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**A better class of people: Protestants in the shaping of early
Chicago, 1833-1873**

Stockwell, Clinton Earl, Ph.D.

University of Illinois at Chicago, 1992

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A BETTER CLASS OF PEOPLE:
PROTESTANTS IN THE SHAPING OF EARLY CHICAGO, 1833-1873

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THESIS

Submitted as partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History
in the Graduate College of the
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1992

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dissertations are never the work of a single person exclusively. They are frequently the work of many people who have given their time and opinion to the finished product. This work has been a journey with several fellow travelers. First, I wish to thank members of my dissertation committee, particularly Drs. Melvin G. Holli and Perry R. Duis. These gentlemen have encouraged, motivated, guided, and at times even protected my journey through critical stages of the process. It has been the best academic experience I have ever had, personally as well as formally. I can only begin to express my sincere thanks for the time, and can only begin to note the many things I have learned over the past several years.

Second, I wish to thank the work of Dr. Richard Fried, whose sense of humor has helped keep the arduous task of writing a dissertation a little more light-hearted. Dr. Fried's dedication at the level of editing the entire manuscript has made the dissertation a much better written piece than it would have otherwise been. Dr. Stephen Warner of the Sociology department has graciously lent his skill to the enterprise. He has suggested a conceptual framework and other ways that will influence this work in the post-doctoral phase of its evolution should a publisher become interested in the body of material contained herein.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS (continued)

Although not on the dissertation committee, this work is due in part to the inspiration of Dr. Raymond J. Bakke, now of the International Urban Associates. It was through Bakke's contagious love of history, and especially his love of Chicago, that I became interested in searching out data regarding the history of Protestant urban missions in this city. It was initially through my joint teaching with Bakke in a course, "A History of Urban Christianity" done for the Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE) that the author was motivated to pursue such an effort as this one.

It was also through such a course that I ran into Dr. Martin Marty, the distinguished Fairfax M. Cone Professor of the History of Modern Christianity at the University of Chicago Divinity School. Dr. Marty's influence on this dissertation while I was a dissertation fellow for the University of Chicago's Center for Congregational Studies was significant. Professor Marty's presence on the dissertation committee made the end of the process both delightful and intellectually stimulating.

I must also acknowledge the sacrifices made by my children, Aaron, Leigh Anne and William. For too many evenings I have worked on the research and writing of this manuscript. While this is probably not my last "book," it is certainly the last advanced degree I shall ever accomplish. It is to these three little persons that this dissertation is ultimately dedicated. CES

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SUMMARY

The thesis, A Better Class of People: Protestants in the Shaping of Early Chicago, 1833-1873, argues that early Chicago was established and exemplified the ideals of Protestants, most of whom were Eastern migrants to the midwest. There were five major denominational groups including the Baptists, Methodist Episcopal, Presbyterian, Protestant Episcopal and Congregational churches. These Protestants formed a cultural hegemony in early Chicago as the institutions, mores and general cultural ethos was shaped by the evangelicalism of the early national period.

The thesis first introduces the subject of investigation, and then proceeds to describe Chicago in the period studied. There follows two major sections of the thesis, the first section describing the church and denominational character of early Chicago Protestant, while Part Two describes the various mission endeavors of these groups, including the benevolence crusades, revivalism, the Bible and tract societies, the Sunday School movement, city missions, the temperance movement, abolitionism, and the more significant charitable institutions of the day.

The Thesis concludes that these Protestants together with her institutions formed a cultural dominant majority in early Chicago. This culture of dominance may be illustrated by the fact that Protestant lay leaders were also the political, social, cultural

SUMMARY (continued)

and commercial leadership of the city. They built institutions including churches, societies, schools, and agencies of government and association. They were able to include Unitarians and Universalists in the "better class," because the latter groups shared the perspectives and the general social location of other Protestants, despite the apparent non-evangelical theology. Ethics and morality were of more importance than doctrinal controversy.

Finally, in an effort to extend and maintain their culture, Protestants in this period utilized a variety of urban mission strategies and models. The strategies utilized varied from "moral suasion" to legislation, and the reform models utilized were mostly on the order of moral individualism, as only the abolitionism and at times the temperance crusade utilized structural reform strategies to change the system and not just individuals.

These Protestants saw themselves as a "better class of people." They believed that they were hard-working, thrifty, temperate, virtuous, and at times even genteel. In contrast, Irish and German immigrants who followed were viewed with suspicion. Their poverty revealed a level of dependence that suggested that the newcomers were lazy and intemperate at best, and threats to "free and democratic institutions" at worst. Along with freed-slaves and poor whites who migrated north, the "better class" perceived these groups as "dangerous," a threat to the emerging Protestant empire. The institutions created by Protestants were designed to maintain and extend their dominant position.

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Preface

Religion has always been a major force in the shaping of American culture. One author wrote that America is the "nation with the soul of a church."¹ Religion certainly helped shape one of the most dynamic cities of the late nineteenth century, the city of Chicago.

The focus here is on Chicago's civic Protestants. There has always been an important Roman Catholic presence in the city, and the influence of Jews in Chicago has been significant, but these stories have been told in part by other scholars. However, the first century in Chicago's history was dominated politically and economically by Chicago's Protestants, many of whom had migrated from New England and the East coast with others coming from Northern and Western Europe.

These people looked for a Protestant empire, a city where they could both live out their values, emerging middle-class values while exercising hegemonic control. Yet, they were faced with

¹Sidney E. Mead, "The Nation with the Soul of a Church," In: Russell E. Richey and Donald G. Jones, eds. American Civil Religion (New York: Harper and Row, 1974): 45-75.

unprecedented forces that were shaping the character of American society, the forces of immigration, industrialization and urbanization. This is the story of how these forces impacted evangelical Protestantism in one midwestern city.

The nineteenth century in Chicago was essentially the story of the conflict between Protestants and the swelling numbers of immigrants. While those who initially settled in the area were Blacks, Indians and French fur-trappers, they were soon replaced by migrants arriving in large numbers from the East coast. Many of these people were businessmen, real estate brokers, or manufacturers. They were Yankees and shared a common evangelical Protestant worldview.

Numerically, the Yankee city did not last long, only until the mid-1850s. With the arrival of the immigrants from Ireland, Sweden, Germany and later from Southern and Eastern Europe, the city became characterized by a population that was increasingly more Catholic, speaking a non-English language, with skills and cultures more suited for an agrarian economy.

The city's founding fathers, influenced by the civil millennialism of the early national period, sought to make and preserve a "holy city" in the midwest. This was no easy task, as the city was quickly embroiled in heated discussions with occasional mob violence. Examples include the Lager Beer riots of the 1850s and the dispute over the issue of slavery.

In response, Protestants were active in the public realm, seeking to advance their culture in the midst of movements like

industrialization and immigration. The range of responses to these movements was astounding and included abolitionist and temperance crusades, revivals, philanthropic endeavors, Sunday-Schools, city missions, and by the end of the century-- "institutional churches," asylums of every variety, congregational coalitions and federations, civic reform associations, and settlement houses.

The question posed in this study is the extent that Protestant culture and social location impacted the way religious denominations, individually and collectively, responded to changing conditions in urban society. While a variety of explanations are in currency, this study explores the manner in which Protestants sought to create a city that exemplified its values and ideals. These values and ideals contributed to what Protestants at the time thought was their city.

Evangelical Protestants represented the vanguard of the reform movement in the period before the Civil War. Antebellum Reform was romantic and perfectionistic, and sought to develop a society that befitted the evangelical worldview, a worldview that was essentially the consequence of a great revival, the so-called Second Great Awakening. The reform movement's influence on mainline Protestantism in Chicago was such that Reverend Jeremiah Porter, one of the key actors in the early period and the first pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Chicago, recounted the following to the Chicago Historical Society in 1859:

How much does it [Chicago] owe to its Christian founders? They honored God, they lived the Sabbath-day; every benevolent institution of the present hour had its ardent and judicious friends in those early days, and there were many adversaries. Your growing college, or your incipient theological seminaries, your labors for the poor, the downtrodden and enslaved, your world-embracing benevolence, are an answer of the prayers of those who prayed early and confidently for your spiritual prosperity."²

Title and Theme

The title of this dissertation, A Better Class of People: Protestants in the Making of Early Chicago, 1833-1873, reflects an interest of this writer to sum up the history and development of civic Protestantism in one city to the time of the great Chicago Fire and its aftermath. The period begins with the settlement of the city in 1833 and depicts the development of Protestant institutions, including churches, city missions, benevolent societies, newspapers, and theological seminaries.

Protestantism in Chicago has always had an aggressive social character. The survey will begin with the establishment of Protestant churches; then it will proceed to a description of the rise of revivalist and evangelistic agencies, charity organizations, temperance societies, relief and aid societies, and other agencies that allowed Protestants to communicate their worldview.

Yet the Protestant imprint on the city was not just religious

²Jeremiah Porter, "An Address on the Earliest Religious History of Chicago, Delivered by Request of the Chicago Historical Society in 1859," 2 Autograph Letters: Fergus Historical Series XVII (1881): 79.

or clerical, but economic and political as well. In the words of Kenan Heise, a historian of this city, in no other city is Max Weber's Protestant ethic and spirit of capitalism so obvious. One need only mention Cyrus McCormick (Presbyterian); William Butler Ogden (Episcopalian); or Philip D. Armour (Presbyterian) to note that, in Chicago, the most speculative of cities, the Protestant ethic of rugged individualism and capitalism reigned supreme.

Thesis

There is much in the sources and literature of early Chicago that assists in describing and interpreting the character of Protestantism in this midwestern city. However, the literature studied only gives hints of an emerging "middle-class" but does not describe the "middle-class" as a separate entity. Rather, the Protestants saw themselves as a "better class," representing a consensus culture in a new city.

It was the self-designation of a group of people, mostly Protestant evangelicals, who saw immigrants, southern whites, blacks, and the "unworthy poor" as less than they. Among the "better class" in Chicago are seeds of the middle-class and the aristocracy or business elite, but it was not really until after the Great Chicago Fire that these social designations had any empirical meaning.

Further, the sources do not seem to make any distinction between what might be termed the aristocracy and what might be understood to be "middle-class." The sources do not give the

reader anything that suggests an empirical understanding of social location.

Rather, in the antebellum period, the phenomenon of social class is ambiguous and ill-defined. The leaders of the city shared a world view with those who were mere pharmacists, shopkeepers, traders or farmers. Many also were railroad magnates, real estate speculators, meatpackers, harvesters, and lumberjacks, representing trades that would have been looked down upon by the "social elite" of East coast cities.

The emerging aristocracy of early Chicago Protestantism, in short, had mud on their boots. There was no "middle-class" as such, only a group of people who, with relative degrees of success, seemed to be carving out their place in the wilderness. They were migrants, mostly from the East, and they were creating a new city.

The phrase "better class" is one way that these Protestants described and understood themselves. Because of hard work and the practice of virtue and temperance, these people saw themselves as successful and morally righteous. The newcomers, immigrants, poor, African-Americans, and southern whites were not as prosperous. The Protestants believed that there must be something wrong with them, some defect of character. Some were feared to be the "dangerous" or "uncultivated classes." They were different in appearance, in religious practice, and in social station. The "better classes," rich or poor, because of their adherence to an evangelical consensus, saw themselves as a cut above the new "immigrant classes" that were flooding the city.

The Protestants of early Chicago sought to establish and exercise cultural and moral hegemony in the city. This hegemony extended to the government and economic institutions, and to the societies and relief agencies. Most of all, the cultural dominance was formed in the churches who at the time had considerable influence on the shaping of the city.

Purpose of Study

This dissertation, A Better Class of People: Protestants in the Making of Early Chicago, 1833-1873, explores the role of Protestant religion in the shaping of Chicago. This study has the following objectives. First, it will attempt to note the character and development of civic participation on the part of Protestants in the evolution of a particular midwestern industrial city.

Second, it will seek to describe the variety of urban ministry models that were employed to respond to the forces of immigration, industrialization and urbanization by Protestant churches. Third, this work will assess the role of Protestant leaders, their culture, and their role in shaping early nineteenth century Chicago. It will evaluate the impact of evangelism, philanthropy, political involvement and civic reform in the making of the city. It will describe the role of these people, and the implicit and explicit motivation for their involvements in social reform.

Fourth, this dissertation will describe how the theologies, politics, traditions, and religious cultures allowed or impeded involvement in public life on the part of congregations and their

denominational bodies. It will seek to evaluate the social location of Protestant leaders and their relationship to the romantic reform impulse. It will evaluate the extent to which Chicago's Protestants established a dominant cultural ethos in the city.

The Protestants as a class³ had a difficult time adjusting to the range of forces that began to characterize the American city which has led some scholars to propose a social control thesis as the best explanation. However, evangelicalism in the city was anything but a "united front." Rather, a multiplicity of forces were at work, and a variety of motivations may be noted as one seeks to understand the influence of Protestantism in Chicago.

Theology, commitment, values, and mission all played a part. For many, it was the "vision" of a "heavenly city" or a "New Jerusalem" that motivated their efforts. Evangelical Protestants at this time were utopian, millennial, and perfectionist. They were intent on creating and maintaining a city not unlike the expectation of John Winthrop's "city on a hill."

However, it was the consensus perspective of cultural Protestantism that seemed to be the most significant factor. The reality of the city in America at the time was that it was characterized more and more by ethnic and racial diversity, religious pluralism, and the ascendancy of Catholicism as the

³I am using "class" here in the way that it is used in the early nineteenth century literature as a "socially homogenous group of likeminded people," but not in the sense of empirically defined or stratified groupings as in more scientific designations.

religion of most city dwellers. Protestantism in antebellum Chicago assumed that their vision was normative, and that their ideology was shared or should be shared by all citizens. However, in countering the diversity of the city, Protestantism had difficulty adjusting to the changing metropolis.

Further, its own history and class background lent itself to rapid social mobility economically and to de-concentration geographically. The major Protestant institutions in this early period occupied the center of the city along the Lake while those who were new to the city lived along the river in pockets of poverty on the North, South, and West sides. Yet, despite the growth and diversification of the city, Protestantism proved resilient in many ways. It responded to the changing city with a proliferation of institutions, activities, agencies and ministry models. Only gradually did Protestants surrender the downtown to business interests and immigrant populations.

Working Assumptions

Protestant urban ministries in Chicago were largely shaped by the great awakenings and what evolved later as the social gospel movement. In this respect, I agree with the thesis of Timothy L. Smith--that revivalism and social concern were interconnected and not divisible in the antebellum period. It was also an expression of a culture, reflecting not only the theologies and new measures of the religious revivals, but also the republican and later populist and progressive ideologies championed by the middle-class

in American history. Reflecting this prevailing ethos, Protestant leaders of the nineteenth century set out to establish their role in society and to interject their values in the making of the city.

Conflicts over slavery, Sabbatarianism, intemperance, corruption, and vice emerged, testing the will and the influence of prevailing Protestant cultural values. While exploring the impact of these values on the evolution of a city, the following assumptions will be tested in this study.

First, Protestant culture was dominant in the city until the turn of the century. While numerically, immigrants outnumbered Protestants by time of the Great Chicago fire, Protestants still asserted cultural, political and economic dominance in the city. After 1871, it became more and more obvious that the Yankee city would not hold sway. This is the story of Protestant ascendancy and dominance, while noting factors that would gradually undermine the cultural hegemony of middle-class Protestants by the latter part of the Nineteenth century.⁴

Protestants judged new immigrant groups on the basis of their religious and cultural values. That is, immigrants were evaluated on the basis of how well they were able to inculcate values of

⁴The notion of "cultural hegemony" appears in the writings of Antonio Gramsci, and refers not just to the political and economic influence of a dominant "class," but also a cultural dominance that stems from a commonly accepted ideology, values, and an implicitly agreed upon perspective of what constitutes the common good in civil society. See Robert Bocock, Hegemony, (New York: Tavistock Publications, 1986); Antonio Gramsci, Selections from the Prison Notebooks, (New York: International Publishers, 1971); and Anne Showstack Sassoon, Gramsci's Politics, Second Edition (London: Hutchinson Education, 1987).

thrift, sobriety, benevolence, civic virtue, and so forth. In short, Protestants judged newcomers by the standard of their own notions of respectability and virtue. For the most part, the first Protestants in the city were Easterners who preferred the culture and the company of fellow Easterners. For those who disdained the Sabbath or capitulated to intemperance, virtue was forfeited and respectability denied.

The lifestyle and attitudes of cultural Protestants were dominant throughout the nineteenth century in Chicago. Business ethics, sales techniques, patterns of dress, and public morality all reflected these ideals. Protestants preferred the lifestyle of the professional, philanthropic, business and technical elite which emerged as power brokers in the city. These people included John Kinzie, William Butler Ogden, Cyrus McCormick, Philip D. Armour, John V. Farwell, George Pullman, and Philo Carpenter, to name a few. These individuals were not only important in their own right, but were significant because they established institutions and associations that exemplified their dreams and values. It was these dreams that contributed to the building of the city.

These Protestants, many of whom would become the aristocracy of a new city, conceived of themselves as a "better class" of citizens. There are seeds of what would later become the "middle class" in American history. However, in this period, the "better class" included both aspirants and achievers, those who would become the aristocracy as well as those who would become the middle-class. The "better class" were those Protestants who were

the culturally and socially dominant "class" of people in early Chicago.

Inquiry

Several questions guide the process of investigation. First, to what extent did white Protestants operate with the goal of social control, or out of "disinterested benevolence" (Charles G. Finney)? Second, to what extent was Protestant influence masculine, or feminine, or both? Was the cult of domesticity operative in determining the character of Protestant reform efforts? What was the role of women in the character of early Chicago Protestantism?

Third, to what extent was Protestant reformism liberal, reactionary, utopian, progressive, or something else? Were the reformers trying to create a new city or maintain an old one? Fourth, what was the role of institutional competition in the shaping of the Protestant empire in this city? Were there significant institutions as mechanisms of the reform, including para-church agencies and churches, or did the reform remain on the level of charismatic leadership. Finally, how does Protestantism function in a society that becomes increasingly more pluralistic, diverse, and urbanized both in terms of religion, social class, and race and ethnicity?

While these are some of the major questions that guide this investigation, the major question has to do with the extent and character of Protestant social and cultural dominance.

Historiographical Perspectives

There have been many books written on the relationship of Protestantism to social concern or the evolution of the social gospel movement in America, but few that describe the evolution of a reform movement in a particular city or context.

For the social reform impulse, works on temperance, abolitionism, and antebellum social reform were of a general nature, including John R. Bobo,⁵ Charles C. Cole, Jr.,⁶ Charles I. Foster,⁷ Lawrence J. Friedman,⁸ Clifford S. Griffin,⁹ and William G. McLoughlin.¹⁰ These studies assess the connection between revivalism and social reform, noting that the revival contributed to the reform crusades in antebellum America.

Recent studies have discussed the role of the middle-class and the phenomenon of social control as a way to understand the

⁵John R. Bobo, Protestant Clergy and Public Issues, 1812-1848, (Princeton University Press, 1954).

⁶Charles C. Cole, Jr., The Social Ideas of the Northern Evangelists, 1826-1848, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966).

⁷Charles I. Foster, An Errand of Mercy: The Evangelical United Front, 1790-1837 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1960).

⁸Lawrence J. Friedman, Gregarious Saints: Self and Community in American Abolitionism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962).

⁹Clifford S. Griffin, Their Brothers' Keepers: Moral Stewardship in the United States, 1800-1865 (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1960).

¹⁰William G. McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism: Charles Grandison Finney to Billy Graham (New York: Ronald Press, 1959).

character of antebellum social reform. Clifford S. Griffin was among the first to hypothesize social control in his essay, "Religious Benevolence as Social Control."¹¹ The social control thesis argues that the middle or upper classes exerted efforts of social reform with the intent of subordinating lower classes, new immigrants, Catholics, or dissidents who might challenge the existing social order. The purpose was to solidify the social position of a particular social grouping, and to establish a society that both maintains social dominance and social order in society. Social control is generally a conservative motivation for reform for it seeks to prevent change not perceived to be in the interest of the social group in power.

Following the notion of social control are the works of Griffin, Bobo, Foster, and Cole (cited above); as well as newer interpretations by Paul S. Boyer, Paul E. Johnson, and David J. Rothman.¹² Other studies have noted the problem of status anxiety among the elites, that social reform was a method of securing one's social position.¹³

¹¹Clifford S. Griffin, "Religious Benevolence as Social Control, 1815-1860," Mississippi Valley Historical Review 44 (1957): 423-44.

¹²Paul S. Boyer, Urban Masses and Moral Reform in America, 1820-1920 (Cambridge University Press, 1978); Paul E. Johnson, A Shopkeeper's Millennium: Society and Revivals in Rochester, New York, 1815-1837 (New York: Hill and Wang, 1978); and David J. Rothman, The Discovery of the Asylum: Social Order and Disorder in the New Republic (Boston, 1971).

¹³This is the influential position of Richard Hofstadter, although from the progressive era, The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R. (New York: Vintage, 1955); and Joseph R. Gusfield, Symbolic Crusade: Status Politics and the American Temperance

Challenging the social control thesis, a school of historians have emphasized that motives for reform included benevolent concern--not just for the welfare of society but also for the welfare of slaves, orphans, the poor and so forth. The view of these historians is that the reform impulse was motivated more by benevolence, a concern for the other, and less by social control. These historians include Lois Banner,¹⁴ William A. Muraskin,¹⁵ Lawrence Frederick Kohl,¹⁶ W. David Lewis,¹⁷ James L. McElroy¹⁸ and Ann M. Boylan.¹⁹

Other very different interpretations influence the conceptualization of this study. First of all, Arthur E. Bestor, Jr. and Donald G. Mathews have argued separately that the

Movement (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1963).

¹⁴Lois Banner, "Religious Benevolence as Social Control: A Critique of an Interpretation," Journal of American History 60 (1973): 23-41.

¹⁵William A. Muraskin, "The Social Control Theory in American History: A Critique," Journal of Social History 9 (1976): 559-569.

¹⁶Lawrence Frederick Kohl, "The Concept of Social Control and the History of Jacksonian America," Journal of the Early Republic 5 (1985): 21-34.

¹⁷W. David Lewis, "The Reformer as Conservative: Protestant Counter Subversion in the Early Republic," in Stanley Cohen and Lorman Ratner, eds., The Development of American Culture (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970): 64-91.

¹⁸James L. McElroy, "Social Control and Romantic Reform in Antebellum America: The Case of Rochester, New York," New York History 58 (1977): 17-46.

¹⁹Ann M. Boylan, "Women in Groups: An Analysis of Women's Benevolent Organizations in New York and Boston, 1797-1840," Journal of American History 71 (1984): 497-523.

institutions created during the expansion of the country westward reflect the creative impulse to provide organization and structure to the vibrancy of expansion. In short, institutions were the creative expressions of reformers who sought to give order, if not control of the social process.²⁰

For Mathews, the Awakening was an "organizing process," because it "helped to give meaning and direction to people suffering in various degrees from the social strains of a nation on the move into new political, economic and geographical areas."²¹ For Mathews, the social reform movement in the antebellum period was an effort to forge a new social organization by establishing institutions. The movement was national in scope, and operated with a common set of values for a new America. Similarly, Don Harrison Doyle adopts a social-structuralist view, arguing that voluntary associations and its institutions contributed to developing social order in Jacksonville, Illinois.²²

While these scholars emphasize the role of institution-

²⁰Arthur E. Bestor, Jr., "Patent Office Models of the Good Society: Some Relationships Between Social Reform and Westward Expansion," American Historical Review LXVIII (1952): 505-526; and, Donald G. Mathews, "The Second Great Awakening as an Organizing Process, 1780-1830," American Quarterly XXI (1969): 23-43.

²¹Mathews, cited in John M. Mulder and John F. Wilson, Religion in American History: Interpretative Essays (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1978), 203.

²²Don Harrison Doyle, "The Social Functions of Voluntary Associations in a Nineteenth Century American Town," Social Science History 1 (1977): 333-55; and The Social Order of a Frontier Community, Jacksonville, Illinois, 1825-70 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1978).

building and social organization, other scholars note the predominance of ideas, vision, and perspective of a new society that would contribute to antebellum reform. Scholars such as John L. Thomas, on the one hand, and H. Richard Niebuhr, on the other, have argued that the ideas of the reformers were the contributing factors to reform efforts. Thomas, for example, argued that the reformers envisioned a people and a society that were perfectible, and that a utopian society was possible. Hence, communitarian movements such as Brook Farm, or the Fruitlands, or the Oneida Community, were efforts to develop a perfectible society in microcosm.²³

Similarly, H. Richard Niebuhr postulated that Protestant reformers expected an ideal society, a civil millennialism. This eschatology, or doctrine of last things, was endemic to Protestant theology and influenced the reform impulse. For Niebuhr, it was the view of a coming ideal city or ideal commonwealth that propelled Protestants to develop their version of an empire constructed from essentially a religious vision. In short, for Niebuhr, there is continuity in American history among religiously-oriented reform groups and Protestant denominations as they sought to construct a commonwealth based on the Bible and religious values, a "city on a hill" and expectation of a coming "New Jerusalem" or the "kingdom of God"--biblical metaphors of a new

²³John L. Thomas, "Romantic Reform in America, 1815-1865," The American Quarterly 17 (1965): 658-81.

social order in Protestant religious perspective.²⁴

While the former historians have emphasized the relationship of theology and utopian ideas to the fusion of a new commonwealth, the most recent wave of historiography has tried to come to grips with the phenomenon of social location. For these historians, the reform impulse was not so much the objective of controlling the social order but a subjective vision that tried to manifest the values and identity of a particular class of people, the emerging middle class.

The first person to suggest the importance of class in American history, was a sociologist, C. Wright Mills.²⁵ For Mills, before 1870, the "old middle class" was comprised of the small entrepreneur, the shopkeeper, the artisan, farmers, and in general, property owners. After 1870, a new middle class emerged, including white collar workers, managers, salaried professionals, retail clerks, and office workers.²⁶ For Mills, the new middle class gradually supplanted the old middle class as society grew more complex as a result of the industrial revolution.

²⁴H. Richard Niebuhr, The Kingdom of God in America (New York: Harper and Row, 1935).

²⁵C. Wright Mills, White Collar (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956).

²⁶Ibid, 63 ff.

Following this view, scholars like Burton J. Bledstein,²⁷ Mary P. Ryan,²⁸ Alfred D. Chandler, Jr.,²⁹ Stuart M. Blumin,³⁰ Frederick Cople Jaher,³¹ E. Digby Baltzell³² and others have forged an interpretation of American history based on the phenomenon of class and the role in particular of the middle-class. This was not the older Marxist theory, but a new vision based on an appreciation of the role of the new bourgeoisie in American history.³³ For this new generation of historians, such as Cindy Sondik Aron, Stuart M. Blumin, and Martin J. Burke, the middle-class with its vision and

²⁷Burton J. Bledstein, The Culture of Professionalism: The Middle Class and the Development of Higher Education in America (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978).

²⁸Mary P. Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865 (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

²⁹Alfred D. Chandler, Jr., The Visible Hand: The Managerial Revolution in American Business (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1977).

³⁰Stuart M. Blumin, The Emergence of the Middle Classes: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900 (Cambridge, Mass.: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

³¹Frederick Cople Jaher, The Urban Establishment: Upper Strata in Boston, New York, Charleston, Chicago, and Los Angeles (Champaign: University of Illinois, 1982).

³²E. Digby Baltzell, The Protestant Establishment: Aristocracy and Caste in America (New York, 1964).

³³See John S. Gilkeson, Jr. Middle Class Providence, 1820-1940 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1986); and, Karen Halttunen, Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle Class Culture in America, 1830-1870 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

values was an emerging decisive factor in the forging of a new America.³⁴

However, there are nuances of interpretations among historians that raise further questions for consideration. Jaher, in his story of the Urban Establishment in New York, Chicago, and other cities noted that the rich who comprised the establishment were not the older families but the new rich, those who were new to the city, those on the rise, or those recently established in a trade, those less likely to understand social change as a threat to their social position.³⁵

Paul S. Boyer, a proponent of the social control thesis, could argue that the "urban morality foot soldiers" were often "first-generation urbanites active in evangelical churches and holding what would later be called white collar jobs - clerks, accountants, bank tellers - on the lower rungs of the business or professional ladders."³⁶ This seems to fit well the emerging leadership of the Protestant crusade movements in Chicago. Boyer goes on to admit that social control and benevolence only inadequately explains the phenomenon of leadership in the benevolent empire:

³⁴See also, Cindy Sondik Aron, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Civil Service: Middle Class Workers in Victorian America (New York, 1987); Stuart M. Blumin, "The Hypothesis of Middle-Class Formation in Nineteenth Century America: A Critique and Some Proposals," American Historical Review 90 (1985): 299-338; and, Martin J. Burke, "The Conundrum of Class: Public Discourse on the Social Order in America" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1987).

³⁵Jaher, The Urban Establishment, 239.

³⁶Boyer, Urban Masses and Moral Order, 15.

. . . the decision to participate in the urban moral-reform society might reflect less the wish to control others than an impulse toward self-definition, a need to avow publicly one's own class aspirations. The Bible, tract, and Sunday School societies enabled members of the still inchoate middle class to seek each other out, join together in purposeful common effort, and submit to the oversight of others who shared their aspirations.³⁷

Hence, the issue of social control or the goal of preserving the social order may be better understood by reference to class identification. In a similar perspective, Daniel Walker Howe has presented a study of Whig reformers, suggesting that these reformers were less interested in "social control" and more interested in "self-control."³⁸

Perhaps the wisest course at this juncture is to try to identify and work with a balance of motives. For Priscilla Ferguson Clement and her study of philanthropic organizations in early nineteenth century Philadelphia, activists were not motivated by one factor, but by a combination of factors, including social control, altruism and social location.³⁹ This group of factors can be combined with the notion of cultural dominance as explored by Antonio Gramsci in a European context, and constitutes the perspective and interpretive lens of analysis for this writer.

³⁷Ibid., 61.

³⁸Daniel Walker Howe, The Political Culture of American Whigs (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1979), 300.

³⁹Priscilla Ferguson Clement, Welfare and the Poor in Nineteenth Century Philadelphia, 1800-1854 (Cranberry, N.J., 1985).

Methodology and Approach

This work will follow a chronological approach to the evolution of the Protestant urban ministry in Chicago. It will note the role of congregations, religious leaders, and other institutional manifestations in one city. It will begin with a discussion of the settlement of the city, describing the denominational beginnings, and the relationship of the churches in the development of society, business, industry, and philanthropy.

In "Part One," this dissertation will focus on the impact of the major Protestant denominations of the period, the Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists. Comparisons of the role of white Anglo Saxon Protestants and Afro-American Protestants will also be made throughout. Also, the work will describe the growing importance of the Lutherans, the Reformed churches and the Unitarian and Universalist fellowships. All of these bodies made substantial contributions to the development of Chicago. While not primarily the subject of this study, the work of Catholics and Jews will be noted when appropriate, lending greater clarity to the study at hand.

In "Part Two," this work will describe the efforts to impact the city through its organizations, its churches, benevolent societies, schools, religious papers, and city missions. It will show how Chicago's Protestants were propelled to shape the city, not just from the standpoint of religious vision for a new city, but also from their social location.

The Protestant "better class" is identifiable by a fusion of

their vision of a new social order and the values that they held in common, despite subtle differences in theology and polity. For these Protestants, social values were preeminent. They valued benevolence, a concern for others and for the whole of society. They valued virtue, the character of individuals that demonstrated the integrity of the inward person together with commitments, beliefs, and actions.

What seemed to matter most to these Protestants is what one might call respectability. The respectable person was faithful to family and friends. He or she was loyal to the peer group and to the traditions and institutions that gave life meaning. It was also a commitment to a common set of beliefs, values and assumptions. Protestantism was a given, especially the version transplanted from the Eastern seaboard. In Chicago, Protestants managed to reflect their values and ideals in the public institutions, particularly the public school, the political process, and via the mediating structures of "free institutions," including the benevolent societies and the churches.

As a consequence, these Protestants eschewed "vices" such as intemperance, dancing, swearing, corruption in politics, and perceived threats to the social order, including Catholicism and social radicalism. Piety, thrift, temperance, self-control, and domesticity were chief values. Hence, efforts in providing homes for orphans, and temperance hotels for drifters were manifestations of this concern for developing on some level a respectable society. The new immigrants who came were viewed as a threat to such

respectability. Many of the new immigrants were perceived to be poor, Catholic, and intemperate, given to strong drink which seemed to always result in domestic and civil disturbance. Many were considered as parasites on society or social dissidents, less than respectable by the standards of Protestant cultural assumptions.

This work, A Better Class of People, Protestants in the Making of Early Chicago, is an attempt to note the impact of Protestant middle-class vision and values in the shaping of a midwestern city. Issues that accompanied the growth of the city--immigration, pluralism, destitution, and social conflict--gave reason to responses by Protestants who sought to develop and preserve a vision of a virtuous city. They worked to prevent what they perceived to be the undermining of morals and free institutions by peoples deemed anything but respectable by the Victorian standards of the time.

Sources

As one might well imagine, the sources for this study are rich and exhaustive. In addition to world class libraries such as the Regenstein Library of the University of Chicago, the Newberry Library of Chicago, and the Chicago Historical Society, archives on various individuals and groups in theological school libraries are available for consultation. Also, the periodical holdings at the United Theological Library (Garrett Evangelical and Seabury-Western theological seminaries), the Jesuit Krauss and McCormick (JKM) Library and the libraries of the Bethany, Northern

Baptist, Chicago (The Hammond Library), and North Park theological seminaries provide a wealth of materials unmatched in any city.

As the religious capital of the midwest, Chicago spawned the efforts of denominations to communicate to its constituency via the media of a proliferation of religious newspapers. This study will utilize the resources of Chicago-based religious periodicals including the Northwestern Christian Advocate (begun, 1853) (Methodist); the Congregational Herald (1853), later the Advance (1867), (Congregational); the Watchman of the Prairies (1847) (Baptist), later the Christian Times, The Standard, and finally the Baptist.

The Presbyterians did not have a major paper until 1870, when the Interior was introduced as the paper of the "Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Northwest," later McCormick Theological Seminary. There is a complete listing of sources in the bibliography.

In addition to the primary sources of contemporary newspapers and city directories, there are numerous papers of such individuals as Jeremiah Porter, Stephen Beggs, and Robert W. Patterson. Studies of churches and issues faced in the period by contemporaries will be consulted when appropriate. Also, dissertations, articles and secondary sources on these themes and persons will be utilized to help with the interpretive framework. The substance of the dissertation is derived from primary sources such as newspapers and manuscript sources. These are supplemented by memoirs, sermons, and essays written by contemporaries.

Summary

The emphasis in this study is the evolution of Protestant social responsibility, noting the social location, values, beliefs, and visions, and institutional manifestations of a culturally and socially dominant "class" of people. These demonstrate that Protestant social concern and public witness was present from the founding of the city, and are perhaps endemic to Protestantism as a social movement.

A secondary interest is the evolution and success of urban ministry models in Chicago history, and the role of the church in public life. It is hoped that the work will provide a forum for debate on "the conundrum of class," as one person put it. Also, the writer hopes that this work will contribute to the debate among scholars on the one hand, and among practitioners on the other. Among scholars, questions of social control, utopian vision, cultural dominance and social class location are integral to interpretive frameworks that seek to evaluate the nature of reform efforts in general, and of Protestantism in particular.

Finally, urban ministry practitioners would benefit greatly in evaluating the history, models, motivations, actions and consequences of religiously-based efforts to shape cities. It is hoped that this work will contribute to the discussion of mission models that work not only from the standpoint of social class respectability, but also with the view of creating a more just, peaceful and compassionate urban environment.

Chapter II

THE URBAN FRONTIER: CHICAGO AS SETTING FOR REFORM

Chicago: Portrayal of a City

Chicago was ripe for commercial expansion and for Protestant evangelization. With the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825, the way was paved for "Easterners" to travel by boat to the Midwest, and from there further westward. In 1833, Chicago was but a military outpost around Fort Dearborn. However, the city would assume significance as a religious center as well as a military and commercial axis.

Charles Butler, who traveled to Chicago in August 1833, described the town "as destined from its peculiar position near the head of the Lake and its remarkable harbor formed by the river, to become the largest inland commercial Emporium in the United States."¹ Chicago, he wrote, is a "beautiful place (and) destined to be the great city of the West. Its location is unrivalled as the head of navigation."²

The city "enjoys commercial advantages equal to Buffalo, [and]

¹Charles Butler, "William B. Ogden and Early Chicago, 1833-1835," New York, 1881. Charles Butler Papers., Chicago Historical Society.

²Charles Butler to Mr. B. Whiting, Esq., August 7, 1833. Charles Butler Papers, Chicago Historical Society.

in addition to this, it has the finest back country in the world. It is on the great Western thoroughfare to St. Louis on the Mississippi" and boasts a "natural harbor."³ In addition to its commercial importance, Butler believed that Chicago "is the most important point in the great West for missionary effort."⁴

In 1848, the Watchman of the Prairies had acknowledged Butler's prediction. Chicago had quickly become the "emporium of the West." Chicago commercially and morally had "a commanding influence. . . . No inland city in the U.S. promises a greater prosperitive (sic) importance than Chicago. The place is worthy of a man of eminent piety and talent."⁵

By 1871, Richard Edwards, editor of the Chicago City Directory, noted that despite the proximity to the Lake, the city was not the result of natural environmental advantages but the spirit of an aggressive and industrious population.

Chicago is not a product of nature. . . . Chicago is a production of genius, art, enterprise and indefatigable industry. . . . All the other great cities of the world had natural resources and lord advantages that attracted men of the most common discernment. But nature did comparatively nothing for the original site of Chicago. The peculiar secrets of Chicago's prosperity have been individual enterprise, energy, and industry.⁶

³Charles Butler, Diary, Aug. 2, 1833. Charles Butler Papers, Chicago Historical Society.

⁴Butler, Diary, Aug. 4, 1833.

⁵Watchman of the Prairies, July 18, 1848.

⁶Richard Edwards, Chicago Merchant's Census Report; and Statistical Review, embracing a Complete Directory of the City (Chicago: Richard Edwards, 1871), 1220, 1223.

Chicago's Growth: A Statistical Profile

Indeed, the city experienced phenomenal growth in the early nineteenth century. When the city was founded in 1833, but 300 people were found in and around Fort Dearborn. However, the population mushroomed to 28,269 in 1850; 80,028 in 1855; 112,172 in 1860; 178,900 in 1865; and 334,270 by the time of the Great Chicago Fire.⁷ Chicago became the fastest growing city in the midwest, contributing to what sociologists today call "overurbanization," when the increase in population outstrips the city's ability to accommodate it in jobs, housing, and city services. This was "future shock" for the nineteenth century.

Not only did the city rise rapidly as a leading axis of the nation, and of the world, but it quickly attracted a diverse population. In 1845, "foreigners" comprised about one-third of the population of the city.⁸ However, by 1850, the numbers of foreign born in Chicago outnumbered native born persons (persons born in America), and the numbers of foreign born and natives were about the same (50% each) throughout the period.

For most of the period, 1833-1873, the foreign born were not the commercial and political "majority," but built institutions, associations, and developed societies just as the "native

⁷Robert Fergus, Compiler, Fergus' Directory of the City of Chicago, 1839 (Chicago: Fergus Printing Co., 1876).

⁸J. Wellington Norris, A Business Advertiser and General Directory of the City of Chicago, for the Year 1845-6 (Chicago: J. Campbell and Co., Publishers, 1845). Norris lists a total population of 10,864, with 1055 Germans, 531 Norwegians, 972 Irish, 143 Africans, 584 "transitory persons," and 683 "other."

Americans" did. However, by 1880, as a consequence of immigration picking up after the Civil War in the decade of the 1870s, the foreign-born population increased to two-thirds of the total population. The increase in population gave immigrants a chance to increase their power politically and commercially. The following is a chart that diagrams the growth of Chicago's population.

TABLE I
GROWTH OF CHICAGO'S POPULATION

Year	Foreign Born	Native Born	Total
1843	2,256	4,726	7,580
1850	15,682	13,693	29,375
1860	54,624	54,636	109,260
1870	144,557	154,420	298,977 ⁹
1880	204,859	298,326	503,185 ⁹

By 1856, Chicago was listed as one of the leading cities not just in the United States but in the world. Chicago, with a population of 100,000, ranked in the top ten nationally, and was among the two dozen cities of over 100,000 worldwide (See Appendix One). By 1871, the year of the Great Chicago Fire, Chicago was the

⁹Source: The People of Chicago: Who We Are and Who We Have Been. Census Data on the Foreign Born. (Chicago: Department of Development and Planning, 1976).

largest and most important city in the Midwest. Founded only thirty-eight years earlier, the city boasted a population of 334,270. Compared with other principal cities in the Midwest, Chicago was not only the largest, but the fastest growing, surpassing its major rivals in Detroit, St. Louis, Pittsburgh and Cincinnati. In 1870, the principle cities in the Midwest and date founded were as follows:

TABLE II
PRINCIPLE CITIES IN THE MIDWEST, 1870

City	Date Founded	1870 Population
Detroit	1700	79,580
St. Louis	1764	310,864
Pittsburgh	1784	86,235
Cincinnati	1789	100,754
Chicago	1833	299,227
	(1871 Population)	334,270 ¹⁰

Similarly, the city diversified ethnically. While the original settlers of the city were French fur-trappers, Native

¹⁰Richard Edwards, Compiler, Chicago Merchant's Directory, and Chicago Census Report for 1871 (Chicago: Richard Edwards, 1871), 1228.

Americans¹¹, and a few African-Americans, these numbers were quickly overwhelmed by migrants from New England and immigrants from Northern and Western Europe.

The statistics indicate that, for the most part, immigration to Chicago came from Northern and Western Europe, with the largest numbers coming from Germany, Ireland, England and Wales. By the 1860s, these numbers were supplemented by persons coming from Sweden, Canada, Norway, Denmark, Scotland, and Holland. The first immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe to come in substantial numbers by 1880 were from Poland and Bohemia. African-Americans comprised about 1% of the total population of Chicago during this period.

By the time of the heyday of the temperance movement in Chicago and the Lager Beer Riots of 1855, Chicago had a foreign born population of 60%. According to the Northwestern Christian Advocate, the city had a total population of 65,872. Of this population, 28,899 were males and 32,657 were females; 25,677 were "American" and 35,879 were "foreign," with 4,316 "Mariners."¹² Among the foreign-born at the time of the Lager Beer Riots, over 50% of the entire population of the city were either German or

¹¹By "Native Americans," I mean the aboriginal "Indian" population, not the "Nativists," native-born Euro-Americans.

¹²"Census of Chicago," Northwestern Christian Advocate (July 12, 1854), 111.

Irish, the two populations most affected by legislation that would have prohibited the sale of "ardent spirits" on Sunday.¹³

Chicago was also a very young city. In 1853, Hall and Smith noted that there were 17,063 children in the city,¹⁴ and Protestants responded to the large numbers of youth and children with Sunday Schools and Mission Sabbath Schools throughout the city. The statistical profile of Chicago shows that the city was not only rapidly growing but was attracting an incredibly diverse population, with immigrants coming initially from Northern and Western Europe and also from Southern and Eastern Europe.

The incredible growth of the city and the influx of immigrants, especially from Germany and Ireland, challenged the Protestant empire. Protestants, whether from status anxiety or from a desire to project their own identity upon a city that was drastically changing, sought to influence the city via its institutions, especially its churches, Sunday Schools, city missions, benevolent societies, schools and newspapers.

Chicago: A City of Spires

For observers of a new city, the metropolis of the midwest, Chicago was not only a center of trade, commerce and business, but also a city of culture and a center of Protestantism in America.

¹³For further discussion of this issue, see below under Temperance Movement.

¹⁴Hall and Smith, Chicago City Directory for 1853-54. (Chicago: Robert Fergus, 1853), 249.

The Weekly Chicago Democrat would muse in 1849, just 12 years after the city's incorporation, that Chicago "may be euphemistically pronounced the city of churches. . . . To a traveler viewing it from a distance, it presents the appearance of a congregation of spires. . . ." A church edifice could be found on "almost every other block."¹⁵

By 1849, there were already eight churches on the South side of the Chicago River alone, including a Catholic, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Methodist, Norwegian, and three German congregations: German Protestant, Methodist, and Lutheran churches.¹⁶ Indeed, the public square was dotted by churches that assumed a role in public affairs. Chicago was indeed a city of business but also "the center of intelligence, and moral and religious influence for the Northwest. . . ." By 1853, the Congregational Herald would note that the city "has no less than six weekly religious newspapers, belonging to as many denominations."¹⁷

Commercial and business growth was not Chicago's only development, it was indeed a city of churches and spires. Even the business-oriented R.W. Norris would note the importance of the churches in the city's early development.

During the brief but exciting period [1837-1844], the community fortunately found time to devote some attention to things of greater importance than the accumulation of the world's goods. Before or during 1836 as many as six churches had been organized, and suitable buildings provided for their

¹⁵Weekly Chicago Democrat, May 8, 1849.

¹⁶Ibid., May 8, 1849.

¹⁷Congregational Herald, I (April 23, 1853), 2.

accommodation. These churches, together with such as have since been established, have always received a liberal support, and are now in a flourishing condition.¹⁸

According to Norris' Directory for 1844, there were 13 churches in Chicago, including First Presbyterian Church, Second Presbyterian Church, the Unitarian Society, the Catholic Church, the First Universalist Society, the First Baptist Church, Baptist Tabernacle Church, St. James Episcopal, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Bethel Seamen's Society, First Evangelical, the German Lutheran Church and the Society of the New Jerusalem.

Among the major Protestant churches, in a city of 4,000 people, there was a seating capacity of 2675 and an average attendance of about 1400, roughly one-third of the city's population. The Catholic Church reported "membership" of about 2,000, one-half of the city's total population.¹⁹ These numbers reflected membership, but likely not weekly attendance.

The planting of churches in Chicago accelerated quickly beyond the flagship churches. By 1847, there were fifteen worshipping congregations in Chicago, including one Catholic, St. Mary's; two Presbyterian; two Methodist; two Baptist; two Episcopalian and one church each for Unitarian, Universalist, German Lutheran, German Evangelical, New Jerusalem, and Bethel Seamen's Church

¹⁸J.W. Norris, General Directory and Business Advertiser of the City of Chicago for the Year 1844: With Historical Sketches and Statistics, Extends from 1837-1844 (Chicago: Ellis and Fergus Printers Co, 1844), 60.

¹⁹Norris, Directory, (1844), 68.

(ecumenical).²⁰ By 1848, there were twenty-five worshipping congregations, twelve from the major evangelical churches.²¹ By 1850, there were twenty-nine churches in Chicago, with a property valued at \$273,000 (See Appendix Three).²²

By 1855, the number of total churches increased to forty-four, including six Catholic, six Episcopalian, six Presbyterian, six Congregationalist, eight Methodist, one Methodist Protestant, three Baptist, three Lutheran, one New Jerusalem, one Unitarian, one Universalist, one Disciples meeting and one Jewish synagogue. Of this total, thirty represented the big five Protestant denominations.²³

The Directory noted that of the 65,872 total population of the city, 35,879 (60%) were foreign born. Foreigners were "all those born out of the United States."²⁴ Further, in 1854 alone, 5,000 new immigrants entered the city from England, Ireland and Germany, with the bulk of them settling in the Western Division of the city. Immigration contributed to the growth of the population far greater than natural increase.

In 1856, Gager's Chicago City Directory would note that the

²⁰Daily Democrat, June 30, 1847.

²¹Weekly Chicago Democrat, Sept. 19, 1848.

²²William Vipond Pooley, Settlement of Illinois from 1830 to 1850 (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1908), 487.

²³Edward Hepple Hall, Comp., Chicago City Directory And Business Advertiser for 1854-55 (Chicago: Robert Fergus, Book and Job Printer, 1854), 22.

²⁴Ibid., 27.

Protestant churches, while increasing in size and number, were slowly giving way to growing numbers of Catholic and "foreign" churches. There were a total of seven Roman Catholic churches at this time, including four German, one French, one Irish, and one "American" parish.

Also, of fifty-three total Protestant churches in Chicago, eighteen were congregations with "foreign" constituencies. These included Scandinavian Baptist, Swedish Protestant Episcopal, two German Evangelical, three German Lutheran, Swedish Lutheran, Norwegian Lutheran, three German Methodist, Scandinavian Methodist, Welsh Methodist, German Swedenborgian, Scotch Presbyterian, and Dutch Reformed congregations.²⁵ In 1871, of 133 total congregations listed in Richard Edwards' Directory of the City of Chicago, fully thirty-six of them were for the "foreign-born."²⁶

By 1860, the Smith and DuMoulin Chicago City Directory noted that the number of churches and synagogues in the city had increased to seventy-five. Of this number, forty-seven were from the big five denominations. What is significant is that there was also nine Lutheran churches represented, not to mention German parishes and German churches connected with the major denominations. In short, the Germans were making their mark in

²⁵John Gager, Chicago City Directory for the Year Ending June First, 1857 (Chicago, 1856), xxxv-xl.

²⁶Richard Edwards, Directory of the City of Chicago: Embracing a Complete Business Directory for 1872 (Chicago: Richard Edwards, 1872), 39-43.

the city in terms of the numbers of churches that served their population and supported German language and culture.²⁷

Halpin and Bailey's Chicago City Directory for the Year 1861-62 could be more specific about the number of German churches. Cooke lists seven Lutheran Churches, only one of which was English-speaking. It notes that the Methodist Episcopal Churches had three German congregations. This list expanded the next year to include eight Lutheran churches, two German Evangelical churches, four German Methodist Episcopal churches, four German Catholic parishes, and one German branch of the Church of the New Jerusalem, a total of nineteen German churches in Chicago in 1861.²⁸ The Lutheran churches included First English (1857), German Evangelical Lutheran (1857), Norwegian Evangelical (1848), Norwegian Lutheran (1858), Drei Faligkiets Kirche (1849), St. Paul's (1846), Swedish Evangelical Church (1848), and the Vor Froelser Kirche (1860).²⁹

After the Civil War, the numbers of churches and synagogues in Chicago mushroomed to 119. These included eleven Baptist, seven Congregational, ten Episcopal, twelve Methodist, and sixteen Presbyterian and Reformed churches, a total of fifty-six churches, roughly half the total number of churches. There were twenty-four

²⁷Smith and DuMoulin, Chicago City Directory for the Year Ending May 1, 1860 (Chicago: Smith and DuMoulin, 1860), "Appendix," 10-11.

²⁸Halpin and Bailey, Chicago City Directory for the Year, 1861-1862 (Chicago: Halpin and Bailey, 1861), "Register," xxiv-xxvii.

²⁹Ibid.

German churches of various denominations, roughly 20% of the total number of churches and synagogues. In addition, there were several Norwegian, Swedish, and Danish congregations.³⁰ The picture shows that there is a proliferation of churches by denomination, and an increase in the numbers of Roman Catholic, German, and sectarian congregations.

Edward's 14th Annual Directory for 1871 lists 117 Protestant churches and sects, five Jewish synagogues and twenty-five Roman Catholic churches and a Cathedral. No longer could the Protestant churches see themselves as the exclusive religions of the city. Of the total number of Protestant churches, forty-two were churches for Germans, Scandinavians, Welsh, Scot, or Dutch populations. Hence, Protestants could no longer see themselves as exclusively English-speaking, even though the Dutch, Scots, and Welsh shared a similar cultural background. Even Protestantism as a religion was, on one level, diversifying. Protestantism, to assert its power and hegemony would have to go beyond doctrine and polity, to cultural assumptions and moral practice. Because of the diversity, even among Protestants, cultural hegemony emerged as more significant than religious or doctrinal uniformity.

Furthermore, Chicago was the home of sectarian groups such as the Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem, Unitarians, Universalists, Society of Friends, Church of God, Christian,

³⁰Edward's Annual Directory To the Inhabitants, Institutions, Incorporated Companies, Manufacturing Establishments, Business Firms, etc., In the City of Chicago, For 1866 (Chicago: Edwards, Greenough, and Deved, 1866), 810-821.

Adventist, Independent and even Spiritualist communions. By 1870, it was thus more difficult to speak of a Protestant religious hegemony in the city, although mainline Protestant influence outstripped the actual numbers. But the city was changing, and the evangelical consensus was a consensus of relatively fewer people. Instead, the city had become more Catholic, more foreign, more diverse, more secular, and even more sectarian, directions that would both offend and threaten the Protestant empire in the city.

Despite the growth in the number of churches, Protestants were not keeping up with the growth in the city's population. By 1870, there were 298,977 people in Chicago, with 46,133 persons attending the five leading Protestant denominations on a regular basis,³¹ comprising about 17% of the population. Protestant influence in the city was overrepresentative of their numbers, although their influence would diminish by the end of the nineteenth century as numbers of Catholics, Jews and many with no professed religion increased.

Protestant social mobility was also accompanied by geographical choices. By 1865, according to Halpin's Directory (1865-6), many Protestants tended to settle in areas that befitted their social class identification. Twenty of twenty-eight Episcopalian, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches were located in regions of the city that were chiefly inhabited by emerging middle-class residents and comparatively wealthier

³¹Edwards, Chicago Merchant's Directory, and Chicago Census Report for 1871, 1241-1242.

Chicagoans along the more fashionable avenues in each of the city's three divisions.

Similarly, the Methodist and Baptist congregations, churches that were growing the fastest, while having some representation in the more fashionable districts, tended to be located among the poor, immigrants, or African-American populations. Over half of the twenty-seven churches of these two denominations were located among populations considered poor or working class. There were three churches for African-Americans, and seven for German and Scandinavian immigrants.³² These were in areas along the Chicago River, and in pockets just beyond the Loop to the South and West.

Still, by 1870, there were 4,000 total members who regularly attended Methodist churches and 3,500 persons who regularly attended Baptist churches, a fraction of the city's total population of almost 300,000.

Also by 1870, Roman Catholics and Lutherans were attracting the largest numbers of foreign-born in the city. The Roman Catholic churches increased from four to twenty-five churches by 1870, and Lutherans increased in total numbers from 480 to 7,500, outdistancing even the aggregate numbers of both the Baptists and the Methodists. The Lutherans included not only German immigrants, but many Scandinavians as well. The result was that by 1870, Chicago was very much an immigrant city, although still run ostensibly by middle-class, Protestant evangelicals.

³²Halpin's Chicago City Directory (Chicago: T.M. Halpin, 1864-65), xxvii-xxxi.

Still, the Advance would call Chicago "a Religious Metropolis" in 1867. Despite the changes in demographics, the Yankee Protestants were still the culturally dominant force in the city. Chicago was a religious metropolis, in the sense that the city was dominated not only by its churches, but was also headquarters for religious periodicals, theological seminaries, denominations, and various Bible, tract, temperance and other reform societies. The city was not only a commercial but a religious center as well.

Thus, all the signs point to the establishment here of a center of religious thought and influence, which we do heartily desire; for nothing is more dreary than a mere monetary center, where buying and selling are the height of ambition and the sole topic of discourse.³³

For the Advance, Chicago was unique because it combined "politics, literature, theology and business, all flavored with practical religion."³⁴

By 1871, just prior to the Great Chicago Fire, churches and spires dotted the landscape of the city. According to Colbert and Chamberlain, there were 334,270 people in Chicago at the time of the fire, with the largest number in the city's West division (165,095 - West, 77,758 - North; and, 91,417 - South).

Colbert estimated that there were 156 total church structures, with thirty-six missions and twelve Roman Catholic convents or schools. Further, "the total attendance in these churches was 150,000 people; (and the) number of Sabbath-School scholars was

³³"Chicago as a Religious Metropolis," The Advance (Nov. 21, 1867), 4.

³⁴"Boston and Chicago." The Advance (Jan. 23, 1868), 4.

57,000. The value of the church property, including lands, was \$10,350,000, or an average of \$69.00 to each in attendance."³⁵

Colbert and Chamberlain went on to list the losses due to the fire, including the number of churches, public buildings, theaters, hotels, railway buildings, principle business blocks, and individual losses. Among the churches lost in the Fire were Trinity Episcopal, St. James Episcopal, First Presbyterian, North Presbyterian, New England Congregational, Unity, Grace Methodist, New Jerusalem Temple, Cathedral of the Holy Name, St. Joseph's, St. Mary's, the Hebrew Synagogue, St. Paul's Universalist, the Sisters of Mercy Convent, Illinois Street (Union), and St. Joseph's Priory.³⁶

Churches in the Public Square

By the 1840s, the flagship churches of the major denominations dotted the Courthouse square. Washington Street, adjacent to the square, was known as the "street of churches." On Washington Street, between La Salle and Wabash, were First Baptist, First Methodist, First Presbyterian, First Universalist and First Unitarian church buildings.³⁷

³⁵Elias Colbert and Everett Chamberlain, Chicago and the Great Conflagration (Chicago: J.S. Goodman and Co., 1871), 167-168. According to Richard Edwards, there were 158 churches, two cathedrals, twenty-six missions and twelve convents in Chicago in 1871 (Directory of City of Chicago, For 1871, pp.40-45).

³⁶Colbert and Chamberlain, Chicago and the Great Conflagration, 340.

³⁷Chicago Tribune, Sept. 22, 1872.

First Universalist was next to First Baptist, and one summer, the Baptists were so noisy that the Universalists had to close the windows on that side of the building. By 1851, Second Presbyterian Church was added on Dearborn Street. The churches understood that they were conducting "public" worship, and the public was expected to attend. Protestants assumed that their religion was in the public interest, and for the public good.

Between the 1833 and 1849, most of the major churches downtown traded in their modest wooden church buildings for more elaborate limestone and brick churches, built in the tradition of Romanesque and Gothic neo-classical revival architecture. Like the Cathedrals of the cities of the Middle Ages, by the 1850s these churches more than just dotted the urban landscape in Chicago--they dominated the geography of the city. When Second Presbyterian Church, organized in 1842, dedicated its new church in 1851, it was a building 80 times 110 feet, with 144 pews and a 161-foot steeple. It was described as a "magnificent pile," the "admiration of strangers, and the pride of citizens."³⁸

The building of churches was influenced by the commercial leadership of city. These included Marshall Field of the First Presbyterian Church; Philip Armour and John Crerar of Second Presbyterian Church; Cyrus Hall McCormick of North and later Fourth Presbyterian Church; Joseph T. Ryerson of Grace Episcopal Church; E. W. Blatchford of the New England Church; and Gustavus Swift and

³⁸Chicago Daily Democrat, September 4, 1850.

Benjamin P. Hutchinson of First Universalist Church; and after the fire, Potter Palmer of David Swing's Central Church. These people "all helped shape both Chicago's commerce and its religious landscape."³⁹

Before 1850, all of the flagship churches were downtown. However, after 1850, with commercial expansion downtown, several of the churches tended to be built or relocated along the boulevards in the residential districts or adjacent to one of the parks in a rural-like setting. These churches, such as First and Second Presbyterian, followed their parishioners to the periphery of downtown. The business community abetted this by offering good money for the property, and the wealthy who supported the churches preferred the church closer to their residences in more idyllic settings.⁴⁰ Church-building was not isolated from commercial speculation and redevelopment, and several of the churches sought new spots to build even larger buildings.

In 1865, First Baptist sold its downtown church for \$65,000 to the Chamber of Commerce, for a lot virtually given to it by the public sector twenty years earlier.⁴¹ Similarly, the Second Presbyterian Church bowed to pressure and sold its building at a handsome profit, selling for \$161,000 a lot that cost \$5000 in

³⁹Daniel Bluestone, "Landscape and Culture in Nineteenth Century Chicago" (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1984), 137.

⁴⁰Ibid., 183.

⁴¹William Wallace Everts Jr., The Life of W.W. Everts, D.D. (Philadelphia: Louis Everts, Publisher, 1891), 48.

1850. The church moved south to Michigan Avenue and Twenty-Second Street in October 1871, just in advance of the Fire.

However, other churches resisted moving away from downtown. In 1867, Grace Episcopal Church, still located downtown in the late nineteenth century, rather than sell the site of the church for commercial development, decided instead to sell it to a Jewish congregation, Kehiliath Anshe Mayriv. Similarly, the Plymouth Congregational Church, rather than capitulate to mammon, sold its building and lot to St. Mary's Catholic Church.⁴²

When several of the Episcopal Churches threatened to relocate, Bishop Henry J. Whitehouse developed a policy whereby an approval by the Bishop had to be received, "to arrest the sacrilege" of tearing down churches for "unhallowed, worldly and common use." For Whitehouse, God had a just claim to urban landscape, and it was the duty of the churches to hold onto its place in and around the public square.⁴³ Following the Bishop's policy, the Rector of Trinity Church decided not to relocate. Rather, he asked, "should the church beat a hasty retreat before Mammon? Should the central portion of the city be wholly given up to Mammon, as was Athens, in ancient times, to idolatry?"⁴⁴

The First Methodist Church sought a more creative way to deal with the commercialization of the downtown. In 1857, it erected

⁴²Chicago Tribune, October 10, 1872.

⁴³Journal of the 32nd Convention of the Diocese of Illinois (1869), 14.

⁴⁴Chicago Tribune, September 19, 1869.

the "Methodist Block" at Washington, between Dearborn and Clark. This building was distinguishable from the Gothic architecture of many of the churches. It was a building on a full city block, with businesses on the first floor, and offices and the church on the second. It was an innovation, an ecclesiastical-commercial hybrid. It rented space to businesses, and the rents enabled the church to be self-supporting, with a \$15,000 surplus for mission activity elsewhere in the city.⁴⁵ Yet, the Protestants had an ambivalent attitude towards both the public square and the commercial life of the city. On the one hand, the Methodist Church was recognized as "anchored upon that corner, the very center of business." On the other, the church was said to be "above the shops, above the commercial outlets," as the place of worship was "high above the noise and din of the streets."⁴⁶ The church leaders could not really decide if they were for commercial prosperity or against the materialism and "worship of mammon" that characterized the city.

The Methodist Church Block was destroyed in the Fire of October 1871 but quickly rebuilt and rededicated a new building on November, 1873.⁴⁷ In the 1870s, rather than abandon downtown, many churches rebuilt there, including the German Methodist Church and the North Star and Olivet Baptist churches. Those who did leave remained in contact with the downtown via Mission Sabbath Schools.

⁴⁵Christian Times, August 5, 1858.

⁴⁶Chicago Tribune, August 5, 1858; April 29, 1859.

⁴⁷Ibid., Nov. 23, 1873.

To the outsider, it seemed that even the Protestant churches in the city were "secular and civic minded." By 1865, it was clear that Chicago was on its way to becoming a commercial power in the U.S. Yet, others questioned if the churches would maintain a "moral force" in the city. In 1865, the Rev. John P. Gulliver of Connecticut was visiting the New England Church at the dedication of its new building. The visitor commented regarding the materialism in the city and the church's moral force:

Every stranger was profoundly impressed with the material power of the city, and the anxious question was whether there was here a parallel moral power. . . . We look at your standing in the great Thermopylae of moral conflict, and . . . we see you exhibiting an enterprise and industry in spiritual matters parallel to the business industry of your citizens.⁴⁸

Chicago: A Protestant "City on A Hill"

At the time of the city's founding in 1833, Protestant churches rushed to establish themselves in the Northwest. In conflict with speculators on the one hand and Catholicism on the other, Protestants believed that the West was the arena where the destiny of the nation would be decided. It was important that Protestants settle first in the region, or the West would be lost to materialism or the Catholic Church.

Early efforts were ecumenical. Congregationalists and Presbyterians formed an Alliance in 1801 called the Plan of Union

⁴⁸Ibid., August 11, 1865.

as a concerted effort to evangelize the West. In practice, it meant that churches in Northern Illinois were Presbyterian, and Congregationalism as a separate denomination did not occur until after 1850. In 1851, "congregationalized Presbyterians" seceded from First and Third Presbyterian Churches to found First and Plymouth Congregational churches over the slavery issue. Congregational churches tended to be more staunchly abolitionist, whereas the Presbyterian churches were against the expansion of slavery but were not against "fellowship with slaveholders."

Also, Congregationalism began to realize that, due to Presbyterianism's superior organization, the latter prospered in part at the expense of the Congregationalist Church. Old School Presbyterians gained control of the General Assembly in 1837 and revoked the Plan of Union. The Congregationalists finally voided the plan in 1852 at their Albany Convention in New York state. Denominational policies often affected the way churches acted in local situations.⁴⁹

On the local scene in early Chicago, the first Protestant churches were Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Episcopalian. Congregationalism and the Protestant sectarian groups established themselves afterwards. In 1833, the Chicago Magazine would note the ecumenical character of early Protestantism in the city.

Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists all met for worship (in one building); and such was the harmony of feeling, and simple hearted view of the road to Heaven in those barbarous

⁴⁹For more information, see R.W. Pointer, "Plan of Union," in Dictionary of Christianity in America (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), 911.

days, that it was no uncommon sight to see three clergymen jointly ministering to the mixed flock, during the same morning service.⁵⁰

These early ministers were, successively, Reverends Porter, Freeman, and Whitehead, "often side by side."⁵¹

The fastest growing of the sects in the nineteenth century were the Baptists and the Methodists. Due to their support of the Second Great Awakening, a nation-wide movement represented by urban revivals of Charles G. Finney, and the Methodist rural Camp Meetings, evangelicalism became the religion of the new republic. Evangelicalism differed from the older Puritanism of John Winthrop or Jonathan Edwards in that it rejected Calvinism, and accepted an Arminian theology that stressed the importance of conversion, the centrality of free will, and the responsibility of "disinterested benevolence"--involvement in any of the several reform causes of the day as proof of one's salvation.

For the evangelicals, salvation was the result of one's choice and response of faith which resulted in good works as a test of one's conversion. Old School Presbyterians rejected this new theology and the "enthusiasm" associated with the revival for a Calvinism that stressed doctrinal purity. New School Presbyterians were part of the evangelical consensus and supported revivalism and the responsibility to do "good works" in society. The theology of the revival was more Methodist than Calvinist, and the

⁵⁰"Churches and Church Choirs in Chicago," Chicago Magazine I (1857): 344.

⁵¹Ibid.

beneficiaries were those who supported the revival, especially the Baptists and the Methodists.

In Chicago, the evangelical consensus was such that there seemed to be little difference between the theologies and practices of the major Protestant churches, including in particular the Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and to a lesser degree, Episcopalian churches. All of these groups operated ecumenically and were united in causes such as temperance, sabbatarianism, and revivalism. A practical ethical theology was more important than abstract theological speculation.

The evangelicals were also highly nationalistic and utopian. Adhering to what some have called a "post-millennial eschatology," they believed that their work on earth would assist in the coming of a new age, the millennium. Evangelicals believed in progress and were therefore enthusiastic about any scientific change that would seem to make the world better, such as the Atlantic Cable or the steam engine. In order to usher in the kingdom of God, they believed it was essential that they played a prominent role in social reform and in politics.

The evangelical churches were, however, faced with a number of obstacles. While Old School resistance to revival was on the wane, other forces were on the increase. First, speculation and material success were on the mind of most Americans. While some Protestants could rationalize that their success as business people was the result of their virtue, character and, to a degree, their God-appointed role in human history, many evangelicals saw this

materialism as a detraction from the real national purpose, that of becoming a "nation under God" and therefore realizing its "manifest destiny." The notion of destiny was not just geographical, but moral and spiritual. Many evangelicals looked for a "civil millennialism," a republic based on the Bible and Protestant dogma.

The other problem was that the nation was quickly becoming more than Protestant. Catholicism as a religion was already present in America, from the days of Spanish and French explorers to Lord Baltimore's founding of Maryland. In the nineteenth century, immigrations from Ireland and Germany and later from Southern and Eastern Europe added to the diversity of the American religious and cultural mosaic. Protestants feared that their empire was being undermined by these new peoples whose religion was Catholic, whose culture was characterized by the drinking of ardent spirits, and whose governments differed from the "free" and "democratic" institutions that seemed to characterize America, a Protestant America.

Furthermore, with the revolutions that characterized Europe in the 1790s, 1830s and finally late 1840s, Americans feared the new immigrants in other ways. The Catholic religion was perceived to be a threat not only to Protestantism, but also to the politics and general culture of the new world. Many of the Germans, for example, were "forty-eighters" who fled the autocracy of the old world. They were feared as "Red Republicans" or "social

communists" who threatened to undermine America's experiment with democracy and the harmony assumed in republican institutions.

Furthermore, many of the newcomers came to America destitute. Such was the case of the Irish, who came fleeing the potato famine in the late 1840s and 1850s. The Irish were not only Catholic in religion, but were also poor and known for heavy drinking and carousing. This offended Protestants, who by the mid-nineteenth century were becoming identified with the emerging ethos of middle-class respectability just as they were also more influenced by the materialism and ethos of the business community.

Protestants believed that hard work would pay off in material rewards. Poverty was thus not well tolerated, and immigrants who were destitute less so. The Irish, in particular, were blamed for their own plight, because of intemperance. Also, it was assumed, that poverty was the result of flaws in one's moral character such as laziness, vice, or even genetics.

On one level, God was still a God of providence, and thus material prosperity and calamity were viewed as somehow God-ordained. On the other hand, the boom and bust cycles, financial panics, and economic depressions were believed to be the consequence of unbridled materialism and godlessness. The response of the business community was to become more involved in religious life and attendance in one of the evangelical churches was expected. Evangelical religion was also a way that the business community could advance its interest in society, and it supported such movements as the Young Men's Christian Association.

Evangelicals, including the lay business elite, believed that public life should mirror the values and ideals of religious beliefs, reflecting again the evangelical consensus of the time.

The founding of churches was thus viewed by evangelicals as critical if the country was to reach its appointed destiny. Evangelicals, while committed to the moral reformation of individuals, were also dedicated to influencing public morality and public virtue. They were likewise hopeful of creating the likeness of heavenly Jerusalem on earth. Like John Winthrop's "City on a Hill," they believed that their efforts in Chicago might result in a heavenly city. The ministry and presence of the Protestant churches in this city were thus engaged in creating and maintaining a Protestant city. Their efforts in church planting, evangelism, education, city missions, and social reform were all committed to this end.

Chicago: Virtue and Vice

For evangelical Protestants, Chicago had more going for it than commercial advantage. The city quickly became the capital for churches, mission societies, religious journals, denominational headquarters, theological schools, and benevolent activity. However, the growing numbers of people who flocked to the city were not the only statistics or trends kept by the urban leadership.

The city was also known for its vice, corruption, and evils that seemed to lure and pervert "young men" who were drawn to it. The Daily Democratic Press would note that by 1849 there were 146

licensed liquor retailers, and another seventy-five known unlicensed drinking places in the city "to say nothing of the places that are not known, but where no doubt liquor is sold despite the fines and regardless of the license law altogether."⁵² And, this in a city of just over 23,000.

Evangelicals were not alone in their concerns regarding intemperance. Intemperance and Sabbath-breaking seemed to occur without controls, and this threatened not only piety but family, public morals, and free institutions. "That intemperance and sabbath-breaking [are] fearfully on the increase in the city cannot well be doubted by anyone who will take even superficial observation," exclaimed the Baptist paper, the Watchman of the Prairies.⁵³

Shocking to evangelicals, even one of the military companies broke the Sabbath in the city by "choosing this day to drill," and the solemnity of the day was disturbed by "guns, drums [and] military array." Threatening political retaliation, the Watchman warned that "this is a piece of . . . utter shamelessness that if public sentiment cannot put an end to it, some other means should be resorted to for that purpose."⁵⁴

No respectable Christian could tolerate Sabbath-breaking or public drunkenness, and for the evangelicals of the time, it was

⁵²Daily Democratic Press, Jan. 26, 1849.

⁵³Watchman of the Prairies (July 9, 1850), 3.

⁵⁴Ibid.

not enough to chastise alcoholics as individuals. Legislation was also needed to control the numbers of licensed liquor dealers as well as to eliminate the sale of liquor on Sunday. The Northwestern Christian Advocate (NWCA) lamented that public drunkenness was on the increase, and seeing the drunk as victim of the "grogshops," the NWCA noted that "the poor drunkard is kicked penniless from the five hundred rum holes of our city."⁵⁵

The consequences of industry and the plight of labor were tolerated more than the saloonkeeper. For the NWCA, the "stench of the slaughterhouse" was preferred over "the rum nuisance." In characteristic hyperbole, the Advocate held that the slaughterhouse was preferable to "the hundreds of beerstews, [and] rum shops" which "are far more dangerous [and] destructive to the public health of our city than would be a slaughterhouse in every square." Rather, "the poor man is fined for not removing his pig from one of our alleys," while the city protects "disease and death vendors on our most public streets."⁵⁶

Public drunkenness was not the only evil in town. Tobacco was also in wide use. Wrote the Watchman of the Prairies,

He who has the weed will render himself disagreeable, to some because he endangers and possibly destroys their property, to others because the odor of his idol is the most disgusting stimulant of the olfactories.⁵⁷

Not only was the odor repulsive, but the writer noted also how hard

⁵⁵Northwestern Christian Advocate (March 30, 1853), 51.

⁵⁶Ibid., (June 29, 1853), 103.

⁵⁷"Tobacco," Watchman of the Prairies (June 11, 1850), 4.

it was to break the habit. It is a "long agony many times outweighing all delights of smoking, scuffing and chewing." From the economic standpoint, "how many things are as dirty as tobacco and far cheaper?"⁵⁸

In addition to the Sabbath, the whole city seemed captive to the "great pantheon of 'almighty dollar' worshipers," giving more attention to the dictates of mammon than to religious principle. "But for the spires of Christian churches," wrote the Northwestern Christian Advocate, "were it not for the Sabbath pauses, and the sanctuary appeals, great cities would become great fungi, absorbing all that was sensual, and sending forth streams of corruption which . . . would resistlessly waste and wither as they go."⁵⁹

If the evangelicals were appalled by these vices, they were repulsed even more by public entertainments. Especially on holidays like the Fourth of July, when the citizens of the city seemed to enjoy accompanying "dissipation and debasing amusements." Questioned the Watchman of the Prairies, "who can estimate the drunkenness and profanity, ruined characters and evil habits produced on such occasions of public festivity?"⁶⁰

Evangelicals were opposed to other forms of entertainment as well, not just drinking and smoking. In 1850, the Watchman of the Prairies raised the question, "should Christians dance?" For these

⁵⁸Ibid.

⁵⁹"Some City Issues," NWCA (May 11, 1853), 75.

⁶⁰Watchman of the Prairies, July 4, 1848.

evangelicals, the answer was absolute. "Charity requires us to abstain. If we would not advise sinners to dance, we certainly must not set the example. If but one member of a church be found in a ballroom, who will not know it?"⁶¹

Dancing was thus prohibited because Christians who spend their time dancing would be considered "unjust stewards" of time and resources. Also, it was a bad example and might "destroy others."⁶² Dancing on lake steamers was the worst, because it "disturbed others" and kept "Christians and others of respectable manners from reading, conversing," and so forth. The Watchman of the Prairies complained that any Christian who desired to pray or sing would not be tolerated, whereas dancing is "not only permitted but encouraged."⁶³

In 1870, the Presbyterian paper, the Interior, discussed the utility of "sacred dance." It was rejected out of hand, because ritual dance was identifiable not with anything in the history of Christianity, but with the sacred rites of pagan religions, as in ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome. These religions were "all notorious for their vile, [and] most obscene, [and] disquieting morals in public [and] private life."⁶⁴ Hence, there was nothing

⁶¹Ibid., (January 8, 1850), 1.

⁶²NWCA (Jan. 12, 1853), 8.

⁶³Watchman of the Prairies (March 19, 1850), 1.

⁶⁴The Interior (Sept. 21, 1871), 2.

redeemable in dancing from the standpoint of evangelical virtue and respectability.

Not only dancing but the ostentatious display of one's clothing was considered less than respectable. The Watchman assaulted "dandy gents" who in their dress depicted their lack of moral virtue. "Their moral garment is a double breasted [sic] coat of vanity, padded with pride, [and] lined with self-complacency, their outward apparel [is] fresh from Beelzebub's ready-made clothing establishment . . . tinkered up with broad cloth, finger rings, safety chains . . . vanity and impudence."⁶⁵

Another source of vice, not unlike the saloon or the dance floor, was the theater. In 1850, the Watchman of the Prairies reprinted a sermon by Henry Ward Beecher depicting the theater as an "immoral influence," linking it with "drinking, prostitution, immodesty, [and] loose virtue."⁶⁶ The theater "portrays vice in frightful colors, [and] is done in such a way as to captivate those whose tastes are depraved, without using . . . those weapons for destruction which the gospel alone affords."⁶⁷ The Watchman condemned not only the theater but also the circus and "comic amusements."⁶⁸

⁶⁵Watchman of the Prairies (March 19, 1850), 1.

⁶⁶Ibid., (Jan. 8, 1850), 1.

⁶⁷Ibid., (July 9, 1850), 2.

⁶⁸Ibid., (Sept. 24, 1850), 1.

Opinions didn't change over time. In 1865, just after the Civil War, the Rev. R.H. Hatfield of the Wabash Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church would have his opinion regarding the theater printed in the Chicago Tribune. For Hatfield, and doubtless for most evangelicals at the time, the theater was "immoral," and actors were condemned because they "practice licentiousness and work injury to the morals of the young."⁶⁹

With the large number of young men in the city, the evangelical press was concerned that the many vices and temptations in the city would lead to the moral degradation of the youth. The Watchman noted that in the city there were, in 1850, "1,000's of dramshops, gay saloons, ten pin alleys," theaters, the billiard room, and "haunts of profligacy." Rather than attending lectures, Bible classes, or reading in libraries, the young men seemed to be turning "to the lion's mouth." Moaned the Watchman, "in the great city, the streets are full of wicked men and boys, and it is difficult to go many steps without hearing profane oaths, or being enticed to partake in ways of transgressions."⁷⁰

Cities were also home to transients, including many who were vagrant and homeless. In 1853, the Chicago Daily Tribune would complain that the streets are "crowded with beggars," and two homeless girls were assisted to find their father "in comfortable

⁶⁹Chicago Tribune, Nov. 20, 1865.

⁷⁰"Dangers of Youth in Cities," Watchman of the Prairies (March 25, 1851), 4.

circumstances."⁷¹ Attitudes were slow to change, and evangelicals did not have a monopoly on intolerance of destitution. In 1867, the Chicago Tribune would note that "two boy vagrants" were found "below the sidewalk" on Clark Street, attempting "to make themselves comfortable by a small fire." This was intolerable, as the gents were arrested and fined \$25.00 each at the police court. The Tribune did not indicate if the young men had the money to pay the fine or ended up in jail for vagrancy.⁷²

In response the Northwestern Christian Advocate was ambivalent. On the one hand, it was the "great cities [which] are the Edens of the earth, in which originates the great curses and blessings of our race." In short, cities were blamed for the woes of humankind. On the other hand, no evangelization strategy could ignore the city. "No denomination will flourish permanently in the country, that neglects to get a strong foothold in the city."⁷³

Most of the blame for urban vice was laid at the door of the immigrant and the foreigner, but not on the city exclusively. Understandings of the impact of the political economy as in the progressive era were all but lacking. From the standpoint of evangelical Protestantism, urban problems were caused by Roman Catholics, social parasites and political dissidents. In a declaration typical of the times, the NWCA claimed that the Roman

⁷¹Chicago Daily Tribune, January 15, 1853.

