885 General Assembly's Committee on the Lapsed Masses, the 1889 Committee on Non-Churchgoing, the Glasgow Presbytery's investigation in 1890 of the housing of the working classes in that city, and the General Assembly's Commission on the Religious Condition of the People from 1890

to 1896 were all stepping stones in the Church's steady progress toward adapting herself and making the Gospel effective and productive amidst the changes of the nineteenth century. The appointment of the Social Work Committee in 1904, the Commission on the War from 1916 to 1919,[1] and the Church and Nation Committee in 1919 with the investigations of its Sub-Committee on Social and Industrial Problems headed by Dr. Watson were landmarks in the early twentieth century indicating the Church's recognition of the grave social and religious problems confronting her people and her flexibility and adaptability in meeting the demands of those years as well. In the twentieth century the varied agencies of the Life and Work Committee continued their work at a steady pace; the activities of the Temperance Committee under the Reverend John Muir, Dr. Fergusson and Dr. William Swan were progressively extended and deepened; a much greater emphasis upon the welfare of youth led to a great increase in the number of youth clubs and organizations within the Church despite the decline of the Young Men's Guild; the trend toward union was accelerated by the manifold cooperative undertakings on local and national levels and was happily consumated in the Union of the Churches in 1929; the work of the Home Mission Committee was especially valuable in helping the presbyteries to promote Christian effort in new areas and, though retarded through the four years of the First World War, the Committee recovered quickly and after the Union undertook a successful and much

---

[1] While outside the scope of this work, it should be pointed out that during the Second World War a similar group, The Commission for the Interpretation of God's Will in the Present Crisis, was set up by the General Assembly and assigned the same task. It too is a further landmark or stepping-stone in that continued process.

needed scheme under the direction of Dr. John White of planting churches in the suburban areas of cities and in the new government housing projects, which were being filled rapidly by thousands moving from the crowded cities. The Sunday School movement had reached a mature and rewarding level and had the full support of the clergy. With their ministers educated on a broader and more comprehensive basis, the churches were better fitted for progressive leadership in the communities throughout the land. Improvements were made in the style and content of church services. Greater attention and care was given to the devotional as well as preaching aspect of the worship hour and with a varied and magnanimous social and philanthropic work carried on throughout the parishes the churches were contributing steadfastly to the spiritual and material nurture of their people.

CHAPTER IX

DAVID WATSON, D. D., 1935-1943

Dr. Watson served on a number of other General Assembly committees as well as on those already indicated. For twenty-four years, from 1905 to 1929, he worked faithfully on the Home Mission Committee. Appointed in 1905 a member of the Life and Work Committee, he was closely associated with Dr. Charteris until his death in 1908 and continued working diligently on that Committee until 1929. His early interest in temperance reform led to his being appointed to the Assembly's Temperance Committee in 1904 and he remained on it until 1929 also. Dr. Watson served, too, on the Committee on Union of the Churches and called the memorable occasion in 1929 "the greatest ecclesiastical event in Scotland since the Reformation."[1]

Dr. Watson's wife died in 1932. He notes that for a time "the road felt very lonely and nothing seemed any longer worthwhile,"[2] but the feeling passed in time and he took up work again. His service to the General Assembly ended in 1935, when he retired as Convener of the Social Work Committee. He wrote his memoirs a year later. By then the work in St. Clement's Church was being given over more and more to his assistant, the Reverend Thomas Smith. Dr. Watson retired from St. Clement's in 1940 and lived quietly with his daughter until his death three years later.

---

1 Watson, Chords of Memory, p. 180.
2 Ibid., p. 184.

Much has been said about Dr. Watson's social work; it is necessary now to turn to his social and religious thought. Unlike such men as Dean Inge, Dr. Watson did not favour a return to the pre-industrial, handicraft stage. With characteristic optimism he urged that the industrial system be accepted, not in its entirety, however. Its wrongs and injustices should be noted and reforms made. Dr. Watson claimed that the inequalities, injustices, and excessive materialism of his day were in glaring contrast to Christian teaching and thus should be eradicated. Men were being used as means only and not treated as ends in themselves.

One of Dr. Watson's main claims was that the Church should be the redeemer of all life--personal, social, and economic. The Church's task was the redemption of the individual from his egotism and society from its materialism, individualism, and over-competitiveness. The Church could be the redeemer of both if she would try; Dr. Watson felt that she had not yet made a wholehearted attempt. Her ministers had not preached the complete Gospel nor had her people applied it. In a tenor reminiscent of Dr. Charteris, Dr. Watson claimed that historically individual churches had been organized mainly for worship, not service, when in reality the latter was as important as the former. Only through such an "applied Christianity" was the brotherhood of man and the earthly kingdom of God possible.

Dr. Watson's optimistic view of human nature led him to place much emphasis upon the building of the kingdom of God on earth. Man, he stated, is a cooperative as well as competitive being.[1] He is not

---

[1] David Watson, "The Cooperative Instinct," Life and Work Magazine, August, 1924, p. 9.

wholly doomed; there is some good in everyone. Man has a religious instinct which can master and overcome the self-regarding and competitive instincts.[1] If the Church would act upon such an assumption, preach the full social Gospel, and become the redeemer of both the social and individual orders, the kingdom would be much nearer at hand. Despite much opposition, Dr. Watson's thesis that there is a spark of goodness in every man, which might be brought out in a better environment, was victorious in the end and became the theological basis of the Church's redemptive social work. To Dr. Watson salvation could not be accomplished only through improving the environment; however, the inner man must be regenerated as well. Environment, of course, was important and must be changed. The Church should be the divine instrument of both social and personal redemption. Her task was to apply the Gospel and Christian principles to social and industrial as well as personal problems. To many people such a claim by Dr. Watson seemed extreme and startling; in fact, almost revolutionary.

Salvation was defined by Dr. Watson as "deliverance from sin in the individual and in the state."[2] It was the transforming of the self-interest motive, the purifying of the competitive and egoistic instincts. True brotherhood would be one result of such salvation. Dr. Watson's outlook was optimistic. To him human nature was a complex, man being capable of both base selfishness and amazing self-forgetfulness. Dr. Watson did not overlook the first but he did tend to

---

1 David Watson, "Vital Social Instincts--The Competitive Instinct," Life and Work Magazine, July, 1924, p. 3.

2 David Watson, "The Religious Instinct," Life and Work Magazine, December, 1924, p. 2.

over-emphasize the latter. He acknowledged that self-interest might be the strongest motive in human nature, yet he declared that "we are not helping the angel in man when we assert continually that it is."[1] Dr. Watson had much faith in the realization of brotherhood, such faith reflecting in actuality the general optimism of the post-war period.

Yet Dr. Watson was aware that there were many things wrong with his society. In the midst of such evils he thought of the Church's role as not that of a partisan political or economic force but rather that of a prophet, mediator, informer, and educator. As a prophet she must present general lines for the building of a better future and forecast the evils befalling civilization if such is not done. The later preventive social work of the Church, such as the hostels for working girls, was in part the outgrowth of the prophetic function stressed by Dr. Watson. He, like Dr. Begg and Dr. Charteris, placed much emphasis upon the prevention of social evils whenever possible. As a mediator the Church must present the basic Christian beliefs of brotherhood, equality, and the sacredness of the individual, upon which the industrial order should operate, strikes be settled, and disagreements ironed out. The Church must save and regenerate both the labourer and employer. She must touch and permeate all aspects of life as was done in the older, rural setting of a previous century. In such an emphasis we see how an attitude is carried from one cultural milieu and applied in a new setting. Dr. Watson felt that the Church as informer must be conversant with all the major problems facing society. She must recognize

---

[1] David Watson, The Church at Work, p. 13.

the materialistic temper of the day which widespread industrialism and the skepticism and materialistic views of Huxley and Herbert Spencer had made fashionable. She must investigate, study, and educate her people for intelligent action on social problems. Dr. Watson urged that such be accomplished in at least three ways; the giving to divinity students of training in both practical and theoretical social work, the instituting of study groups in local churches, and a united, comprehensive scheme of social endeavour by all churches. The first was done through the starting of lectures on practical theology beginning in 1870. While highly desirable the second suggestion was carried out only partially. The Men's Guilds in the parishes provided an opportunity for such study but they were not taken advantage of to the extent that Dr. Charteris had hoped or Dr. Watson wished. Dr. Watson had hoped that his Scottish Christian Social Union would become the central agency for the united social work of the denominations but such was not to be. The union of efforts did not become a reality until 1929.