⁷²Chicago Tribune, Feb. 20, 1867.

⁷³NWCA (Feb. 16, 1853), 26.

church was "hostile to American institutions." "Popery and republicanism are incompatible." Further, Catholics were especially feared, because they "vote as a group . . . subject to clerical dictation."⁷⁴

Protestantism was at war with Catholicism. "Romanism," was believed to be "an attack on religious freedom [and] toleration." The power of the Jesuits was feared, because they were held to be "instruments of the despots of the old world, in a common purpose to exterminate free principles from their dominion."⁷⁵

Protestants were particularly concerned that Catholics might deplete the public treasury for the dubious cause of enhancing their own institutions, especially the parochial schools. Catholics were to be countered for their attempts to "obtain public money for their schools." The Catholics of the country "constitute a most troublesome, factious, and expensive religico-political element."⁷⁶ Contrariwise, the Watchman praised the common school for its prevention of vice, encouragement to industry, [and] aid to democratic institutions as an "intellectual force which leads to the intelligent appraisal of true religion."⁷⁷

However, parochial schools, it was feared, were "degrading to the intelligence" as the Baptists did not believe that the purpose

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid., Jan. 5, 1853.

⁷⁶Ibid., (Feb. 16, 1853), 26.

⁷⁷Watchman of the Prairies (Nov. 14, 1848), 2.

of the common schools to spread Christianity, "except through the teaching of how to read [and] the inculcation of high ideals."⁷⁸ Parochial schools should not receive public money because it would tend to form a union of church and state, and might shape the mind of the youth, "without teaching the [true Protestant] denominational teachings of religion."⁷⁹ Taking a liberal stand at the time, the Watchman viewed the schools as separate from Sunday Schools which were believed to be sufficient in themselves for religious instruction.

Contrary to the Baptist view of separation of church and state as applied to the schools, the Presbyterian Interior held that the reading of the Bible should be mandated in the curricula of the public schools "against those who hope to root out religion from the minds of man." Bible reading was important to counter the ascendancy of the parochial schools, which had become by 1870 "a great ecclesiastical power aiming to become the only religious educator of all races of man."⁸⁰

Not only were Catholics demanding funds for their schools, but, for the Northwestern Christian Advocate, the Catholics were a problem because they were parasites, and dependent upon the public purse in other ways. "Two thirds of the paupers supported at public expense, from all our cities are furnished by

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Ibid., (Sept. 18, 1849), 2.

⁸⁰The Interior (May 24, 1870), 4.

Catholicism. Of the hundred and five, for example, of the Poor House of this County, sixty-two are Irish, and seventy-five of the whole number are Catholic."⁸¹

The immigrants were also blamed for labor disputes and political dissidence. In short, they were perceived as threats to the social order. German immigrants in particular were viewed as harbingers of socialism and anarchism. For the NWCA,

. . . communist socialism . . . is unattainable, abominable, atheistic, materialistic, [and] violent. Immigrants who maintain these views should be barred from the country. The leaders of the German Socialist gang . . . [violate] every principle of right, [are] destructive of virtue [and] morality, [and] lead . . . to rapine and blood. . . . On this parent stock of German Socialism is also grafted large branches from . . . Red Republicanism [whose] food is vice [and] whose drink is blood.⁸²

For the Advocate, the problem among labor and the working-class, almost exclusively immigrant, was that of rising expectations among the laboring class. "They never had it so good. There was to be no sympathy with strikers." The movement "is an unwarrantable abuse of the best times the laboring classes ever saw in this country. . . . The demand is unreasonable [and] has no sympathizers beyond those immediately interested."⁸³ Characteristic of much of American history, labor dissidence and protests were considered unwarranted by those in power.

The Watchman of the Prairies, like the Methodist Advocate,

⁸¹Northwestern Christian Advocate (March 23, 1853), 47.

⁸²Ibid., (March 30, 1853), 1-2.

⁸³Ibid., (Aug. 17, 1853), 3.

assumed that there was generally a "very equal distribution of wealth" in this country, so that strikes, violence, and the like were rejected. The Bible is against communism and socialism, for God has designed "that the wheat [and] the tares shall grow together, that the rich [and] the poor, the strong [and] the weak shall occupy the same field."⁸⁴ The assumption is that the country and its resources were bountiful enough for both labor and capital. Further, labor and capital needed each other. In an assumption of republican harmony, the two sides could come to some reasonable agreement, without coming into conflict.

In a rarity, the editor of an 1848 article in the Baptist paper, the Watchman of the Prairies, believed that labor had been "violated" by "monopoly." However, in words that would have been consistent with the later positions of the Knights of Labor, dissatisfaction should not go the way of strikes, or the route of that "lean [and] hungry monster, Communism."

Despite the fact that the editor attributed the problems of labor to "selfish acquisitiveness among monopolists [and] employers," the solution lay more with "a government that regulates property rights, [of] both the capitalists [and] the laborers." This was a rare assessment, and far-reaching for the times. Yet while the editor assumed that labor conflict was not the fault of

⁸⁴Watchman of the Prairies (Nov. 5, 1850), 2.

labor but of capital, the solution should come from the intervention of the state, government regulation as necessary.⁸⁵

Against the woes of urbanized society came the impulse towards social reform. For evangelicalism, "the Bible should ever be made the true basis of social reform." The Bible was viewed by the

Watchman as representing a superior system to socialism. Christ . . . , the noblest of philanthropists, went about doing good, [and] provided for the recovery [and] prosperity of mankind. No system of socialism of itself has ever produced or ever will produce a community superior to a Christian village where the gospel is the ruling element, where by its principles every man has formed always the habit of telling always the truth, fulfilling his promises, being industrious, living peaceably, [and] obeying god's commandments.⁸⁶

The Watchman held that the position and duty of the church in relationship to social reform was to "take an active part in the moral reformation of the world" and to go about "evangelizing the world."⁸⁷

Reform societies, like the Bible, Missionary, Antislavery, Temperance, Education, and so forth, were believed "not in contradiction to the scriptures," yet, they "are not a primary concern of the churches per se [and] should not be considered as part of them. . . ." However, participation in the reform societies, as in the church, was encouraged. Both are important, albeit separable, and yet necessary institutions in society.

⁸⁵Ibid., (Nov. 21, 1848), 2.

⁸⁶Ibid., (Nov, 5, 1850), 2.

⁸⁷Ibid., (Oct. 3, 1848), 2.

For the evangelicals, social reform was consistent with the pursuit of respectability and public virtue. Yet true happiness in society comes not with the creation of institutions or the legislation of morality but when the "plainest Christian virtues, such as chastity, sobriety, frugality, and peace" are performed by members, individually and in social groupings. The practice of virtue, wrote the Watchman, has more influence in "promoting the true prosperity of a family or town than any species of politicians or theories of socialists. . . . Where the virtues fail, the fertility of eden would become a curse."⁸⁸

Regarding public morals, the evangelicals were against every conceivable vice. There was no room for public amusements in the evangelical catechism, although "picnics" would be acceptable, if organized on the order of an evangelistic camp-meeting. It seemed that, for the evangelical Protestant of the early nineteenth century, there was only time enough to work at being more respectable and virtuous. This might come in the commercial sphere as one advanced his/her economic standing through hard work, thrift, self-control, industry, and the other virtues of the day. Or it might come through education, or via acceptable amusements such as attending lectures, or participating in the affairs of church. If there was spare time available, there were the demands of political campaigns or the call to participate in one of many of the benevolent crusades. There wasn't time for much else.

⁸⁸Ibid., (Nov. 21, 1848), 1.

First Settlers and the Beginnings of Catholicism

The Protestants were not the first Christians to settle in the region. That honor belonged to the French, who, before the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, saw the Mississippi valley as their frontier. The French were the first to introduce the Christian religion to the region. For the French, trade was the chief motive for the settlement of the West, but the spread of religion was also of importance. The Jesuits were the first white Europeans to set foot on the land that would eventually become known as "Chicago." Chicago meant skunk or wild onion, describing a land that seemed to have a peculiar native smell.

John Nicolet in the 1640s was perhaps the first white man to row a canoe into Lake Michigan, and to walk the land that would eventually become the great city. However, according to Alfred T. Andreas, late nineteenth century historian of Chicago, Nicolet was not a priest, and his purpose was for commercial gain.⁸⁹

Roman Catholic missionary presence was important for the French in the settlement of the West. In September of 1673, Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet together with five French explorers canvassed the area.⁹⁰ Father Marquette was the first Catholic priest in Illinois, working among the Indians in the winter of 1673-4. Marquette and two Frenchmen arrived at the mouth

⁸⁹Alfred Theodore Andreas, History of Chicago Vol. 1 (Chicago: Arno Press, 1975), 287.

⁹⁰Joseph J. Thompson, "First Catholics in and About Chicago," Illinois Catholic Historical Review III (January, 1921), 227.

of the Chicago River, then at the foot of what is now the intersection of Monroe and Michigan Avenues. "These were the first Catholics in Chicago, and the first white men ever known to have inhabited the present territory now within the boundaries of Chicago."⁹¹

While we don't know much about Marquette's work, we know he was succeeded by Claude Allouez who with Indian guides allegedly rowed up the Chicago River in April of 1676. Allouez was received favorably by local Indians and returned to the area in 1685. Around 1680, Ferdinand La Salle passed through the area, but did not establish a mission or a settlement. In 1696, Fathers Pierre Francois Pinet and Julius Bineteau built a house on the banks of the lake, near the mouth of the river. Called the "Mission of the Guardian Angel," it was abandoned a few years later in 1696. After this, no regular mission was established in the region for a century or more.⁹² Around 1765, a woman, the Madam LaCompte, lived in the area and was a "devout Roman Catholic."

The next person of prominence was the Rev. Stephen D. Badin, who apparently visited the Chicago area in 1796. Badin was the first Catholic priest ordained in the United States, having been consecrated in Baltimore. In 1822, Badin again visited Chicago,

⁹¹Thompson, "First Catholics," 228.

⁹²J. Seymore Currey, Chicago: Its History and Its Builders. A Century of Marvelous Growth, vol. I (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1912), 375.

and ritually baptized Alexander Beaubien, then an infant, in Fort Dearborn. This was the first recorded baptism in Chicago.⁹³

The Beaubien family was the most prominent family of French descent in early Chicago. Mark Beaubien, the owner of a popular inn called a meeting to request a priest in 1833. The appeal was made to Bishop Rosati in St. Louis, and the Bishop responded by sending the newly ordained Rev. John Mary Irenaeus St. Cyr to Chicago.⁹⁴ On May 1, 1833, the first Catholic Priest arrived in the settlement, and on May 5, 1833, the first mass was held in a building owned by Jean Baptiste Beaubien.

This was the origination of the first Catholic church in Chicago, St. Mary's. By the fall of 1833, a church building was constructed with the help of three carpenters, one of them a staunch Presbyterian, Deacon John S. Wright. The structure was plain, with wooden benches and simple tables, but exhibited the early vitality of the first Catholic Church. The congregation grew and by 1835, due to immigration to the city, the parishioners numbered over 400. The Parish was multicultural at the time, as Germans, Americans, Irish and French were all part of the same church.

Despite this success, the Bishop had other plans for his young Reverend, in the diocese of St. Louis. The young congregation petitioned Rosati to allow St. Cyr to stay. While the petition had

⁹³Andreas, I, 288; Currey, I, 376.

⁹⁴Thompson, "The First Catholics of Chicago," 232.

little effect on the Bishop, it did reveal the character of the early Catholic church in Chicago. The petition was signed by 142 names, with 117 of the signatures reflecting Irish surnames and only a dozen French. This indicates that very early in the city's history the Irish, not the French, were in control of the direction of the Roman Catholic Church in Chicago.⁹⁵

In 1833, the First Catholic Church was built on State Street with Fr. Leander Schaeffer as priest.⁹⁶ This alarmed the Protestants at the time, and one Protestant minister tried to claim the building and sell it on the auction block, without success. By 1837, over 2,000 residents of Chicago were of the Catholic persuasion.⁹⁷

St. Mary's Cathedral opened in 1843 as the most prominent Catholic parish at the time in Chicago. From 1843 to 1847, the largest church in Chicago was Catholic. Catholics were also prominent in aggregate numbers. In 1843, Pope Gregory XVI created the Diocese of Chicago, today the second largest in the world. Also, in 1843, a priest from New York was appointed for the new Diocese, Bishop William J. Quarter. By 1848, there were thirty Catholic congregations in Chicago, with forty clergymen, and twenty theological students at St. Mary's Seminary.

⁹⁵Ibid., 234-240; and also, Joseph J. Thompson, "The Irish in Chicago," Illinois Catholic Historical Review III (April 1920); and (October, 1920): 146-169.

⁹⁶"Churches in Chicago," NWCA (March 27, 1854), 47.

⁹⁷Thompson, "First Catholics in Chicago," 230-240.

Bishop Quarter opened a Catholic school for boys called "St. Mary's College of the Lake" in June of 1844. By December 19, 1844, Quarter was able to obtain a charter from the State Legislature for his school, and land was donated for the enterprise by a Protestant, William Butler Ogden. The school opened in 1844 with five students and by 1847 boasted fifty-five students, with instruction by five full time professors in Latin, Greek, German, Spanish, Italian, French, philosophy, mathematics, English and "declamation."

By 1848, six nuns from the Sisters of Mercy order arrived from Pittsburgh to establish a convent and a school for young women. This school, the "St. Francis Xavier's Female Seminary" opened the 1847-1848 academic year with twenty-five students.

By 1846, Quarter had reorganized the diocese, and created three new parishes, including St. Patrick's (Irish), and St. Joseph's and St. Peter's (German). Quarter was respected by Catholic and Protestant leaders alike and was supported financially by leading Protestant businessmen at the time, including William Butler Ogden, Walter L. Newberry, and J. Y. Scammon. In 1854, St. Mary's Cathedral was also used as a school room.

While the French were the first white inhabitants, and immigrants from Germany and Ireland were present from the beginning, Protestants of Anglo-Saxon descent coming from New England also laid claim to the city. For George S. Phillips, author of Chicago and Her Churches and evangelical apologist:

"the great Providence of history, accepting these labors as a

foundation of power, presently introduced quite another race to build upon it, a strong race of much enduring, hard-working Anglo-Saxons; Protestants by nature and as such, the sureties of universal freedom."⁹⁸ What follows is the story of the building of a Protestant empire in the midwest.

Protestant Beginnings

The French, Indians, and frontiersmen were replaced quickly by Yankee Protestants, the first builders of the city. Chicago in 1833 had all the characteristics of a frontier settlement. But it would quickly become a Yankee city, a city built by New Englanders who transported their culture, economic system, political institutions, and religious beliefs. The first pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Jeremiah Porter, could say to the Rev. Edmund Hovey of Indiana that "most of the Christians of our church that I have found in the country are from New England, and of course are awake to the benevolent plans of the day. A school and a preacher are the first things inquired for. . . ." ⁹⁹

The presence of New Englanders in the city was considered a plus. Charles J. Barnes would write that "I am told that there has been very little attention paid to the Sabbath until lately. There are so many Eastern peoples getting in now that their customs

⁹⁸George S. Phillips, Chicago and Her Churches (Chicago: E.B. Meyers and Chandler, 1868), 23.

⁹⁹Jeremiah Porter to Rev. Edmund Hovey, Jeremiah Porter Papers, August 27, 1833. Ms. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

prevail over those of the South. At all events, the streets have been very still on the Sabbath since they have been here."¹⁰⁰

The ministers of the major Protestant faiths, came mostly from the East coast, having been sent by "liberal contributions of our churches . . . and with the ministry of the gospel there have sprung up temperance, industry, order, and all the virtues which adorn . . . society."¹⁰¹ In short, the New England ministers brought with them moral ideals of their social class together with their evangelical views.

Significance

Chicago was but a frontier settlement in 1833, but by 1870 it had become one of the largest and most fastest growing cities in the new world. The city was founded by Yankee Protestants who hoped to become rich--and to stamp the imprint of their culture on the new environment. These Protestants had a strong sense of what was right and what was wrong, but were informed more by the ethos and morality of Eastern puritanism, and less by a sophisticated theology.

Staunchly moralistic, they sought to make a city that would exemplify Protestant virtues, and built institutions to this end.

¹⁰⁰"Charles J. Barnes to Mary Walker, Burlington, New York," November 1, 1835. Miscellaneous Papers, the Chicago Historical Society.

¹⁰¹Rev. William T. Allen, "The Relation of New England Puritanism to the Growth and Prosperity of the West," Chicago Democrat, July 13, 1847.

Protestants for the most part saw their role as influencing public life, until beckoned to leave the commercial district for the more bucolic and idyllic settings of the city's parks and boulevards. Its cultural hegemony was severely tested in this period by immigrants, many of whom were also Roman Catholics. Seeing public institutions as their own, and assuming that the public interest was best served by Protestant morality, evangelicals sought to insure that its world would triumph over the perceived threats to the social order.

What follows is a portrayal of Yankee Protestantism, and the institutions, societies, and philanthropies that they created. It is the story of a culturally triumphant "class" of people. It was their attitudes and actions towards those who did not share the history, norms, and values of New England Puritanism that influenced the cultural ethos of early Chicago.

CHAPTER III

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PROTESTANT EMPIRE IN CHICAGO

Methodist Beginnings

The Methodists were the first to establish a Protestant religious society in Chicago. In his survey of Chicago churches, George S. Phillips noted that "the Methodists have always been the pioneers of Christianity in the wilderness, whether of savages or of so-called civilized men. . . ." ¹ Methodism had an influence in America, but not just in the countryside. "John Wesley set them a brave example which they have not forgotten. Hew went down in to the slums of the cities, into the vile places of the earth, anywhere, where there were lost souls to save." ²

Methodism was important in the history of early Chicago, however, precisely because of its rural character. In the early 1830s, "Chicago" was but a frontier settlement in the wilderness and an unfriendly climate built around Fort Dearborn. The Methodists were both beneficiaries and carriers of the Second Great Awakening, and managed to have an impact in the Midwest because of the character of the Methodist ministry.

¹George S. Phillips, Chicago and Her Churches (Chicago: E.B. Myers and Chandler, 1868), 117.

²Ibid.

Itinerant preachers or "circuit riders" help spread Methodism throughout the frontier. Many Methodists and Baptists were bivocational which also suited them for the frontier. "Farmer preachers" were popular in the Midwest, and with little formal education, charismatic leaders emerged to proclaim a popular moral theology, and to draw together religious societies. Methodism epitomized the religion of the frontier and the midwest.

The Methodists however did not lack for organization. The Wesleys in England were noted for organization, for having methods that worked. A "Society" was founded in a new place, and this was divided into "classes" or "companies." Each class was formed around a lay leader, and the leaders were commissioned to provide oversight of each member of the class.

According to the Annual Compendium of Methodism in Chicago for 1878, the leaders were expected to visit each person once a week, and to inform the minister of the local society if anyone was sick, or if any of them "walk disorderly, and will not be reprov'd." Also, the leader was required to collect money for the preachers, the church and the poor. It was assumed that collections for the latter group had particular reference "to towns and cities, where the poor are generally more numerous and the church expenses considerable."³

Methodists as a rule adhered to a rigid moral discipline, and were believers in "sanctification" or "perfectionism." That is,

³J. Glen Collins, Annual Compendium of Methodism in Chicago for 1878 (Chicago: John Collins and Co., Printers, 1878), 14.

they assumed that believers could improve their character and religious standing through good works, perfecting their morality and their spirituality in the process. However, Methodists believed that one could lose their salvation, which made good works and moral virtue all the more important if one wished to be sure of his/her place in eternity.

Admission to a Methodist society was thus accompanied by a strict code of moral discipline. "For those who desire admission in our societies" must practice the ethic of "doing no harm to others, keeping the sabbath while avoiding evil, profanity, strong drink, slaveholding, fighting, quarreling, brawling, suing a brother in court," or the practice of "usury." The faithful were admonished to avoid "uncharitable conversation, particularly speaking evil of magistrates or sinners."⁴

Methodist discipline provided the foundation for the moral theology of the Awakening. Additionally, this moral theology was tied to "benevolence," the pursuit of the public good in society. As carriers of the revival, Methodists expected their converts to give evidence of their salvation through the practice of good works out of what Charles G. Finney called "disinterested benevolence." For Methodists, "it is expected of all who continue in these societies that they should continue to evidence their desire for salvation . . . by doing good, [by being] merciful, by giving food

⁴Ibid., 14-15.

to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick or in prison."⁵

In short, evidence of one's salvation was found in participation in one of the many benevolent societies, or working for one of the moral causes of the day, especially temperance, antislavery or the preservation of the sabbath. Such work would not only give evidence of the participant's personal righteousness, but might contribute to the establishment of a golden age called the millennium in American society.

In Chicago, the first permanent Protestant religious society was Methodist. According to Stephen R. Beggs, a Methodist minister and author of books on the West, the Rev. Jesse Walker (1766-1835) was the founder of the Chicago Mission District, and started the first Methodist society in Fort Dearborn.⁶ Walker was a traveling preacher, and Presiding Elder of the territory of Illinois since 1812. But, Walker did not preach the first Methodist sermon in Illinois, as that honor belonged to Isaac Scarritt.

In 1828, Scarritt came to Chicago, and preached in the home of a Mr. Miller attracting a small audience, with most of them coming from Fort Dearborn.

I cannot say that this was the first sermon, or even the first Methodist sermon that was ever preached in Chicago, but I may

⁵Ibid., 15.

⁶Stephen R. Beggs, Pages from the History of the West and Northwest: Embracing Reminiscences and Incidents of Settlement and Growth, and Sketches of the Material and Religious Progress of the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Missouri with Especial Reference to the History of Methodism (Cincinnati, Methodist Book Concern, 1868).

say that there were neither the intimations or indications of its ever having been preceded, the whole movement, from the first to last, bore the appearance of a new measure in that place.⁷

However, it was Walker's presence that made a permanent difference. The Chicago Mission District was started in 1830, and Jesse Walker was appointed Mission Superintendent. Walker was also Clerk of Elections that year in the town.⁸

Walker had a long history in mission with Native Americans, and was initially concerned about the plight of the Indians, who were numerous in and around the Fort. Walker noted the propensity to drink ardent spirits among the natives, and hoped that the "gospel" might make a difference among both the soldiers and the Indians. Walker compared the Indians in Chicago with the ones he worked with previously in Des Plaines.

[In Des Plaines], the Indians express a strong desire to settle themselves and change their mode of living. There are three hundred of them who attend the worship of God each morning and evening, and keep the Sabbath day. . . . These have laid aside ardent spirits altogether, [including] stealing, lying, and all manner of sin. They keep the Sabbath day with all possible strictness, and speak freely of the divine influence of the Holy Spirit, and exhort each other to give their hearts to the Savior. I still have some hope that Chicago will some day receive the gospel.⁹

In 1831, Walker and two lay preachers, Stephen Beggs and William

⁷Isaac Scarritt, "Early Methodism," Northwestern Christian Advocate (January 26, 1853), 15.

⁸Almer Pennewell, A Voice in the Wilderness: Jesse Walker, the Daniel Boone of Methodism (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1959).

⁹Walker to Bishop Roberts, November 25, 1830. Quoted in Almer M. Pennewell, The Methodist Movement in Northern Illinois (Sycamore, Illinois: The Sycamore Tribune, 1942), 23.

See, established the first Methodist society in Chicago. Beggs was asked to continue the work in Chicago, and the Chicago society was launched in Fort Dearborn, January 15, 1831. Beggs preached "on one of the coldest days of the winter," and "this was the beginning of a happy time there . . . [and] ten joined the church."¹⁰

However, trouble with the Indians was far from over, and the Blackhawk War brought many refugees to the Fort. The Fort was so crowded that Mrs. Beggs pleaded with her husband to leave the Fort for their native Plainfield. For Mrs. Beggs, "it would be no better to die here than to be killed by Indians on the road."¹¹ So the Beggs returned to Plainfield, where the wife happily recovered from illness. Meanwhile, the Fort was hit by a force more deadly than the Indians--cholera. In the early 1830s, it seemed safer in the wilderness than at Fort Dearborn.

Walker returned as Beggs' successor, and in 1832 moved his family to Chicago. In January 1832, Walker held his first quarterly meeting in John Watkins' log school house which served at the time as Walker's "parsonage, parlor, kitchen, and audience room."¹² Walker's wife died in the Spring of 1832, and the preacher purchased a cabin at Wolf Point, at the intersection of the three branches of the Chicago River. Walker's log cabin functioned as a lodging house, meeting place and a school. It was

¹⁰Beggs, Pages From the History of the West, 86-87.

¹¹Ibid., 103-105.

¹²Ibid., 95; "Churches in Chicago," Northwestern Christian Advocate (March 27, 1854), 47.

thus not unusual for Walker to host preachers of other denominational persuasions, such as Jeremiah Porter, the founder of the First Presbyterian Church in Chicago.

The cabin thus was the place of the founding of the Presbyterian and Baptist churches in the city, the latter formed on October 19, 1833. In 1834, the first Methodist Church building was dedicated, the Clark Street Church, and Walker retired to Des Plaines, dying there in October of 1835 at 65 years of age. Stephen Beggs praised the work of Jesse Walker, because through "untiring efforts . . . neither Catholicism nor the 'Prince of the Power of the Air' has been able to withstand its growth."¹³

Walker was replaced by lay preachers William See and Henry Whitehead (1810-1884), also a carpenter and new arrival from England.¹⁴ Whitehead was born in Chatham, England in 1810 and was 23 years of age when he arrived in Chicago in 1833, just one month after the town was incorporated. In England, he was apprenticed to his father as a shipbuilder and carpenter so he brought with him skills useful in the settling of the West. Whitehead was commissioned to build a larger Methodist house of worship, a wood-framed building which was erected on the corner on North Water Street North of the Chicago River. The church quickly became the center of numerous civic activities, as seventy persons were

¹³Beggs, Pages from the History of the West, 97.

¹⁴Louise W. Christopher, Hoofbeats on the Prairie: The Story of a Saddlebag Preacher (Evanston: Paul Halford Press, 1987); and Louise W. Christopher, "Henry Whitehead: Circuit Rider," Chicago History 5 (Spring, 1976).

appointed there to watch gambling activities in 1834 and in October of that year, the plans for the "canal project" were discussed in the church, with construction of the Illinois and Michigan Canal beginning in 1836.

Whitehead married Elizabeth Jenkins, a Welsh immigrant who arrived in 1832, and this relationship connected Whitehead with the city for the rest of his life. However, with the death of Walker, Whitehead was asked to assume the former's circuit riding responsibilities, including the tasks of overseeing the development of several churches in the Chicago Mission District, including DeKalb, Joliet, and much of Northern Illinois.

With Whitehead's responsibilities elsewhere, the church in Chicago was assumed by the Rev. John T. Mitchell, a graduate of Illinois College and "a young man of devoted piety."¹⁵ Whitehead returned to Chicago to establish a trading post on the south side of the river. The corner where Whitehead's store was to be found was later taken over by Carson, Pirie and Scott, becoming the "busiest corner in the world."

Chicago's Methodists, like other denominations, faced several crises in the mid-1830s, and among them was abolitionism. William Box Brown, a fugitive from slavery gave a lecture in the Methodist pulpit, causing some dissent among church members. However, the

¹⁵Jeremiah Porter, "An Address on the Earliest Religious History of Chicago," Autograph Letters VII (Chicago Historical Society, 1859), xvii.

abolitionist issue was not as problematic among the Methodists as it was among other groups.

It is not necessarily to be inferred from this incident that those who tried to keep out anti-slavery discussion were in favor of the continuance of the institution of slavery. Their main desire was to build up Methodism in Chicago, and to accomplish this most effectually they thought it necessary to exclude dissensions and promote harmony.¹⁶

The most serious crisis to face the church was the Panic of 1837. Runaway inflation occurred after money was printed without regard to controlling its value, It was not a good time to try to build a new church even though such was needed. With the coming of the Panic, Whitehead ended up giving away most of his profits to help those most affected. However, not everyone in the church responded in the way that Whitehead did. In the face of extreme hardship, many in the church were negatively affected, almost devastating Chicago Methodism.

In the general commercial crash which succeeded, few of the members escaped. There were some who so grieved at the loss of their wealth, that they turned their backs on God. . . . Especially sad was the ignominious fall of our presiding elder, W.B. Black, The outbreaking crimes and scandalous conduct of some of our members, who had been active and prominent in the Church, fell in quick secession with crushing weight upon the faithful few, and with our pecuniary embarrassments, threatened to overwhelm [and] scatter them with shame and confusion. There has never been a time in the history of Methodism in Chicago when false brethren, wicked men, and tempting devils weemed to sneer the accomplishment of destruction as at this period.¹⁷

¹⁶A.T. Andreas, A History of Chicago (Wheaton: Alfred T. Andreas and Co., 1885), I: 326.

¹⁷Grant Goodrich, "History of Chicago Methodism," Annual Compendium of Methodism in Chicago for 1878, ed. by J. Glen Collins, 31.

Financial Panics sometimes have a "silver lining," and in this case it was the breakout of revivalism in the city. Methodist historian Grant Goodrich described the revivals of the late 1830s as "deep, widespread and powerful." John T. Mitchell was made presiding elder of the Chicago District, paving the way for the coming of the Rev. Peter R. Borein. Borein was like a "Joshua" whose appointed role was to lead the church out of the wilderness.

He came in the fullness of the gospel, burdened with the love of Christ to dying men. He gathered his feeble flock around him and breathed into them something of his own mighty faith, and with them, at the feet of the Redeemer, cried for help. Salvation was poured as in a mighty torrent upon the people.¹⁸

The revival that followed crowded the newly dedicated Methodist Church to its capacity, and "the altar was thronged with inquiring and penitent souls." The Spirit of God seemed to pervade the very atmosphere for "religion was the absorbing theme of thought and conversation in private and public places." The result was that the revival added three hundred persons to the church, "about one-tenth of the whole population" of the city.¹⁹

In 1839, Borein unfortunately died, and Whitehead was sent to the Racine Mission. Hence, the church appeared for a time to be without a solid leader. The subsequent minister, S.H. Stocking, lasted only for one year, and was followed by a succession of short-term pastorates. Whitehead was in Chicago on many occasions in the 1840s, and preached in the jail, known as the "Estray Pen,"

¹⁸Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 325.

¹⁹Goodrich, "History of Methodism in Chicago," 21.

because of its similarities with pens for animals. Whitehead's constant traveling to and from Racine had its consequences on his health, and the preacher was weakened by pneumonia in 1845, forcing his retirement in 1846.²⁰

In 1845, William Mitchell became the Presiding Elder of the Chicago District. Mitchell questioned the liberal practices of membership and shared revival among the Methodist churches, understanding such liberalism to be a danger to the "holiness" of its members. He accused the First Methodist Church of infidelity for allowing any "Christian" to worship there, and the church seemed more "Congregational than Methodist."

Mitchell was against the practice of "open communion," for its practice of "free seats, free grace, and free gospel" might undermine the integrity of the Methodist Church. Mitchell disturbed the practices of First, Canal and Indiana Street churches, but was later transferred to St. Louis where he was forced to resign his position because he allegedly practiced "falsehood," and was guilty of selling "mortgaged slaves."²¹

Methodism in the first decade had taken root in the city. As a beneficiary of the revival, the church grew both in numbers and in reputation. The 1840s in Chicago for Methodists was a time of revival and growth for Methodism. In 1843, the Canal Street

²⁰Christopher, "Henry Whitehead," 9-10.

²¹Almer Pennewell, Methodist Movement in Northern Illinois (Sycamore, Illinois: Sycamore Tribune, 1942), 41.

Methodist Church was established with 75 members from First Church (Clark Street Methodist).

Because of a 1844-1845 revival, the parent needed a larger church, dedicated in November, 1845. The Norris Directory described the new facility as "one of the most beautiful [and] spacious buildings in the city" with a 148 spire and an eight foot high basement with walls of brick.²² By 1848, there were five churches in the city that carried the Methodist name, including a German Methodist Church, a pioneering venture in the city.²³

By 1852, there were ten Methodist congregations in Chicago, representing the power of revivalism and evangelicalism in the city. These churches included Clark Street, Canal Street (later Jefferson Street Church), State Street (later Harrison Street Church), Indiana Street, Owen Street, Clinton Street, two German Methodist churches, one African-American Methodist Church, and a "Calvinistic Methodist Church" (Welsh).²⁴

Institutionally, the Methodists were in a position to influence the character of the city and the perspectives of its citizens. The Methodists were growing so fast it seemed that they were forced to purchase the old house of the Second Presbyterian

²²James W. Norris, A Business Advertiser and General Directory of the City of Chicago, for the Year, 1845-6 (Chicago: J. Campbell and Co., 1845), 5.

²³Chicago Democrat, August 24, 1847.

²⁴Chicago Daily Democrat, January 15, 1851; December 13, 1852; Udall and Hopkins, Chicago City Directory for 1852-53 (Chicago: Udall and Hopkins, 1852), 219.

Church for one of its churches. The Watchman of the Prairies, a Baptist paper, was impressed with this action stating that "the extending spirit of the Methodists is worthy in this respect of imitating."²⁵

Baptist Beginnings in Chicago

The Baptists were in the city as early as 1787. According to Edwin Goodman, a historian of Baptist history in Chicago, the first Protestant in Chicago was a Baptist, Mrs. Rebecca Heald. Mrs. Heald came to Fort Dearborn in 1811, just prior to the Fort Dearborn Massacre of 1812. Due to her skill as a horseback rider, she was able to escape the slaughter. However, there was not a Baptist society or church in the region until much later.

In 1825, the Rev. Isaac McCoy, a Baptist, preached the first sermon in Chicago. McCoy developed a mission school in Carey, Michigan, and was in Chicago for a visit. The Rev. McCoy was recorded to have said the following:

In the forepart of October, I attended at Chicago the payment of an annuity by Dr. Wolcott, United States Indian agent, and through his politeness addressed the Indians on the subject of our Mission. On the 9th of October, 1825, I preached in English which I was informed was the first sermon ever delivered at or near the place.²⁶

²⁵Watchman of the Prairies (April, 22, 1851), 2.

²⁶Perry J. Stackhouse, "Protestant Churches Prior to 1850," in The Place of the Church in a Century of Progress, 1833-1933 (Chicago: The Church Federation of Chicago, 1933), 8; and A.T. Andreas, A History of Chicago (Chicago: A.T. Andreas), I:288.

However, the beginnings of a Baptist society in Chicago was connected with a physician, Dr. William Temple. Temple arrived from the Washington D.C. in Spring of 1833, and wrote the American Baptist Home Missionary Society, started in 1832, to sponsor a Baptist preacher in the Midwest. The American Baptist Foreign Mission Society started the Western Baptist Missionary Society as a way to extend its work in the West. The Baptists saw their purpose as a combination of evangelism and the promotion of educational endeavors.

We agree that our sole object on earth is to promote the religion of Christ in the western parts of America, both among the whites, Africans and Indians, and the means to be employed are the preaching of the gospel, distribution of the Holy Scriptures, religious tracts, etc., and establishing and promoting schools for the instruction of youth, and the education of such persons as may be selected to aid us either as preachers, catechists, or school teachers.²⁷

Temple shipped lumber to the city and built a one and one-half story building with the view of beginning a church and school in Chicago. Thereafter, he appealed to the Home Missionary Society to send to the city a Baptist preacher. The Doctor offered to pay the salary of the minister of \$200 a year, and with that offer, the services of the Rev. Allen B. Freeman were procured. Freeman was a recent graduate of the Hamilton Theological Seminary, and arrived

²⁷Quoted in Henry Thomas Stock, "Protestantism in Illinois Before 1835," in Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 12 (1919): 2.

as missionary to the entire region of Northern Illinois, headquartered in Chicago.²⁸

Rev. Freeman reached the settlement August 5, 1833, and resided in the house of Dr. Temple, who was at the time "parsonage, salary and supply."²⁹ Temple circulated a subscription to raise money for a church building, and twenty Baptists were identified, and \$450 was raised. A two story building was erected, the lower story used for worship of one hundred persons, and the second story used as a Sabbath School on a Sunday, and a Day School weekdays. From the beginning, the Baptists of the city were invested in education.

Freeman shared the pulpit often with Rev. Jeremiah Porter of the Presbyterians, with whom he became good friends. Porter would reveal his respect for Freeman in a letter to a fellow minister in Indiana.

I have now a yokefellow in the field, Bro. Freeman, ordained for this place by the Bap. H.M.S. [Home Mission Society]. He is just from Hamilton Seminary, [and] tho he has been here but a fortnight, has already become a bro. beloved. Eight of the soldiers who came with us are Baptist professors, and there are twelve others in the place. One of whom, Dr. Temple, will be a pillar. He has subscribed \$100 for their church, which is a small building [and] will be open for worship in two or three weeks.³⁰

On October 19, 1833, the First Baptist Church was organized

²⁸Edwin Goodman, History of the First Baptist Church of Chicago (Chicago: United Religious Press, 1910), 3.

²⁹Goodman, History of FBC (1910), 5.

³⁰Jeremiah Porter to the Rev. Edmund A. Hovey, Coal Creek Fountain Co., Indiana, April 27, 1833. Jeremiah Porter Papers. Miscellaneous Ms. Collections, the Chicago Historical Society.

at the corner of South Water and Dearborn with fifteen members, including eight soldiers. The facility, called the "Temple Building," was used as a school, meeting house and school. Presbyterians until the Presbyterians added their own church building. Freeman was formally ordained as pastor January 12, 1834.

The first person to be baptized in Lake Michigan by Freeman was Dr. Temple. A Sunday School and a Bible class were organized in Fort Dearborn with the result that several soldiers were added to the church. Freeman baptized other new converts in Lake Michigan while "people from all sects gathering upon the shore, and little groups of wondering Indians looking on from afar, presented a scene of touching solemnity and interest."³¹

Freeman and Jeremiah Porter, the Presbyterian minister worked together, with one preaching in the city to both audiences, Presbyterian and Baptist, and the other preaching in the country in an attempt to start other churches.³² In December of 1834, Freeman was asked to recognize a newly formed church thirty miles outside of the city. On the return, his horse collapsed, and the minister was forced to carry his saddle with him though the cold all the way to Chicago.

He unfortunately became sick with pneumonia and died on December 15, 1834. The funeral was given by the Presbyterian

³¹Bentley, History of First Baptist Church, 7.

³²Porter, "Address on the Earliest Religious History in Chicago," 365.

minister, Rev. Jeremiah Porter, and accompanied by Rev. Isaac W. Hallam of the Episcopalian Church, Rev. John Mitchell of the Methodist Church, and a Baptist minister from one of the churches organized on the periphery of the city, the Rev. J.E. Ambrose.³³

Upon the death of Freeman, leadership of the church passed on a temporary basis to the Rev. Ambrose, until replaced by the Rev. Isaac Taylor Hinton, D.D. (pastor, 1835-1841). Hinton was from London, England, and initially worked there as a printer. He and his brother wrote The History of the United States, published in Boston. Failing in business, he emigrated to the U.S., settling first in Philadelphia, and then in Richmond, Virginia, September 1833. Hinton was a pastor of First Baptist in Richmond before coming to the Midwest.

Isaac T. Hinton

Hinton had the reputation of a scholar, as he was also educated at Oxford University and reputedly knew both Greek and Latin. He became the first Chicago resident to publish a major book, A History of Baptism from Both Inspired and Uninspired Writings.³⁴

Hinton was the brother of the famous English preacher, Rev. John Howard Hinton. He came to the city with his six children,

³³Goodman, History of FBC (1910), 7; Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 316.

³⁴Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists, p. 13. The book was published by the American Baptist Publication Society in Philadelphia, 1840.

again entertained by Dr. Temple. In 1835, a foundation for the church was laid but not completed due to a scarcity of materials. In 1836, Hinton was sent East and raised \$846.48 for the purpose of erecting a new church building. This was a disappointing sum and the church was forced to worship in a large temporary structure erected on the lot purchased and a permanent structure would not be built for eight years. In 1837, Chicago and much of the nation was faced with an economic panic which stymied building plans. In order to pay for the pastor's salary, the church instituted pew rents as the "most satisfactory mode of obtaining the amount necessary for the support of their pastor."³⁵

In addition to planting churches, the denomination was active in creating local organizational structures that might assist the growth of the Baptists. In September, 1835, the first Baptist Association in Northern Illinois was established as "The Northern Baptist Association of Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin Territory." The Association had four churches including Chicago, O'Plain, DuPage, and Plainfield. With a combined enrolment of 120 persons, the Chicago church boasted 40 of the membership. Hinton, Dr. Temple, Samuel Lathrop, and Benjamin H. Cliff attended the meeting as delegates.³⁶ In July of 1836, the Chicago church was host to

³⁵Chicago Daily American, Dec. 26, 1840.

³⁶Goodman, History of FBC (1910), 10.

the first meeting of the Northern Baptist Association of Illinois, Indiana and the Wisconsin territories.³⁷

Hinton had a positive reputation in the city. An observer from the Chicago Daily American described his pulpit oratory as "Lectures not sermons."³⁸ Hinton was praised for giving moral discourses "on general subjects, tending to improve and elevate the moral and social feelings of the hearers." Hinton did not appear to preach in a sectarian manner, as his sermons had appeal regardless of one's theology or social location. His sermons were "free from abstractions of religion which frequently expel all thought or the disposition to think, in those who have not confirmed habits of thinking."³⁹

Not that the "Rev. lecturer" was unmindful of his mission or lacked having views, for he tried to stimulate his hearers and provoke them to pursue civic righteousness. Hinton's "discourse," wrote the news writer, "is a high intellectual feast, the hearer is convinced through the exercise of his reason and a view of the circumstances by which he is surrounded, that it is his interest as a citizen, aside from religious duty, to practice virtue and avoid vice."⁴⁰

³⁷Chicago American, Sept. 10, 1836.

³⁸Chicago Daily American, January 13, 1842.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

Hinton's preaching could attract a great deal of attention. Like the Millerites and Seventh Day Baptists, Hinton was interested in setting dates for the second coming of Christ. In 1836, he preached a number of sermons in the Presbyterian church, seeking to prove from the books of Daniel and Revelation that the second coming of Christ and the end of the present social order would occur in 1873.

Also, Mayor Long John Wentworth would remember Hinton's sensationalism, in that for a solid month he preached a series of sermons on the identity of the devil, proving conclusively that there were as many devils as there were persons sitting in his audience.⁴¹ On October 2, 1840, Hinton gave one of his final lectures, which was well attended. The subject, "The Fulfillment of Prophecy--As indicated by the Present State of European Nations."⁴²

Hinton was also a radical of sorts, and his church adopted "open communion," allowing anyone participation in the Lord's Supper regardless of their denominational affiliation, as long as they professed allegiance to Christ. For this reason, He was called to the ecclesiastical bar, and the church was almost forced to close. He also founded the first religious newspaper in Chicago, the Northwestern Baptist, and his strong anti-slavery

⁴¹Cited in Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists, 14.

⁴²Chicago American, October 2, 1840.

views eventually divided the church, forcing those sympathetic to abolitionism to leave the church and start a new one, the Tabernacle Baptist Church.

In 1839, Hinton read an announcement from the pulpit of a prayer meeting on behalf of slaves in a joint gathering of Baptist, Presbyterian, and Methodist abolitionists. Some of Hinton's flock regarded this action as high-handed and a violation of the sacred doctrine of the separation of church and state, a cardinal position of Baptists since the days of Isaac Backus. A meeting of the church was called, and a resolution was adopted. The church voted that "notices of political meetings should not be read from the pulpit under any name or guise whatever."⁴³ As a result, the church divided into pro-slavery and anti-slavery factions. "The latter had a majority of the members, the former the most of this world's goods."⁴⁴

Hinton resigned in 1841, leaving for a church in St. Louis. He preached his farewell sermon on September 25, 1841, and for those who were his supporters, "he will leave us with the unfeigned regret of our citizens."⁴⁵ Hinton remained in St. Louis until 1846, when he moved to New Orleans, Louisiana. There, he was the only member of his family to succumb to cholera in 1847.⁴⁶

⁴³Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists, 29-30.

⁴⁴Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 319.

⁴⁵Chicago American, Sept. 25, 1841.

⁴⁶Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 318-9.

Baptists and Slavery

Isaac Taylor Hinton was replaced in 1842 by the Rev. Charles B. Smith, the third pastor of the church and editor of the paper started by Hinton, the Northwestern Baptist.⁴⁷ Smith on the one hand was committed to abolitionism, yet the church was also challenged by a series of lectures by Dr. Levi D. Boone, who tried to prove that slavery was in accordance with the scriptures.⁴⁸

While this offended the anti-slavery faction, the pro-slavery faction was disgruntled with the anti-slavery sentiments of Rev. Smith. After one year, Smith refused the nomination of pastor of First Church, and eventually left First Church with 89 members to start the newly formed Tabernacle Baptist Church (later, Second Baptist Church), organized on August 14, 1843. This church adopted the following resolution against slavery.

Resolved that slavery is a great sin in the sight of God and while we view it as such we will not invite to our communion or pulpit those who advocate or justify from civil policy, or the Bible the principles or practices of slavery.⁴⁹

Cyrus Bentley, a lay leader and historian of Chicago Baptists, observed that the formation of the Second Baptist Church "arose from differences on the question of slavery, then being warmly discussed."⁵⁰

⁴⁷Goodman, History of FBC (1910), 11.

⁴⁸For more on importance on Dr. Boone, see below under discussion of the Temperance Crusade.

⁴⁹Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists, 32.

⁵⁰Bentley, "History of First Baptist Church," 15.

Smith stayed for two years in this capacity, and then left for the East coast in 1845. Smith became an author and wrote books such as The Philosophy of Reform, and Scenes from Luther's Life.

The Tabernacle Church in the late 1840s was characterized by short pastorates, and a gradual recognition that the future of the church lay in the Western division of the city. This church experienced a fire in 1851, and moved to a location on Des Plaines Street, between Madison and Washington, and changed its name in 1864 to the Second Baptist Church, with the Rev. E.J. Goodspeed as pastor.

After several short tenures at First Church, the Rev. Luther Stone came to Chicago in 1847, and in addition to the pastorate of First Church, became editor of the paper, Watchman of the Prairies. Stone was a graduate of Brown University and the Newton Theological Institution and served the church from only January, 1847 to September, 1848. The Watchman was the first weekly Baptist paper published in Chicago and continued to February 22, 1853, when it was succeeded by the Christian Times, and afterwards the Standard. Perry J. Stackhouse described the Watchman as having a "surprising social vision . . . , a Puritan outlook on the evils of the day and a passion for Baptist principles and practices."⁵¹

Stone would later serve on the Board of Trustees of the Baptist Union Theological Seminary and had a reputation as a compassionate advocate for the poor and imprisoned, including

⁵¹Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists, 35.

Confederate soldiers confined to Camp Douglas during the Civil War. Stone was replaced the next year by the Rev. Elisha Tucker, D.D., but maintained editorship of the paper.⁵² Tucker came to Chicago from the Oliver Street Church in New York City. He was described by church clerk and commercial leader Cyrus Bentley as having "a lofty bearing in the pulpit . . . a well-trained and harmonious voice, earnest in manner, eloquent in discourse, speaking from behind the cross, he enchained the attention and carried conviction to his hearers."⁵³

During Tucker's pastorate, the Church came under censorship by the local Association, this time not because of its policy of open communion, but due to the policy of removing persons from the church roles for either unethical behavior or not supporting the church financially. During the pastorate of Rev. Tucker, the Church got in trouble with the Association for its moral code, which was strict even for Baptists.

In 1849, the church purged its roles of fifty-two members who were known or suspected of transgressing the accepted moral code, including dancing, the sale or use of intoxicating liquors, quarreling, or the failure to attend church services and to support the church financially. "Scriptural" methods for church discipline were presumed by many to be limited to death, a church letter or exclusion. The Association thus chastised First Church for using

⁵²Goodman, The History of FBC (1910), 12.

⁵³Bentley, History of FBC (1866), 10.

"unscriptural methods" for excommunicating members. The First Church remained steadfast, and Tucker remained as pastor.

However, Tucker became ill and requested a six-month leave of absence in 1851, and to the dismay of the church, died in Cumberland, Maryland of a lengthy illness in 1853. Tucker's wife nonetheless remained faithful to the congregation and was buried by the church on March 15, 1890, at ninety-four years of age.⁵⁴

With the resignation of Tucker, Cyrus Bentley (1819-1888), a key Baptist layperson, assumed temporary leadership of the congregation, while retaining the office of clerk of the church, a position he held from 1852-1874. Bentley was born in New Lebanon, New York and studied rhetoric at Williams College. He transferred to Brown University, graduating in 1844. He later attended the Harvard Law School and was admitted to the Bar in 1847. Bentley came to Chicago with his father in 1847 and practiced law in the city for forty-one years. He was also a historian, active layperson, and founder and first President of the Chicago YMCA.⁵⁵

By 1850, there were but two Baptist churches with a combined membership of six-hundred persons in a city of 38,000 and growing rapidly. There was both a need for new churches and new pastoral leadership. Problems for the church continued however, as the First Baptist Church building was destroyed by fire in 1852. The

⁵⁴Goodman, History of FBC (1910), 13.

⁵⁵Richard Bentley, "Cyrus Bentley," 1929. YMCA Papers, Ms. Collections, the Chicago Historical Society.

First Presbyterian Church offered the use of its building until a new facility was built.

A new pastor, Dr. J.C. Burroughs, arrived in 1852. Burroughs' pastorate was short lived, but he made history in other ways, as he was one of the principal players in organizing the first University of Chicago.

Meanwhile, Baptists were responding to the migration to the city of immigrants from Germany and Scandinavia with churches and missions in the immigrant languages. The Swedish migration to the city was on the increase in the 1850s and many Scandinavians seemed to be drawn to Baptist faith and practice. In response, the Scandinavian Baptist Church was begun in a building once occupied by a German Lutheran congregation on Nov. 13, 1854. The Rev. L.L. Frisk of First Baptist became this congregation's first pastor.⁵⁶

In 1851, the Baptist Education Society of the Midwestern States originated, and in a convention held in Elgin, Illinois, it was moved that the Baptist Education Society take measures to establish a "literary and theological institution for the benefit of this section of the country."⁵⁷

Meanwhile, the First Baptist Church building perished in the fire of October 1852, and this thwarted energies from starting a theological school. As a result, Dr. Burroughs had to devote his time to make arrangements for a new church building. On November

⁵⁶Goodman, History of FBC (1910), 16.

⁵⁷Watchman of the Prairies (Sept. 16, 1851), 2.

12, 1854, a new First Baptist Church was erected at the corner of LaSalle and Washington streets. Afterwards, Chicago's Baptists could return to the discussion of establishing two schools of higher learning in the city.

In May of 1856, after a few years of discussion and fund-raising, Burroughs resigned the pastorate of First Baptist to become the first President of the "Old University of Chicago." Burroughs obtained land from the Honorable Stephen A. Douglas in the South Division at 34th and Cottage Grove. He also raised over \$80,000 for the erection of buildings at the new school. The University lasted for 30 years, before folding in the late 1880s because of funding problems.⁵⁸

The 1850s became as a result, a major decade in Baptist expansion in the city. Cyrus Bentley describes the importance of these efforts. The First Baptist Church

. . . has borne a principle part, and her members, while colonizing in various parts of the city, organizing new churches, erecting houses of worship, planting mission Sabbath schools, and aiding in sending the gospel to the heathen, have been permitted largely to aid in providing for the education of the young men in the North-west.⁵⁹

Presbyterian Beginnings

The beginnings of Presbyterianism in Chicago was largely the result of the efforts of an Eastern born missionary, Jeremiah Porter. Porter was raised a Congregationalist, and hearing about

⁵⁸Goodman, History of FBC (1910), 17.

⁵⁹Bentley, History of FBC (1866), 12.

opportunities in a place called "Chicago," decided it was his role to assist in the settlement of the West responding to the need for religious and moral leadership for the frontier.

Jeremiah Porter (1804-1893) was born in Hadley, Massachusetts in 1804, where his forebears had been located for almost two centuries.⁶⁰ Samuel Porter was one of the first residents in Hadley, Mass., and a grandfather, also Samuel Porter, married Susanna Edwards, one of the daughters of Jonathan Edwards. Porter's father was a physician and served in the War of 1812 as a surgeon in the U.S. Army. His mother, Charlotte Williams, was the daughter of William Williams, a prominent attorney from Hatfield, Massachusetts.

Porter was educated at Hopkins Academy, and at seventeen years entered Williams College. Unsure of a career in either law or medicine, he entered the Andover Theological Seminary and accepted a temporary position as a high school principal in 1828, only to enter the Princeton Theological Seminary in 1830. Porter was a student of professors Archibald Alexander (1772-1851), Samuel Miller (1769-1850) and Charles A. Hodge (1797-1878), the pillars of the Princeton school of theology, a conservative brand of Calvinism that linked the piety and religious experience characteristic of the Great Awakening with an academic rationalism regarding the Bible and theology. Archibald Alexander was the

⁶⁰For more detailed biographical sketch, see, "Rev. Jeremiah Porter," in A.T. Andreas, History of Chicago (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1885), I:302-304.

first professor at Princeton Seminary, and argued for a conservative option to the New England theology of Ralph Waldo Emerson and the Transcendentalists.

Upon graduating in 1831 Porter was licensed by the Hampshire Congregational Association as a Preacher of the Gospel. Meanwhile, Dr. Absalom Peters, Secretary of the American Home Mission Society, was recruiting ministers for the West and issued an invitation to function as chaplain at Fort Brady, Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Porter made an impression on the women of the First Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, who contributed funds necessary for the preacher to do work on the frontier.⁶¹

Porter soon found himself leaving the East coast for the West traveling by means of the Erie Canal to Buffalo, then a town of 3,000 people; Cleveland, a town of 1500 people; and finally Detroit. There he waited for the last schooner to Sault Ste. Marie, in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. On Thanksgiving Day, 1831 Porter was transported by canoe with Mr. Henry R. Schoolcraft author and American Indian Agent to the "Soo" as it was called.

At the Sault, Porter discovered that there was already a Baptist mission to the Indians under the ministry of Rev. Abel Bingham.⁶² Mr. Schoolcraft cleared out his store, and Porter gathered those who might be interested in starting a Presbyterian

⁶¹Works Projects Administration of Illinois, A History of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 1833-1941, (Chicago: First Presbyterian Church, 1941), 7.

⁶²For more details, see Jeremiah Porter, Diaries, Jeremiah Porter Papers, Ms. Collection, Chicago Historical Society.

mission. These included three who claimed to be Presbyterians, Schoolcraft who was Episcopalian, and a Methodist woman. Afterwards, Porter and Bingham cooperated in leading a revival. Dancing, which had been tolerated, was forbidden, and the temperance pledge was signed by all but one family as many in Fort Brady professed conversion.

By the Spring of 1832 both the Presbyterian and the Baptist churches numbered about 39 people. However, with the escalation of the Blackhawk War, one of the companies at Fort Brady was ordered to join General Winfield Scott's army at Mackinac and another company was to be transferred to Fort Dearborn, Chicago. Porter first learned about Chicago from Schoolcraft. He was informed in 1832 "that Mr. John H. Kinzie, then Indian agent at Fort Winnebago, was about to lay out a town on the Chicago River, or had done so, and he believed it would be a flourishing one."⁶³

Schoolcraft was transferred to Mackinac thus breaking up Porter's Fort Brady church. Under the circumstances Major Fowle invited Porter to join his regiment as it transferred to Fort Dearborn, as many of the soldiers in the regiment were also part of Porter's church at Fort Brady. Porter consented, and the remaining members became devotees of the Baptist Mission Church.

Porter stated that had heard some promising things about

⁶³Jeremiah Porter, "Address on the Earliest Religious History of Chicago," by Rev. Jeremiah Porter, its First Resident Minister, Delivered Upon Request of the Historical Society, 1859. The Jeremiah Porter Papers, Ms. Collections, the Chicago Historical Society.

Chicago after an initial encounter with a traveler to the new town, and was curious enough to want to accompany the Army to the new outpost.

In the cabin of a schooner, on my way to Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, in the autumn of 1831, I found a man on his way to Chicago, and heard from him that the United States Government was about to build a light-house there, and he was going to open a boarding-house and believed it -Chicago- would become a fine place for business.⁶⁴

Porter traveled with the United States' troops to Chicago by way of Green Bay, Wisconsin, journeying along with them as their chaplain. Arriving in May of 1833, he conducted religious services in the Fort. Porter recounted how many families were fleeing to Chicago's Fort Dearborn for protection during the Blackhawk Indian war. It was so crowded, with over 300 people, that the disease and the noise made it scarcely safer than dealing with Indians.⁶⁵

Upon arrival in Chicago, then a small village of 300 people surrounding the Fort, Porter dined at Wattle's Tavern on the West side and there met some of the business leaders of the community, including John S. Wright. Wright is recorded to have said to Porter:

Well, I do rejoice, for yesterday was the darkest day I ever saw. Captain Johnson, who had aided in our meetings, was to leave us, and I was almost alone. I have been talking about and writing for a minister for months in vain, and yesterday as we prayed with the Christians about to leave us, I was almost ready to despair, as I feared the troops coming in

⁶⁴Jeremiah Porter, "Address on the Earliest Religious History of Chicago, its First Resident Minister. Delivered by Request of the Chicago Historical Society, in 1859." Autograph Letters XVII (1859): 353. Ms. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

⁶⁵Stephen R. Beggs, Pages From the Early History of the West and Northwest (Cincinnati, 1868), 97 ff.

would all be utterly careless about our religion. The fact that you and a little church were, at the hour of our meeting, riding at anchor within gunshot of the fort, is like the bursting of the sun from behind the darkest clouds.⁶⁶

P.F.W. Peck invited Porter to lodge in a room above his dry goods store, and thereafter Porter was able to gather persons from the Fort and the town.

At the invitation of "Father Walker" the Methodist missionary, Porter then preached in the log school house, about one-half mile from the fort. Thereafter, Porter preached on the Sabbath in the morning at the Fort, in the afternoon to the citizens of the city, and held a prayer meeting in the evenings for the faithful. It soon became obvious that if the church were to be established, a building was needed, and subscriptions were taken by Porter towards building one.

Porter described the situation as follows: "Here the field was open on my arrival. The people were stretching [sic] out their hands for a preacher of the gospel." Porter noted that, prior to his arrival, Presbyterian ministers had not found their way to Chicago. Porter was a pioneer.⁶⁷ Porter recounted that

. . . within the fort there were professing Christians [including] two officers, three wives of officers, three wives of soldiers, and ten soldiers, all these from my Fort Brady church. All these outside of the fort, except Mrs. Charles Taylor, were born in New England; so were . . . the army officers, Major Fowle and Major Wilcox, and educated in Congregational churches, like myself, yet we organized a

⁶⁶Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 299.

⁶⁷Jeremiah Porter to the Rev. Edmund A. Hovey, Coal Creek Indiana, April 27, 1833. Jeremiah Porter Papers. Ms. Collection, Chicago Historical Society.

Presbyterian Church, and called it the "First Presbyterian Church of Chicago."⁶⁸

All of the first members of the Presbyterian church were Congregationalists, except Philo Carpenter, and his parents were Baptist. This was the city's first "religious society," and "the mother" of all churches in Chicago.⁶⁹ Temporary arrangements were made for the church to meet in the carpenter's shop, and on May 19, 1833, and Porter delivered his first sermon in Chicago on the subject of "Herein is my Father Glorified, that ye bear much fruit," from John 15:8.

Porter was visited in August of 1833 by Charles Butler, real estate investor and brother-in-law of one of Chicago's most prominent citizens, William Butler Ogden. Butler approached the city on August 2, describing the environs of the emerging town as "situated on a prairie, bounded only by the distant horizon like a vast expanse of ocean . . . on my left . . . [while] on my right in summer stillness lay Lake Michigan. I had never seen anything more beautiful or captivating in nature."⁷⁰

Butler described how at the time "emigrants were coming in almost every day . . . and in many instances families were living in their covered wagons while arrangements were made for putting

⁶⁸Porter, "Address on the Earliest Religious History of Chicago," 58.

⁶⁹Andrew Stevenson, Chicago: Pre-eminently a Presbyterian City (Chicago: Winona Publishing Co., 1907), 17.

⁷⁰Charles Butler, "William B. Ogden and Early Chicago, 1833-1835," Address given in New York, Dec. 17, 1881. Charles Butler Mss., the Chicago Historical Society.

up shelter. . . ." Butler noted that Chicago was populated by about 300 people at the time "mostly strangers to each other." Fort Dearborn was a military establishment, and just prior to Butler's coming, there "was a transfer of a company of United States troops . . . to Fort Dearborn under command . . . of Major Wilcox, accompanied by the Rev. Jeremiah Porter, as Chaplain."⁷¹

Butler was impressed with Porter. "The home missionary has a very excellent and devoted man here (Rev. Porter) who preached this morning in the Fort, and this afternoon in the School house. . . . He preached a very fine sermon; there are a good many officers [and] men, pious, attached to the Garrison."⁷²

Butler said he spoke to Porter about starting some of the numerous benevolent societies in the settlement. "There should be here a Bible, Tract [and] Sunday School depository. . . . A moral influence should be diffused in the beginning to give character to the city which is growing up here."⁷³ Butler said that he spent the evening with Rev. Porter, suggesting the need of such societies.⁷⁴

Already the "benevolent empire" had taken over the city. For Porter, most of the people who were part of his church were "from

⁷¹Ibid., 12-13.

⁷²Charles Butler to Mrs. Eliza Butler, Sunday, August 4, 1833, Geneva, New York. Charles Butler Mss., the Chicago Historical Society.

⁷³Charles Butler, Diary, August 4, 1833. Charles Butler Mss., Chicago Historical Society.

⁷⁴Ibid., August 8, 1833.

New England, and of course are awake to the benevolent plans of the day."⁷⁵ In addition to the work of building cabins, planting seeds for harvest, locating a preacher, and establishing a school, Porter noticed that already "there [were] three temperance societies in the county. I have procured subscribers for 20 copies of the Temperance Recorder, which are already working like leaven in this region."⁷⁶ Porter helped lay the foundation of Protestant social concern in Chicago virtually from the day he found himself in the city.

There was an ecumenical harmony in early Chicago and the early pastors preached for each other, shared each other's facilities, and in general supported each other and joined together in common cause. The Chicago Magazine of 1857 wrote that "Presbyterians, Baptists and Methodists all met for worship [in one building]; and such was the harmony of feeling, and simple-hearted view of the road to Heaven in those barbarous days, that it was no uncommon sight to see three clergymen jointly ministering to the mixed flock, during the same morning service."⁷⁷ Preachers Porter, Freeman (Baptist) and Whitehead (Methodist) were good friends and partners in the effort of Christianizing Chicago.

⁷⁵Porter to Hovey, April 27, 1833.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷"Churches and Church Choirs in Chicago," Chicago Magazine 1 (1857), 344.

On Wednesday, June 26, 1833, members met to form a church, the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago.⁷⁸ The church was formed of twenty-six members, seventeen from the Fort. Historian Philo James Otis boasts that the First Presbyterian Church was "the oldest religious society in Chicago, older than the town of Chicago which was not founded until August 10, 1833."⁷⁹

Members of First Presbyterian Church included John Wright, Philo Carpenter, John S. Wright, Rufus Brown, J.H. Poor, Mrs. Elizabeth Brown, Mary Taylor, E. Clark, and Mrs. Cynthia Brown. Among the members from the Garrison included DeLafayette Wilcox, and Miss Eliza Chappel. The first Elders of the church included John Wright, Philo Carpenter, and Major Wilcox. Miss Chappel, a schoolteacher and abolitionist, would later become Porter's wife.⁸⁰

Porter was offended at the blatant desecration of the Sabbath day. He observed that the "most dreadful spectacle before my eyes [while] going to church was a group of Indians sitting on the ground before a miserable French dram house, playing cards, and as

⁷⁸For more information, see the following: An Account of the Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Organization of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, (Chicago: Beach, Barnard & Co., Printers, 1883); Rev. Albert Elliot Kittridge, Historical Discourses, (Chicago: Culver, Page, Hoyne & Co., Printers, 1876); Philo Adam Otis, The First Presbyterian Church, 1833-1913: A History of the Oldest Organization in Chicago, Second Edition. (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, 1913); and, Works Project Administration of Illinois, A History of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 1833-1941, (Chicago: The First Presbyterian Church, 1941).

⁷⁹Otis, First Presbyterian Church (1913), 229.

⁸⁰Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 300.

many trifling white men standing around to witness the game."⁸¹ Porter was livid in describing the situation during his first communion service in the city, July 7, 1833, in which twenty-seven people participated. During his worship service, the following was occurring.

Many witnessed the solemn scene, but a majority were females, as two vessels were unloading in the harbor, causing a wanton abuse of the holy day by many who sin against dear light, and abuse divine compassion and love.⁸²

With the dedication of the first Presbyterian Church, Porter preached an inaugural sermon that revealed his millenarian hope for the new city. With the temperature reading at -15 degrees at noon, Porter preached the dedication arguing that the churches were important for spiritual liberty, and "for political and commercial prosperity." Porter envisioned the role of churches in the building of a city, and questioned: "would you see this place holding its rank among American cities, like a diamond among the pearls?"

Chicago, might become another Jerusalem, reasoned Porter, or it might become like Babylon. "How glorious is the prospect of the town, if the people will hear and obey the commandments of the Lord. It shall stand beautiful for the situation a joy and rejoicing, while the sun and moon shall endure. But if they refuse and rebel, and covet the luxuries and crimes of the cities whose

⁸¹Cited in Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 300.

⁸²Ibid.

names only stand on the page of history, it shall fall like Babylon."⁸³

For Porter, the presence of Yankee Protestants gave hope and order to the new midwestern settlement. Most of the Yankees were Puritans, and were shocked at the wanton disregard of the Sabbath, intemperance, profanity, and general preoccupation with the world and its goods. The First Presbyterian Church was thus founded to bring morality, "intelligence," and order to a disorderly environment.

The Presbyterians are noted for their strict observance of the Sabbath. They are the most intelligent part of the community, lovers of order and promoters of knowledge; the most ready to support schools, the Gospel, and missionary and Bible Societies.⁸⁴

A meeting-house was finally built by Joseph Meeker and dedicated Saturday, January 4, 1834. "It was the first church ever built in Chicago, though the Baptists had a school house built, in which we had preached for a time--for a few months--on alternate sabbaths."⁸⁵ By 1834, Baptists, Methodists, and Episcopalians all had established a religious society.

It was an unpretentious structure, about forty by sixty feet, and could have been mistaken for either a meeting house or a school

⁸³Cited in Josiah Seymore Currey, Chicago: Its History and its Builders, I (Chicago: S.J. Clarke, 1919), 386.

⁸⁴Cited in First Presbyterian Church of Chicago (1941), 10.

⁸⁵Porter, "Earliest Religious History," 59.

house. Stephen F. Gale, a Universalist, had this to say about the first church edifice in Chicago:

Considering that it was not designed for the Baptists, Meeker should have placed it nearer the future sidewalk, as the long planks leading to the door could scarcely be distinguished from the water in the evening, and bewildered Christians were occasionally immersed without the aid of clergy.⁸⁶

The building would not befit the demands of genteel refinement. One citizen would exclaim, upon seeing the church for the first time: "I have often heard of God's house, but I never saw his barn before."⁸⁷ Nonetheless, the structure had a certain utility. It was used not just as a church but as a schoolhouse, for concerts and the lyceum, and functioned as "sort of a town hall."⁸⁸

According to historian and traveler Henry R. Schoolcraft, the founding of the Presbyterian Church in Chicago had a much more important significance as it "proves that the religious element . . . is everywhere destined to attend the tread of commercial and political elements of power into the great area of the Valley of the Mississippi."⁸⁹

Churches were also important in the establishing of a "social system for the conduct of men." "A town has risen, like magic, on

⁸⁶Stephen F. Gale, "Our Early Churches and Sunday Schools," In: Reminiscences of Early Chicago and Vicinity (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1903), 361.

⁸⁷Ibid.

⁸⁸Chicago Magazine I 1857), 345.

⁸⁹Henry R. Schoolcraft, Thirty Years Among Indian Tribes, 494.

the soil where recently only savages had danced."⁹⁰ In addition to Philo Carpenter, Major Wilcox, and John Wright--Aaron Russell, a new arrival from Boston in 1834, was added to the body of Elders.

Porter preached against some of the urban woes that were prevalent in and around the fort. He railed against cursing and profanity and the sale of liquor to Indians during the Treaty of September, 1833 which concluded the Blackhawk War.

The awful scenes of "the treaty," the unprovoked and wanton violence of the sabbath, the disregard of the necessary laws and customs of well regulated communities, the ridiculous [sic] imitation of the follies of the most profligate cities of our land, have made Christians tremble for the future prospects of this place.⁹¹

Porter also decried the gambling houses, and organized a group of fellow Protestants who succeeded in closing down "two nests" in the town. Porter provides readers with one of the earliest impressions of the city's inhabitants.

The Sabbath by multitudes is most shamefully abused; twenty stores and groceries are dealing out liquid death, while there are but two real temperance stores in the place, and those begot by members of my church. . . . Profaneness prevails to an extent such as I never witnessed before. The teams from the Wabash [Hoosier farmers] that visit us daily, seem to come loaded with cursing and bitterness. The drivers appear almost as degraded as the miserable heathen around us [the Indians]. . . . Many who call themselves gentlemen and move in the highest arch of society are . . . polluting every sentence they utter with some oath or curse.⁹²

⁹⁰"Dedication of Presbyterian Church," Chicago Democrat (Jan. 4, 1834), 2.

⁹¹Cited in, A History of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago (1941), 10.

⁹²Cited in First Presbyterian Church of Chicago: Born in the Fort, 1833-1983, ed. by L. Dale Richesin (Chicago: First Presbyterian Church, 1983).

The city seemed to draw people who exhibited manners detestable to New England Protestants. In addition to the rougher characters and traders that came to the frontier, Porter noted that the Catholics had a chapel going up rapidly. "These things speak enterprise and of interest in religion."⁹³ Porter disagreed theologically with the Catholics, but morally he hoped for allies in benevolent causes.

In October of 1834, the Ottawa Presbytery was founded, encompassing the whole northern part of the state of Illinois. The Presbytery encompassed the churches of Northern Illinois, including Cook, LaSalle, and Pritania counties. There were eleven churches, Presbyterian and Congregational at the time, with eight ministers. First Presbyterian Church joined the Presbytery. The tone of the Synod was "New School," friendly to revivalism and critical of the sterility of "Old School" Calvinism and conservatism. By 1834, the church had a membership of fifty-two persons and had become self-supporting, no longer needing money from the Presbyterian Home Mission Society. In the spring months the church was almost inaccessible because the rainfall filled the ditch in front of the church. The benches from the church were taken out to provide a bridge from Lake Street to the church.⁹⁴

Presbyterians had established missions on the Du Page, Des Plaines, and Fox Rivers outside the city. These areas too would

⁹³Porter to Hovey, April 27, 1833.

⁹⁴Otis, First Presbyterian Church, 23-24.

later support schools and ministers. "As occupied as they will be by eastern peoples, a majority of the preachers will be Presbyterians."⁹⁵

From its inception, the First Presbyterian Church in Chicago was prominent in civic affairs. The wooden frame building was initially the largest in town, and was used for a schoolhouse, concerts, as a lecture hall, and for political debates. The use of the building for benevolent society meetings symbolized the involvement of the congregation in public life. The Ladies Aid Society of the church raised funds to support the city's first public school teacher, a Presbyterian, Miss Eliza Chappel.

Miss Chappel came to the city from Mackinac in 1833 with the purpose of establishing a school. The school was originally located in John Wright's log cabin outside the fort, and in January 1834 it was moved to the First Presbyterian Church building. In addition to funds from the Ladies Aid Society of the church, the school received additional support from the public school fund of the village. During the revivals of 1834 and 1835, many of the first converts came from the school. However, in January 1835, Miss Chappel fell ill, and while recovering became engaged to wed the pastor, Jeremiah Porter, who was apparently a frequent visitor during Miss Chappel's convalescence.

In 1835, Porter was chosen by the Presbytery of Ottawa to be its first delegate to the General Assembly in Pittsburgh. After

⁹⁵Porter to Hovey, April 27, 1833.

the adjournment of the Assembly, he married Chappel in Rochester, New York, June 16, 1835. On July 30, the couple returned to Chicago, and Porter was considering calls from churches in Green Bay and Peoria. In November, 1835, Porter accepted a pastorate to the Main Street Presbyterian Church, Peoria, Illinois, and the Chicago church, with a membership of 109 persons, had to search for a new pastor.⁹⁶

Porter's ministry in Peoria reflected his growing interests in reform movements. By the fall of 1837, he preached the opening sermon to the Synod of Illinois in Springfield, and it was an antislavery sermon. This caused quite a stir, and the Rev. Dr. Gideon Blackburn had to protect Porter against a pro-slavery mob. After the Synod adjourned, the abolitionist faction traveled on horseback to Alton, Illinois to support the efforts of Elijah Lovejoy in his war against slavery and for the freedom of the press.

Several resolutions were passed in favor of the abolitionist cause, and only a few days later, after the ministers had returned home, Lovejoy and his followers were martyred by proslavery mob violence. Despite being down with typhoid fever, Porter preached twice to his congregation on the Sabbath following the murder of Lovejoy. Lovejoy's death signalled the further organizing of abolitionist societies, including the first such society in Chicago. After Porter's recovery from illness, he moved to

⁹⁶Otis, The First Presbyterian Church (1913), 25.

Farmington, Illinois where he cooperated in a general revival with several ministers, including the Rev. Flavel Bascom, another Presbyterian abolitionist.⁹⁷ Bascom would soon relocate to Chicago as minister of First Presbyterian Church.

In 1840, several old friends from Mackinac had organized a church in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Porter was approached and accepted the pastorate of a Presbyterian church in Wisconsin, staying there for eighteen years, until 1858. Also in 1840, the "Presbyterian and Congregational Convention of Wisconsin" was formed, composed of churches from the two denominations who were cooperation in the settling of the West.

After eighteen happy years, Porter was asked to assume the role of Pastor of the Edwards Congregational Church in Chicago, and to the chagrin of the Green Bay church, he resigned and accepted this call. Porter stayed on until the outbreak of the Civil War, and was given opportunity by the newly formed Chicago Historical Society to present a lecture in 1859, reflecting on the earliest history of the of religious settlement in Chicago.

With the outbreak of the war, Rev. Porter accepted a position as Chaplain of the U.S. volunteers, and Mrs. Porter assisted the Chicago Sanitary Commission and left to join her husband in Cairo, Illinois, and later in convalescent camps in Paducah, Kentucky; Pittsburgh Landing, Tenn.; Corinth, Mississippi; and Memphis, Tennessee. With the permission of Dr. Edmund Andrews, surgeon in

⁹⁷Porter, Diaries, Ms. Collection, Chicago Historical Society; Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 303,

Webster's Army, the Porters began the first school for freedmen on the borders of the Mississippi River.

Thereafter, the Porters followed Union troops to Vicksburg and later to Atlanta, both ministering to the sick and teaching freed slaves. After the Civil War, the Porters requested travel with the Christian and Sanitary Commissions to the Rio Grande River, Texas, to assist troops who were protecting the borders against a feared attack by Mexican General Maximilian. Rev. Porter ministered to troops in the soldiers' hospital, and Mrs. Porter opened a school called the "Rio Grande Seminary," a pattern that would continue with the Porters until their retirement.

The Porters continued to travel with U.S. troops, with Mr. Porter ministering to troops and Mrs. Porter setting up schools for children, black and white. The Porters were frequently in and out of Chicago and maintained a strong reputation among both Presbyterians and Congregationalists locally and nationally. The Porters were present in 1883 at the "semi-centennial" celebration of the First Presbyterian Church. Jeremiah Porter lived until his ninetieth year, finally dying on July 25, 1893 at the home of his daughter in Beloit, Wisconsin. They had nine children, two of whom served as missionaries to China.⁹⁸

⁹⁸For more details on the life of Rev. and Mrs. Jeremiah Porter, see, Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 304.

Episcopalian Beginnings

After the American Revolution, Episcopalianism in the West was slow to develop. The church was "disestablished, discredited for her English connections, many of her churches gone and her churches closed."⁹⁹ Neither did the church make plans for the settlement of the West, because of a scarcity of funds and questions regarding the church's future in America. Also, since the church was historically comprised of persons of social standing, there was less anticipation that Episcopalianism would spread to the West in the same way that Methodism and other revivalist churches would. In short, Episcopalians were "not a migrating class, and there was little missionary vision of winning the unchurched population."¹⁰⁰

Episcopalians basically conceded the West to the more aggressive evangelical groups, especially the religious reform movement that came out of the Anglican Church, Methodism. In the west, it seemed that "Jeffersonian democracy and Methodism ruled, and the Roman Catholic Church was in the field." Numerous English immigrants "were drawn to Methodism and other forms of dissent."¹⁰¹

It seemed that the West, particularly the Midwest, had been taken over by the evangelical sects. Wrote a historian of the St. James Episcopal Church:

Quite naturally, the Methodist circuit riders were the first

⁹⁹Massey Hamilton Shepherd, Jr., History of St. James Church, Chicago, 1834-1934 (Chicago, 1934), 11.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Francis J. Hall, History of the Diocese of Chicago, Part One (Dixon, Il.: DeWitt C. Owen, ca. 1902), 6.

ministers to appear, and a Methodist class was organized as early as June, 1831. Then followed the Roman Catholics [chiefly among the French] in May, 1833, the Presbyterians in June and the Baptists in October of the same year. As for the Episcopalians, in 1832 they had only one clergyman in the whole state of Illinois, and no bishop had as yet come west of the Lake.¹⁰²

In 1821, the Episcopalian Church founded the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society in an effort to lay some claim to the West. By 1834, there were four Episcopal churches in Illinois, including St. John's (Albion, 1825), Trinity (Jacksonville, 1832), Christ Church (Rushville, 1834), and St. Jude's Parish (Peoria, 1834).¹⁰³ The Peoria church was founded by Palmer Dyer, who resigned as Rector of St. Paul's Church and came West as a missionary under the auspices of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society.

St. James Church

The establishment of a church in Chicago was largely the result of Mrs. John H. Kinzie, whose letters to the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society managed results after pleading the case for a church for several years. The Kinzies came to Chicago in 1831. The "first prayer meeting in the city" was held in their home by Mr. Mark Noble, a Methodist, who was living at the time in the Kinzie home. In October 1831, the Kinzies moved back to Fort Winnebago, and then returned to Chicago in July, 1833.

¹⁰²Shepherd, History of St. James (1934), 10-11.

¹⁰³Hall, History of Diocese of Chicago, 6-7.

In October 12, 1834, Rev. Palmer Dyer came to Chicago from Peoria. At the invitation of Mrs. Kinzie, Dyer preached in the Presbyterian Church on October 10, 1834, the first Episcopal sermon in Chicago. The Presbyterian Church was "in a lonely spot, almost inaccessible on account of the surrounding sloughs and bogs."¹⁰⁴ Dyer preached, and the Prayer Books were distributed by Mrs. Kinzie, Mrs. Helm, and Miss Chappel, later wife of Jeremiah Porter, pastor of the Presbyterian Church. At the time, only the Kinzies and two to three other households were on the north side of the river. "The Romanists, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Baptists had already established themselves on the South side."¹⁰⁵

Rev. Dyer did not stay long in the city, and moved on to Peoria, but remained an advocate for the Episcopal Church in Illinois. Palmer Dyer wrote Stephen Warren, of Troy, New York in an effort to solicit aid for Episcopalian work in Illinois. Referring to a letter from Bishop Philander Chase, Dyer noted that "pecuniary aid" was needed for Episcopalian church work in the midwest.

Dyer that there were thousands of "intelligent people" looking for "means of salvation" in Chicago. On the other hand, "the whole land is in moral darkness. . . . Something must be done soon or

¹⁰⁴Service for the Eighty-Fifth Anniversary of St. James Church, Cass and Huron Streets, Chicago, 1834-1919. Rev. James S. Stone, D.D., Rector (Chicago: St. James Episcopal Church, 1919).

¹⁰⁵Rev. W.H. Vibbert, An Historical Discourse, St. James Church, Chicago. Semi-Centennial Celebration of the Foundation of the Parish, Oct. 26, 1884 (Chicago: J.M.W. Jones Stationary and Printing, Co., 1884), 6.

all will be lost in Illinois . . . [to] sin and infidelity, heresy, [and] schism. . . . If Eastern churchmen will do their duty to Illinois," we will establish a diocese. If not, the church might "lose ground . . . that can probably never be recovered."¹⁰⁶

At the instigation of Mrs. Kinzie, the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society sent to Chicago the Rev. Isaac W. Hallam on August 28, 1834 as appointed Missionary to the Chicago area.¹⁰⁷ Hallam, born in Stonington, Connecticut, graduated from Trinity College, Hartford in 1830. His first Rectorship was St. James parish, New London, Connecticut, where he was ordained a priest on December 28, 1833.

The Sunday following Dyer's departure, October 19, 1834, Hallam conducted a similar service in the Baptist church. He was described as "a man of strict piety, and ready for that self-sacrifice and privation which always seems a part of the ministerial profession with those who emigrate to try Western Preaching."¹⁰⁸ However, Joseph Turner Ryerson had another opinion, describing him as "a Christian gentlemen of simple manners and gentle characteristic [sic], and respectable . . . , but not of much power in the pulpit, nor vigor as a parish minister."¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶Palmer Dyer to Stephen Warren, Troy, New York. Dec. 20, 1836. Palmer Dyer Collections, Mss. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

¹⁰⁷A.T. Andreas, History of Chicago (Wheaton, 1885), I:335.

¹⁰⁸Chicago Magazine (1857), 405.

¹⁰⁹Joseph Turner Ryerson, "History of St. James P.E. Church, Chicago, 1843-1871." Ms. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

The Parish was organized on October 26, 1834 with key business leadership in William B. Egan, Dr. Philip Maxwell, Giles Spring, John H. Kinzie, Dr. Clarke, Gurdon S. Hubbard, Josiah Wilcox, William Pettit, Eli B. Williams, Jacob Russell and Hans Crocker.¹¹⁰ Other communicants, who for reason of tradition were not eligible for position of Vestryman, included Mrs. Juliette Kinzie, Mrs. Peter Johnson, Mrs. Francis W. Magill, Mrs. Nancy Hullman, and Mrs. Margaret Helm. However, the Episcopalians did not have their own facility, so for a time the congregation met in what was called Tippecanoe Hall, a building owned by the Kinzies. The church grew slowly, and by May 1836, drew only twenty participants with thirty "scholars" in Sunday School.¹¹¹

However, John H. Kinzie donated two lots at the corner of Cass and Illinois streets for the purpose of providing land for a church. The Ladies Sewing Circle conducted a fair to raise money for the new church, and ground was broken for the new edifice July 1835. However, because of scarcity of materials, the building was not erected until March, 1837. It was a brick building, the first such structure in Chicago, built at a cost of \$15,000, opening on Easter Sunday. "Though really a modest edifice, it was thought to be a very imposing structure for a frontier town."¹¹²

¹¹⁰Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 335.

¹¹¹Service for the Eighty-fifth Anniversary of St. James Church, Cass and Huron Streets, Chicago, 1834-1919. Rev. James S. Stone, D.D., Rector (Chicago: St. James Episcopal Church, 1919).

¹¹²Vibbert, An Historical Discourse (1884), 9.

Meanwhile, there was some interest among the Episcopalian churches in Illinois, to organize a Diocese. In March, 1835, three clergymen met in Peoria to organize the Diocese of Illinois, and Philander Chase, D.D., in semi-retirement in Michigan, "was elected Bishop."¹¹³

Chase was born in Cornish, New Hampshire, Dec. 12, 1774, the son of Congregationalist parents, and entered Dartmouth in 1791. In 1805, he organized Christ Church in New Orleans and moved back to the East coast in 1811, becoming Rector of Christ Church of Hartford, Connecticut, Chase organized the Diocese of Ohio in 1818, and in 1832 moved to Gilead, Michigan, "devoted to farming and missionary labor in the neighborhood."¹¹⁴

Chase was described as "large and impressive," a man of untiring labor, strong, pious, and "a militant evangelical." He was a champion of "low church" doctrine, and advocated missionary activity consistent with the revivalist tendencies of the age. St. James would hold to a moderate position, and in its early history, ministers with views that were too high or too low would not remain very long. Chase was called to Illinois as Bishop of a frontier diocese and came "without prospect of earthly support."¹¹⁵

The parishioners of St. James were composed of migrants from the East coast, largely from New England and New York, Rima Lunin

¹¹³Shepherd, History of St. James, 15.

¹¹⁴Hall, History of the Diocese of Chicago, 14.

¹¹⁵Ibid., 16.

Schultz argues that the congregation boasted a close relationship with English culture and society and was dedicated to transmit Yankee culture and values to the west. The congregation never saw themselves as cut off from the Eastern seaboard, but maintained "an urban, cosmopolitan flavor even when they resided in the most bucolic, gentry-like atmosphere of Chicago's North Side before the Civil War."¹¹⁶

Women of the church played a significant role in civic affairs, and the church was the most important, if not only outlet, for their efforts. The congregation was the outgrowth of commercial interests in the city on the part of migrant New England entrepreneurs and businessmen.

St. James' parishioners often gathered socially at either the Kinzies' house, or in the country estate of William Butler Ogden. Ogden, a real estate speculator, entertained persons of importance, including Martin Van Buren, Daniel Webster, Samuel J. Tilden, William Cullen Bryant, Margaret Fuller, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Wendell Phillips.¹¹⁷

The church assumed its role as a supporter of culture, the arts and society in the city. The new church hosted the "Chicago Polemical Society" and sponsored a debate on the subject: "Is a

¹¹⁶Rima Lunin Schultz, The Church and the City: A Social History of 150 Years of St. James, Chicago (Chicago: Cathedral of St. James, 1986), 12.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 28.

Monarchy more favorable than a Republic?"¹¹⁸ On February 4, 1836, members of St. James organized the Chicago Athenaeum and sponsored a debate on the theme: "Should the U.S. acknowledge Great Britain as a mediator in her present difficulties with France?"¹¹⁹ Rev. Hallam was asked to present a lecture sponsored by the Chicago Lyceum at the Presbyterian Church on February 23, 1836, under the title, "Ought Common Schools to be Supported at the Public Expense?"¹²⁰ What intellectual questions that were in currency were discussed at least at St. James.

In January 1837, St. James could cease being a mission, dependent upon funds from the mission board. Now self-supporting, it hired Rev. Hallam as Rector for \$1200 a year. Hallam hosted a singing school in his home, a Wednesday night Bible class, and the church quickly assumed the role of cultural leader in the community. Bishop Philander Chase dedicated the building on June 25, 1837.

The Kinzies had so much to do with the founding of the church, that St. James was called at the time "Kinzie's Church." Money from John Kinzie, the sale of pew rents, and money raised by St. James's women amounted to a \$4,000 excess. This was utilized to erect a structure with a mahogany pulpit, an organ, and the first tower among existing Protestant churches. Upon dedication, the

¹¹⁸Shepherd, History of St. James, 21.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Ibid., 21-22.

numbers of communicants at St. James increased to thirty, with eleven consecrated the day the church building was opened. The remainder of the money was used to build a rectory for the minister.

The Chicago American anticipated that the church, "when completed, will vie in splendor with many of the best churches in the East."¹²¹ Despite the financial downturn, the building opened on Easter Sunday, 1837. The Chicago American described the church as exhibiting a "brick edifice that does credit to the city, when the circumstances under which it has been erected are considered, and we have no doubt that the pews 'will go off well' and the church be liberally supported, as one of the indexes of the good character of the city."¹²² Despite the financial crisis, a church was built, and stood in a vast tract of land on the prairie, called the "commons."¹²³

Yet the Panic of 1837 was viewed by Rev. Hallam as a day of reckoning. St. James' parishioners were hurt badly by the panic, and Hallam lamented the materialism of the day. Hallam railed against Chicagoans, including his own flock, for being more devoted to "the cares of the world" than the observance of the sabbath and

¹²¹"Improvements in Chicago," Chicago American, Dec. 10, 1836.

¹²²Chicago American (March 25, 1837), 2.

¹²³Service for the Eighty-Fifth Anniversary of the St. James Church, Cass and Huron Streets, Chicago, 1834-1919. The Rev. James S. Stone, D.D. (Chicago, St. James Episcopal Church, 1919).

the church as an institution, as evidenced by the waning support of the church.¹²⁴

[The] Financial Panic of 1837 was severely felt by the Church. There was much poverty. Many Chicago people raised vegetables in their city lots to keep themselves from starving. Several years of depression followed. A church building started in Galena had to be suspended, and a small chapel . . . was erected instead.¹²⁵

Rev. Hallam complained in many a sermon that "the greatest hindrance to the progress of religion" in the city was "the neglect of religious services and . . . the lack of effort to establish and sustain the institutions of religion at any sacrifice."¹²⁶

In 1841, it was determined by members of St. James that another church was needed in the South division of the city, this would be Trinity Church.¹²⁷ On March 5, 1842, the new church was organized in the Saloon building," and Rev. Hallam agreed to serve as Rector of both churches on a temporary basis. However, the task of overseeing two churches and Hallam's longing to go back East caused the relationship to be short lived.

In October, 1843, Hallam resigned to return to the East coast and subsequently served as Priest in Lynn, Massachusetts; Clarksboro, New Jersey; Windham, Connecticut; and New Canaan, Connecticut. The Rev. William F. Walker was called to replace

¹²⁴Schultz, 34-35.

¹²⁵Hall, History of the Diocese of Chicago, 22.

¹²⁶Shepherd, 22.

¹²⁷For sketch of first churches of the Diocese of Chicago, see A.T. Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 334-339.

Hallam and assumed the role of priest at both St. James and the new church, Trinity Episcopal Church.

St. James Church was the most prominent and most decorated church in the city. In May of 1842, the Sewing Society of the church raised money in a fair to purchase and install a baptismal font, as the church sought to mimic the aesthetic and liturgical quality of Eastern churches.¹²⁸ Socially, St. James offered the city much of the political and economic leadership at mid-century. The Boosters who were making a fortune in business also provided the city its political leadership. "These boosters, as distinguished from later commercial or industrial elites in the city, took direct responsibility for the life of the community."¹²⁹ These including the following persons, all parishioners at St. James.

William Butler Ogden, Julian S. Rumsey, George W. Dole, John H. Kinzie, Gurdon S. Hubbard, W. B. Egan, Giles Spring, Eli B. Williams, Isaac N. Arnold, Thomas Dyer, Walter L. Newberry, and Judge Thomas Drummond served in many capacities. Rumsey and Ogden were alderman, and each served as mayor. Kinzie sat on the Common Council and had been president of the town. Dyer was alderman, mayor and a state legislator. Hubbard represented Chicago in the state legislature and was a Chicago alderman. Dr. Egan was elected city recorder and state representative.¹³⁰

Ogden combined self-interest with civic responsibility. His booster mentality represented a commitment to work for municipal progress, as well as individual profit. Ogden developed the city

¹²⁸Chicago Daily American, Tues., May 24, 1842.

¹²⁹Schultz, 41.

¹³⁰Ibid., 42-43.

with many miles of streets and several bridges. He also supported the development of the city's architecture and the general aesthetics of the city. He hired the city's first architect, John Van Osdel, in 1838, and the engineer, E.S. Chesborough, to develop the city's sewer and water systems in the 1850s.¹³¹

Ogden and others supported projects to elevate the city's culture. Isaac N. Arnold was one of the founders of the Chicago Historical Society in 1856. Ogden encouraged fellow Chicagoans to assist in the establishment of a free public library. St. James's families were also at the forefront of the benevolent and relief activities in the city.

Significance

The major Protestant denominations, the Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians all established their "first" churches at the city's founding. Representing the influence of the Eastern seaboard, and the evangelical consensus of the time, these Protestants sought to influence the character of the city through the medium of their institutions. Protestant "public religion" was presumed to be the norm of religious doctrine and moral practice in the city. Business leaders who desired respectability aligned themselves with one of the churches, otherwise risking social isolation in the young city. For Protestants, their influence amounted to what we might call

¹³¹Ibid., 44.

"cultural hegemony," as the players and institutions influenced the character and ethos of the new midwestern city.

CHAPTER IV
THE GROWTH OF EVANGELICAL CHURCHES

Methodism at Mid-Century

Henry Whitehead of the Methodists, the frontier preacher, kept religious books in the little store he managed on the corner of State and Madison. Although the religion of the frontier, Methodism quickly adapted to the urban environment of Chicago. In 1852, the Conference authorized Whitehead and other Chicago Methodists to establish in Chicago a Book Depository and a prominent religious journal, The Northwestern Christian Advocate. Methodism continued to grow, and by early 1853, the Methodist Sabbath School Union purchased a lot to build a church near the American Can Company, "a worthy enterprise to provide a place of worship for those who live in that region."¹

This was arranged by Orrington Lunt, Asahel Otis and Henry W. Clark, lay Methodist businessmen. Whitehead continued with this work until the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. After the fire, he became manager in Chicago for Bigelow and Main, publishers of

¹Weekly Chicago Democrat, Feb. 12, 1853.

Sunday School and church music books.² Frontier religion was changed by the urban environment.

The Owen Street Methodist Church was organized in 1853 as the fruit of a Sabbath School. The Church had thirty-two members with 120 scholars enrolled in its school. The Northwestern Christian Advocate noted that the School was able to purchase a library of 200 volumes.³ The churches often developed Sunday Schools which created the need of printed literature, both to give away to recent arrivals, and as materials for use in the schools.

Since the Conference was growing so fast, the Methodists organized a "Preachers Association" in 1853 to include all the preachers, local or itinerant, to meet at the Clark Street Church in order to effect the general "improvement in ministerial offices and graces."⁴ At the time, ministers were not just important in the churches, but were also important public figures. It was thus important to learn social graces that would appeal to the respectable in society.

Growing pains required some adjustments. By 1853 the State Street Church was remodeled and as a result was "now one of the handsomest little chapels in the city. Its good taste, [and] diligent hands of the ladies, who prompted [and] so largely contributed to the execution of the work, is evinced in the neatly

²Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 327.

³Northwestern Christian Advocate (April 16, 1853), 54.

⁴Ibid., Jan. 5, 1853.

papered walls [and] plain [and] beautiful simplicity of the altar trimmings. . . ." ⁵ One might describe the decor as elegant simplicity.

From 1850 on, the story of Methodism in Chicago became the story of the individual societies in the city. By February 1857, the Clark Street Church changed its name to the "First Methodist Episcopal Church in Chicago." Influenced by revival fires, the church was not only an instrument of conversion and moral suasion--but spawned the spread of Methodism in the city.

One historian would observe that the mother church was involved in the founding of almost every other Methodist church in Chicago, as "nearly every Methodist society that has been organized in this city has received pecuniary aid, to a greater or lesser degree from the funds of this church. In all, over seventy thousand dollars had been paid to other churches in the city, before the great fire, for the purposes of church extension." ⁶

Just after the Civil War, there were over seventeen Methodist churches in the city. The value of church property owned by the Methodist Episcopal Church in Chicago was listed at \$825,000, with 3050 church members and 6,337 Sunday School scholars in seventeen churches, three of which were German. ⁷ By 1868, the reputation

⁵Ibid., (May 25, 1853), 82.

⁶Goodrich, "History of Chicago Methodism," 30.

⁷Elias Colbert, Chicago: Historical and Statistical Sketch for the Garden City (Chicago: P.T. Sherlock, 1868), 113-114; and Grant Goodrich, "History of Growth of Methodism in Chicago, 1845-1852," NWCA (May 25, 1853), 82. These churches included Clark Street 1834); Canal Street (1843); Indiana Street (1847); State

of Chicago was such that the National Denomination held a meeting in the city, with 250 delegates at the Clark Street Methodist Church. The Chief business was how to increase the role of lay representatives. Chicago was viewed as a good model for this objective.⁸ By 1871, there were at least twenty-one churches of the Methodist Episcopal denomination in Chicago.⁹

Beginnings of the African Methodist Episcopal Church

One congregation not directly founded by First Methodist was Quinn Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church. Rather, it was begun directly by the Rev. J.H. Ward, a traveling deacon representing Bishop William P. Quinn. Ward was succeeded by Madison Patterson, who in turn was succeeded by the Rev. Aaron Parker. Parker was a slave, born in Kentucky, and was sold to a slaveholder in Missouri. There, Parker was able to purchase his freedom, and then came to Chicago. Quinn Chapel became Parker's first church. Parker was

Street (1848); Bethel (African, 1851); Van Buren (German, 1851); Scandinavian (1852); Maxwell Street (1854); Wesley Chapel (1854); N. Indiana Street (1855); Wabash Avenue (1857); Des Plaines (1857); Bridgeport (1860); Grace (1860); Trinity (1864); Park Avenue (1865); and Centenary (1866). Others not included in the above were the Welsh (Calvinist, 1845); First Swedish Methodist (1853); Methodist Protestant Church (1849); Quinn Chapel (1847); Halsted Street (1863); Western Avenue (1867); Langley Avenue (1868); and Portland Avenue (German, 1869). From separate lists, it appears that there were at least 25 Methodist Episcopal separate churches operating for at least some of the time.

⁸The Advance (May 7, 1868), 5.

⁹Elias Colbert and Everett Chamberlain, Chicago and the Great Conflagration (Chicago: J.S. Goodman, 1871), 168.

able to get a loan from Orrington Lunt, a Methodist and Garrisonian abolitionist.¹⁰

Parker was succeeded by Revs. John Collins in 1849 and Y.W. Johnson in 1850. With the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill (September 18, 1850), a considerable uneasiness visited the African-American citizens and residents of Chicago. Rev. Johnson persuaded many of the church members to leave for Canada, rather than risking arrest and transport to one of the slave states, legally or illegally as under the new law. Rev. Johnson was reduced to poverty and was forced to leave himself for Canada, and started a church there.

Meanwhile, Orrington Lunt maintained the church at his own expense while another pastor was named, the Rev. John A. Warren. The church went through several weak pastorates. The Rev. M.M. Clark succeeded Warren, but it was not until the coming of the Rev. Elisha Weaver that the church managed to raise money to pay off debts and erect a new parsonage.

Methodism and the City

Henry Whitehead continued to influence Methodist policy in the city, even after the Civil War. Like many other Methodist leaders, Whitehead was not only concerned with evangelism and church extension, but with some of the reform causes of the day. Upon his return to the city in the late 1840s, Whitehead befriended

¹⁰Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 333.

abolitionist leader Philo Carpenter and joined forces with abolitionists and temperance crusaders whenever possible.

Also, during the Civil War, the circuit rider was still active, visiting Camp Douglas and ministering to confederate soldiers. He became known in town as "Father Whitehead" despite his Protestant persuasion. During the great Chicago Fire of 1871, he assisted efforts in the Methodist Church to feed hungry people.¹¹

In many ways, the Great Chicago Fire destroyed the old city. The desolation of the fire was complete. In addition to the loss of property, Grace, Clark Street, Van Buren Street, Michigan Ave., Clybourne, Scandinavian, State Street, Century, Wabash Ave., Park Ave., Ada Street, and Grant Place churches were left with huge financial indebtedness.

The total loss in church property is \$300,000. But this loss represents only a small part of the loss. The great fire (meant) everyone of the twelve hundred Methodists of the churches destroyed were burned into poverty, or so reduced that they could not be relied upon to carry forward the great benevolent enterprises of the church.¹²

These "homeless and fortunateless ones" also had a personal indebtedness of \$270,000, "not to mention heavy personal obligations." It was decided that the ministers would go to "all

¹¹Christopher, "Henry Whitehead," 11.

¹²Report of the Conference Committee for the Relief of the Methodist Institutions and Churches of Chicago (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1873), 8.

the leading cities and ask the Denomination to help save the church."¹³

The mission collected over \$149,000, and Grant Goodrich exclaimed that "we had learned that Methodism is a great universal fact."¹⁴ As a result of relief efforts, the Report For Relief of Methodist churches after the fire could report in 1873:

With our homes rebuilt, our churches reopened, our city risen from the ashes, so beautiful and vast, that all the world wonders, it seems impossible to realize our want, our desolation, our extremity of two years ago.¹⁵

However, Henry Whitehead lamented the Chicago rebuilt after the fire. By 1873, the city had lost its frontier character, and had become more cosmopolitan. Gaps and distinctions between rich and poor were sharper, and these changes were distasteful to Whitehead. Meanwhile, Whitehead continued the efforts of the Methodist Book Concern and sold church and Sabbath School singing books, while occupying a Methodist pulpit on occasion until his death.¹⁶ Despite ailments and infirmities that plagued him for forty years, Whitehead lived until 1884, succumbing finally at 75 years of age. Parishioners buried the preacher in Rosehill Cemetery.

¹³Ibid., 9.

¹⁴Ibid., 13.

¹⁵Ibid., 5.

¹⁶A.T. Andreas, A History of Chicago, vol. II (Chicago: A.T. Andreas and Co., 1885), 427.

Methodists were also involved in other movements of the day. Grant Goodrich, Methodist historian, and William H. Brown, banker and speculator, were active in the Young Men's and Washingtonian Temperance Societies.¹⁷ John V. Farwell, a dry goods merchant and member of First Methodist Church, was a close supporter of Dwight L. Moody and the establishment of the Chicago Young Men's Christian Association (see below). The Rev. C. G. Truesdale, a Methodist clergyman, was one of the local Methodist pastors, whose work with the Chicago Relief and Aid Society after the fire allowed him the chance to assume leadership of this most important of Chicago charities by 1872.¹⁸

By 1877, there were over twenty Methodist churches in Chicago claiming 5,000 members and \$758,000 in church property. These churches were involved not only in benevolent efforts, but also in educational efforts through its many Sunday Schools, and through several para-church agencies which the churches either sponsored or supported in some way. The pride of Methodism was in its establishment of the Garrett Biblical Institute and Northwestern University, established in Evanston, Illinois in part from money from the estate of Augustus Garrett, one of the city's prominent mayors in the early period.

¹⁷Bessie L. Pierce, History of Chicago, vol. I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1937), 256-258.

¹⁸Goodrich, "History of Chicago Methodism," 65.

Baptist City Missions at Mid-Century

Baptists also grew in numbers and in importance during the period from 1850 to the Fire. First Baptist, like First Methodist, had a hand in establishing most of the other major Baptist churches in Chicago, and many Sunday Schools, City Missions, benevolent and charitable institutions, and major educational institutions including the first University of Chicago.

Rev. J.C. Burroughs was succeeded by the Rev. W.G. Howard, D.D. in 1856, the beginnings of glory years for the First Baptist Church in Chicago. As the result of efforts by First Baptist Church parishioners, several new churches were organized in the 1850s. These included the Zoar Baptist Church (1853, for African Americans); the Edina Street Baptist Church (1856) (later Wabash Avenue and Michigan Avenue churches); the Union Park Baptist Church (1856) (later Fourth Baptist Church, and now Fourth Baptist Congregational Church); and the Berean Baptist Church (Fifth Baptist Church), also in 1856. The next year, the North Church was begun, as well as the Evanston Church. These churches were all begun by members of First Baptist Church.

In 1859, Dr. Howard resigned, becoming the pastor of the Coliseum Place Baptist Church in New Orleans. Howard was replaced by the Rev. W.W. Everts, D.D., who pastored the church for twenty years, 1859-1879. Dr. Everts was from Louisville, Kentucky, and, being an apt fundraiser, raised \$14,000 to pay off church debts on the building. Everts was now ready to guide the church into further missionary expansion.

For Cyrus Bentley, Everts' tenure signaled the golden age of First Baptist Church. "In no period of the history of the church has such progress been made in works of benevolence, in the activity and growth of mission Sabbath school work, in church extension, and in educational enterprises, as since Dr. Everts came among us."¹⁹ In late 1859, the church founded the Indiana Street Mission, which in just a few years became the Indiana Avenue Baptist Church (1864).

In the 1860s, First Church assisted in the organizing of mission congregations for the city's immigrants as well as the African-American population. In 1858, the First German Baptist Church was organized. This was followed in 1863 by the founding of the Second German Baptist Church and in 1864 by the First Danish Baptist Church. The First Swedish Baptist Church was organized in 1866, as were the Providence (African-American) and Olivet (African-American) Baptist churches.²⁰

First Church was active role in the development of City Missions.²¹ In 1861, Everts consolidated the Chicago Avenue, Wells Street, and Bremer Avenue Missions into one mission, the North Star Mission, with R.M. Graves as Superintendent. By 1866, North Star

¹⁹Bentley, History of FBC (1866), 13,

²⁰John C. W. Bailey, Chicago City Directory, vol. X (1867-8), xi.

²¹See below for discussion of City Mission movement in Chicago.

had its own pastor, the Rev. George L. Wrenn, as well as a school superintendent, D.W. Baker.

First Baptist Church started a Sunday School in 1864 in its own building, known as the Home Sunday School, with B.F. Jacobs as Superintendent. Both the North Star Mission and the Home Mission Sunday School were sponsored and staffed by members of the First Baptist Church. In 1866, the First Church moved into its fourth building, at the corner of Wabash and Hubbard streets.

The old location proved no longer suitable due to commercial expansion and the outward movement of residential populations. Upon sale of the old church to the Chamber of Commerce and business interests, \$25,000 of the \$65,000 total was divided among churches started by First Church. The money was distributed as follows:

Second Baptist Church	\$10,000
North Baptist Church	\$6,500
Union Park Church	4,000
Wabash Ave. Church	3,000
Berean (later Fifth Church)	1,000
Olivet (Colored)	500
	\$25,000 ²²

In the late 1860s, despite the change, the church boasted a membership of 1,000 and an additional 2,000 in the various Sunday Schools including 400 in the Bible class taught by B.F. Jacobs.

By 1867 there were fourteen Baptist churches in the city,²³

²²Bentley, History of FBC, (1866), 18.

²³These include the First (1833); Second (1843); Wabash Avenue (1856); Union Park (1856); Fifth-Berean (1856); North (1854); Indiana Avenue (1864); First Danish (1864); First German (1858); Second German (1863); First Swedish (1866); Olivet (African); Providence (African, 1866); and Free Will Baptist Church. Source: John W. C. Bailey's Chicago City Directory Vol. X (1867-8), xi.

this would increase to sixteen Baptist churches by 1870, including the University Place Baptist Church (1868).²⁴ Also, by 1870, both the First and Second (formerly Tabernacle Baptist Church) had over 1,000 members.²⁵ One would have to say that the Baptist churches were increasing in Chicago, although not keeping up with the population of Chicago which stood at almost 300,000 by 1870.

In October 1871, the city was beset with the Great Fire. Fortunately, the fire did not damage First Church which at the time was located South of the Loop, but it did destroy the homes of many of the church's parishioners. Many of these people were dispersed throughout the city upon resettlement, causing strains on the church. The Lecture Room was used as a place to feed the hungry and destitute of the fire, and over 12,000 meals were served by the church in the months after the fire. The home of Cyrus Bentley was destroyed, and with it, the church records. While the church building survived the fire, the congregation seemed unalterably shaken by the catastrophe.²⁶

In 1873, a financial panic struck the city and was followed in July of 1874 with a second Chicago fire which completely destroyed the church. The church relocated to a new building at South Park and 31st streets. The Indiana Street Church at this time merged with First Church. Not only had the fires scattered

²⁴The Advance (March 10, 1870), 5.

²⁵Ibid., (Aug. 25, 1870), 4.

²⁶Ibid., 24.

the congregation throughout the city, but the church had accumulated a large debt of over \$80,000. Overcome and weary from these ordeals and burdens, Dr. Everts retired January 1, 1879, "worn with the long toil of nearly twenty years."²⁷ Everts' long pastorate brought to the church over 1800 new members and 800 persons baptized.

The First Presbyterian Church, After Jeremiah Porter

Jeremiah Porter was succeeded at First Presbyterian Church by Rev. John Blatchford, whose tenure lasted only two years. Blatchford, who arrived from Jacksonville, Illinois in 1837 was the father of E. W. Blatchford, successful merchant, Congregationalist and founder of the Chicago Theological Seminary. John Blatchford was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut (1799-1855), educated at Princeton and came to Illinois as the President of Illinois College.

Blatchford accepted the call, July 1, 1837 but plans to replace "God's Barn" with a more substantial edifice were undermined by the financial panic of the same year. James Otis in his biographical sketches noted that it was the duty of the minister to lay "the foundations for the future civic and religious life of this great city and in moulding into some proper form the various element[s] that came pouring in."²⁸

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Otis, First Presbyterian Church (1913), 234.

Unfortunately, the minister had to retire in August 1839 for reasons of failing health. Blatchford moved to Marion, Missouri and became dedicated to the education and training of college students. He returned to Quincy, Illinois in 1847, and assisted in the founding of the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Northwest, becoming President of the Board of Directors until his death in 1857.

Blatchford was succeeded at First Presbyterian Church by the Rev. Flavel Bascom (1804-1890). Bascom, another New Englander, was born in Lebanon, Connecticut and was a graduate of Yale College (1828) and Yale Theological Seminary (1832). He made his way to Illinois courtesy of the American Home Missionary Society and assisted in the founding of Illinois College. Bascom had preached in Chicago in 1833 and was in the city in late 1839 as an agent of the Home Missionary Society. Without a pastor, the church requested Bascom to preach and early next year a formal call was extended. He became the church's third pastor at a salary of \$1,000 a year.²⁹

Bascom accepted with the understanding that during the summer, he could continue his missionary work. He served as minister from 1840 to 1849. The first five years of his pastorate, the church was the benefactor of revivalistic enthusiasm which added considerably to the church's numbers. During the 1840s, the

²⁹Ibid., 29.

church increased in numbers and in influence and Chicago became noted for evangelical Protestantism nationally.

Bascom's revival preaching was viewed by many as the major cause of the "city-wide moral improvement" in the city. Revivals in 1841, 1843, and 1845 led to an increase in membership of over one hundred persons. In April 1846, the church reported a membership of 456 members, which declined to 254 members in 1851, in large part due to the abolition controversy (see below). In the 1840s, the town was small enough that the culture of evangelical Protestantism was normative for the whole community.

Flavel Bascom introduced the abolitionist movement to Chicago.³⁰ The nucleus of the anti-slavery movement in Chicago in the 1840s was related to First Presbyterian Church.³¹ The congregation addressed key public issues like intemperance, slavery and the care of the poor, although, with the exception of abolition, these were more the reform of the individual's morality than an attempt to transform society at the level of social structures and systems. With an emphasis on "benevolence," the Ladies Benevolent Society of First Presbyterian Church raised money for the poor and helped relieve the resettlement problems of new immigrants by establishing an employment service. The men of the church were active in the Young Men's Temperance Society, and the Chicago Washington Temperance Society.

³⁰See below on chapter on abolitionist movement.

³¹Richesin, First Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 6-7.

In 1846, the Church peaked in membership to 456 members. Bascom left in December of 1849 and was succeeded by the Rev. Henry Harvey Curtis (1806-1862), who after a prosperous ministry of eight years left in 1858 to become President of Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois. However, Curtis had to weather some rough storms including a conflict over slavery. After the bitter dissension in 1851 over the slavery issue, his congregation was cut in half to 254 members.³²

The church nonetheless managed to recover from the schism. By 1853, First Presbyterian Church spawned a mission and, before the Great Chicago Fire, succeeded in planting ten other Presbyterian churches in the area and indirectly two Congregationalist churches. These included Second Presbyterian, Third Presbyterian, Plymouth Congregationalist, First Congregationalist, Westminster Presbyterian Church, as well as six city missions.

The church never really lost its concern for social issues. In a meeting of January 3, 1853, it passed resolutions that indicated the church's stand regarding public issues at the time. "Declarations of sentiments" were passed regarding the pressing "moral questions of the day."³³ First, "the duty of all Christians

³²Otis, First Presbyterian Church, 238.

³³Ibid., 34 ff.

and philanthropists [to] abstain from and discountenance in others all violations of the Sabbath as a heaven appointed day of rest."³⁴

Second, with the deterioration of country and escalation of hostilities leading to the Civil War, the Church was again responding to pressures to take a more decided stand on the slavery question. An impasse had been reached in 1852, and the Congregationalists and Presbyterians permanently dissolved relationships in the region. As a result, on December 1, 1852, forty-eight members of First Presbyterian Church left to start Plymouth Congregational Church.

However, with the passing of the Fugitive Slave Law, First Church was ready to adopt a stance that was more recognizably abolitionist. In Articles II and III of the Resolutions passed January 3, 1853, declared:

We regard the system of American Slavery as a gross invasion of the natural rights of man and a grievous outrage upon the principles of that civil liberty we enjoy and that Protestant Christianity we profess, a moral wrong which must be offensive to God, and which is most injurious to the temporal prosperity and happiness and to the spiritual well being of all connected with it. And for its speedy overthrow, we invoke the co-operation of all humane and philanthropic and Christian people, and the interposition of the Almighty God.³⁵

The church took a specific stand against the Fugitive Slave Law, calling it "a palpable violation of some of the fundamental principles of our Federal and State Constitutions; and opposed to the natural promptings of humanity and the precepts of

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid., 34.

Christianity, and as such we shall not cease to demand and labor for its repeal."³⁶

Similarly, the church rejected the reaffirmation of the "Black Codes," passed in 1848 and 1853, discouraging the immigration of free blacks to Illinois. The church regarded them as "most oppressive and needlessly cruel, and altogether unworthy of a free and generous Christian people." The church hence began to stand with the progressives, abolitionists, and those drawn to reform in the city. The church also supported the passage of the Maine Law in the state legislature as a way to suppress intemperance, as public drinking was associated in particular with Irish and German Catholics.³⁷

By the mid 1850s, the attendance in the church was outstretching the building, and commercial establishments in the downtown area were forcing out residential structures. According to the Rev. Z.M. Humphrey,

It was found that the location was not good, the surrounding population being driven away by the encroaching business, and the place becoming constantly more and more dusty and noisy. At the time an increase of Church sittings was needed to supply the wants of the rapidly increasing population.³⁸

After much deliberation, the church decided to sell its land and to divide the proceeds among three churches in the city, Third Presbyterian, Westminster Presbyterian, and a new structure for

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid.

³⁸Ibid., 35-36.

First Church. In November, 1855, the property was sold, and the church purchased a lot in the South of the river at the corner of Wabash and Congress.

On May 10, 1857, Brainerd Kent founded the Railroad Mission as an outreach ministry of the church. Kent was invited to Chicago to undertake this mission, at the request of Dr. Curtis, Kent's brother in law.³⁹ The new First Presbyterian Church was dedicated October 15, 1857, and immediately began to benefit from the mid-century revivals that were having an impact upon the city.

The Second Presbyterian Church

In 1842, Presbyterians from First Church established a new congregation, the Second Presbyterian Church. The Church was sanctioned by the Presbytery of Ottawa and was comprised chiefly of members from the First Presbyterian Church. The elders of Second Church were each former elders in the First Church, including William H. Brown, Benjamin W. Raymond, and Sylvester Willard.⁴⁰ The reason for founding the Second Church has been given as the "rapidly increasing . . . population, numbering now not far from five thousand, and the Church in its membership and attendance felt the effect of municipal prosperity."⁴¹

³⁹Rev. John H. Barrows, "Historical Sermon," Fiftieth Anniversary of First Presbyterian Church (Chicago: Beach, Barnard and Co., 1883), 33.

⁴⁰John C. Grant, ed., The Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 1842-1892, (Chicago: Knight, Leonard, and Co., 1892), 20.

⁴¹Ibid., 22.

A notice appeared in the Daily Chicago American, May 4, 1842, advertising for members for the new church.

A meeting of all those who feel interested in the formation of a second Presbyterian Church in Chicago to be under the Pastoral care of the Rev. Robert W. Patterson, will be held in the Presbyterian Church on Thursday, evening, the 5th of May, at . . . 7 O'Clock to decide whether such a measure is practicable.⁴²

On June 1, 1842, twenty-six charter members committed to support the new congregation. These included William H. Brown and wife, Thomas D. Carter and wife, George W. Dole, George W. Merrill, Flavel Moseley, B.W. Raymond and wife, Charles R. Starkweather and wife, Mrs. John Wright, John S. Wright, and Miss Frances S. Wright. These people were among the social elite, and the business and professional leadership in Chicago.⁴³

In addition to the expanding population of the city, the Daily American recounts additional reasons for the founding of the new church. First, the need for an additional church to accommodate the increased membership of over 500 in First Church; second, the opportunity and availability of a new pastor; and third, the "political situation." The Daily American stated that "those who withdrew opposed the 'anti-slavery politics' in the [First] Church," and the more conservative members, following Dr. Patterson, "escaped the antislavery proclivities of the First Church under Rev. Bascom."⁴⁴

⁴²Daily Chicago American, Wed., May 4, 1842

⁴³Second Presbyterian Church, 19.

⁴⁴Daily Chicago American, Sept. 12, 1842.

The biographer of the Second Presbyterian Church admits that the church's founding was also due more to the "political situation."

The acknowledgement of the evil of slavery seemed to do little toward suggesting a satisfactory remedy. The conservative position was held by many Christian men, in those troublous [sic] times, caused many to believe that it was part of a wise prudence to avoid the discussion in the Church and on the Sabbath of questions upon the details of which there was so much disagreement.⁴⁵

On the practical side, since the city was growing so rapidly, it seemed that congregations could be formed in a city with so much diversity to meet the needs of peoples who had very different political views. Hence, conservatives followed the Rev. Robert W. Patterson to form a new church, whereas abolitionists and those favorable to the perfectionist theology of Charles G. Finney and his Oberlin theology would steadily gravitate towards Congregationalism.

The Second Presbyterian Church society selected a site for a church on the corner of Randolph and Clark Streets. Meanwhile, the society met in the "City Saloon." By September 13, the facility was completed, and the Rev. Robert W. Patterson was installed by the Presbytery of Ottawa. The Chicago Daily American called the edifice, "complete, a decided improvement" which "contrasts well with our other public buildings." The emphasis on "public" is critical. The church exemplified a "chaste simplicity in architecture, and nowhere should this be so strictly adhered to as

⁴⁵Second Presbyterian Church, 23-24.

in places of public worship." Religion in the early national period was an activity that impacted the city's public life. The building was dedicated on Sept. 13, 1842, and the Rev. Robert W. Patterson was ordained⁴⁶ beginning one of the most distinguished ministries in Chicago history.

At the time when the Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago was founded:

The whole population of Illinois was then but a trifle more than 500,000, and that of Chicago but 6,000; and there was neither canal nor railroad in the State. Not a street was paved, the water works consisted of water carts, the business of the village was trading by the exchange of goods for ordinary agricultural productions, and gas was unheard of.⁴⁷

Robert W. Patterson was born in Maryville, Tennessee on January 21, 1814. His family moved to Illinois in 1821, and in 1832, after making a "public profession of religion," he became Presbyterian. Following his conversion, he attended Illinois College in Jacksonville, a college supported by Presbyterian and Congregationalist denominations, graduating in 1837.

After graduation in 1837, Patterson went to Lane Seminary for two years to study the theology of Lyman Beecher. He was not part of the "Lane Rebels" who left in 1835 for Oberlin to become more freely involved in the slavery issue as abolitionists. Thereafter, Patterson returned as tutor to Illinois College, and was asked in

⁴⁶"Second Presbyterian Church," Chicago Daily American, September 13, 1842.

⁴⁷Rev. Abbott Elliot Kittridge, "Historical Sketch of Third Presbyterian Church," in Historical Discourses (Chicago: Culver, Page, Hoyne and Co., Printers, 1876), 14.

1840 to assume the pulpit at First Presbyterian Church in Chicago while the Rev. Bascom was on leave for the summer. This he did until Bascom returned.

Afterwards, Patterson returned to Lane, and then assumed a church in Monroe, Michigan before returning to Chicago. In 1842, he accepted the pastorate of the Second Presbyterian Church. In 1843, settling in the city, he married the former Julia Quigley of Alton, Illinois, by whom he had eight children.

The formation of Second Presbyterian Church was directly related to the slavery issue. During this time, "the development of abolitionism [and] religious doctrines styled as Oberlin perfectionism in First Church antagonized many of the older members, [and] in June 1842, they withdrew [and] organized the Second Presbyterian Church."⁴⁸ Patterson met for three months in the city saloon, a social rather than drinking center at the time.

Patterson was interested in Chicago as a city. His remarks regarding the city are worthy of note.

When I came to Chicago, in 1840, although it was a small place of only forty-three hundred, it was the largest place in the State. There was no other town of equal population in this State. I was familiar with other large cities, such as Cincinnati and St. Louis, but there was no city in the State of Illinois that was as large -- indeed in Illinois, in 1840, there was no city except Chicago. I thought that it was a growing place and would be important some day, and even thought it might, at sometime, contain a population of from forty to fifty thousand, based on the growth of places like Cincinnati and St. Louis. . . . Milwaukee claimed to be a

⁴⁸Robert W. Patterson, "History of Second Presbyterian Church," The Chicago Tribune, June 26, 1892.

rival of Chicago some years before I came to Chicago, but in a very few years that rivalry ceased.⁴⁹

Patterson assumed the pastorate of Second Presbyterian Church for nearly thirty-two years. For the biographer of this congregation, there was a link between the activities of the minister and the commercial growth of the city. "No less gratitude is due the men of spirit who make Chicago a city of churches and a centre from which should go forth strong Christian influences, than to those who developed the great commercial possibilities of the situation." Describing Patterson, the writer noted: "As a citizen, he rejoiced in municipal prosperity; as a preacher of sound doctrine, he kept his church steady. . . ."⁵⁰

The church in 1842 began with twenty-six members and experienced slow but steady growth. New arrivals in the city seemed at the time to be more attracted to Rev. Bascom whose congregation showed more flair with its anti-slavery emphasis and more liberal theology. In retrospect, the Rev. Patterson could say at the fifty-year celebration of Second Church that the conflicts of the time were due to the crises fomented by "extreme abolitionism" and "Oberlin Perfectionism" which led to the conflict between "aggressive and conservative parties," the result being that the more conservative members aligned with the Second Presbyterian Church.⁵¹

⁴⁹The Second Presbyterian Church, 50-51.

⁵⁰Ibid., 51.

⁵¹Ibid., 292.

Patterson went on to insist that his church was, in fact, decidedly anti-slavery but opposed to "revolutionary action." Patterson was "moderately Calvinistic" and in sympathy with the New School theology, but not to Oberlin perfectionism and the theology of Charles G. Finney. Yet the church grew steadily as evidenced by its commitment to city missions and benevolence, and because, despite the turmoil, the pastor held public worship regularly and "preached the word without display or sensationalism."⁵²

The church initially founded the "Dorcas Society," similar to the Church Sewing Circle of First Church. This group gave shoes and stockings to the poor, and fairs in the winter paid for church lamps, cushions, and pulpit trimmings.⁵³ In October of 1843, the Church organized the "Young Men's Mission Sunday School," with leadership from Maurice A. Wurtz, B.W. Thomas, and S. Lockwood Brown. This was "the first mission Sunday School in the Northwest and probably in the U.S." This school was later moved to the Bethel Seamen's Church, and became known as the Bethel Mission Sunday School.⁵⁴ In 1845, the Bethel Sunday School was organized by Paul Anderson, a Norwegian, as the First Evangelical Lutheran Church of Chicago.⁵⁵

⁵²Ibid., 273.

⁵³Ibid., 102.

⁵⁴Ibid., 76.

⁵⁵Ibid., 115.

The church was active in organizing other Sunday Schools as well. In 1844, the State Street Sunday School was organized and would later become the State Street Mission. Also, about this time, other church members helped to organize the Taylor Street Mission.⁵⁶

Despite turmoil around it, the Second Church remained steadfast, and through the medium of revivals the congregation grew, and by January 1851, it dedicated a "fine stone church." This church, known as the "spotted church of Chicago," was allegedly the first example of simple Gothic design in the West.⁵⁷

Patterson's theology at this time was more pious than social, with but little public content. In his dedication sermon, he stated that the new church was a place of worship "to enlist the social element in our religion, to aid one another, [and] to unite in our humble pleadings." Patterson proclaimed that "we come together to acknowledge the God of the Bible in a public manner, and thus to glorify him."⁵⁸

Patterson noted in 1851 that the members of Second Presbyterian "come to strengthen our religious habits and principles and to give stimulus and efficiency to Christian zeal in its outgoings towards the multitudes in our community and

⁵⁶Ibid., 77-8.

⁵⁷Ibid., 33.

⁵⁸Robert W. Patterson, The Place Where God Records His Name: A Discourse at the Dedication of Second Presbyterian Church, Jan. 24, 1851 (Chicago: S.C. Griggs and Co., 1851), 11.

country." Patterson supported the idea that "progress is a law of Christianity; progress in the hearts of believers, progress in the world."⁵⁹ Patterson believed that the faith of his congregation should spill over into responsible action in society. In religious metaphor, the church was to "go out to make glad the city of our God."⁶⁰

The Sunday School was held in the lecture room, and an infant class was conducted in a room over the lecture room. Bible classes were held in the main audience room. The church also boasted an organ, church bell, clock and fine furniture. The old spotted church, although used later by the Swedenborgians and by an African Methodist Episcopal Church, was unfortunately destroyed by the Fire in 1871.

The Northwestern Christian Advocate in 1854 reported that the Second Presbyterian Church supported two Sunday Schools with an aggregate 240 scholars, and that "thirty members of the church are tract distributors and circulate monthly 1575 tracts, and 390 copies of the American Messenger, making in all 23,580 copies for the year."⁶¹

Patterson, an influential leader, blocked a movement to unite Presbyterians and Congregationalists in Wisconsin and stood against the General Assembly's adopting an abolitionist stance that

⁵⁹Ibid., 16.

⁶⁰Ibid., 19.

⁶¹Northwestern Christian Advocate (Jan. 11, 1854), 3.

required "no union with slaveholders." Despite being "anti-slavery," Patterson was slow to accept a posture that might divide the denomination. As a result, many "congregationalized Presbyterians" withdrew from Presbyterian communions in the city to form Third Presbyterian, and later First and Plymouth Congregational churches. Second Presbyterian Church, despite its political conservatism, began to focus on city missions and various philanthropic endeavors in the city. In 1854, the Daily Democratic Press reported the gifts from the church of the previous year (see TABLE III).⁶²

For 1854, the Church's report of contributions by Treasurer L.L. Brown revealed a similar picture. Over \$7,000 were dispersed to the American Board of Foreign Missions, Home Missions, education of young men for the ministry, the American and City Bible societies, the American and Chicago Tract societies, the Bethel Seamen's society, Sunday Schools, and the bulk, \$2501.37, going to a fund to build a new church.⁶³

Patterson was proud of this record of charity. In the late 1850s, he noted that the church was chiefly responsible in efforts to establish Lake Forest University (1856), the City Orphan Asylum, and the Home for the Friendless. What Patterson lacked in the pursuit of social justice he made up in the distribution of charity.

⁶²Daily Democratic Press, Jan. 5, 1854.

⁶³Chicago Democratic Press, Jan. 10, 1855.

TABLE III
 PHILANTHROPIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE SECOND
 PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1854

PHILANTHROPY	AMOUNT
American Board of Foreign Missions	\$870.31.
Home Missions	719.93
American And Chicago Bible Society	356.50
American Tract Society	369.00
Chicago Tract Society	216.00
American and Foreign Christian Union	86.50
American Temperance Union	80.00
Distribution of Temperance Tracts	77.50
Aid for Waldensian Churches	101.00
Presbyterian Church Extension Fund	685.06
Chicago Orphan Asylum	184.00
Erection of Chicago Orphan Asylum	4655.00
Endowment of Beloit College	1000.00
Sabbath Schools	<u>120.00</u>
Totals:	<u>\$10,205.30</u>

While Patterson was reluctant to become involved in political issues, he was active in the church's support of revivalism, church planting, temperance, education, and in city missions. While he did not support abolition, he did support Missionary, Bible and Tract societies as, in his view, more appropriate ways that the church could participate in the reform of society.

However, Patterson ironically knew how to wield political power within the church. As Moderator of the Presbytery in 1850,

he was responsible for striking out the abolitionist secessionists of Third Church, forcing them to start Congregationalism in the city. He was named as member of the committee to foster a reunion between Old and New School Presbyterians in 1866.⁶⁴

Patterson was antislavery, but not abolitionist. He was a moderate on the slavery issue and opposed the action of more radical Presbyterians who favored abolition by seceding from the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1851. He continued to oppose the effort of some to renounce the Presbyterian Church in favor of a new organization. However, despite his resistance to abolitionism, he would later side with Lincoln against Slavery in the 1860s when abolitionism became the more acceptable position in the North.

However, in 1856, in a sermon delivered in his church, "A Sermon for Prayers for Rulers," Patterson uttered a sentiment regarding government that was closer to John Locke than to Edmund Burke. Patterson had seemingly abandoned any hint of conservatism regarding slavery by this time. He upheld the "universal sovereignty of God" and the "importance of prayer" for those who wield "civil and political power." While "the powers that be" are ordained of God, subjects could not "sanction their mistakes or wrongs."⁶⁵

For Patterson, reacting to the Fugitive Slave Law and Kansas-

⁶⁴John Frederick Lyons, Centennial Sketch of the History of the Presbyteries of Chicago (Chicago: McCormick Theological Seminary, 1947).

⁶⁵Robert W. Patterson, A Sermon on Prayers for Rulers, June 8, 1856 (Chicago: S.C. Griggs and Co., 1856), 3-5.

Nebraska decisions nationally, the rulers "are not infallible, but are arbitrary, unjust and oppressive." Hence, "it may be our duty to pray against their policy and measures." Patterson, sounding more the radical than the radicals before him argued that citizens have "the right to demand redress and protection at the hands of government, when any portion of its citizens are oppressed and made subjects of cruel and relentless atrocities. . . ." ⁶⁶ Further, wrote Patterson:

And it is surely the duty of every citizen to use all his civil prerogative to displace rulers who identify themselves with the cause of oppression, and seek to sustain and extend it by forcibly crushing the lovers of freedom and humanity. ⁶⁷

For Patterson, prayer was a duty to promote "public repentance, and works meet for repentance from our National capital." He wrote, "we should pray for public as well as for private interests. . . . Pray for the peace of Jerusalem, seek the peace of the city." ⁶⁸ The reason we pray for rulers, reasoned Patterson, is "because those who are in authority . . . are but men." Prayer "lifts the suppliant beyond one's mere private interest to the bosom of divine providence." ⁶⁹ The "praying spirit" of a community or a nation "thus tends to promote the general good-will, and to calm the political waters when they have been lashed into fury by tempests of popular passion." For

⁶⁶Ibid., 7.

⁶⁷Ibid.

⁶⁸Ibid., 9.

⁶⁹Ibid., 10.

Patterson, prayer for rulers was a duty to fortify the "Christian Republic," so that "the millions of earth's enslaved people may lift up their heads and hail the coming redemption."⁷⁰

The problem for Patterson was "the general ignorance and corruption" in society. "The wide-spread ignorance and vice of all our cities and rural districts," were caused by "corrupt and wily politicians, [who were] willing to sell their votes at any time for the means of gratifying their diseased and debasing appetites." The other problem as Patterson saw it was "the vending of intoxicating poisons, the sale of virtue, the effeminacy of luxury, the poverty and degradation [of] intemperance, national pride [and] ambition. . . ." ⁷¹

For Patterson, "diverse interests" have . . . swept into the one vast circle of the public domain," including "millions of ungodly people" who "profane Jehovah's name, trample His sabbaths, and neglect [and] despise His sanctuaries."⁷² Unfortunately, at this point, Patterson began to castigate not just a government that sanctioned slavery, but also new immigrants as well. "We have in this nation more than two millions of people whose religious ideas and usages are essentially in union with civil and spiritual despotism."⁷³

⁷⁰Ibid., 12.

⁷¹Ibid., 13.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., 14.

Patterson believed that the nation had three options in front of it, including the triumph of freedom and the subjection of despotism, the triumph of principles of despotism and the subjection of freedom, or the fragmentation of the country and the dominance of some foreign power. For Patterson, as early as 1856, the nation seemed to be moving towards that irrepressible conflict.

Now these opposing sectional interests and conflicting principles, can no more be permanently reconciled or harmoniously combined under the same General Government. . . . The progress of economical, and social, and moral causes, must bring them more and more into collision with each other.⁷⁴

After fifteen years in the ministry in Chicago, Patterson had won a wide reputation as a pastor and community leader. Patterson received the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Hamilton College in 1857, and maintained a moderately Calvinistic theology, having little sympathy with old light Calvinism on the one hand, or liberalism on the other.

By 1862, Second Presbyterian Church had a membership of 351 persons, and benefitted greatly from the revival years of 1847, 1850, 1852, 1855, and "most of all in 1858." It had, by the mid 1870s, contributed almost \$200,000 in "annual" and "charitable outlays," a record of which Rev. Patterson was most proud.⁷⁵ By the time of its fifty-year anniversary, it was estimated that the Church had given away to various charities over \$650,000.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Patterson, "History of Second Presbyterian Church" Chicago Tribune, June 26, 1892; Chicago Daily Tribune, June 3, 1862.

The revivals of 1857 and 1858 followed very closely the "commercial and business prostration of 1857." The result, however, greatly benefitted the churches. "Many prominent business men were brought to consider the question of laying up treasures in heaven, at a time when so many had lost their earthly treasures by the disasters of the previous year." Hundreds were added to the Church, and moreover, "as a result of this period of interest, many have achieved a high degree of business or professional success."⁷⁶

In a sermon on June 1, 1862, Patterson could reflect on the significance of the church's history.

We have seen among us few developments of inconsiderable impulse, few attempts at hazardous experiment, few departures from evangelical faith. Our peace and unity have not been seriously interrupted, even when storms raged without. . . . Our growth by enlargement from hopeful conversions has been quietly continued from year to year. . . . We have borne a good relative share in the tract, Sabbath school, educational and general missionary enterprises of the city and the country. Besides sustaining the Sabbath-school immediately connected with the Church, our working membership has established and long kept in operation two or three of the best flourishing and useful mission-schools in the city, one of which has been in successful operation for more than seventeen years.⁷⁷

At the church's twenty-fifth Anniversary in 1867, Patterson could boast that the church had contributed over \$125,000 to various causes, \$175,000 by 1871, and would note that the first mission Sabbath School in Chicago had been in operation for twenty-five years by members of Second Presbyterian Church, without

⁷⁶Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 96.

⁷⁷Cited by A.T. Andreas, History of Chicago, II, (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1885), 417.

interruption. The Second Presbyterian Church was the founder of several other churches, including Olivet, Westminster, and Lake Forest Presbyterian churches, and had given material support to North, Calvary and Hyde Park Presbyterian churches.⁷⁸

Second Presbyterian Church and City Missions

The Church also sponsored several mission Sabbath Schools. These included the Sunday School of the church, which in the 1860s was attracting from between 600 and 700 "scholars." The Rev. A.W. Henderson, a retired communicant of Second Church, was responsible for starting a Sunday School for African-Americans of the Bridewell in the 1850s, one of the first city ghettos on the near south side. During the Civil War, Henderson was a Chaplain in the Thirteenth Illinois Calvary.⁷⁹

Many prominent lay business leaders also played a large role in the affairs of the church. The Honorable William Bross, an active layman in the political, social and business affairs of the city, provided an endowment for Lake Forest University. Charles P. Kellogg was the superintendent of the Sunday School, just as the Professor Cyrus F. Hill participated in this endeavor before relocating to Milwaukee. General S. Lockwood Brown was associated with the church Sunday School and in 1843 organized the "Young Men's Mission" Sunday School on the North side. This was "the

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹The Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 73.

first Mission Sunday School in the Northwest and probably in the United States."⁸⁰

In 1844, several members of the Church started a Sabbath School on State Street, later called the State Street Mission. Mr. Walter Butler gave a building for a school and employed a teacher, later giving the building to the State Street Mission, with the result that the name of the mission was changed to the Butler Mission.

In the early 1850s, a small chapel was built on Taylor Street, with support from several churches due to the work of the Rev. E.F. Dickinson, the City Missionary. This became the Taylor Street Mission. In 1857, a large building was erected for the Erie Street Mission Sunday School which, unfortunately, was destroyed in 1871. After the Fire, the Erie Street united with the Howe Street Mission, also a mission sponsored by the church.

In 1865, Mr. Flavel Mosely, a prominent Presbyterian layman died, and the Church received a bequest from his estate in the amount of \$10,000. An organ was purchased for the Taylor Street Mission with some of these funds, and so the Taylor Street Mission was thereafter known as the Moseley Chapel. This was later sold to the Trinity Episcopal Church in 1870.

In addition to the mission Sunday Schools, the Second Presbyterian Church was involved in many other philanthropic organizations of the day.

The Second Church has been interested in all the benevolent

⁸⁰Ibid., 76.

efforts of the time, and its money or that of its members has been freely given to establish and help the "Chicago Orphan Asylum," "Home for the Friendless," "Old Ladies Home," "Chicago Bible Society," "American Tract Society," "American Seamen's Friend Society," and other organizations working for the moral and physical welfare of the community. In its earlier and later years, the "Young Men's Christian Association" has drawn largely from the members of the Church to sustain it in its grand work.⁸¹

In 1867, the Church celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. Patterson reflected on the progress of the church and the city noting that, from 1842 to 1867, the city and the state were mushrooming in population. Illinois had a population of less than 500,000 people in 1842, but had increased to a population of over 2.5 million people, "with 8-10 flourishing cities."⁸²

In 1842, Chicago was but a city of 16,000 people. In 1867, the city boasted a population of between 240,000 and 260,000 people, "doubling every 2-3 years." In 1842, noted Patterson, there was little industry, no paved streets, and lamps and candles were used for light. Water was transported to houses by crude water carts.⁸³

At the time of the twenty-fifth Anniversary, the city had dramatically changed. The city now boasted a new canal, railroads, numerous industries, a tunnel under the river that connected the South and North divisions of the city. The "gas works give light

⁸¹Ibid., 92.

⁸²Robert W. Patterson, Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the Second Presbyterian Church, Chicago, June 2, 1867 (Chicago; Tribune Co. Book and Job Printers, 1867), 9-10.

⁸³Ibid.

to the city" in a way inconceivable just two decades of before. Neither did the city have the other public institutions of importance. In 1842, there were "no public schools, no asylums, or home for the orphan or for the friendless, no literary associations, or general libraries."⁸⁴ However, in 1867, "our public schools [became] models for imitation of early cities," [and] "our literary and benevolent associations and institutions . . . compare well with those of any other community not less than twice or thrice the age of ours."⁸⁵

Furthermore, Patterson, a city booster, noted the importance of the city of Chicago in 1867. The city was

. . . the acknowledged centre of the North-west, its immensely valuable canal connecting the great lakes with the father of waters, its fifteen to sixteen railroads, traversing its territory in all directions, its unequalled agricultural interests, its rapidly expanding manufacturing and commercial forces, its grand system of public schools, and its numerous and flourishing academies and colleges, and its generous provisions for the care of the unfortunate and the suffering of nearly every class.⁸⁶

For Patterson, the progress and the expansion of the city were due in no small manner to the influence and presence of religious congregations in the city, particularly the Second Presbyterian Church. In 1842, there were "no ecclesiastical connections" (Synods and local judicatories) in the city. Twenty-five years ago, there had been but a few churches, one Episcopal, one

⁸⁴Ibid., 11.

⁸⁵Ibid., 12.

⁸⁶Ibid.

Methodist, one Baptist, one Roman Catholic, one Universalist, one Unitarian, two Presbyterian, two Dutch Reformed, and one New Church (Swedenborgian).

Since the year 1842 there have been established in the city seven Congregational churches, four Old School Presbyterian, one Scotch Presbyterian, two Reformed Protestant Dutch, and ten Lutheran, besides several small churches of minor sects. Thus we have no among us one hundred and seven churches, where there were only eight or nine a quarter of a century ago; and the increase (except Roman Catholic "and a few rationalist German churches, which is due to immigration from Europe") has been, in connection with the evangelical denominations, eighteen hundred percent, while that of the unevangelical sects has been only about one hundred per cent.⁸⁷

In particular, Patterson noted the progress and influence of Second Presbyterian Church. Despite "untoward circumstances and hostile influences," the church has made "slow but sure progress."⁸⁸ Since January 1851, with the dedication of the new church building, "we have experienced an uninterrupted and most satisfactory external prosperity up to the present time, not withstanding the rapid drift of the church towards the western and southern sections of the city. . . ."⁸⁹

Patterson admitted that the church profited greatly from the revivals.⁹⁰ Because of the church's participation in the revival and its commitment to the welfare of the city, the church had tremendous influence in the city.

We must not forget that thousands of intelligent people have

⁸⁷Ibid., 13.

⁸⁸Ibid., 15.

⁸⁹Ibid., 16.

⁹⁰Ibid., 17.

here listened to the word, and been restrained of partially sanctified by its influence; and that among these hearers have been numbered not a few of the strong and distinguished men of the community and the nation.⁹¹

For Patterson, the church was influential in the development of "vigorous Christian characters . . . developed and matured for broad usefulness on earth and high seats in heaven." The church has "supported the great principles of liberty and Christian morality." Against the critique of abolitionists, the church, wrote Patterson, was "free from the taint of fanaticism. This people have stood up consistently and unitedly for freedom against slavery."⁹²

For Patterson, the Church was influential in other ways as well. It has testified by word and example "against the vices of intemperance, Sabbath-breaking, and impurity in general society." It has "declared the true doctrines of Christian sobriety and moderation, and in some good measure stood aloof from the purlieus of dangerous indulgence."⁹³ In the presence of numerous influences, the church has responded with "unselfish benevolence" and religious activity "for the furtherance of Christian evangelization in the community and world at large."⁹⁴

The Church "has cared for the souls of the poor and the neglected classes in general society." Finally, it supported

⁹¹Ibid., 19.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Ibid., 20.

⁹⁴Ibid.

Sunday Schools, colportage, Bible distribution, church building, home and foreign missions, and "education of young men for the ministry" in the newly founded Presbyterian Seminary of the Northwest.⁹⁵

We are moving forward with amazing rapidity. Progress as well as change is written upon the surface of affairs in this great city. The growth of this community during the last quarter century has been like a vision of enchantment or a dream.⁹⁶

Patterson's next task was to move the congregation in the direction of where his parishioners were settling. In 1865, he advised that the Church follow the movement of its parishioners and move further South to Wabash and Fourteenth Streets. It seemed that the "Second Presbyterian Church of this city can't stand the pressure of the business blocks that now elbow us on all sides."⁹⁷ "How shall a congregation be kept from extinction?" he questioned. The residential population was leaving the downtown area, and moving southward. Patterson's leadership at the moment proved critical, as the church had decided to relocate further south to Twenty-Second Street, October 1, 1871, just ten days before the fire destroyed the old church.⁹⁸

Seeing to it that the church was relocated and rebuilt, Patterson finally resigned in 1874 to become Professor of Apologetics in the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the

⁹⁵Ibid., 21.

⁹⁶Ibid., 49.

⁹⁷Advance (Feb. 24, 1870), 5.

⁹⁸Ibid.

Northwest. He remained in this position until 1881, when he resigned to lecture for three years at the Lane Theological Seminary.⁹⁹

In a sermon presented to the Church in 1892 in celebration of its fiftieth year, Patterson could reminisce regarding the accomplishments of the church and his ministry. Perhaps he could look back with some degree of satisfaction. It was not so much that he won the great battles of the time as he outlived them. Patterson survived most of the crises and disputes of his age. The Southern Presbyterians withdrew in 1857, thereby making the battle cry of the abolitionists, "no fellowship with slaveholders," a non-issue for those who remained. Also, the splits of the early 1850s between Presbyterians and Congregationalists successfully thwarted those who wanted to unite with the latter denomination. Unlike many of Patterson's contemporaries, the pastor survived, and survived well in one church for a thirty-two year ministry.

In 1876, the Rev. Abbott Kittridge of the Third Presbyterian Church would summarize the contribution of the first two churches, their public ethics, and importance in the making of Chicago.

Both the First and Second Churches have done a grand work for the Master and for the highest interests of this city. Their history is one of spiritual growth, of steady increase in membership, and of aggressiveness in the warfare with sin, political, social and individual. Though never led away by a blind fanaticism, they have always stood forth boldly as hostile to slavery, to intemperance, to Sabbath breaking, and to all false doctrine, and well may we rejoice and thank God for the visible and invisible influences which they have

⁹⁹A.T. Andreas, A History of Chicago, II, 418.

exerted upon the forming character of this rapidly-growing city.¹⁰⁰

Significance

Despite controversy, the Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians in particular were able to establish themselves in Chicago as the leading evangelical institutions of the city. These churches quickly became involved also in the many benevolent crusades of the day, which for the most part were begun in the churches. Also, with the case of the Episcopalians and Presbyterians, the churches were able to influence the politics, economics, and general culture of early Chicago.

The result is that the city by 1860 reflected the cultural dominance of the mainline evangelical churches. Social status was measured to the extent that one was a member of one of these churches, and the newcomers were judged on the basis of how well they inculcated the beliefs and values of Protestantism which had developed a cultural hegemony in the city through its leaders and institutions.

¹⁰⁰Kittridge, "Historical Sketch of the Third Presbyterian Church," 15.

CHAPTER V

RADICAL PROTESTANT CHURCHES:

ABOLITIONISM AMONG PRESBYTERIAN AND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES

Congregationalized Presbyterians

In 1833, there were three Congregationalist churches in Illinois but none in Chicago. Not that Congregationalism lacked appeal, for it was noted for local democratic polity and for its support of the doctrine of freedom of conscience. However, due to the political agreement with Presbyterianism, many of those who boasted Congregationalist backgrounds affiliated with the local Presbyterian churches. The oldest church structure in Chicago was the First Presbyterian Church, but the first members of this church were Congregationalists.¹ The most important thing in Chicago at the time, was not so much what denomination one was associated with, but whether or not one shared the values of New England Protestant culture.

Prior to 1851, Congregationalists worshipped with Presbyterians in the city due to similarity of creed and shared history. A practical ecumenism existed, and even as each of the denominations was being established, mutual ties allowed the

¹Congregational Herald (April 20, 1854), 3.

churches opportunity to share space and work together in the benevolent causes of the day. Presbyterianism and Congregationalism were thus almost interchangeable, and all the denominations, including the Baptists and Methodists, shared a similar evangelical view of the world, as influenced by the Second Great Awakening.

Yet this did not mean that Congregationalism was absent in the region, nor was it without distinction. As early as 1834, the Fox River Association was organized in Northern Illinois. In 1835, The Congregationalist began, one of the earliest religious journals in Illinois. By 1840, there were fourteen congregations in Northern Illinois, but still no church in Chicago.² Ironically, the founding of the First Congregational Church in the city was due to a schism in a local Presbyterian church.

Philo Carpenter: The Father of Congregationalism in Chicago

No discussion of Congregationalism and its beginnings in Chicago can ignore the person of Philo Carpenter (1805-1887). It was Carpenter, abolitionist and descendant of Baptist parentage, who forced the issue of "no fellowship with slaveholders," which directly led to Carpenter and his followers to decide to leave the ranks of the Presbyterians and to begin the First and Plymouth Congregational churches.

Carpenter, like many Yankees in Chicago, was a migrant from

²M.K. Whitteley, "A Half Century of Work; Northern Illinois Congregationalism, 1833-1883," Advance XX (Nov. 26, 1885), 762.

New England. He was the direct descendant of William Carpenter, who in 1635 migrated from Southampton, England, and settled in Weymouth, Massachusetts. Philo Carpenter was born on February 27, 1805, the fifth of eight children. He was apprenticed a druggist Amatus Robbins in Troy, New York. In March of 1830, Carpenter joined the First Presbyterian Church there, and was converted in a revival meeting under the preaching of Rev. Nathan S.S. Beman.³

He married Sarah Forbes Bridges in May, 1830, but she died the following year. With the death of his wife and with his newly found religious purpose, Carpenter closed his business in 1832 and shipped a stock of drugs and medicines Westward to Fort Dearborn. Carpenter finally arrived in Chicago on July 18, 1832.

He found a settlement of about 200 people with soldiers, Indians and half-breeds settling in log cabins along the river. With no minister present, Carpenter read the sermon himself and organized a prayer meeting the first evening of his arrival in the settlement. By the end of the first month he organized a Sunday School of which he functioned as Superintendent, and this later came under the oversight of the First Presbyterian Church.

With the coming of the Rev. Jeremiah Porter, Carpenter became supportive of the establishment of the First Presbyterian Church, June 26, 1833, becoming one of the first three elders. He was also one of the first officers of the Chicago Bible Society, founded

³For more details of his life, see, "Philo Carpenter," in A. T. Andreas, A History of Chicago, I (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1885), 340.

August 18, 1835. Later, he became one of the original members of the Third Presbyterian Church, begun by persons committed to the abolition cause. Carpenter was also one of the founders of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society and his actions led to the establishing of the First Congregational Church, with members leaving the Presbyterian churches for a church more committed to the dictum, "no fellowship with slaveholders."

When Carpenter's goods arrived, he opened the first drug store in the city in a log building on Lake Street. There was a great demand for his drugs, especially quinine. He later built a two-story frame house opposite the Court House Square and remarried, in 1834 to Miss Ann Thompson of Saratoga, New York. They prospered and the couple eventually produced seven children.

In 1842, he moved his business to a larger store, and thereafter sold the business to Dr. John Brinkerhoof, focusing his efforts on the futures market in Chicago real estate, which was quite promising at the time. Carpenter escorted Rev. Flavel Bascom to Chicago in 1840 as the new minister of the Presbyterian Church.

In 1840, Carpenter built a new house in the western section of the city, at the corner of Randolph and Morgan streets. He offered hospitality to "good men and women coming to the West for its salvation from barbarism, intemperance and infidelity." His home was known as "a hiding place for the colored emigrant from the South, whom this officer on the underground railroad piloted

by night to Canada-bound vessels, as they were seeking that liberty which was then denied them under the stars and stripes."⁴

Carpenter was known for assisting over 200 fugitives to Canada and freedom. An activist for the cause of antislavery, Carpenter was a subscriber and patron of the abolitionist paper of the ill fated Elijah P. Lovejoy, the Alton Observer. He also helped Zebina Eastman establish the Western Citizen, a leading reform journal and chief organ of the Liberty Party in Chicago. Finally, it was due to Carpenter's gifts of land and money that the Chicago Theological Seminary was formed.

The Third Presbyterian Church

The Third Presbyterian Church was founded in July, 1847 as a protest against the conservatism of the Presbyterian General Assembly. There were already many Presbyterians who lived on the West side of the city, and Mr. Thomas Cook of the First Church agreed to give a plot of land for a church on the west side, provided the church was Presbyterian.

The church was organized by the Presbytery of Ottawa. It had a congregation of 35 persons, and Philo Carpenter, Henry Smith, Lawrens Kent and Gustavus W. Southworth were chosen elders. For many years, the New School Presbyterians, or at least the Congregationalists that were scattered among New School

⁴Henry L. Hammond, "Philo Carpenter," in Early Chicago and Illinois, edited by Edward G. Mason (Chicago: Fergus Printing Co., 1890), 110.

Presbyterian churches, were dissatisfied with the policy of the General Assembly regarding fellowship with slaveholders. The hallmark of abolitionism was that "no fellowship with slaveholders was possible," whereas moderates, while wanting to limit slavery, were not as quick to leave the denomination over the abolition issue, nor were they quick to expel those known to be slaveholders from the Presbyterian church.

The first pastor of Third Presbyterian was the Rev. J.B. Walker, staying until Nov. 1849. He was followed by the first permanently installed pastor of Third Church, the Rev. Lewis H. Loss of Rockford, Illinois. Loss was installed May 12, 1850 and remained until the following year when his church split over the issue of slavery.

In 1850, the Third Presbyterian Church of Chicago sent delegates to the Christian Anti-Slavery Convention in Cincinnati, and Carpenter returned championing particular resolutions that not only denounced slavery but also institutions that seemed to countenance slaveholding. The delegates believed that the position of the General Assembly was too moderate, as it allowed known slaveholders admission in the Church.

Carpenter agreed that Christians "ought to separate themselves from all slaveholding churches, ecclesiastical bodies, and missionary societies that were not fully divorced from the sin of slave-holding; and we who may be still in connection with such bodies, pledge ourselves that we will . . . come out of from among

them, unless such bodies shall speedily separate themselves from all support of or fellowship with slaveholding."⁵

This problem led Carpenter and others to challenge the presence of the Third Presbyterian Church in the General Assembly and its inconsistency for "refusing its fellowship with slaveholders at home and freely extending it to them abroad and were furthermore convinced that the said Church were [sic] less prepared, through their pastor, to remove this inconsistency than it had been at an earlier period of history."⁶ Carpenter went on to declare that holding other human beings in bondage was a sin and a moral evil.

It is the duty of those who support these organizations immediately to reform them; and if efforts to reform have proved hopeless, should cease to co-operate with those whose measures tend to sustain rather than to remove a system, the principles and practices of which are in direct hostility to that Gospel which we are required to love and propagate in the world.⁷

In anticipation of the upcoming General Assembly meeting in Detroit, Carpenter influenced the abolitionist faction to press the church to be more consistently supportive of immediate abolition, and to consider seceding from the Presbyterian Church if the General Assembly did not take a stronger stand on the issue. The abolitionists were of the opinion that the Presbyterian General

⁵Quoted in Hammond, "Philo Carpenter," 113-114.

⁶Philo Carpenter, Organization of the First Congregational Church of Chicago With the Causes that led to Such an Organization (Chicago: Whitmore and Fulton, Printers, 1852), 4.

⁷Ibid., 5.

Assembly should denounce slaveholding as a sin. In the General Assembly meeting in Detroit, 1850, the issue was pressed to force the denomination to condemn slavery as a system and disfellowship all Presbyterians who were slaveholders, prohibiting the sons of slaveholders from becoming ministers or missionaries.

When this did not happen, Carpenter came back with a series of resolutions which in effect mandated the expulsion of known slaveholders from the fellowship of the church. If churches or the denomination refused to act on such a mandate, then the following should occur:

Resolved, that when the judicatories and boards of our churches refuse to apply the laws of Christ's house to those who hold their fellow-beings in bondage, when their action recognizes those as in good standing who voluntarily hold and treat men as property; when such organizations tend rather to prolong, than to destroy the existence of slavery; in such circumstances it is the duty of those who support those organizations immediately to reform them, and if efforts to reform have proved hopeless, duty to Christ, the Divine Reformer, requires that Christians should cease to co-operate with those whose measures tend to sustain rather than remove a system, the principles and practices of which are in direct hostility to that Gospel which we are required to love and propagate in the world.⁸

Philo Carpenter put to the church an even more difficult resolution, asking for those supportive of anti-slavery to become virtual "come-outers" from the denomination and any other church that would not disfellowship slaveholders. To Carpenter,

. . . the friends of true Christianity ought to separate themselves from all slave-holding churches, and from all churches, ecclesiastical bodies, and missionary organizations, that are not fully devorced [sic] from the sin of slaveholding; and we who may still be in connection with such

⁸A.T. Andreas, History of Chicago, vol. I (Wheaton, 1885), 307.

bodies, pledge ourselves that we will by the aid of Divine grace, conform our action in accordance with this resolution, and come out from among them, unless such bodies shall speedily separate themselves⁹ from all support of, or fellowship with slave-holding.

This forced a series of debates on the issue. First, a conflict raged as to whether the Third Presbyterian Church should secede from the Presbyterian Church. Yet, when the full session met, the pastor and three of the five elders were not supportive of secession.

The pastor, Rev. L.H. Loss, offered another strategy. He called for New School Presbyterians and Congregationalists to have a meeting in Peoria with the purpose of uniting the two bodies into a separate organization in the state of Illinois. The Pastor and a goodly number of members were in agreement with joining another denomination, but not on withdrawal from the Presbyterian General Assembly as a single congregation.

A series of meetings was held, with the majority of members favoring withdrawal, and a minority favoring other options. Seventeen of the members signed the resolution, and another twenty-five followed suit. The minority in the church who would not sign appealed to the Presbytery for a constitutional solution to the problem. The Presbytery responded by calling the action "irregular" and ordered the Session to call a meeting to rescind the resolution which called for separation of the church from the General Assembly.

⁹Ibid.

In February of 1851, a meeting was held to discuss the possibility of secession, and forty-two of sixty-eight members of Third Church "excinded" themselves from the Presbytery, while still intending to remain in the church.

Among the resolutions passed by the dissenters was the following: "God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth." Therefore, there could be no dominance of one race over the other. Second, the dissenters held that "chattel slavery is blasphemous towards God, inhuman and cruel to our fellow men; and that Christians are especially called to discountenance it, and have no fellowship with those who participate in its abominations."¹⁰

Third, the dissenters stated their "dissatisfaction with the church and with the General Assembly" for having fellowship with known slaveholders. Fourth, the church, aloof from the General Assembly, should become "free, and relieve themselves of all responsibility."¹¹

On March 10, 1851, the church met but split on the issue of whether the church could delay action on the resolution to secede from the denomination until after the General Assembly, which was scheduled to meet in two weeks. However, the conservative faction in the church believed that they should obey the will of the Presbytery and rescind the resolution. The "come-outers" believed

¹⁰Ibid., 6.