In this period we see a distinct cleavage between the assumption and outlook of many sociologists and social workers and those of such men as Dr. Watson. One of Dr. Watson's major contributions was his integration of the two philosophies and a practical application of the synthesis. To Dr. Watson social problems could not be solved successfully on a purely humanitarian level. One must go a step farther and solve them on the basis of a Christian ethic and in the Christian spirit of service, sacrifice, love, and complete identification. Dr. Watson did not discredit the humanitarianism of the day; he believed that it

simply did not go far enough. Actually Dr. Watson helped many people outside the Church to realize that the changing of environment only was inadequate. That was the major shortcoming of humanitarianism. It did not go farther and change the inner man as did Christianity. On the other hand, Dr. Watson helped many church people to realize the necessity of reforming the environment as well as the inner being. He claimed that inasmuch as there is in everyone some good which environment often prevents from being realized, the environment must then be changed. This combination of the two emphases was to become, increasingly, the message of the Church. Dr. Watson came at a time when practical "social Christianity" was appealing more and more to the people. He lived in a period when the older emphasis upon personal regeneration was being supplemented, if not replaced, by the emphasis upon social reform. Dr. Watson helped greatly to speed that process.

It was also an age in which the inevitability of progress was commonly accepted. Change was believed to be inevitable, and change was usually interpreted as being, unquestionably, progress. Such an attitude was based, in part at least, on the assumption of man as an altruistic as well as egoistic being. Added to this was the popular emphasis upon environment and its potential redemption; thus the reason for the belief in steady progress becomes apparent.

We see beginning at this time also a new application of the belief in the infinite worth of the individual. It was such men as Dr. Watson who stressed and finally convinced people of the need for applying that principle to the industrial order and judging that system by

whether or not it violated the sacredness of the human personality. Dr. Watson felt that in many ways it did. Men were used too much as tools, as means to others' ends, and not as ends in themselves. The Church's task was the giving of constructive criticism and pointing out faults and ways of changing the industrial order to conform with Christian teaching on the inviolability of the individual. Behind this was Dr. Watson's assumption of the direct relationship of the spiritual and material. They could not, nor should they be severed. The Church must seek to reform and elevate both.

In this period we find also a great emphasis by social theorists upon the importance of environment. Social thought had not gone to the point where Christ had entered in. It may have accepted the premise of the basic dignity and worth of man but it rejected the belief in the ultimate need of inner or personal regeneration through Christ. The contribution of such men as Dr. Watson was the giving of the environmental emphasis greater depth and force by adding to it the emphasis upon changing the individual too. Thus in the end the Gospel of the Church became more socio-centred and the outlook of sociologists more appreciative of the part played by religion. In this period from 1890 to 1935, the finality of the Christian ethic was no longer generally assumed; Dr. Watson's contribution came in asserting that the Christian ethic not only should but must be the basic assumption of all social life and activity.

An analysis of Dr. Watson's thought would be incomplete without a note on his international outlook. Like many leaders of his time,

he was concerned with international as well as national problems. Naturally he felt that the Church should have such a concern as well, and he was gratified to see the zeal and thoroughness with which she, especially after 1900, approached the international issues of the day. Such action was both forced and voluntary, for this was a period when international issues were becoming more and more a concern of both the Church and the secular world. The issues were of such magnitude that they almost overshadowed all others, occupying increasingly the minds of leaders both in and outside the Church. Dr. Watson was a delegate to three major conferences dealing with world-wide concerns of both a religious and secular nature. The first was the Student Volunteer Missionary Union Conference at Liverpool in 1911. The second was the 1914 Birmingham Conference on Christian Politics, Economics, and Citizenship. Most thrilling to him was the Stockholm Conference in August, 1925, with its theme, "Life and Work," so reminiscent of Dr. Charteris. This conference, perhaps more than anything else, confirmed his conviction of the need for a true brotherhood of man based upon the love of Christ, a denial of excessive nationalism, the common goal of elevating humanity, and the building of a peaceful world.

At heart Dr. Watson was a kind and peace-loving person. His life was given completely and unselfishly to the cause of Christ on earth. He was an humble man. He sought no honors, yet many came to him and of them he was justly proud. Dr. Watson was a very sensitive and sympathetic individual also. He responded wholeheartedly to the beauty of the natural world, and he was deeply stirred by the cold,

pinched faces of little children, huddled together for warmth, on the steps of a rickety tenement on a cold winter's morn.

CHAPTER X

IN RETROSPECT

In the 1830's, 1840's, and 1850's, the Industrial Revolution was rapidly changing the face of Scotland. She was no longer a semi-agricultural country of small manufacturing towns and rural communities. New mining and industrial towns with their rambling factories were rapidly spreading over the countryside. The population increased surprisingly; cities expanded rapidly but always with a nucleus of slums despoiling each. A revolution occurred in rural life as well. The application of science to agriculture increased production greatly; machinery replaced hands and started a trek urbanward. In the years from 1830 to 1860 the new system of large-scale manufacturing made an abundance of manufactured goods available. The wealth of the country increased greatly. Public services were extended. The standard of living rose. The amenities of life were more in evidence; people on the whole ate, dressed, and comported themselves better than ever before. The press came into its own and was a powerful influence for good. The hopes and aspirations of all classes were intensified and extended. People began to expect and demand more from life. Their tastes changed. They would no longer be satisfied with the mediocre and ordinary.

There was a darker side to the picture, however. For the first time in the history of Scotland there had come into being, as a result of the Industrial Revolution, a large labouring class, cut off

from the land and filled with discontent, who, while they might have liked a share in the pleasantries of life, were denied such a portion in countless cases, because of the fluctuations and uncertainties of the economic system under which they lived. Lurking ever before this mass was the shadow of industrial recessions, the pawnshop, and perhaps finally the poorhouse. For them life was too much a struggle for survival to leave room for the finer things, and the continued starvation of sensibilities led only to a lower level of gratification and living. The packing of these thousands into disowned urban areas was certainly not conducive either to their moral or physical welfare, as Dr. Begg was quick to discern. Most disheartening to them was their realization of their want of any real means of political expression and the necessary political and economic power to do much to overcome the evils to which they were subjected.[1] This situation changed and the gradual enfranchisement and uplifting of the working classes has been one major theme running through this study.

In the years from 1843 to 1860 the Established Church was occupied almost wholly with recovering from the effects of the Disruption and the Free Church was too intent on building up its strength to give much attention to the multitude of social problems which accompanied the Industrial Revolution. The Free Church had to undertake the gigantic task of providing places of worship for her nearly one hundred thousand adherents; the Established Church lacked the manpower and vigour

---

[1] The Reform Act of 1832 enfranchised the middle class; it was not until 1867 and 1883 that the town worker and rural labourer respectively were enfranchised.

to barely hold her own, to say nothing about undertaking any aggressive action to combat the irreligion and immorality of the day. Thus during the 1830's, 1840's, and 1850's, when such evils as intemperance, crime, child labour, abominable working conditions and long hours became rampant, they received scant reproach from the churches. No inclusive program of social reform was presented either by the Established or Free Churches, despite the efforts of such men as Dr. Begg and Thomas Guthrie in the latter and Principal Macfarlan in the former. In fact, it was the laxity and neutrality of the Free Church in regard to social evils which caused Dr. Begg and Thomas Guthrie to strike out on their own in the field of reform.