¹¹Ibid.

that they should obey the Word of God, which was in their view clearly against slavery as a sin, and therefore could not obey the Presbytery.

The Synod Moderator, Robert W. Patterson, Pastor of Second Presbyterian Church, forced the issue by declaring that all those who signed the resolution to dissociate from the church, were now by definition no longer part of the church, unless they rescind the resolution. Calling the action on the part of the "come-outers" "disorderly and revolutionary,"¹² the Presbytery ordered, for those who refused to rescind their commitment to the resolution, that their names be stricken from the church rolls. Patterson argued that those who signed the resolution had already seceded from the denomination and should be treated as having seceded in fact, and should be forthrightly disfellowshipped from the church.

Philo Carpenter, among those excommunicated, was informed that he was no longer a member of the Presbytery. Retorted Carpenter, "How can a person who is not a member of a Presbyterian Church be a member of the Presbytery for even a particular session?"¹³ Members of the Third Presbyterian Church were equally bitter:

Out of this conflict of opinion, which we can all remember as running very high throughout the North, between conservative and radical abolitionists, was born the First Congregational Church, which at once took from this Church the large majority of its members, leaving it feeble and with a clouded prospect before it for the future.¹⁴

¹²Watchman of the Prairies (April 15, 1851), 2.

¹³Ibid., 10.

¹⁴Ibid., 16.

The result, of course, was devastating for the church, for it forced the schism, and the "come-outers" were now obliged to leave the church. The next year, the Church published its official position summarizing the estimate of the schism on the part of those not excinded [sic] from the Presbytery. "And the Session of the Church, in dropping the names of those who voted for the resolution in favor of secession only completed the unpleasant work which had been forced upon the Presbytery and upon them by the disorderly and disorganizing procedure of their brethren."¹⁵

The come-outers thus seceded and were among those who started the First Congregational Church of Chicago. The effect on Third Presbyterian Church, and Chicago Presbyterians was profound. During the 1850s, the Presbyterians lost many members. First Presbyterian Church alone dropped from over 400 to 251 members. The Third Presbyterian Church was faced with an uncertain future. Only twenty-seven of sixty-seven members remained in the church, and they had to pick up the pieces. Meanwhile, abolitionism shifted from a locus in the Presbyterian churches in the city to the new and emerging Congregational churches, particularly First and Plymouth Congregational churches.

To set the record straight, members of the Third Presbyterian Church published a statement regarding the manner of the split in the church. The real issue as perceived by church members who stayed was not so much slavery as submission to the governance and

¹⁵Cited in Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 309.

order of the church and the authority of the Presbytery as a governing body. In the view of those who remained, the seceders

. . . were neither willing to be governed by the Constitution of the Church, in their former ecclesiastical relations, nor to go out peaceably, unless they could oblige the minority to go out with them, or at least to relinquish the property of the Church to them.¹⁶

From the official view of the Presbytery, the seceders were not "excinded" but were "suffered to go out without trial. They deliberately renounced the Constitution of the Church and the Authority of the Presbytery."¹⁷ Further, the Manual of the Third Presbyterian Church for 1852 noted that the Presbytery had given the come-outers ample time to adjust their views, but to no avail.

Philo Carpenter threatened to appeal to the Synod, but apparently realized the shakiness of his protest and rather joined in starting a new church. Those who remained in the church were obviously bitter and sought in the publication a chance to counter "erroneous" and "false impressions which have been given to the public, on behalf of 'friends of truth and order.'"¹⁸ Unfortunately the damage was done, and Third Church would need time to heal and to rebuild.

The Third Presbyterian Church, after the controversy with the "come-outer" abolitionists, was reduced to around twenty members in 1851, and it took a full decade to recover. The church climbed

¹⁶History and Manual of the Third Presbyterian Church of Chicago (Chicago: Democratic Press, October 1, 1852), 15.

¹⁷Ibid., 15.

¹⁸Ibid., 17.

steadily climbed to a body of around 200 members by 1859. During the revival of the late 1850s, and again in 1863, numbers of "young and middle-aged business men . . . were brought to the saving knowledge of Christ."¹⁹

Two churches were started by Third Presbyterian Church, the Reunion Church, formerly Bethesda Mission, and the Westminster Church, formerly the Peoria Street Mission. In the summer of 1872, over fifty members withdrew from Third Church to form a new congregation, the Ashland Avenue Presbyterian Church. By 1871, more than 500 persons had been added to the church, as it climbed to over 1,000 in regular attendance at Third Church by 1876.

The Third Presbyterian Church survived after 1870 as one of the most prominent Presbyterian churches in the city. Third Church did not run from political controversy, but often found itself in the middle of political debates. For Abbott Kittridge, the Pastor of the Third Church, "religion and politics" were "married" by the Savior. Kittridge held that the church must stand forthrightly in the center of the conservative reform concerns of the day, particularly temperance, sabbatarianism and, unfortunately, anti-Catholicism. Kittridge, like social gospellers such as Josiah Strong who would follow, believed that Roman Catholicism was a threat to "free and democratic institutions," as he believed that the Protestant church was at war against the Pope.

The Church must stand boldly and unitedly by our free common schools, shouting its defiant "No!" to every demand of the

¹⁹Kittridge, "Historical Sketch of the Third Presbyterian Church," 18.

Papacy. It must stand boldly and unitedly by the Christian Sabbath in the presence of rationalism and infidelity. It must fight intemperance always and everywhere, agitating fearlessly, though every political party go to pieces in the conflict, until law shall forcibly prevent the liquor dealer from the daily murders he now commits, shall help the slave of appetite break his chains, and shall guard the drunkard's home from violence and poverty.²⁰

The First Congregational Church

Congregationalism in Chicago was begun as the result of the controversy with the Presbyterians over the issue of slavery. Philo Carpenter and others withdrew from the Third Presbyterian Church to organize the First Congregational Church in Chicago on May 22, 1851. Forty-eight persons were among the founders, comprised "of those recently cut off from the Third Presbyterian Church."²¹

The Church began because its members "abhorred slavery and they found the Presbyterian Church conservative and prone to overlook the national disease. They protested the lack of action of the General Assembly" and withdrew, forming their own church more sympathetic to the abolitionist cause.²²

Philo and Ann Carpenter were the first signatures on the register of the new organization, and Philo Carpenter was made a deacon in the process. The church called a pastor, the Rev. Joseph

²⁰Ibid., 22.

²¹Watchman of the Prairies (May 13, 1851), 2.

²²George S. Phillips, Chicago and Her Churches (Chicago: E.B. Myers and Chandler, 1868), 373-374.

E. Roy, but, whether accident or arson, "Carpenter's nigger church" was burned to the ground following the minister's first sermon, on June 21, 1853. The fire originated in a carpenter's shop, and quickly spread to the church. "The church building was not very valuable," wrote the editor of the Congregational Herald. "The doors, windows, and furniture were saved. The society was contemplating the erection . . . of a better edifice, and we hope, they will now be able to accomplish their design without delay."²³

However, the catastrophe became an impetus to build a larger structure, emblematic of the spirit of Chicagoans in the face of disaster in history.²⁴ A new church building was soon on its way up in the Western division of the city. The new church was dedicated October 28, 1855.²⁵ By 1859, the Church boasted a membership of over 400, having received in the previous year alone over 152 new members.²⁶

Carpenter facilitated Congregationalist presence in the city in many other ways. Along with Joseph Johnston, the Rev. John C. Holbrook, and Charles Goodrich Hammond, Carpenter took part in sponsoring the first denominational paper in Chicago, the Congregationalist Herald. In 1855, he was one of the founders of

²³Congregational Herald (June 25, 1853), 2.

²⁴Northwestern Christian Advocate (June 22, 1853), 77.

²⁵Congregational Herald, January 13, 1859.

²⁶Ibid.

the Chicago Theological Seminary, and was for many years a member of the Board of Directors and Chairman of the Executive Committee.

Carpenter was also among those who opposed secret societies and contributed money to the founding of the Christian Cynosure, a paper dedicated to reveal the teachings and practices of secret societies, such as the Masons. He also wrote several tracts on the subject. While many of his co-laborers in other reform causes questioned this endeavor, Carpenter remained antagonistic to secret societies for his entire life.

A generous philanthropist, Carpenter was noted for giving large sums of money for those objects he believed in, including the First Congregational Church (\$50,000); the Chicago Theological Seminary (\$60,000); the National Christian Association (\$40-50,000); and another quarter of all his real estate was given to other charities, amounting to over \$100,000. For laying "the moral foundations on which so much of the real prosperity of a city depends, no man probably equalled Philo Carpenter."²⁷

Carpenter was also a believer in public education, and served on the Board of Education for many years. Upon his retirement from those duties in 1865, the remaining members of the Board, in tribute to Carpenter's dedication, renamed one of the more elegant schools in the district Carpenter School.²⁸

²⁷Hammond, "Philo Carpenter," 123.

²⁸Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 340.

In 1865, the Carpenters moved to Aurora, Illinois to seek an improvement of the health of his wife, Ann. Unfortunately, Ann died shortly thereafter. Carpenter then returned to Chicago, where he spent his last years with his children, dying August 7, 1886.

Philo Carpenter was a pioneer, Sunday School superintendent, church founder, deacon, abolitionist, reformer, philanthropist, Christian, and citizen. In 1883, the newly found Chicago Congregational Club would give special tribute to Philo Carpenter, electing him, in his advanced years, as an honorary member, and referring to him as the father of Congregationalism in Chicago.²⁹

By 1867, there were nine Congregational churches in the city, including Tabernacle, Salem, Union Park, and Bethany churches. With the ending of the Civil War, membership in Congregational churches in Chicago increased by 50% in 1866 alone, the Tabernacle Church tripling in size.³⁰ The Tabernacle Church grew out of a mission of First Congregational Church, as property worth \$20,000 was given to the Tabernacle Society in 1868.³¹

Congregationalism and the Pew Rental System

Dwight L. Moody, who began his work in Chicago through the mission Sunday School of Plymouth Congregational Church, shook up Protestant congregations by challenging the practice of charging

²⁹Hammond, "Philo Carpenter," 126.

³⁰The Advance (Oct. 3, 1867), 5.

³¹Ibid., (March 19, 1868), 4.

pew rents to pay for pastoral salaries, new church buildings and furnishings. The practice of making pews free was slow to catch on among mainline congregations. When the First Congregational Church dedicated its new building on June 5, 1870, it began moving in the direction of making the pews free. Said the Advance, "the house is of great size and beauty, [and] the rents are placed at only two-thirds of the rental usual in other city churches; many of them being at a nominal rent, to accommodate those in the humblest circumstances."³² There was a debate in the church, with a good number of church members wanting to make all the seats free and to support the church by freewill offerings. However, "the majority were afraid to try the experiment. It is but a question of time. God is educating his people to nobler ideas [and] methods than those hitherto in use."³³

Despite continuing the practice of pew rents, First Church was nonetheless noted for its strong history of benevolent giving. From 1864 to 1870, the church gave almost \$115,000 dollars to benevolent causes, \$23,000 alone in 1870. In the same period, the church gave \$20,000 to a new chapel, \$40,000 to the Advance, and \$60,000 to the Chicago Theological Seminary.³⁴ In no small way, the spread of Congregationalism in the city stemmed from the activism of First Congregational Church.

³²Ibid., (June 2, 1870), 4.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., (March 9, 1871), 1.

While many churches were moving in the direction of a "free and untrammelled church," the churches of the mainline denominations continued the practice of renting the pews to pay for the church and its ministry. In the 1880s, the practice of collecting pew rents began to relax and was all but discontinued by the 1890s. Critics argued that pew rents discriminated against the poor and that the rich, in paying rents, could avoid a contribution more in line with their true wealth. While free pews, on the one hand, seemed more consistent with a notion of voluntarism in a democratic society, they also symbolized the loss of commitment and discipline that once characterized the churches.

By the time of the Great Fire in 1871, there were over thirteen Congregational churches and two Congregational missions in Chicago.³⁵ In a short twenty-year period, the Congregational church was among the most powerful religious institutions in the city.

Significance

It was ironic that the denomination which did the most to bring abolitionism to the city was the denomination most hurt by the issue. This was due to the more liberal stand of the denomination as a whole, and the clash with those more radical in the churches. Presbyterians has as a liability churches in both

³⁵Chicago Tribune, January 31, 1862; Matthew Spinka, ed., A History of Illinois Congregational and Christian Churches (Chicago: Chicago Congregational Union, 1944), 103-106.

the north and in the south, whereas the Congregationalists had few churches south, which allowed the latter the freedom to be more radical. Despite the dismal appearance in the 1850s over the issue, each of the Presbyterian churches, First, Second and Third, recovered nicely. Next, the Presbyterians had to face the question of reunion among rival New School and Old School Presbyteries.

Although the Congregationalists got a later start in the city, when compared with the other denominations, the numbers of churches and Sunday Schools by the end of the 1860s were comparable to other denominations. According to Edward's 14th Annual Directory... of the City of Chicago for 1871, there were thirteen Congregationalist churches in the city, compared with eighteen Baptist, seventeen Episcopalian, twenty Methodist, and seventeen Presbyterian churches.

However, there were only three mission Sabbath Schools mentioned in the Edwards City Dictionary for 1866 and 1867, including the Elm Street in the North division, the Industrial Mission in the West division, and the North Mission, also in the northern division of the city.³⁶ In 1867, the names of the Sabbath Schools are listed as the Elm, Union Park, and Tabernacle Mission Sabbath Schools.³⁷

³⁶Richard Edwards, Annual Directory of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Manufacturing Establishments and Incorporated Companies of the City of Chicago (Chicago: Richard Edwards, 1866), 823.

³⁷Edward's Chicago City Directory, for 1867 (Chicago: Richard Edwards, 1867), 999.

Yet the denomination sponsored one of the leading journals in the midwest, The Advance, which was arguably the most progressive journal of the period, and before that, The Congregationalist Herald. However, the crowning accomplishment among Congregationalists was the founding of the Chicago Theological Seminary.

CHAPTER VI
MID-CENTURY CONTROVERSIES:
CHURCHES IN CRISIS

The Presbyteries of Chicago

The 1801 Plan of Union was an arrangement between the Presbyterian and Congregational churches over who would settle the West. The deal proved more favorable to the Presbyterians, until the debate over slavery.

Not all Presbyterians were friendly to either the revival or the abolitionist cause. "Old School" Presbyterians believed that right doctrine was preferable to social change. "New School" Presbyterians were friendly to the revival and believed that Christians should be involved in evangelism as well as the social reform movements of the day. New School Presbyterians also tended to be either antislavery or abolitionist, whereas the Old School adherents were at best antislavery, wanting to stop slavery from spreading to new territories while not interested necessarily in abolishing the institution.

The "first" Presbytery of Chicago was organized in 1847. It was decidedly New School in orientation. A "second" Old School Presbytery was started in 1852, with the same name. The First Presbyterian Church of Chicago met on October 12-13, 1847 and

requested the Synod of Peoria to grant to Chicago opportunity to develop a Presbytery to cover the city, Cook and Will counties.

Five churches formed the first Presbytery including First Presbyterian of Chicago; Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago; Third Presbyterian Church of Chicago, just organized July 1, 1847; the Hadley Church, organized by Jeremiah Porter, May 17, 1833; and Central Church of Joliet, organized in 1844 by Jonathan G. Porter (from England, no relationship with Jeremiah Porter) and B.W. Dwight. The nine ministers in attendance were all "young men from the East, filled with the missionary spirit."¹

The ministers present included Flavel Bascom of First Church; Robert W. Patterson of Second Church; Hutchins Taylor of Joliet; Abner W. Henderson; Ripley Downs; Charles R. French; and Jonathan G. Porter. The relationship with Congregationalist churches was still strong at this time. The Hadley Church was essentially Congregationalist. Fourteen churches listed as Congregational churches in the 1850s in Illinois were founded as Presbyterian churches earlier. As has been noted, the First and Plymouth Congregational churches in Chicago were founded by exiting Presbyterians over the slavery issue.

Herman R. Mulder, the author of Congregational Church in Illinois, noted that Congregationalism was at an advantage over the

¹John Frederick Lyons, Centennial Sketch of the History of the Presbytery of Chicago (Chicago: McCormick Theological Seminary, 1947), 8-9.

Presbyterians, and indeed the other mainline denominations with respect to the slavery issue.

Of all the major denominations, Congregationalism alone was confined to the area North of the Mason-Dixon line, and did not have to deal with the sin of slavery among its own communicants, and could therefore well afford to be more ruthless in its condemnation of the evil.²

The Presbytery of Chicago (New School) set out with the goal of organizing churches in the Chicago metropolitan area. Also, benevolence activities were organized, as Presbyterian churches cooperated to assist the American and Foreign Christian Sunday School Union, the American Tract Society, the Protestant Orphan Asylum, the Home for the Friendless, and the Old Ladies Home.

The New School Presbytery in 1847 was staunchly anti-slavery, due in no small part to the influence of Rev. Bascom, Philo Carpenter, and Zebina Eastman. However, there was a difference of opinion, as "ultraism" was synonymous with abolitionism at the time and most members, even in the New School, preferred the phrase "anti-slavery." Conservatives supported the American Colonization Society in an effort to relocate African-Americans to Liberia. Colonization was opposed by the more radical abolitionists.³

By 1850, the General Assembly in Detroit was perceived by the radicals as promoting a vacillating policy, "capable of representing black or white, as suited the different sections of

²Cited by Lyons, Centennial Sketch of the Presbyteries of Chicago, 11.

³Ibid., 12.

the church." The result spawned the division that severely diminished Presbyterianism in Chicago.

The Old School Presbytery was organized April 6, 1852. The ministers involved in the Old School in the Chicago area included John Ustick of the Willow Creek Church and R.H. Richardson of the North Church. However, "the outstanding leader in the Chicago Old School Presbytery, corresponding in a measure to R.W. Patterson, in the New School, was not a minister, but a layman, Cyrus H. McCormick." There were no Old School Presbyterian churches in Chicago until after McCormick's arrival; he organized the South and Central Presbyterian churches.⁴

McCormick's chief contribution, however, was his leveraging of dollars to bring to the city a theological school, the Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Northwest which after 1886 bore his name. In 1859, McCormick put up \$100,000 as an endowment for four professorships, and the act was chiefly responsible for relocating the institution to Chicago from Indiana. One of the most noteworthy pastors and professors of the period, again lured to Chicago by McCormick, was Dr. Nathan L. Rice. Rice came to the city from St. Louis to pastor the North Church.

Rice became a professor at the new seminary and also was influential as the editor of the newly formed Presbyterian Expositor, a journal subsidized by McCormick. Rice was a scholarly supporter of the institution of slavery, arguing that the Bible

⁴Ibid., 18.

both sanctioned and supported the practice. He then published a collection of essays in 1860 called, Lectures on Slavery, arguing that slavery was sanctioned by God. This created a controversy, and both the secular press, and ministers such as the Rev. Samuel Wolcott of the New England Congregational Church, responded by calling Rice a "willing and obedient servant of the Devil."⁵

Rice did more to radicalize the rest of the clergy in Chicago on behalf of abolitionism than he did to gain support the other way, and the events of the Civil War further justified the movement to end slavery once and for all. Rice left for a church in New York City, leaving the Old School bereft of quality pastoral leadership. In the initial Old School Presbytery of Chicago, there were eight churches total, only one of which was in the city, and that was Rice's North Church. The others included Woodstock, Willow Creek, Marengo, Lynn, Hebron, Jefferson Grove, and Wilmington.⁶

In the 1860s both Presbyteries had an active interest in supporting freedmen, evangelizing the French in Kankakee, and cooperating with the Sunday School, Bible and Tract Society agencies. However, the Old School still tended to support conservative causes politically and remained skeptical of revival efforts. Old School proponents did support conservative efforts

⁵Chicago Press and Tribune, January 19, 1860; Feb. 24-25, 1860.

⁶Lyons, Centennial Sketch of the Presbyteries of Chicago, 19.

of social reform such as sabbatarianism and total abstinence. In this respect, they were similar to the New School.

At a glance, the location of the Old School churches intimated their rural character. The New School was decidedly more urban in identification. The Old School, also, was stronger in the South nationally, whereas the New School had few churches there. The Old School churches struggled with internal dissensions, and the growth of the Seminary was off to a slow start. The reason was the identification of the Old School with slavery. Despite these problems, the Old School churches seemed to mushroom, from eight churches in 1852 to twenty-seven in 1870 (inclusive of rural-based congregations), from 420 to 2,573 congregants.⁷

By contrast, the New School Presbyterianism claimed six churches as well in 1847 and grew to twenty-seven churches by 1870 and from 721 members to 3,516.⁸ However, with the passing of time, and the changes wrought by the Civil War, it no longer seemed practical or desirable to maintain separate Presbyteries. Nationwide, the Presbyterians remained split over the issue of sectionalism. However, in the North, there were clear signals that it was time again for the two schools to become reunited.

Discussions of a union of old and new school Presbyterian churches occurred frequently after the Civil War. The Advance would record in late 1867 that a meeting of the different branches

⁷Ibid., 20.

⁸Ibid., 12.

of the Presbyterian churches was held on December 4 at the Second Presbyterian Church, with representatives of Old School, New School and Reformed Presbyterian churches. The purpose was to ratify the action of the "late Philadelphia Convention" with regard to the union of all Presbyterian churches. The ratification locally was "unanimous," and a "good feeling" and "desire for union" were demonstrated by all parties.⁹

Despite this, the Tribune noted that, in early 1868, a "New School" Presbyterian Church was formed and organized by Joseph Meeker, on the corner of 31st and Wabash streets. "Some time ago, the Church Extension Society of the Presbyterian denomination commissioned the Rev. G.W. Mackie to collect subscriptions for a church in this rapidly growing section of the city."¹⁰ This became the "Thirty First Street Presbyterian Church," with trustees H.H. Cooley, James Otis, Henry Mallory, Elijah Smith and Joseph Meeker. "It will be located in a growing part of the city, [and] the efforts that have been made are deserving of success."¹¹ However, by 1870, the two Schools recognized that their differences were minimal and were no longer worth fighting for in separate denominations.

⁹Advance (Dec. 12, 1867), 5.

¹⁰Chicago Tribune, Jan. 20, 1868.

¹¹Advance (Jan. 23, 1868), 1.

The Walker Trial

The Episcopalians were not as embroiled in the abolitionist controversy, but managed to foment controversy over matters of doctrine. For William F. Walker, the Episcopalian church was not Catholic enough. For Charles E. Cheney, Episcopalians looked to be too Catholic in theology, and needed to be more evangelical. This was a family squabble, and more limited to Chicago, but preoccupied many Episcopalians during this period.

William F. Walker, an Episcopalian minister, was influenced by the Oxford Movement, which was an attempt to establish a rapprochement between the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches in England. The "Anglo-Catholics" were also called "tractarians" because of the wide circulation of tracts by the movement's founder, John Henry Newman. The movement caused a division in the United States after 1832 into high and low church parties. Walker was described by Joseph T. Ryerson as "a man of a great deal of ability, but better suited for a politician, than a minister of the gospel." Further, he "was of an impulsive, impetuous temperament, and soon began to make changes and stir up the people . . . and soon fell into bad odor with the people of St. James."¹²

Even though St. James was moderate and was certainly not a low-church communion, the changes brought by Walker were too much, the result being that Walker resigned his post at St. James on April 7, 1844, to assume full time as Rector of the newly founded

¹²Shepherd, History of St. James, 25-26.

Trinity Church. By August of 1844, Trinity Church had its own building, and by 1845 boasted a congregation of eighty-nine members.¹³ At this time, St. James boasted a membership of some ninety members.

Walker was accused of offering communion to a German Lutheran, A.C. Becker, who proved himself unworthy of the privilege, showing himself to be "profane" and "intemperate." Walker approached Bishop Chase for advice on the matter, and Chase demanded that Becker be brought to trial, and Walker was summoned to bring charges against him. As this was farther than Walker wanted to go, the Rector failed to show up at the hearings and was in trouble with the Bishop for not living up to his ministerial vows and responsibilities. This, of course, became an excuse for the Bishop to go after Walker, as Becker was soon forgotten.¹⁴

The real opposition was not against Becker but against Walker, whose high-church theology offended church members as well as the Bishop. Bishop Chase was known to be "evangelical," with a deep-seated hatred of anything that savored of Catholicism. He was bitterly opposed of the Oxford Movement, as well as to the "tractarians," and hence stood opposed to Walker, who was influenced by these movements. Walker was accused of "falsehood, Sabbath-breaking, intemperance, and other 'immoralities.'"¹⁵

¹³Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 336.

¹⁴Shepherd, History of St. James, 27.

¹⁵Ibid., 28.

During the controversy with Walker, the membership of Trinity was reduced to 61 persons. Walker was accused of several other things by his church, who too wanted to get rid of him. Of some eleven charges, he was found not guilty of five, and the others were dismissed for lack of evidence, except that he was found guilty of having an "unchristian temper." Bishop Chase had Walker eventually transferred to New York, where he eventually stirred up trouble, and for other reasons was deposed there by Bishop Wainwright. Walker was succeeded at Trinity by the Rev. William Barlow who remained at the church until 1850.

St. James Church, 1844-1873

In 1844, St. James was able to replace the departed William Walker with Ezra B. Kellogg. At the time, the parish had 75 communicants. Kellogg's rectorate was noted for "harmony and quiet growth." He conducted a Wednesday evening Bible study, held monthly offerings for "missions," and developed a Sunday School and library of 200 volumes. Kellogg was not a vigorous leader, and the congregation desired a change. Hearing of these currents, Kellogg resigned in 1848.¹⁶

From 1849 to 1865, the Church was led by the Rev. Robert H. Clarkson. Born in Pennsylvania and a graduate of St. James College, Hagerstown, Maryland, Clarkson arrived in Chicago in the middle of the cholera epidemic of 1849. Clarkson noted that

¹⁶Shepherd, History of St. James, 28-29.

"people here worship the dollar more idolatrously than I ever could imagine men with reason and souls could do."¹⁷

However, despite the predilection to mammon, there was also something noble about St. James, stemming from their class consciousness. In a letter to Bishop Philander Chase of June 12, 1849, Clarkson noted that Episcopalians "look upon themselves, as a very respectable class of people, that they say their prayers out of a book and litany to a preacher who wears either a white gown or a black gown."¹⁸

In 1851, Episcopalians from Grace, St. James and the Church of Holy Communion in Chicago founded the Church Guild "for the purpose of systematizing the various branches of parochial work," including "mission work," the "work and life of the church," and the development of a "Sunday School Union" with classes for Sunday School teachers. The Sunday School Union's purpose was to systematize the curriculum and to promote weaker mission schools, while forming classes for baptism and confirmation.¹⁹ This was not an ecumenical concern, but an Episcopalian effort for Episcopalians.

The churches were expanded to keep up with the mushrooming population of the city. In 1850, a new tower was added to St. James, and twenty-six pews were added. A new site was chosen for

¹⁷Ibid., 32.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., 35-36.

a larger church at the corner of Cass and Huron streets, because of the increase in numbers as well as "the encroachment of business in the neighborhood of the church, and of the distance from the residences of the parishioners."²⁰ The building committee was composed of William B. Ogden, John H. Kinzie, George Higginson, and T.F. Phillips. Money from the sale of pews and other donations contributed to a new structure that would seat 1200 people. The new St. James was completed in the middle of another financial panic, this one in 1857.

The panic was due to "overspeculation, causing 9,000 farms to close in the west."²¹ The impact on the city was also significant. The result was a debt on the building worth \$30,000, and the mortgage was carried for many years at 12% interest, considered very high for the time. This was a heavy burden, and the banks threatened foreclosure. However, in 1864, the finance committee assessed all pew-owners and renters for additional fees of from \$25 to \$2000 per year, with the instruction to bring the money to the church on Easter Sunday, 1864, and the debt was paid off, and the church preserved.²²

St. James established the Wells Street Mission in 1856,²³ and this later became the Church of the Ascension. The Mission was led

²⁰Ibid, 36.

²¹Ibid., 37.

²²Ibid.

²³Chicago Daily Journal, Dec. 30, 1856.

by the Rev. C.C. Barclay, who was succeeded by the Rev. J.W. Cracraft when Barclay accepted a church in Syracuse, New York. Cracraft was "low-church," and the Church of the Ascension was founded in reaction to the "high-church" tendencies at St. James. Cracraft eventually joined the Presbyterian Church, because Episcopalianism seemed too formalized.

The Church of the Ascension, because of the depression of 1857, had to find temporary quarters. Ascension was initially offered use of the old St. James church, and then this offer was withdrawn, resulting in further tensions between the two congregations. In 1858, St. James allowed another new church, the Church of the Holy Communion, free use of the older building.²⁴

In 1857, the church founded the Young Men's Association rather than join with the other evangelical churches who formed the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). Episcopalians, for reason of social class, and for reasons of a less than aggressive theology, chose not to partner with the more evangelical denominations who founded the YMCA. For the Episcopalians, the Young Men's Association was "to promote attendance of young men upon services of the church; to aid in the diffusion of church knowledge [and] principles; to cultivate social disposition and brotherly feeling; and to care for the sick and needy."²⁵

²⁴Shepherd, p. 40.

²⁵Ibid., 41.

The Sunday School for St. James was also less an evangelistic tool for outsiders and more a way to nurture the children of the "better classes." St. James was willing to be part of the benevolent impulse, on their terms and with their people, but not in partnership with the more aggressive evangelical denominations.

In 1858, the church opened a house to give free dinners to the poor, serving 3,000 at a time. The Rev. Clarkson sponsored several Christmas dinners for needy families. St. James' benevolences reflected a range of interests, including the support of Nashotah Seminary and Racine College. However, since the pews were all rented or even owned by parishioners, there was little desire or effort to "convert" others to Episcopalianism, only to nurture those already so inclined. The charitable impulse in the church was thus more of a manifestation of the cultural mandate to give to others, but not out of a desire for proselytizing. Benevolences thus revealed the virtue of the giver but did not necessarily mean the inclusivity of the recipient.

In the tenth anniversary sermon given by Robert H. Clarkson, in 1859, the minister could reflect on the meaning of the previous decade. From 1849-1859, wrote Clarkson, "Chicago has passed from a respectable town to a large city. . . . The transition has been rapid, remarkable, and eventful; and the growth of the material

wealth about us, and the progress of the city in population and power, has no parallel in the history of the world."²⁶

By 1859, St. James was a congregation of over 300 families, and Clarkson reflected upon the events of the past. He recounted that he had given 812 sermons and lectures, conducted 523 baptisms, 205 confirmations, 185 marriages, and 317 funerals.²⁷ The church had given \$21,110 "to the poor, missions, and theological schools." Also, \$96,000 was expended to enlarge St. James. Most memorable to the pastor was the experience of a death of at least one loved one in most St. James' families over the decade.

In this short space of time, nearly two-thirds of the families of this parish have had their thresholds crossed by the dark shadow of the destroyer. Children have buried parents, wives have been bereaved of their husbands--sisters have wept over the loss of brothers and may a precious little one has gone up from a loving mother's embrace to tread 'with tiny feet celestial realms.'²⁸

The church had also experienced a great deal of transition. According to Clarkson, only thirty-seven of 300 persons were in the church ten years previous. Some of the members went to other congregations, some went "to the communion of saints above," and a few have gone back "with Demos, to the world they renounced."²⁹ In addition to death, and a high rate of mobility and transition,

²⁶Robert H. Clarkson, The Tenth Anniversary Sermon Preached In St. James Church, Chicago (Chicago: Scott and Co., Printers, 1859), 6.

²⁷Ibid., 8-9.

²⁸Ibid., 16.

²⁹Ibid., 17.

Clarkson isolated the major problem that faced St. James, materialism.

Clarkson bemoaned the fact that "many a young man" preferred "the fearful maelstrom of whirling, giddy life," and that many were "hurrying after riches, and comforts, and guns." Clarkson was concerned for those "who have already attained wealth, and are heaping it up in piles . . . or, who are spending it on selfishness, when the cry of the struggling Church of God for help, help, is evermore ringing in their ears. . . . We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out."³⁰

Hence for Clarkson, the major problem facing St. James was materialism. The church attracted many persons of high society, who spent their wealth on getting more wealth. Clarkson was not so much interested in giving money away to the many benevolent societies, as finding support for the daily operations of St. James. To this end, he found the parishioners of the Church more preoccupied with self-aggrandizement than with the demonstration of virtuosity.

During the Civil War, St. James, like most of the churches of the time, rallied behind the Union effort. However, such support was atypical of Episcopalianism at the time. According to Shepherd

[The] Episcopal Church . . . avoided the issue as much as possible, and refused to take any action on the question. A deep-seated tradition of refusing to involve the Church in what seemed to be purely political issues . . . coupled with

³⁰Ibid., 18-19.

the Church's close connection with the landed Aristocracy of the South, saved the unity of the Church in America.³¹

St James was an exception on this one issue. Clarkson vowed from the pulpit that, should any of the parishioners die in battle, their names would be inscribed in memoria on a plaque in the walls of the church. After the war, a plaque was created and placed in the church vestibule. Ten soldiers are mentioned, including sons of several of the prominent families of the church, John Harris Kinzie, Richard Skinner, and Louis Dekoven Hubbard.³²

Isaac N. Arnold, a Vestryman in the church, was active in the Antislavery cause. He also became a member of Congress during the war, and was later a biographer of Abraham Lincoln. Arnold introduced a bill to Congress to abolish slavery.

In 1865, the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in America elected Robert H. Clarkson as Bishop of Nebraska and Dakota. Hence, the Church was without a pastor for the first time in fifteen years. After Clarkson left, the church was led briefly by the Rev. Edward C. Porter, the son of Jeremiah Porter, the founder of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago. The elder Porter visited St. James on several occasions because of his son.³³

Clarkson was replaced by the Rev. Dr. Rylance, who came to Chicago after the war at a time when there was a noteworthy slump "in the common morality and decency" in the city. Many issues had

³¹Shepherd, A History of St. James, 44.

³²Andreas, History of Chicago, II, 410.

³³Shepherd, 49.

emerged in the rapidly growing city, including a rise in poverty, high prices, licentiousness, crime, rowdiness, bloody brawls, and prostitution, including over "2,000 lewd women in the city." Faced with the collapse of general morals in the city, the church seemed little affected. "The people of St. James, drawn as they were from the better part of the city, were little affected by those conditions."³⁴

In the late 1860s, George Phillips could describe St. James as "Episcopal and respectable--a decorous well to do people, . . . self-possessed, comfortable, [and] devotedly attached to the forms and ceremonies of their Church."³⁵ Dr. Rylance, unlike most of the evangelical preachers of the day was a "moral and intellectual" rather than "evangelical" preacher. For Phillips, "there was very little doctrine in his sermons." The pulpit was rather more "practical," with an emphasis on "conduct and behavior, honor, honesty [and] the love of God."³⁶ In short, members of St. James prided themselves on their image of respectability in society.

In 1871, Dr. Rylance was replaced by the Rev. Hugh Miller Thompson, D.D., formerly Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the Nashotah Seminary. Thompson only lasted for one year and was on the East Coast at the time of the great Chicago fire. Instructed

³⁴Ibid., 50.

³⁵George S. Phillips, Chicago and Her Churches (Chicago: Myers and Chandler, 1868), 454.

³⁶Ibid., 462,

by the church to stay and raise money for the relief effort, Thompson did manage to raise \$17,000, but despite protests from St. James, he secured another pastorate in New York, at the Trinity Church. Thompson later found himself in New Orleans and, in 1883, became Bishop of Mississippi.³⁷

Charles E. Cheney Controversy

Charles Edward Cheney was born in Ontario County, New York, on February 12, 1836. He graduated from Hobart College in 1857, and then entered the Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Alexandria, Virginia. In 1859, Cheney was ordained a "deacon," beginning a ministry in Havana, New York. Upon receiving an invitation to assume the Rectorship of Christ Church in Chicago in November 1859, Cheney initially refused and then accepted, preaching his first sermon as an ordained presbyter on March 11, 1860. Christ Church increased in numbers and prominence under Cheney's ministry, until the confrontation between "low church" and "high church" emerged in the late 1860s among the Protestant Episcopal Church which eventually led to many seceding in 1873 to form a new denomination, the Reformed Episcopal Church.³⁸

In February 1868, the church was packed to hear the low church evangelical leader, S.H. Tyng, Jr. Thereafter, Cheney moved more

³⁷Shepherd, 59.

³⁸Andreas, History of Chicago, II, 415.

in the direction of a low church theology, much to the dismay of the Bishop, Henry J. Whitehouse. Cheney was part of several conflicts with the Bishop, including the "Chicago Protest" which erupted because the undercount of church statistics by the Bishop.

However, the conflict that led to Cheney's trial was over the issue of "regeneration" and the perception of Roman elements in the official Prayer Book, which seemed to suggest a belief in "Baptismal regeneration," a position wholly unacceptable to low church Episcopalians.³⁹ In 1869, Cheney found himself in conflict with Bishop Whitehouse regarding the sacrament of infant baptism. The conflict was a major factor that contributed to the establishment of the Reformed Episcopal denomination in 1873, and Cheney himself was later elected presiding Bishop of that denomination.⁴⁰

Cheney was a practitioner of certain "low church" rituals and casually eliminated certain words in the liturgy that implied that the sacrament of infant baptism meant regeneration. The Prayer Book intimated that the baptism meant also regeneration. This offended the evangelical views of the reformers, who would not accept a doctrine of baptismal regeneration of infants. The evangelical rectors thus sought to eliminate words in the Episcopal prayer book any vestiges of Roman Catholic teaching.

³⁹Andreas, History of Chicago, II, 412.

⁴⁰Ibid.

Cheney was preaching the new doctrine from the pulpit, arguing that regeneration meant conversion, and happened at the same time the holy spirit came upon the person. For Cheney, the child could not be regenerated. Regeneration means new birth, and signaled "conversion and a change of heart from sin to holiness."⁴¹

Like the baptists, Cheney believed that baptism was for adults, "who have intellect and the heart to receive the truth." Cheney attacked the practice of infant baptism, and the use of regeneration to define baptized children as redeemed, a position that Cheney regarded as unbiblical.⁴² To gain acceptance for these views, Cheney was among those reformers who wanted to liberalize the Common Prayer Book, to rid the liturgy of "Romanizing elements."

Cheney had already erred in the Bishop's eyes by inviting the Rev. Stephen S. Tyng to preach from his pulpit at Christ Church, in Feb. 1868. Tyng, a Rector from New York, was tried for preaching in a Methodist Church, and was "admonished" not to do so. By 1869, an anonymous tract was circulating among reform-minded Episcopalians entitled, "Are there Romanizing Germs in the Prayer Book?" This encouraged many Episcopalian clergy to challenge certain readings in the Prayer Book, and in a convention, 1869, "Evangelical Bishops" urged that the General Convention meet with certain "low church" advocates to discuss how alternate phrases or

⁴¹Charles E. Cheney, "The New Birth: A sermon Preached in Christ Church" (Chicago, Sunday, July 4, 1869), 11.

⁴²Ibid., 16.

"some equivalent modifications" in the ritual might be used "to disallow inference to baptismal regeneration."⁴³

Whitehouse, a defender of high church dogma and hostile to reform, ordered Cheney to give answer as for his liberal use of the Prayer Book or face deposition by Ecclesiastical Court. In response, a conference of low church clergy was held in Chicago, June 13, 1869, to protest the growing formalism and "strong Romanizing tendencies" in the denomination. Some twenty clergy, including Cheney, petitioned to be able to liberalize the use of the Prayer Book and set in motion the process of reform. These clergy were all evangelical, liberal and ecumenical.

The participants met in the YMCA building on June 16, 1869. Participants included Alexander G. Tyng of Peoria, Mason Gallagher of Patterson, New Jersey, William H. Cooper of Lockport, Illinois, and key Chicago laypersons, John Kedzie and Gurdon S. Hubbard. They all insisted on the "right of private judgement" in the tradition of the Reformation, Cheney being the chief spokesperson.⁴⁴

Cheney was arraigned for trial on July 21, 1869. The trial levied three charges against the rector: first, that Cheney refused to use the Book of Common Prayer, the sacraments and other rites sanctioned by the General Convention of the Protestant

⁴³Arthur Carl Piepkorn, Profiles in Belief: The Religious Bodies of the United States and Canada, vol. II (Philadelphia: The Fortress Press, 1979), 247-8.

⁴⁴Andreas, History of Chicago, II, 412-13.

Episcopal Church; second, Cheney refused to conform his practices to the doctrines and practice of the Church; third, Cheney was accused of violating his ordination vows.

Cheney's trial by Bishop Whitehouse was a conflict over doctrine and ecclesiastical authority in the Diocese. Theologically, the conflict centered on the use of the word, "regenerate" in reference to the rite of infant baptism. Cheney and the other reformers held that the word should be omitted, that the sacrament could only be regenerative in a spiritual sense, and that those who are faithful would be regenerated by the Holy Spirit following a decision of faith.

Whitehouse reprimanded Cheney and implored him to read the Sacrament from the Prayer Book as written. Cheney refused, and was brought to trial. Cheney appealed to the city's Superior Court in Chicago "for an injunction to stay all further proceedings" of the trial"⁴⁵ until the upcoming national meeting of the denomination. However, Whitehouse made the case that the Court had no jurisdiction.

Judge Jameson agreed that the case was not a civil matter and that the Court of Chicago had "no jurisdiction over an Ecclesiastical Court, unless either of the actions threaten the civil rights of the other party." In American society, there is "no religious establishment, no ecclesiastical law or court system"

⁴⁵Trial of Rev. Charles Edward Cheney: Proceedings of Superior Court of Chicago, Opinion of Hon. John A. Jameson (Chicago: Western News, 1869), 32.

supported by the public. Hence, Jameson dismissed the case, overturned the injunction, and sent the case back to the Ecclesiastical Court. Cheney was found guilty of omissions, which he admitted, and he was initially deposed from the priesthood. Cheney appealed to the "Court of Revision," a court in the Church that adjudged cases on matters of doctrine.⁴⁶ However, the Ecclesiastical Court intervened, and Cheney was given the verdict of "degradation from the ministry."⁴⁷

However, the Vestrymen of the Church refused to allow the deposition of Cheney. The Cheney case, in October 1871, was taken to the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, which met that year in Baltimore. There propositions emerged as to whether or not Cheney should be transferred to another diocese. Rather than deal with the issue, the case was ruled as the judgment of the Bishop of Illinois.

The Advance, a Congregationalist paper, voiced its opposition, stating that "fair minded Christians of every name will be saddened to think that so much narrow intolerance can still exist in any part of the American Episcopal Church."⁴⁸ The Advance invited Cheney to consider becoming a Congregationalist. "He could still use his prayer books, making all the omissions he pleased, [and] adding all the extemporaneous exercises that might be edifying.

⁴⁶The Advance (Feb. 16, 1871), 4.

⁴⁷Andreas, History of Chicago, II, 414.

⁴⁸Advance (May 25, 1871), 1.

Our motto is: 'So speak ye [and] so do a they shall be judged by the law of liberty.'"⁴⁹ The Advance symbolized the popular support of Cheney against Whitehouse during the trial.

However, Christ Church refused to bow to the pressure of the Bishop, and maintained Cheney as their Rector. To oust the Rector, Bishop Whitehouse came to Cheney's Church for the purpose of accepting candidates for confirmation. The Bishop asked for the candidates to come forward. However,

The candidates for confirmation all declined to be presented to the bishop except by their own pastor, and as the bishop would not so receive them, the main purpose of the visitation was frustrated. The vestrymen declined to allow Mr. Cheney to vacate his place in the chancel, and the bishop declined to officiate by the side of a deposed rector, and, as the time of the opening services drew nigh, he withdrew by the side door. The services were then conducted as usual by the Rev. Mr. Cheney.⁵⁰

In 1873, Bishop George David Cummins of Kentucky took up many of the same issues with the Episcopal denomination. Cummins participated ecumenically with the Evangelical Alliance, and was censured publicly by the Bishop Potter of New York. As a result, Cummins resigned his office on November, 1873 in order to organize the Reformed Episcopal Church with six other clergymen, including Rev. Charles E. Cheney. In February 1874, a New Vestry was chosen at Christ Church, Chicago, and the church became formally aligned with the Reformed Episcopal Church.

⁴⁹Ibid., (Feb. 2, 1871), 4.

⁵⁰Andreas, History of Chicago, II, 415.

Growth of Presbyterian Churches to the Fire

Several Presbyterian churches were started in the late 1850s and 1860s, including Calvary (1859), Central (1865), Edwards (Seventh Pres. Church, 1857), Eighth (1864), Fullerton (1864), First, Hyde Park (1860), and the Fifth Presbyterian Church (1867) as a merger of South and Twenty-Eighth Street Presbyterian Churches. By 1867, there were eleven New School and six Old School Presbyterian churches, and a discussion of merger was already under way on both national and local levels.

Before the Fire, and before the official reunion of the Presbyteries, a "Presbyterial League" was organized by both church groups to support new churches, and organize and coordinate church extension. In 1869, the League had raised over \$120,000 for the cause, \$50,000 at the bequest of John Crerar. By 1870, other avenues of cooperation would be more possible following unification.

The Presbyterian General Assembly of 1870 made it official, as the Old and New school Presbyterians united, bridging a gulf "which had separated twenty or more years earlier on doctrinal grounds." Because of the Union, the Twenty-Eighth Street Church (Old School), and the Thirty First Church (New School) were united, and it seemed likely that the Scotch Presbyterian Church in the same area might likewise unite with the new church.⁵¹

⁵¹Advance (July 7, 1870), 5.

After the merger of the Presbyteries, several churches also saw it in their interest to combine. For example, on the North side, the Westminster and the North Churches of Chicago "tied their marriage knot," becoming the Fourth Presbyterian Church with David Swing as pastor.⁵²

In 1870, the new and old school Presbyteries in Chicago united to become one "Presbytery of Chicago" as there seemed little to distinguish them. Also, the merger resulted in the Presbyterian Interior, a journal reflecting Presbyterian thought in Chicago. By 1871, there were thirty-six Presbyterian churches in Chicago, and these church bodies together supported such efforts as Bible-reading in public schools, the circulation of Sunday newspapers, the closing of theaters and saloons on the Sabbath, the suppression of Mormonism and polygamy, and the support of temperance efforts, especially in regard to habits of the new immigrants.⁵³

The churches were also active in the support of educational institutions. One of the first acts of the united Presbytery was to raise money for its schools of higher learning. As a result, some \$200,000 was pledged for the Seminary, and an additional \$250,000 was pledged for the Lake Forest University.⁵⁴

Unfortunately, the Great Chicago Fire destroyed several of the churches, including First, North and Westminster churches, as well

⁵²Ibid., (March 2, 1871), 4.

⁵³Robert W. Patterson and E.R. Davis, The Presbyteries of Chicago, 1847-1888 (Chicago: McCormick Theol. Seminary, 1888), 34.

⁵⁴Lyons, Centennial Sketch of the Presbyteries of Chicago, 21.

as the Erie Street Mission. Like other denominational churches in the city,

. . . the fire crippled the city and suburban churches, by rendering many of their members penniless, destroying the incomes of others reducing the number of houses of worship, and in a word, paralyzing for a time, all church work in Chicago and vicinity, except that of ministering to the relief of fire sufferers."⁵⁵

Growth of Episcopal Churches in the 1860-1875

By 1861, there were nine Episcopal Churches in Chicago, including St. James, Ascension, Christ's, Holy Communion, Grace, Trinity, Little Atonement, St. John's and St. Ansgarius. These churches had a combined membership of 2,923 persons, with 1,189 "scholars" in church Sabbath Schools.⁵⁶ Four new churches were begun in 1866, including St. Mark's and St. Luke's, bringing the total to thirteen in the city.⁵⁷ In 1865, Halpin's Chicago City Directory listed the active Episcopalian churches in Chicago as St. James, Trinity, Grace, St. John's, Christ, Ascension, St. Ansgarius, St. Mark's and St. Stephen's.⁵⁸

The Chicago Fire was costly to Episcopalians. St. James, Trinity, the Church of the Ascension, St. Ansgarius, and the Church of our Savior were all destroyed. A total of sixty-nine churches and convents were destroyed in the blaze, a net financial loss of

⁵⁵Ibid., 21.

⁵⁶Chicago Daily Tribune, Nov. 20, 1861.

⁵⁷Ibid., Dec. 31, 1866.

⁵⁸Halpin's Chicago City Directory, for 1865-6, pp. xxvii-xxix.

over six million dollars. In addition, the fire meant 250 deaths, 100,000 homeless, the destruction of 13,500 buildings, and a net loss of from twenty to thirty million dollars in property.⁵⁹

Efforts to rebuild St. James were derailed by another in a series of regular twenty-year financial downturns, this time the Panic of 1873. The financial panic curtailed efforts of St. James parishioners to build a church, and the church was not rebuilt until the latter part of 1874.

By 1875, the parish was finally restored, and charity had increased to 4-5,000 dollars a year. There were also two ladies societies, a sewing school, a mothers' meeting of the poor, a Sunday School with 300 scholars, and a second Sunday School at St. Ansgarius with 100 pupils. The new pastor was the Rev. Arthur Brooke (since 1872), a low-churchman. However, by this time, low-church theology was distasteful to the parish, and Brooke left in 1875 for another church elsewhere.⁶⁰

Significance

Despite controversies among Presbyterians and Episcopalians, both denominations ended up united and strong after the Chicago Fire. The Old and New School Presbyterians healed their divisions. This meant to a certain degree a merger of some of the churches, forced again after the Fire. For Episcopalians, despite

⁵⁹Ibid., 56.

⁶⁰Ibid., 65.

controversies surrounding its ministers, the debate, court rulings, and ultimate leaving of Cheney and his church for the Reformed Episcopalian denomination did little to slow Episcopalian church growth.

Both denominations were comprised of more highly educated persons, and both had the luxury of attracting key members of the business community. The debates in themselves were abstract and esoteric enough so as to not disturb too many people in the pew, and would make little difference in how the churches responded to urbanizing societies. The Presbyterians continued to support the Sunday Schools, City Missions, and efforts of individual churches. Episcopalians continued to provide leadership for the many charities and benevolences of the day. The social position and cultural dominance of the two groups were not dislodged by controversies over fine points of theology.

CHAPTER VII

THE OTHER PROTESTANTS: UNITARIANS, UNIVERSALISTS, AND THE EVANGELICAL CONSENSUS

The Unitarian Society

The most successful of the non-evangelical Protestant groups in the city were the Unitarians. By 1836, there were two Unitarian societies already established west of the Alleghenies in St. Louis and in New Orleans, but nothing yet established in Chicago. In June of that year, the Rev. Charles Follen was traveling from the East coast.

He was a radical abolitionist and was forced to leave his professorship at Harvard because of his views. Follen had married Eliza Lee Cabot of Boston, also an abolitionist and friend of Dr. William Ellery Channing (1780-1842). The Follens tried to get by writing poetry and other literature, but found themselves beset by poverty. Trying to find a new life in the west, they happened upon Chicago, June 26, 1836.

Chicago at the time was dominated by land speculation, and the migration to the city of large numbers of people, many passing through on their way elsewhere, and others trying to make it in the town. The city was besieged by a panoply of "investors, agents, land-developers, and speculators of all kinds [who] crowded the

hotels and taverns" while immigrants "were camped in a semi-circle around town," and "tricksters, gamblers, and patent medicine vendors congested the sidewalks."¹

Befriended by Miss Harriet Martineau, author² and visitor to the Midwest at the time, Follen was implored to deliver what was the first Unitarian sermon in the city, in a dining room of the unfinished Lake House on the North bank of the river. Residents in the city were given two hours notice regarding the sermon, and a goodly number of the city's free thinkers came. Among those present were some of the city's leading women, including Mrs. Edmund S. Kimberly and Mrs. Eli Prescott, as well as other of the leading citizens.³

Also present were Mr. Joseph Balestier, lawyer; Henry Moore, lawyer; Isaac D. Harmon, later a justice of the peace; Horatio G. Loomis, a store owner; Eli Prescott, land developer; Peter L. Updike, a contractor; Stephen F. Gale, a bookseller; and William and Abram Clarke, brothers of Rev. James Freeman Clarke, prominent Unitarian minister in Kentucky, abolitionist and editor of the journal, the Western Messenger. The Unitarians drew from the educated and commercially prominent citizens in the new city.

¹Esther Hornor, History of the First Unitarian Society of Chicago, 1836-1936 (Chicago: First Unitarian Society, 1936), 1. (Note, pagination is by the writer, corresponding to pages of texts in the Ms.).

²Harriet Martineau, Society in America, 3 Vols. (London, 1837).

³Chicago American, October 22, 1836.

William H. Clarke was among the founders of the Chicago Colonization Society in 1839. These were among the charter members of the First Unitarian Society in Chicago.⁴

Afterwards, Rev. Follen met with interested persons to discuss the need for a permanent Unitarian Society in the city. At the time, the Roman Catholics had a thriving parish, St. James Episcopal Church had sponsored a successful fair, the Presbyterians had a small "home made" church at Clark and Lake, and the Baptists had a congregation of 19 persons with a minister, the Rev. Isaac Hinton. The Methodists too had planned to move to their own building, and even the Universalists, separate then from the Unitarians, had an initial meeting on June 11, 1836.

Unitarianism represented the left wing of congregationalism, and were hitherto largely confined to "the neighborhood of Boston." However, commenting on the introduction of Unitarianism in the city, Rev. James Freeman Clarke had this to say about the potential in the midwest. "In fifty years," wrote Clarke, "Unitarianism must become the prevailing faith of the west." "Calvinism is worn out--its mission is nearly fulfilled. It has done a good work, but its work is over. . . . Therefore, we say to our Chicago friends--Go forward--the Lord is with you--the spirit of the age is with you--the wants of the human heart are with you."⁵

⁴Hornor, History of the First Unitarian Society of Chicago, 3-4.

⁵"Monthly Record, August 1836," Western Messenger 2 (1836-7), 140-141.

In October of 1836, local Unitarians sponsored a lecture by the Rev. Mr. Huntoon at Mr. Brown's schoolroom on the subject, "The Objections to Unitarianism."⁶ However, it was to be a few years before the Society had its own meeting place. The church had difficulty getting off the ground. However, in 1839, lectures were given by Rev. Crawford Nightingale on each Sunday at the Municipal Court, later changed in May to the Saloon Building.⁷ This was followed in June by a lecture by the Rev. George W. Hasmer from Buffalo, New York.⁸

The Chicago Lyceum

While the Episcopalians claim responsibility for setting the pace for the advancement of society and intellectual life in Chicago, the Unitarians and Universalists were particularly responsible for elevating Chicago's literary culture, making Chicago a center for intellectual discourse among the well-educated and more open-minded of Chicagoans. Prior to 1840, the Lyceum was supported by other Protestant groups in a debate format. Afterwards, it had more the character of inviting speakers, many of whom were from the East coast, to address themes of interest.⁹

⁶Chicago American, October 22, 1836.

⁷Ibid., April 10, 1839; May 26, 1839.

⁸Chicago Daily American, June 8, 1839.

⁹Chicago American, July 25, 1835.

The Chicago Lyceum promoted a strong interest in Ralph Waldo Emerson and in Transcendentalism. This reflected strongly the intellectual currents of the day which had also influenced the theology and mindset of liberal Christians, many of whom were Unitarians. The Lyceum in Chicago was supported by several ministers, including Dr. William H. Ryder (Universalist), Russ R. Shippen (Unitarian), Joseph Harrington (Unitarian), Robert H. Patterson (Presbyterian), Robert Collyer (Unitarian), and David Swing (Presbyterian turned Independent). In the late 1860s, the most popular local speakers were Collyer and Swing.¹⁰

The Lyceum attracted numerous speakers, including Emerson, Wendell Phillips, Edward Everett Hale, Clara Barton, Susan B. Anthony, Daniel Webster, Frances Willard, Mark Twain, James Freeman Clark, Peter Cartwright, Horace Mann, Thomas Starr King, Stephen A. Douglas, and Frederick Douglass on at least five different occasions. The issues were varied, including discussions of temperance, abolition, women's suffrage, Mormonism, Spiritualism, and a discussion of many key literary figures of the time.¹¹

¹⁰See Mary Elizabeth Murphy, "Cultural Interests Initiated by Lectures Before the Chicago Lyceum, 1837-1871," (M.A. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1929). Murphy's evidence suggests that the Lyceum was an informal lecture circuit, whereas the description in Bessie Louise Pierce suggests a more formal debating forum. See, Bessie Pierce, A History of Chicago, 1673-1848 I (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1937), 285-6; 381 note 97.

¹¹Murphy, "Cultural Interests... Before the Chicago Lyceum," 25.

Growth of a Church

In the late 1830s, the city was beset by a number of calamities, including the panic of 1837, a cholera epidemic of 1838, drought, a bout of malaria, and the first great fire in the city (October 26, 1839). At the time, "practically all of the men of the Society [were] public-spirited members of the Volunteer Fire Co."¹² The fire destroyed the Tremont Hotel and seventeen frame buildings. Stephen F. Gale, bookseller and member of the Society, was President of the Volunteer Fire Department.

Part of the emerging intellectual life of the city, the Society met in the back room of the bookstore of August H. Burley, a meeting place also for citizens to discuss political issues especially abolitionism. Finally, the First Unitarian Church building was erected and dedicated June 20, 1841, situated on Washington, between Clark and Dearborn, and was presided over by a graduate of Harvard, the Rev. Joseph Harrington, Jr., the society's first minister.¹³

The Society attracted many who were "energetic and successful businessmen." Nearby at the time were edifices of the Presbyterians, Methodists, Episcopalians and the Baptists, virtually monopolizing the public square. The church-building was a proud edifice, in the Doric style, having the largest bell in the

¹²Hornor, p. 6.

¹³Daily Chicago American (June 29, 1841), 2; Wallace P. Rusterholtz, The First Unitarian Society of Chicago (Chicago: First Unitarian Church, 1979), 1.

city, and an organ.¹⁴ Pews were sold the following Thursday "in a public auction."¹⁵

The church sold thirty-eight of fifty-six pews, a common practice at the time to fund the building and pay a pastor's salary. However, in 1844, Rev. Harrington left to return to the East. "As an Easterner," wrote a recent historian, "he never felt at home in pioneer Chicago."¹⁶ The Rev. William Adam, a Scotchman and former Baptist missionary to India and author of Slavery in British India was hired as the church's second minister.

By the late 1840s, the church, "which for ten years had been the private cherished interest of the few, had suddenly become a full-grown, public institution."¹⁷ However, the church faced financial difficulties, and in 1849, Adam suddenly departed. In 1849, the Church called as its pastor the Rev. Russ R. Shippen, a graduate of Allegheny College, and the first student enrolled at the Meadville Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania.

By 1851, the prosperity of the church had increased to the point where the trustees could reappraise the value of pew rents, increasing the fees from \$50 to \$275. The pastor's salary was likewise increased. The Ladies Sewing Circle raised money for a new organ in 1850, and in 1853, the Society had established a

¹⁴Daily Chicago American, June 29, 1841.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Rusterholtz, 1.

¹⁷Ibid., 13.

church library from the Pew tax. By 1854, the membership resolved to build a new building. Meanwhile, Society members represented prominent members of Chicago's political leadership. H.G. Loomis became one of the Board of Water Commissioners, and W.H. Clarke became the Assistant Engineer of Public Works (1855).

In 1857, a Unitarian minister from the East to visit the congregation. He warned the church to consider branching into new societies rather than one large Church. "The Church undivided might become like the Unitarian Churches in many cities, merely an isolated group representing a strange sect, but that divided into many centers of activity, familiar and simple, the Church had the glorious opportunity of keeping pace with the growth of the city, and of maintaining the superiority and influence it possessed."¹⁸ Heeding this admonition, the Society began to develop plans to begin two other congregations on the North (later Unity Church), and the West sides of the city (later Third Unitarian Church).

The "Ministry At Large": Urban Ministry among Unitarians

Yet 1857 was another rough year historically, for the city and for the churches. Beset by cholera, an economic panic, widespread unemployment, and alas, a flood, and overworked, the Rev. Shippen took a six months leave of absence and then resigned. In addition to overseeing charity relief and assuming the difficult job of ministering to a large congregation, Shippen was also the

¹⁸Hornor, 15.

editor of the local Unitarian paper. In September, 1857, the Rev. George F. Noyes was called as Pastor. Seeing the difficult work undertaken by his predecessor, Noyes initiated the "Minister at Large" to assist in charity work and hired the Rev. William H. Hadley to assume this responsibility.

The Minister at Large position had predecessors in Boston in 1822 and New York in 1836. Its purpose was to become "a social agency for the dispensation of general benevolence." It was engaged in giving relief to the poor, providing education and guardianship for destitute children and orphans, and finding homes and employment for the homeless and unemployed. It was soon obvious that the Minister at Large was a full-time vocation, not something that Hadley was prepared to handle.

In addition to relief efforts, money was raised and given to the Orphan Asylum, the Home for the Friendless, and to Antioch College in Ohio. The society started a sabbath school with 200 pupils, an evening school, a sewing school for young girls, and an employment agency. In the first year alone, over 150 men were assisted in finding a job.

In 1859, the Church began looking for a full time Minister to assume the duties of the Ministry at Large. Addressing Dr. Livermore in New York City and the editor of the New York Unitarian Journal, the Society advertised for someone to come to Chicago to direct its charity and relief ministries. Dr. Livermore said that only one person would qualify, and that was the Rev. Robert

Collyer,¹⁹ an Englishman living in Pennsylvania.²⁰ Collyer was a blacksmith, a former Methodist lay preacher, and a radical abolitionist follower of William Lloyd Garrison who demanded immediate end to slavery.

Rev. Robert Collyer, Unity Church in Chicago

The Rev. Robert Collyer came to Chicago in January of 1859 and opened the Unity Church in the city. Collyer was born in Yorkshire, England in 1823. He lived in Tewston until 1850, then in Ilkey, working as a Blacksmith. From eight years of age, Collyer worked in a factory. Collyer recalled the dreadful years of working in the blubber houses and in the linen mills under horrible conditions in the 1830s. He worked thirteen hours a day, eleven hours on Saturday, for two Shillings a week. He knew the problems of child labor exploitation from personal experience. Following his father, Collyer was apprenticed as a blacksmith from ages fourteen to twenty-one.

Collyer was largely self-educated. A good reader, Collyer would spend his leisure time reading books of his choice. He read Burns, Shakespeare, Scott, Lamb, Dickens, Thackeray, and McCaulay. He had more of a heart for his books than for the hammer. He read

¹⁹Not to be confused with Robert Laird Collier, later Minister of the Church of the Messiah, a later name for the First Unitarian Church in Chicago. For more information, see, John Haynes Holmes, The Life and Letters of Robert Collyer, 2 Vols. (New York: Dodd, Mead and Co., 1917).

²⁰Hornor, 18.

the literary classics of the age, including Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress; Defoe's Robinson Crusoe; Goldsmith's England; and Bible stories.

In 1846, John Birch, his mentor, died. Collyer was hired as a blacksmith for eighteen shillings and one pence a week. He married Harriet Watson and had his first child on July 5, 1847. Collyer struggled with personal crises. His half brother died in 1842, his father in 1844, and another brother in 1846 from "alcoholism." Finally, he lost his wife February 1, 1849, and his baby daughter died three days later.²¹ These personal tragedies seemed only to mould a great and compassionate character.

Following these tragedies, Collyer began attending a local Methodist church and surrendered to the Methodist ministry. He also found and married his second wife in the Methodist Church, Ann Armitage, on April 9, 1850. Methodism had given Collyer a new life after the tragedies of the previous decade. Now, with the support of a daughter of a cloth maker, he was ready to accept a new challenge.²² The couple, leaving behind Collyer's son Samuel in the care of his mother until a home was established in the new world, left for Liverpool. On April 13, 1850, they sailed for the new world.

Collyer's family had thought of migrating from England years before. Life was hard, and economically blacksmiths received

²¹Holmes, Life and Letters of Robert Collyer.

²²Ibid., I, 99.

meager wages. Such work was not rewarding, and Collyer began to wonder what he was really purposed to do.

In Collyer's autobiographical sketch, Some Memories, he wrote: ". . . I think I was never a very good blacksmith, not nearly so good as my father, for to do anything supremely well you must give your whole mind to it, yes, and give your heart, and these for me were given to the books."²³ Collyer traveled first to New York, a four week trip, and then to Philadelphia and just the outside city to "Shoemakertown."²⁴

From 1850 to 1859, Collyer was a Methodist lay-preacher while working in Philadelphia making claw hammers. Wrote Collyer: "we were strangers there as when we landed in the city seven miles away. No soul knew us of us; but they took us in . . . in good scripture fashion, so that we soon began to feel quite at home among them."²⁵ Ann Armitage Collyer gave birth to seven other children, three of them dying in infancy. Samuel, the surviving son of the first marriage, joined the family in 1854 by traveling to America with a Mr. Gallagher, a shopmate in the Shoemakertown factory.

Embroided in the abolitionist controversy, many of the Methodist Churches in the Philadelphia conference seemed more sympathetic to slavery than to abolitionism. Collyer regularly

²³Robert Collyer, Some Memories (Boston: Beacon Press, ca. 1905), 39.

²⁴Now, Ogontz, Pa., seven miles north of Philadelphia.

²⁵Collyer, Some Memories, 49.

attended a Lyceum, where Methodists came to debate these issues. The Methodists were critical of Garrisonian views (demanding immediate abolition of the slavery and the slave trade). Collyer supported the gradual view until hearing Lucretia Mott, and then became a "Garrisonian abolitionist."²⁶ Collyer's support of the plight of the slave is revealed in an 1859 letter to Flesher Bland from Chicago.

I soon began to see that I was in a new world where a totally new religion was being evolved-- a religion that must uphold a system of caste as marked as that of Hindustan. No coloured man was ever allowed at the sacrament until all else were served. No child, coloured ever so little, ever sat on the same seat in Sunday school, nor grown person in church. Silence in the pulpit for six years. No prayer [was] ever uttered on behalf of the slave."²⁷

Collyer became aligned with the radical abolitionists, and would speak in "infidel" pulpits (Unitarian/ Universalist churches) to support the cause. Among them was the pulpit of Dr. William Henry Furness, of the Unitarian Church in Philadelphia. Collyer was pressed by evangelicals as to why he would speak in more liberal pulpits, and left the Methodist church. His movement toward Unitarianism was gradual. His acceptance of Unitarianism reflected a zeal for abolitionism and a rejection of evangelical doctrines such as eternal punishment, original sin, and total depravity.

A letter to the editor of the Christian Inquirer came from Chicago, advertising for someone to assume the Minister at Large

²⁶Ibid., 70.

²⁷Cited in Holmes, Life and Letters of Robert Collyer, I, 143.

position. Livermore knew of Robert Collyer, and redirected the letter to Dr. Furness, minister of the church in Philadelphia. Collyer asked around about Chicago and this unique opportunity, but could not get much of an answer. One man described the city as "all mud when he was there, and the water you had to drink was brought from the lake in barrels and peddled from house to house."²⁸

Even so, Collyer was up for a new challenge. He and his family left for Chicago in 1859. Collyer was attracted to the task of working with the poor. Details of the job were as follows:

I must look after the poor---as one man said, the Lord's poor, our own poor, and the devil's poor; for I should find them all in Chicago. Try by all means to set them to go straight, if possible. Find homes for girls and boys on farms or in good homes in the country, where their work would be worth their home and education. Hold a night school and a Sunday-school mainly, as I found, for the children of the emigrants who were flocking from Germany in those times, and the managers would give me all the teachers I might need.²⁹

In reflecting on his work to Rev. Bland in Yorkshire, Collyer wrote that

I get places for hopeless men and women, and start them in life again after they have fallen down in despair. All the publicans and harlots are members of my parish--when all the churches turn them out and they are lost to society I am here to help them to themselves and to God. I visit prisons and get the deserving, or those that desire to do well, into good places when they come out, or if it is better, get them out.³⁰

²⁸Robert Collyer, Some Memories, 94.

²⁹Ibid., 96.

³⁰Cited in Holmes, Life and Letters of Robert Collyer, I, 195-196.

The First Unitarian Church was established on the South side of the city, and there were plans in the 1850s to open a second congregation on the North side. On May 11, 1857, ten Yankees met in the office of William M. Larrabee, treasurer of the Galena and Chicago Railroad, with plans for a second Unitarian church.

In December of 1857, a constitution was adopted, and the name, Unity Church was selected. While carrying out his duties as Minister at Large, Collyer was called to become Minister of the newly formed Unity Church on the north side of the city. Unity Church began with meetings on May of 1859 and was, by early 1860, looking for a pastor. Collyer at first rejected the offer because his duties as Minister at Large were demanding enough. However, he later accepted the call upon advice of those close to the situation. He maintained the position of Minister at Large until someone else could be found.

In June of 1860, Collyer was approached by members of the Board of Trade, as some board of Trade members were also members of his church, to visit victims of a cyclone in Iowa. This he completed, gaining local acclaim for his efforts.

In 1861, a wall collapsed in the First Unitarian Church, and the office of the Ministry at Large suffered. Finally, on May 22, 1863, a fire destroyed the old First Church, and the records of the Ministry were lost. A new Church, The Church of the Messiah, was built in its place (see below). The State of Illinois finally consented to incorporate the Ministry, recognizing the activities already in practice for four years. The Ministry at Large focused

on "relief needs" of the city's poor. The Laws of the State of Illinois acknowledged the purpose of the Ministry as

the relieving, care, culture, education, and guardianship of the destitute and neglected children, (the) furnishing of suitable and proper homes and employment for the same, and the relief of persons in indigent and needy circumstances.³¹

Collyer found himself in a city that was, in the 1860s, supplier and defender of the Union. Like most progressive ministers at the time, Collyer came out in support of the Union against the institution of slavery defended by the South. The church at that time was so involved with the war effort that parochial interests were forgotten and replaced by the larger concern of saving the Union. Hence, the Ministry at Large took a backseat to the demands of war relief and preparation.

Yet, Collyer refused to allow his son Samuel, then 14, to enlist, but instead paid a hundred dollars for a boy to go in his place, and the proxy paid the ultimate price. The father continued to resist the protests of his son, and by the time Samuel was 18, the war was over. Chicago was a nexus of transportation during the war. Chicago's position as a railroad center attracted recruits to the city from the surrounding states to be fitted for war. At no other time was the city so connected to national destiny.

In mid-summer of 1861, the Reverend Henry W. Bellows of the All Souls Church in New York, and Frederick Law Olmstead, sought official recognition for the United States Sanitary Commission.

³¹Private Laws of the State of Illinois. Passed by the Twenty Third General Assembly, Commenced Jan. 5, 1863 (Springfield, 1863), 34-37.

The Commission was officially recognized by the Secretary of War on April 16, 1861. On April 16, 1862, the Sanitary Commission was given standing as part of the government to assist the efficiency of the Medical Department of the Army.

Collyer agreed to assist this enterprise through the duration of the war. To this, the new congregation at Unity gave their full consent, and Collyer was off to Washington. It was Collyer's task to visit the army after Bull Run, "to visit the camps, examine their sanitary condition and the general health of the men, and report to headquarters."³²

Collyer joined the Northwestern Sanitary Commission in Chicago, the local branch of the U.S. Sanitary Commission. This was organized by Mary Livermore and Jane Hoge in the summer of 1861 to bring fresh supplies, especially clothing and bedding, to soldiers in combat, and to comfort the wounded and dying. He described the Commission as "the grandest organization . . . the world has ever known in the merciful ministrations for the sick and wounded on the battlefield, in the hospitals, or wherever help was needed."³³

The Sanitary Commission had two purposes: one, preventive, to protect the Union troops against the possibility of disease; the second, to provide relief for the wounded, dressing wounds, giving medicines, making beds and serving meals. The Commission gathered

³²Holmes, Life and Letters of Robert Collyer, I, 255.

³³Collyer, Some Memories, 120.

supplies for the sick, including bedding, clothing, food, and bandages, and distributed such items to the battle lines.

Collyer visited those in camp, in the field, and in hospitals during the Civil War. He traveled all over the midwest, along the battle lines, to St. Louis, and to Jefferson City, Missouri, and described the acute problem of hunger. "I've never been so hungry, before, or since," he wrote. The soldiers, on both sides, picked the land of crops and supplies, "clean to the bone."³⁴

In a notable incident, Collyer traveled to Cairo, and was in route from Cairo to Pittsburgh Landing by way of a ship. On the ship, Collyer bumped into another Chicago religious leader, Dwight Lyman Moody who was traveling, purportedly, with a similar purpose like the Sanitary Commission, except with the so-called "Christian Commission," an evangelical relief entity. Moody approached Collyer, and said, "Brother Collyer, we are going to hold a prayer meeting in the [ship's] saloon. Will you come and join us?" Collyer gave his consent, only to discover that Moody's purpose in going to the battlefield was "to save souls or those men would die in their sins." Moody did not say that they would go to hell, although that was clearly implied. Collyer countered Moody publicly with a different perspective.

"Brother Moody is mistaken: we are not going there to save the souls of our soldiers, but to save their lives and leave their

³⁴Ibid., 123.

souls in the hands of God."³⁵ Collyer did not believe that his purpose was "to warn the sinner." Rather, the work was "to comfort them with tender words, lay on the soft linen and cool water, wash them, and see by all means to their help and healing. The great first thing was the nursing them back to life, and this we must do."

Disagreeing with Moody, Collyer went on: ". . . we know what those men have done, no matter who or what they are. They left their homes for the camp and the battle, while we stayed behind in our city. They endured hardness like good soldiers, while we were lodged softly. They have fought and fallen for the flag of the Union and all that the flag stands for, while here we are safe and sound."³⁶

Collyer by chance came upon Moody on the Chicago elevated train platform years later in the 1890s. Moody came over and with a smile said to Collyer, "You were wrong that day in the saloon." Collyer, replied defiantly, "Old Friend, if I was ever all right in my life, it was in that afternoon on the steamer; and, if we must all answer for the deeds done in the body, my answer will be ready, and don't you forget it!"³⁷

Of course, evangelicals would disagree with Collyer's theology. The Rev. A.E. Kittridge, Pastor of the Third

³⁵Ibid., 126.

³⁶Ibid., 127.

³⁷Ibid., 128.

Presbyterian Church would comment on the importance of revivalism, and the difference between revivalism and social work without evangelism, contrasting the styles of the Sanitary and Christian Commissions.

If the Sanitary Commission bent over the wounded soldier to bind up the gaping wounds, and give a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, the Christian Commission, the child of the revival, was omnipresent before and after the battle, on the field, in the hospital, bearing the mother's boy in the assurance of a mother's prayers.³⁸

Later in Chicago, Collyer continued to visit soldiers, this time with soldiers from the Confederacy who were imprisoned in Camp Douglas, many of whom were gravely ill. He assisted these individuals with letter writing, and did whatever was needed without judging the deeds or perspectives of the soldiers. He ministered to soldiers, blue and grey, including those who lost limbs, those shot through the lungs, and even those whose faces were disfigured.

He sought to raise money for soldiers who died, without money for burial. He continued to raise money from his church for the Sanitary Commission, for garments, and to give medical attention to the sick and wounded. Collyer's work in Chicago, and with the Sanitary Commission received wide acclaim. Visitors to his church and home included prominent persons like Ralph Waldo Emerson, as well as ordinary soldiers who years later came to thank Collyer of his kindness.

³⁸A.E. Kittridge, "The Revivals of 1857 and 1858," The Advance (Feb 16, 1871), 2.

After the war, Collyer plunged into the tasks for which he was hired. He began a Sunday-school, a children's church and nursery. In the North Side of the city, Collyer was present in the "German Quarter," as it was called, and German children, Catholic and Protestant, flocked to his school, many of them able to learn English as the result of the effort. Collyer remembered that "we made all the children welcome who came in, and drew no line between our own and the children of the stranger within our gates."³⁹

The "Day Home" too attracted many children, many from the Catholic faith, yet Collyer's purpose was not to convert, but to help "nurture" the children and their families to help elevate these families from their poverty and destitution.

Things in Chicago stabilized enough to allow Collyer to travel back to England in the late 1860s, once to see his mother, and once to give an address at the international gathering of the Unitarians in London. The late sixties were prosperous times for Unity Church, and a new church building was erected in the summer of 1869. Unfortunately, the prosperity that Chicago experienced in the late 1860s was soon overshadowed by the devastation of a great fire. "Two good and fruitful years were given us in the new church, in which I for one certainly began to feel very much at home, and then the great calamity fell on our city when the church and the homes were [over]whelmed in the common ruin."⁴⁰

³⁹Collyer, Some Memories, 157.

⁴⁰Ibid., 185.

A casualty of the war, the Ministry at Large ceased to function. "It had been an emerging office and short lived, but it had been the first of its kind to respond to the needs of the poor in the city and it had set a pattern which subsequent agencies followed."⁴¹ Another scholar concluded that the Ministry At Large "was probably one of the Chicago social agencies which helped to inspire Jane Addams to establish Hull House in 1889."⁴²

Robert Collyer was involved in almost every reform organization at the time. In addition to his participation in the Sanitary Commission, he supported an effort by local women to raise money for relief of the Civil War soldiers. He was a fundraiser for the Chicago Erring Women's Refuge, a home for women in prostitution. He supported an Industrial Home for refugees of the Civil War. He promoted the opening of reading rooms and lodging places for "newsboys," the growing wandering adolescent population in the city. Finally, Collyer helped establish the Womens and Childrens Hospital.⁴³

His public career in Chicago was impacted by significant events in the history of a nation and of a city. His concern for the lives of people, especially during times of hardship, characterized his ministry. Collyer's efforts stemmed from his

⁴¹Hornor, p. 19.

⁴²Rusterholtz, 3.

⁴³W.H. Furness, "Robert Collyer and His Church," A sermon given in Philadelphia for relief of the Chicago fire, Nov. 12, 1871. Ms. Collections, The Chicago Historical Society; and Chicago Tribune (March 10, 1865), 4.

love of the city. Later, in his Diary, Collyer could reflect on his years in the city.

Forty-five years ago in this week when I came there, she was lifting herself out of the mud, where the need was, seven feet, the buildings as I have said, with jack-screws worked by the might of Irish labor---houses, banks, stores, and hotels--while the inmates stayed about their business just the same, and the spaces in the streets were brought up to the new level. The population in 1860 was one hundred and nine thousand, and she was alive to the tips of her fingers and the core of her heart and brain. I had lived in the country all my life, and when I came there [I] was thirty-six years of age. The life in the city was a new life and I caught something of the strong inspiration. The rune runs, "God made the country, and man made the town." The rune is not true. Every great city hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. We come to the strong and vital cities to find ourselves: This was what befell me in going to Chicago. There was a challenge in the strong and headstrong life I must answer.⁴⁴ Evil, yes, but good also to match, and more than match.

Other Reform Efforts

Robert Collyer was renowned for his involvements during the war with the Northwestern Sanitary Commission, a precursor to the American Red Cross. However, on the home front, the most significant effort to support the Sanitary Commission was carried out by a laywoman, Mary A. Livermore, a Universalist and wife of the Rev. David P. Livermore.

During the Civil War, women were active in many other ways. By 1863, the women started a Soup House and were involved in establishing a Soldier's Rest Home for victims of the war. In Unity Church, Collyer was involved in other fronts as well. He

⁴⁴Collyer, Some Memories, 115-116.

helped begin the "Chicago Christian Union" as a relief effort for the poor among liberal churches in 1861. This was largely the result of the Unitarians not being able to participate in the YMCA, since that was limited to evangelical churches.

Also, Collyer was responsible for beginning the "Liberal Christian League" (see chapter on "Limited Benevolence"). This League, ahead of its time, postulated that poor people, including women in prostitution, were victims and not the perpetrators of their plight. Collyer wanted to inquire as to the causes of poverty, and the condition of the poor, rather than assuming with most of the evangelical world that poor people were responsible for their own poverty.

Church of the Messiah

Noyes resigned in 1859 as Pastor of the First Unitarian Church, stating that he did not have a "free church." Perhaps this was a reference to the practice of pew rentals. Whatever the problem, Noyes stated that he was unable to conduct his ministry "untrammelled by the usual conditions of society [and] organization," and because he was unable to operate under "the guidance of my own convictions of truth and duty."⁴⁵ Information is not available as to what was really on Noyes' mind, except that

⁴⁵Rusterholtz, 3.

his resignation was accepted "with regret and appreciation of his pastorate."⁴⁶

After the fire of 1863, the First Unitarian Church was rebuilt on the same location and renamed the Church of the Messiah. Doctrinally, the church confessed to a dogma that accepted Christ as somewhat less than God, but teaching disciples to hope for a coming Messiah. This was taken from a speech by William Ellery Channing.

Unfortunately, the Church was described as "destitute" by 1864, and the Rev. Thomas was dismissed for "having violated the laws of God and society and thereby become unworthy of the name of a Christian man."⁴⁷ While we can only conjecture as to what transpired, Thomas' leaving happened at the same time the Church experienced major losses in the church treasury.

In April 17, 1866, after the War, the Rev. Robert Laird Collier was installed as Minister of First Church, now Church of the Messiah. Collier was from New Brunswick, New Jersey, and like Robert Collyer, was formerly a Methodist Minister before turning to Unitarianism. The Rev. Robert Collyer led the Dedication Service for the new church on Sunday, while the Rev. Robert Laird Collier was installed on the following Tuesday. On Wednesday, the Church sponsored a Parish Re-union, and members signed up for pew

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid., 4.

rentals on Thursday evening.⁴⁸ The pews were rented for \$12.50 per quarter, and the renter agreed that "the Trustees shall have the right to Re-rent the Pew in the event this note is not paid at Maturity."⁴⁹

Collier's theology shocked evangelicals. Not only was he a blatant liberal theologically, but he openly attacked some of the primary beliefs and practices of evangelical orthodoxy, temperance and Sabbatarianism. On Thanksgiving Day, 1867, Collier came out opposed to prohibition and the closing of saloons on Sunday. He argued that Sunday blue laws were unconstitutional and "a violation of religious liberty."⁵⁰

The Advance called Collier an advocate of "Sunday license." Collier was caricatured by the Advance as advocating a non-evangelical religion. His religion was described by the Advance as "the religion of my own soul; my creed is my own pleasure; my church is the saloon; my sermons the words of dissipation."⁵¹ To the evangelicals, not only were the Unitarians guilty of heresy, but, more than that, they compromised the ethos so dear to evangelicalism. Collier had challenged what was for many the essence of evangelical Protestant self-identity.

⁴⁸Unitarian Church of Chicago: The Church of the Messiah, Miscellaneous Pamphlets, 1866. The Chicago Historical Society, Manuscript Collection.

⁴⁹Unitarian Church of Chicago, Miscellaneous Pamphlets, 1866, Ms. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

⁵⁰The Advance (December 19, 1867), 2.

⁵¹Ibid.

Not all of the evangelicals were willing to see the Unitarians partners for the public welfare. In 1858, the Presbyterian Expositor, and the conservative editor, Nathan L. Rice, would raise important theological questions of Unitarianism.

There is no system of doctrines which they profess to believe; and therefore, the outsiders may be quite as orthodox as the members. In the next place, the members do not profess to have experienced any renewal of heart, and, therefore, the outsiders may be quite as good as they. Why, then should any distinction be made. If the church and the world are alike, why make a difference? Whilst, therefore, we do not admire the Unitarian religion, we do admire the consistency of the Unitarian preachers in so nearly acknowledging, that their religion amounts to nothing.⁵²

Additionally, the Advance reported that the Unitarians purchased property with the view of establishing a theological seminary.⁵³

Finding something to fault, the Advance voiced its shock that Unitarians, from their vantage point, seemed to use any means to raise money, including lotteries, raffles, drawings, "not only contrary to the most assured principles of Christian morality, but also demoralizing in its effect upon the church [and] community at large, [recommends] all the churches in its fellowship to discountenance their employment."⁵⁴

For many evangelicals, a legacy of theological differences remained. For the Advance, four Unitarian churches in Chicago were

⁵²"Unitarianism and the World," The Presbyterian Expositor (July 1858): 441-442.

⁵³Ibid., (June 9, 1870), 5.

⁵⁴Ibid., (Jan. 19, 1871), 5.

not the best of all possible news. The editor disputed the belief that Boston was the "Jerusalem" for Unitarianism. "Rather, Chicago is the New Jerusalem."⁵⁵

On November 1, 1868, the Third Unitarian Church was started on the West side, with the Rev. Carlton A. Staples as Minister. Staples' sermon dedicating the church was: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is Liberty," symbolizing the hallmark of Unitarian theology. A church building was to be erected, but was interrupted by the Fire and not finished until September, 1872. In 1869, Unitarians set up the Chicago Missionary Society on Twenty-Second Street, later called Fourth Unitarian Church.

Unitarianism by 1870 was listed as a full partner with the rest of the evangelical groups in the major philanthropies of the time. Robert Laird Collier's work and leadership with the Chicago Relief and Aid Society symbolized the coming of age of Unitarianism as a viable alternative among the denominational choices in the city.

Yet, there seem to have been fewer evangelicals who were concerned about doctrine in this period. Most were interested in the class-based virtues of thrift, industry, benevolence, and self-control. The Unitarians, despite their theology, or lack of it, nonetheless adhered to the same set of moral values as the evangelicals. Ethics and moral virtue were more important than theology.

⁵⁵Ibid., (Nov. 11, 1869), 5.

When the city was beset by the fire in 1871, it presented a situation that required an ecumenical response. Thirty-nine churches were destroyed, but not the Church of the Messiah. However, the fire did destroy the homes of parishioners. To protect the church and the Methodist Church nearby, buildings around it were dynamited.

At the time of the fire, Robert Laird Collier was the Executive Director of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society.⁵⁶ The catastrophe was a time to put in the background disputes over theology and ethics. A public crisis was at hand. Collier met with colleagues at the local train station and accepted the responsibility of distributing a trainload of food and medical supplies to the needy, homeless, and hungry of the fire. English Unitarians contributed over \$12,000 to the relief effort.

In addition to directing the work of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society at this time, Collier also opened up his own church to shelter the homeless, as many slept on pews as beds, and the basement was converted to a soup kitchen to feed the people victimized by the fire. After the fire, the area was desolate, and the church was not well attended.

After the fire, parishioners rebuilt their homes away from the business district, tempting the church to do likewise. The old building was set to be sold, and a new building was erected on June 14, 1873, on the corner of Michigan and 23rd Streets on the south

⁵⁶Hornor, p. 25.

side. The First Unitarian Church eventually ended up in Hyde Park by the turn of the century.

Since Unitarians were relatively well-educated and were known for their free-thinking attitudes and concern for the arts and intellectual pursuits, they were ready partners with Universalists and Episcopalians in the pursuit of culture. Also, since several of the Unitarian ministers were outstanding leaders for reform and had gained both respect and visibility, they were commonly accepted by citizens, and by most evangelicals, as partners in relief of the city, and in the struggle of most of the reform crusades of the day.

Universalism in Chicago

In addition to the Unitarians, the other major liberal religious group in Chicago was the Universalists. In June of 1836, the first Universalist services were held in Chicago in the auction room of the Saloon building, the "Garrett, Brown and Brothers Auction Room."⁵⁷ The Reverend William Queal preached the first sermon, and the church was organized June 11, 1836.⁵⁸

As late as July of 1841, an ad appeared in the Daily Chicago American that the Rev. David Vanalstine, a Universalist, would preach in the "city saloon" on Sunday July 18.⁵⁹ The Universalists

⁵⁷Chicago Democrat (August 19, 1835).

⁵⁸A.T. Andreas, History of Chicago (Wheaton, 1885), I:343.

⁵⁹Chicago Daily American (July 16, 1841), 2.

would later utilize the court room of Chapman's building, before building their own structure in 1844,⁶⁰ but their liberalism in theology and ethics would continue to offend the evangelical Protestants. Universalists held simply that God was too good to condemn human beings to an eternal hell and that all human beings would eventually get to heaven as the final resting place.

The Universalist Church was thirty-five by seventy feet and laid on a lot on Washington Street, between Clark and Dearborn. The edifice was "built upon a lot donated to the society by the state and stands in a central part of the city. It is constructed after the Ionic order, and rests upon a permanent stone foundation, six feet high, has a ringing gallery over the Vestibule, supported by columns. . . . At a cost of \$2500, it is "tastefully completed, carpeted, [and] furnished, [and] is one of the prettiest edifices for public worship in the city."⁶¹

The Rev. William E. Manley was the first pastor, and he was replaced by Rev. Samuel P. Skinner in 1845. Skinner was replaced in 1855 by the Rev. Samuel B. Mason. During Rev. Mason's pastorate, the congregation outgrew the former edifice, making the building of a new church a necessity. The new church was built at the corner of Van Buren and Wabash. It was replete with turrets, towers, a spire 175 feet tall, a basement and a "very fine organ."

⁶⁰Chicago Democrat, October 16, 1844.

⁶¹Ibid.

The church was dedicated on May 7, 1857, with the final cost of \$60,000.⁶²

The church was officially the First Universalist Society of Chicago but was known more popularly as St. Paul's Universalist Church. St. Paul's was a church of 400 persons, and in 1843, a Sabbath School was organized, with 168 scholars in 1861, and a library of 700 volumes.⁶³ The Second Universalist Church was organized near Union Park in 1854, dedicated Jan. 23, 1861, with the Rev. J.H. Tuttle as pastor. Known as the Church of the Redeemer, this church also sponsored a Sabbath School, with 350 scholars and a library of 600 volumes.⁶⁴ The pastor of the church during the Civil War was David P. Livermore, the editor of the denominational paper, The New Covenant. However, the most significant leadership that Universalists gave the city at this time was given by Mary A. Livermore, the minister's wife.⁶⁵

The Northwestern Soldier's Fair

Mary A. Livermore was born as Mary Rice in Boston. Her father was a Welsh preacher, and she shocked her Calvinist family in 1845 when she married Daniel Parker Livermore, a young Universalist

⁶²Weekly Chicago Democrat, Jan. 10, 1857; Andreas, History of Chicago, I, 343.

⁶³The New Covenant (Nov. 22, 1862), 1.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵For more information on the life and contribution of Mary A. Livermore, see below under "The Benevolent Crusade."

Minister. The Livermores campaigned for the passage of the Maine Law, which would forbid the sale of intoxicating beverages in the state of Massachusetts. Like many at the time, it was assumed that alcoholism was the cause of poverty, crime, and immorality.

Mary was also a writer, and her first published book was on temperance. Upon moving to Chicago in 1857, she became active in some of the standard charities, including the Home for the Friendless and later was among the founders of the Home for Aged Women and the Hospital for Women and Children. While her husband was editor of the Universalist journal, the New Covenant, Mary became Associate Editor because of her superior writing skills. She was the only woman journalist at the Republican Convention of 1860, held in Chicago.⁶⁶

Upon the beginning of the war in 1861, Mary found herself giving counsel to women whose sons or husbands were going into the Civil War, and she decided to become more involved. The United States Sanitary Commission was working in ten cities, hospitals and camps. The Chicago branch of the Commission, the "Northwestern Branch," was organized at the Tremont House in October, 1861, by Mrs. Livermore and Mrs. A.H. Hoge.⁶⁷ The two women were nominated as "associate managers" and accepted the responsibility to inspect

⁶⁶J. Christopher Schnell, "Mary Livermore and the Great Northwestern Fair," Chicago History (Spring, 1975): 35.

⁶⁷Sarah K. Bolton, "Mary A. Livermore," The Advance, XXI (May 13, 1886), 294.

Mrs. Livermore and Mrs. A.H. Hoge.⁶⁷ The two women were nominated as "associate managers" and accepted the responsibility to inspect camps, raise funds, and organize for the "solicitation, storage, and disbursement of supplies."⁶⁸

Mrs. Livermore turned out to be a great fundraiser. She visited the camps of the wounded and then would return home to audiences, speaking and sharing stories for two hours and asking for money to help the afflicted. Undaunted, Livermore planned to hold a Fair to raise money for the Northwestern Sanitary Commission. She appealed to examples of world's fairs in Paris (1861) and London (1862). Livermore was impressed with the stories of machines, and new technologies.

Livermore was interested in raising money for fallen soldiers and their families. The Fair was held in 1863, despite skepticism from the (male) business community. Livermore organized a planning team of women from five states, with gifts from several societies, including the Knights of the Good Templars, Soldiers Aid Societies, and the Camp Douglas Hospital Aid Society. Twenty-eight women from five states came, and 10,000 circulars were printed and distributed.

The Executive Committee included only one man, E.W. Blatchford, the treasurer. The Committee proceeded to collect

⁶⁷Sarah K. Bolton, "Mary A. Livermore," The Advance, XXI (May 13, 1886), 294.

⁶⁸Schnell, "Mary Livermore," 36.

articles for soldiers, including clothing, machines, dairy products, apples, flowers, turkeys, chickens, knives, forks, spoons, flags, and antiques. These items would all be sold at the Fair to raise money.

Livermore divided up the duties among the women and organized them in committees. These committees included the Executive Committee, the Committee on Entertainment, Daily Dinners, Fine Arts, Fruit and Flowers, Records of Donations, and Treasurer. Livermore implored the support of clergy from all the churches: "Clergymen of all denominations are urgently requested to interest their parishes in this great enterprise, and stimulate their labor to the manufacture and donation of articles for the fair."⁶⁹

Mrs. Hoge and Mrs. Livermore visited cities by the scores "to awaken interest where a special interest was needed."⁷⁰ The Fair was organized like a World's Fair, except that its purpose was the relief of soldiers in a war. The basement of the McVickers Theater became the base of operations. When the Fair occurred, Livermore organized Bryan's Hall, later the Grand Opera House, as an art gallery. She had to build one structure, the Manufacturers Hall, to display plows, stoves, barrels, pails, washtubs, pumps, washing machines, a boiler and a ten horsepower engine.⁷¹

There was also a Curiosity Shop, where things like flags,

⁶⁹History of the North-Western Soldier's Fair Held in Chicago, 1863 (Chicago: Dunlap, Sewell, Spalding, Printers, 1864), 11-12.

⁷⁰Ibid., 14.

⁷¹Ibid., 28.

was sponsored to benefit the Fair. Auctions were held and a copy of Lincoln's "Emancipation Proclamation" sold for \$3,000.⁷²

The Goal of the fair was to raise \$25,000, and many people in the business community believed, because it was organized by women, that the Fair would lose money. However, the Fair in fact netted \$78,682.89 in total receipts. Of this, \$3000 was paid to the Soldiers Home in Chicago, and the remainder of over \$75,000 was paid by order of the managers to the Sanitary Commission.⁷³ The Fair was a huge success, and "such benevolence had never been known," as the event was a "magnificent outburst of patriotism and generosity."⁷⁴ States Livermore, "the rich gave of their abundance, and the poor withheld not from giving, because of their poverty."

Livermore was invited by the Sanitary Commission to conduct fairs in other cities. She participated in such organizing, although allowing local people to do most of the work. Cincinnati raised over \$225,000; Boston, \$380,000; Philadelphia, \$1.2 Million; and New York City, one million dollars. Livermore continued to visit hospitals and military posts. She both lectured five nights a week and carried blankets, medicines and food to victims.⁷⁵

⁷²Ibid., 54.

⁷³Ibid., 184.

⁷⁴Ibid., 3.

⁷⁵Advance, XXI (May 13, 1886), 295.

After the war, she spent ten years active in the temperance movement.

Chicagoans were not used to such leadership from women. Even the charities run by women historically had men in charge at the executive level. This was true of the Chicago Erring Women's Refuge, the Home for the Friendless, and the Chicago Orphan Asylum. Such effort by Mary Livermore and Jane Hoge showed that women were quite capable of organizing events and making a significant difference in the shaping of society. The success of Livermore opened up the door for other women leaders like Frances Willard and Jane Addams to take similar risks in later years.

But Livermore was a phenomenon in her own right. She became active in the Temperance Movement and was also part of the women's movement. When she attempted to build Manufacturer's Hall, the builder noted that she could not sign the contract, for married women at the time did not have that legal right. This infuriated Mary, and she later worked hard to sponsor legal and voting rights for women.

A feminist, she organized in 1868 the first such convention in Chicago for the promotion of women's suffrage. Livermore established a journal in Chicago that addressed both temperance and woman's suffrage issues in 1869, The Agitator. In 1870, she moved to Boston to assume editorship of another journal, Lucy Stone's Woman's Journal. The latter combined with The Agitator.⁷⁶

⁷⁶Schnell, "Mary Livermore," 43.

Livermore lived until 1905 and was well known as a speaker and writer on women's issues, a major theme of her's being the need for higher education for women.

Like the Unitarians, the Universalists were admired for their morality and involvement in public affairs, while their theology was treated with suspicion. The Universalists founded the Lombard University in nearby Galesburg, and like the Unitarians, were interested in intellectual pursuits as well as the development of arts and general culture. They were also partners with the evangelicals in most of the charities and moral reform movements of the day.

William Henry Ryder, an outstanding Universalist Minister, wrote that Universalist churches were involved in all "the moral and religious welfare of the city." They were assailed for their theology, but were also well-known doctrines of "religious toleration." For Rev. Ryder, "no part in the Northwest has done more effective service in defending Christianity against the assaults of rationalism than St. Paul's in Chicago."⁷⁷

Significance

The Protestant evangelicals were not the only prominent religious groups in the city. The Unitarians and Universalists were the most successful of the English-speaking non-evangelical

⁷⁷William Henry Ryder, "Universalist Denomination in Chicago," in Discovery and Conflict of the North-west, edited by Rufus Blanchard (Wheaton: Rufus Blanchard and Co., 1881), 602.

groups and, on one level, the Unitarians and Universalists were treated with respect. Despite their liberal theology, they shared the worldview, social location and the value-system of evangelical Protestants. Although very small, the same could be said of the Church of the New Jerusalem, the Swedenborgians. However, because the Unitarians and Universalists did not share the same evangelical theology and were outside the evangelical mainstream and were considered marginal, even heathen, by some mainstream Protestants.

There were other groups around who were more sectarian and more marginal than the Unitarians, even though they would have been closer theologically to the evangelicals. These included the Christian Church, the Seventh Day Baptists, the Adventists, the Church of God, and the Society of Friends. Each would have been more agreeable to evangelicalism but, due to their sectarian appearance and marginality, were considered less than a respectable option for a socially-conscious people.

Other sectarian groups were treated with even more disdain. These included the Mormons and the Spiritualists. These groups were considered outside the mainstream of the evangelical consensus. While it may have been more entertaining to attend a spiritualist meeting rather than an Adventist gathering in expectation of the end of the world, both groups were considered less than respectable because of their strange theology or odd practice. Protestant evangelicals preferred those groups whose religious practices and general lifestyle befitted the respectable and virtuous of society. What mattered was the practice of moral

virtue and participation in society in one of the approved benevolent crusades. For those groups that were more on the margin, they could either try to imitate the appearance and practices of mainstream evangelicalism, or move on to another place.

PART TWO: PROTESTANT MISSIONS

CHAPTER VIII

THE IMMIGRANT CHURCH: GERMAN AND SCANDINAVIAN PROTESTANTISM

Protestants and Catholics

For many evangelicals in the city, the most significant problem was the foreign population. With the rapid increase in the city of populations who came from Ireland and Germany, fears of Roman Catholic insurgence dominated protestant thinking. For with the foreign element came Catholicism, "social communism," and poverty and dependence upon the strained public coffers. The foreign element was considered a threat, not just to the hegemony of evangelical religion, but to "liberty" and to the institutions of the republic, the churches, the public schools and the governmental systems.

The Watchman of the Prairies summed up the perspective of evangelicals and fear of foreigners. "Our republican institutions are based upon the Bible, and no man is qualified to discharge the duties of an American citizen who is unacquainted with this book, and especially when it is remembered that a large share of these foreigners come to our shores with erroneous views of what

constitutes piety."¹ This fear of the foreign element included a fear of immigrants, Catholicism, and with them intemperance, dissidence, and vice, all of which were considered threats to public institutions.

To a certain degree, the fears were justified. Many of the immigrants were Catholics who would not accept the precepts of protestant hegemony. Many came with cultures that assumed the legitimacy of public drinking. A few were "red republicans," who were swayed by political radicalism or utopianism as alternatives to authoritarianism and monarchy in the old country. Finally, not a few came to this country destitute, and not a few succumbed to disease, including epidemics like cholera. It seemed, to the evangelicals, that the very foundations of society were being undermined by the foreign element.

By 1850, the foreign population had outnumbered the "nativist" population, comprising 60% of the total population by the time of the Lager Beer riots of 1854. As early as 1837, there were 2,000 Catholics in Chicago. The diocese of Chicago was founded November 28, 1843, and the city had its first bishop, William Quarter of Ireland. By 1848, Quarter had started thirty churches, ordained twenty-nine priests, and had summoned forty clergymen and twenty theological students to the city. This was an overt threat to the

¹"The Bible Among Immigrants," Northwestern Christian Advocate (April 20, 1853), 63.

Protestant empire.² To Protestants, the greatest threat to "free institutions" and "liberty of conscience" was Catholicism. Protestants believed that their mission was to conquer the West before the Catholics did, thereby preserving the country from the perceived dangers of Catholic nations and the feared political autocracy.

Mrs. Robert Strong warned in 1832 that "it is thought if there is not a Protestant Church at Chicago soon, that there will be a Roman Catholic one."³ Mrs. Strong hoped for "a faithful devoted missionary [who would] come into this dark corner of the earth. . . . You cannot imagine how sin, and iniquity, doth abound here, it is enough to make one shudder to see how the sabbath is so absent here, particularly by the soldiers stationed here. . . ."⁴

The Chicago Democrat ran some articles against Catholicism from the New York American, representing views of the "Native American Democratic Association." "We are opposed to the Roman Catholic religion for we believe that the system is a political engine, incompatible with a free government."⁵ Such was consistent with the way most Protestants viewed the power of Catholicism.

Jeremiah Porter, the founder of the First Presbyterian Church

²Theodore C. Pease, The Frontier State, 1818-1848 (Springfield: Illinois Centennial Commission, 1918), 424.

³Mrs. Caroline Strong, Fort Paine, to Miss Elizabeth Trowbridge, Ogden, Monroe Co., New York, July 12, 1832, Blackhawk War Mss., the Chicago Historical Society.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Chicago Democrat, August 1, 1835.

in the city, was a militant anti-Catholic. Porter prayed at the door of the building used as a Catholic chapel in 1834, that the religion might not know prosperity in the city. Yet, prosperity followed the Catholics in the city, as it did the Protestants. The Chicago Magazine two decades later observed that "the Catholics, it appears, had louder prayers inside than those sent up on the outside, as the number of large Catholic churches . . . now among us testify."⁶

Typical of the times, Lyman Beecher (1775-1863), President of Lane Seminary and Pastor of Second Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati, wrote in 1835 that . . .

the religious and political destiny of our nation is to be decided in the West. There is the territory, and there soon will be the population, the wealth, and the political power. The Atlantic commerce and manufactures may confer always some peculiar advantages on the East. But the West is destined to be the great central power of the nation, and under heaven, must affect powerfully the cause of free institutions and the liberty of the world.⁷

The first Catholic minister in Chicago, the Rev. St. Cyr, noted the increase and wrote to Bishop Rosati in St. Louis that, the "Americans do not fail to crowd our church every Sunday. . . ." Despite the public prophecy of Porter that the Catholic church would come to little in the Midwest, "our little church is far from being put up for sale as our miracle worker said on board the

⁶Chicago Magazine (1857), I, 404.

⁷Lyman Beecher, "A Plea for the West," (1835); in Conrad Cherry, ed. God's New Israel: Religious Interpretations of American Destiny (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1971), 120.

Steamboat Michigan."⁸ Porter would later modify his position in a sermon to the Chicago Historical Society.

The Catholics were already a sizeable population and a significant influence in the city by 1859. So Porter changed his tune. "If I ever prayed at midnight before that chapel, or any of the Roman Catholic churches since built in the city, it was that no evil should come from them. . . . My hearts desire [was] that they who teach and they who worship in these churches would receive the whole truth and be true followers of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ."⁹ Porter here tried to minimize ill feelings between he and Catholic leaders. However, incipient in the quote is the belief that his beliefs are superior, and Catholic views are errant.

In 1846, word reached an evangelical newspaper that a protestant woman had converted to Catholicism. This was shocking beyond belief. The editor reasoned, "the woman was either criminal or crazy," for no one in their right mind would submit to the "idolatrourous and debasing tendencies of Catholicism." Still, the Western Citizen did not condemn individual Catholics, but the Catholic church as a political and religious system. There may be many good lay people in the Catholic Church, "but for a Protestant

⁸St. Cyr to Bishop Rosati, Jan 12, 1835. Ms., Chicago Historical Society.

⁹Jeremiah Porter, "Address on the Earliest Religious History of Chicago," Delivered at the request of the Chicago Historical Society, 1857. Jeremiah Porter Papers. Ms. Collection, the Chicago Historical Society.

or an individual educated under Protestant institutions to become a Catholic, indicates an unsettled mind, or an impure heart."¹⁰

Hence for evangelical Protestants, their mission was to conquer the West before the Catholics did. They were to carry out the manifest destiny, the national purpose of establishing protestantism as the official religion of the empire.¹¹ Only in protestantism was there hope for democracy, free institutions and the pursuit of liberty. Protestants thus rushed to the West, to conquer it before the Roman Catholic antichrist, the "man of sin" got there first.¹²

For native American Protestants, the differences between evangelicalism and Catholicism was an unbridgeable gulf. Between "popery and Protestantism," wrote the Watchman of the Prairies, were differences on every point of doctrine, between the nature of the church, rule of faith and practice, the use of the Bible, object of worship, nature of sin, agency whereby the sinner is renewed, the way the sinner is saved, the mediation of Christ, as well as the "state into which the souls go, on the departure from the body." "These differences," the author exclaimed, "are as wide as the differences between truth and error, it is almost as wide

¹⁰Western Herald, Sept. 9, 1846.

¹¹For an elaboration of this theme, see Martin E. Marty, Righteous Empire: The Protestant Experience in America (New York: The Dial Press, 1970), esp. sections II-IV.

¹²The Western Herald, Sept. 9, 1846.

as is the difference between the mythology of the heathen [and] the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments."¹³

The Watchman of the Prairies, the organ of the Baptist churches, could argue that "Romanism never changes," its "hierarchy" will "bring the world back to . . . ignorance, superstition, [and] slavery." Catholicism is "adverse to republics [and] is the cause of the downfall of Spain, Italy, Russia, etc."¹⁴ Whether true or not, the fact was that the perception of evangelicals at the time was that Catholicism was a severe threat to Protestantism, and to all "republican institutions."

For the Methodist religious press, the conclusion was similar. "Romanism" was in conflict with protestantism, as the former represented an "attack [upon] religious freedom [and] toleration." The Methodists feared the "power of the Jesuits" who are "instruments of the despots of the old world, in a common purpose to exterminate free principles from their dominion."¹⁵

"Popery and republicanism are incompatible," wrote the NWCA. Why? Because "Catholics vote as a group . . . subject to clerical dictation." Attempts to "obtain public money for their schools" were viewed as "indicative of the evil." The Catholics of the city

¹³Watchman of the Prairies, Dec. 11, 1859.

¹⁴Ibid., (March 5, 1850), 1.

¹⁵Northwestern Christian Advocate, Jan. 5, 1853.

"constitute a most troublesome, factious, and expensive religico-politico element."¹⁶

The Catholic press was of course not silent on the matter. In the Catholic paper, The Western Tablet, the editor would counter "protestant fallacies," especially in their caricature of Catholicism. The Tablet would criticize the "insane rancor, indecency, and blasphemy which these journals are . . . belching forth against everything Catholic." It seemed to the editor that "Satan [had] taken a vacation from his employment in the infernal world, and had established himself . . . in the editorial sanctums of certain Presbyterian and Methodist prints."¹⁷

Of Protestantism, "the sectarian persons and editors are doing all they can ultimately to undermine their own credit with their own partisans, as well as that of Protestantism considered as a positive system. . . ." "Protestantism . . . was born of cursing and bitterness, and it will die with the vernacular of hell freezing on its lips."¹⁸ With this example of ecumenical relations, the two Christian bodies would continue to war with each other into the next century.

The controversy over public schools was a prime example and was also related to anti-Catholicism. The Watchman of the Prairies praised the American common schools for their prevention of vice,

¹⁶Ibid., (Feb. 16, 1853), 26.

¹⁷"Voice of the Sectarian Press," The Western Tablet, Nov. 27, 1852.

¹⁸Ibid.

encouragement to industry, aid to democratic government, [and] "an intellectual . . . appraisal of true religion." Contrariwise, parochial schools were held by the evangelicals to be "degrading to the intelligence [and] it (sic) does not conceive of the purpose of the schools as the place from which to spread Christianity. . . ."19

The Protestants believed that money from the public coffers should sponsor the public schools, an institution under the control of Protestants, but not Catholic schools. To the evangelical mind, the Catholics were already too dependent upon the public purse. In addition to money for the schools, "two-thirds of the paupers are supported at public expense," and the numbers of recipients of public aid seemed to be "furnished by Catholicism. Of the hundred and five, for example, of the Poor House of this County, sixty-two are Irish, and seventy-five of the whole number are Catholic."20

In addition to the schools, the Protestants also feared the possibility of papal takeover. The Advocate would thus raise the question, "Should Chicago Become like Rome?" If yes, there would be dire consequences. There were already "a number of Roman Catholics in the city of Chicago--perhaps 25,000 in this Protestant city."21

Further, the editor of the Methodist paper warned, that if the

¹⁹Watchman of the Prairies (Nov. 14, 1848), 2.

²⁰Northwestern Christian Advocate (March 23, 1853), 47.

²¹"Should Chicago Become Like Rome?" Northwestern Christian Advocate (Wed., March 29, 1854), 49.

pope has his way, "no person should be permitted to read the Bible, none would be distributed, and the version used by Protestants should be burned and their preachers... prohibited from preaching." The Pope, Protestants feared, "was greater than the mayor, the council, the governor or the law," and "would reign supreme."²²

Attitudes Toward the Foreign Element in Chicago

The Protestant fear of Catholicism was also linked to xenophobia. In 1856, there were seven Catholic churches in Chicago, four of which were German, one French, one Irish and one "American."²³ Similarly, the Irish in 1850 numbered 6,000 people, comprising 20% of the total population and about 39% of the foreigners in the city. In 1850, there were 5,076 Germans in Chicago, comprising 17 percent of the population. In 1860, their numbers were about 20% of the population. The foreign-born comprised over 50% of the population from the 1850s to the close of the period. The foreign element became more established and more active in political and economic affairs.²⁴

The Germans were feared for several reasons. First, since many were Catholics, it was believed that the Germans might do much to undermine the Protestant empire, since their allegiance might

²²Ibid.

²³John Gager, Chicago City Directory For the Year Ending June First, 1857 (Chicago, 1857, xxxv-xxxvi).

²⁴The Northwestern Christian Advocate calculated, that of a total population of 65,872 in Chicago in 1854, 25,677 were "American," and 35,879 were "foreign." NWCA (July 12, 1854): 111.

be aligned, religiously, to Catholicism or even Lutheranism, considered by Protestants at the time to be foreign.

Second, the Germans were perceived as having leanings towards political radicalism. Following the year 1848, when hordes of Germans seemed to be arriving in the United States, it was feared that these same Germans might undermine the political and economic institutions of American Society, as many seemed to be drawn to "Red Republicanism" or "social communism," and therefore the Germans might bring with them political ideas and practices that might undermine the political institutions in the new world.

Wrote the Northwestern Christian Advocate, Protestants feared the ascendancy of "social communism" because it was "unattainable, abominable, atheistic, materialistic [and] violent." Further, it was feared that this political perspective, like any other disease, was infiltrating the country, and immigrants who held these views "should be barred from entering the country." The

. . . leaders of the German Socialist gang . . . [violate] every principle of right, [are] destructive of virtue [and] morality, [and] lead . . . to rapine [and] blood. On this parent stock of German Socialism is also grafted large branches from . . . Red Republicanism [whose] food is vice [and] whose drink is blood.²⁵

Third, Protestants believed that intemperance by definition came with the Germans. Both Germans and Irish immigrants were known as drinkers of alcoholic beverages, and following the domino hypothesis of the time, it was believed that drinking by definition would lead to public drunkenness, intemperance, followed by other

²⁵Ibid., (March 30, 1853), 1-2.

vices including domestic violence and thriftlessness. Finally, the Germans were known to be "freethinkers" and might undermine Protestant theology.

The Watchman feared the "metaphysics and exegesis of German universities," compounded by the fact that 100,000 Germans had migrated to the U.S. from 1848-1850. The "most active" of these freethinkers were perceived to be "violent propagators of Red Republicanism" who might "undermine democracy [and] free institutions."²⁶ The author went on to connect such "metaphysics" with infidelity, intemperance, beer and tobacco abuse.

Yet, many of the Germans were attracted to Catholicism, for such was the religion of their forebears. By the late 1840s, there were enough Germans in the city that they would demand of the Catholic Church a German parish and a priest familiar with the German language. The Germans in 1847 requested a priest who could deliver masses in the German language. "They say they desire a man who can talk their language fluently, and understand their customs, and they think they are now entitled to one; and they believe one can be granted without interfering with the privilege of those who speak the American tongue."²⁷

Many Germans were nonetheless attracted to Protestantism, and seemed for a number of reasons to be preferred over the Irish. At least the Germans came to this country with urban skills, middle

²⁶Watchman of the Prairies (November 4, 1851), 1.

²⁷Chicago Democrat, Sept. 7, 1847.

class manners, and a culture that appealed to the genteel of society. The Germans, "with scarcely an exception can all read, and consider themselves Christians, and feel themselves insulted if the fact is at all questioned. They are either Catholics or members of the formalist churches of Germany."²⁸

The Advance thought that the Germans were "intelligent, lovers of liberty, industrious and learned." Admitted, many were "beer guzzlers, free thinkers and infidels," but most Germans were "not an irreligious people," and provide "the best hope for being evangelized"²⁹ among the "foreign" population.

To this end, the evangelicals took pride in their efforts at establishing churches that would reach out to the German population. The Baptists in 1850 calculated that there were five million Germans in America but only ten German Baptist churches, one of which was in Chicago. The editor of the Watchman of the Prairies lauded the "reawakened interest in the sending of missionaries among the Germans," especially, since growing numbers seemed "to eschew Catholicism [and] the churches they know in Germany [Lutheran]."³⁰

Of course, not all Protestants were necessarily anti-Catholic. William Butler Ogden, an Episcopalian, Walter Newberry, and J.

²⁸"Convention of Colporteurs in Chicago," Watchman of the Prairies, October 22, 1850.

²⁹"Our Foreign Population," The Advance (October 15, 1868), 2.

³⁰Watchman of the Prairies (Dec. 2, 1851), 2.

Young Scammon, albeit of non-evangelical persuasion, would give liberally to Catholics and would encourage several of the various enterprises, so that the Catholic Church "owed them a debt of gratitude that would not soon be forgotten."³¹ Similarly, the Chicago Democrat congratulated Bishop Quarter for building three new churches in the city, "and aiding the cause of temperance."³²

The Weekly Chicago Democrat the next year would express support of edifice-building. The paper expressed hope that the recent donations to benefit Catholics in the city would result in the erection of new churches. "Bishop Quarter has already ornamented Chicago with several fine edifices. . . . The commendable zeal of Catholics in this behalf is worthy of imitation by other religious organizations."³³ Such building was considered in the public interest and of benefit to Chicago as a city. Protestants were challenged to build additional, and even more prestigious buildings in what became a competition between groups.

Also, it was a mistake of major proportions to assume that immigrants were by definition aligned with either the Pope or a monarchy in another country. Such xenophobia no doubt turned away many would-be evangelical Protestants, and, rather than accept such prejudice, the immigrants started their own churches in huge

³¹Gilbert J. Garraghan, The Catholic Church in Chicago, 1673-1871: An Historical Sketch. (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1921), 134.

³²Chicago Democrat, May 12, 1846.

³³Weekly Chicago Democrat (Aug. 24, 1847), 2.

numbers. Very few of them joined mission churches of the established Protestant sects.

English Protestant Church Missions to Immigrants

In November of 1850, the Baptists reported that "five Germans" were baptized by the Rev. Dr. Tucker of First Baptist Church. "These are the first fruits of our labors among the several thousands of Germans in the city."³⁴ The next year, sixteen Germans separated from First Baptist Church to establish the First German Baptist Church of Chicago with the Rev. Conrad Lesher as minister.³⁵ The Watchman of the Prairies celebrated "Brother Lesher's" work, as it was "among several thousand Germans in this city, some of whom, are Catholics, some Luthereans [sic], many of them profess no form of Christian religion."³⁶

The Methodists dedicated the German Methodist Church on the corner of Van Buren and Griswold streets, with the Rev. Kellner as pastor. The assumption was that Germans would be receptive to evangelization by Protestants. "As the occasion will be one of special interest, we hope that no friend of the cause of evangelism among our German brethren in this city will fail to be present."³⁷

³⁴Watchman of the Prairies (Nov. 12, 1850), 2.

³⁵Ibid., (July 22, 1851), 2.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Northwestern Christian Advocate (Aug. 17, 1853), 2.

Also, the "Southern German Mission" was started by the Methodists in early 1853, with a reported sixty members and eighty children. Since the congregation was poor, the Methodists were asked to contribute "to glorify God . . . in building the German church in Chicago."³⁸

Evangelicals seemed less interested in evangelizing the Irish. The Irish, of course, had had enough of Protestantism over the previous few centuries and came to this country poorer, and more committed to Catholicism as a group than the Germans. Over time, the avenues of social mobility for the Irish included the police force, politics, and if all else failed, the priesthood. The fact that the first Bishop of Chicago was Irish seemed to indicate that, more than the Germans, the Catholic church was considered to be the church of the Irish in Chicago.

The Northwestern Christian Advocate praised the work of evangelist Rev. John McDevitt, whose works "are primarily confined to his Catholic countrymen, to whom he preaches, [and] distributes tracts in their own tongue." The Methodists prayed that "the enemies of popery will do all they can to facilitate his work."³⁹ Protestants were happy that Catholics sponsored their own temperance societies, including the Hibernian and Catholic Temperance Societies. They saluted the work of Father Matthew, a temperance crusader, figuring that his effort would be more

³⁸Ibid., (Feb. 16, 1853), 27.

³⁹Ibid., (March 2, 1853), 34.

effective than efforts of Protestants. Protestants were quite happy if anyone else would seek to reach the Irish.

Efforts at evangelism had some effect on the foreign population, especially among the Scandinavians. However, they did not have much effect on either the Germans or the Irish. In 1868, the Advance would lament the "German Saenger Fest" on a Sunday, a "pic-nic" held in "Wright's Grove." It seems that the Advance was offended by the "gaiety [and] intemperance of the occasion." "It was a rude insult to American institutions, [and] an indefensible outrage upon the order [and] quiet of the Lord's Day which should be protected in the interest of morals no less than of religion."⁴⁰

Similarly, when 5,000 Germans marched through the city to Ogden's Grove in 1870, the Advance was appalled that the event was even supported by the Chicago Police who marched together with the Germans so as to protect them and preserve the order. The Protestants seemed to be losing control. As a result, the Advance threatened retribution and warned that a "balance of power" would be won at the polls. Perhaps the Germans had too much love of life, but evangelicals were outraged that such a group would dare defy the Sabbath, especially publicly and with the consent of the authorities.⁴¹

⁴⁰Advance (June 25, 1868), 4.

⁴¹Ibid., (Aug. 25, 1870), 4.

Proliferation of German Churches to the Great Fire

Despite efforts at evangelization by English-speaking Protestant denominations, by 1871 there were five Catholic parishes that were established to appeal to the German population of the city, the single largest ethnic group in the city from 1860 to 1900. Many Germans were also drawn to the five Jewish synagogues, while but few were drawn to the German-speaking Protestant churches in the city.

There were a total of eighteen German-speaking churches in Chicago by 1870, among many different denominational groups. Six were aligned with the Evangelical Lutheran Church, five with the United Evangelical denomination, four with the Evangelical Association, one Evangelical Free Church, one Evangelical German church, and one English Lutheran Church. There were five Scandinavian Lutheran churches in the city as well, comprising a total of twenty-three Lutheran and Evangelical churches in Chicago, a sizable number.⁴²

Despite the fact that most Lutherans were evangelical, they were still looked upon as foreign by "Americans" in the city. Lutherans were relative latecomers to Chicago, spoke a non-English language and brought with them a culture different from old and New England. As late as 1870, twenty-two of the twenty-three Lutheran churches in the city were either German-speaking, or homes to Scandinavian immigrants, particularly Norwegians and Swedes.

⁴²Edward's 14th Annual Directory... of the City of Chicago (Chicago: Richard Edwards, 1871), 41-43.

Scandinavians were attracted to Protestantism over Catholicism. A few were attracted to high church liturgy which was identified with the St. Ansgarius Episcopal Church. Most, however, were attracted to one of the Lutheran churches, including the Immanuel Lutheran Church (Augustana Synod) or the Salem Lutheran Church. The enrollment of both churches in 1860 was 220 members combined and this total increased to 2,139 in 1870. The Lutheran churches were drawing well among the Swedes during the 1860s.

The evangelistic character of the churches of the revival, the Baptists, Methodists, and Mission Covenant churches, appealed to persons in more humble economic situations. However, in Sweden, the revival appealed to "freeholders, craftsmen and small town residents, . . . thus bringing a 'middle-class' element to revivalist churches."⁴³ For those preferring a low-church, evangelistic church, the Baptist and Methodist Protestant churches would be the logical choice.

The revivalist churches did not have a leader of the caliber of Gustav Unonius or Erland Carlsson. The result is that most Swedes chose the ranks of the two prominent Lutheran churches in the city in the 1860s, either Salem or Emmanuel. Emmanuel provided a moderate course between high-church national identity and openness to the revival. Membership in Emmanuel was therefore more acceptable to Swedes as the revival churches were looked upon with

⁴³Ulf Beijbom, Swedes in Chicago: A Demographic and Social Study of the 1846-1880 Immigration (Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1971), 247.

suspicion in the homeland. Emmanuel and Salem churches seemed more "middle-class" than either St. Ansgarius or the revivalist churches. It was therefore preferable for many Swedish immigrants to join either Emmanuel or Salem churches as evidence of one's emerging social status in a new environment.⁴⁴

The high-status Presbyterians and Episcopalians had difficulty reaching Scandinavians. Not that Scandinavians were adverse to status, just not the American version of it. Scandinavians looked upon church membership as a sign of status and respectability but were drawn to churches that were more acceptable in the homeland, and these were the Lutheran churches. The churches also insured that "virtue" was inculcated in Scandinavian communities. Temperance societies, for example, were very active among seamen in general, and among these Scandinavians in particular. A separate Scandinavian Temperance Society was founded in 1864 to address the issue among the Scandinavians.

Church membership among Scandinavians was presumed to be the door to middle-class status and acceptability in the new world. However, despite efforts by revivalist churches, Scandinavians preferred to be associated with Lutheranism. This choice seemed to square with the history of independence from the Catholic Church in these countries on the one hand, and functioned as the outward

⁴⁴In 1870, the number of communicants in the largest Swedish Churches are as follows: Immanuel (North side), 1790 (including children); Salem (South side), 349 (including children); Scandinavian Methodist Church (North side), 289; and the Mission Covenant Church, 50 members. (Source: Beijbom, Swedes in Chicago, Table 84, 364-365).

sign of respectability and virtue on the other, the essence of Protestant culture and social class values.

The result is that by 1870, of the total Swedish population in Chicago, the Lutheran churches drew the larger numbers, whereas the other protestant churches were struggling to survive. Immanuel (Augustana) attracted 30% of the Scandivavian population, St. Ansgarius Church had 10%, the Scandinavian Methodist Church had 6%, and the Baptist and Mission Covenant churches attracted but 1% of the total.

By 1871, there were five Scandinavian Lutheran churches, two Methodist churches, two Baptist churches, one Congregational church and one Scandinavian Baptist mission in Chicago. The Presbyterians had churches that attracted Welsh, Dutch, and Scotch nationalities but did not have churches or missions to the Scandinavians. Also, the Roman Catholics, despite having separate churches for Bohemians, for Poles and Germans, had none for Scandinavians.⁴⁵

By 1870, there were 13,000 Scandinavians in Chicago, including Danes, Norwegians and Swedes. Unlike many of the other ethnic groups, the Scandinavians who came to this country were mostly Protestant, drawn chiefly to Lutheranism, but also to other Protestant denominations. Of the twenty-three Lutheran churches in Chicago in 1871, six were Scandinavian, one English and the remainder German.⁴⁶

⁴⁵Edwards' Directory ... of the City of Chicago (Chicago: R. Edwards, 1871), 810-821.

⁴⁶Beijbom, Swedes in Chicago, 229.

Significance

Several of the Protestant churches tried to establish missions and churches among the new immigrant population. However, they met with very limited success. St. Ansgarius was Episcopalian, only because Gustav Unonius sought out the Episcopalians over the Lutherans in this country. Baptists and Methodists were nominally successful, with token German and Swedish churches. However, for the most part, the story among the Germans in Chicago is the story of the ascendancy of their own churches. Germans, Swedes, and Norwegians delighted to have their own churches, in their own language.

They also tended to align themselves, not with any of the evangelical Protestant churches, but with denominational choices of their own. These included the Lutheran or the Evangelical denominations. Rather than assimilate into American culture among the already established churches, the Germans and Scandinavians preferred churches and religious practices that they were familiar with in the homeland. Fully 85% of the Swedes who were church-going were Lutheran, and the percentage was even higher among the Germans. Of seventeen Lutheran churches in 1870, only one was English-speaking. The immigrants, despite questions over public drinking, shared the value-system and general cultural ethos of the English-speaking Protestants. However, because of differences in language, religious preference, and the recent arrival status in this country, the newly arrivals did not mix well with the English-

speaking Protestants. However, as immigrant communities solidified, they became more involved as leaders in the city's political and commercial life.

CHAPTER IX
VANGUARDS OF REFORM: THE BENEVOLENT CRUSADE
IN CHICAGO

The Benevolent Empire

Chicago quickly became a mecca for many of the benevolent societies. In 1848 alone, several of the societies held annual meetings in the city including the American Seamans' Friends Society, the Colonization Society, the Foreign Evangelical Society, the American Anti-Slavery Society, the Society for the Ameliorating the Condition of the Jews, the New York Institution of the Blind, the American Home Missionary Society, the American Tract Society, the American Protestant Society, the American Bible Society, and the American Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church.¹

The editor of the Watchman of the Prairies, impressed by the proliferation of societies in Chicago, looked forward to the day when "Jerusalem shall take her stand of predicted glory and become the metropolis of a magnificent empire."² By 1849, the city boasted five temperance hotels, twenty-three churches, twenty religious periodicals, numerous Sunday Schools, numerous asylums

¹Watchman of the Prairies, May 30, 1848.

²Ibid., April 10, 1849.

and hospitals, and not a few benevolent societies. "Look at these things," wrote the Watchman, "and then say if a stranger is far out of the way in calling this youthful city a 'moral lighthouse' between the two great Seas of our Western border."³

Although charity was not organized, and there was not yet a YMCA, "there were those here who deeply felt for and earnestly prayed for the young men. . . . They felt if the young men here were saved from vice and sin, Chicago would be saved."⁴ Yet organized charity soon became a big part of the city and its people.

The liberal Chicago-based periodical, The Western Citizen, the organ of the Liberty Party, challenged the churches to take a stand on issues. The paper was "devoted to universal liberty, protection of free labor, political reform, religion, temperance, agriculture and the general intelligence." Zebina Eastman, a lay Presbyterian, abolitionist and the paper's editor, rebuked the churches for their "noncommittalism," their tendency to be uninvolved in public life. Such noncommittalism contributed to the "spirit of the sect" on the part of churches. The object of churches and indeed all democratic institutions was to "remove ignorance, error and sin; and to establish their opposites."⁵

³Ibid.

⁴Jeremiah Porter, "Address on the Earliest Religious History of Chicago," Autograph Letters XVII (1859), 78.

⁵"Public Men, Public Institutions and the Church," Western Citizen (March 16, 1843), 1.

The Citizen challenged church leaders to go public. "Non-committalism" reduced the church's activity to the private realm. It "wastes and squanders the energies of God's people by directing their minds to such sins only as require attention, and where their opposition will be least felt." In short, noncommittalism is a way to avoid conflict and shun controversy. The result is that "reforms are thrown into hands of men and women of defective minds who yet see moral principles with great clearness, and will not rest in silence." Rather, the Citizen wanted qualified leaders to become actively involved rather than retiring from action.⁶

For Eastman, both the churches as well as the colleges and seminaries had a role in preparing leadership for reform. The faculties should be role models, to lead students "by precept and by example." They should engage in the battle against slaveholding, Sabbath-breaking, and intemperance. "When a public man, or public seminary, takes pains to suppress or shun any question of reform (as at Lane Seminary), it allows the sin to spread and represses those who stand against it."⁷ Periodicals like the Western Citizen thus pressured church leaders to become involved in the benevolent crusades as a test of their faith and integrity, and many of the churches relied on the actions of benevolent societies to achieve reform.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid.

In 1848, the Baptist paper Watchman of the Prairies raised the question of whether or not the churches should participate in the benevolent crusades. The paper argued that the churches could not "reform the world" without help from these societies. "Should the churches take part in the moral reformation of the world?"⁸ The editor lamented that the churches "have done so little to fulfill the great commission . . . in leading back a rebellious world to the rightful king of heaven and earth."⁹

As a result, the churches needed the voluntary associations and should make these societies "the channel through which our benevolence shall be brought to bear on the condition of men." These societies--including "a Bible society, a Missionary society, an anti-slavery society, an education society, and a temperance society, are all voluntary, and through any one of these . . . a Christian can act." "For more than a quarter of a century, the churches have employed these societies in the distribution of their benevolent and freewill offerings . . . with great benefit to themselves and the world."¹⁰

For the editor, participation in the benevolent societies was not only needful but consistent with Baptist polity. The voluntary associations, since they were voluntary, usurped no authority over the churches, and therefore should not be looked upon as a threat

⁸"Relation of the Churches to Voluntary Societies," Watchman of the Prairies, October 3, 1848.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Ibid.

to the churches. Rather, the voluntary societies were dependent on the churches for funding and personnel.¹¹

Proliferation of Benevolent Societies

In the Chicago City Directory of 1843, only four benevolent societies were mentioned as having headquarters in Chicago. These were the Chicago Bible Society, William Hubbard, President; the Washington Temperance Society, Louis C. Kerchival, President; the Mariner's Temperance Society, G. A. Rubb, President and Grant Goodrich, Vice President; and the Junior Washington Temperance Society, Edward A. Rucker, President.¹²

However, by 1846, there were six Temperance Societies alone in the city, including the Washington Temperance Society (1840), Junior Washington Temperance Society (1843), Independent Order of the Rechabites (1844), Independent Sons of Temperance (1845), the Bethel Temperance Society (1842), and the Catholic Temperance Society. Combined, the societies stated that they had 5,000 members in a city of just over 14,000 people. Just these numbers alone suggest the importance of the movement in 1846.¹³

By 1849, in addition to the Temperance Societies, several asylums and educational or moral improvement societies were active

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Robert Fergus, Chicago City Directory for 1843 (Chicago: R. Fergus, Printer, 1843).

¹³James W. Norris and George W. Gardiner, Chicago Directory for 1846-47 (Chicago: Geer and Wilson, 1846), 89.

in the city. These included the Chicago Retreat for the Insane (1847), the Catholic Orphan Asylum (1849), the Protestant (Chicago) Orphan Asylum (1850), the Young Men's Association (1841), the Mechanics Institute (1843), and the Chicago Bible Society (1840).¹⁴

To these societies would be added the YMCA (1854) as well as privately-sponsored associations such as the Chicago Building Association, the Hebrew Benevolent Society, the Printers Union, the Masons, and the Hibernia, St. George's, St. Andrews and New England societies in 1853.¹⁵ If the strength of a city, and of any political democracy, is the strength of associations and voluntary societies, then Chicago was indeed a city of civic virtue virtually unmatched in the midwest.

Additionally, there were several "secret societies" in the city. By 1855, the Chicago City Directory listed eight Masonic lodges, ten Independent Order of the Rechabite lodges, an order of the Knights of the Good Templars, a Temple of Honor, the Chicago Lyceum, the German Benevolent Assn., an Order of a United America, and the Chicago Phrenology Society to go along with the previous lists.¹⁶ By 1862 the list would include a wide variety of societies--secular, political, immigrant, commercial and many

¹⁴Chicago City Directory and Annual Advertiser, for 1849-50, ed. by O.P. Hathaway and J.H. Taylor (Chicago: James J. Langdon, Book and Job Printer, 1849).

¹⁵Hall and Smith's City Directory for 1853-54 (Chicago: R. Fergus, 1853), 234-7.

¹⁶Chicago City Directory and Business Advertiser, 1855-6. (Chicago: R. Fergus, Book and Job Printer, 1855).

societies with an express religious purpose, both Protestant and Roman Catholic.

Several of the societies had the specific religious purpose of evangelism and the spread of religious knowledge, mostly from the standpoint of a revivalistic evangelicalism, so popular at the time. These included the American Baptist Mission Union, the American Sunday School Union, the American Tract Society, the Chicago Bible Society, the Chicago Sabbath School Union, the Methodist Book Depository, the Swedish Lutheran Publication Society, the YMCA, and the Union Hebrew Relief Association.¹⁷

By 1866, the Chicago City Directory listed 107 different societies, agencies and philanthropic institutions, adding the American Home Mission Society, the Chicago Sunday School Union, the Home for the Friendless, the Ladies (Methodist) City Mission Society, the Northwestern Freedman's Aid Society, the North Star Society, the YMCA, and the Swedish Lutheran Publication Society.¹⁸ These societies, religious and secular, continued to increase in number and kind after the Civil War.

Protestants did not have a monopoly on sponsoring societies or philanthropies, although they did maintain the numerical edge. By 1867, many of the philanthropies were not just run by Protestants, but also the Roman Catholic Church. These included

¹⁷Halpin and Bailey's Chicago City Directory for the Year, 1862-63 (Chicago: Halpin and Bailey, 1862), xxiii-xxvii.

¹⁸Edwards' New Chicago City Directory for 1867 (Chicago: Richard Edwards, 1867), 988-993.

the Catholic Asylum for Boys, the Magdalen Asylum for "erring women," the St. Joseph's Male Orphan's Asylum, the St. Mary's Female Orphan Asylum, and the Sisters of Mercy Hospital.

Immigrant groups also formed their own philanthropies. These included the German Emigrant Aid Society, the Hebrew Relief Society, the Slovanska Lipa Benevolent Society, Chicago Scandinavian Union, Svea Society, and the Irish Republican Brotherhood. Since Protestant societies tended to be evangelistic and assumed the preeminence of their moral code and practice, immigrants felt they would do better by establishing their own societies.

Chicago was indeed a center of benevolent activity, moral reform and participation in civic life. The proliferation of societies during the early years reveals not only the vibrancy of the city but also the intent of the leading citizens and new arrivals to address common issues such as intemperance, relief, religious education, abolitionism as well as Bible and tract distribution. Also, Protestants organized a number of asylums, shelters and homes for the aged, women and children. It was an age of benevolence and philanthropy. But were there strings attached?

Bible and Tract Societies

Some of the most important of the benevolent societies in Chicago were those societies engaged in Bible and tract distribution. As early as 1835, the Chicago Bible Society was organized, having its first meeting in the First Presbyterian

Church.¹⁹ The Reverend John T. Mitchell, Secretary and Presiding Elder of the Methodist Church, gave a report of this first annual meeting, which was reprinted in the Chicago American. The report argued that the Bible played a large part in the democratization of the country, the elevation of morals and the encouragement of ecumenical cooperation.

The purpose of the Bible Society was to "consider and adopt some measures for the dissemination of the Holy Scriptures." It was presumed the duty of all evangelicals "to extend the circulation of the Holy Scriptures to his utmost ability." To this end, a Bible Society was started in Chicago as an auxiliary of the American Bible Society. The Society began with fifty-one members, and the following officers: President, the Rev. Isaac T. Hinton; Vice Presidents, John Wright and Grant Goodrich; Recording Secretary, John T. Mitchell; Corresponding Secretary, Jeremiah Porter; and other members of the Executive Committee, John Rockwell, and Philo Carpenter.²⁰ These were all prominent ministers and laymen of the major Protestant churches.

In November, the Society reported that \$300 was donated to purchase Bibles for distribution among the general population. To which, the leaders said celebrated because "it is beautiful to see

¹⁹John T. Mitchell, "A Report of the Chicago Bible Society," Chicago American, December 5, 1835.

²⁰Ibid., August 22, 1835.

the diversified elements of our new town perfectly harmonizing together in their work of moral good and Christian philanthropy."²¹

In December, the Executive Committee ordered 150 English Bibles, 300 English New Testaments, twenty-five German Bibles and twelve French New Testaments at \$147.50. The Society could report that "these books have all been received at the depository and will be disposed of or distributed to those who are destitute. . . ." At this early period, the Executive Committee reported: "We are happy to learn that very few of the inhabitants of our town are without a copy of the sacred scriptures."²²

For Mitchell, the Bible Society signalled the age of "enlightened philanthropy." "The Bible is the most successful agent in taming the savage beast, and in nursing an empire to civilization, and the most powerful engine to overturn the throne of the tyrant. The strongest chains of despotism are melted in sunder before the rays of this heavenly light."²³ The Bible of Luther "unbound the shackles of Europe, and whenever this volume shall have gone into every land, and shed its light on every dwelling, and upon every mind, despotism and wretchedness shall be banished from the globe."²⁴ For Mitchell and other crusaders of the age, the Bible society was the vehicle to spread democracy and

²¹Ibid., Nov. 28, 1835.

²²Ibid., Dec. 5, 1835.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

to eradicate poverty. The Bible was believed to be central to the hope of moral reform.

Further, the Bible Society enabled the Protestant denominations of the day to cooperate with each other in an enthusiastic manifestation of nascent ecumenism.

It is not the least interesting feature of the Bible associations, that they combine the interests and operation of all sects and denominations of Christians. This is to the various branches of the Christian churches, eminently a common ground, where party feelings and distinctions are forgotten, or merged, and one mind and one soul actuates the whole body.²⁵

Mitchell revealed the resolutions of the first annual meeting of Chicago Bible Society, arguing that Bible distribution led to the "progressive opening of papal and pagan countries" and the society was important "as an indispensable and urgent appeal for preserving labor and increased liberality."²⁶

In 1847, the Chicago Bible Society reported that it had distributed Bibles in fifty hotels, twenty-seven shipping companies, Sabbath Schools and among "destitute families." This work was increased to include distributing Bibles and testaments to sailors and boatmen in 1848. By 1851, visitors had contacted 4,382 families, 820 of which were "destitute." Bibles were distributed to Protestant adults and children, and not only this, 915 Bibles were distributed to Roman Catholics. By the end of 1851, Bibles and testaments were "distributed . . . among the poor

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid.

and destitute, as well as the city prison, the county jail and (the county) poorhouse.²⁷

The Bible Society continued to expand its work. By 1852, it was distributing Bibles to Sabbath Schools, public schools, the Bridewell district and the Marine Hospital. It had distributed a total of 1047 Bibles and testaments for 1852.²⁸ In 1853, over 4000 families were visited, including 1100 who were said to be destitute. 4,189 volumes were also distributed. By 1859, the Society had hired two agents who visited families and distributed Bibles and testaments full time.²⁹

With the onslaught of the Civil War, the Bible Society shifted its focus to include soldiers. By the end of 1861, over 3,500 Bibles and testaments were distributed to soldiers at Camp Douglas. Other agencies were utilized to distribute its materials. The YMCA distributed an additional 3,699 Bibles, and various Sabbath schools distributed over 4,000 Bibles and testaments. Others were distributed through the local Tract Society, and via Sunday Schools.³⁰ After the war, the Society continued to distribute

²⁷Annual Report of the American Bible Society, New York, for 1848, 1849, and 1851.

²⁸Watchman of the Prairies (Dec. 21, 1852), 1.

²⁹Chicago Bible Society: Bible Society Record, VII (Feb. 1862), 22.

³⁰Ibid.

through its connections over 23,000 Bibles or portions of the scriptures per year.³¹

On the surface, it did not seem that Bible and tract societies would contribute much to social reform. However, in the minds of officers and supporters, the distribution of Bibles, testaments, and religious tracts would do much to assist in the project of reforming Americans, and especially new immigrants.

The Bible was believed to be the "strongest safeguard to liberty which the world has ever known." Its utility in producing social change was perceived to be "a truth susceptible of practical as well as theoretical demonstration. It is the only means which can govern mankind without destroying their freedom." It was capable of "restraining" the passions of men, and at the same time, could "purify and elevate" their character. It was also instrumental in the government of nations. "The government of mankind without the Bible has in general resulted in the government of mere force: while that of the Bible converts the fierceness of the lion into the submissiveness of the lamb. . . ." ³²

Not only the Bible but Christianity was perceived to be a source of reformation. Christianity "contains and develops two opposing forces. On the one hand, she is in her very nature aggressive and reforming. . . . [It] is a restless agitator, steadily pointing society onward and upward. . . ." On the other

³¹Bible Society Record (May 1868), 70; and (March 1870), 40.

³²Watchman of the Prairies, Aug. 29, 1848.

hand, "Christianity is conservative. Her spirit is the spirit of moderation, fanaticism of every species find no favor with her. . . . Christianity is conservative in her reforms and institutions which she creates. Christianity [is] more compatible with a Constitution, 'which France needs,'" than socialism.³³

Chicago Tract Society

In addition to the American Bible Society, Chicago also became an important center for the distribution of tracts. In 1812, the New York Tract Society was formed, committed to supply tracts and literature to support the moral foundation of the nation. The Tract Society attacked the current vices of Sabbath breaking, profanity, drinking and prostitution. In 1825, the New York Tract Society merged with the New England Tract Society, forming the American Tract Society. Tracts were cheaply printed, easily transported, and quickly read, becoming an urban evangelical phenomenon.

In 1838, the American Tract Society established a branch in Chicago. In Chicago, the first effort in the city to distribute tracts was done by an affiliate of the American Tract Society.³⁴ It would later become an independent enterprise.

In the 1862 Chicago City Directory, the purposes and goals of the Chicago City Tract Society were stated publicly. "The object"

³³Ibid.

³⁴Thomas J. Dorst, "Sowing the Seeds of Reform: The Chicago Tract Society, 1889-1910," Chicago History (Spring 1983): 36.

of the Society "shall be to promote the interest of evangelical religion and sound morality, by the circulation of moral and religious publications, and by the labors of Missionaries, Colporteurs [visitors], and other agencies, which from time to time the Society may deem expedient."³⁵ From this mission statement, it is clear that the Tract Society did not just have religious education themes in mind, but also moral themes.

The Tract Society worked hand in hand with the Sabbath Schools and sought to recruit children for the schools. However, Tract distributors did not just visit people in neighborhoods. The express goal of the Tract Society was to employ missionaries and colporteurs "to establish mission Sabbath Schools" as well as distribute tracts. This was to be done on "steamboats, almshouses, hospitals, prisons, [among] the ignorant and the poor, the open-transgressors of the law of God, and those who neglect the ordinary means of grace."³⁶

In 1846, the Rev. Charles Peabody, a representative of the American Tract Society, gave a sermon at First Presbyterian Church. In the sermon, Peabody pointed out that the Tract Society was an ecumenical venture, as it represented several different denominations in the country.

Secondly, the Tract Society could offer many benefits to local churches. It sent "colporteurs" throughout the West, where

³⁵"Register," Halpin and Bailey's Chicago City Directory for the Year, 1862-63 (Chicago: Halpin and Bailey, 1862), xxiv.

³⁶Ibid.

ministers are few. Second, as of 1847, the Tract Society published 470 different kinds of tracts in ten different languages and 200 different books in five different languages.³⁷

In 1850, at the "Annual Meeting of the Chicago Tract Society," held at the Second Presbyterian Church, leaders reminded the audience of the "duty of moral and religious instruction" in home, city and country. With the "immense flow of foreign population" in the city the Tract Society was important because it could gain access to this population which was beyond the "influence" of other institutions. The goal of "distributing" tracts among the destitute of our city" was reiterated since colporteurs were "acquainted with the moral conditions of the city, and [have] enlarged the scale of their usefulness."³⁸

By 1850, over half of the population was foreign-born with 25% German and another 25% Irish. The leaders of the Tract Society suggested therefore a more aggressive strategy. The city was divided into 108 districts and each was assigned a "visitor" to provide, once a month, a tract to each family in the district. As an aside, the visitor would also enlist children for one of the many Sabbath Schools and would promote also the temperance cause, getting people to sign the temperance pledge to abstain absolutely from alcoholic beverages (teetotalism).³⁹

³⁷The Western Citizen, Sept. 9, 1846.

³⁸"Annual Meeting of the Chicago Tract Society," Watchman of the Prairies, April 9. 1850.

³⁹Ibid.

By February 1850, the Tract Society reported that from sixty-six districts, 2,623 families were visited and 3,773 tracts distributed. It also noted that fifty-two families "refused tracts." In addition, twenty-three children were recruited for Sunday School--five were converted, one backslider was reclaimed, and sixty-four were persuaded to attend churches. One visitor noted the problem faced in one district: "There are seventy-five families in my district, principally Roman Catholic." However, the Bibles and tracts were "received and read with pleasure. There is a good field open for a Sabbath School in the district."⁴⁰

By early 1851, over 3000 families were receiving tracts on a regular basis. Also fifty-two children a month were recruited to the Sunday Schools, and the work of organizing a constituency to fight public drinking politically was underway as over 300 names of individuals were collected to assist in the political task of suppressing liquor licenses.⁴¹ In short, the Sunday Schools and the tract societies were arenas for political mobilization regarding temperance as well as vehicles for the dissemination of literature.

Not everything went as planned, as three visitors were claimed by cholera. "Our city remains an arena upon which nearly every kind of wickedness is practiced."⁴² Still, the best hope for

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹Ibid., (March 4, 1851), 1.

⁴²Ibid.

society, it was believed, was the distribution of evangelical literature, and the hopeful conversion and moral improvement of the population. Just having a Bible or tract in hand on a regular basis was believed to be enough to effect social change on a large scale.⁴³

It should be pointed out that by 1850 the colporteur had become something of a professional. He or she did not just give away materials, but had to sell books and solicit money, as well as set up social meetings of churches. The "colporteur" functioned as an evangelist as well, preaching and praying among (and, in some cases, preying upon) the urban underclass of the time. The colporteur had the responsibility not just to distribute the tracts, but also to recruit for the Sunday Schools and to address the moral questions of the day.⁴⁴

A conference of colporteurs was held in 1850 in the city, reiterating "the great importance of colportage as the only means of bringing religion to the sparsely settled northwest [and] the frontier."⁴⁵ Colporteurs were, for the Methodists, "District Agents" appointed by the Conference Auxiliary.⁴⁶ Some of the colporteurs were specialists, and in 1854 one of them in particular worked the Chicago branch of the Illinois Central Railroad, whereas

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Northwestern Christian Advocate, August 17, 1853; Watchman of the Prairies, March 4, 1851.

⁴⁵Watchman of the Prairies (Oct. 1, 1850), 2.

⁴⁶NWCA (Aug. 17, 1853), 2.

others worked with specific populations such as the seamen or the Germans. By 1870, the Chicago Bible Society reported on the work of its four colporteurs, that they visited in 1869 with 7,710 families and distributed to 850 of those households Bibles and testaments.⁴⁷

However, the distribution of tracts did not seem to be making much of a difference. By 1870, the population of the city was close to 300,000, and tract distribution was increasingly more difficult and costly. It became humanly impossible to saturate the city with tracts as in earlier years, because the population of the city was growing so fast. The Advance would wonder: "Is the day of tracts at an end?"

The editor mused that "they" were no longer reading them. "In our cities, tract distribution became sort of a habitual thing . . . Are tracts . . . no longer useful in our communities?" Rather, "words must now be short, practical and to the purpose." The Advance anticipated the dilemma of the advertiser and the ad-man of the future.⁴⁸ How does one communicate a message, any message, in a pluralistic, urbanized society?

The Women's Movement

Women were the footsoldiers of the benevolent empire, and launched crusades of their own as a result. Even in the early

⁴⁷Bible Society Record, XV (March, 1870), 39.

⁴⁸"Lessons From City Walls," Advance (July 28, 1870), 2.

days, the Reverend Jeremiah Porter noted the early role of women in the practice of benevolence. "Mrs. Helm, the sister of Mr. John H. Kinzie, daily walked from her brother's house, on the North side, a half mile, to minister food and change of garments to a sick and poor family of strangers. We were first a community of strangers, and tried to obey the command, 'Love ye therefore the strangers.'"⁴⁹

Women were the footsoldiers of the charity organizations. However, there was not a very strong "women's movement" in Chicago. Women like Juliette Kinzie were prominent in society, and in her case, the St. James Episcopal Church. Other women organized Ladies Sewing circles, the backbone of churches both in terms of raising money for missions and for furnishing the church building. Many of the philanthropies were led by women, notably the Chicago Home for the Friendless, the Protestant Orphan Asylum and the Erring Woman's Refuge for Reform (see below, chapter on "Limited Benevolence").

However, the structure of the charities was that, while women were the functionaries who ran the homes, the Executive Committee was comprised of male ministers and businessmen. Men and women saw these activities as an extension of domesticity. It was women's ordained duty to raise up children and to assist indigent and wayward women in the dictates of etiquette and morality. Such was their separate sphere. Women might work for abolition, such as

⁴⁹Jeremiah Porter, "Earliest Religious History," 78.

schoolteacher Eliza Chappel or the "big four" women in the Quinn Chapel African-American Episcopal Church, but seldom were women given leadership in what might be termed social reform. This was not their sphere, hence participation in benevolence societies had to be around issues of domesticity.

A few women were not satisfied with such a predetermined existence. In her own way, Juliette Kinzie ran the St. James Church, and Eliza Chappel, wife of Presbyterian Minister Jeremiah Porter, started the first public school in Chicago. Women frequently came to Chicago via the lecture circuit, and these included Clara Barton, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Frances Willard. However, with the exception of Willard, these were famous outsiders and could be dismissed after the event.

For the Northwestern Christian Advocate, a focus on women's issues was the work of "ultra progressives." The Advocate commented on a women's convention in Rochester, New York. The convention was "large and orderly" but dwindled "to a corporal's guard" because of the "advocacy of the peculiar views of masculine women . . . consisting of a few women who ought to be in pants, and a few men who ought to be in petticoats."⁵⁰

The Advocate cited the views of one Antoinette Brown regarding women sharing in the property of men.

When husband and wife cannot agree, let them separate according to law, and principles of justice and equity, and the property be divided as in the case of ordinary

⁵⁰Northwestern Christian Advocate (December 21, 1853), 202.

copartnership. Men should not have the supreme power in the marriage relation.⁵¹

This seemed to be "the ultimatum of 'woman's rights'; the abolition of the marriage covenant."⁵²

In 1854, Mrs. Lucy Stone spoke in Chicago, lecturing on women's rights and temperance. Women like Stone began to recognize their own bondage which they perceived as not unlike the enslavement of African-Americans. The Northwestern Christian Advocate called Mrs. Stone's lecture "ridiculous" and characterized by "infidelity." The Advocate went on to discredit Stone's lecture: "If in every page of Holy writ, from Genesis to Revelation, had written upon them, wives be submissive to your husbands, she would discard them for the golden rule of Confucius, 'do unto others as thou wouldst others should do unto thee.'"⁵³

In 1858, the Presbyterian Expositor would utter its concern. This journal was edited by the very conservative Nathan L. Rice and funded by the Cyrus Hall McCormick. Rice deplored all "feminists" because they denounced what seemed to be clear biblical teaching regarding a subordinate role of women in marriage, arguing the opposite, that "the slavery and degradation of women follows from the institution of marriage; that by the marriage contract she loses the control of her name, her person, her property, her labor, her affections, her children, and her freedom." For Rice,

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Ibid., 49 (Dec. 6, 1854), 194.

"feminists" were "false reformers." The editor looked for the time when "abolitionism" along with "feminism" would "run its course, the way will be open more fully for the religion of the Bible to elevate the slave and still more fully to give to woman her true position."⁵⁴

Chicago had but one outstanding feminist in the period before the fire. Mary Livermore was outstanding for her work in Chicago in the 1860s with regard to the United States Sanitary Commission. Livermore was a Universalist and wife of the Universalist Minister, David P. Livermore. The Livermores were active in the Temperance movement on the East Coast.

The Livermores left New York in the mid-1850s following the lure of the "Western Fever." They had planned to settle on a farm in Kansas, but the youngest daughter fell ill in Chicago. Because of the Panic of 1857, times were hard, and Rev. Livermore was forced to take over the editorship of the Universalist paper, the New Covenant, and Mary Livermore became associate editor, due to the frequent absence of David. Mrs. Livermore stated: "I wrote for every department of the paper, except the theological, and took entire charge of the business."⁵⁵

Mary published "Pen Pictures" which were stories previously published in the New Covenant, and was the only woman journalist

⁵⁴Nathan L. Rice, "Convention in New England," The Presbyterian Expositor (July 15, 1858), 432-433.

⁵⁵Mary A. Livermore, The Story of My Life (Hartford: A.D. Worthington and Co., 1899), 456.

to attend the Chicago Wigwam in 1860, a Republican Convention that nominated Lincoln for President. Additionally, Livermore was active in the benevolent causes of the day. "I was untiring in my labors for the Chicago Home for the Friendless, one of the most philanthropic and useful institutions in the city, then and now." She also assisted in the founding of the Home for Aged Women, and the Hospital for Women and Children.⁵⁶

With the outbreak of the Civil War, Livermore was encouraged to work for the United States Sanitary Commission. Livermore was reluctant to do this, for she knew it would take her away from her literary work and from her husband and children; ". . . but the need of relief work for the sick and wounded men of the army became more and more imperative." So, Mrs. Livermore and Jane C. Hoge became "associate members" of the Sanitary Commission, with headquarters in Chicago.⁵⁷

Livermore and Hoge organized the Soldier's Fair, delivered numerous public addresses, wrote letters by the thousands, published bulletins, circulars, and monthly reports, and made trips to and from the front with supplies. In return, they brought back wounded soldiers as well as those who were discharged, and "assisted to plan, organize, and conduct colossal sanitary fairs, the histories of which I wrote at their close. . . ." ⁵⁸

⁵⁶Ibid., 457.

⁵⁷ibid., 471.

⁵⁸Ibid., 472.

For Mary Livermore, the experience of not being able to sign a contract to build a temporary Manufactures Hall in 1863 (only men could do that) led her in the direction of pursuing women's rights. Livermore raised about \$75,000 for the Northwestern Sanitary Fair in 1863, indicating that women too had organizational and administrative skill.

Women only slowly made it to places of leadership with men in the churches. In 1868, the Chicago Tribune noted that a woman minister, the Rev. Miss Chapin, preached in the Church of the Redeemer (Universalist). "Women have given spiritualist sermons in Chicago before, but this is the first time a woman has practiced in one of the regularly constituted churches of Chicago." The Tribune concluded, nonetheless, that Miss Chapin was "intellectually equal to the average male, but had a want of the rousing element."⁵⁹ In 1868, a womans' association was organized "to increase the social relations of woman and mankind."⁶⁰

Early next year, February of 1869, the women, led by Cynthia Leonard and Mary L. Walker, hosted a suffrage convention in Chicago, with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Anna Dickinson and Edward Beecher as speakers. Local speakers such as Robert Laird Collier, of the Church of the Messiah was also invited arguing for women's

⁵⁹Chicago Tribune, November 9, 1868.

⁶⁰Ibid., June 19, 1868.

suffrage; whereas Robert Collyer of the Unity church argued the opposite. (Collyer and Collier were of no filial relationship).⁶¹

Livermore and Myra Bradwell issued the first of several papers, called "Sorosis," to agitate for women's issues. There were two women's rights factions in Chicago, with the Livermore-Walker group gaining preeminence. Livermore became editor of The Agitator, as the organ of the newly established Illinois Woman Suffrage Association. In September, 1869, the Western Female Suffrage Association was held in Chicago, chaired by Mary A. Livermore.

For Livermore, the women's movement arose after the War for several reasons: to demand for the opening of women's colleges and professional schools; to repeal unjust laws; and to enlarge work opportunities that women might become more independent and self-supporting. At the time, wrote Livermore, women were "not recognized as a factor in the political world," and such attitudes impeded the contribution of "the large portion of the nation's work--in the war."⁶²

For Livermore, and other leaders of the women's movement at the time, the issues were education, government, and struggle against the liquor traffic. Other issues included "organized social impurity, the duel between labor and capital, and the demand for a high standard for business honesty." Livermore stood for the

⁶¹Advance (Feb. 18, 1869), 4.

⁶²Livermore, The Story of My Life, 479.

"care of the dependent and delinquent classes, [as] men and women should stand shoulder to shoulder as equals before the law."⁶³

Livermore credited herself for beginning the Suffrage movement in Chicago. Regarding the first Suffrage Convention:

It was the first Woman Suffrage Convention I ever attended-- as the lecture which I delivered in the Baptist Church was the first Woman Suffrage lecture I ever heard. As far as I was concerned, I was a pioneer in the reform.⁶⁴

Livermore became the first President of the Illinois Woman's Suffrage Association. However, the women's movement in Chicago did not achieve suffrage, but in the 1869 meeting of the state legislature, the laws were changed so that women were given the right to control their own earnings, and could also sue for divorce and alimony if the spouse was guilty of bigamy. Other grounds for divorce included impotence, adultery, desertion, or habitual drunkenness over a two year period.⁶⁵

The Livermores left in 1870 for the East coast, and Mary was asked to edit the journal of Lucy Stone in Boston, the Woman's Journal. The issues of woman's suffrage, temperance and woman's rights would continue to be issues that rallied women for the next several decades. Twenty-five years later in Melrose, Massachusetts, Mrs. Livermore was still on the lecture circuit.