By the 1860's, however, the situation within the Free Church had changed. She had become consolidated and embedded in Scottish life. She had successfully carried through an ambitious scheme of erecting her own schools throughout the country.[1] Under the leadership of Thomas Guthrie, manses had been provided for her clergy. She had set up over eight hundred churches throughout Scotland and by 1860 was beginning to make a notable contribution in the foreign mission field, while at home an aggressive home mission movement to Christianize the dwellers of grimy closes and dingy tenements was embarked upon under the prompting of Dr. Begg. By 1860 she was beginning to acknowledge the debasing effects of a wretched environment upon the lives of the lower orders and

---

[1] Within five years of the Disruption, the Free Church had raised nearly £ 40,000 for expenditure by her Education Committee. By 1850 she had 626 schools in the parishes and normal schools for teacher training at Glasgow and Edinburgh.

so she became interested in current social reforms. The extollment for such an attitude and the subsequent activity belong to a large extent to Dr. Begg. It was his efforts in the 1840's and 1850's which roused the Free Church to an awareness of, policy toward, and program of reform. From that impetus came the General Assembly's Temperance Committee and numerous local groups stalwartly opposing intemperance, Dr. Begg's Housing of the Working Classes Committee, which not only presented the distressing housing problem to the Church and the public but also brought about some real results, and the Committee on the State of Religion and Morals which in the forty years from 1860 to 1900 unearthed a gold-mine of information for the Church on the many moral and social evils blighting the land. It was extremely unfortunate for the Free Church that Dr. Begg did not continue his aggressive and prolific work in social reform during the latter 1860's and the 1870's. His experience and fervour would have strengthened her efforts greatly. His failure to continue his earlier social work was the greatest tragedy of his life, for he could have made a much greater contribution to the Church and society.

Within the Established Church a change had occurred also. By 1860 she had recovered from the shock of the Disruption. A younger group of men, which included Dr. Charteris, had come forward to take up the cause and under the wise council and guidance of older heads the Established Church entered into a new era of activity. Behind her was the weight of tradition and a goodly heritage, as well as an extensive array of church buildings and other facilities. Families associated with her through generations were reluctant to part from her

at the Disruption and now came forward to propell her on her way. New life was breathed into the General Assembly's Home Mission Committee with the appointment of Dr. Crawford as convener in 1858. His dramatic and urgent appeals to the people on behalf of the impoverished and churchless greatly increased the revenue of the Committee enabling it to give financial aid for the construction of churches and mission halls to parishes with rapidly increasing populations. The work of the Endowment Committee progressed favourably under Dr. Robertson and his successor, Dr. Smith of North Leith, despite the Disestablishment Crusades of the 1870's and 1880's. Under Dr. Cook of Haddington, the Education Committee made notable advances with the increased funds at its disposal. By 1870 that Committee was contributing to the support of over 2,525 schools. Of the 2,344 certified teachers in the schools of Scotland in 1869, 1,481 were connected with the Established Church and with over two hundred-thousand pupils under her care it is not to be wondered at that many churchmen vigorously opposed the taking over of her schools by the state in 1872. Foreign Missions came into their own in the Established Church as well in this period, under the consecrated and vigorous leadership of Dr. Norman Macleod and the hearty support of Dr. Charteris and others. At home, intemperance caused the Church much concern and under the convenership of the Reverend James Stewart the Assembly's Temperance Committee, in the 1870's and after, progressed from a stage of unenthused commenting to an aggressive period of collecting information, petitioning the legislators for legal enactments, addressing memorials on the subject to magistrates and lord provosts,

promoting local groups, especially Bands of Hope, issuing special appeals to church members, writing and sending out numerous pamphlets,[1] and cooperating with other secular and religious groups.

Within the Established as well as the Free Church in these years from 1860 to 1890, there was a growing awareness of the need for study and action in the field of social reform. Dr. Charteris is to be commended for his early recognition of that need and his setting up of the Life and Work Committee which through its queries gathered facts and information enabling a coordinated and effective program to be undertaken by the Church. The Committee's investigations led to the setting up of the Guilds for men and women which in the parishes became instruments of evangelism and humanitarianism, the order of Deaconesses as another channel through which the humanitarian impulse and the Gospel of Christ were spread, the Pleasance Mission which not only had a tremendous uplifting effect upon the immediate area but which, because of its forwardness in methods, inspired similar projects throughout the country, and the Charteris Memorial Hospital as a training ground for home mission workers and a symbol of the Church's healing ministry. The Committee's disclosure of large numbers still outside the ordinances of the Church led to the formation of the Committee on Non-Churchgoing in 1889, which became the Commission on the Religious Condition of the

---

1 The Temperance Committee's publications for 1896 may be listed as an example. Such ones as the following were sent out: Legislative Temperance Reform, The Church's Appeal--A Message for the New Year, Suggestions to Workers and Helpers, Parochial Temperance Organization, Memorandum on Temperance Legislation, A Good New Year and a Glad New Year, and Temperance Catechism for Bands of Hope.

People with its magnificent and prolific work from 1890 to 1896 in getting at the causes of the alienation of the masses from the Church. Such conditions as the state of housing, intemperance, gambling, promiscuity, working conditions, hours of labour, and Sunday labour and amusements were included in their investigation, with an eye to their effect upon the spiritual life and religious habits of the people.

All of these activities within the Church came just in time, for by the 1860's the social evils accompanying industrialization had become so obvious and the lapsed masses of such extent that no church could possibly overlook them. The housing problem continued to be a grave and perplexing one, both among the lower classes where it was most acute and to conscientious humanitarians who sympathized with their plight. Advances in such areas as the abolishing of child labour, shortening working hours, bettering working conditions, welfare work in factories, and unemployment relief were made, but not nearly as fast or as thoroughly as either workers or philanthropists would have liked. Intemperance, despite all the efforts of secular and church temperance organizations, had not decreased appreciably. Prostitution was increasing rapidly in the larger urban centres. Alarming to the Church also was the rapid spread of the habit of using profane language, especially among the youth. The gambling habit was following a similar course of expansion among all age groups.

In the years from 1860 to 1890 other conditions appearing were causing the Church concern not only for the working classes but for society as a whole. The rising materialism which had infiltrated

all ranks was one. The ever increasing abundance of goods, while raising the standards and increasing the comforts of life, tended to make material values predominant. The accumulation of wealth by a few led to the worship of wealth by the majority and made gain the major preoccupation and objective of many, as the Commission on the Religious Condition of the People pointed out in its 1896 Report. Such a state of society greatly distressed Dr. Charteris and was staunchly opposed by the churches. Related to the wanton materialism was an increasingly anonymous and impersonal quality in the social relationships of urban dwellers which contrasted strikingly and unfortunately with the neighborliness, friendliness, and primary relationships of an earlier day. An inevitable result was the breakdown of moral codes, as individuals were no longer as much under the restraining influence of family or neighbors. Dr. Charteris evaluated the situation correctly when he initiated the Men's and Woman's Guilds for he saw that they would be centres of fellowship and inspiration with which individuals might align themselves and so be helped to overcome the temptations of a freer environment. With the taking of work and recreation outside the home, family life inevitably suffered. Nor were the traditional religious practices of Bible reading and family prayers kept up as faithfully, even among the middle and upper classes, and with the increasing freedom and openness of society long-standing moral codes and patterns of behaviour were scrutinized, questioned, and often discarded for, if a freer, also many times a looser standard of conduct. Most distressing to the Church was her new position, especially in urban areas, on the

periphery rather than in the centre of community life. In the earlier semi-agricultural period of small towns the Church was the centre of community activities and focus but this became less common in the new urban, industrial age when other interests and organizations occupied increasingly the attention of many. In the face of such changes the Church from 1860 to 1890 did not stand aloof but through her clergy, her Courts, and her General Assembly she sought to uphold the moral level, retain the traditional religious practices, strengthen family life and keep the Church in the centre of the community.