⁶³Ibid., 80.

⁶⁴Ibid., 482.

⁶⁵"Act of April 5, 1869," Laws of the State of Illinois . . . Passed by the General Assembly (Springfield, Illinois, 1869), 164.

She wrote: "It was not one of my seeking. I had no ambition for public life."⁶⁶

The women's movement in Chicago was slow to develop. Other women in later years, including Frances Willard and Jane Addams would build on the accomplishments of the former generation. However, for this earlier generation, women were perceived as confined to their separate sphere. They could participate in reform efforts that were perceived as extensions of their sphere, such as with orphans or with "erring women." They could also function as the visitors, colporteurs, and caretakers of the societies and the asylums. However, for the most part, such philanthropic efforts were always subject to the oversight of men who comprised the decision-making positions in the Executive Committees or the Boards of Trustees. But it was these early beginnings that gave impetus to the fight for suffrage finally won fifty years later.

Significance

The Bible and Tract societies were instrumental in spreading the message and morals of the evangelicals to the cities of the midwest. Society leaders were very scientific about their task and developed a system whereby professional colporteurs and volunteers literally covered the city with their visits and tracts.

Their efforts were not just to evangelize the poor but also

⁶⁶Ibid., 483.

to recruit, raise money, and instruct the immigrant and the poor in public morality. To this end, many of the agencies worked together, including churches, Bible and tract societies, church-based and mission Sunday Schools. Also, other groups such as temperance societies and the YMCA were involved in tract distribution. By the late 1860s, the YMCA accepted the responsibility to distribute tracts in the city for virtually the entire evangelical empire of the city.

These societies assumed many things that the poor and immigrants may not have accepted. First, they presumed that the recipient groups could read. Second, colporteurs believed that the Bible was the norm for society, and third, they thought they represented an evangelical consensus that gave them the legitimacy to instruct and to insist on a given moral code. This was a code that forbade public drinking, assumed Sunday worship as a public norm, and condemned vices or exalted virtues in society from their point of reference.

For the most part, the benevolent crusades were religious and moral in nature. However, at the end of the period studied, there were many voluntary associations, not all of them Protestant, and increasingly more of them were political or related to a commercial trade. There were of course other societies such as peace agencies, abolition and women's rights movements. However, these movements were left of center at the time, and only abolitionism, due to changes in the political climate, would move to center

stage. Women had an important role to play in these movements but did not really have their own movement until after the Fire.

Until male hierarchy could be seriously challenged, women were the "doers" and the implementers of the benevolent empire. They were the tract-distributors, the matrons, the teachers and missionaries, the bedrock of the evangelical societies. Yet the woman's sphere was still confined to the home, or what seemed to be an extension of the home to other women and children. The sphere and understanding of the role of women in the nineteenth century has been described in recent literature as the "cult of domesticity."⁶⁷ By contrast, the men were the Presidents, officers, fundraisers and decision-makers for the benevolent societies and the philanthropies. The two spheres seldom crossed in this period of history.

⁶⁷See for example, Nancy Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood: The "Woman's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835 (Yale, 1977); Mary P. Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); and Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," The American Quarterly 18 (1966): 151-74.

CHAPTER X

PROTESTANT CRUSADE: THE EARLY CHICAGO REVIVALS

Revivalism in the City

Chicago was a Yankee city, established in no small manner through the efforts of New England Protestants who brought with them their churches and benevolent societies. In 1833, Dr. H. Van Der Bogart could report that, in the frontier town, "the state of morals is improving rapidly, three new churches are now being built: Presbyterian, Baptist and Roman Catholic," although the Roman Catholic Church was "losing ground as its doctrine is taught."¹ Already in 1833, the city boasted a Sabbath School, a temperance society, and a depository of Bibles, tracts and Sunday School books. The city was founded to be an outpost of the benevolent empire, a combination movement of revivalism and social reform.

However, Chicago was soon to be also the most materialistic and speculative of cities. By the mid 1830s, speculation seemed a greater force in Chicago than the practice of religion. The regular Panics and economic downturns were experienced as judgments

¹Dr. Henry Van Der Bogart to William Van Der Bogart, Bogart Papers, Sept. 15, 1833. Ms. Collections, the Chicago Historical Society.

of God. Revivalism was perceived by many in the benevolent empire as the cure for social ills.

Revivalism was a major characteristic of evangelical Protestantism in the city. As early as 1834, a revival was reported to have occurred at the First Presbyterian Church. According to Jeremiah Porter, "we enjoyed a revival of religion and fifty-two persons were gathered into the church" under the leadership of Rev. Ralph W. Gridley.²

A first widespread economic panic emerged in 1837 contributing to one of the many great revivals of the day. The panic caused some to "turn back to God" during their time of distress. Others seemed to "turn their back to God" or tended to "blame God" for their misfortune. In either case, religious faith was an important way that early Chicagoans made sense of their world.

According to Stephen Beggs, revival fires led to a number of conversions during the winter of 1837-1838, "but compared with the work of the succeeding year, the revival was quite limited."³ By December 1838, revival again broke out among the Methodists. The Rev. Peter R. Borein was preaching nightly in the city. According to the account of Stephen Beggs:

Night after night, with tireless zeal, he poured forth the arrows of God's truth; he followed the smitten sinner into his

²Jeremiah Porter, "Address on the Earliest Religious History Chicago," Autograph Letters XVII (1959), 371. Ms. Collections, the Chicago Historical Society.

³Stephen R. Beggs, Pages from the Early History of the West and Northwest: Embracing Reminiscences and Incidents of Settlement and Growth, ... With Especial Reference to the History of Methodism (Cincinnati: Methodist Book Concern, 1868), 178.

home, into his shop, and even pursued him to the haunts of dissipation; and, with pleadings and entreaties that seemed almost resistless, besought him to be reconciled to God. The house, from first to last, was crowded to its utmost capacity, and the altar was thronged with penitent souls. Concern for the soul seemed to swallow up every other; more than three hundred were converted, most of whom united with the Church, comprising about one-tenth of the population."⁴

Revival also spread to the Baptists. From December 1838 to March 1839, the Rev. I. T. Hinton led a protracted meeting, baptizing fifty-five at one point in the dead of winter. Baptists at the time used outdoor facilities, probably Lake Michigan. Hinton commented that "we have seen the grace of God," and revivals were led by Elders Powell, Ashley, Hubbard and Whitman. According to Hinton, "nearly 200 persons, in some form, have professed religion during the last ten weeks."⁵ For Hinton, "the whole moral aspect of the city appears to be changed." He noted that "the gaming tables are almost deserted, the ballroom has been as silent as the grave; and the vendors of liquid poisons are complaining bitterly of the injury done to their craft."⁶ Revivalism seemed to go hand and hand with moral reformation.

The impact on Chicago was immense. This was the first mass revival experienced in the young city. Occasional conversions had taken place, admitted the Daily Chicago American, "but nothing that

⁴Ibid., 179; Bessie L. Pierce, History of Chicago: The Beginnings of a City, 1673-1848 (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1937), I: 234.

⁵Isaac T. Hinton, "Revival in Chicago," Daily Chicago American (April 29, 1839), 2.

⁶Ibid.

would be called a general revival. And yet, the gospel has been preached with zeal, fidelity, and fullness ever since the place contained any considerable population."⁷

Like many at the time, the economic busts of the age were believed to be a consequence of vice, materialism and immorality. Bad economic times were believed to be evidence of judgement from the Almighty, and repentance and religious conversion were perceived to be the only remedy for the bad economy. Religion and economic conditions in a strange way were believed to be part of the same social fabric.

"Chicago heretofore has been the focus of excitement in all the Northern region. Speculation, the acquisition of wealth, worldly aggrandizement, have hitherto swallowed up every consideration. The interests of the soul, and of eternity, have not been paramount in the eyes of the irreligious, and, in too many instances, of the professedly religious . . . God, in mercy to the people, in his mysterious providence, caused a reaction."⁸ The change was such that it impacted "not only every citizen, but even to those who pass through our city."⁹

The Methodists supported camp meetings in the country, west of the city. Participants brought tents, provisions, and supplies and stayed for weeks. Meanwhile, Revivals flared up in the city

⁷Ibid.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

in Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist churches, and over one hundred people joined the Presbyterian Church, and there were reported sixty converts in the Methodist Church. "The spacious house of the Presbyterians is crowded nightly, and the whole city now presents the interesting spectacle of church going people."¹⁰

All through the 1840s, revivals hit the city in waves. In March of 1843, the Western Citizen reported that "for several weeks past this city has exhibited unusual interest in the subject of religion. Meetings have been held for weeks nearly every evening in the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian Meeting-houses."¹¹ Then, in the following years revivals continued in the Methodist and Presbyterian churches¹², only to break out again among the Methodists in 1847. Noted the Chicago Democrat, "there is a great deal of room for reformation in this city."¹³ Revivals even influenced Catholic parishes. In May of 1847, Father Francis de Maria, a Professor at the University of St. Louis, conducted religious meetings each day, day and night.¹⁴

The revivals were the immediate cause for the growth and proliferation of churches in Chicago. In 1839, visitors would comment that the buildings were too small to accommodate the

¹⁰Ibid., (March 17, 1841), 2.

¹¹Western Citizen, March 16, 1843.

¹²Chicago Democrat, Jan. 8, 1845.

¹³Ibid., Feb. 25, 1847.

¹⁴Weekly Chicago Democrat (March 2, 1847), 4.

interest in evangelical religion in the city. The Daily Chicago American noted that "the churches are quite too small for the growing wants of the place. The Presbyterians and Methodists especially need more ample accommodations and it cannot be too long before they will have both the ability and disposition to erect both spacious and comely edifices."¹⁵

In 1839, there were but six major church groups in the city: the Baptist Church led by Rev. Isaac T. Hinton; the Catholic Church led by Rev. Timothy O'Meara; the Methodist Church, led by S.H. Stocking; the Presbyterian Church, led by the Rev. Flavel Bascom; the St. James Episcopal Church, led by Isaac W. Hallam, Rector; and the Unitarian Church, led by Rev. Joseph Harrington while meeting in the local saloon.¹⁶

From 1839 to 1847, the number of Protestant churches increased to fifteen worshipping congregations,¹⁷ all but one of them having their own building.¹⁸ By 1847, Sunday religious meetings were being held in the following churches: St. James Episcopal, Trinity Episcopal, St. Mary's Roman Catholic, First Presbyterian, Second Presbyterian, First Baptist, Second Baptist, the Bethel Church for Seaman, Clark Street Methodist (I Methodist), Canal Street Methodist (II Methodist), the Unitarian church, the Universalist

¹⁵Daily Chicago American, July 23, 1839.

¹⁶Robert Fergus, Compiler, Directory of the City of Chicago for 1839 (Chicago: Fergus Printing Co., 1876), 37.

¹⁷Merchant's Magazine, XVIII (1847), 165.

¹⁸Pierce, Chicago, I: 237.

church, a German Lutheran Church, and the Chicago Society of the New Jerusalem.¹⁹

Revivalism continued with great vigor into the late 1840s and 1850s, climaxing in the years, 1857-1858. The city faced a year of economic depression in 1848. While not as severe as the Panic of 1837, the spinoff was another time of religious ferment. The Watchman of the Prairies would argue that the reasons for the depression was an overemphasis of material concerns and the neglect of the religious. "We have pushed out our enterprisings with utmost boldness . . . forgetting that God has anything to do with them."²⁰

Economic depressions were viewed as theodicy, the judgement of God on the affairs of men. "The depression is not too gentle reminder from the Lord that the people had better return to Him." Depressions seem to cause people to repent and seek religious solace in a time of trouble. "We see light breaking through the commercial darkness, [and] look upon these things as a sign the set day to favor Zion has come."²¹

For the evangelicals, the depression reminded believers of the spiritual unity and interdependence of society, and the necessity to "worship God, not mammon." The economic downturn was a boon to revival, because if it was a judgment, it was "rebuke [to] that

¹⁹Daily Democrat, June 30. 1847.

²⁰Watchman of the Prairies (Nov. 21, 1848), 1.

²¹Ibid.

selfish competition in which one class endeavors to monopolize [and] hold to itself some peculiar advantages. God has made us to be mutually dependent, [and] therefore we ought to be mutual helpers."²² This religious critique of materialism and class conflict would foreshadow the critique by social gospel leaders in the next generations.

In subsequent years, members were added to the churches which operated evangelistically, but without a general revival. In 1848, some twenty people were converted by "Elder Knapp" in a revival meeting at First Baptist Church.²³ Revivals, such as they were, were primarily religious events. The Watchman of the Prairies could describe the general character of the revival as follows:

Revivals are . . . scriptured. They are also philosophical, suited to the condition [and] wants of the church of Jesus Christ; for in the natural world God does not always allow showers of rain to descend. . . . Revivals increase the spirituality of churches. . . . Revivals possess also a reformatory influence on society. They diffuse a moral element in community which is more effectual in controlling the conduct of man, than all the laws which legislation can pass.²⁴

For the Watchman of the Prairies, revivals were the means to control the morals of society and were more effective than political action in controlling such morality. With their base in the churches, benevolent crusades like temperance or abolitionism could be conducted with the view that moral suasion was more

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., June 13, 1848.

²⁴Ibid., (Feb.16, 1850), 2.

influential that legislation. "Revivals are the pillars of virtue and good order without which the structure of society would be dissolved. . . ." "But the reformation of society," argued the Watchman, "is only one of the collateral fruits of revival. Their direct object is to increase the holiness of Christians [and] to save souls."²⁵

In 1851, fifteen were added to Tabernacle Baptist Church,²⁶ while 225 persons were added to the "Baptist churches during the . . . revivals" of 1852.²⁷ These are not great numbers by previous standards and indicate the lull of the period. Nonetheless, the Watchman of the Prairies noted that the revival had made an impact on the churches, if not on society as a whole.

There have been added to the First Baptist Church 81 by baptism, about 20 by letter, [and] are awaiting baptism. To the Tabernacle Baptist Church, 99 have been added by baptism [and] 17 by letter. . . . Quite a large number are expected to unite, many of them have already united, with the First [and] Second Presbyterian Churches, the Clark Street [and] Canal Street Methodist churches, [and] the Congregational Church.²⁸

These are again not great numbers, but reveal the hopes for a revival, if not the reality.

In April 1852, the Watchman of the Prairies would concede that in the years 1847-1852 there was not high interest in revivalism. Yet in the spring of 1852, a modest revival broke out. Some

²⁵Ibid., (Feb. 26, 1850), 2.

²⁶Ibid., (March 4, 1851), 2.

²⁷Chicago Daily Democrat, April 28, 1852.

²⁸Watchman of the Prairies (April 27, 1852), 2.

seventy persons were added to the First Baptist Church in this period, and some ninety persons were added to the Tabernacle Baptist Church. Protracted meetings were also held in the First and Second Presbyterian Churches, and in the Clark Street Methodist Church. Converts included "young persons [and] intelligent scholars in the Sabbath School, which shows that the Sabbath School is an exceedingly useful help in the conversion of the world."²⁹

The churches of course continued to grow, as the numbers of the city increased. In 1853, forty "were added to the Indiana Street United Methodist Church," and sixteen to the "State Street Methodist Church."³⁰ Yet despite these additions, the Northwestern Christian Advocate would concede that the era, particularly the winter of 1853-1854, passed without any revival of importance.

The flame of revival in these days of infidelity, . . . is hard to kindle in cities. In the moral progress of Chicago, however, the past winter, the rapid spread of the Temperance leaven . . . may be note as one of the relieving features. We rejoice too at the presence [and] pervadence [sic] of a wholesome anti-Slavery sentiment."³¹

Instead of a general revival, the editor could celebrate that most "of the pulpits of our city . . . have been faithful testimony against that high scheme of national folly [and] . . . mischief."³²

²⁹Ibid., (April 6, 1852), 2.

³⁰Northwestern Christian Advocate, Jan. 12, 1853; (March 2, 1853), 34.

³¹Ibid., (March 8, 1854), 3.

³²Ibid.

Revivals of 1857-1858

The greatest of revivals in early Chicago history, next to the revivals of the late 1830s, were those of 1857-1858. The Rev. Robert W. Patterson of the Second Presbyterian Church noted that there were "five revival years" previously--in 1847, 1850, 1852, and 1855, "but the most important of all was 1858."³³ Preparing the way, the Panic of 1857 again shook the business community. The Christian Times wrote that "the financial distress" was "the result of extravagance in business" which amounted to "gaming" (speculation). "The public mind had become . . . diseased. . . ."³⁴

Again, the financial woes were understood as the judgement of God and opportunity for God to do "a great work" among the people. With an unfettered faith in providence, it was assumed that "God has arranged the system of this world on a plan that causes such evils to work out their own cure. . . ." Revival was thus a rebuke to "evils" such as "stockjobbing, [and] the swallowing up of individual interests in great corporation, [and] real estate speculation."³⁵

The economic system with its privatism and speculation was thus assumed to be a movement away from the harmony of republican institutions and represented sins against God and the public good.

³³Chicago Daily Tribune, June 3, 1862.

³⁴Ibid., (October 21, 1857), 2.

³⁵Ibid.

Evangelicals assumed, that in God's providence, the financial downturn would reap "benefits in disguise" and men would think "less of the world [and] more of their own souls."³⁶

The apex of the revival occurred in the Spring of 1858. While revivals were recorded to have broken out in several of the churches in February of 1858,³⁷ and the Northwestern Christian Advocate noted over two hundred additions to the major evangelical churches,³⁸ much of the revival of 1858 occurred outside the churches among the business community. Influenced by the Fulton Street noontime prayer meetings in New York, a similar manifestation was found in Chicago.

In late March, noontime prayer meetings were held in the First Baptist Church, bringing together the evangelical business community. These meetings were accompanied by "striking manifestations of the Spirit's power," "numerous conversions, and a number baptized." Noontime prayer meetings were also held in Metropolitan Hall with considerable success. The Christian Times saluted this activity. "Let our friends in the country remember Chicago at the throne of grace. No place in the whole country more needs a revival of religion."³⁹

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Ibid., (Dec. 9, 1857), 2.

³⁸Northwestern Christian Advocate (March 17, 1858), 2.

³⁹Christian Times (March 24, 1858), 2.

The Northwestern Christian Advocate wrote on March 31 that Metropolitan Hall was crowded with "men of business, with sober, serious men [and] women engaged in a prayer-meeting. . . . Impossible . . . but our eyes have seen it." Some 2500 people crowded the Hall. The Advocate had reservations, however. "We have only one fear, [and] that is, that these meetings may become fashionable, [and] resorted to as is the opera as mere places of entertainment."⁴⁰ Yet, the Christian Times shared the glee. "It is a new thing . . . to see this Hall, capable of seating something like 2,500 people, crowded in every part on the occasion of a prayer meeting."⁴¹

The preoccupation of the business community with revival was a new thing and would culminate in the rekindling of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), a lay-led movement of the evangelical business elite. The Oquawka Spectator would observe that "even politics appears to be in the shade just now, and the Board of Trade closes their doors at an early hour so as to attend at the noon prayer meeting."⁴²

The benefits to the evangelical churches were recognized. Thirty-five received the "right hand of fellowship" at First Baptist, and fifty conversions "were reported at First Presbyterian." "All the evangelical churches of the city, nearly,

⁴⁰Northwestern Christian Advocate (March 31, 1858), 2.

⁴¹Christian Times (March 31, 1858), 2.

⁴²Oquawka Spectator (Illinois weekly, Democrat), April 2, 1858.

are experimenting the benefits of the awakenings [and] converts are multiplied."⁴³ It was therefore in the interest of the business community and the evangelical churches to continue the revival. It seemed a way to both control society as well as a way to increase the numbers and economic support of the evangelical churches.

With the coming of the Civil War, revival did not break out again until the late 1860s. In early 1865, just as the war was drawing to a close, the Christian Times recorded that spontaneous revival had broken out in the Berean Baptist Church and the North Star Mission. The result is that attendance in the North Star Mission Sabbath School increased to 732, with "twelve baptisms from six different nationalities."⁴⁴ Similarly, revival broke out in the Olivet Colored Baptist Church which reported "20 saved," including "one or two from the Methodist Church."⁴⁵ Again, these are numerically insignificant and point more to the desire for revival in times of relative quiet.

In 1867, evangelist D. L. Moody conducted a revival in the new Farwell Hall, built to house activities of the YMCA. These meetings resulted "in the conversion of quite a number of young

⁴³Christian Times (April 7, 1858), 2.

⁴⁴Ibid., (Jan. 26, 1865), 2; (Feb. 9, 1865), 2.

⁴⁵Ibid., (Feb. 23, 1865), 2.

men, some of whom have been considered hopeless on account of their dissipated habits."⁴⁶

Early next year, the religious press noted that the Tabernacle Congregational Mission Church "was stirred up by a revival." As a result, members proceeded to "district the city [and] visit all the saloons regularly." It purposed to visit all those in its neighborhood, and each saloon had a man assigned to it. Others were uniting with the effort as it became something of a novel movement. This tactic foreshadowed that used by the Pacific Garden Mission and other "rescue missions" in the next decades.⁴⁷

For Methodists, the revivalistic type was not the city revival, but the camp meeting, which might meet for weeks at a time in a rural campsite. The Advance would express support of Methodist Camp meetings in 1867 but would wonder why the Methodists didn't have such meetings in the city.

We verily believe that if our Methodist brethren would abandon camp-meetings near the cities, [and] would substitute open air [and] tent preaching in the cities, much greater good would result, [and] the original design of camp meetings are, rather religious pic-nics [which] probably [accomplish] less than the same effort [and] expense laid out in evangelizing the heathen masses in the great cities.⁴⁸

Yet tent revivals were tried in the city in 1868, and met with

⁴⁶Advance, Nov. 28, 1867.

⁴⁷Ibid., (Jan. 16, 1868), 5.

⁴⁸Ibid., Sept. 12, 1867.

little success.⁴⁹ The time of revivalism in early Chicago seemed to have passed.

Critics of Revivalism

Other isolated "revivals" occurred in 1868-1869, but revivalism seemed to be on the wane by the late 1860s. Critics of the revival were already around. As early as 1848, a writer for the Chicago Daily Journal would voice his displeasure with "street preaching." Revival practice, especially during business hours, was not universally appreciated. Although it had become a "weekly occurrence," the writer condemned the practice. Such revival practices seemed more of a problem for the practice of business, than a help.

We think it a reprehensible [activity]. Men who can only be reached on street corners and in the groggeries, cannot be reached at all. The atmosphere is bad, the latitude and the longitude wrong, and he who brings a serious truth to such a market, and under such circumstances, cannot but degrade.⁵⁰

The Republican paper went on to say that the message was also wrong. Reflecting an anti-revivalist point of view, the writer noted that "the themes of these street dissertations are . . . a patchwork of free-soil, religion, temperance, and abolition. Crowds gather around them, obstruct the ways, and give the air of an election rather than a Sabbath day to our otherwise quiet streets."⁵¹ While the purpose of such a view is subject to

⁴⁹Ibid., (Oct. 22, 1868), 5.

⁵⁰Chicago Daily Journal, Sept. 12, 1848.

⁵¹Ibid.

discussion, the writer probably had much sympathy for his views among Catholics, immigrants, saloonkeepers, politicians, and the growing numbers in the city who were enemy to evangelical religion and practice.

The New Covenant (Universalist) would raise questions about revivalism as early as 1859. For the Universalist, there was a distinction between "true revivalism" that was a spontaneous creation of the spirit of God and the revivalism of professional revivalists like Charles G. Finney and his "new measures" that seemed to be more a technique to manipulate audiences than true revival.

The journal would argue that it "was not opposed to true revivals of religion." However, it stood opposed to "religious excitements, produced by 'machinery of means,' brought into operation by narrow-minded and bigoted divines merely for sectarian and selfish purposes." The New Covenant opposed in particular the revival of 1858 as "detrimental to the interests of pure and undefiled religion." Reacting to the engineered means of manufacturing a revival, the Universalists rejected the "new methods" as "unwise and unjudicious."⁵²

Even the Advance in 1871 would raise critical questions regarding the utility of revivalism. While "oldsters" might nostalgically yearn for an "old fashioned revival," when hundreds were converted, it seemed to this journal that the age of

⁵²New Covenant, Jan. 15, 1859.

spontaneous revivalism was at an end. The "spirit-led" revivals seemed to be more and more replaced with "engineered" meetings by professional evangelists who brought with them "new methods" for creating enthusiasm. The Advance observed that "conversions are still made, but not as they used to be, nor should Christians become morbid over this change."⁵³

Perhaps the revival was less useful to the business community, and perhaps mass evangelism or tent revivalism was considered more a threat to the churches than a boon. Regardless, the writer of the Advance would say that "while the editor himself feels that yearning, at times, he believed that it is unwise to hearken back to a vanished condition." It is better to "live intellectually, [and] morally in our own generation, and to appreciate . . . the period which is just rising to view."⁵⁴ In short, it seemed that the revival was not as respectable as it once was in the city, nor were they the sure guarantees of civic virtue as in the past.

Significance

The revival was viewed a method of social reform but was primarily a vehicle of the growth of the churches. The deterministic theology of the times assumed that God was providentially in control of history and that financial downturns

⁵³Advance (Jan. 12, 1871), 4.

⁵⁴Ibid.

were a sign of God's displeasure and judgment upon men for their pursuit of economic advantage.

Some members of the business community supported the revivals for other reasons. It seemed to be a way to promote good morals, and to enhance the image of the city as a place of business. Others, those of non-evangelical persuasion, saw the revival, especially on workdays, as inappropriate to time and location, with minimal results anticipated among the down and out or those in the dens of vice at the time. For these people, street evangelism seemed more a nuisance.

For the churches, the romance of the revival, not the "engineered" versions of professional evangelists like Finney, was a good thing. Not only did it help the churches, but it seemed to restore proper priorities to society. Especially helpful to the churches was the participation and support of the business community. Both underscored the moral hegemony of evangelicalism at the time and added to the financial support of evangelical institutions such as the YMCA (see below).

For the business leaders, in addition to the moral and religious support, revivals seemed to be in their self-interest. First of all, if the attitudes and faith were right, then prosperity would follow. In a twisted kind of way, revival might result in financial prosperity for men of business. Second, it was assumed that workers in the business would be better and more diligent workers. For a few, the revival got in the way of the real purpose of business, to make money. For others, the revival

not only enhanced the churches but morality and commercial expansion as well. For evangelicals at the time, the revival was in the public interest, for those converted would be doubtless become both good citizens and faithful attenders of the churches.

CHAPTER XI
THE SUNDAY SCHOOL MOVEMENT

Origins of the Sunday School Movement

The Sunday School movement originated in England and is traceable to the work of Robert Raikes (1753-1811), editor of the Gloucester Journal. Raikes hired teachers to assist children in desperate circumstances and gained support of the idea from the churches. This was transported to the U.S. in 1785, and in the 1790s Sunday Schools opened in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Rhode Island. They were intended to assist children who had no other opportunity for education, many of whom were employed in the factories. A Sunday School was set up in a cotton mill in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, and the teachers were primarily laity.

Paving the way for the development of public schools, the text in the first Sunday Schools was the Bible, and the schools stressed reading, writing and morality. The curriculum was wedded to evangelism and connected with various benevolent societies. Combining evangelism with a democratic vision, the American Sunday School Union was founded in 1824. From 1820 to 1870, there arose two distinct types of Sunday Schools: the mission Sunday School, established in rural and inner city environments; and the church

Sunday School, usually connected with a particular congregation.¹

The American Sunday School Union established many Sunday Schools, including several that were the result of a campaign in the Mississippi Valley. In 1830, the Rev. James B. Taylor in the Philadelphia meeting of the American Sunday School Union noted the importance of Sunday Schools. The Schools were necessary to "the condition of knowledge, public morals, and religion, and showed necessary obligation of [a] united Christian effort to relieve the evils that abound."²

The Sunday School and Urban Social Reform

In 1836, an article appeared in the Chicago American outlining the purposes of the American Sunday School Union.³ The Sunday School Union established a "Western Board of Agency" in Illinois "to cooperate with friends of the Sunday School Union, to employ agents and missionaries . . . to resuscitate old and languishing schools, and to establish new ones," to "raise funds, and to establish and take charge of local depositories of books . . . to establish well-organized Sabbath Schools in every city, village, neighborhood, and settlement in the State, to furnish each with a

¹J. L. Seymore, "Sunday School Movement," Dictionary of Christianity in America (Downers Grove: Inter Varsity Press, 1990), 1146.

²The Western Pioneer and Baptist Standard, June 30, 1830.

³"To Friends of Sunday Schools in State of Illinois," Chicago American, April 30, 1836.

suitable supply of useful books" and "to spread publications of the American Sunday School Union."⁴

The Sunday School Union held that there was "a great defect in the common education of the day . . . a want of moral training, while the intellect is cultivated, the heart is neglected." The Union combined evangelistic zeal and patriotism in a way that was typical of many of the benevolent movements of the time.

Let us contemplate your rising cities and villages teeming with their thousands of immortal beings, who are fast growing up with to bless or curse their country and their age, and who are to exert an untold influence on all future ages, in bearing to them the means of salvation or perdition, and see if our Patriotism and our Christianity, cannot furnish the most heart-stirring motives for immediate vigorous, and extensive exertions to scatter the⁵ blessings of Sabbath Schools throughout this great valley.

For Bessie Pierce, "the tide of New England migration in 1833, laden with Puritan tradition and ideals, almost at once brought about the establishment of Bible, Tract, Temperance and Sunday School societies."⁶ The first Sabbath School in Chicago was begun by Mrs. Mary A. Taylor. Mrs. Taylor stated:

My early training and the blessed privileges of Sabbath-School, had lost none of their power, and I resolved to begin a school here. There was no resident minister of the Gospel here, no house of worship; the Sabbath was not observed. I gathered the children of the Laflamboise family and others,

⁴Ibid.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Bessie L. Pierce, History of Chicago: The Beginnings of a City, 1673-1848, vol. I (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1937), 231.

on Sunday afternoon in my little parlor in the log tavern, at the "Point," as it was called.⁷

Philo Carpenter, a Presbyterian, and Captain Seth Johnson of the Army assisted this "first Sabbath school in the city," and the school was expanded to include fifteen scholars and four teachers. By 1833, the school had from forty to fifty students and a library.⁸ In 1833, Joseph Meeker arrived from New York City with second-hand books, and an additional 200 volumes were donated by Charles Butler and Arthur Bronson.

Yet the early experience of being in a Sunday School was not always pleasant. Edwin O. Gale, a Unitarian, recounts his experience in a Sabbath School, as he reveals the legalism and puritanism that likely characterized many of the schools. Mr. Gale's experience in a Sunday School drove him away from evangelicalism to the more accepting arms of religious liberalism.

Some of us remember those small religious books of early days, with water paper covers of somber hue, mostly melancholy biographies of inconceivably goody goody boys. . . . It was after this society had moved their church to the west side of Clark Street south of Washington, that I had my religious experience as a Sunday School scholar, under the tutelage of the devout adopted daughter of Tuthill King, whose conscientious efforts to prove to me every Sabbath my total depravity made a painful impression upon my sensitive nature. My frightened, rather than guilty, conscience left no doubt in my mind that I was in danger of the terrible doom which threatened the son of the good deacon. . . .

⁷"Letter from Mrs. Mary A. Taylor, the First Sunday-School Teacher in Chicago," in An Account of the Celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Organization of the First Presbyterian Church of Chicago (Chicago: Beach, Barnard and Co. Printers, 1883), 110.

⁸George S. Phillips, Chicago and Her Churches (Chicago: Myers and Chandler, 1868), 126.

As I looked upon the fragile form of my devout teacher, I feared her strength might fail her at a critical moment and I should be plunged into eternal perdition. Those Sabbaths became days of torture to me. The red, swollen eyes and dejected countenance I carried home every Sunday with my primer attracted my father's attention, and he permitted me to stay at home and hear him read from the Good Book, the Psalms of David and the lofty teachings of Christ, which I thought infinitely sweeter, purer and holier than the horrid catechism, which my teacher required me to learn and believe . . . I was glad when the Unitarian Society and school started in the saloon building, and I became the happy member of William Larrabee's class."⁹

Yet one person's experience does not show the impact of the movement. In January 1838, the Chicago Sunday School Union was organized, with Sunday Schools in the Presbyterian and Baptist churches and in three missionary schools. The number of scholars at the time increased to 120, with thirty-one teachers. By 1848, the Methodists and the Episcopalians added to the numbers, so that ten years later there were 225 teachers and 1,150 scholars, all in evangelical churches.¹⁰

A journalist of the time could boast that ". . . many of the teachers who are now actively engaged in the various benevolent objects of the day are those who were once scholars in our schools. The church is receiving from year to year multitudes of children and youth who grow up to be useful in the church and in the world."¹¹ The children were perceived to be assailed by a legion

⁹Edwin O. Gale, Reminiscences of Early Chicago and Vicinity (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell, Co., 1902), 369-370.

¹⁰S. L. Brown, "History of Sabbath Schools in the City of Chicago," Watchman of the Prairies, Feb. 29, 1848.

¹¹Ibid.

of temptations in the city, and the Sabbath schools purported to reach children . . .

from transient families . . . and it is from this class we have many of our best and most promising scholars. The Sabbath school is so great an instrument in promoting the welfare of our country and benefitting the rising race, as well as preparing the soul for higher and more glorious life above, how exalted a position does the Sabbath School teacher occupy.¹²

Sunday Schools were established for the "generous effort to give religious and secular instruction to the . . . children of the poor and the destitute [which] is to us one of the grandest sights which the theatre of the moral world ever presented to human eyes."¹³ The Sabbath Schools were the first Protestant urban mission manifestations in Chicago. They were believed to be ". . . often the only chances which immortal souls can ever have to hear of their immortality. This is especially the case in the neglected neighborhoods of large cities, which are haunted by the outcasts, and where the poorest of the poor congregate."¹⁴

Amid urban woes, the Sunday School "is like a shaft sunk suddenly down from heaven to some desolate region of the earth. . . . For these schools do literally bring life and immortality to the light. They clasp, as in the arms of infinite love, the lost children of society, and bring them very near to heaven."¹⁵ The

¹²Phillips, Chicago and Her Churches, 126.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., 127.

¹⁵Ibid.

Sunday School movement thus became an urban mission phenomenon. Chicago was perceived to benefit much from the Sunday School movement. Phillips concludes: "We cannot do too much for Sunday Schools; and happy is Chicago, that she has so many of them in 'her dark and desolate places' -- so many teachers, and so many city missionaries. . . ."16

Sunday Schools were often connected with churches in direct ways. In 1843, the newly formed Second Presbyterian Church organized the Young Men's Mission Sunday-School, initially held in a store on the North side of the city on Kinzie Street. "This was the first Mission Sunday-school in the Northwest and probably in the United States," boasted the historian of the church. In the fall of 1844, the Mission was moved to Bethel Church, and in 1857, following the building of a large edifice on Erie Street, its name was changed to the Erie Street Mission Sunday-School.¹⁷

The Sabbath Schools were also important in the Protestant mind, because they helped solidify the keeping of the Sabbath and control behaviors not acceptable to Protestants, especially public drinking. Protestants believed that the nation needed the Sabbath, and the Sabbath Schools were important to combat despotism, Catholicism, immigration and rich capitalists. The Sabbath Schools were also held to be good for commerce, government and religion. It was good for laborers, and good for manufactures, it was argued.

¹⁶Ibid., 127-128.

¹⁷John C. Grant, ed. The Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 1842-1892 (Chicago, 1892), 76.

Even lawyers need the Sabbath.¹⁸ In 1844, a Sabbath convention was held in the city. Some 250 gentlemen came from all over the state and met in the First Presbyterian Church. A theme of the Convention was sabbatarianism.

In fear of Catholicism, and forces that seemed out of control, the Northwestern Baptist noted the importance of Sunday Schools amid heavy immigration to this country.

The Catholics are pouring in upon us. . . . The Catholics will have the balance of power. . . . What power is to restrain such an amount of physical force? Look at the riots in Philadelphia arising from mere love of riot. Our only hope is in the observance of the Sabbath, and the diffusion of learning. The papal power can never surpass us in purity of the gospel or in revivals of religion.¹⁹

Proliferation of Sunday Schools in Chicago

One thing that some of the better Sabbath Schools did was to introduce the "scholars" to the world of books. The Watchman of the Prairies could boast that most of the Sunday Schools had libraries, and the libraries were important in the "cultivation of a healthful reading taste in the community." The books read were those supported by the American Sunday School Union, which "not only afford gratification to the taste, but . . . at the same time give strength to the mind [and] improve the heart of almost any child or adult."²⁰

¹⁸Northwestern Baptist, Feb. 15, 1844.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Watchman of the Prairies, Dec. 26, 1848.

To respond to the challenge of a growing city, the churches in Chicago began to organize numerous Sunday Schools. However, the city was growing very fast. In 1851, there were 12,000 children in the city under twenty-one years of age. By 1855, this number would increase to over 31,000, over 52,000 in 1860, and over 136,000 by July 1, 1870. The Sunday Schools would be hard pressed to accept the growing numbers of children in the city.²¹

Yet they tried. In response to the growth of cities, the Watchman of the Prairies would argue that Sunday Schools were needed "for the intellectual [and] moral education" of slum youth. The Sunday Schools "are better for this type of rough slum youth." In the absence of churches, the mission Sunday Schools "are the best possible means" to reach this population in the cities.²²

In 1850, the Watchman would note that, "out of 5,500 children in the city, only 1,256 were gathered into Protestant Sabbath Schools," merely one-fourth of the total number. Suppose that 1,000 were taken by the Catholics, reasoned the writer, that would still leave "2,000 students without any moral instruction."²³ Another count at the end of 1850 would suggest that there were 6,000 children in the city not "availing themselves of the privilege." According to these calculations, there were

. . . an army of 6,000 young persons, in this city of a proper age to attend Sabbath Schools, who were not availing

²¹Bessie L. Pierce, History of Chicago: From Town to City, vol. 2 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1940), 512.

²²Watchman of the Prairies (Sept. 11, 1849), 1.

²³Ibid., (Jan. 22, 1850), 1.

themselves of these privileges. No doubt a large number of the above children not attending Protestant schools are Catholics who are taught in their own schools, and of whom no account is taken in the report. There are also Universalist, Unitarian, New Jerusalem, [and] other children probably not counted.²⁴

In the quarterly meeting of the Chicago Sunday School Union, it was reported that the Union supported eleven schools, with an average attendance of 923 persons, thirty-seven of whom were new converts. Further, two new schools were in the process of being organized.²⁵ In the next meeting, 1851, it was reported that the churches sponsored the same number of Sunday Schools (11), but that the attendance dropped to an average of 800 pupils and 145 teachers. The Sunday School was hailed to be important, because "the Bible is the subject of instruction."²⁶

A Sabbath School Association was formed in Chicago in 1852, composed of Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian churches. It was formed for the purpose of "visiting [and] gathering into Sabbath Schools, every youth in the city between the ages of six [and] sixteen. This Association consists of officers [and] teachers in the Sabbath Schools." It had a President, a Secretary, and three directors, "the duty of the directors being to district the city [and] assign alternately once in three months a district to each

²⁴Chicago Daily Democrat, Oct. 25, 1850.

²⁵Watchman of the Prairies (April 16, 1850), 1.

²⁶Ibid., (Jan. 28, 1851), 1.

school, who are required to make their quarterly report in respect to their field."²⁷

In the Chicago Sunday School Union's Annual meeting of 1853, the Northwestern Christian Advocate noted the importance of the Sunday School. "What a substitute [is the school] for the immeasurable lures which Satan spreads before the young in the feverish round of city dissipation?"²⁸ In a meeting of the Chicago Sunday School Union in 1855, it was determined that the purpose of the union was "the extension of Sabbath Schools into districts of the city now destitute of their influence, by the establishment of mission schools."²⁹

In 1851, the Methodist Episcopal Church organized several Mission Sunday Schools, including a Sunday School at Owen and Peoria streets, with 140 scholars, and a library of 200 volumes. In July of 1851, the Harrison Street Mission was begun. Also at this time a Negro Methodist Episcopal Church was begun from a Sunday School mission.³⁰

In 1853, women of several Methodist Episcopal churches in the city called a meeting at the Clark Street Church for the purposes of establishing a City Missionary Society. Called, the "Chicago City Missionary Society," the agency would allow the Methodist

²⁷Ibid., (July 27, 1852), 2.

²⁸Northwestern Christian Advocate, Jan. 5, 1853.

²⁹Christian Times (July 11, 1852), 2.

³⁰Northwestern Christian Advocate (March 22, 1854), 3.

Churches to coordinate efforts of urban ministry outreach in the city, particularly the work of the Sunday Schools directly connected with the Methodist Churches. A "City Missionary" was hired and several mission Sabbath Schools were begun.³¹

The Methodist Episcopal Church, by 1854, sponsored eleven Sunday Schools with 1,070 scholars enrolled. The Northwestern Christian Advocate would estimate that 4,673 children in Chicago were attending Protestant Sunday Schools, whereas 9,540 children were not attending. In short, about a third of all children in Chicago were being reached by Protestant Sunday Schools, and about one-fourth of the total number were going to Methodist schools.³²

The Methodist City Missionary E. F. Dickinson collected money from several churches and erected a chapel and industrial school on Taylor Street, called the Taylor Street Mission. Upon the death of Flavel Moseley in 1865, a member of Second Presbyterian donated \$10,000 to renovate the Taylor Mission, and it became known as the Moseley Chapel. This was sold to Trinity Episcopal Church in 1870, becoming an Episcopalian-sponsored mission Sunday school.

Similarly, the "Ladies City Missionary Society" was active in the mid 1850s for the purpose of establishing schools "located in sections of the city which are too remote from the public schools to be much benefitted by them, and among a class which as a general thing, cannot at first be induced to attend them." The Schools

³¹Ibid., Jan. 5, 1853.

³²Ibid., March 22, 1854, 3.

were designed to "reclaim" children from "vagabondism," and to teach them "the usual rudimental English branches, [while] the girls are taught sewing and other things in the department of female labor."³³

In 1854, the Rev. D. B. Nichols, of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society came to Chicago for the purpose of organizing Sunday Schools for the "destitute and the ignorant." Nichols had the backing of local Congregationalist churches and organized a mission Sunday School with the "Ragged School" in the Sands.³⁴ The Ragged School was organized in February, 1855 in the Sands, led by Miss Carolina Kirk. It attracted some seventy children, while the Sunday School was led by City Missionary, drawing 120 pupils.

While not always appreciated by evangelicals, the liberal church Sunday Schools gave children the opportunity to learn the arts, by participating in dramas and musicals. In 1859, the Second Universalist Church Sunday School provided "entertainment at Metropolitan Hall." The School sponsored "juvenile dramas, operas, colloquies, duets, quartets, [and] choruses."³⁵

Similarly, the "annual exhibition" of the Second Universalist Sunday School was held in February, 1860, also at Metropolitan Hall, with "choruses, readings, duets, a drama, dialogues,

³³Christian Times (July 4, 1855), 2.

³⁴Congregational Herald, Feb. 17, 1854.

³⁵The New Covenant, Jan. 15, 1859.

tributes, [and] showings of art."³⁶ In short, this Sunday School functioned as a fine arts school for the Universalist Church.

The mission Sabbath Schools in the poorer parts of the city would have a different history. While the Universalist Church was hosting its fine arts fairs, other Sabbath School leaders were appealing to the Chicago Police to provide protection for teachers and students. Mayor Wentworth authorized Sabbath School teachers to call the police "to protect their school from the noise of unruly [and] vagrant boys, who assemble around the doors and frequently come into the halls to create disturbance." In response, the Daily Democrat would warn that "policemen will be at Mission Schools today, for the purpose of getting a few of these boys for the Reform School."³⁷

In 1859, the Chicago Press and Tribune estimated that there were between thirty and forty Mission Sabbath Schools in the city, embracing "between 5,000 and 6,000 of the poor."³⁸ The Tribune managed to obtain more accurate information for 1860. Then, there were apparently sixty-five church schools with 6,463 scholars; and eighty-five mission schools with 4,202 scholars. The church schools included seven Baptist, thirteen Methodist, twelve Presbyterian, nine Episcopalian, nine Lutheran, six Congregationalist, two Universalist, one Reformed Dutch, one

³⁶Chicago Daily Democrat, Feb. 27, 1860.

³⁷Ibid., March 26, 1860.

³⁸Chicago Press and Tribune, May 24, 1859.

Swedenborgian, one Unitarian, and one Jewish.³⁹ The numbers must have been tabulated by a writer for the Tribune, since it would be unlikely that evangelicals would have given numbers of Lutheran or non-evangelical Sabbath Schools.

By 1861, there were approximately 55,000 children under the age of twenty-one in Chicago, while 30,000 of them were between the ages of six and sixteen. Yet the Chicago Daily Tribune could report that there were "sixty-three evangelical churches in the city," with seventy-five Sabbath Schools, 1,692 teachers, 10,080 scholars, and 13,751 volumes in the libraries.⁴⁰ While sizeable, the Sunday Schools were clearly not able to keep up with the swelling urban population.

In 1862, the numbers appeared to be on the increase. In the annual meeting of the Chicago Sunday School Union held at the First Presbyterian Church, there were ninety-two Sabbath Schools in the city, including sixty-three church schools, and twenty-nine mission schools. There were 30,000 children between the ages of six and sixteen, and of that number, over 18,117 were in Protestant Sabbath Schools. If the Catholics were serving 5,182, then "the numbers of those neglected and destitute of religious instruction" were 6,702.⁴¹ This was a sizable number, but a appeared to be reachable for Protestants at the time.

³⁹Ibid., May 5, 1860.

⁴⁰Chicago Daily Tribune, December 10, 1861.

⁴¹Ibid., May 27, 1862.

By 1866, the Chicago Sunday School Union was sponsoring 35 mission Sabbath Schools. These schools were supported ecumenically by Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist churches.⁴² Meanwhile, the Advance noted that in 1867, Congregationalist churches alone were attracting 4,181 "scholars" to their Sunday Schools.⁴³ The Second Presbyterian Church was maintaining two mission Sabbath Schools, including the Taylor Street Mission School and the Erie Street Mission School.⁴⁴

Similarly, the Baptists recorded reaching 4,332 students in fourteen Sunday Schools, including the First German, North Star, Shields, Union, and Stockyards missions.⁴⁵ All totaled, the Advance reported that by the end of 1867 there were 200 Sunday Schools in Chicago serving 36,095 persons and having an average attendance of 26,815⁴⁶ The chart below depicts the numbers of Sunday Schools and the numbers of youth served together with the total increase of the youth population in the city.

While other comparable data were not available, this data does show an increase in numbers served by the Protestant Sunday Schools. At the same time, the population of Chicago was swelling.

⁴²Richard Edwards, Annual Directory of the Inhabitants, Institutions, Manufacturing Establishments and Incorporated Companies, etc, of the City of Chicago (Chicago: Richard Edwards, 1866), 823.

⁴³Advance (Sept. 12, 1867), 5.

⁴⁴Phillips, Chicago and Her Churches (1867), 195.

⁴⁵Christian Times and Witness, October 24, 1867.

⁴⁶Advance (Nov. 21, 1867), 4-5.

TABLE IV
GROWTH OF SUNDAY SCHOOLS, CHICAGO

Date	Sunday Schools	Scholars	Total Youth Pop
1830	3	120	(est) 120 (>21yoa)
1850	na	1256	5000
1851	11	800	12000
1854	na	4673	14000 (6-16)
1860	150	10,605	52000 (>21yoa)
1861	150 est.	10,080	55000
1862	160 est.	18,117	30000 (6-16)
1867	200	26,815	90000 (>21yoa)
1870	na	na	136000

According to the Chicago School Board, there were over 90,000 young people in Chicago under the age of twenty-one in 1867, so the evangelicals were addressing the religious and educational needs of about 30% of the total number,⁴⁷ but were not keeping up with the general population.

In 1867, a fair to support mission schools related to the Young Men's Christian Association was held, indicating that outside the churches, ecumenical agencies tried to organize mission activities. The fair was held at Farwell Hall during the four weeks prior to Christmas, with dinners, entertainments, and holiday presents, allowing each Sunday School to sale items to benefit its work. Reported the Advance:

⁴⁷Pierce, History of Chicago, II, 512.

This will be one of the grandest Union efforts ever undertaken in Chicago. All denominations represented in our mission schools are actively at work. It appeals especially to our sympathies, as the results will reach some ten to twenty thousand of the children gathered in the mission schools.⁴⁸

Despite this effort, the Advance reported that the success of the Sunday School movement in Chicago was due to the commitment of the churches, not the interdenominational groups. The denominational base and sponsorship of Sunday Schools by the churches meant success for the schools. The Advance was skeptical of ecumenical and interdenominational efforts. Church-based Sunday Schools were more successful because they generated excitement and generosity, encouraged responsibility, and were better able to mobilize men and resources. Finally, the results were connected with individual churches, "so that the harvest is carefully garnered."⁴⁹

The union mission method never accomplished anything noticeable here. It was not until that method was abandoned [and] each denomination took up the work by itself, through local churches, that perceptible progress was made.⁵⁰

While it is unclear how well the Sunday Schools did in evangelizing, Americanizing, and assimilating the children, especially immigrant children, recreational activities made the Sunday Schools attractive for reasons other than religious instruction.

In the 1850s, following the advent of the railroad in the

⁴⁸The Advance (Dec. 12, 1867), 5.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰The Advance, October 10, 1867.

city, two Sabbath Schools connected with the Baptist church were given a "railroad excursion" on July 4, 1851; scholars and teachers rode to "Babcock's Grove," twenty miles from town.⁵¹ The next year, the First Presbyterian Church followed suit. Arrangements were made with the Michigan Central Railroad to depart from Lake Station to proceed three miles west of the city "with five car loads of children." The reality of the "excursion" is described well in the following:

They had a fine time of it, but a few of the boys in rambling about fell in with a hornet's nest, the occupants of which treated them as intruders. Boys are sometimes enterprising to their hurt.⁵²

The next year, the Methodists joined the fun. In 1853, "seven crowded cars" embarked from the Clark Street Methodist Church, "through the politeness of John B. Turner, Esquire, President of the Galena and Chicago Union Railroad." The students "enjoyed a delightful ride to Darby, in Dupage County, where in Johnson's Grove, after suitable religious exercises, a sumptuous picnic was gratefully and cheerfully [enjoyed]." Similarly, the Indiana Street Methodist Sabbath School held a picnic with 300 children, courtesy of one of the railroads.⁵³

Similar excursions were planned by church-sponsored Sabbath Schools. For example, the Sabbath Schools of the First Congregational Church held a picnic and trip to Joliet, "to examine

⁵¹Watchman of the Prairies (July 1, 1851), 2.

⁵²Ibid., (July 12, 1854), 3.

⁵³Northwestern Christian Advocate (July 12, 1854), 3.

the new state prison" in 1860.⁵⁴ Meanwhile, annual picnics were held by other Sabbath Schools often combining with religious camp meetings.⁵⁵ For the most part Sunday Schools could be fun but usually were tools of evangelism, acculturation, and church growth.

The Sunday School continued as one of the important urban mission outreach programs throughout the nineteenth century. As late as 1910, there were over 150 Sunday Schools in the Cook County Sunday School Association, with 31,746 pupils.⁵⁶

Significance

The Sunday School movement in Chicago was the chief vehicle to communicate to city dwellers, the poor, and new immigrant children the beliefs, expectations, and values of emerging middle-class Protestantism. It became a vehicle for the temperance crusade in the city, and for the education of the poor regarding Protestant values. From the standpoint of the immigrant, it also was an avenue for assimilation, mobility, and a way for adults and families to gain allies and skills needed to become more successful in living in a new environment, the urban environment of nineteenth century Chicago.

The Sunday School, together with the revivals, became the

⁵⁴Chicago Daily Democrat, July 12, 1860.

⁵⁵Northwestern Christian Advocate, June 19, 1861; Chicago Tribune, July 7, 1871.

⁵⁶Samuel Nicholas Reep, "The Organization of the Ecclesiastical Institutions in a Metropolitan Community," (Ph.D. Dissertation: University of Chicago, 1910), 44.

means whereby Protestants could both manifest and communicate their values to urbanized society. It was a way for Protestant evangelicals to exercise their virtue and manifest their standards of respectability in the city. The Sunday Schools also enabled Protestants to expand rapidly in the city, creating centers for other reform efforts such as temperance, and sabbatarianism. The Schools were also places where evangelical culture and its accompanying values could be inculcated among both citizens and newcomers including temperance, thrift, self-control and other values characteristic of the Protestant "better class."

However, Sunday Schools were not the only outreach efforts into the city. Many Sunday Schools assumed more than just the responsibility for distributing religious literature or educating the public in matters of religion and morality. Many others began to assume a larger role in their communities, including social relief, education, and skills-development for the workplace. The Sunday Schools began to be supplemented by City Missions, as evangelicals sought to indoctrinate not only their own members but also members of the immigrant classes, the poor and others considered worthy enough for both evangelism and charity. While Sunday Schools were mostly concerned with education of religion and morals, the City Missions went beyond the Sunday Schools to address problems of relief, housing, and jobs.

CHAPTER XII
THE CITY MISSION MOVEMENT

Beginnings of City Missions in Chicago

Chicago experienced a proliferation of city missions at mid-century, foreshadowing more famous institutions like the Pacific Garden Mission and the Olive Branch, both begun in the 1870s. In 1864, the Rev. Thomas Whipple in the Northwestern Christian Advocate noted that Chicago's city missions were "congregating thousands, from all lands, [who] daily meet in the mart of trade, and struggle for the ascendancy, or to sustain dear life-while but a few favored ones rise above their fellows in material prosperity" ¹

Whipple, the City Missionary for the Methodist Church, observed that "the majority of the people of our great cities are poor, and for this reason, and no other, are found in attics, alleys, garrets, and cellars, and in sparsely settled and neglected parts of the city. . . . [The existence of poverty] renders the demand imperative for city mission labor." ² While Whipple recognized the economic plight of the poor, the city mission

¹Northwestern Christian Advocate (October 19, 1864), 332.

²Ibid.

movement did not readily accept economic solutions for poverty. Rather, the problem was viewed largely as spiritual or moral. To many evangelicals, the solution to poverty was to develop "character" in the immigrant, with values and virtues befitting the emerging Protestant middle-class.

Even for Whipple, the problem was essentially religious, for he believed it important that "the poor have the gospel preached to them" and that the blind, lame and dead "are raised up." At best, most of the city missions might address the survival needs of the poor in the form of charity and social services, but few saw the problem in terms of economic or political dislocation.

Seamen's Bethel

The first city mission of any prominence was the Mariner's Church, formed from a mission Sunday School sponsored by the Second Presbyterian Church. Before his death in 1839, Rev. Peter Borein, a Methodist, was active in ministry among seamen. A small chapel, called Bethel Chapel, was hastily built for sailors at the upper end of the Dearborn Street bridge.³

But this was too small to meet the need. Borein pointed out that the religious denominations all had their places to worship, "but the seamen are neglected." The seamen "do not come within the pale of the churches, [and] are isolated from society by their occupation." Some of the business leaders in the community asked

³Daily Chicago American, Wed., April 17, 1839.

for financial aid to build a place of worship for sailors, and the public was solicited to contribute to the cause in an advertisement signed by William H. Brown, Joseph E. Ware, and John Wandel.⁴

Another ad appeared two days later as attempts to raise money for "the moral education of the sailor" and aid for "fitting up a room for the sailors [and] boatmen connected with our city." The purpose was "moral elevation," particularly to address problems of idleness, swearing, and public drunkenness, which so often seemed characteristic of such visitors to the city. Such a reform effort was supported by the public and particularly the business classes—who sought ways of bettering the city and enhancing the reputation of the city as conducive to commerce.⁵

However, it was the Presbyterians who really launched the ministry in the 1840s. In 1842, the Chicago Daily American noted that there was "Wharf Preaching" to sailors in Chicago. At the time, Baltimore was noted for street preaching, but wharf preaching got the press in Chicago. These were "excellent temperance addresses," by the Revs. Cavanaugh and Hume. "The seeds of good principles thus sown brought forth good fruit," and several signed the Abstinence Pledge. "Every mariner should stick to his native element, cold water," the editor wrote.⁶ For the seamen, evangelism was linked to the temperance movement.

⁴Ibid., Thursday, Aug. 6, 1840.

⁵Chicago Morning Democrat, Sat., Aug. 8, 1840.

⁶"Wharf Preaching," Chicago Daily American (August 11, 1842),
2.

While First Presbyterian Church was focusing on antislavery, Second Presbyterian Church began to focus on the needs of the city, developing more particularly an urban ministry in Chicago. In 1844, a band of young men at the Second Presbyterian Church became interested in the welfare of seamen on Chicago's port, and began a ministry to seamen. The parishioners distributed Bibles, tracts and papers to this population. Seamen were invited to worship, without regard to denominational background.

The Seamen's Bethel Mission was thus founded. Three years later, the Rev. Stilwell, an agent of the American Bethel Society, spoke to a crowded audience in the Presbyterian church. Stilwell urged the "religious care" of the mariners "on the Lakes, Rivers and Canals." He tried to raise money for a Bethel Church in Chicago, a dream realized in 1854.⁷

Chicago was a logical place to establish a Seamen's Bethel as the city sat at the "the head of navigation on the Lakes westward, [and] canal transportation."⁸ The Rev. M. Rowley was initial pastor but was replaced in 1854 by the Rev. J.H. Leonard, a Methodist under the auspices of the Western Seamen's Friend Society of Buffalo, New York.⁹ The Seamen's Bethel was an ecumenical undertaking and was independent of any one denominational body.¹⁰

⁷Chicago Democrat, Tues., May 25, 1847.

⁸Watchman of the Prairies (June 24, 1851), 2.

⁹Northwestern Christian Advocate (Jan. 11, 1854), 2.

¹⁰Congregational Herald (April 21, 1854), 3.

However, the Mission Sabbath school was under the care of the young men of Second Presbyterian Church, "and [they] occupied Bethel until 1857."¹¹ After 1857, the Seamen's Bethel became an independent City Mission agency, and seamen were given more responsibility to administer their own affairs.

In 1867, Mark Skinner became President of the "Chicago Seamen's Friend Society," supplanting the work of the "Seamen's Friend Society." By 1869, the Mariner's Church was housed in a new brick church, near Michigan and Market streets. The new church conducted religious services in a new building that also had a reading room and a library. It sponsored a church, a Sabbath school and a "free night school," and steps were taken to provide homes for sailors as well.¹²

In each of the City Directories through 1870, the Seamen's Bethel is listed separately from the churches, indicating its independence. In 1870 the Western Seamen's Friend Society moved its headquarters from Cleveland to Chicago, and religious services under the auspices of this society were held in the old First Congregational Church building in the city.¹³ Hence, well before the establishment of the Pacific Garden Mission in 1877, Chicago Protestants were active in evangelism along Chicago's port among sailors.

¹¹John C. Grant, ed., The Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago (Chicago: Second Presbyterian Church, 1892), 114.

¹²Advance (Nov. 21, 1867), 5.

¹³Ibid, (July 7, 1870), 5.

Mission Sunday Schools

Sunday Schools were established both by individual congregations and by ecumenical groups such as the Ladies City Missionary Society, the Chicago Sunday School Union, the YMCA, and the various denominationally-sponsored City Missionary Societies. The Chicago Sunday School Union in 1850 determined that two missionary schools should be established in the city, one on State Street on the south side, and another on the West side of the city.¹⁴ A convention was held in Chicago in 1852 for the purpose of establishing a "Free Mission Society for the Northwest."¹⁵

Mission Sunday Schools were connected with many churches. They were considered the primary source of outreach to the urban poor and sought to publish evangelical belief among those distant from the churches. The Mission Sabbath Schools were different from the church-based Sunday Schools in that they were located outside of the sponsoring churches, in communities where Protestant churches were sparse. As a result, many Mission Sabbath Schools became City Missions, and many of the Sunday and Mission Sabbath Schools became churches. The City Missions addressed the multiple needs of immigrants and the poor and were not just limited to evangelism or indoctrination as in the Sunday Schools.

¹⁴Watchman of the Prairies, April 16, 1850.

¹⁵Chicago Daily Democrat, July 7, 1852.

Presbyterian City Mission Work

Second Presbyterian Church started an outreach program to the youth and the poor on the north side of the city. Begun by the members of the church, the Young Men's Mission Sunday School was begun on the north side as "the first mission Sunday School of the Northwest." Members of Second Presbyterian Church continued to provide leadership in this endeavor until 1857. Similarly, another Sunday-school mission was begun on State Street in 1844, housed in an old warehouse.

The Presbyterians had begun a mission to Irish and African-Americans near the Michigan South Railroad yards, called the "Railroad Mission." The Railroad Mission was begun by the Rev. Brainerd Kent on May 10, 1857 with the opening up of a passenger car of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad. The mission used an old railway car, then two and three railroad cars until overcrowding forced the mission to move in 1864 to a brick chapel on Griswold Street between Van Buren and Harrison.¹⁶

The mission was located "in the midst of wickedness and unthrift." The area was described as an "area of tenements . . . [with an] illclad, [and] heterogenous population, composed principally of Irish, Dutch, [and] colored." The Railroad Mission featured a "special colored Bible class, numbering one hundred, with all ages and adult negroes gathered there. The colored infants, however, were mixed with white children. . . . Since many

¹⁶The Advance, December 12, 1867.

of those who attended the mission were illiterate, efforts are made to teach them to read."¹⁷

Methodist City Mission Work

The Chicago City Missionary Society was established in 1853 by several women of the Methodist Episcopal Church.¹⁸ Its purpose was to develop missions connected with the churches to care for the "destitute and the ignorant."

The Methodists in essence had a mission Sunday School connected with each of the churches and were more connected with some of the poorer and immigrant populations than several of the other Protestant groups. In 1861, several city missions were established by the Rev. W. F. Stewart of the Methodist City Mission Society. His plan was to purchase cheap buildings as "Sabbath School Tabernacles" with Sunday Schools and preaching each week. This was a quick way to start new churches in the city, as well as an opportunity to channel some energy to evangelize the poor and the newcomer.¹⁹

In 1861, the Park Avenue Mission School was organized as a mission of the Wabash Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church, known more popularly as the "Western Prairie School." By 1862, there were 200 scholars, fifteen teachers, and sixty-seven children in the school,

¹⁷Ibid., 6.

¹⁸Northwestern Christian Advocate, Jan. 5, 1853.

¹⁹Chicago Daily Tribune, May 11, 1861.

and a library of 200 volumes.²⁰ Other Sunday Schools were enhanced during the period. The Sedgwick Street Mission School was organized in 1856 and met initially in Wesley Chapel Methodist Church. It too was a mission of the Wabash Avenue Church. By 1861, it worked with 150 scholars, and 11 teachers. It also boasted a library of 150 volumes and 100 Sabbath School papers.²¹ Also, the Van Buren Street Mission School, organized on April 29, 1858 with but 3 scholars and 4 teachers, was meeting in the German Methodist Episcopal Church on Van Buren. This school had increased in participation to 131 students and 22 teachers by mid-1862.²²

Baptist City Mission Work

The Baptists established the New Street Mission Sabbath School in 1856. Connected with the First Baptist Church, by 1863 this mission had over 50 teachers and 500 pupils. In 1860, the name was changed to Shields, in honor of a donor who gave several thousand dollars for the ministry, a "noble Christian lady, temporarily sojourning in Chicago." Baptist missionaries visited homes of Roman Catholics as well as Protestants, and reported numerous conversions. In 1869, the mission moved further South to 25th and Wentworth avenues,²³ now in the heart of Chinatown.

²⁰Ibid., May 11, 1861.

²¹Ibid., July 15, 1862.

²²Ibid.

²³Edmund Goodman, History of First Baptist Church of Chicago (Chicago: First Baptist Church, 1910), 15-16.

The Sunday School grew because of the efforts of its School Superintendent, B. F. Jacobs. Jacobs was a prominent businessmen in produce and real estate, arriving in Chicago from Patterson, New Jersey at twenty years of age in 1854. He was superintendent of the First Church Sunday School in 1864. He was founder of the Waif's Mission in Chicago, was a President of the Y.M.C.A. in the city, president of the World Sunday School Convention, and originator of the "International Sunday School Lessons."

The New Street School was initially "on the outskirts of the city among antagonistic Roman Catholic groups. . . ." By 1863, the Sunday School boasted "numerous conversions among the scholars. Also, there is a program of week-day Wednesday prayer meetings, [and] Sunday Church services supplementing the school. The building has been improved, [and] the library is being continually enlarged."²⁴

The North Star Mission

The most prominent mission started by the Baptists was the North Star Mission. This mission was initially the project of the Second Presbyterian Church. It was organized in 1858 as a mission Sunday School called the Chicago Avenue Union Sunday School. It closed but reopened in October of 1859 as the Bremer Street

²⁴Christian Times (Sept. 30, 1863), 2.

Mission, then under the management of the First Baptist Church.²⁵ In 1861, the Baptist City Mission society would report its sponsorship of six city missions in the city, including Shield's Mission, the Bremer School, the Tabernacle Mission, the Union Park School, the Edina Place School and the Liberty Street School.²⁶

However, the neighborhood of the Bremer Mission was "unpromising . . . being filled with Catholics and 'Turners,' who did not take at all kindly to the new enterprise."²⁷ In July of 1861, the Baptists consolidated the Chicago Avenue, Wells Street and Bremer Avenue Missions, renaming it the North Star Mission, making it the largest in the city.²⁸ The North Star advertised in the Chicago Tribune for the "charitable public" to contribute money to the mission Sunday Schools, "bread for the poor."²⁹

In December, 1861, a new chapel was dedicated, and in October 1862 the Rev. G.L. Wrenn was installed as pastor. The school cost \$2500 and was "pronounced by competent judges to be one of the most commodious [and] most admirably adapted in the city if not in the entire country," capable of seating 800 children. The Chicago Daily Tribune stated that "Chicago now stands confessedly ahead of

²⁵Lafayette Wallace Case, History of the North Star Baptist Mission Sunday School and Church; And the LaSalle Avenue Baptist Church of Chicago (Chicago: Norman G. Lenington, 1897).

²⁶Chicago Daily Tribune, Jan. 17, 1861.

²⁷The Advance (Jan. 16, 1868), 6.

²⁸Perry J. Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists: A Century of Progress (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1933), 58-9.

²⁹Chicago Daily Tribune, Aug. 27, 1861.

any city in the country in the number, capacity and character of mission school buildings, and is furnishing a model in this respect which is everywhere challenging admiration."³⁰

The North Star was located between Division and Oak Streets (east and west), and Sedgwick and Larrabee Streets (north and south) on the North side. The mission appealed to seven different language groups, and German and Swedish Sunday schools eventually became separate churches. While the pastor of the mission was a male, the teachers in the school were some of the prominent women of the city, including Mrs. Robert Harris, wife of the President of a local railroad; Mrs. Alice A. Lyon, the wife of a judge; and Sarah Nicholas, Naomi Sayler, and Nellie McLean. Women occupied a prominent role in this and many of the other city missions.

During the Civil War, the mission sent "considerable literature for distribution among the soldiers . . ." [and] collected \$120.00 "for work outside its own field."³¹ By 1864, the North Star was attracting 6-700 people a week,³² and the Sunday School increased to 1500 in 1867 so the mission was enlarged to accommodate the numbers. The mission building was raised and a brick basement was installed, providing extra meeting space for the local school, now Franklin Fine Arts elementary school. This was celebrated with addresses by notable Protestant business leaders

³⁰Ibid., Jan. 9, 1862.

³¹Christian Times (Oct. 7, 1862), 2.

³²Ibid., (Oct. 13, 1864), 1.

Nehemiah Wooden, B.F. Jacobs, John V. Farwell and Cyrus Bentley.³³ By 1869, the Mission had an enrollment of 1,000 to 1,500 pupils in the Sunday School and 200 students in the industrial school for girls.

The mission also sponsored a reading room and a paper, The North Star, not to be confused with the paper of Frederick Douglass. Social and religious events were regularly scheduled and conducted in the German language. This mission was far in advance of its time and is similar to the work of the "Institutional Churches" and settlement houses of the next generation. Historian Perry J. Stackhouse concludes that efforts at North Star Mission "would seem to indicate a social vision and a program of Americanization on the part of that group of young men from First Church" more akin to practices of city missions in the early part of the twentieth century.³⁴

This mission was self-supporting by 1870, becoming the North Star Mission Baptist Church. Unfortunately, the church was destroyed by the Great Chicago Fire of October 9, 1871. The fire also destroyed the parsonage of the current pastor, the Rev. James W. Whitehead, as well as most of the homes of the parishioners. Money was later raised from suburban congregations to support the building of a chapel after the fire.³⁵

³³The Advance (Dec. 19, 1867), 5.

³⁴Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists, 59.

³⁵Case, History of the North Star Baptist Mission, 5-6.

The Mission was not deterred by the Great Chicago Fire but expanded its work to assist victims of the conflagration. The church rented space to the Chicago Relief and Aid Society which built a two story building as a supply center for victims of the fire. By 1874, because of the migration away from downtown of former parishioners after the fire, the North Star spawned the Immanuel Baptist Church, later named the Central Baptist Church. Also in 1874, the Church members started the North Star Literary Society, which met regularly in the church. The Society's mission was to encourage "young people in their efforts to mental improvement."³⁶ The Church also hosted local musical, literary, and temperance societies.

By January 1879, the Church began to struggle with the phenomenon of neighborhood transition and changes of land use in the area around the church. From 1874 to 1884, the community had experienced "the encroachment of business," and the residential and commercial usages had undergone change. Also, "the spiritual interests of the church had not kept pace with the material progress, and it was felt that a new location, a new name, a new man to lead, and an infusion of new members was urgently needed to bring the church up to the true position it should enjoy."³⁷

On June 16, 1884, the North Star Baptist Church dissolved, and the La Salle Avenue Baptist Church was organized, with all property

³⁶Ibid., 7.

³⁷Ibid.

and funds donated to the new church. All legal transitions were completed by Feb. 24, 1886. The North Star Baptist Church was an example of how a congregation survives changes from within, going from mission to church, and from without, responding to the cataclysm of the fire and to neighborhood change. Its ability to adapt to changing circumstances allowed it to continue as a vibrant entity for three decades.

The First Baptist Church was responsible for the starting of other missions, including the Indiana Street Mission, organized as the Indiana Avenue Baptist Church in 1864. The first minister of the church was Dr. Justin A. Smith, also the editor of the Christian Times, the sequel to the Watchman of the Prairies.

Congregational City Mission Work

Although slow to get started in the city, Congregationalists also developed a strong interest in city missions. The Congregationalists brought in the Rev. A. B. Nichols of the Massachusetts Sabbath School Society to establish "Sabbath Schools and education for the underprivileged." Nichols organized the Sands Sabbath School in an area known to be home to rogues and lawbreakers.

The school of seventy pupils was led by Miss Carolina Kirk, and the Sunday School was under the leadership of Rev. Nichols, the city missionary, with an attendance of 120 pupils.³⁸ Still

³⁸Christian Times (July 4, 1855), 2.

existing in 1857, John Gager could describe the facility as follows:

It is a missionary school, [and is] sustained by teachers from different evangelical denominations, many of whom have taken a deep interest in its welfare. . . . [They] have a small library. The instruction given is principally oral, in connection with singing, distribution of tracts, papers [and] cards. [It] meets at 3 in the afternoon. [The] Superintendent [is] H. D. Bassett. [The] Schoolhouse [is] located on Illinois St., near the Lake."³⁹

In 1857, Long John Wentworth, a Presbyterian and the sixteenth Mayor of Chicago was sworn in. His inaugural address was characterized by piety and dedicated to a policy of retrenchment and reform. On April 20, 1857, Wentworth raided the Sands for the purpose of evicting "lawbreakers" from the city. Amid the cries of protest from residents and applause from the rest of the city, ten of the shanties were pulled to the ground as a warning.⁴⁰ Wentworth boasted that he "went to church twice every Sunday" and was "a regular evangelical" in his theology. He said he believed in "hell, straight out, and in future punishment, and I believe in rewards straightout."⁴¹

The Sands was not the only mission that enticed the Congregationalists. In 1854, the Congregationalists established the Union Mission, an outgrowth of the Congregationalist Church in

³⁹John Gager, Chicago City Directory for the Year Ending June First, 1857 (Chicago: John Gager and Co., 1857), xl.

⁴⁰Don E. Fehrenbacher, Chicago Giant: A Biography of Long John Wentworth (Madison: The American History Research Center, 1957), 142-143.

⁴¹Inter Ocean (Chicago), June 18, 1879.

the district. By 1857, the mission had 300 in its Sunday School. This became the Union Park Congregational Church.⁴²

The "Newsboy's and Boot Black's Mission" was started by Martin Van Arsdale, a theology student at the Chicago Theological Seminary, and commissioned by the Chicago Sunday School Union. It was an effort downtown to "get the boys off the street, and obtain for them good homes in the country." This mission focused on the plight of homeless boys who either sold newspapers or survived by polishing boots. The mission sought to deal with the problem of orphans in the city, young "ragamuffins" who "at an early age, learn vice, swearing, smoking, and drinking."

To counter the growing problem of juvenile delinquency, Van Arsdale began a mission Sunday School downtown, starting in the old Board of Trade Hall with 250 persons attending. The rationale was based on the premise that, among city residents, "it was found that the newsboys, bootblacks, [and] sailors were least cared for religiously" in Chicago.⁴³ However, the sailors resented being classed with the boys and seceded to find something more appropriate to their needs.

The mission needed new headquarters, because the old Board of Trade Hall was too big and too bare, and the boys were too rowdy and rough. "To keep their attention," Van Arsdale utilized creative "pedagogic methods," showing "relics and treasures [with]

⁴²The Advance, June 18, 1868.

⁴³"Newsboys' and Boot-Blacks' Mission," Advance (Feb. 6, 1868), 6.

magic lantern entertainments." The mission held activities on weekday nights, and a lunch was given on 12:30 each Sunday.

Many of them are homeless, and some would be better off if they had a home. . . . The Newsboys home is the street, his dinner such as he can get at a bakery, or a cheap restaurant which is more often a disguise for a saloon. His sleeping place in the summer time is a dry-goods box - a lumber pile - a convenient alley, and in winter . . . [he] sleeps on the floor around the stove in the counting houses of the newspapers which they sell during the day.⁴⁴

With the realization that many of the boys were homeless, it was decided to erect a home for them, initially over "Wright's Stables," in November, 1867. This was on the corner of State and North Water Streets and "convenient to where the boys worked." "Here the surroundings were more intimate and homelike," observed the Advance. The activities and services of the Mission demonstrated the concerns of the evangelicals regarding this population.

Off the main Sunday School room, are two sleeping rooms. Arranged around the sides of the two rooms are the beds, made after the manner of steamboat berths. The berths looked clean and neat, [and] were all well-supplied with comfortable clothing. The culinary department is under the charge of a competent cook, [and] the food, as we can testify from personal experience, is substantial [and] good. A bathing room is one of the accessories to health and comfort [and] in it every boy connected with the home is obliged to bathe every day.⁴⁵

However, the facilities housed only "forty of the homeless boys." Organizers hoped that other contributions would make an addition possible, as the upper floor of Wright's Stables was

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Ibid.

available for development. However, the Advance estimated that there were over 600 boys in the city, and with limited accommodations, began exploring other options. One solution was to place the boys out in approved rural settings with "good families." In the city, some of the boys could be part of the home, could participate in the Sunday School or use the library. However, the condition of the boys suggested their removal from the temptations of city life, which meant utilizing the "placing-out" system.

By the mid 1860s, City Missions were all over the city, mostly in poor and new immigrant neighborhoods. The Northwest Sunday School Institute was formed in connection with Clark Street Methodist Episcopal Church, as a lay training institute in Chicago. It was sponsored by the Chicago Sabbath School Union and was designed to train Sunday School teachers and lay visitors for the city in connection with the many city missions and mission Sabbath Schools. By December of 1864, thirteen week sessions were held in the Methodist church and were held in both fall and spring sessions.⁴⁶

Sunday Schools and City Missions

By the conclusion of the Civil War, the Protestant churches sponsored a wide variety of City Missions. Some of them were still listed as "Sunday Schools," either church-based or Mission Sabbath

⁴⁶J. C. W. Bailey and Company, Chicago City Directory for 1865 (Chicago: John C. W. Bailey, Publishers, 1865), "Register," xxiii.

Schools. However, to meet the many needs in poor and immigrant communities and to work more effectively, many of the denominations also became involved in City Missions.

The Chicago Sunday School Union, working in partnership with some of the English speaking evangelical churches, reported that it had organized seventy-nine Sunday Schools and twenty-nine mission Sabbath schools in the city. There were over 14,437 "teachers and scholars," in the Sunday Schools, and 9,543 "teachers and scholars" in the mission schools, totalling 23,900 persons.

The largest reported church school in the city was Second Baptist Church (formerly Tabernacle Church) with 515 in regular attendance, whereas the largest reported mission school in the city was the Railroad Mission, sponsored by the Second Presbyterian Church, with 814 in regular attendance. The Union also reported that there were a combined 18,917 books in the combined Sunday School libraries.⁴⁷

By 1864, each of the major denominations and churches sponsored either church-based Sunday Schools, or Mission Sabbath Schools. While all the churches sponsored Sunday Schools, the more evangelical groups were also involved in mission activity beyond their own church. John C. W. Bailey lists the numbers of schools by denomination in his Chicago City Directory.

Methodist--17 (practically speaking, one in each of the churches)
 Presbyterians--13
 Episcopalian--10
 Lutheran--10

⁴⁷Ibid.

Baptist--9
 Congregationalist--6
 United Presbyterian--2
 Reformed Scotch--1
 Reformed Dutch--1
 United Brethren in Christ--1
 Christian Church--1
 Evangelical (German)--4
 Bethel (Seamen's)--1

In short, each of the churches, including the Lutherans and Episcopalians, considered church-based Sunday Schools important to the growth of individual churches.

In contrast, the Protestant evangelical groups were stronger in the support of mission Sunday Schools, evangelistic outreach to persons not connected directly with their churches. The total Mission Sunday Schools reported in Bailey's Chicago City Directory⁴⁸ is as follows:

Presbyterian--9
 Baptist--6
 Methodist--6
 Congregationalist--3
 Episcopalian--1
 Lutheran--1
 Union--2
 Church of God--1

Notice for example, that Episcopalians had ten church Sunday Schools, but only one Mission Sabbath School.