In the industrial field during these years an increasing unrest occurred as the antagonism between labour and capital became sharper. Victorian individualism, freedom, and absence of state control because of the laissez-faire policy may have allowed an enormous expansion of industry and commerce, and yet it came at the cost of much human degradation and suffering. The result was the rise of the working class movement (with which Dr. Begg was closely associated), and the growing consciousness among workers of their power which led them to revolt against obnoxious working conditions, monotonous labour, and long working hours, and to demand a greater share in the fruits of their labour.

With changes in the society all about her it was both inevitable and good that changes occurred within the churches as well. The transposition in theological thought and emphasis, especially as it affected the social philosophy and work of the churches, was a major one. The older theology with its extreme individualistic emphasis upon personal sin and salvation slowly gave way to a broader concept and message

which acknowledged personal debaucheries as being caused not solely by huamn depravity but by the influence of environment as well. The loss of a job and idleness was not attributed to individual laziness, sin, or unwillingness, but recognized for what it was, the outcome of a vacillating and uncertain economic and industrial system; and the Church acknowledged that the spiritual purgative recommended earlier was somewhat inappropriate and insufficient in the new situation. This broader outlook was due in part to the influence of such men as Dr. Begg and Thomas Guthrie in the Free Church and Dr. Charteris and Norman Macleod in the Established Church. The natural result of such an outlook was the new emphasis upon social as well as individual salvation. The effect of environment upon character was given greater consideration and a fair number of churchmen began to propound the idea that society as well as the individual needed to be redeemed. It was in such a changing current of thought that the Church's "social Gospel" was born.

In this period from 1860 to 1890 the numerous philanthropic organizations which arose, even if not under the direct control of the Church, at least owed their inspiration and much of their success to her. Often they were manned by churchmen, and it was to prevent the leakage of church personnel into these groups that Dr. Charteris wisely set up the Guilds and the order of the Diaconete. The philanthropic organizations were a manifestation of the aroused social conscience of the general public characterizing this period and facilitating the work of reformers. Dr. Begg had much to do in the 1840's and 1850's with the stirring up of that sentiment and the efforts of Dr. Charteris'

Life and Work Committee owe their success in part to it. Two developments contributed to the maturing of the humanitarian sentiment in the years after 1860. One was the widespread belief that social evils were the result of misdirected human efforts and that through human wisdom and good-will they could be solved and a happy state of society achieved. This notion was an offspring of the current optimism and belief in inevitable progress. The Church with her traditional emphasis upon the natural depravity of human nature was less optimistic and did not accept wholeheartedly such a sentiment; however, her outlook was coloured by that optimism as indicated above. A second aid to the expansion of the humanitarianism sentiment was the renewed emphasis upon the worth, dignity, sacredness, and invioliability of the individual. This feeling predominated especially among the working classes; it served as a coagulator of the working class movement which had grown from a stage of uncertainty and confusion in the 1840's and 1850's to one of confidence and direction by the 1860's and which seemed to many workers their only hope and salvation; it was the philosophical basis of their demands for greater rights, freedom, and justice. The churches' failure in the earlier part of this period to apply that principle and identify herself with political or economic reform movements alienated many of the working classes from her, and it was only as she proclaimed and applied that principle toward the end of the century that the Established Church, and the Free Church to a lesser extent, drew the working classes back to her. In the years from 1860 to 1890 the progressiveness of both churches was demonstrated in their vigorous use of the press, their numerous

investigations of social evils, the giving to women a rightful place in the Church, a more liberal spirit in theological discussion, a revived interest and improvement in ecclesiastical architecture and in the conduct of worship, the trend toward union, and significant efforts in the foreign missions field. In such ways the Free Church was enabled to make a greater contribution to Scottish life in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the Established Church to stand firm amidst the controversies of voluntaryism, disestablishment, and science which raged about her.

This summary of the one hundred years (1835-1935) during which Dr. Begg, Dr. Charteris, and Dr. Watson did their work has been divided into three periods of time; 1835 to 1860, 1860 to 1890, and 1890 to 1935, and to that last period we now turn. By 1900 the industrialization of Scotland had become complete making an even greater abundance of goods available and a still higher standard of life possible. The belief in the inevitability of progress continued to give bouyancy and hope but also blinded many to the ugly realities of life.[1] Once out of the hands of the churches education became more widespread and comprehensive, although at the same time more secularized, but the rapid expansion of the Sunday School movement after 1872 helped partly to make up the loss. The emphasis upon the sacredness, dignity, and worth of the individual continued as strongly as in the previous periods, was still the basis

---

[1] Doubts as to progress' inevitability appeared on the horizon first in the 1914-1918 war, hoved in sight quite plainly during the 1929-1932 depression, and made a full-dress rehearsal during the Second World War and the years immediately after.

of the working class movement and humanitarian activities, and in its most profound sense became the foundation of the Church's social work. That emphasis upon the inviolability of personality led to great progress in the field of child welfare in which Dr. Watson was interested and active. Legislation was passed prohibiting the employment of children in factories; attendance at school was required until the age of thirteen,[1] and activity in community centres, clubs, institutes, and local churches such as Dr. Watson's helped greatly to brighten and enhance the lives of thousands of children. In society in general a saner urban morality was worked out in the form of a balance between complete abandonment and Victorian repression. The credit for that equilibrium must go in part at least to the churches which, while becoming more liberal and open-minded, nevertheless upheld certain basic standards of conduct. Greater colour and breadth was added to the services of the Church and the messages of her clergy. The Church made even fuller use of the press and also adopted the radio as her evangelizing agent. The thoroughly aroused social conscience of the general public and the continued growth of the humanitarian sentiment forced social problems even more upon the attention of the Church and facilitated the work of numerous social and philanthropic agencies which by 1900 had passed from a stage of experimentation to one of well defined programs and techniques.

---

[1] The Education Act of 1872 required the attendance of children between the ages of five and thirteen; the Education Act of 1908 raised it to fourteen; ten years later it was set at fifteen, and still later raised to sixteen years of age.

In spite of the advances in both Church and society, there was much to cause the Church concern. A major perplexity issued from her feeling that many people, both within and without the Church, were integrating their lives around such false goals as the exclusive pursuit of wealth and material goods, exotic pleasures and amusements, and an unproductive level of morality. She realized that the goals a people seek determine the character and durability of a civilization and so her clergy proclaimed even more strongly the basic truths and eternal values of Christianity. The continued discarding of traditional religious habits,[1] a naive and looser morality, the ostentatious display of wealth, the sharpening of class feeling, and the commercial immorality among the upper classes alarmed the churches considerably and evoked her denunciation.

In the economic field the industrial problem became more acute as trade depressions worsened in scope and effects and intensified the antagonism between capital and labour. With a complete solution of social problems becoming less likely, the absoluteness and supremacy of the whole industrial system was questioned increasingly and modifications proposed.[2] Quite a number of people, even earnest churchmen

---

1 G. D. Henderson in his book Heritage, A Study of the Disruption (Oliver and Boyd, Ltd., 1943), notes: "During the second half of the nineteenth century the Scottish people remained relatively orthodox, Bible-reading and church-going, and maintained a Victorian standard of propriety and respectability, and at least a fashion of godliness. In these 'hurrying years' of the new century the situation is different and becoming steadily more so." p. 124.