However, the emerging new model for urban society in Chicago was the City Mission. The City Mission often grew out of a Sunday School, and often became a church. The City Mission, because of its multifaceted approach, eventually supplanted the Sunday School as the preferred form in the city.

⁴⁸Ibid., xxiii-xxiv.

TABLE V
CITY MISSIONS, 1865

MISSION	CHURCH SPONSOR
North Star Mission--	First Baptist Church
Shields Mission--	First Baptist Church
Rolling Mills Mission--	First Baptist Church
Reuben Street Mission--	Union Park Baptist Church
Providence Mission--	Union Park Baptist Church
Illinois Street Mission--	Union Effort
North Mission--	First Congregational Church
South Mission--	First Congregational Church
Elm Street Mission--	New England Congregational Church
Van Buren Street Mission--	Clark Street Methodist Epis. Church
Railroad Mission--	First Presbyterian Church
Foster Mission--	First Presbyterian Church
Bridewell Mission--	Second Presbyterian Church
Erie Street Mission--	Second Presbyterian Church
Taylor Street Mission--	Second Presbyterian Church
William Street Mission--	Third Presbyterian Church
West Market Mission--	(Union effort)
Milwaukee Depot--	Third Presbyterian Church
Reformed Presbyterian Mission--	Reformed Pres. Church
Industrial Mission--	Union effort
Holstein Mission--	Union effort
Bremer Mission--	Scotch Presbyterian Church
Liberty Street Mission--	Third Baptist Church ⁴⁹

The preceding table notes the number of City Missions and their church sponsors in 1865. City Missions represented the presence of the evangelical churches among the poor and new immigrants. The evangelical groups understood their mission as

⁴⁹Ibid.

evangelistic outreach to newcomers. The Episcopalians tended to be more concerned about educating those more formally connected with their churches, and the Lutheran churches, since most were German-speaking, were more involved in educating their own constituency and hence attracted German immigrants of a Protestant persuasion. Since Methodists tended to be located in poorer communities, their Sunday Schools were connected with the churches, but many of the Methodist churches functioned also as missions.

By 1866, and following the Civil War, the churches were able to become more involved in the sponsoring of city missions in each of the separate divisions of the city.

Table V is a chart with the name of the mission, sponsor, division of the city, date established, superintendent, and average attendance was compiled for Edward's Annual Director (sic) . . . to the City of Chicago for 1866.⁵⁰ The City Missions and Mission Sunday Schools were evenly distributed throughout the three divisions of the city and located in the newer, poorer, areas of Chicago. The missions were sponsored mostly by the four leading evangelical denominations in the city; the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists and Congregationalists. However, Lutherans were developing their own City Missions, rather than risk their children to the Missions of the already established churches that did not appreciate German language and culture. The activities of City

⁵⁰Richard Edwards, Comp., Edwards' Annual Director (sic) to the . . . City of Chicago, For 1866 (Chicago: Edwards, Greenough, and Deved, 1866), 823.

TABLE VI
CHICAGO CITY MISSIONS, 1866

Name	Society	Division	Date Org.	Supt'd	Atten.
Illinois St.	Union	N	1858	J.V. Farwell	750
North Star	F. Bapt	N	1859	D.W. Baker	665
Railroad	F. Pres	S	1857	G.W. Perkins	1200
Foster	F. Pres	S	1858	E.S. Wells	500
Mosely (Taylor)	II Pres	S	1858	G.E. Puriugt	250
Trinity	Trin. Epis	S	1864	F.A. Emery	210
Shields	F. Bapt	S	1856	J.F. Gilette	280
Van Buren St.	Clark ME	S	1857	J.P. Farnum	101
Liberty St.	Union	W	1859	H.B. Clissold	45
Williams St.	III Pres	W	1855	E.W. Hawley	270
W. Market	YMCA	W	1858	J.M. Chapman	225
Providence	Union Pk Bp	W	1863	Daniel Hurd	200
Reuben Street	Union Pk Bp	W	1860	S.S. Scribner	250
Industrial	F. Cong. Ch	W	1857	T.T. Gurney	225
Park Ave.	Park Ave ME	W	1859	J.N. Cutler	100
Tabernacle	II Baptist	W	1857	F.M. Fox	197
North	F. Cong.	W	1857	W.N. Mills	350
Excelsior	Wabash AME	W	1863	M. Carpenter	170
Holstein	Holstein ME	W	1864	Atkinson	75
Erie St.	II Pres	N	1843	Thomas Carter	250
Elm St.	N Eng Cong	N	1857	A.W. Tinkham	250
Wesley Chapel	Wesley ME	N		A. Madison	75
Bremer St.	Ref. Scotch	N	1862	Robt. Clarke	105
Rolling Mills	F. Bapt	W	1864	K. Gray	65
Nickerson		W	1865		48
St. Peters	St. Pet Luth	W	1864	K. Schoeneck	195
Church of God	Chch of God	N	1865	P. Longenecker	40
Bridewell	II Pres	S	1858	J.V. Farwell	120
Reform School	Ref Pres	S		G.W. Perkins	200
German		N			150
Junction		S	1865	T. Graven	40
St. John		W	1864	H.S. Queek	55
Free Church		W		D.W. Whittle	
Union Stark Yards	Bapt	W		S.A. Keane	
Chi. Th Sem	CTS	W		F.E. Adams	

Missions by Protestants were not always appreciated by those who were the recipients.

In 1868, a Rev. Lederer of the "Hebrew Christian Brotherhood of New York" gave a lecture in the Second Presbyterian Church, and "all Christian Ministers are especially invited."⁵¹ The result of the lecture was a stated concern for the evangelization of the Jewish population. Following the lecture, a proposal arose to establish a "Jewish Mission" with the express purpose "to convert to Christianity the 12,000 Jews of Chicago."

An Advertisement in the Chicago Tribune invited anyone interested in such an effort to meet in the Second Presbyterian Church. To everyone's surprise, Henry Greenbaum, an "unconverted Israelite" attended the meeting and objected to such a notion. First of all, he noted, there are only "8,000 Jews in Chicago." Secondly, Jews are already cooperating with Christians in "good works." Third, Greenbaum noted that he had given \$25 to Mr. Moody's mission. At any rate, any further discussion about a mission to the Jews seems to have abated,⁵² and with some effect there were no city missions to the Jews in this early period.

And Greenbaum was correct, not only were Jews cooperating with Christians in the works of charity, but Julius Rosenwald was numbered among those on the Board of Directors of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society in 1873, a sure sign that the Jews had

⁵¹Chicago Tribune, May 13, 1868.

⁵²Ibid., May 14, 1868.

joined the better class of Protestants in the benevolent empire. Protestants were suspicious about the Jews and their religion, but seemed to have an easier time accepting Jews as fellow-workers than they did Roman Catholics.

Foreign and Home Missions

Not everyone was interested in city missions, as many others were interested in influencing other parts of the world. In June of 1852, the Watchman of the Prairies noted that there were 980 million people that comprised the total non-Christian population. Of this number, only 68 million were considered "nominal Protestants who stand a chance of being saved." Christians were thus invited to pray and more than that contribute financially, "so that the vast, dark, sin-ruined world might be converted."⁵³

In an 1853 issue of the Northwestern Christian Advocate, the perennial question was asked, "why carry the gospel to the Heathen when so many at home are unconverted?" To the question posed, the Advocate suggested that the "sinner" at home is wilfully so, because he/she sees and hears what should be done. "The heathen is not able to see true religion unless missionaries bring it to them. . . . Also, an introduction to Christianity leads the heathen to forsake his graven images and old gods and to take up new ways of living, . . . economical pursuits, changes, etc."⁵⁴

⁵³Watchman of the Prairies (June 6, 1852), 1.

⁵⁴Northwestern Christian Advocate, April 27, 1853.

There was considerable interest in Chicago in evangelizing the likes of Ireland, Syria, Rome, Turkey, India and the Orient, and other exotic places. The Advance pointed out that missionary work was attracting large numbers of women. The Congregational Women's Board of Missions would say in 1871 that women were employed in worldwide missions and as a result were "raising their status by mission work, [and] that in the Orient, the example of the emancipated woman is helping [those] who are considered as chattel."⁵⁵

Despite the romance of Foreign Missions, Home Mission activity seemed in many ways to be a more pressing concern. In 1851, just after the Fugitive Slave Law was passed, the First Presbyterian Church held a meeting for the purpose of aiding in giving the gospel "to the colored population in Canada."⁵⁶ Many African-Americans ended up in Canada after a stop in Chicago by way of the Underground Railroad. Even free blacks joined fugitives in Canada after 1850 for fear of being falsely arrested and sold to slaveholders.

The churches of Chicago sent missionaries to other parts of the country as well, including San Francisco, and also among the Germans and Scandinavians of the host city. The Northwestern Christian Advocate hoped that, in evangelizing the immigrant population, "Germany and Sweden" might be converted "by converting

⁵⁵The Advance (Jan. 12, 1871), 5.

⁵⁶Chicago Daily Democrat, Nov. 17, 1851.

their nationals in this country."⁵⁷ In this respect, Chicago was more and more recognized as an important mission field. A meeting at the Second Presbyterian Church was held in 1850 to consider "the condition and wants of the Irish, German, and Norwegian population [and] the adaptation of Colportage to the immigrant classes."⁵⁸

Significance

The churches knew that Chicago, with its diverse group of immigrants, was in itself an mission field. To this end, the churches sponsored numerous City Missions. The City Missions symbolize the growing sophistication of evangelical presence in the city. In addition to the distribution of tracts and literature, the churches realized that there were many resettlement issues, as well as the perceived mandate to evangelize and educate the immigrant and the poor.

Mission work in the city was also a way of communicating Protestant values to the growing numbers of "working classes," the immigrant newcomers in the city. The purpose of such mission work was clearly more evangelistic than charitable. Protestants assumed that the best thing that could happen to the immigrant was religious conversion.

By 1870, in addition to churches, societies and Sunday Schools, City Missions also proliferated in the city. The City

⁵⁷Northwestern Christian Advocate, Oct. 12, 1853.

⁵⁸Chicago Daily Democrat, Oct. 10, 1850.

Missions were often extensions of Mission Sabbath Schools and many developed further, as did the North Star Mission, becoming churches. Protestants, despite their emphasis on evangelism, realized that education and evangelism were not enough. Rather, the poor and the immigrant had need for relief and the churches were beginning to realize that efforts of education had to be supplemented with a range of other services. City Missions would develop into Rescue Missions, Institutional Churches, or Settlement Houses by the turn of the Century.

However, for many newcomers, there was resistance to proselytizing, in whatever forms Protestants invented. The Roman Catholics had their own churches and were more comfortable there. Even the immigrants who professed Protestantism would prefer their own churches due to language and cultural differences.

Finally, Jews resented being evangelized and were quick to point out their contribution on the one hand and their unique history and culture on the other. Jews accepted the moral crusades of the Protestants, but not their Bible or theology. These realizations caused many evangelical groups to reconsider what they were doing as they developed more efforts in charity than evangelism. Ironically, since Jews generally accepted the cultural values of the Protestants, it was easier for Protestants to work alongside Jews than Roman Catholics. To Protestants, it seemed easier to tolerate the Israelite than the religion of the Pope.

CHAPTER XIII

DWIGHT L. MOODY AND THE CHICAGO YMCA: INDEPENDENT EVANGELICALISM IN THE CITY

Dwight L. Moody and the Illinois Street Mission

Interdenominational unity was promoted and solidified locally by the Sabbath School Union and the Sabbath School Association. However, the most significant ecumenical group among the evangelical churches in the city at the time was the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), and the most prominent city mission in the pre-Civil War era was the one sponsored by the "Y" and founded by a shoe salesman from Boston.

Dwight Lyman Moody (1837-1899) was born on a farm in Northfield, Massachusetts. Leaving the countryside for the excitement of the city in his late teens, Moody arrived in Boston in 1854 and was employed briefly as a shoe salesman by an uncle. Confronted by a Sunday School teacher, Moody had a "matter of fact" conversion, and in 1856, decided to move west to the city of Chicago. In Chicago, Moody set as his goal to earn \$100,000 and was again employed as a shoe salesman.

Giving up this goal, Moody joined the Plymouth Congregational Church and rented four pews which he filled regularly. However, Moody noticed that the poor felt uncomfortable in this setting, and

so in 1859, he began a mission Sunday School called the Illinois Street Mission, when the evangelist was twenty-one years of age. Without being formerly educated or ordained, Moody left his business in 1861 to devote his life to preaching and evangelism.

Moody's Mission Sunday School was typical of the ones established at the time in other places. In Chicago alone, there were thirty-one such mission Sunday Schools in the city in 1865, with twenty-seven of them sponsored by the four major Protestant denominations.¹

For many of the evangelicals of the time, the Mission Sunday School was the medium for reaching out to the new immigrants. "These mission schools gave evidence of the evangelical concern for the poor and for those outside the fold, yet they were also a way to keep these people somewhat at arm's length and apart from active participation in the established churches until they had been properly trained and educated."²

The Illinois Street Mission was different, only because of its founder and Superintendent. "Moody is the spirit which moves this mission to its great success," observed the Advance.³ Not having enough space in Plymouth Church, Moody's Illinois Street Mission was located in a "brick chapel of respectable dimensions," and made

¹Halpin's Chicago City Directory, 1865-1866 (Chicago, 1865), xxxv; James F. Findlay, Jr., Dwight L. Moody: American Evangelist, 1837-1899 (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1969), 73.

²Findlay, Dwight L. Moody, 73.

³Advance, Nov. 7, 1867.

"purposefully unassuming so as not to frighten the visitors and poor communicants." The seats, of course, were all free, and strangers and the poor were all welcomed, without the demand of pew rents, unlike the practice of most churches at the time.

In 1861, Moody placed the Mission under the auspices of the YMCA, and it became the Illinois Street Church in 1864. Moody fastened a sign above the door that read, "Ever welcome to this house of God are strangers and the poor, the seats are free."⁴

The Advance described the place as warm and friendly. At the door, one was greeted by a person whose handclasp was "sincere and genuine." The Sunday School was a huge success and attracted children "from the notorious Wells [and] North Clark Streets [and] from the neighboring localities." The prayer meetings and Sunday religious services were for the adults of the neighborhood. Moody also sponsored "Sunday evening teas" for the genteel. Attenders included some of the seventy-two Sunday School teachers, with friends or "helpless souls searching for Christ."⁵

Moody conducted over 800 services a year in and about the church and mission by 1868. The Advance reported that "converts were received at every communion: that teacher's meetings have been regularly held for the past two years: that a prayer-meeting has been held right after the close of the School for the past four

⁴A Plaque on the East wall of the present Moody Memorial Church records these words.

⁵Advance (March 19, 1868), 6.

years: [and] that the members of his School represent ten nationalities."⁶

Moody worked with the YMCA during the Civil War, visiting many of the wounded soldiers. After the war, Moody organized several Sunday School teacher's conventions. By 1865, the average attendance of the mission was 750, ranking second only to the Railroad Mission. By 1868, Moody was able to draw as many as 1200 people to his church. While the primary purpose was to collect converts, Moody was not unsympathetic to social needs. He collected a small library of 700 volumes, and purchased clothing and food for needy families which an accomplice called "missionary sugar."⁷ Moody's persuasiveness was captured in the Advance.

When Moody speaks, everybody listens. Even those who do not like him. His remarks are short, pithy and practical, and his exhortations impressive, and sometimes touching even to tears . . . His remarks always have a martial ring. He wants "to wrest this State from the power of Satan and take hold it for Christ." What he wants done he wants done NOW. . . . As a brother once said of him, "He acts as if he were going to convert the world off-hand."⁸

The Young Men's Christian Association

Moody's great work became connected, however, less with his own Mission, and more and more with the YMCA. The outlook and practice of the YMCA were similar to the great benevolent movements

⁶Ibid., (April 23, 1868), 5.

⁷Findlay, Dwight L. Moody, 77.

⁸The Advance, 1 (November 7, 1867), 4.

of the time, including the American Bible, Tract, Home Mission, Foreign Mission, Temperance and Anti-Slavery societies.

These societies combined evangelism with a concern for moral improvement and social reform, believing that such efforts would result in a golden age, called a millennium. The YMCA was particularly concerned about the "salvation of young men," many of whom were believed to be tempted to indulge in the great evils of the time, particularly the drinking houses and the houses of prostitution.

The YMCA was lay-led, and Christian businessmen were at the forefront of the movement. It was "a typical expression of the Protestant layman in works of Christian reformation, and it displays an interesting synthesis of religious-humanitarian reform and urbanization in mid-century America."⁹ By 1865, the "Young Men's Association" had a social center, with debates, discussion groups, lectures and a library of 7,000 volumes.

It was also the administrative center for charity distribution, for the distribution of tracts and religious literature, and as a sponsor of several of the Sunday Schools. The YMCA moved beyond a mere Sunday School and fused a model that was at once evangelistic, charitable, and educational. By the late 1860s, the YMCA was the largest City Mission in Chicago.

⁹F. Roger Dunn, "Formative Years of the Chicago YMCA," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 37 (Dec., 1944): 332.

The Chicago YMCA

On June 6, 1844, twelve young men met together in London with the purpose of forming a society to improve the spiritual condition of men engaged in dangerous trades and other trials. This is the official date of the start of the YMCA, soon to become a worldwide movement.¹⁰ Meanwhile, Chicago was on its way to becoming ". . . the industrial city [that was] the home of young men of the Protestant world. These conditions, with their temptations to young men living in cities, called for the Association. It [the YMCA] is the product of the modern city."¹¹

By 1851, there were Associations in eight locations in London and in sixteen other cities in the United Kingdom as well as in Montreal and Boston. By 1866, YMCAs could be found all over the United States, including Springfield, Buffalo, Washington, D.C., New Orleans, Baltimore, Louisville, San Francisco, and Chicago. By the mid-1860s, the YMCA was a movement that was beginning to embrace the entire country. It was primarily an urban mission expression and was very much the product of the Second Great Awakening usually associated with the efforts of Charles G. Finney. The object was to "improve the spiritual, intellectual, and social condition of young men."¹²

¹⁰Fifty -Five Years: The Young Men's Christian Association of Chicago, 1858-1913 (Chicago: The Board of Managers, 1913), 4ff. The YMCA Papers, the Chicago Historical Society.

¹¹Ibid., 4.

¹²Ibid., 6.

There were predecessors of the "Y" in Chicago. In 1841, a "Young Men's Association" was established, followed by the "Mechanic's Institute" in 1842. In 1852-3, a third organization came into existence as the "Young Men's Society for Religious Improvement." Each of these organizations

sought to furnish a pleasant social center as an attractive and respectable resort for young men alone in the city, to maintain a library and reading room supplied with books, magazines, and newspapers suitable to their membership, to sponsor such informal educational projects as lectures, discussions, debates and exhibits and to carry on similar works of moral and intellectual improvement and social amelioration.¹³

In Chicago, there were attempts at founding an Association as early as 1852, the year after the initial one in Boston. In early 1853, An article in the Northwestern Christian Advocate challenged evangelical business leaders with the following: "We should have one [a YMCA] in the city of Chicago. Who will first move on the matter?"¹⁴ The next month, the journal would note that "preparatory steps are being taken for the organizing of a Young Men's Christian Association in Chicago."¹⁵

By April of that year, the new Association was "in full swing," with an initial large membership meeting in Harmony Hall on Clark Street.¹⁶ Officers included Protestant businessmen S.D. Ward, President; Frank Hathaway, Grant Goodrich, J.R. Shedd, and

¹³Dunn, "Formative Years of the YMCA," 335.

¹⁴Northwestern Christian Advocate, Jan. 12, 1853.

¹⁵Ibid., (Feb. 2, 1853), 2.

¹⁶Congregational Herald, April 23, 1853.

C.B. Nelson, Vice Presidents; Cyrus Bentley, Secretary; Orrington Lunt, Treasurer; and F.C. Robinson, Librarian.¹⁷

With the goal of improving the condition of both the strangers and the residents of the city, W.P. Montgomery, a Chicago representative at the Buffalo convention in 1854, stated that the Association sought to provide a facility to counter the ". . . saloons where young men were being transformed by an easy, natural process into loafers; alleys well furnished with liquors and means of amusements; pitfalls well concealed in which young men were sinking to ruin by scores - but the city possessed but few facilities for the moral benefit of strangers among us."¹⁸

However, the first attempt at establishing a YMCA did not really take off, and it for all practical purposes ceased to exist by 1854, a casualty of the latest cholera epidemic. The city was hit in 1857 by a widespread financial panic, which fed the fires of revival the subsequent year. The Panic of 1857, while one of many economic bust cycles in the nineteenth century, was nonetheless treated in religious terms as judgment for materialism and irreligion. The Panic brought "a tide of religious feeling which, beginning to rise in 1857, rose so high in the Winter and Spring of 1858 as to sweep away all denominational lines."¹⁹

¹⁷Hall and Smith, Chicago City Directory for 1853-1854 (Chicago: Robert Fergus, 1853), 234.

¹⁸J.M. Montgomery, "Report of W.P. Montgomery to Buffalo Convention," (June 7-8, 1854), 1. YMCA Papers, Chicago Historical Society.

¹⁹"History of the YMCA," The Advance (March 19, 1868), 6.

The Chicago revivals were influenced by the Fulton Street prayer meetings in New York, and similar rituals were begun in Chicago. Noontime prayer meetings, later a major dynamic of the Chicago YMCA were begun in early 1858, with large crowds coming daily to Metropolitan Hall. The revival dominated the topic of conversation among citizens, and displaced "even the important political contest of the year. There was a thoughtfulness that pervaded the entire business community."²⁰

The noontime prayer meetings were later moved to the First Baptist Church.²¹ These "Union prayer meetings" were supported by the various denominations, and discussions emerged as to how to develop a mechanism to further the revival. Fully fourteen (half) of the total mission Sunday Schools were the product of the revival, and the YMCA was the revival's most outstanding product.

Suggestions to establish the YMCA were uttered in March, 1858, and by May a call went out for those interested in reforming the Association. On May 17, the Association was reorganized with Cyrus Bentley, President (1858-9). A Baptist, Cyrus Bentley, was a member of the Bentley and Burling Law Firm and a manager in the International Harvester Company. He was a member of numerous philanthropic organizations in the city.²²

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Christian Times (April 28, 1858), 3.

²²Ibid., 3-4.

Bentley gave an inaugural address at a prayer meeting at Metropolitan Hall, LaSalle at Randolph, at the present site of the Bismarck Hotel. He noted that Chicagoans were influenced by the works of the Association in other cities and that "we have spontaneously come up hither from the various evangelical churches of the city, without any reference to sect or denominational preferences, and organized this association for the avowed purpose, under God, of rescuing and saving these vast numbers of young men in our city from the temporal and eternal ruin to which they are exposed."²³

In the YMCA, Protestant business leaders saw the opportunity to develop a mechanism for continued revival. They therefore took over the successful noontime prayer meeting to this end. It was an ecumenical affair, and while its focus was on "rescuing" young men from the temptations of the city, it seemed to draw more adult men from the business community than "young men" from the streets of the city.

In mid-1858, a committee of seven persons from seven evangelical denominations drew up the plan for the Chicago YMCA, for the "improvement of the spiritual, intellectual and social condition of young men."²⁴ A major concern was membership and it was agreed to be limited to members of the evangelical churches, excluding Roman Catholics, liberal and sectarian congregations.

²³Ibid., 3.

²⁴Dunn, 339.

The officers of the 1858 YMCA included Cyrus Bentley, Dwight L. Moody and John V. Farwell. The Association rented a "common room" at 205 West Randolph, and immediately developed a library classes "for mental culture under Christian teachers," and offered "young men" opportunity to gather in "rooms . . . where withdrawn from the temptations of ungodly society, they might spend their evenings in suitable companionship."²⁵ The leadership of the Chicago YMCA reflected the Protestant business elite of the city.

On June 21, 1858, there were 153 active members of the Association, and all the members had to pass the "evangelical test," as membership was limited to "any male member of good standing in any evangelical church, which holds the doctrine of faith in Christ alone."²⁶ By the end of the year, the membership had risen to 315, with 242 "active" members, forty-two Associates, and twenty-five life members.

Members of the "Y" were presumed men of "good moral character." In 1861, women could apply for Associate or Auxiliary membership, but the leadership was in the hands clearly of Christian men of business. Since the express purpose of the organization was "to win souls and protect newcomers from the pitfalls of the city," converts were also encouraged to join one of the city's evangelical churches. As a result, evangelical

²⁵The Advance (March 19, 1868), 8.

²⁶Ibid., 9.

denominations supported the YMCA, as they would Moody's revivals in the city in the next decade.

The Chicago Association "assumed . . . the fundamental truths of evangelical Christianity and furnished an opportunity for broad co-operation in Christian service."²⁷ Also, it was dedicated to spread evangelical truth to many of the "young men" who found themselves in Chicago, many of them immigrants from Ireland and Germany, as well as migrants from the East coast and from the South. For members, the YMCA was "so universally adapted to the saving of souls, especially suited to the protection of our young men from the alluring evils which surround them."²⁸

While expressly evangelistic, the activities of the YMCA from the beginning also addressed issues of charity and education. The monthly meetings were designed to discuss an essay or piece of literature, and the charity work included finding houses of public worship for strangers, suitable boarding houses, employment, as well as visiting the sick, both members as well as strangers "as might be brought to their notice."²⁹

The Association moved its meetings from Metropolitan Hall to First Baptist Church, and then to First Presbyterian Church where the attendance declined, and then to the "Iron Block" on Randolph Street. The Advance would note in retrospect that "the first year

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Northwestern Christian Advocate (May 5, 1858), 3.

²⁹Advance (March 19, 1868), 6.

was not an aggressive one. The main effort was to obtain [and] make it attractive with books, papers, [and] periodicals, [and] at which members should be in attendance to make welcome those who should come to make use of them."³⁰

However, in the absence of a permanent home for the YMCA, the objects of the Association could not be realized. A motion was considered by the fall of 1859 to disband the organization, as attendance in the noontime prayer meetings had declined to six or seven people. But members responded and took hold of the problem with great vigor. The noon meetings were then moved to the Methodist Church block, and there began to prosper again, while the leaders considered plans for the purchase of their own building, later Farwell Hall.

In 1860, Moody was beckoned to give leadership to the YMCA's noontime prayer meetings. Moody was then accustomed to street preaching and enjoyed visiting saloons, gambling dens, and other places of ill repute. Moody was an associate of a group that called themselves the "Mission Band," young men from the First Methodist Church who visited saloons and hotels on Sundays, distributing tracts and Bibles, and luring recruits to Methodist worship services.

However, in 1860, the Advance noted that Moody was "then regarded as a young man with more zeal than knowledge," but he rekindled interest in the prayer meeting by standing at the

³⁰Ibid., 6-7.

entrance, inviting passersby to join. Moody followed up these meetings with visits to "saloons and places of like character."³¹ In the spring of 1861, Dwight L. Moody joined Farwell, a Presbyterian, in providing vigorous leadership for the YMCA. Moody gave the "Y" evangelistic zeal, and membership in the association increased dramatically. Moody's leadership was so helpful that he became President of the Association from 1865 to 1868.

Farwell was not the only Presbyterian to be active in the city's moral and social life. Many Presbyterians, such as Cyrus McCormick, Marion Hughitt and others mixed their class and religious interests with an attempt to support various benevolent activities like the Home for Incurables, Chicago Home for the Friendless or the John Crerar Library. The Presbyterians brought with them their religious zeal and managerial know-how. "The strength of the denomination lies in its strong, courageous, and aggressive body of business men, backed up, and in many instances led, but one of the finest bodies of women a denomination, or a city for that matter, ever possessed."³²

By October 1861, these business leaders were looking for a way that churches could organize the distribution of charity in Chicago. "Visitors" connected with several of the Sabbath Schools and several of the "accredited city missionaries" were brought together by the Y to organize charity giving for the coming

³¹Ibid., 7.

³²Andrew Stevenson, Chicago: Pre-eminently a Presbyterian City (Chicago: Winona Publications, 1907), 18.

winter.³³ By early 1862, it was obvious that Dwight L. Moody was going to become the most significant leader of the new movement. In his retirement speech of April 1862, John V. Farwell recommended that Moody be hired by the YMCA and duly rewarded for his efforts.

Brother D.L. Moody, without any official action on the part of the association, has given his entire time and energies in executing the saving plans of doing good. . . . [Further], not having raised . . . funds outside of membership dues . . . we have not been able, as an association, to make him any remuneration.³⁴

The Chicago YMCA in the Civil War

YMCA leaders were involved intimately in relief and in the provision of religious service in the Civil War. Farwell noted Moody's efforts in representing the Sanitary Commission at Pittsburgh Landing and Fort Donelson. Farwell suggested that Moody be given the leadership of the YMCA due to his demonstrated leadership skills. "I scarcely deem it necessary to recommend his constant employment as a city missionary, for which service he is eminently qualified, and that some systematic plans be carried out to meet the expense of such a engagement."³⁵

Moody and J.M. Chapman were also engaged in visiting soldiers at Camp Douglas "for the purpose of distributing tracts among them." Daily prayer meetings were held with attendance swelling

³³Chicago Daily Tribune, October 18, 1861.

³⁴John V. Farwell, "Annual Report of YMCA," Chicago Daily Tribune, April 22, 1862.

³⁵Ibid., April 22, 1862.

sometimes to over a thousand, the result being that the YMCA built a chapel there for \$2,300. Moody was sympathetic to abolitionism and to the peace movement, but believed that the primary problem was spiritual and he pressed rather for spiritual salvation rather than political reforms.³⁶

The Chicago Daily Tribune supported the endeavor of building a chapel, agreeing that the camp "should possess an adequate and commodious place of worship. . . . A large room should be constructed among the barracks or a separate building erected for this purpose. It will be a glorious and permanent monument to the Association."³⁷

Meetings were held at Camp Douglas in the mornings and in the evenings. Some 3,500 hymn books were printed and bound for distribution in the camp.³⁸ This was considered by the Chicago Daily Tribune to be a laudable undertaking, and it would no doubt "meet the approval of army chaplains [and] others in bettering the moral conditions of the volunteers."³⁹ One hundred workers were mobilized by Moody to assist at the Camp. In addition to the aid given the soldiers, the effort at the Camp "gave a new vigor to the Association." The Association became, at Camp Douglas, a vehicle

³⁶"D.L. Moody," Chicago Tribune, Jan. 24, 1937. A summary of Moody's life and evangelistic mission in Chicago.

³⁷Chicago Daily Tribune, Nov. 12, 1861.

³⁸Advance (March 19, 1868), 7.

³⁹Chicago Daily Tribune, Dec. 20, 1861.

of the work of the U.S. Christian Commission, organized in New York to provide religious counsel and relief to soldiers during the war.

Evangelism and Social Concern

By 1862, the city had issues other than the Civil War to be concerned about. The 1860s were an important decade for Chicago, as the railroad, lumber, textile, and meatpacking industries took root. The city tripled in size, from 109,260 to 298,977, becoming one of the largest cities in the United States. With such growth came other problems. The Christian Times could report in 1864 that "there is a growth in poverty." For the Times, the increase in poverty was directly attributable to the "twelve to fifteen hundred drinking houses" in the city.⁴⁰ The war was also a factor. Many a family was victimized by sons or husbands going off to war. In 1861 alone, the YMCA distributed among "the deserving poor"-- "ninety loads of wood, 64 tons of coal, provisions, [and] clothing valued at \$595.00 . . . among 182 families" including sixty-five Irish, fifty-three German, twenty-eight "American," eighteen English, seven Scandinavian, seven French, seven Scotch, and two "colored" families.⁴¹

Evangelical leaders, many of them connected with the Association, were trying to centralize charity-giving and also the manner in which tracts were distributed. On April 30, 1862, a

⁴⁰Christian Times (December 1, 1864), 1.

⁴¹Chicago Daily Tribune, Jan. 22, 1862.

meeting occurred for those interested in tract distribution in the city. The Reverend W.W. Everts, Pastor of the First Baptist Church, sponsored a resolution suggesting that "the work of tract distribution in this city should be placed in the hands of the Young Men's Christian Association [so] as to combine the agency and co-operation of the ladies and pastors of the churches."⁴² The YMCA was looked to by leaders in the city to organize the distribution of services and religious literature as a single agency.

A week later, a subsequent meeting was held for the purpose of uniting the efforts of the City Tract, Missionary and Sabbath School Union societies with the YMCA. After a "spirited debate," the Rev. Robert Patterson of the Reformed Presbyterian Church⁴³ moved that the Y appoint a "Publications Committee" comprised of an officer or pastor from each of the co-operating denominations in the city. The purpose of the Committee was "to select tracts to be used in distribution, that the YMCA take charge of the work; [and] that Chicago churches be asked to give their tract collections to the YMCA to be used by them exclusively in the distribution of tracts."⁴⁴

On the Publications Committee was the Rev. Everts of First Baptist, Fisk of the Congregationalists, Pratt of the

⁴²Ibid., April 30, 1862.

⁴³Not Robert W. Patterson of Second Presbyterian Church in Chicago.

⁴⁴Chicago Daily Tribune, May 7, 1862.

Episcopalians, Eddy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Swazey of the Presbyterians and Patterson of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.⁴⁵ The Constitution of the YMCA was also changed. Whereas in the past, only men forty years old or younger could be officers, this was increased to age forty-five. Second, "applicants" to the society could be immediately considered by the Board of Managers, rather than the common practice of a month wait.

Tract Distribution

In 1862, citywide tract distribution was begun. By 1864, lay volunteers made 100,000 different visits and distributed over 675,000 pages of tracts. In the late 1860s, a married couple was hired by the association to distribute tracts, visit saloons, hotels, ships in port and "thousands of the city poor in quest of Christian commitment."⁴⁶

Tract distribution was looked upon as an important vehicle in the "evangelization of the outcast."⁴⁷ In 1866, the YMCA distributed 500,000 pages of reading materials, including 250,000 pages of foreign tracts, 25,000 religious papers, 400 testaments and 150 Bibles. "The result was a considerable increase of the Sabbath-Schools and the hopeful conversion of 130 families."⁴⁸

⁴⁵Ibid., May 20, 1862.

⁴⁶Dunn, "Formative Years of the Chicago YMCA," 347.

⁴⁷Ibid., 135.

⁴⁸Ibid., 137.

Teachers and lecturers were provided, and plans were in place to establish an employment service and temperance boarding houses.

By 1867, the noontime prayer meetings of the YMCA rivaled similar expressions such as the Fulton Street meetings in New York.⁴⁹ A new Farwell Hall, named after John V. Farwell, was in the process of being dedicated in the fall of that year. The building cost around \$200,000. The Advance outlined plans for use of the building.

It is expected that the rental of that part of the building devoted to business purposes will pay for its total cost in ten years. After that its revenue will be devoted to the work of the Association. The audience room is a very fine one [and] will accommodate, it is said, a larger congregation than the famous Exeter Hall, of London.⁵⁰

Unfortunately, the hall was completely destroyed by fire on January 7, 1868, just three months after it was dedicated. While no improprieties were suspected, the loss of the Hall was a blow to the "pride and glory of Chicago." The Advance reported that "an appeal [was] made to rebuild the Hall. The loss, not covered by insurance, amounted to \$80,000."⁵¹ The journal later corrected the figure for the uninsured part to be \$50,000 for the building and \$8,000 for the library.⁵² The noontime prayer meetings that were previously held in Farwell Hall were resumed in the "Session room" of the Methodist Church Block.

⁴⁹Advance (Sept. 19, 1867), 5.

⁵⁰Ibid., (Oct. 3, 1867), 5.

⁵¹Ibid., (Jan. 9, 1868), 5.

⁵²Ibid., (Jan. 16, 1868), 4.

New plans were made to replace Farwell Hall and to build a separate building costing \$60,000 adjacent to it just to house the library alone.⁵³ In March, D. L. Moody was elected for the third time as President of the local YMCA.⁵⁴ In April, the tenth anniversary was held for the YMCA. A celebration was apparently held in two places, the New England Congregational Church on the North side, and the First Baptist Church on the South side.

The new Farwell Hall opened in January of 1869. The Advance described the Hall as giving "suitable place once more for public entertainments, [since] it is a Christian duty to see that a pure, unexceptional character, yet attractive to the people, are furnished." A "songstress," Parepa Rosa, sang as a benefit to the Hall and the Association. The new Farwell Hall could accommodate 3,000 people just as its "chaste but cheerful finish is in happy contrast to the begilded pretenses of the Opera House."⁵⁵

YMCA "Social Work"

The YMCA was well-known for its philanthropic work. It was described as doing a ". . . great work . . . visiting the poor and the distressed, and providing them with temporary relief. There is scarcely a poor home in the city, whether worthy or unworthy, which has not been visited by these Christian missionaries. . .

⁵³Ibid., 6.

⁵⁴Ibid., (March 19, 1868), 5.

⁵⁵Ibid., (Jan. 28, 1869), 4.

"⁵⁶ "Here they make inquiries as to the health and needs of the inmates. Some are without bread and other necessities, some have pawned or sold their last articles of wearing apparel; some have no wool or coal, and sit huddled together in rags round the rusty stove. . . ." ⁵⁷

In 1860, the first year of organized relief, the "Y" assisted some 554 different families. With the coming of the Civil War, the YMCA sponsored Sunday evening meetings in support of soldiers in churches and established a Relief Committee in the fall of 1861. A "city missionary" was hired to distribute clothing, food, fuel, and to visit those who were in need of medical attention, as well as those who were in spiritual need. In 1866, an employment officer was hired to find jobs for veterans of the war as well as for others in need. By the end of the decade, several thousand men and women were helped each year.

By the late 1860s, the Chicago Association, in addition to sponsoring Lyceum lectures, functioned as the administrative center for relief in the city and sponsored a Committee to look after "the interests of the may suffering poor, worthy and unworthy, who ever at this early day pressed to the city in undue numbers." "Our public charity in this direction has been pretty well systematized [and] the matter of distribution placed in the hands of the Young Men's Christian Association." Thus, the YMCA by the end of the

⁵⁶George S. Phillips, Chicago and Her Churches (Chicago: E.B. Myers and Chandler, 1868), 131.

⁵⁷Ibid.

Civil War was the conduit of relief and evangelism for the evangelical churches. It accepted the responsibility to "coordinate the various attempts to relieve the poor, including the victims of the war, and of strong drink."⁵⁸

The Chicago YMCA was involved in "social Christian work," uniting churches "to furnish a halting place," providing opportunities for employment "for the multitudes of young men who were constantly attracted here." In 1866 alone, \$29,991.12 was distributed to the poor and hungry of the city.⁵⁹

In 1867 over 4,000 persons were assisted, and YMCA relief activities included

provisions; groceries; bread-tickets; medicines; dry goods, including bedding, material for clothing and second-hand clothing collected in the city; shoes; sundries, including rent paid for families; transportation furnished; funeral expenses, and . . . all practical, useful articles, and accommodations.⁶⁰

The YMCA Reports of 1868 showed expenditures of \$15,000. Over 3,400 people were found job situations, and over two million pages of religious literature were distributed, mostly tracts, Bibles and testaments. Additionally, the YMCA sponsored over 400 religious meetings the previous year, and the visitors were seeing 1500 families per month. The visitation efforts by Sunday School workers and "colporteurs" was effective that the "Y" could boast

⁵⁸Christian Times (Dec. 1, 1864), 3.

⁵⁹Phillips, Chicago and Her Churches, 133.

⁶⁰Ibid.

that "saloons in all parts of the city have been visited weekly."⁶¹

In the Eleventh Annual Meeting of the YMCA, held in Farwell Hall April 11, 1869, the Employment Committee reported that in the previous year, 2,039 men and 1,070 women were assisted in finding work situations. This Committee "procures work and good boarding places for worthy people of every class without charge."⁶² Additionally, 300 "young men" were placed in a boarding house devoted to temperance and Christian values. This was the YMCA's answer to the evils of the gambling dens and barrooms.

Publications

The YMCA also moved into publications. In addition to distributing tons of tracts, the Association produced two monthly papers, Heavenly Tidings and Everybody's Paper, with an aggregate distribution of 100,000. The former paper was evangelistic in nature, the latter more concerned about news and issues of the day. A library of 3,000 volumes of "the choicest popular literature" was available for readers.⁶³

The Association sought to expand its membership as well as increase its revenues. Costs for life and annual memberships varied. Life Memberships in the Association was \$20 for men, and \$10 for women; Sustaining Members paid \$5 a year, and Associate

⁶¹Advance, April 30, 1868.

⁶²The Christian Times (October 21, 1869), 4.

⁶³Advance (April 15, 1869), 5.

Members on an annual basis paid \$2 a year for men, and \$1 a year for women.⁶⁴ The effort paid off, for by 1871, membership in the Association had climbed from a few hundred members to 1,838.⁶⁵

One of the most popular programs of the Association at this time was still the noontime prayer meetings. These meetings attracted "businessmen and clerks, [and was] apparently interdenominational."⁶⁶ The Advance recorded the details of the prayer meetings in the years after the Civil War in detail, noting the speakers and the subjects covered, almost all of them devoted to evangelism and Christian discipleship.

If the meetings did not address substantively pressing social ills, they reflected the concerns of morality and the development of evangelical religious character by the Protestant business community. The constituency of the noontime prayer meetings was clearly the business community. The Interior (Presbyterian) concluded that the meetings were "a good idea . . . so that business men, women, and visitors may all get some contact with God during the day." However, the Interior had some concern about the conduct of the meetings and suggested that the "professional attenders" develop more of a "grace of silence" so that there might be a freer expression of "Christian sentiments from the scores of

⁶⁴Christian Times (October 21, 1869), 4.

⁶⁵Advance (May 25, 1871), 5.

⁶⁶Ibid., (Jan. 13, 1870), 6.

warmhearted [and] intelligent believers, who are too modest to push themselves into notice."⁶⁷

In 1870, the organization received \$2,000 to establish a library. John V. Farwell assisted this cause by transferring \$30,000 in stock to Farwell Hall "as a nucleus of a fund for a general theological library, including standard works of all denominational authors, to be free to all young men preparing for the ministry in the various theological seminaries in [and] about the city, [and] also to the Chicago ministry."⁶⁸ The Advance concluded that this "generous gift was characteristic of his warmhearted liberality."⁶⁹ In 1870, a full-time librarian was hired, and by 1871, the library was organized as a free public library and had over 5,200 volumes, with fifty-five weekly and fifty-one daily periodicals.

The character of the early YMCA showed the influence of Dwight L. Moody. In addition to the noonday prayer meetings with one hundred persons in regular attendance, Moody held religious meetings in lodging houses, hospitals, jails, and houses of ill repute. He also held outdoor revival meetings in the city, all sponsored by the YMCA. Evangelism was linked to campaigns against drinking, obscene literature, theater going, dancing and

⁶⁷Interior (March 17, 1870), 2.

⁶⁸Advance (Sept. 22, 1870), 4.

⁶⁹Ibid.

billiards.⁷⁰ By 1870, the YMCA was the center of both evangelistic and philanthropic work in the city.

Moody played no small part in the development of the Association, and under his leadership "the YMCA was . . . transformed into an agency of city-wide evangelization. In the 1860s and 1870s, public evangelism became the most important of all its functions and gave it essential character."⁷¹

The YMCA also sponsored revivals led by lay businessmen including J. V. Farwell, T. King, B.F. Jacobs, and D. L. Moody. By 1866, the association constructed its first chapel at Camp Douglas, the first such YMCA edifice in the country.

The YMCA was also engaged in temperance work and in efforts to diminish the "desecration of the Lord's Day." Members of the association, including Mr. Moody, were mobilized to "rid Chicago of its vices and her resorts to crime" which included by the mid-sixties "two thousand saloons and gambling houses which were dispensing, according to a horrified observer, the unbelievable total of twenty million gallons of liquor yearly to an estimated fifty thousand patrons."⁷²

The YMCA by 1870 provided relief in ways that the Salvation Army and Travelers and Immigrants Aid would do for the city in the next century. Like today's United Way, the efforts of the YMCA

⁷⁰Dunn, 350.

⁷¹Ibid, 348.

⁷²Advance, Sept. 17, 1867.

were comprehensive and citywide. The "Y" also functioned as an employment agency. It would provide temporary and permanent work situations for men and women. In 1863 J.M. Chapman and J.M. Cutler of the Association volunteered to record the number of people who were inquiring for jobs. In the first year, 500 men, women and children were assisted in finding employment. This program would continue to develop, and by 1871 job situations were found for 3,490 persons.⁷³ Also, the agency took charge as the central administrative headquarters for many of the Sabbath Schools, home and foreign missions, as well as Bible and tract distribution.

The YMCA was more evangelistic than social at core. Lectures were on theological themes such as justification by faith alone, the resurrection, life after death, and the last judgment. Usually, lectures railed against the evils of Catholicism and many evangelicals linked "popery" together with slavery, despotism, and superstition. Individual Catholics were welcomed, but not the church or the religion. Lutherans were attacked and considered foreign; and Unitarians, Universalists, Swedenborgians, followers of "Mohamet," and Spiritualists were all castigated as "apocalyptic cults." In short, the YMCA preachers were committed to evangelical orthodoxy, and membership in the association was limited to the evangelical churches.

The Great Fire leveled churches, businesses and residences, and also Farwell Hall and other facilities that housed the

⁷³Ibid., (May 25, 1871), 5.

activities of the Y. As a result, Moody began a tour of England to obtain funds for a new building, and for relief of victims of the fire. In the process, Moody became the Chicago YMCAs fundraiser, but the great evangelist of the time.

Significance

The YMCA, for its first fifteen years, was established for primarily the purpose of the spiritual salvation of "young men" in the city. While this purpose was later supplanted by an emphasis on charity and relief, the original purpose was never lost. "Through experiences of fire and tumult, in the midst of a marvelous material development," the Chicago Association was a prominent lay Protestant evangelical institution, responsible for endeavors both evangelistic and philanthropic in the city's early history and development.

The YMCA also reflected the interests of the Protestant evangelical business elite at the time. John V. Farwell, for example, was an Easterner, born in Painted Post, New York in 1825. A Presbyterian laymen, entrepreneur, journalist, and principle owner of the J.V. Farwell Company, a well-to-to dry goods firm, Farwell came from New York in 1838 and was converted in 1840 in a camp meeting.

Farwell was also the principle founder of the YMCA. He was President of the Association until 1861, and was succeeded by John Hamilcar Hollister (1861-1862), a medical doctor, Congregationalist, and member of the Illinois State Medical Society, the

American Medical Association, and editor of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Hollister was followed by Benjamin Franklin Jacobs (1862-1863). Born in Patterson, New Jersey, Jacobs was a produce entrepreneur and real estate broker. Jacobs was a Baptist, and in September, 1856, became the Superintendent of the New Street Mission, the first Baptist Sunday School in Chicago. Jacobs was also Superintendent of the Baptist Newsboy's Mission and the Immanuel Baptist Church Sunday School. During the Civil War, he worked with the Christian Commission to provide relief to soldiers.

Jacobs was succeeded by Edwin Silas Wells (1864-1865). Wells was born in Salisbury, Connecticut on October 19, 1828, and was a member of the Presbyterian church in the city. He was the proprietor of the Metropolitan Hall in 1857 and had the authority to give consent to the use of the facility for the popular noontime prayer meetings. He became the fifth President of the Chicago YMCA and was succeeded in 1865 by Dwight Lyman Moody, the salesman turned evangelist.

The leaders of the YMCA represented the major evangelical denominations of the time. They were for the most part prominent businessmen and represented the collegiality of the Protestant business elite of the city. By 1867, the Board of Trustees included E.W. Blatchford (Congregationalist), promoter of Chicago Academy of Sciences and the Chicago Sanitary Commission in the 1860s; J.V. Farwell (Presbyterian), Dry Goods Merchant; Cyrus McCormick, (Presbyterian) President of McCormick Reaper Works; and

George Armour, (Presbyterian) grain merchant. The YMCA in Chicago was thus a lay-led movement, influenced by the revivalist currents of the day that was both evangelical and ecumenical in character.

The YMCA organized the efforts of the revival, and combined the revival interests with evangelical concern for education of newcomers, especially young people, with a concern for the social needs of the poor. However, as evangelical denominations looked to the YMCA to organize the distribution of tracts and Bibles, it is clear that the major commitment of the YMCA, was not really social reform, but evangelism, and the growth of the sponsoring churches as the outcome.

CHAPTER XIV
THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT
Beginnings in Chicago

Like other reform movements of the era, the temperance movement was also a product of the Great Awakening. The reform crusade, fed by the revivals, "made all social ills seem easily curable. Foreign and home missions, Bible and tract societies, conversion of sailors, and temperance reform were only a few of the movements taken up under the influence of the Great Awakening."¹

The temperance crusade in particular was a spectacular movement in early Chicago. As a crusade against the sale and consumption of liquor, there was initial outrage at the sale of liquor to the Indians in the city, and the resultant stealing of land in return for strong drink.

Jeremiah Porter tells the story of the incident:

The traders had ordered quantities of whiskey, expecting a golden harvest at this payment. One had fifteen barrels on the way. Happily for the Indians, . . . though they may not have thought so at the time, a strong south wind prevailed for sixteen days, while the Indians were here, so that not a single vessel could come up the lake. . . . Temperance men, philanthropists, and Christians rejoiced that the firewater did not come. In consequence of this Divine protection of the Indians, they went from the payment with a large sum of money

¹Herbert Wiltsee, "The Temperance Movement, 1848-1871," Papers in Illinois History (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Society, 1938): 82-92.

. . . which [30,000 in silver] would have been wasted for whiskey, had not the strong wind kept it back.²

Porter was perhaps the first temperance reformer in Chicago, and he obtained twenty subscriptions for a periodical, the Temperance Recorder, a voice for temperance reform in the city.³ As early as 1834, there were three temperance societies in Cook County. The American Temperance Society was the major temperance organ, and by Feb. 4, 1834, the Chicago branch had over 120 members. The Society targeted soldiers at Fort Dearborn in an effort to elevate the character of the armed services.⁴

Activities of the temperance workers were often linked to churches, and clergy and laity alike railed against the sin of strong drink and its consequences. Not only did reform crusades such as temperance emanate from the churches, but they also got their membership and financial support from church constituencies.⁵ The churches' goal was really prohibition, not temperance. They were not following Benjamin Franklin's ethic of moderation, but Franklin's fellow Philadelphian Benjamin Rush's argument for teetotalism. Teetotalism became the dogma of the Great Awakening, following the influence of Rush and Lyman Beecher.

²Jeremiah Porter, "An Address on the Earliest Religious History of Chicago," Autograph Letters XVII (1859): 73. Mss. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

³Jeremiah Porter to the Rev. Edmund Hovey, Coal Creek, Indiana, Aug. 27, 1833. Mss. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

⁴Chicago Democrat, Feb. 4, 1834.

⁵Wiltsee, "The Temperance Movement, 1848-1871," 83.

On December 19, 1835, the Young Men's Temperance Society⁶ held meetings in Chicago, and new members pledged total abstinence. Leaders for the society included religious laymen such as Grant Goodrich, (Methodist); Dr. John T. Temple (Baptist); Dr. Josiah H. Goodhue; Philo Carpenter (Presbyterian/ Congregationalist); Dr. Van Der Bogart; M. D. Harmon; William H. Brown (Presbyterian); John Wright (Presbyterian); and John Dye.⁷

Teetotalism led to a debate in Chicago. According to the Chicago American, the question of teetotalism was addressed as early as 1836. In a Lyceum debate, the following question was posed and discussed: "Does the progress of the Temperance Reform in Chicago require the exclusion of all intoxicating drink as a beverage?" Teetotalism became the acceptable position among evangelicals and temperance reformers.⁸

By 1842, the Washingtonian movement made its way to Chicago, and a small group of drinkers provoked by an evangelist signed a pledge that they would abstain totally from drinking alcoholic beverages and would work earnestly to get others to do likewise. The Washingtonian movement originated in the previous year (1841)

⁶Later, Washingtonian Temperance Society (1841).

⁷Chicago Democrat, Feb. 4, 1834; Chicago American, Dec. 12, 1835; Jan. 9, 1836.

⁸Ibid., April 16, 1836.

in Baltimore with the express purpose of "the reformation of those who had unhappily become drunkards."⁹

On the first of January, 1842, at the Methodist church, William H. Brown was elected President and Grant Goodrich, Secretary of the newly formed "Chicago Washington Temperance Society." Repentance of "former slaves to alcohol" was urged, and a pledge to total abstinence was signed by 25 persons "to abstain from all use of intoxicating liquors either as a beverage or to traffic in them, and to use their influence to persuade their friends to give up their use."¹⁰

The Chicago Daily American printed the proceedings.¹¹ Testimonies were shared as how the "alcohol demon" "stole from people their good name, property and happiness; snatched the bread from their children's mouths, and left them naked and hungry, houseless and brokenhearted." In short, alcoholism led to ruin and the destruction of the domestic sphere. The solution was for offenders to repent and sign the pledge to abstain from liquor completely. Wives and children "wept tears of joy," as this crusade, like many others, took on every form of a revival.

The members hoped "to restore thousands of our citizens to society and respectability." Membership had its responsibilities, as they must "subscribe to the pledge" and observe the

⁹"Washingtonian Temperance Meeting," Chicago Daily American (Jan. 13, 1842), 2.

¹⁰Ibid., (Jan. 4, 1842), 2.

¹¹Ibid., January 4-13, 1842.

constitution. Officers included a President, three Vice Presidents, a Treasurer, two Managers and a Secretary, all elected annually. One could be expelled from the Society upon undisputed evidence of violation of the pledge. The Pledge was as follows:

We the undersigned do agree that we will not use intoxicating liquors as a beverage, nor traffic in them, that we will, in all suitable ways discountenance their use by others, and that we will contribute by all kind and friendly means in our power, to induce our friends and acquaintances who may be in the habit of using them, wholly to abstain from such sue as a beverage, that they may be restored to all the comforts and blessings of a sober life.¹²

On February 19, 1842, joint meetings of temperance groups were held in the city including the local Washingtonians, the Juvenile the Sunday Schools and even the Catholic temperance societies. The Washingtonians began at the Presbyterian Church, the Chicago Temperance Society at the Methodist Church and the Juvenile Temperance Society met at the Baptist Church. Each paraded to the Presbyterian Church with singing, prayers, readings and declarations. In a rare ecumenical meeting, the Catholic Temperance Society was also invited to attend along with the Protestant Sunday Schools.

In the evening, the group met at the Methodist church, where "alcohol was tried for murder" before L. C. Kerchival, judge, with a prosecution and defense carried by six prominent attorneys in a mock trial.¹³ Such a dramatic display by temperance forces

¹²Ibid., (Jan. 13, 1842), 2.

¹³Ibid., "Washington Temperance Celebration," Feb. 19, 1842.

illustrates the importance of the crusade and the role of evangelical Protestantism in the movement.

In April, Col. Kerchival addressed a crowded audience in the Court House, with the result that 250 persons were added to the Temperance Society.¹⁴ A "Temperance notice" appeared April 3, 1842, advertising the meeting of the Executive Committee, in the Baptist Church. The Society moved towards greater organization, establishing superintendents in each of the six districts.

Duties of the superintendents were described. These leaders were required to encourage members and warn of "backsliding"--a religious term. They were to visit and converse with such members as may have violated the pledge, and to report fallen members to the Executive Committee who might opt to discipline those reported.

Finally, the superintendents were obliged to "use all means to promote fidelity of its members."¹⁵ Other notices appeared in May, 1842, as the Society passed resolutions on membership and withdrawal from the society.¹⁶ The meetings were held in the Baptist Church. In December of the same year, another mock trial was held, this time by the Mariners Temperance Society versus "King Alcohol."¹⁷

¹⁴Ibid., (April 6, 1842), 2.

¹⁵Ibid., "Temperance Notice," April 30, 1842.

¹⁶Ibid., May 10, 24, 1842.

¹⁷Western Citizen, December 30, 1842.

Several temperance boarding houses were established in the 1840s to house drifters and to instill temperance virtues. A few public houses were kept "upon temperance principles," and the Lake Street House as well as the City Hotel were described as "respectable and orderly." Temperance Hotels that were important at the time included the Lake Street Coffee House, Washington Hall, Franklin Temperance House, and the American Temperance House, opened by Asher Rossiter.¹⁸

The Mayor B. W. Raymond, in his inaugural speech on March 7, 1842 stated that improvements in the city were due to the presence of the Washingtonians. "Reclaiming Committees" searched out people who had violated the pledge or were "in danger of doing so."¹⁹ In addition to reclaiming those who were "former slaves of alcohol," the society also provided employment opportunities for "those who have been in the habits of intemperance and desiring to reform."²⁰

The proliferation of temperance societies continued in the 1840s. In 1842, the Marine Temperance Society was established to address issues of drunken seamen. This society alone had 1000 members by 1845, the product of aggressiveness on the part of members of the Second Presbyterian Church.

¹⁸Chicago Daily American, March 2, 1842; Chicago Democrat, October 19, 1842; March 21, 1843; A.T. Andreas, History of Chicago, (Wheaton: A.T. Andreas, 1885), I: 635.

¹⁹Daily Chicago American, May 10, 1842.

²⁰Ibid., April 30, 1842.

By the end of 1843, there were four active temperance societies in Chicago, the Washingtonians with 1100 members, the Catholic Total Abstinence Society with 500 members, the Mariner's Temperance Society with 271 members, and the Junior Washington Temperance Society, with 118 members. That's a total of 1,989 members of temperance societies, out of a total population of 7,580 in the city.²¹

In February of 1845, still another temperance society found its way to Chicago from the East, the "Independent Order of Rechabites." The Order of the Rechabites was organized August 20, 1844 as a secret society devoted to temperance reform. Additionally the Sons of Temperance was organized on November, 1845 with 300 members, and was able to dedicate a new hall by 1847.²²

Protestants were soon followed by Roman Catholics in the establishing of societies to support the temperance movement. The Catholic Total Abstinence Society was begun in 1844 and the Catholic Benevolent Temperance Society was organized in 1846, with Bishop William J. Quarter as President.²³ Even the Hibernian Society was inclined to temperance. However, while these groups, Protestant and Catholic, were working on the same cause, they had

²¹James W. Norris, General Directory and Business Advertiser for the City of Chicago, for the year 1844 (Chicago: Ellis and Fergus, 1844), 59.

²²Chicago Democrat, April 27, 1847.

²³Andreas, History of Chicago, I: 518.

difficulty working together, and it was not until 1847 that efforts to unify each of the temperance societies were attempted.

The attempt to unite these groups into the "Chicago Temperance League," however, met with little success. The various groups and societies maintained their independence in the city, with two Washingtonian societies, three "tents" of the Independent Order of the Rechabites, and three divisions of the Sons of Temperance, not to mention the Mariner's Temperance Society and the Catholic Temperance Society which boasted 2,000 members alone by 1847.

By the 1840s, evangelicals and other temperance reformers were using a variety of strategies to address the "sin of intemperance." In addition to sermons from the pulpit, the various temperance societies held meetings which occurred almost always in the churches. They produced pamphlets and other literature; held temperance meetings that had the feel of a revival; erected temperance hotels; established missions; and even did street preaching to "the very class of men the temperance reform was designed to benefit."²⁴ However, with the apparent ineffectiveness of "moral suasion," leaders began to turn to legislative action to enact prohibition in the city.

Attempts at Legislative Reform

In 1846, evangelicals and temperance reformers united to make Chicago dry. On April 3, 1846, a motion was presented to prohibit

²⁴Watchman of the Prairies, Jan. 20, 1848.

the sale of all intoxicating liquors within the city limits of Chicago. The motion lost, but narrowly, by a slim margin of seven to five.²⁵ License fees, however, were raised from \$25 to \$50 per year for taverns and grocers. At least the city budget won where moral principle could not. The Washingtonians considered the passage of such fees a great victory and passed a resolution in support of the vote as follows:

Resolved, that the thanks of the Society to the members of the Common Council of this City for their fearless vote, in raising the price for licensing individuals to retail ardent spirits; and that we deem them worthy of the temperance public for this evidence, of an intention to suppress the sale of intoxicating drinks in this city.²⁶

However, the Council repealed the ordinance the following year.²⁷

By 1848, a fever pitch was reached for the temperance crusade in Chicago. In the Baptist paper, The Watchman of the Prairies, the editor noted that, despite all the efforts of the temperance societies in the city, "intemperance is evidently increasing in the city. This is evident both to citizens and occasional visitors [sic]. The number of drinking houses has increased, and profaneness, brawls, and all the [effects] of intemperance are upon us."²⁸ Anti-foreign sentiment was also notable in the paper, and drinking was considered to be a contributor to the cholera epidemic and spread by immigrants.

²⁵Chicago Democrat, April 14, 1846.

²⁶Ibid., April 21, 1846.

²⁷Ibid., May 11, 1847.

²⁸Watchman of the Prairies, January 2, 1848.

Nine out of ten of the drinking houses are probably kept by foreigners, and perhaps three-fourths of the spirits drunk are consumed by the same class of citizens. We fear that temperance societies and temperance meetings will have little effect upon those who must need to be saved from their vices. . . .²⁹

Public drinking was the sole reason for the collapse of society from the standpoint of the temperance reformer. Even the outbreak of cholera would lead many to suspect that intemperance was the cause.

The cholera is approaching, and the drinking houses are more pestiferous than the foulest in the city. If the City Council takes measures to guard the city against the epidemic, we hope they will at once make a clearance of liquor groceries.³⁰

When cholera broke out in 1849, twenty-six cases were reported in May, and "the above cases are mostly among the transient residents and the intemperate." The editor of the Watchman believed that cholera was an epidemic caused by God, to produce "sickness and death . . . a consequence of sin . . . for God is angry with the wicked everyday . . . to cause the wicked to repent."³¹

With the hysteria of cholera as evidence, temperance reformers would now press for legislative change. Despite these setbacks, the Watchman of the Prairies still believed that Chicago was a "moral lighthouse," the "most prominent city on the Western shore

²⁹Ibid., (Jan. 2, 1849), 3.

³⁰Ibid., Jan. 2, 1848.

³¹Ibid., "Why Did God Send the Tornado," December 11, 1849.

of the Lake."³² By 1849, it was a city of 23,000, and the editor of the paper boasted of the city's millennial place in settling the west.

With what Western city will Chicago suffer in comparison? Look at its five temperance hotels; over 20 periodicals, its 4 public and 17 select schools numbering in the aggregate over 2,500 pupils, its 23 churches and their Sabbath Schools--not to speak of the Medical College, Retreat for the Insane, Marine Hospital. Look at these things, and then say if a stranger is far out of the way in calling this youthful city a "moral lighthouse" between the two great seas of our Western border.³³

The Watchman of the Prairies, a Baptist paper in the tradition of separation of church and state, argued that temperance was also a political issue. In an article, "Can sober men vote for Drunken Candidates," the Watchman argued that "temperance men" needed political support, as it was perceived necessary to "nominate for office those who think and feel right on this great and momentous subject."³⁴

The paper went on to warn prospective political candidates that "friends of temperance" would "scan carefully the tickets they are asked to support." "We cannot consent to commit the guardianship of the State to men who do not know how to govern their own appetites." The Watchman boasted that "hundreds of thousands" of fellow citizens are "principled against

³²Ibid., "Chicago Should Be a Moral Lighthouse," April 10, 1849.

³³Ibid.

³⁴Ibid., April 10, 1849.

temperance."³⁵ The evangelicals had some impact. In January of 1849, a petition was given to the Common Council to prohibit the sale of liquor on Sunday, so that the city "may no longer be disgraced by the exhibition of the most loathsome scenes of drunkenness, on a day set apart by the great majority of people for the worship of God."³⁶

However, by the fall of 1849, the high tide of temperance reform seemed to be losing enthusiasm. Was the "moral lighthouse" fading? John Hawkins of the Washingtonians lectured to Chicago audiences, but support was not forthcoming from the churches. "Mr. Hawkins called in vain for some one of the clergymen of the city, who were in the hall on Sunday evening, to open the meeting with prayer. [But] not one was to be found at his side, not in the Hall. No wonder there is no such place as Chicago registered in the books of heaven."³⁷ It appeared that support for the temperance cause was fading.

The temperance movement faced its most severe test in the 1850s. While rival temperance societies were judged as "apathetic" and "uncooperative," the churches, although not always active politically, supported the temperance movement throughout. Its ministers repeatedly preached from the pulpit regarding the "sin of intemperance" and were leaders in organizations that sought to

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Daily Democrat, Jan. 29, 1849.

³⁷Chicago Commercial Advertiser, September 5, 1849.

curtail drinking. The Temperance Committee of the Presbyterian Church in 1849 advocated weekly pulpit exhortations versus the evil, for "no drunkard can enter the house of God."³⁸

In the Sunday Schools, temperance was "a prominent object," and children "enrolled their names on the temperance pledge," and missionaries and tract visitors were "faithful laborers" for the cause.³⁹ The Watchman of the Prairies described the position of the Baptists as such that it "will not receive a rum-seller as a member or a minister, so let them take their ground with slave holders."⁴⁰

The Rev. L. Raymond gave a lecture in City Hall in 1850. advocating "legal restriction where moral suasion has ceased as a force."⁴¹ Not everyone was in favor of liquor laws, although the view in favor of prohibition was gaining momentum. Yet the lecture and pressure from "respectable society," including the churches, had its impact. The Common Council passed a law in January of 1851 which not only prohibited the sale of ardent spirits in less quantities than a quart, but made it a penal offense to give away spirits for drinking.⁴²

On the other hand, the Chicago Daily Democrat criticized

³⁸Watchman of the Prairies, October 30, 1849.

³⁹Bessie Louise Pierce, A History of Chicago: The Beginnings of a City (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1937), I: 263.

⁴⁰Watchman of the Prairies, Jan. 8, 1850.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, (April 23, 1850), 2.

⁴²Wiltsee, "The Temperance Movement," 86.

prohibition because it would hurt city revenues. "The effect, we are afraid, will be to deprive the city of eight or nine thousand dollars per annum now received for licenses which liquor will be sold as freely, if not more, than before."⁴³ It seemed that the fiscal needs of the city might win out over moral principle.

Similar to arguments against prohibition a century later, the Democrat argued that legislation would not reduce liquor sales, but would rather increase the amount sold illegally. Such a law would also contribute to the establishment of "disorderly houses" where liquor would be sold and higher rates. The only solution was not to legislate, but to make "the home of the Artizan [sic] more attractive than the splendidly furnished grog-shop, and . . . provide other amusements for young men than those which are now too closely allied to sources of dissipation [and] ruin."⁴⁴

The Watchman of the Prairies, nonetheless, discussed the impotence of "moral suasion" and argued for the necessity of legislation leading to prohibition. The "Maine Law," a prohibition law passed in Maine forbidding the sale of liquors except for medicinal purposes, was supported as "checking crime, pauperism, [and] the disturbance of the public peace." It further suggested that the state of Illinois take active measures to bar liquor sales.⁴⁵

⁴³Chicago Daily Democrat, January 28, 1851.

⁴⁴Ibid., Feb. 14, 1851.

⁴⁵Watchman of the Prairies (Feb. 10, 1852), 2.

Similar efforts were made with the Sabbath, the other side of the temperance coin. In July, 1852, the Common Council passed a law warning that "all persons owning or keeping places where ardent spirits are sold, are informed that they must shut up on the Sabbath."⁴⁶ In response, saloon and tavern-keepers held a meeting at the Rio Grande Hotel, "to consider what steps ought to be taken in regard to the late action in the Common Council on the Sabbath Act."⁴⁷

This announcement was signed anonymously by "The Committee." Two weeks later, "Marshall Howe" prosecuted several persons for violating the act, for selling liquor on the Sabbath, including Ira Couch of the Tremont House, and Mr. (Thomas) Church of the Sherman House.⁴⁸ This law, while on the books, was not easy to enforce, and would foster public debate later on.

Public drinking had to be stopped by legislative means since it was assumed that it was responsible for a panacea of ills, including cholera, the "depreciation of property values, corruption of youth, depravity of public morals, the increase of taxation, and the violation of women."⁴⁹

Sometimes, tactics of moral suasion and legislation were pursued together. In June 1853, the Sons of Temperance and the

⁴⁶Chicago Daily Democrat, July 15, 1852.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid., July 26, 1852.

⁴⁹Northwestern Christian Advocate (Feb. 16, 1853), 26.

Washingtonians were speaking of the need of "conversion" while demanding total abstinence.⁵⁰ Meanwhile, the Sons of Temperance sponsored a convention on the Maine Law with Neal Dow, the author of the Maine Law ordinance, as speaker.⁵¹

At the end of 1853, a "Maine Law Convention" was held in Chicago by the "Friends of Prohibiting Liquor Law in the State of Illinois." This convention was held at the Clark Street Methodist Episcopal Church, Dec. 7-8, 1853. There were 240 delegates, "including many prominent ministers." In fact, five/sixths of the delegates were evangelical ministers. Temperance reforms were discussed, and the Maine Law was staunchly supported. Delegates pledged to vote for no candidate who was "not unequivocally pledged to the Maine Law."⁵² At this meeting, the Illinois Maine Law Alliance was formed in Chicago.

In February, 1854, the Cook County Maine Law Alliance was formed, and nominated Amos Gaylord Throop for Mayor of Chicago to represent temperance interests. In March, 1854, in the Municipal election for Mayor, Isaac L. Milliken defeated Throop, the Maine Law Alliance candidate and candidate for temperance reformers and the evangelical ministers who dominated the alliance.

The Northwestern Christian Advocate railed that the election had been stolen, not the first or last time in Chicago history.

⁵⁰Ibid., June 15, 1853.

⁵¹The Congregational Herald, June 18, 1853.

⁵²Northwestern Christian Advocate (Jan. 25, 1854), 3.

The defeat was perceived to be the result of work of "Catholic priests, the rumsellers, Irish Whiskey-drinkers, [and] German beer-drinkers." Milliken was also helped because "not less than twelve to fifteen hundred illegal votes" were allegedly cast in his favor.⁵³ The temperance movement was therefore linked with the anti-foreign and anti-Catholic sentiments of the time.

However, the evangelicals would have their revenge. The Election of March, 1855 brought a new mayor, Dr. Levi D. Boone, physician and arch-conservative member of the First Baptist Church. Boone was a member of the American Party, the nativist "Know Nothings" who were known for their hatred of foreigners. This proved to be less than wise since the city by 1855 was already 60% foreign-born, with half of the total population German and Irish. Boone's first decree was to pass an ordinance that all policemen must be native-born "Americans." The ordinance was an insult to the Irish, but Boone did not stop there.

Boone next picked on the Germans, now comprising 25% of the population. The Germans, many of them "forty-eighters" leaving Germany after the failure of democratic reforms, were a substantial minority in the city. They brought with them a love for German culture including music, their own theater, German-speaking churches, and their own "Bier Gartens."

Boone regarded beer-drinking as un-American and sought to curtail it. He first raised the costs of licenses to \$300 per

⁵³Ibid., (Feb. 15, 1854), 2.

year, which would put many German beer-sellers out of business. Second, he resurrected a Sabbath Law, forbidding the sale of alcoholic beverages on Sunday, a fairly "moderate" course since a strong minority wanted a prohibition law passed in Chicago that was more akin to the law passed in Maine.⁵⁴

The first Sunday after these ordinances were passed, some 200 Germans were arrested for violation of the ordinance, and a trial was set for April 21, 1855. A mob was formed as 300 Germans marched to the Courthouse and then to an intersection where they were disbanded by the police. In the afternoon, another mob formed, with some Irish sympathizers, and a conflict with the police ensued at the Clark Street bridge. One rioter shot the arm of a policeman off and was then killed, and many others were injured as they escaped back to the North Side of the city.

Cannons were placed at the courthouse to protect it and the worst of the Lager Beer riots was over. The net effect was that Mayor Boone did not pursue his quarrel with the Germans. Losing credibility with both evangelicals and the immigrants, Boone's political career was hurt, and the Know Nothing party was discredited.⁵⁵

Not finished by any means, the Maine Law Alliance forced a decision on the Maine Law for Illinois in June, 1855. A

⁵⁴Emmett Dedmon, Fabulous Chicago: A Great City's History and People (New York: Atheneum, 1983), 52-53.

⁵⁵Daily Democratic Press, April 23-24, 1855; Weekly Chicago Democrat, April 28, 1855.

"temperance" meeting on behalf of the legislation was held at the Indiana Street Church (Methodist Episcopal), with speakers from the State Maine Law Alliance.⁵⁶ The Daily Democratic Press reported a meeting that was held in the "Welsh Church" on the same issue on June 1, 1855.

The Church discussed "the prohibition phase of the liquor question, with special reference to the election to occur on Monday next, with scarcely a dissenting voice in this city, they are for prohibition." The Church resolved that "intemperance is a sin against God [and] humanity and that prohibition is the only means by which it can be eradicated."⁵⁷

Unfortunately the proposed passage of the State Prohibition Law was not as evangelicals and temperance crusaders had hoped. In the city, prohibition was defeated by a vote of 3,864 to 2,795; and in the County it was defeated 4,982 to 3,667.⁵⁸ The results were no doubt influenced by the Lager Beer Riots a few weeks before. In celebration, 4,000 people paraded, celebrating the defeat of the Illinois Prohibition Law. This represented the beginnings of immigrant politics in the city, a tradition that continued through the mayors of Irish lineage even to the end of the next century.

⁵⁶Daily Democratic Press, May 4, 1855.

⁵⁷Ibid., June 1, 1855.

⁵⁸Ibid., June 6, 1855.

In the Chicago Democratic Press, S.S. Hayes stated that the law would have been "dangerous and subversive of genuine liberty; [and] that it would provide for the punishment of a wrong committed, but took away from man the liberty of doing what is wrong."⁵⁹ In short, immigrant culture won out over nativist sentiments, although the temperance crusade was far from dead.

Sabbatarianism

An issue that stood similar to temperance was Sabbatarianism. The temperance reformers tried at least to protect one day of the week in fidelity to a biblical interpretation to isolate Sunday as one day set aside for spiritual matters. It was considered a sacrilege to work, much less drink on the Sabbath, and evangelicals worked hard to protect this day from violation.

As early as 1850, the Watchman argued on behalf of "keeping the Sabbath." The Sabbath was already kept faithfully by thousands of "liberty-loving, [and] law-abiding people." To keep the Sabbath "absolutely" meant to stop the "Sunday trains, forcing the law-maker" to recognize the difference between the Sabbath and other days of the week.

The evangelicals were ready to fight for the Sabbath on the political front. The Sabbath was understood to be the difference in America's free institutions and "the papal countries of the old

⁵⁹Ibid., June 28, 1855.

world, [who] hold their Bachinalian [sic] revels in the very places where should go up prayer and praise to God."⁶⁰

The Watchman told a story of two men who pondered taking a boat to Chicago on a Sunday. Thinking better of it, they "resolved that they would not travel on the holy day when it was in their power to prevent it." As the story goes, the two men passed the wreck of the boat on their way to the city the next day, "burned to the water's edge," all the travelers having perished.⁶¹ Such sensational stories, real or not, reflected the beliefs of the time among many regarding the power and mystery of the Sabbath.

For the Methodist paper, the Northwestern Christian Advocate, problems with regard to "Sunday trains" continued. The Pastor of the First Methodist Church wrote to the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad, "requesting them to observe the Sabbath by running no trains, . . . not committing an unlawful practice," thus promoting "pure morality."⁶²

The Congregational Herald noted that the "Fox River Congregational Union" passed a resolution, protesting railroad activity on the Sabbath. The resolutions passed were aimed at influencing the railroads "to cease to contend with God, in the open violation of His holy Sabbath." The Union also sought the circulation of a petition by all the ministers of the city,

⁶⁰Watchman of the Prairies (December, 17, 1850), 2.

⁶¹Ibid., (April 6, 1850), 1.

⁶²Northwestern Christian Advocate, June 29, 1853.

requesting that the Chicago and Rock Island Railroad discontinue its "running their trains on the Lord's day."⁶³

The effort seemed to produce some effect. Some railroads suspended the Sunday trains. However, the Northwestern Christian Advocate noted that workers were still required to work on the Sabbath. Seeking to get around the issue, "some of the railroads" used the day "for repairing, hauling wood, and doing jobs in shops, etc." The editor of the Advocate regarded this "as a foul plot to desecrate the Sabbath, thus "depriving laborers [and] their families even the rest required by nature, granted by civil authority, [and] required by God."⁶⁴

In the 1850s, the issue continued to be a hot topic. In 1854, the "Interdenominational Northwestern Sabbath Convention" was convened in Chicago with over 200 members of various churches meeting at the First Presbyterian Church. The action was in support of the "Sabbath, as a holy day, [and] not to be desecrated."⁶⁵

This of course went hand and hand with temperance reform. In 1859, a mass public meeting was held in support of Mayor Haines in his effort to enforce the Sunday Saloon Closing ordinance. Although the laws were on the books, they were evidently not being enforced. The Weekly Chicago Democrat argued that the Mayor should

⁶³Congregational Herald (July 8, 1853), 1-2.

⁶⁴Northwestern Christian Advocate (August 10, 1853), 1.

⁶⁵Ibid., (May 24, 1854), 2.

simply revoke the license of the disobedient. Also, noted the paper, "there have never been so many gambling halls, brothels," and other "outrages on Sunday." Showing still the power of the churches, the Democrat would note that "there are more 'church members' than ever before who support the laws. The laws are sufficient, let them be enforced."⁶⁶

Another secular paper sounded like the religious ones on the issue. The Chicago Daily Tribune in 1862 noted that an agreement had been reached among cattle dealers not to run their beef in the streets on Saturdays or Sundays, but rather, on Wednesdays and Fridays. No doubt, this still presented a problem, but at least it protected Sunday. The Tribune went on to note that even the "Jews were among the most zealous and energetic workers to affect the change, despite the fact that they, of course, do not celebrate our Sabbath."⁶⁷

Another activity frequently practiced by the citizens of the city was the reading of the Sunday paper. The Advance questioned "Sunday reading," for it tended "to dwarf and deaden spiritual life." Society seemed to be "in danger of losing a just reverence for the day." The paper bemoaned the "growing neglect of Bible study," and the important role of the Sabbath as the day "to visit the impenitent, teach Sabbath School, and attend prayer

⁶⁶Chicago Weekly Democrat, August 27, 1859.