2 This period saw the rise of the powerful Socialist movement which counteracted the excessive laissez-faire individualism of the early and mid-century. Dr. Watson was undoubtedly influenced by Socialist

such as Dr. Watson, were asking if the benefits of the industrial system outweighed the cost in human degradation which that system seemed inevitably to provoke. By 1900 labour as a force to be reckoned with in the political and industrial fields had come at last into its own and, with a sense of responsibility and the capacity to carry the duties of public office which education had made possible, was using her power constructively. It was fortunate for the Church that she was engaged in social work in this period. The loss of the care of the poor in 1844 and the taking of education from her hands in 1872 were factors in her losing touch with the masses from 1843 to 1890 but the abolishing of patronage in 1874 by the Established Church and her general democratization in the latter part of the nineteenth century helped turn many among the working classes back to her. The philanthropic work of the Guilds in the 1890's and then the starting of the Social Work Committee in 1904 continued that trend churchward.

The change in the outlook and message of the Church after 1900 also aided in the return of the working classes to her. There was a decided movement from the attitude that the Church should have no part in social, industrial, and political questions to the concept that she should interest herself in those problems and act as a mediator between conflicting social groups. The Church in the early twentieth century proclaimed increasingly that religion could not be isolated from everyday life and that the gap between the two must be bridged.

---

concepts as evidenced in his advocacy of unemployment insurance, old age benefits, consumer cooperatives, labour copartnery, and profit-sharing schemes.

She declared that all phases of life--personal, social, industrial, national, and international--must come under her scrutiny and be tested by the Christian principles of love and brotherhood. More and more in the messages of her clergy the note was struck that society as well as the individual needed to be redeemed, that Christian principles must be applied to corporate as well as individual life or, as Dr. Watson was fond of claiming, both "social reform and personal regeneration"[1] were needed. Previously the Church had conceived as her chief task the redemption of the individual. After 1890 the Church saw that her duty was something more than the salvation of the individual through the provision of the traditional means of grace--the faithful preaching of the word and the sacraments duly administered; she recognized that she must undertake social work and study and make pronouncements on social problems and evils and in those ways be a leavening influence on the community and nation. It was through the efforts of such men as Dr. Watson that the Church was led at last to give full consideration to the role of environment in the formation of morals and character and to proclaim a message which was more realistic and balanced. In the years from 1890 to 1935 the Church discharged her social duty by inspiring many to community work and social service, by her preaching of the social ideal of community, love, brotherhood, and the sacredness of the individual and, most of all, through her Social Work Committee with its manifold agencies and activities.

---

[1] David Watson, <u>Social Problems and the Church's Duty</u>, p. viii.

There were many factors contributing to the union of the Established and United Free Churches in 1929;[1] a major one was the gravity of the social problem and the interest and activities in that field undertaken by both churches. The United Free Church had her Committee on Social Service. She had her church sisters. She participated freely in joint congresses on current social and industrial problems. Her Guilds had worked harmoniously with the Life and Work Committee's Guilds in promoting the temperance cause at feeing markets and agricultural fairs. Both churches had lodging-house missions in Glasgow and missions to fishermen and to berry pickers in which there was much cooperative endeavour. All of this activity helped to overcome deep-rooted suspicion and ill-feeling and to build up a sense of a common goal or purpose. Thus the churches' social work was a stimulus to their union, and the Union in 1929 was, in turn, a stimulus to greater effort. For the first four years of his convenership from 1929 to 1935 Dr. Watson had Mr. John Mansie, who had contributed much to the United Presbyterian Church's social work, as his colleague on the Social Work Committee.[2] Not only was the number of agencies under the Committee increased but perhaps even more important was the greater stress upon preventive as contrasted to ameliorative work. Dr. Watson was largely responsible

---

[1] The Free and the United Presbyterian Churches united in 1900 to form the United Free Church.

[2] In this last reference to the Social Work Committee it should be noted that in 1936 it was amalgamated with the Christian Life and Work Committee and called the Committee on Christian Life and Social Work. In 1945 the name was changed to the present one of the Committee on Social Service.

for that new emphasis. With a vigour reminiscent of Dr. Begg, he advocated constantly that the Church should try to prevent and not only ameliorate social distress.[1] The submergence of minor differences in an increasing concern about great world problems also accelerated the trend toward the union of the churches. Dr. Watson was deeply interested in international affairs and claimed strongly that Christianity must be applied in that area too; however, he was too busy with the Church's social work at home to participate in action and movements designed to understand and ease international problems and, while it is outside the scope of this study, it should be noted that the Church was not oblivious to the tensions, dangers, and developments in the international field but spent more and more of her time, as the twentieth century progressed, in seeking to understand and evaluate the relationships between nations in the light of the Christian ethic of love and brotherhood.

In this survey of the years from 1835 to 1935, we have seen how the churches, with a fair degree of success, adapted and adjusted themselves to the changing society in which they were set. The three men we have studied--Dr. Begg, Dr. Charteris, and Dr. Watson--realized that if the Church as an institution was to retain her central role in the community, change men's lives, and make a significant contribution to society, she must move with the times, and the organizations they set up all helped the Church in that process of accommodation and

---

[1] The Committee's homes or hostels for working men and boys, for working girls and women, and for students are a good example of its preventive social work.

preparation. Each of these men realized the close relationship of the spiritual and the material; their basic motive for correcting and improving the material environment was that man's spiritual life might develop more fully. Each emphasized the centrality of spiritual values and lamented their subversion by the excessive materialism of the day. In the struggle between the material and the spiritual they helped to absolve the conflict by inducing their churches to be more active in secular affairs and by asserting to the unbeliever the ultimate supremacy of spiritual values. With their unshaken belief in the Fatherhood of God, his creation of Man in his own image, and the Church as a brotherhood and fellowship of believers, they opposed the trends in society which undermined the Church and violated the sacredness of the individual. These three men are to be commended for their placing of the advancement of the Church and the public welfare above self gain and ambition, as leaders in many spheres are tempted to do. Fame, fortune, or the world's praise was not their goal or motive, but instead the fruition of the Kingdom of God upon earth, the betterment of mankind, the uplifting of their fellow men. The task they set for themselves was not an easy one--to be a leader in the best sense of the word is always difficult. Yet they were leaders in defining, crystallizing and pointing out the Church's task in an industrial age, in being ahead of their brethren in their awareness of social problems and the remedies they suggested and effected, in their consciousness of the injustices, brutality, and ugliness of their contemporary world, their arousing of public opinion and stirring the public conscience, and in

the courage and determination with which they set about their task of bringing all of society under the redemption and inspiration of the Church and the Gospel of Christ.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. BOOKS

Ashton, T. S., The Industrial Revolution. London: Oxford University Press, 1948. 167 pp.

Bayne, Peter, The Free Church of Scotland, Her Origin, Founders and Testimony. Second edition; Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1894. XII, 346 pp.

Begg, James, Happy Homes for Working Men and How to Get Them. Second edition; Edinburgh: Charles Lyon, 1873. 222 pp.

Binns, L. E., Religion in the Victorian Era. London: The Lutterworth Press, 1936. 525 pp.

Blaikie, W. G., After Fifty Years. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1893. 144 pp.

_______, Better Days for Working People. London: Alexander Strahan, 1867. 268 pp.

_______, Heads and Hands in the World of Labour. London: Alexander Strahan, 1865. 269 pp.

Bremner, D., The Industries of Scotland; Their Rise, Progress and Present Condition. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1869. 535 pp.

Brown, R., History of Paisley. Paisley: J. and J. Cook, 1886. Vol. I, 425 pp.; Vol. II, 508 pp.

Brown, W., Notes and Recollections of the Tolbooth Church. Edinburgh: Printed privately, 1867. 88 pp.

Bruce, W. S., D. D., F. R. S. E., Reminiscences of Men and Manners During the Past Seventy Years. James G. Bisset, Aberdeen, 1929. 230 pp.

Burns, Robert, Memoir of Reverend Stevenson MacGill, D. D. Glasgow: W. R. M'Phun, 1862. 262 pp.

Campbell, A. J., Two Centuries of the Church of Scotland, 1707-1929. Paisley: Alexander Gardner, Ltd., 1930. 317 pp.

Charteris, A. H., Cannonicity. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1880. 480 pp.

______, Life of Reverend James Robertson, D. D., F. R. S. E. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1863. XII, 431 pp.

______, The Church of Christ. London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1905. 250 pp.

______, The New Testament Scriptures. London: James Nisbet and Co., 1882. 227 pp.

Clapham, J. H., An Economic History of Modern Britain. Cambridge University Press, 1926. Three volumes.

Clow, W. M., Christ in the Social Order. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1913. XII, 295 pp.

Cowan, R. M. W., The Newspaper in Scotland. Glasgow: George Outram and Co., 1946. 432 pp.

Dunnett, A. H., The Church in Changing Scotland. London: James Clarke and Co., Ltd., 1932. 191 pp.

Fay, C. R., Life and Labour in the Nineteenth Century. Cambridge: University Press, 1920. VIII, 319 pp.

Ferguson, T., The Dawn of Scottish Social Welfare. London: T. Nelson, 1948. 321 pp.

Fleming, A., Dr. Graham of Kalimpong. Edinburgh: R. and R. Clark, Ltd., 1931. 39 pp.

Fleming, J. R., A History of the Church of Scotland, 1843 - 1875. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1927. X, 276 pp.

______, A History of the Church of Scotland, 1875 - 1929. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1933. X, 338 pp.

Galt, James, Annals of the Parish. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1821. 400 pp.

Good, George, Liberton in Ancient and Modern Times. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1893. XX, 185 pp.

Gordon, A., The Life of A. H. Charteris. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1912. XIV, 510 pp.

Graham, H. G., The Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1901. XII, 545 pp.

Graham, J. A., The Missionary Expansion of the Reformed Churches. Edinburgh: R. and R. Clark, Ltd., 1898. XV, 246 pp.

Gray, A., Talks with Our Farm Servants. Second edition; Edinburgh: R. and R. Clark, Ltd., 1906. 204 pp.

Hamilton, H., The Industrial Revolution in Scotland. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932. 300 pp.

Henderson, G. D., Heritage, A Study of the Disruption. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, Ltd., 1943. 158 pp.

Henderson, H. F., Religion in Scotland. Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1920. 236 pp.

Highet, John, The Churches in Scotland Today. Glasgow: Jackson and Son, Co., 1950. 257 pp.

Hobson, J. A., The Social Problem. London: James Nisbet and Co., 1901. X, 295 pp.

Hyde, W. D., Outlines of Social Theology. London: Macmillan and Co., 1895. 260 pp.

Johnston, G. A., International Social Progress. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1924. 263 pp.

Johnston, T., A History of the Working Classes in Scotland. Glasgow: Forward Publishing Co., Ltd., 1921. 394 pp.

Lang, J. M., The Church and Its Social Mission. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1902. XX, 364 pp.

MacArthur, John, New Monkland Parish: Its History, Industries and People. Glasgow: C. L. Wright, 1890. VIII, 422 pp.

MacGregor, Reverend Malcolm B., M.A., Ph.D., Toward Scotland's Social Good. Edinburgh: Church of Scotland Publications Committee, undated (probably 1950).

MacIver, R. M., and C. H. Page, Society. London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1949. XVIII, 698 pp.

Mackenzie, J. S., Outlines of Social Philosophy. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1918. 280 pp.

Mackie, J. B., The Life and Work of Duncan McLaren. Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1888. Vol. I, 331 pp.; Vol. II, 299 pp.

Mackinnon, J., The Social and Industrial History of Scotland. London: Longman's, Green, and Co., 1921. Vol. I, 183 pp.; Vol. II, 298 pp.

MacLean, N., The Life of James Cameron Lees. Glasgow: Maclehose, Jackson and Co., 1922. XVII, 459 pp.

_______, Set Free. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1949. 253 pp.

✓Macmillan D., The Life of George Matheson, D. D., LL. D., F. R. S. E. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1907. 369 pp.

✓_______, The Life of Robert Flint, D. D., LL. D. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914. 518 pp.

Macpherson, H., The Intellectual Development of Scotland. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1911. 223 pp.

Macrae, A., Scotland, 1707 - 1907. London: J. M. Dent and Co., 1908. XI, 272 pp.

✓Marwick, W. H., Economic Developments in Victorian Scotland. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1936. 291 pp.

✓Matheson, A. Scott, The Church and Social Problems. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1893. 375 pp.

_______, The City of Man. London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1910. 315 pp.

McLaren, K. D., Memoir of Professor Charteris, D. D., LL. D. Edinburgh: R. and R. Clark, Ltd., 1914. X, 156 pp.

Money-Kyrle, R. E., Psychoanalysis and Politics. London: Gerald Duckworth and Co., Ltd., 1951. 182 pp.

Morgan, A., Rise and Progress of Scottish Education. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1927. XI, 234 pp.

Muir, W., Christianity and Labour. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1910. XXIII, 316 pp.

Paterson, W. P. and D. Watson, Social Evils and Problems. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1918. 275 pp.

Reid, H. G., Past and Present, Social and Religious Life in the North. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1871. 304 pp.

Robb, James, The Cottage, the Bothy, and the Kitchen. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1861. 82 pp.

✓Saunders, L. J., Scottish Democracy, 1815 - 1840. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1915. 444 pp.

Sherwell, A., The Drink Peril in Scotland. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1903. 64 pp.

Simpson, P. S., Life of Principal Rainy. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909. Vol. I, 469 pp.; Vol. II, 535 pp.

✓Smith, Thomas, Memoirs of James Begg. Edinburgh: James Gemmell, 1889. Vol. I, 413 pp.; Vol. II, 554 pp.

✓Stewart, A., and J. K. Cameron, The Free Church of Scotland, 1843 - 1910. Edinburgh: William Hodge and Co., 1910. XV, 427 pp.

Taylor, Reverend J. W., Memoir of the Late David Maitland Makgill Crichton. Edinburgh: Thomas Constable and Co., 1853. 223 pp.

Thomson, A., Social Evils, Their Causes and Their Cure. London: James Nisbet and Co., 1852. 176 pp.

Trevelyan, O. M., English Social History. London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1942. XII, 628 pp.

Troup, G. E., Life of George Troup, Journalist. Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace, 1881. 197 pp.

Two Churchmen, The Church Problem in Edinburgh. Edinburgh: William Hodge and Co., 1904. 86 pp.

Walker, N. L., Chapters from the History of the Free Church of Scotland. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1895. 364 pp.

_______, Robert Buchanan, D. D. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1877. XI, 594 pp.

Watson, David, Child-Life in Cities and Some Aspects of the Social Problem. Glasgow: Begg, Kennedy and Elder, 1901.

✓_______, Chords of Memory. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1936. 190 pp.

_______, In Life's School. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1902. 213 pp.

_______, Perfect Manhood. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906. XII, 238 pp.

_______, Perfect Womanhood. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1906. XVI, 203 pp.

_______, Social Advance; Its Meaning, Method and Goal. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1911. XXI, 336 pp.

✓_______, Social Problems and the Church's Duty. London: A. and C. Black, 1908. X, 216 pp.

______, The Church at Work. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1926. 226 pp.

______, The Heritage of Youth. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1903. X, 212 pp.

______, The Scottish Christian Social Union. Glasgow: David Clark, 1901. 16 pp.

______, The Social Expression of Christianity. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1919. IX, 216 pp.

Watson, Jean, Bygone Days in Our Village. Edinburgh: Morrison and Gibb, 1863. 204 pp.

Wilson, W., Memorials of Robert Smith Candlish, D. D. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1880. XIII, 631 pp.

✓Wylie, J. A., Disruption Worthies. Edinburgh: Thomas C. Jack Grange Publishing Works, 1881. CXIX, 508 pp.

B. PAMPHLETS

✓Alison, W. P., Observations on the Management of the Poor in Scotland. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1840. 123 pp.

Anderson, W., The Poor of Edinburgh and Their Homes. Edinburgh: John Menzies, 1867. 110 pp.

Begg, James, A Connected View of Some of the Scriptural Evidence of the Redeemer's Speedy Return. Fourth edition; Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1831. 282 pp.

______, Letters on Our Saviour's Prediction of His Return. Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1831. 234 pp.

______, The Antiquity of Church Extension and Its Relationship to Other Social Problems. Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1838. 45 pp.

______, Seat Rents Brought to the Test of Scripture. Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1838. 88 pp.

______, The Duty of the Friends of the Church of Scotland. Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1839. 23 pp.

______, A History of the Act of Queen Mary Restoring Church Patronage in Scotland. Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1841. 30 pp.

______, Pauperism and the Poor Laws. Second edition; Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1849. 103 pp.

______, How to Promote and Preserve the True Beauty of Edinburgh. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1849. 16 pp.

______, National Education for Scotland Practically Considered. Second edition; Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1850. 36 pp.

______, Drunkenness and Pauperism (Social Reform Pamphlet). Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1851. 16 pp.

______, How Every Man May Become His Own Landlord (Scottish Social Reform Association Lecture). Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1851. 22 pp.

______, Reform in the Free Church. Fifth edition; Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1855. 15 pp.

______, Scotland's Demand for Electoral Justice. Second edition; Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1859. 36 pp.

______, The Headship of Christ Over the Visible Church. Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1860. 16 pp.

______, preface; author unknown, A Plea for Early Closing. Edinburgh: John Menzies, 1861. 39 pp.

______, The Art of Preaching and the Duty of the Church Toward Her Theological Students. Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1863. 39 pp.

______, preface; J. Bedford, author, The Saturday Half-Holiday. Glasgow: Hutcheson Campbell, 1867. 32 pp.

______, The Proposed Disestablishment of Protestantism in Ireland. Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1868. 31 pp.

______, The Late Dr. Chalmers on the Establishment Principle and Irish Protestantism. Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1869. 32 pp.

______, The Duke of Argyll's Bill on National Education Considered. Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1869. 31 pp.

______, Free Church Principles Since the Disruption. Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1869. 19 pp.

______, The Causes and Probable Remedies of Pauperism in Scotland (A Chalmer's Association Pamphlet). Edinburgh: Seton and Mackenzie, 1870. 27 pp.

_______, *Pauperism, the Present State of the Question in Britain*. Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1870. 18 pp.

_______, *Union on the Proposed Basis Inconsistent with the Free Church Principles*. Edinburgh: John Menzies and Co., 1871. 23 pp.

_______, *The Ecclesiastical and Social Evils of Scotland and How to Remedy Them*. Edinburgh: Johnstone, Hunter and Co., 1871. 40 pp.

_______, *A Violation of the Treaty of Union the Main Origin of Our Ecclesiastical Divisions and Other Evils*. Edinburgh: Johnstone, Hunter and Co., 1871. 40 pp.

_______, *The War and Its Lessons*. Edinburgh: J. Nichol, 1871. 12 pp.

_______, *Recent Educational Struggles in Scotland*. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1872. 47 pp.

_______, *Protestant Classes Necessary*. Edinburgh: The Scottish Reformation Society, 1874. 24 pp.

_______, *Hints to Students on Health*. Edinburgh: Lyon and Gemmell, 1875. 48 pp.

_______, *The Position, Principles and Prospects of the Free Church of Scotland*. Edinburgh: Lyon and Gemmell, 1875. 29 pp.

_______, *Instrumental Music and the Worship of God*. Edinburgh: Lyon and Gemmell, 1875. 8 pp.

_______, *Purity of Worship in the Presbyterian Church*. Edinburgh: Lyon and Gemmell, 1876. 103 pp.

_______, Prepared Statement on *School Board Elections*. Unpublished but privately circulated, 1876. 8 pp.

_______, *Scottish Public Affairs, Civil and Ecclesiastical*. Edinburgh: James Gemmell, 1879. 32 pp.

_______, *Report of a Special General Assembly Commission on the Transfer of Schools*. Unpublished.

Bell, George, *Blackfriar's Wynd Analyzed*. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1850. 44 pp.

_______, *Day and Night in the Wynds of Edinburgh*. Second edition; Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1849. 36 pp.

Bird, Isabella, *Notes on Old Edinburgh*. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1869. 31 pp.

Charteris, A. H., Some Types of Student Life. Edinburgh: James Thin, 1893. 16 pp.

_______, Speech on the Christian Sabbath in Its Relation to Christian Liberty. Publisher not given, November, 1865.

_______, The Church of Scotland. Moderator's Address at the close of the 1892 General Assembly of the Established Church. Edinburgh: R. and R. Clark, 1892. 54 pp.

_______, The Church of Scotland and Spiritual Independence. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1874. 57 pp.

_______, The Present State of Biblical Criticism As Regards the New Testament. Edinburgh: James Thin, 1897. 32 pp.

Cockburn, Lord Henry, A Letter to the Lord Provost on the Best Ways of Spoiling the Beauty of Edinburgh. Fourth edition; Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1849. 29 pp.

Foulis, Robert, Old Houses in Edinburgh and Their Inhabitants. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1852. 47 pp.

Gerrard, Dr. (of Banff), The Rural Labourers of the North of Scotland: Their Medical Relief and House Accommodation As They Affect Pauperism and Illegitimacy. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1856. 88 pp.

Guthrie, Thomas, A Plea on Behalf of Drunkards and Against Drunkenness. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1850. 63 pp.

Hanna, W., The West Port. A Chapter from the Life of Dr. Chalmers. Edinburgh: Thomas Constable and Co., 1852. 24 pp.

Home, David, Social Reforms Needed in Scotland. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1867. 121 pp.

Maccoll, D., Among the Masses; or, Work in the Wynds. London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1867. VI, 383 pp.

Macleod, N., Our Deserving Poor. London: Alexander Strahan, 1867. 39 pp.

Marwick, W. H., The Beginnings of the Scottish Working Class Movement in the Nineteenth Century. A Reprint from the International Review of Social History. Vol. III, 1938.

Miller, James, Prostitution, Its Cause and Cure. Edinburgh: Sutherland and Knox, 1859. 38 pp.

Pirie, Reverend John, The Lapsed, with Suggestions as to the Best Means of Raising Them. Edinburgh: John Maclean, 1871. 34 pp.

Resident, A, The Canongate, Ancient and Modern. Edinburgh: Myles Macphail, 1856. 31 pp.

Sinclair, G., Observations on the New Scottish Poor Law. Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1859. 91 pp.

Stuart, Harry, Agricultural Labourers, As They Were, Are, and Should Be, in Their Social Conditions. Second edition; Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1854. 109 pp.

C. SPECIAL PUBLISHED REPORTS

A Chronicle of the General Assembly, 1870. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1870. 292 pp.

Act for the Improvement of the City of Edinburgh. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1867. 76 pp.

Acts, Proceedings and Debates in the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1844-1885.

Church of Scotland Yearbooks. Published for the General Assembly Committee on Christian Life and Work. Edinburgh: R. and R. Clark, Volumes for 1886-1935.

Edinburgh Association for Improving the Lodging-Houses of the Working Classes. Fourth Report. Edinburgh: Thomas Constable, 1849. 11 pp.

Forbes, John, Report of an Adjourned Public Meeting of the Association for Promoting Improvement in the Dwellings and Domestic Condition of Agricultural Labourers in Scotland. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1854. 12 pp.

Hastings, G. W., Transactions of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science. London: John W. Parker and Son, 1855-1880.

Kirk Session Records, Liberton Parish Church, Newington Free Church, and St. Clement's Church.

MacPherson, J. I., The Scottish Land Enquiry Committee Report. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914. LV, 555 pp.

Narrative of the Proceedings of the Sabbath Alliance, 1849 and 1850. Edinburgh: Johnstone and Hunter, 1851. 46 pp.

Report of the House of Commons Select Committee on Poor Law (Scotland). London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1869. 608 pp.

Report of the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Industrial Population of Scotland, Rural and Urban. Edinburgh: H. M. Stationery Office, 1917. Four volumes.

Report of the Scottish Land Enquiry Committee, Appointed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1912-1913. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914.

Reports on the Schemes of the Church of Scotland with Legislative Acts Passed, and Overtures Sent Down to Presbyteries, by the General Assembly. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1860-1930.

Reports on the State and Condition of the Lower Classes of Edinburgh. Edinburgh: Colston and Son, 1868. 120 pp.

Reports to the General Assembly of the Free Church on Houses for the Working Classes in Connection with Social Morality, James Begg, Convener, 1859-1867. Found in the *Reports to the General Assembly* for those years.

Report of an Association for Obtaining an Official Inquiry into the Pauperism of Scotland. Edinburgh: Ballantyne and Hughes, 1840. 46 pp.

Report of the Committee Appointed by the Commissioners of Police to Inquire into the Practicability of Suppressing the Practice of Common Begging and Relieving the Industrious and Destitute Poor. Edinburgh: Alex Laurie and Co., 1812. 19 pp.

Reports of the Committee for the Relief of the Labouring Classes in the City and Suburbs of Edinburgh, 1816-1817. Printed by Alex Smellie for private circulation. 46 pp.

First *Report* by Her Majesty's *Commissioners Appointed to Inquire into the Schools of Scotland.* Edinburgh: Thomas Constable, 1865. 411 pp.

Report from the Select Committee, House of Commons, on Criminals and Juveniles, 1850. 551 pp.

Report from the Select Committee, House of Commons, to Inquire into the Extent, Causes, and Consequences of Vice and Intoxication among the Labouring Classes of the United Kingdom. 1834. 445 pp.

Scottish Society for Promoting the Due Observance of the Lord's Day. First Annual Report. Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1840. 45 pp.

Sinclair, John, The Statistical Account of Scotland. Edinburgh: William Creech, 1791. Twenty-one volumes.

_______, The New Statistical Account. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1845. Fifteen volumes.

The Churches' Task in Social Reform. Report of the Proceedings of the United Free Church Congress on Social Problems, 1911. Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson and Ferrier, 1912. 152 pp.

The First Church Congress, Official Report, 1899. Edinburgh: J. Gardner Hitt, 1899. 200 pp.

The Third Church Congress, Official Report, 1904. Edinburgh: J. Gardner Hitt, 1905. 182 pp.

D. SERMONS, SPEECHES, LECTURES, AND LETTERS

Begg, James:

The True Cause of the Prevalence of Pestilence. Sermon. Paisley: Alexander Gardner, 1832. 48 pp.

The Transfiguration of Moses, Elias, and Christ upon Mt. Tabor. Sermon published in "The Scottish Pulpit," February 15, 1834.

The Recent Progress of Popery and Puseyism. Article in the "Scottish Christian Herald," 1839.

Reply to Sir Graham's Letter. Speech in Roxburgh Church. Edinburgh: John Johnstone, 1843. 8 pp.

Speech at a Meeting of the Sabbath Alliance in the Music Hall, Edinburgh. Edinburgh: Miller and Fairly, 1847. 4 pp.

Speech at the Opening of the Protestant Institute. No publisher, 1851. 8 pp.

The Scottish Freehold Movement, Speech at a Public Meeting of. Reprint from the "Daily Express," December 25, 1856.

Speech in Commemoration of the Reformation. Reprint from the "Edinburgh Courant," 1860.

Speech on the Union Question. Given in the General Assembly. Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1864. 48 pp.

Free Church Presbyterianism in the United Kingdom. Four addresses delivered in the 1865 General Assembly when Moderator. Edinburgh: Duncan Grant, 1865. 48 pp.

The Security of the Christian and the Strength of the Church. Sermon delivered at the opening of the 1866 General Assembly. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1866. 32 pp.

Speech on the Union Question. Delivered in the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1868. 31 pp.

Speech at the Glasgow Working Men's Sabbath Protection Association, Glasgow. Glasgow: William Munro, 1868. 46 pp.

Speech at a Public Meeting on The Bible in the School, Held in City Hall, Glasgow. Glasgow: Thomas Murray and Son, 1870. 48 pp.

Speech at a General Meeting in Edinburgh on The Scottish Education Bill. Reprint from the "Edinburgh Courant," 1871. 12 pp.

Religious Instruction in the National Schools of Scotland, Speech at a public meeting on. Galloway: Printed at the Galloway Gazette Office, 1872. 54 pp.

Education, Secularism, and Non-conformity. Article written by Dr. Begg in "The Quarterly Review," revised by the Editor, 1872.

God's Gift to Scotland in John Knox and the Reformation. Sermon preached in John Knox's Church, Edinburgh. Perth: Devon, Mitchell and Co., 1872. 11 pp.

A Visit to New Zealand, Speech regarding. Delivered at a meeting in the Edinburgh Literary Institute Hall. Publisher not given. 1874.

Purity of Worship Association, Address before. Edinburgh: Lyon and Gemmell, 1875. 4 pp.

Speech in relation to the Free Church Temperance Report. Glasgow: Dunn and Wright, 1875. 15 pp.

Health and Homes of Working People. Speech at City Hall, Glasgow. Glasgow: William M. Stuart, 1875. 24 pp.

Speech at a meeting in Edinburgh of The League in Aid of the Christians of Turkey. Edinburgh: Colston and Son, 1876. 8 pp.

Remembering the Poor. Article in the "Christian Treasury." Undated.

The Spirit of Missions the Spirit of Heaven. Sermon in Newington Church. Undated.

Charteris, A. H.:

A Young Man; His Faith. A lecture. Edinburgh: Macniven and Wallace, 1884. 24 pp.

A Devoted Minister. A Sermon on the Death of Reverend Maxwell Micholson, D. D. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1875. 26 pp.

Is There Faith Upon Earth? Printed by William Blackwood and Sons, Edinburgh, 1867. 22 pp.

E. NEWSPAPERS

The Bulwark, 1852-1872.

The Globe, 1832-1851.

The Scottish Guardian, 1832-1860.

The Signal, 1870-1880.

The Witness, 1840-1861.

F. PERIODICALS

St. Andrew (A Journal of Religious Thought and Social Progress). March 21, 1901; April 11, 1901.

The Church of Scotland Home and Foreign Missionary Monthly Record. Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1890.

The Free Church Home and Foreign Missions Record.

The Free Church Monthly Record.

The Life and Work Magazine of the Church of Scotland. 1879-1935.

Tolbooth Parish Magazine. Edinburgh: issued monthly, 1881-1914.