⁶⁷Chicago Daily Tribune, January 7, 1862.

meetings."⁶⁸ However, even the evangelicals packed the day with activity. "Public temperance meetings" were held on Sunday afternoons in the YMCA's Farwell Hall, "with all the clergymen of Chicago favorable to such meetings." The Sabbath School was the means "for building sentiment for temperance."⁶⁹

The Temperance Movement, From the Civil War to the Fire

The temperance movement, like Sabbatarianism, continued to be a live issue in the 1860s. The Chicago Tribune wrote that temperance is not the same thing as prohibition. "A Prohibition will add evils to the county and does not diminish the evils of intemperance." Those who disagree with Prohibition, furthermore, "are not necessarily in favor of liquor interests." Prohibition was thus opposed, because it "overstepped the powers of government" and would "overthrow the security and privacy of our homes."⁷⁰

Still, the temperance movement would continue to be a presence in the city. In 1860, the Illinois Temperance Union had its annual meeting in Chicago at the Methodist Episcopal Church city block, a set of buildings owned by the Methodists, but with mixed-use for religious, philanthropic and business concerns. The aim of the Union was to "rid the great state of Illinois of that almost unparalleled evil [and] source of poverty, wretchedness, and crime,

⁶⁸Advance, September 24, 1868.

⁶⁹Chicago Tribune, March 30, 1871.

⁷⁰Ibid., April 10, 1867.

intemperance." It also hoped "to secure passage of a law more effectually to circumscribe [and] ultimately suppress the traffic in liquors as a beverage."⁷¹

Like the age of which it was a part, the temperance movement maintained revivalistic characteristics and techniques. A variety of music books were utilized in both revival and temperance meetings. Songbooks abounded, such as the "New Temperance Methodist," the "Union Temperance Songbook," "Temperance Melodies," and the "Washington Choir."⁷² However, the Civil War would soon take precedence over moral reform movements and the temperance crusade was temporarily set aside.

In 1862, the Reverend Dr. Tiffany of the Clark Street Methodist Church accepted a post with the Chicago Sanitary Commission, and went with a delegation to Pittsburgh Landing. He managed to get drunk in the company of soldiers, and word got back to Chicago. This became a moral outrage, and Dr. Tiffany was forced to resign his position in the church as pastor, his status with the Methodist denomination, as well as his position in the Chicago Sanitary Commission. Although he was later reinstated due to evidence of "sincere repentance," the incident pointed to how seriously intemperance was taken at the time.⁷³

⁷¹Chicago Daily Tribune, Dec. 7, 1860.

⁷²Ibid., Feb. 26, 1861.

⁷³Chicago Tribune, May 17-22, 1862.

After the War, the city continued its growth, tripling during the 1860 to a census of 298,977 by 1870.⁷⁴ Evangelicals believed that the city seemed to be losing its moral fiber. Temperance reform was in decline, and the editor of The Advance believed that the decline was attributable to the "ever accumulating masses of . . . foreign population." "Strong drink" seemed to many Yankee Protestants as characteristic of immigrants, especially the Irish and Germans, as many of them were "known bartenders."⁷⁵

After the war, some discussion of temperance in the city was revived, but not with the enthusiasm of former decades. The Presbyterian Interior concluded that "moral suasion" was not enough, and that intemperance seemed to be on the rise in Chicago. With the coming of more and more immigrants, the Protestant empire seemed to be threatened, and the growth in incidents of public drunkenness seemed indisputable evidence.

In 1869, a temperance meeting was held at Farwell Hall, with the Rev. Dr. Hatfield presiding. Also, evangelists associated with the YMCA were known to preach in the saloons. However, the political actions of the mayors were sometimes hard to influence. Despite 22,000 petitions by some of the leading citizens to support the city ordinances to keep the saloons closed on Sunday, they were open nonetheless. Instead, crusaders established "Temperance Bars"

⁷⁴The People of Chicago: Who We Are and Who We Have Been (Chicago: City of Chicago, Department of Development and Planning, 1976), 13.

⁷⁵"Temperance Reform in Decline: The Cause," The Advance (September 24, 1868), 2.

to attract the temperate. The Washington Temperance Home, established in 1863, increased its activities by 1868 to "cure drunkards of the taste of liquor."⁷⁶

However, the only solution, for many, was legislative reform, prohibition, not just temperance. "Prevention is better than cure. . . . It is well to rescue the drowning victims from the wreck, but it is better to prevent the occurrence of the wreck at all."⁷⁷ The last great victory of the temperance crusade before the Prohibition Amendment in Chicago occurred when Joseph Medill was elected mayor in 1870 dedicated to enforce laws restricting liquor selling. But, Medill was less than totally effective on this issue. In 1872, temperance crusaders lost a public referendum to keep the saloons closed on Sunday.⁷⁸ In another era, the temperance fight and campaign for prohibition would revisit the city and the nation.

Significance

Temperance reformers were closely supported by the churches in the city. The temperance crusade was begun there, and meetings were held almost exclusively in churches throughout the period. Many of the leaders of the temperance movement were directly related to the church, and membership and funding normally came

⁷⁶Chicago Tribune, Jan. 14, 1868.

⁷⁷Interior (March 31, 1870), 6.

⁷⁸Dedmon, Fabulous Chicago, 138.

from these people and their institutions. Temperance was also a badge of respectability, and self-control amid temptations to drink, with the thousands of "grogshops" available, was the sign of the highest virtue.

Evangelicals and temperance crusaders were joint forces in addressing the problem of intemperance. Many scholars have documented that intemperance in the age of Jackson was not just a perception, but was a real problem.⁷⁹ Churches railed against alcoholism, and assumed in domino fashion that public drinking would lead to the ruin of one's life. Like the revivals, the conversion of individuals was assumed to be the best remedy.

With the rapid expansion of the foreign population in the city, evangelicals feared that society was threatened, and their time-honored values of temperance and self-control were ignored. When "moral suasion" did less than convert the populace, a coalition of temperance leaders, including the church, sought political reform and the prohibition of selling or consuming liquor in both the state and county. At this point, a moral reform crusade became also a legislative reform movement. When this failed, evangelicals retreated to other proven tactics. However, prohibition would once again become a major reform movement by the early twentieth century.

⁷⁹R.J. Rorabaugh calculates that, in the early nineteenth century, Americans drank more gallons of beer and other liquors per capita, than at any other time in American history. See, R.J. Rorabaugh, The Alcohol Republic: An American Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), Tables A1.1-A1.2, pp. 232-3.

CHAPTER XV
ANTI-SLAVERY MOVEMENT IN CHICAGO

Abolitionism and the Benevolent Empire

The years before the Civil War in America were years of revivalism and the establishment of what many have called a "benevolent empire," and these two movements were anything but mutually exclusive. Issues of the day and organizations were often interconnected, and revivalists were supportive of ways to reform the country and the world. Some sought to usher in the millennium, a golden age of peace, harmony and religious virtue. Evangelist Charles G. Finney and his followers often spoke of "disinterested benevolence," advocating involvement in benevolent societies as a way to demonstrate one's conversion and election.

Many evangelicals also supported such crusades as abolitionism as well as the temperance movement. In Chicago, the origins of antislavery sentiment in the city lay with the Presbyterians. It was the Presbyterians, according to Zebina Eastman, that were the real founders of abolitionism in the city.

Flavel Bascom, the third pastor of the Presbyterian Church in Chicago, started abolitionist meetings in his church despite protests from his more conservative members. Bascom, born in Lebanon, Connecticut, was a graduate of Yale, and came to First

Presbyterian Church in 1839. This was the date for the beginning of the abolitionist movement in Chicago

Abolitionism in Chicago emerged as a protest to the death and "martyrdom" of Elijah P. Lovejoy, murdered in 1837 in Alton, Illinois. This was perceived by many as an "assault on the constitutional right of freedom of the press."¹ The first meeting was called at the Saloon building by the Rev. Flavel Bascom, Minister of the First Presbyterian Church. Bascom, Philo Carpenter, Robert Freeman, Calvin De Wolf, "and some members of the Baptist and Methodist churches were the leading spirits of this meeting."² A watch was set to warn those in attendance if a mob was assembling, as Bascom and others did not want to repeat the mistake of those made in Alton.

According to a letter to Zebina Eastman, it was Bascom who introduced and organized the antislavery movement in Chicago. "This was the first anti-slavery meeting if it may be called such, held in Chicago, of which there is any recollection."³ According to Bascom, upon accepting the role of Minister of the First Presbyterian Church, "I had no personal knowledge of any Anti-Slavery movements on the part of Citizens of that place." He was

¹Zebina Eastman, "History of the Antislavery Agitation and the Growth of Liberty and Republican Parties in the State of Illinois," in Discovery and Conquest of the Northwest with the History of Chicago, ed. by Rufus Blanchard, vol. 1 (Wheaton: R. Blanchard and Co., 1881), 661.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

invited the fill the pulpit in a city that had at the time but 5,000 people. The Presbyterian Church at that time had a lively membership of about 200 people. And, noted Bascom, "the church contained . . . a lively Anti-Slavery element."⁴

Bascom went on to name several abolitionists who were active in his church, including Philo Carpenter, Joseph Johnston, William H. Taylor, Doliver Walker . . . Seth P. Warner, Joseph Meeker, Robert Freeman, and "honorable women, not a few." Yet, to make things interesting, there was also a conservative element in the church, "consisting of a number of the most estimable men and women of large influence in the church and in the city." Despite this, Bascom was approached by members of the Anti-Slavery faction, and asked if he would appoint a monthly prayer meeting "of the oppressed, in concert with Anti-Slavery Christians throughout the county."⁵

This was the beginning of the Anti-Slavery movement in Chicago. Two meetings in late 1839 and early 1840 passed without a problem. However, after Bascom announced the third meeting for February, he was met in the aisle by an officer of the church who articulated his "profound disapproval." He then decided that "in the course of the winter, it was deemed desirable to hold a more

⁴Flavel Bascom to Zebina Eastman, Chicago, 1874. Correspondence in Reference to 1874 Antislavery Reunion, Zebina Eastman Papers. Ms. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

⁵Ibid.

public meeting for addresses on the side of anti-slavery."⁶ The meetings, at this time, did not result in mob violence as with Elijah P. Lovejoy, nor did the church divide over the issue.

Bascom allowed Anti-Slavery activists to preach from his pulpit, and despite some "manifestations of indignant displeasure . . . by prominent men," he nonetheless received the call to become the church's pastor. Afterwards, the church was frequented by other Anti-Slavery agitators such as William T. Allen and Ichabod Coddington.

The good seed which they scattered was fruitful. The numbers of decided outspoken antislavery men and women increased every year. Some of our own citizens became very effective speakers in our Anti-Slavery meetings, prominent among them was Dr. C.V. Dyer who also rendered the cause valuable service by aiding fugitives to Canada.⁷

Bascom gathered pastors from other churches to discuss and concern themselves "with public questions." At this time, a stand on antislavery by the church meant growth of the church, not its demise. By the end of 1840, the church had expanded its facility to embrace twice the numbers as she had in an earlier decade.

Key Presbyterians and support "from the Baptist and Methodist churches" assisted in the expanding of the movement, and gathered on the third floor of the Saloon building to discuss the issues. These intrepid "professing Christians," mostly exponents of the Presbyterian faith, took a stand on sentiments now rapidly

⁶Ibid.

⁷Bascom to Eastman, Correspondence in Reference to Antislavery Convention, 1874. Zebina Eastman Papers, Chicago Historical Society.

crystallizing either for or against the institution of slavery.

Later, Presbyterian historian Andrew Stevenson could say this of the role of his church in the shaping of Chicago.

Practically every undenominational movement and philanthropic work, in fact any cause which has for its purpose of uplifting of mankind, or the cleansing of a community, is largely dependent upon the generosity of the members of the Presbyterian Church. . . . Were it not for the Presbyterians many of the great philanthropic and charities of the city, such as the libraries, museums, and hospitals, would not and could not exist.⁸

Hence, the first antislavery meeting in Chicago was held in a Presbyterian church, and it served as a beacon light in events to come and marked out a path for many of those present. Soon, antislavery societies proliferated in the city. By 1840, the Chicago Anti-Slavery Society with Henry Smith, dry goods merchant, as president, started its activities in monthly meetings, "being directed by many of the pioneer protagonists of Negro freedom."⁹

Many other antislavery societies emerged as well, including the Chicago Female Anti-Slavery Society, meeting at the First Presbyterian Church in 1844; the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society, begun in 1837; and the Chicago Colonization Society, begun in 1839. The latter group, had as its objective, the resettlement of slaves back to Africa, in what is now known as Liberia. Rev. Isaac T. Hinton and William Butler Ogden were members of the Chicago Colonization Society. First Presbyterian Church allied itself with

⁸Andrew Stevenson, Chicago: Pre-eminently a Presbyterian City (Chicago, 1907), 18.

⁹Daily Chicago American, January 20 and April 9, 1840.

the New School Presbyterian ideology. As opposed to the Old School, the New School was friendly to revivalism, and supported involvement in the benevolent societies and moral crusades of the day.

In 1842, a lecture was given by the Rev. I.H. Dickey of Kentucky. Dickey was a former slaveowner, and his address, "The Bible Against Slavery," was well attended and widely discussed. However, the Presbyterian Church seemed to grow less friendly to hosting abolitionist lectures, however biblical. The conservative element in First Presbyterian could not accept the discussion of religion and politics from the pulpit, and many seceded in June, 1842 to start the Second Presbyterian Church.

Several periodicals, including the Western Citizen, the Chicago organ of the Liberty Party, and the Watchman of the Prairies (Baptist), were devoted to the antislavery cause. In 1843, The Western Citizen, edited by Presbyterian layman, Zebina Eastman, advertised the preaching of William T. Allan on the subject of "The Bible versus Slavery." Allan's supporters tried to get him entrance into several of the churches, but without success. Allan, a Lane Rebel¹⁰ and Methodist preacher, was forced to lecture in a local saloon, but later gained access to Presbyterian and Universalist congregations. Finally, Allan met with Methodists by their invitation.

¹⁰The Lane Rebels were a group of students who, following Theodore Dwight Weld in 1834, left Lane Seminary for Oberlin because the former did not allow antislavery debate or agitation for the abolitionist cause.

Replied the Western Citizen, "we see that the synagogues [Protestant churches] of Chicago are too holy and sacred for the use of those who plead the cause of the poor and needy."¹¹ This press got some results. A few months later the Western Citizen reported that a slaveholder was publicly expelled from First Presbyterian Church on the first Sunday, 1844, but "a slaveholder in the Second Presbyterian Church [remains] in good and regular standing."¹²

The Western Citizen continued to put pressure on the churches by printing several major addresses against slavery. In 1844, it published a sermon by an unnamed layman on the evils of slavery. The address attacked the inactivity of the churches, and the toleration of attitudes regarding pro-slavery. This put pressure on ecclesiastical bodies to do otherwise.

The sermon quoted biblical texts that assumed responsibility for "the least of these" who are "hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick and in prison. How significantly this applies to American slaves as a class." The Citizen cited that there are 200,000 "of Christ's followers" who are sick and imprisoned, "slaves, yet within the reach of evangelical churches." It concluded that "those who neglect to plead the cause of these 200,000 suffering, perishing, followers of Christ must, if they do not repent of their neglect, their criminal inactivity, and open

¹¹Western Citizen, June 15, 1843.

¹²Ibid., (Jan. 18, 1844), 2.

their mouths and drop their ballots for the dumb, . . . go away into everlasting punishment."¹³

No less indicting was the sermon printed by the Western Citizen by the Rev. William Goodell, a "Presbyterian heretic," called, "The Christian's Duty to the Slave."¹⁴ Goodell started a non-denominational "Union Congregation" in Utica, New York, as a front for abolitionist activity. He was a journalist of some reputation, editing at various times, the Friend of Man, the Christian Investigator, the Genius of Temperance, the Emancipator, and so forth. Goodell's church was comprised of former Methodists and "congregationalized Presbyterians." His slogan, "Pro-slavery, or apparently neutral churches are anti-Christian" helped polarize the denominations over the issue.

He proposed "antislavery action" as an agenda for the missionary societies, and castigated churches for their inactivity and proslavery positions. His "Union Church" was based on morals, teetotalism, attitudes on the millennium and abolitionism. Goodell and others like him were criticized for making abolitionism a test for evangelical religion.¹⁵

Yet, Goodell's analysis of slavery and its consequences was among the most cogent of the times, and was reprinted in full as

¹³Ibid., (January 18, 1844), 1.

¹⁴Ibid., (June 27, 1844), 193.

¹⁵Whitney R. Cross, The Burned Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850 (New York: Harper and Row, 1950), 280-281.

a feature article in the Western Citizen.¹⁶ Goodell argued that American slavery was based on the chattel principle, that slaves were mere property, owned by slaveholders. Slaves as such were the "poorest of the poor," hopeless, brokenhearted, captives, and the most crushed of the bruised. In the U.S., he wrote, "there are over 2.5 million slaves. Slaves are not counted among rational beings, and they have no rights. They cannot make a contract, cannot marry, and cannot receive either moral or religious instruction."¹⁷

Neither could slaves congregate or assemble, for they are an article of property, under the absolute power and whim of the slaveholder. Goodell noted that there are laws, dejure or defacto, against teaching the slave how to read. Christianity and slavery he described as mutually exclusive. Goodell went on to describe the role of Christians to the slave, and against the institution of slavery. Christians must first "sympathize" with the slave, making the slave's cause of freedom one's own. Second the Christian must pray for all people, "especially for the crushed."

Third, he must plead on behalf of the oppressed. He must reprove the oppressor, agitate the community, hide the outcasts from those seeking them, provide for the elevation of the oppressed, treat them as equals, as well as pursue political action and legislative changes. Finally, and this is what caused much

¹⁶William Goodell, "The Christian's Duty to the Slave," The Western Citizen (June 27, 1844), 1-3.

¹⁷Ibid.

controversy, Goodell argued that churches should apply church discipline versus all slaveholders as oppressors, by rebuke, and if necessary, excommunication. As a last resort, Christians should withdraw membership and fellowship from proslavery or "pretendingly neutral churches," unless they can be reformed.¹⁸

The churches, he argued, were in league with slaveholding, and refused to take a stand. "Three fourths of all Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists, in the non-slaveholding states are in close and fraternal fellowship and connexion [with slaveholders]."¹⁹ This stance was uncompromising, and in 1845, several denominations split over the issue, North and South. In Chicago, the stir dramatically impacted churches. Some churches divided over the issue, and others left to start churches of other denominations. Yet, the Western Citizen was unrepentant.

If the church had been right years ago, division never would have been thought of, and slaveholders would not have been sheltered under the holy mantle of the church. If the church can dissolve, or preserve the Union, could not the church then, dissolve the connection of slavery with the government, and thus decree that it shall be abolished?²⁰

Goodell's article must have been widely read. The first church splits in Chicago history occurred over the issue of slavery. The Second Presbyterian Church was formed, seceding from First Church, just as Tabernacle Baptist Church would secede from

¹⁸Ibid., 2.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰"Influence of Church on Political Institutions," Western Citizen (Jan. 5, 1845), 1.

First Baptist Church, because the latter church was too moderate. Congregational beginnings also in Chicago occurred over the issue of slavery.

Slavery and Division among the Presbyterians

Division among the Presbyterians was striking. On June 1, 1842, members of the parent church succeeded to found the Second Presbyterian Church for members who did not endorse the current antislavery crusade, calling Rev. Robert W. Patterson as Pastor.

Regarding the question of slavery, the men of Second Presbyterian held the position that it was not prudent to discuss abolitionism or slavery on the Sabbath, but that such should be reserved for questions of a religious nature. This "conservative" position is to be contrasted with the avowed antislavery position of First Presbyterian church leaders, and the more radical position of Third Presbyterian, which became a sanctuary for slaves as part of the underground railroad network. Regarding the position of the founders of Second Presbyterian Church slavery, the following may be noted.

While no Presbyterian minister or Church in the Presbytery of Ottawa favored the perpetuation of slavery, there was a wide difference of opinion in regard to the best means of dealing with what all recognized as an evil, and in regard to the moral responsibility of Church members in connection with the system. There were many Christian men who could not rest so long as slavery existed, by whom the abolition of slavery was urged in season and out of season. There were others no less loyal to the principles of liberty, to whom the means advised by the more radical seemed harsh or unwise. Those who lived in the North West in those days testify that the ability to preach anti-slavery politics was then first called "politics in the pulpit," was considered a test of Christian prudence. Between these extreme views could be found all the

intermediate possibilities of belief in regard to duty and expediency as related to the slavery question.²¹

Despite the exodus from First Presbyterian to Second Church over the slavery issue, the older congregation nonetheless continued to grow, with 456 members in 1846, requiring a new building to be built in 1847. In October 1845, members of First Presbyterian Church shocked the Rock Island Presbytery by promoting a resolution that slavery was a "heinous sin against God," insisting that the Presbytery push the General Assembly (national) to adopt a clear and unambiguous stand against slavery, or withdraw if the national body failed to cooperate.

In 1847, the Ottawa Presbytery implored the General Assembly to submit a resolution outlawing slavery. The resolution was "an overture proposing to insert 'slaveholding' after 'man-stealing' in the answer to the 142nd question of the Large Catechism, among the sins forbidden by the 8th commandment."²² However, the General Assembly did not condemn slaveholding. Antislavery was carried with some modifications, and "fellowship with slaveholders" continued, infuriating the radicals. This set up a conflictual situation for the Presbyterian Church. The Free Church of Scotland threatened to cut off communication with the Presbyterians, unless

²¹John C. Grant, ed. The Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago, 1842-1892 (Chicago: Knight, Leonard, and Co., Printers, 1892), 24.

²²The Western Citizen, May 11, 1847.

they publicly "renounce their ecclesiastical connection with slaveholders."²³

The slavery issue continued to dominate the discussion, leading to the founding of Third Presbyterian Church in 1851, and later the First Congregational Church, as reaction to the moderate position passed by the General Assembly in 1847. The Presbyterian denomination did not separate North and South until 1857, but doctrinal cleavages can be found since 1837, and differences in views of slavery led to the division.

Yet, there was a more radical faction calling, not just to stop slavery from embracing new lands, but for immediate abolition of slavery in the South as well. The phrase, "no fellowship with slaveholders" became the litmus test for abolitionism. This group, following Elder Philo Carpenter, left First Presbyterian Church to found Third Presbyterian. Carpenter was asked to leave the Presbyterian church because of his radicalism. Members of Third Presbyterian began an underground railroad station, aiding over 200 runaway slaves.²⁴

The result of the controversy was a decrease in First Presbyterian's roll from 456 to 254 members, to the point that some feared that Presbyterianism might "disappear from Chicago." Dr. Robert W. Patterson, the first pastor of Second Presbyterian Church

²³Weekly Chicago Democrat (Nov. 16, 1847), 2.

²⁴See Matthew Spinka, etal. A History of Illinois Congregational and Christian Churches (Chicago: Congregational and Christian Conference of Illinois, 1944), 103ff.

expressed the perilous position of Presbyterianism at the time. "It was confidently predicted that in ten years there would not be a Presbyterian Church left in Chicago. But the intense denominational feeling soon abated and Christian comity prevailed."²⁵

Despite dissension and loss of membership, many members of First Presbyterian continued to assume a public stand against slavery, and the Session came out "irreconcilably opposed" to the Fugitive Slave Law that forbade the giving of aid and comfort to runaway slaves. Members vowed to labor untiringly for the law's repeal, and refused to obey the law as written in 1850, a public act of civil disobedience.

The Fugitive Slave Law, aimed at the underground railroad, ordered that escaped slaves be returned to their original owners. The law was in force defacto since the Black Codes were passed in 1829. As early as 1846, a "Negro riot" occurred in Chicago, and two fugitives were taken from the jails "in defiance of the law" by "negroes of the city" together with "some abolition fanatics."²⁶ This event no doubt marginalized the more radical abolitionists, and offended those of a more moderate persuasion.

The Weekly Chicago Democrat responded to this "defiance of the law." It concluded that "every good citizen must regret this

²⁵Cited by Perry J. Stackhouse, "Protestant Churches Prior to 1850," in The Place of the Church in a Century of Progress, 1833-1933 (Chicago: Church Federation, 1933), 9.

²⁶"A Negro Riot," Weekly Chicago Democrat (Nov. 3, 1846), 2.

trampling under foot in open day light the laws of the state. Little as we regard or care for the slaveholders- much as our sympathies are with the oppressed- we cannot regard the transaction of Wednesday with any other feelings but profound regret [and] indignation. If the laws are wrong, repeal or modify them" was the advice of the paper.²⁷ Many of the abolitionists would pursue just this course.

Antislavery and the Baptists

The most important issue confronting the Baptists, as well as other denominations in the 1840s was the issue of slavery. While the cardinal doctrine among Baptists was the doctrine of the separation of church and state, that the church should not meddle in politics, the antislavery movement took the demeanor of a religious crusade. Luther Stone, editor of the Baptist journal, The Watchman of the Prairies, took the position that religious leaders had the right and the responsibility to discuss political questions of moral significance.²⁸

The slavery issue could not be evaded, and it led to many divisions and controversies. The issue posed difficult problems for the Baptists, and the church had to answer such questions such as: "Should a Slave-owner be admitted to the fellowship of a

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸"What has Politics to Do with Religion?" Watchman of the Prairies, October 12, 1847.

Baptist Church?" "Should a church or a missionary society accept money that is the product of slave labor?" "Should a Slave-owner be employed as a missionary?"²⁹ These questions divided the Baptists North and South, and the Triennial convention of 1845 resulted in schism over the question.

In Baptist history, antislavery sentiment can be traced back rather early to the Rev. James Lemen, who organized the First Baptist Church in Illinois at New Design in 1796. In January 8, 1809, Lemen gave a sermon on the evils of slavery, entitled, "Come Out From Among Them and Be Separate." By December 10, 1809, a separate antislavery church was organized, with the name of the "Baptized Church of Christ of Friends to Humanity." The Friends of Humanity churches increased in number and in influence. By 1832, there were 161 churches in Illinois with 4,622 members, over 25% of the Baptist constituency in Illinois. In the view of an editorial in the Chicago Tribune in 1907, it was "the judgement of many abolition leaders the spirit which made Illinois a free State grew out of the public stand of Lemen and his friends and the resulting discussion."³⁰

The Baptists were caught in the fever of anti-slavery emotionalism. Antislavery sentiment seemed to increase in relationship to the revivals of 1839 and 1841. Yet, not everyone

²⁹Perry J. Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists: A Century of Progress (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1933), 23.

³⁰Cited in Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists, 25.

was in agreement. On August 14, 1843, sixty-two members of old First Church seceded from it to form the Tabernacle Baptist Church to more specifically channel antislavery conviction. This congregation declared that it would not receive in either its fellowship or in its pulpit persons who "advocate or justify from civil policy or the Bible the principles or practice of slavery."³¹

Antislavery sentiment impacted the Baptist convention in Belvedere in 1844. There, resolutions were passed in support of slaves and against slaveowners, supportive of giving slaves Bibles. This was considered radical for the time, in that it was illegal in the South to teach slaves how to read. It was also considered improper to give slaves Bibles, as slaves were believed to be subhuman, incapable of understanding Bible teaching. In December of 1844, some Baptists called an antislavery meeting in Warrensville, and a resolution was passed calling slavery "both a political and moral evil." An antislavery publication was begun there also at the cost of \$500.00.³²

Perry J. Stackhouse, author of Chicago and the Baptists, studied the Associational records of the Baptists in Illinois from 1835 to 1853, and detected a growing radical sentiment, showing influence from the Baptist Friends of Humanity. In 1835, in the first documented Associational meeting, the resolution among the

³¹A.T. Andreas, History of Chicago (Chicago: A.T. Andreas, 1885), 1: 320.

³²Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists, 27 ff.

initial four Baptist churches was passed. "This Association regards the practice of holding men in slavery to be a violation of the natural rights of man and contrary to the first principles of the gospel."³³ Further, in 1844, at the First Baptist Church in Chicago, a resolution was passed stating that Baptists "entirely disapprove of the employment of slaveholding missionaries as repugnant to the spirit of the age of the missions and of the gospel."³⁴

In 1845, the Illinois Baptist Association supported the action of the national American Baptist Board of Foreign Missions and the Baptist Home Mission Society by refusing to appoint slaveholders as missionaries. This led to division and the beginning of the Southern Baptist Convention in the South as a pro-slaveholding denomination.

In 1853, Baptist conviction was expressed publicly as well. Moving beyond the classical doctrine of separation of church and state, Chicago Baptists expressed their outrage at the State legislature. "The recent enactment of the State Legislature of Illinois in reference to 'persons of color are steeped in oppression' to that portion of our countrymen and is a disgrace to any legislative body, an insult to the intelligence and patriotism

³³Ibid., 27.

³⁴Ibid., 28.

of the State and imposed on us as Christians the obligation to labor assiduously for its repeal."³⁵

The slavery controversy was no less important in the city. Andreas notes that an influential member of First Baptist Church, Dr. Levi D. Boone (1808-1882), delivered in a series of lectures the opinion that slavery was consistent with scriptural teaching. Boone, physician, politician and arch conservative, was the grand nephew of the frontier hero, Daniel Boone of Kentucky, and later mayor of Chicago from 1854-1855 for the American Party, the anti-foreign "Know Nothing" ticket.

Boone came to Chicago in 1836, and for six years was Alderman of the Second Ward. He was also Superintendent of the Sunday School of the First Baptist Church, and one of the founders of the first University of Chicago.³⁶ Boone also gained notoriety in the city's history for his "nativist" anti-foreign stand against public drinking, Sabbath desecration, and commercialized vice, forcing the Lager Beer riots of 1855.³⁷

Yet, Rev. Isaac T. Hinton, the second Baptist minister at First Church, held strong convictions regarding the evil of slavery. As early as 1839, Baptists met with Presbyterians and Methodists to pray and deliberate over the issue. One Sunday, Hinton was chastised for speaking out against slavery from the

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid., 71.

³⁷Ibid., 158.

pulpit, but the next minister, the Rev. C. B. Smith, was not so easily intimidated.

Rev. Smith was also a journalist, and began in 1842 a small periodical, the Northwestern Baptist, the first religious journal in Chicago. Yet, because of the editor's strong anti-slavery views, the paper was discontinued in two years.³⁸ Smith was "an enemy [of slavery] in all its works, and compromise was a word that did not enter into his vocabulary."³⁹ Members of the church suggested another name as pastor of the congregation, the Rev. E. H. Hamlin. The result is that "the friends of Mr. Smith decided that the only course open to them was to withdraw and organize a new church that should stand four square against slavery."

According to the minutes of the Baptist Association held in Chicago in 1844 regarding the second Baptist Church in Chicago, "this body was constituted in August, 1843, of sixty-two members dismissed from the First Church for that purpose. After this organization they received forty-two by letter and baptized fourteen."⁴⁰

The new church, the Tabernacle Baptist Church, was established as a "free and untrammelled church," with Smith as the pastor. It applied for membership into the local Association, with the following conviction: "Resolved that slavery is a great sin in the

³⁸Ibid, 31.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid., 31-32.

sight of God and while we view it as such we will not invite to our communion or pulpit those who advocate or justify from civil policy, or the Bible, the principles or practices of slavery." This church continued under the name of Tabernacle Baptist Church, until 1864, when it moved to Chicago's West Side as the Second Baptist Church.

Despite this division, there was reconciliation between the two churches, as a joint worship service was held in 1854. According to the Christian Times, the Rev. Kenyon of Tabernacle Church delivered a sermon, on "The Reformatory Power of the Gospel." The sermon was followed in the evening with a "delightful conference and prayer meeting in the evening closed a very profitable and pleasant Sabbath."⁴¹

In January of 1847, the Rev. Luther Stone came to Chicago. Stone, a graduate of Brown University and Newton Theological Institution, was pastor for a year. Yet, his main contribution was that he succeeded in founding a Baptist religious journal, the Watchman of the Prairies, appearing in August of 1847. This was the first weekly Baptist paper published in Chicago, continuing until February 22, 1853, succeeding as The Christian Times on September 1, 1853 and later as the Standard.

Stone was not only anti-slavery but an impassioned pacifist. On the Mexican war, Stone wrote, ". . . this war like other wars is a crime against God and man. Viewed in the light of Christian

⁴¹Christian Times, May 4, 1854.

truth it is of the same nature, originated in the same law and is waged under the same influence of the same criminal passions and has the same malignant relations to humanity and the government of God as other wars."⁴²

Stone also wrote articles on Sabbath observance, and an article condemning Roman Catholics. Advertisements that supported the consumption of patent medicine also abounded. Yet, the most important question of the era was slavery, and Stone was one of many supportive of abolition. Stackhouse observed, ". . . a church is rarely very far in advance of the social and political ideas of the community in which it exists, and the foremost political question agitating Chicago during the decade was the slavery issue."⁴³

In the first volume of the Watchman of the Prairies, a paper "devoted to intelligence, morals, and religion," the editor would argue the case for equality among whites and blacks, the "unity of the races." For Stone, whether "black or white, [we] have the same origin, same destiny, from the same human family. If all the nations are of one blood, they are bound to treat every other nation as member of the same family."⁴⁴ On this basis, the editor would critique the institution of slavery.

One would think that no man of sense and honesty would maintain this absurd and unscriptural opinion [slavery]. This subjecting three millions of African brethren to such a mean

⁴²Watchman of the Prairies, October 12, 1847.

⁴³Stackhouse, Chicago and the Baptists, 29.

⁴⁴Watchman of the Prairies, September 28, 1847.

and degrading servitude is a lamentation, and ought to be a lamentation to all men before that Being who is the common creator and father of our race. It is a deep stain on our national character, and nothing but repentance and reformation can wipe it off.⁴⁵

In Chicago, the activity of churches over antislavery became indistinguishable from political alliances. The First "Liberty Association of Illinois," a church-based antislavery umbrella organization, became supportive of the Liberty Party, members pledging not to vote or support a slaveholder or an apologist of slavery. However, the churches were actually stronger on this issue than political parties, including the Liberty Party.

In 1844, the Chicago Baptist Association raised \$500.00 to support the expenses of agents, speakers, or tracts that denounced slavery. In 1846, the Northwest Liberty Convention was held in Chicago. Speakers denounced ministers who were slaveholders, and resolutions were passed to establish an anti slavery newspaper in Washington, D.C. Whether or not much was accomplished in the area of social reform, abolitionist conviction had influenced much of the Chicago's political conscience, including key members of the religious leadership.

Most of the evangelical churches railed against slavery. In June of 1849, New School Presbyterians passed a resolution stating that "slavery is a sin before God and man and should be treated by the churches in the same way as other gross immoralities."⁴⁶

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Western Citizen, June 19. 1849.

The Western Citizen argued on both biblical and constitutional grounds that slavery was wrong. The "slave code" is not supported in the Bible, it was "unchristian" to support slavery as an institution or to hold people in bondage.⁴⁷ Similarly, the Declaration of Independence was held to affirm that "all men are created free and equal; and therefore all people, including African-Americans, "have the inalienable right to enjoy liberty [and] pursuit of property."⁴⁸

By 1850, the Watchman of the Prairies developed a militant stand against slavery, even more radical than the organ of the Liberty Party. Abolitionism was gaining the support of the public, and was fast becoming the more accepted position, particularly in light of laws that seemed to threaten the political economy of the North in the decade of the 1850s.

The Watchman initially distanced itself from "radical abolitionism," but later came to embrace it. Again, the litmus test of abolitionism, over and against antislavery, was the dictum that churches should have "no fellowship with slaveholders." The Watchman, "while critical of the too great zeal of the abolitionist, yet believe[s] that the Baptist churches North should pass the same rules preventing slaveholders from being members [and] ministers that it has passed with reference to the rum

⁴⁷Ibid., March 20, 1849.

⁴⁸Ibid., June 19, 1849.

seller." The "Southern Baptists," who seceded in 1845, "should thus be shown the enormity of the sin which is slavery."⁴⁹

In a follow up article, the Watchman went on to say that slavery was arousing by its "injustice, inhumanity, [and] national disgrace" total repudiation from the public. The editor supported the Union for "fostering Christianity, securing civil [and] religious liberty," and giving its people promise of "a glorious destiny." However, the editor chastised the government for the "intellectual and moral bondage of untold millions."⁵⁰ This was very political for a Baptist paper.

In regard to the slavery issue, the Watchman of the Prairies articulated an uncompromising version of the doctrine of the separation of church and state, a position championed by Baptists in the tradition of Roger Williams (1603-1683) and Isaac Backus (1724-1806), champions of religious toleration and religious freedom.⁵¹ For Baptists, the rule of conscience could never be subjected to the rule of the Constitution which was committed to extending and perpetuating slavery.

Dear as the Union is and its Constitution, we owe an obligation to God [and] his constitution of eternal principles, which must be discharged, even at the sacrifices

⁴⁹Watchman of the Prairies (Jan. 9, 1850), 2.

⁵⁰Ibid., Feb. 19, 1850.

⁵¹Roger Williams argued for the principle that "God requireth not an uniformity of religion," and argued for "soul liberty," the freedom of religious conviction and practice in Rhode Island. Isaac Backus' tract of 1773, "An Appeal to the Public for Religious Liberty Against the Oppression of the Present Day" was influential as a statement of the concept of separation of church and state, and in the formulation of the first amendment to the Constitution.

of the Union of these states. A Union preserved by aiding a scheme of injustice, [and] maintained only by unwavering obedience to the extension of slavery can be no other than a covenant with death to ourselves [and] to the nation. . . . [One's] religion is too dear a price to pay for the Union. Slavery strikes too many blows upon the gospel [and] upon community to receive the connivance of any unprejudiced mind.⁵²

For the Watchman of the Prairies, there was a limit in which a citizen could in good conscious support a government. It could not support a government that sanctioned slavery, "engages in war for the purposes of . . . national aggrandizement, tramples upon the Sacred defences of personal liberty, oppresses the aboriginal possessors of its domain, and expels them from that just and established sentiments."

Nor could it allow an injustice to go unrequited, or tolerate "anything else of wrong and wickedness to which the interests of politicians, or the passions of the rabble impel and prompt it." Rather, in the face of obvious injustice, the Watchman countenanced protest and resistance, not conformity and passivity.

Each man is responsible under God's government for his political action. . . . He is responsible for protesting against it, and for resisting it, through all the agencies, with all the forces, that God has given him; for doing his utmost to secure the overthrow of the wrong that is sought to be established, and to plant in its place the institutions of Equity.⁵³

⁵²Watchman of the Prairies (May 21, 1850), 2.

⁵³*Ibid.*, "Limits of Responsibility," Feb. 18, 1851.

Abolition and the Churches after the Compromise of 1850

After the Compromise of 1850, which designated states and territories as either free states, slave states, or open to slavery depending on popular sovereignty, the states moved forward to a head on collision which eventually would lead to Civil War. The failure of Congress to satisfactorily address the issue would push even the most moderate persons in the direction of abolition. The churches of Northern Illinois, with the rest of the nation, mounted a growing protest against national policy.

The Fugitive Slave Law

The Fugitive Slave Law, passed in 1850, gave legal justification to return slaves to slaveholders, and sought to undermine the efforts of the "underground railroad." The authorities only had to decide if the black person under question was the person described by the slaveholder, not whether or not he or she was a slave. For abolitionists, this was a violation of the bill of rights, and a denial of the right of trial by jury. Free blacks, under the law, could be apprehended mistakenly or otherwise, and given over to slaveholders with no means to defend themselves.

Seeking to influence the legislation, the Watchman suggested that allegiance to God's law was superior to man's. It argued that "if placed in a position where we should be compelled either to aid in such work, or suffer the penalty of the law for not aiding, it would be our duty to suffer that penalty." For the Watchman, if

one is placed in an office where it would be required to give aid to something unjust, "we would sooner resign the office than do it."⁵⁴

The Fugitive Slave Law was signed by President Millard Fillmore, later a "Know Nothing" candidate, September 18, 1850. Fillmore, Zachary Taylor's Vice President, replaced President Taylor following the latter's untimely death. Taylor was a Southerner and known slaveholder. The Law was viewed as an attempt to appease the South and slaveholders.

The Fugitive Slave Law was discussed at the Clark Street Methodist Church, because "one of its members of several years standing has been obliged to flee to Canada to prevent being taken back to slavery."⁵⁵ Similarly, members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church characterized the law as but another "glaring instance of northern subservience to slaveholding dictation."⁵⁶ In this, the African-Americans had the support of fellow white churchman. Even the Chicago Common Council reacted, stating that any state senator or representative supporting the Law was "fit only to be ranked with the traitors, Benedict Arnold, and Judas Iscariot who betrayed his Lord and master for thirty pieces of silver."⁵⁷

⁵⁴Ibid., (May 21, 1850), 2.

⁵⁵Chicago Daily Democrat, Nov. 26, 1850.

⁵⁶Chicago Daily Journal, October 3, 1850.

⁵⁷Ibid., October 22, 1850.

For those Baptists who agreed with the Watchman of the Prairies, the Fugitive Slave Law was "a very cruel restriction on human liberty, [and] a disgrace to our country." God's laws were assumed to be superior to human laws, and "no law can make it right to sin." It was therefore "mandatory for Christians, therefore, when placed thus between conflicting laws, . . . [to] bow to the highest."⁵⁸

Additionally, there were often misuses of the law for economic gain. The Congregational Herald was concerned because "certain selfish men" used the Fugitive Slave Law to capture "an industrious [and] thrifty negro, who had lived near Chicago for 7 years," and transported him to Missouri, dividing his property between the U.S. Marshall, "the alleged slaveowner, [and] the witness."⁵⁹ Such alleged miscarriages of justice were used well by those opposed to the law to gather sentiment for abolition.⁶⁰

From Colonization to Abolitionism

Laws that oppressed blacks were passed in the state legislature as well. Illinois Black Laws passed in 1852 reaffirmed the laws already in the books in 1829, and put severe restrictions on movements of African-Americans in Illinois as well as Chicago.

⁵⁸Watchman of the Prairies (October 15, 1850) p. 2; and October 22, 1850.

⁵⁹Congregational Herald, June 11, 1853.

⁶⁰See Zebina Eastman, "History of the Black Code of Illinois," Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, Jan. 10, 1883. In: Zebina Eastman Papers, Ms. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

The Watchman of the Prairies supported a meeting of free blacks in Chicago on December 27, 1852 to protest the unjust and discriminatory legislation that would require African-Americans desirous of living in Illinois to present a Certificate of Freedom, and post a \$1000 bond, with a promise that "he would never become a dependent of the State." Another such law prevented servants from congregating in a group of three or more.

The Watchman described the laws as "more worthy of the dark ages than of an enlightened, republican, [and] religious community."⁶¹ The Congregational Herald shared the disdain for the law, and protested the "Black Law or Negro Law" passed by the Illinois Legislature. "We utterly repudiate this wicked [and] inhuman enactment, [and] will use our best efforts to render it unpopular, [and] effect its speedy repeal."⁶²

The organ of the Methodists, the Northwestern Christian Advocate, was slower to adopt abolition. The Advocate, in one breath, would condemn slavery as "an evil doomed by Providence, condemned in the gospel, and deprecated and cursed by an enlightened world." Yet, in the same breath, Methodist opinion was reluctant to alienate Methodists in the South, and was tolerant in the short run, "with an avowed determination to 'extirpate' [slavery] at the earliest practical moment."⁶³

⁶¹Watchman of the Prairies (Jan. 11, 1853), 2.

⁶²Congregational Herald (April 30, 1853).

⁶³Northwestern Christian Advocate, Jan. 5, 1853.

As an alternative, the Northwestern Christian Advocate advocated colonization, as "the nearest approach to the raising up of a Moses . . ., and pointing out a Canaan, for the colored man, of any movement we at present see." The colonization movement proposed to send African Americans back to Africa, rather than integration with the "American" peoples and institutions. It seemed to many to be the "only practical course," because "the two races can never live on terms of civil and social equality, [since] no one is prepared for racial amalgamation of the two."⁶⁴

Colonization might also have the added advantage of being the means to "the evangelization of Africa." It might assist the "Dark Continent in its struggle to arise from barbarism," and therefore, should be "especially favored by Methodists."⁶⁵ Continuing in a reactionary direction, the voice of Chicago Methodism, in an editorial, rejected the "infidel abolitionism of the Garrisonian school" as a "mischievous sin as bad as slavery itself."⁶⁶ Nor, for some Methodists, was slavery necessarily a sin, or even condemned by scripture.

The NWCA seemed intolerant of the opinion of African-Americans regarding colonization. When Chicago blacks organized and showed their rejection of colonization and forced immigration, the Advocate saw such action as "impolitic" and an expression of

⁶⁴Ibid., (Feb. 9, 1853), 22; and (March 16, 1853), 42.

⁶⁵Ibid., (March 16, 1853), 42.

⁶⁶Ibid., (Feb. 23, 1853), 30.

ungratefulness. In a strikingly uncharitable gesture towards African-Americans, the Advocate threatened to withhold funds from the African Methodist Church. Such pressure from the white church, and blatant racism, served to undermine the abolitionist effort.⁶⁷

The Methodist paper heard that the AME Church was demonstrating not only against colonization, but also for women's rights. This seemed at best to be "semi-infidelic."

We regret to be compelled to intimate these things, to our country friends in reference to our colored brethren of the African church in this city. We will . . . not believe that the members [are] officially of this church sympathize with such a course, until we have further evidence of the fact.⁶⁸

In a published letter from Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, slavery was viewed, as not necessarily a moral evil, "because the scriptures do not expressly condemn it." He warned that "our abolition brethren either know more of the moral code than did the inspired apostle Paul, or slavery is not a sin sufficient to keep a soul out of heaven." To assume otherwise, the church would appear to be "holier than heaven," and should not adopt a position that would exclude slaveholders "from its pale and fellowship."⁶⁹

⁶⁷Ibid., March 16, 1853; February 19, 1853.

⁶⁸Ibid., (Dec. 9, 1853), 3.

⁶⁹Ibid., (April 6, 1853), 53.

The Kansas-Nebraska Bill

However, the event that seemed to push Methodists over the line was the passing of the Kansas-Nebraska bill of 1854. The bill repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1820, allowing popular sovereignty to determine whether or not the territories of Kansas or Nebraska would be either slave or free. This led to a formulation of a new Republican Party composed of Whigs, Democrats, Freesoilers and others who wanted to keep slavery out of new territories.

Even the Northwestern Christian Advocate opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Bill. First, the Fugitive Slave Law seemed to test "the law-abiding virtue of two-thirds of the nation." Now, the North "may be called on for its great sacrifice to do away with slavery altogether."⁷⁰ The NWCA supported a unified protest of clergy. "Almost the entire Protestant clergy of the city" was present in a meeting to protest the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The clergy came up with an alternative resolution protesting the repeal of the Missouri Compromise and the extension of slavery into the Kansas and Nebraska territories, calling it "a great moral wrong."⁷¹

The Advocate noted the response of Senator Stephen A. Douglas, who answered the protest, appealing to the doctrine of "popular sovereignty," the right of citizens in a particular place to vote as they chose on an issue. This view was championed by South

⁷⁰Ibid., (Feb. 8, 1854), 2.

⁷¹Ibid.

Carolina Senator, John C. Calhoun, as a way for Southern states to maintain and extend the institution of slavery. Douglas, perhaps trying to appease the South to gain support for a future bid for the Presidency, criticized the ministers for mixing religious convictions with "political matters."⁷²

As in most pulpits at the time, the Rev. Eggleston of Plymouth Congregational Church advertized that he would "deliver a Discourse . . . bearing on the Nebraska outrage."⁷³ Pushed in the direction of abolitionism, the Methodists joined a growing number of evangelical reformers who not only wanted to stop slavery, but wanted an end to the institution. The Daily Democratic Press reported, that in Chicago pulpits, that "without an exception, no discourse was preached in favor of this measure" in Protestant pulpits.⁷⁴

When the act was finally passed, May 26, 1854, the NWCA expressed its sorrow and grief, and suggested that the churches in Chicago participate in an action of public mourning.

The heavens were hung in complete black on yesterday afternoon, as in mourning for the iniquity completed on that morning in Washington. It has been suggested . . . that all the churches and other bells in the city be tolled at three o'clock this afternoon for one-half hour, as a token of the grief with which the intelligence of the final consummation of the Nebraska iniquity was received by the citizens of

⁷²Ibid., (April 19, 1854), 3.

⁷³Daily Democratic Press, Feb. 18, 1854.

⁷⁴Ibid., April 1, 1854.

Chicago. . . . It will be the most appropriate manner of manifesting our sorrow.⁷⁵

What churches were not able to do together, government legislation was able to accomplish. The churches of Chicago were now unanimous in their stand against slavery, and much more sympathetic to the cause of abolition.

Slavery and the Black Church

African-Americans have always had a presence in Chicago. The first resident in the area was a French African-American fur trader, Pierre LeMoyne Pointe du Sable. Yet, their numbers were always small compared to the general population. There were but 323 African-Americans in the city in 1850, and this number increased slightly to about 1000 in 1860. After the Civil War, a growth in numbers would increase slowly, but the slowness of numbers suggests the impact of the state's regressive legislation, the infamous "Black Codes."

According to St. Clair Drake, "color has served as a convenient classification trait, and has made the assimilation of Negroes into the total society extremely difficult."⁷⁶ Race has always been a highly political issue in the city. Unlike the paternalistic version of racism practiced in the South, the racism

⁷⁵Northwestern Christian Advocate (May 31, 1854), 3.

⁷⁶St. Clair Drake, Churches and Voluntary Associations in the Chicago Negro Community (Chicago: The Works Project Administration, December, 1940), 31.

in the North has always been more "aversive," contributing to the development of separate communities and separate societies.⁷⁷

Prior to the 1840s, there was little evidence of separate African-American institutions in the city. However, in the late 1840s, the presence of churches began the institutionalization of the separate society. Blacks were concentrated near Harrison Street in the South Loop, between Clark and State streets. Initially,

. . . the Negro people were integrally related to the white society; both work and worship, and to some extent, play, brought many of them face to face contact with the white neighborhoods."⁷⁸

However, many of the Blacks that were coming to Chicago, some on their way to Canada, brought with them "remnants of plantation culture and the traditions of the Southern cities. With them came a tradition of separate churches."⁷⁹

By 1870, there were 3500 blacks in Chicago, still only about one percent of the population. They lived mostly on the South side, between Monroe and Sixteenth, and Lake Michigan and the South branch of the Chicago River. After the Fire, they settled further South to 22nd Street, and on the West side, initiating the two major sections of Black settlement in the city.

⁷⁷For elaborations on this theme, St. Claire Drake and Horace R. Cayton, Black Metropolis: A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1945).

⁷⁸Drake, Churches and Voluntary Associations in the Chicago Negro Community, 35.

⁷⁹Ibid.

The first established Black church in the city was Quinn Chapel. Beginning in 1844, John Day and others on the South side organized themselves into "an undenominational band."⁸⁰ This was but a prayer band, and in 1845, an "exhorter" was secured, Madison Patterson. However, it wasn't until 1847 that Bishop William Paul Quinn of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in New York sent the Rev. George Johnson to Chicago. The church was officially organized on July 22, 1847. It was the "first Negro church, and the second still surviving Methodist church organized in the city of Chicago."⁸¹ The first minister was Thomas Farnsworth, and the church became an important station on the underground railroad.

The secular press and the white church were supportive of separate churches. The Chicago Daily Journal (Republican) noted that Quinn Chapel was a colored church, with "a neat edifice on Wells Street, crowded every Sabbath to its fullest capacity." The writer noted that "we have rarely seen a better appearing congregation, whether in point of appeal or decorum."⁸² The "colored church" had a "plain, but neat church edifice," and in contrast to the church-building fever of the time, the Journal noted that the church was comparable "with other congregations of greater pretensions."⁸³

⁸⁰Quinn Chapel AME Church. The 120th Anniversary Record, 1847-1967 (Chicago, 1967), 23.

⁸¹Ibid.

⁸²Chicago Daily Journal, July 2, 1850.

⁸³Ibid., Nov. 25, 1850.

The Methodist Church was "more prosperous than the Baptist," with "stated preaching in a crowded house," a "neat and sufficiently commodious building," George Johnson, Pastor.⁸⁴ By 1853, there was a need for larger building with a school, and the Chicago Daily Journal, supportive of the enterprise, appealed to the "citizenry to assist" in the building of a new facility which was located on the south side at Buffalo and Jackson streets.⁸⁵

The church was dedicated, with the Rev. James E. Wilson, Pastor. This church was praised as attracting "well informed and peaceable citizens."⁸⁶ This building was 60 feet long, with 60 members.⁸⁷ A second AME church, Bethel, was added the following year in 1854, to accommodate a growing African-American population in the city.

The Baptists formed the Zoar Baptist Church in April 1853, with but eleven members. However, by 1856, the church had fifty-six members. The Rev. H.H. Harding was pastor of the "Colored Baptist Church" in Chatham, West Canada, and was called to pastor the new church. John Jones, one of Chicago's early citizens, and the first wealthy African-American in the city, was a member of this church. Zoar sponsored preaching services in the morning, at

⁸⁴Ibid., Jan. 20, 1851.

⁸⁵Ibid., April 25, 1853.

⁸⁶Ibid., Sept. 10, 1853.

⁸⁷Ibid., Sept., 10, 1853.

3:30 pm in the afternoon, and prayer meetings on Wednesday.⁸⁸ The Christian Times, a Baptist paper, applauded the efforts of Zoar.

The colored Baptist church in the city, is made up of very excellent and reliable material. Its leading male members are respected and successful business men and fully capable of directing wisely the financial affairs of the church.⁸⁹

Drake noted that in 1837 there were but three Black-owned businesses in the city, but this increased to eighty-four by 1860. However, the story and the context of the importance of African-American churches must be set in the context of slavery. Key issues facing the black church at this time were connected with the legacy of slavery. Drake points out that a major issue facing the black church was the legitimacy of marriage among slaves. Masters would separate couples who were victims of commercial transactions, and coupling was seldom respected legally in the South. However, "marriage" among slaves was morally binding if not legally. So, should the church recognize a relationship born in slavery, or what would happen if a single member of a couple managed to escape to freedom, not knowing the whereabouts of the other?

The other controversy was over "footwashing." In the 1850s, a controversy arose over the practice. The congregants of Zoar Baptist wanted the practice, whereas the Pastor was against it. This was a major debate in the African-American religious communities. It was so heated, that the pastor was forced to

⁸⁸Drake, Churches and Voluntary Associations in the Chicago Negro Community, 40.

⁸⁹Christian Times, Sept. 2, 1857.

resign over the issue due to "bitterness" that "marred their peace and hindered the work of God and scattered the members."⁹⁰ African-Americans had a high Puritan ethic. When a member of its ministerium was caught on a couch with a Negro Doctor's wife, the preacher was tried, fined \$100, and immediately discredited.⁹¹

African-Americans in the city started their own voluntary associations in the late 1850s. These included the "Order of the Good Samaritans" and the "Daughters of Samaria" aimed at the "moral elevation and advancement of the people of color." There were seventy-eight such lodges nationwide, mostly in the Northern states.⁹² The churches, lodges and businesses were the initial efforts of African-Americans in the city to develop their own social institutions and social structures.

In 1861, thirty-five to forty members of Zoar Baptist Church left to start a new church, Mount Zion. However, since building a new church was expensive, the members rented space in a store on Clark Street and Harrison. This practice became normative in many cities as stores were cheaper to rent on Sundays than building a separate church building. The practice of starting churches in storefronts made sense since many African-Americans owned small businesses, serving constituents in their own communities.⁹³

⁹⁰Cited in Drake, Churches and Voluntary Associations in the Chicago Negro Community, 42.

⁹¹Chicago Daily Journal, March 11, 1859.

⁹²Ibid., August 17, 1859.

⁹³Drake, Churches and Voluntary Associations, 43.

By 1861, the beginning of the Civil War, there were four African-American churches in the city for 1000 Black residents. These included two Methodist and two Baptist churches. In 1861, the two Baptist churches reunited again when the pastor of Zoar relocated to Canada. The name of the church was changed to the Olivet Baptist Church, with a congregation of 300 people at Harrison and Griswold streets.

Of course, the Baptist churches were meeting places for the underground railroad. After the Compromise of 1850 and the Fugitive Slave Law, defiance and consternation were the responses of the churches, black and white. Chicago was openly defiant. Not only did the white population express its antagonism, but the Negro community gave proof of its strong resentment against the law. Quinn Chapel, and the residence of John Jones, founder of the Olivet Baptist Church, were two of the most active "terminals" in the Underground Railroad. Four women leaders at Quinn Chapel, called "the big four," were also among the most active members of the underground.

In October, 1850, the Rev. George W. Johnson, Pastor of Quinn Chapel, called to order a "large and enthusiastic meeting of colored citizens" at his church, and organized the "Liberty Association" as a black-run abolitionist organ in Chicago.⁹⁴ 300 people were organized in a "police division," to patrol the city each night and to warn others of "interlopers" who were intent at

⁹⁴Chicago Daily Journal, October 15, 1850.

not only capturing escaped slaves, but anyone that could post no Certificate of Freedom. The result, is that many African-Americans were forced to take advantage of the Underground Railroad.

The organization efforts versus slavery brought the African-American community together in the city. In the city, blacks could be more militant, because the city offered Negroes a better chance to organize a resistance than in the countryside. By 1860, bounty hunters with U.S. Marshalls stormed Chicago, capturing slaves and former slaves at random. This caused a hysteria and a mass exodus of blacks from the city to safer soil in Canada.

In April, 1861, such interloping appeared to be at its height. "After the religious services at the Zoar Baptist Church, in the morning which was densely attended, the leave-taking commenced. . . . The colored clergymen of the city were also among the number, and labored ardently in extending encouragement and consolation to those about to depart."⁹⁵ By 1860, the black churches were very active in the cause of abolition and in giving assistance to fugitives. The churches were involved in the

. . . broader social movements involving Negroes by actively supporting the anti-slavery movement, by caring for fugitives and aiding them in their escape to Canada, and by providing educational and recreational facilities.⁹⁶

The AME churches were more active than the Baptist churches, and these were joined as well by white churches. The "white congregations and individuals seemed to have been active in

⁹⁵Ibid., April 8, 1861.

⁹⁶Drake, Churches and Voluntary Associations, 48.

rendering financial assistance, giving moral support, and encouraging Negroes to develop a secular leadership for businesses in addition to the clergy. There was much emphasis on the middle-class virtues of thrift, sobriety, and decorum."⁹⁷ White church leaders were trying to influence the character-development of their Negroe brethren.

After the Civil War, the Advance would welcome free blacks to the North and to the city. However, the editor, and indeed the majority of the white evangelical community did not believe that the freed slave was ready for "civilization." Rather, there was a perceived need for a "general education of the blacks, and an elevation of learning, religion, wealth, [and] polite manners. Civil and ecclesiastical office and artistic and literary culture would rapidly throw down social barriers."⁹⁸

Abolition and the Civil War

Among churches, white and black, a strong reaction to the Dred Scott decision followed in 1857. Dred Scott was a slave who sued for his freedom since for seven years his owner had taken him into Illinois and then to the Wisconsin Territory, areas that barred slavery by way of the Missouri Compromise of 1820. However, the case went on to the Supreme Court, where Scott lost. The majority of the supreme justices at the time was Southern. Judge Roger B.

⁹⁷Ibid., 49.

⁹⁸"The Social Status of Blacks," The Advance (Jan. 21, 1869), 4.

Taney ruled that Scott was neither a citizen of Missouri or of the United States, and that residence in a free territory did not make him free, nor did Congress have the power to bar slavery from a territory.

Dred Scott overturned a sectional compromise that had been in force for thirty-seven years, and even threatened the concept of popular sovereignty as the Court suggested that free territories were not altogether free. This created a strong reaction, and moved the country one step closer to Civil War. The Congregational Herald was livid. It replied: "in the person of Dred Scott liberty is trodden to the earth, and if this decision be valid, slavery has henceforth every inch of American soil for its own." The Herald feared that slavery had advanced, and that every basic principle of law and liberty had been lost.⁹⁹

Drawing implications of the Dred Scott decision for the North, the Congregational Herald reasoned that it was now "optional with the slaveholder whether he will hold his slaves in South Carolina or in any state of the North. . . . Bondage is now not more at home in New Orleans than in Chicago. . . ." Further, it now seemed, even to the religious press, that the nation was moving inevitably towards a collision course of war. The Congregational Herald warned.

For if in these four years Slavery shall not have achieved a consolidation of power, a supremacy North and South greater

⁹⁹Congregational Herald, March 26, 1857.

than it has every yet possessed . . . then comes a day of reckoning for all this, as it very well knows.¹⁰⁰

In October 20, 1859, the Northwest Anti-slavery Society met in Chicago, assembling at the First Congregational Church with 150 to 200 delegates to discuss the present course of Anti-Slavery. Never had the Anti-Slavery forces seemed more pessimistic of a solution short of armed conflict. Despite efforts of Anti-Slavery activists and abolitionists everywhere, "strenuous efforts [were] being made to revive the African Slave trade; to vitalize and energize the Fugitive Sale Law; to fasten slavery upon all our territories and to annex foreign territory for the purpose of extending . . . its power."¹⁰¹

Abolitionists following the anarchism of William Lloyd Garrison countenanced slaves in the South to rise up and throw off the yoke of slavery, just as Patriots did in 1776. As might be predicted, evangelicals were slow to countenance violence. Moral suasion was the preferred path, followed by changes through the court system. But what happens when these more acceptable forms prove ineffective? Would violence be acceptable even to evangelicals and the church? The Christian Times, a Baptist paper, voiced its concern, considering violence misguided and unwise.¹⁰²

However, when John Brown raided Harper's Ferry, his death lifted him to the status of a martyr for the cause of abolition.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Chicago Press and Tribune, October 22, 1859.

¹⁰²Christian Times, November 11, 1857.

The Rev. W.W. Patton of the First Congregational Church in Chicago was slow to condemn Brown. For despite the "error of his judgement," John Brown's actions would forever be "eclipsed by the glory of his principles [and] we shall forget his mistaken appeal to arms, and think of his character, his motives, his sacrifices, and his death. It is not in vain that John Brown had died in form as a traitor, in spirit as a martyr."¹⁰³

Patton could forgive Brown of his actions of violence. For: "though his deeds came seemingly to nought, his heroic daring, and his sublime contempt of death, even by the hand of the executioner, will render him immortal. They have killed him, but they have given new life to his principles."¹⁰⁴ The acceptance of John Brown's act signalled the growing acceptance, even among evangelicals, that violence might be not only necessary, but divinely sanctioned as the only way left to deal with the oppression of slavery as an institutional evil.

The Chicago Daily Democrat pled for the churches to take an active role, and that it was a Christian duty to oppose slavery.

. . . churches must take side against slavery. . . . How can a man keep the commandments if he believes in and practices slavery? How can a man love his neighbor as himself, if he believes in slavery? How can any Christian man believe and practice a system which is destructive of the first principles of Christianity, ignores the marriage relation, and murders the family tie? Every religious sect must sooner or later

¹⁰³Congregational Herald (Dec. 29, 1859), 1.

¹⁰⁴Ibid.

denounce slavery, or it will render it a bye word, and a mocking in the world.¹⁰⁵

The religious press agreed with the Democrat, and journals like the Congregational Herald believed it was the duty of those committed to reform to support not only "moral suasion" but also political reformers as well. The "moral reformers having prepared the public mind, the political reformers are now taking up the moral sentiment manufactured to their hand, in order to organize it in opposition to the despotic power which has so long swayed our government."¹⁰⁶ However, with the firing upon Fort Sumter, April 12, 1861, neither moral suasion nor Congressional decree would have opportunity to solve the problem. The nation was plunged into Civil War and to a military solution of the problem.

With the secession of South Carolina, the Chicago Daily Tribune assumed that there would be far fewer complaints about "political preaching." Instead, pulpits spoke with unanimity in the North in support of the Union against the South, and against slavery.¹⁰⁷ It was assumed that the great strength of the Republican Party, the party of Lincoln, was the support of the churches.

The Rev. W.W. Patton, among other pulpits in the city, preached eloquent sermons in support of the Union effort in the war. Patton, the abolitionist pastor of First Congregational

¹⁰⁵Chicago Daily Democrat, October 22, 1860.

¹⁰⁶Congregational Herald, June 7, 1860.

¹⁰⁷Chicago Daily Tribune, Dec. 25, 1860.

Church, viewed the war as "God's providence bringing about great changes for good, and for progress of humanity. . . . The present struggle is one in which every Christian may rise from his knees, and shoulder his rifle. . . . We must give up our constitution and our liberties, or defend them. . . ." ¹⁰⁸ In the present situation, even the churches supported the violence of war against the institution of slavery.

Similarly, the Rev. Dr. Robert W. Patterson, a moderate on most issues, was not moderate regarding the war. Stated Patterson, "our land pertains to the right of liberty. . . . Liberty must triumph. The example of this nation must soon illustrate to the world the power of true religion to break every yoke." ¹⁰⁹

Both the religious and the secular press understood the war as an effort to end the barbarity of slavery, and this was extended to the barbarism reported among Confederate soldiers. In the midst of battles, the Congregational Herald voiced its horror of Confederates stabbing the wounded "in cold blood, poisoning food and water, [and] mutilating victims." This reporting of "horrible barbarities" of Confederates to Union soldiers shocked the public, and churches to support the war. ¹¹⁰

The Congregational Herald thought that the sectional conflict was a conflict of two cultures, two civilizations. For the North,

¹⁰⁸Ibid., April 15, 1861.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., April 22, 1861.

¹¹⁰Congregational Herald, July 11, 1862.

Puritanism was the rule, with its concern for human equality. In the South, "the principle of equality formed no part of their belief or practice." Southern culture was "highly aristocratic," and "proud, overbearing, domineering . . . , turbulent and restless."¹¹¹ Hence, the conflict was a war of two different models of civilization, one agrarian, and the other industrial; one based on human equality, the other based on hierarchy. Slavery was the product of the barbarism of Southern culture.

President Abraham Lincoln issued the famous Emancipation Proclamation, beginning January 1, 1863. The Proclamation allegedly set free all slaves in states in rebellion against the Union. However, critics noted that Lincoln made the Proclamation inoperative in areas where Union troops were present. The Proclamation appeared to be a political tool versus the Confederate military establishment, rather than a tool that would do much to set slaves free. Regardless, many slaves would seize whatever opportunity to find freedom.

On the literary front, The Northwestern Christian Advocate favorably received the publication of Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin as exposing slavery for its "hideous support of the South, coiling in loathsome, slimy folds around all that is fair [and] lovely in humanity."¹¹² Antislavery and support of the Union now had its most famous literary expression.

¹¹¹Ibid., (March 7, 1861), 2.

¹¹²Northwestern Christian Advocate (June 15, 1863), 95.

Freedman's Aid Societies for Ex Slaves

As the war progressed, more and more African-Americans were fleeing the South, coming to the North to join other free blacks. In August of 1863, several months after the Emancipation Proclamation, the American Missionary Association met in Chicago. It met for the purpose of "more fully uniting and interesting all the various denominations in the great work of educating, civilizing, [and] Christianizing the Freedman, for perfecting arrangements for sending teachers, books, [and] clothing" to over 200,000 liberated slaves now in the North.¹¹³ Among those present were Old and New school Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Wesleyans, Episcopalians, Methodist, Baptists, and United Brethren in Christ.

This body established the "Northwestern Freedman's Aid Committee" as an auxiliary of the American Missionary Association.¹¹⁴ The Committee held a fair to raise support for the venture, called the "Northwestern Fair of the Freedman's Aid Commission," for benefit of newly freed slaves.¹¹⁵

The religious press supported Lincoln for a second term. The Presidency of Lincoln was viewed to be essential for a satisfactory outcome to the conflict, and the final abolition of slavery, and

¹¹³Christian Times (August 19, 1863), 2.

¹¹⁴Ibid., (Sept 23, 1863), 2.

¹¹⁵Ibid., (Dec. 22, 1864), 2.

the eventuation of peace.¹¹⁶ The Christian Times, a Baptist paper, agreed. "We believe . . . that the election of Mr. Lincoln is essential to the preservation of these [the Union, the government and free institutions] . . . and we therefore hope our readers will seek wisdom from above to guide them aright in casting their votes in the coming election."¹¹⁷ Baptists who supported the separation of church and state were not necessarily apolitical.

While African-Americans were grateful for charity, charity was not enough. In 1866, the Rev. Richard de Baptiste, Minister of the Providence Baptist Church began raising questions regarding Civil Rights in Illinois, and to reformulate the antiquated laws of Illinois regarding Blacks in the state. In 1869, Baptiste called for a "Colored Convention" in Chicago, held at the Olivet Baptist Church. The purpose of the convention was to push for "social equality."¹¹⁸

Baptiste formulated an objective to press the State Legislature for equal school priveleges, and for two delegates to attend an upcoming Constitutional Convention. This effort was of symbolic value. Some of the difficulties were dealt with in the Amendments to the Constitution on the Federal level. However, the Illinois Constitutional Convention granted suffrage only to

. . . male citizens of the United States who were over twenty-one years of age and who had satisfied the residence requirements of one year in the state, ninety days in the

¹¹⁶Northwestern Christian Advocate, Nov. 2, 1864.

¹¹⁷Christian Times, October 13, 1864.

¹¹⁸Drake, Churches and Voluntary Associations, 53 ff.

county, and thirty days in the election district; to all electors of Illinois on April 1, 1848; and to foreigners who had "obtained a certificate of naturalization, before any court" in the state by January 1, 1870.¹¹⁹

It would take another one-hundred years for African-Americans in this country would have the beginnings of the "social equality" as hoped for by Rev. Baptiste.

Significance

Abolitionism was one of two volatile issues in the nation in the antebellum period, the other being temperance. However, the churches were more divided over abolitionism than most issues they confronted. This is the case because abolitionism was a national issue, and it demanded a political solution. Also, while all the churches were against slavery, a smaller number were "ultraists," demanding the immediate end of slavery.

As events escalated toward Civil War, the churches began to align themselves more on the side of abolition. Earlier, many of the churches paid a dear price for taking a stand on the issue, especially prior to 1851. The result was division among churches and schism among denominations. However, the Fugitive Slave Law was the turning point, and thereafter, all the churches seemed to assume the more radical posture.

Abolitionism, unlike other crusades, was a justice issue that demanded a political and, eventually, a military solution.

¹¹⁹Cited in Bessie Louise Pierce, A History of Chicago, vol. II, From Town to City, 1848-1871 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1940), 300.

However, it raised other questions that would haunt the church for years. These included the status of African-Americans, and the role of the church in politics.

While abolitionism split the churches, the debate suggests that social control is not an all encompassing or satisfactory thesis. Those on the side of abolitionism were more committed to the mission of setting the slaves free, rather than furthering the oppression of African-Americans or the lower classes. Abolitionists were trying to undermine the control of proslavery political leaders, and tried to sway antislavery activists to the more radical posture.

In Chicago, this was a crusade championed by several leaders who also had strong church ties.

The men who were willing to be known as abolitionists, soon after this event, were mainly a nucleus that formed around the First Presbyterian Church, embracing a few members who were Methodists or Baptists. But in almost every instance, they were professing Christians, who were to take a stand by the death of Lovejoy.¹²⁰

Zebina Eastman noted that there "were a few abolitionists who were unbelievers," though in the minority. Those who rejected Christianity did so because "the majority of the professing Christians of the country pretended to believe that the Bible authorized slavery, making God the author of that abominable system of iniquity."¹²¹

¹²⁰Zebina Eastman, "History of the Antislavery Agitation," 661.

¹²¹Ibid., 662.

Eastman noted that, despite this, the abolitionist movement became a "power in Chicago," and made that city distinguished throughout the country. Eastman turned on its head the legislative rulings of the day, insisting that it was the abolitionists who were acting as the "law-abiding community by sheltering and protecting the fugitive slave against illegal arrest."¹²²

Of all the benevolent causes of the day, abolitionism was the only one that addressed structural and systemic causes. It was the only reform crusade that focused not on the reform of an individual, but the restructuring of the whole of society. However, like the other evangelical crusades, abolitionists also appealed for individual slaveholders to repent, and change their attitudes and practice. In effect, the appeal to morality and evangelism was simply transferred to counter the "sin of slavery." Also, despite differences in doctrine on this and other issues, the abolitionists also shared the values of their class, even with antislavery and proslavery Christians.

All of them wanted a society where virtue, hard-work, thrift, self-control, benevolence, and a concern for the public good would reign supreme. The differences between abolitionists and anti-slavery advocates were matters of method rather than differences in the ultimate goal. Neither party dealt effectively with the race issue, only the issue of slavery as an institution. Despite differences in views in regard to what should be done about

¹²²Ibid., 661.

slavery, the evangelicals of this period looked for a coming kingdom of God when evils like the institution of slavery would be banished forever.

CHAPTER XV
LIMITED BENEVOLENCE:
PRIVATE CHARITY IN CHICAGO

The Growth of a City: Poverty and Charity

In the 1830s, following the Blackhawk War, many refugees came to the city. Like all urban places, Chicago brought a diversity of peoples together. This diversity brought cultural richness, but also much conflict and many difficult problems. The city brought together a mixture of people, with their differences and antagonisms. Very quickly, Chicago had rich and poor, nativist and immigrant, prosperous and dependent, healthy and sick, and Protestant, Catholic and Jew. More than any other American city, the story of Chicago became the story of the relationship between peoples and cultures, very different cultures.¹

Quickly after settlement, hordes of immigrants began to come Westward, as the decade of the 1830s marked the swelling of numbers of peoples traveling west from the Eastern seaboard. In 1833, only four boats landed in the Chicago Harbor. However, 108 boats arrived in 1834, and the numbers increased four times to 450 boats

¹Bessie Louise Pierce, "Humanitarian Reform," Unpublished Paper, n.d. Bessie L. Pierce Papers, Chicago Historical Society.

for 1836, the year before the first financial panic.² The Chicago American noted in 1835 that there were so many newcomers that immigrants were forced to sleep in the warehouses by the water.

The floodgates of enterprize (sic) seem to let loose upon us and multitudes are crowding on to the young land . . . where they can build there futures and their hopes, and enjoy the plenty which our fat fields yield to the hands of industry.³

By 1836, ads were appearing in New York City seeking workers for the newly planned Illinois and Michigan Canal. Over "two hundred sons of the Emerald Isle" arrived in July of 1836, and over "10,000 more were wanted."⁴ Unfortunately, just as the Irish were arriving in record numbers, the nation was beset with the Panic of 1837. The panic first hit the East Coast, and slowly made its way West, the result being that work on the Canal came to a standstill by 1841. The city did not show signs of recovery until 1842, and meanwhile many Irish laborers were left jobless while others arrived destitute, having just left famine and crop failure in the homeland.

These immigrants, like Southern migrants from Tennessee and Kentucky, arrived poor, with but few household items. Yankee entrepreneurs from the East had greater capacity to survive the downturn in economics, but the new arrivals were forced to the public coffers for survival. Germans too were coming to the new

²W.V. Pooley, The Settlement of Illinois, From 1830 to 1850 (Madison: University of Wisconsin), 358.

³Chicago American, June 13, 1835.

⁴Ibid., July 2, 1836.

city, although many of them came in the late 1840s seeking political freedom and economic opportunity in the new world. By 1850, the Irish and the Germans comprised 38% of the total population of the city (11,131 of 29,375).⁵

From 1850 to 1857, the city tripled in size, growing from 30,000 to 93,000 people. By 1854, the city had become the leading wheat distribution center in the country. By 1856, it was a significant lumber exchange center, and by the 1860s the city had become the midwestern center of meatpacking, becoming the "hog butcher to the world." Such growth in the economy was often accompanied by "bust" cycles which strained the ability of the public to respond to poverty in the city. Increasingly, the new immigrants, who were disproportionately poor, comprised the largest numbers of those on public assistance.

From September 1 to December 1, 1859, 610 people ended up in the Cook County poorhouse. Of the total number in the poorhouse, 321 were Irish (52.6%), and 110 were German (18%). In addition, sixty-one were from Sweden (10%), forty-six were "American" (7.5%), and twenty were from England (3.3%). Hence, immigrants developed an unwelcome reputation as people that would more likely end up on some form of public assistance.⁶

By 1870, 14,000 people were receiving public relief (outdoor

⁵The People of Chicago: Who We Are and Who We Have Been (Chicago: Department of Development and Planning, 1976), 10.

⁶Cited in James Brown, The History of Public Assistance in Chicago, 1833-1893 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941), 28.

relief). Of this number, 6,840 were Irish (48.6%), and 2,965 were German (21%). In the County Almshouse (indoor relief), of 759 "paupers," 390 were Irish (51.3%), and 125 were German (16.4%).⁷ Swedes suffered particularly for ill health as they were frequent victims of cholera and deaths from other diseases. The result was that there were more children left as orphans from Sweden and Norway than other immigrant groups. The Rev. Unonius, the Swedish Episcopalian minister, was very active in trying to address the problem of orphans in his congregation and was among those who founded the Chicago Protestant Orphan Asylum.⁸

A number of factors, economic and epidemiological, contributed to the destitution of the immigrant and the consequent need of some form of relief, either from the public or private charities. For the most part, Protestants could empathize with the need for relief among those who suffered from disease, fires, unemployment, or loss of a loved one due to the Civil War. These were more clearly the result of factors beyond the applicant's control. However, it was more difficult to sympathize with immigrants, or with unemployed men. It was presumed that there must be something wrong with the victim, not the system.

Also, most Protestants believed that women and children were victimized by men who were either intemperate, or seduced to vice.

⁷"Report of the Warden of the Poorhouse," Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of Cook County, For 1870, "Appendix," pp. 72-73.

⁸Brown, Public Assistance, 15.

There was a growing impatience among Protestants and other caregivers about giving charity to those considered "unworthy." Barring natural disasters, Protestants believed that men in particular became poor because of some flaw in their character or morality. Neither the city fathers nor church leaders understood the complexity of economic issues facing poor people, especially immigrants, who seemed to bring poverty upon themselves and were considered to be parasites on both public coffers and private charities. In short, there was

. . . a thoroughgoing lack of sympathy for poverty traceable to personal defects, (taking) the form it had in England more than one-hundred years before and still frequently in this country: Relief must be made (a) deterrent Schemes to make the poor miserable by publishing their names, or requiring task work were other ways of discouraging any but the most wretched.⁹

Thus, the city faced the problem of what to do for the drifter and the destitute in the city. Increasingly; the city became home to those considered undesirable, including the stranger, the poor, the debtor, the diseased, and more often than not these were both immigrant Roman Catholic. There were several possible solutions to these problems.

Sometimes the city would intervene with outdoor and indoor relief, with cash payments and asylums. These were the response of the county or the municipality. However, funds were often low, and charity to the destitute was discouraged, lest other poor persons or vagrants come to the city for services, and lest those

⁹Ibid., 17.

receiving aid become dependent, thereby encouraging "pauperism." Increasingly, the churches and private philanthropies would see their role as helping the poor, usually their own poor, those temporarily in need of relief. A debate was played out in the antebellum period in Chicago and other cities as to who had responsibility for the poor, the public sector, or private philanthropies. Neither group was thrilled about the task.

Public Charity

The problem of destitution was initially handled by the municipal treasury. In 1831, the Cook County Board of Commissioners organized efforts to care for the sick, the disabled, the strangers, and other unfortunate members of the town. A Poor House was begun in 1832, and for the first decade, \$20,953.93 was dispensed to feed, clothe and house the impoverished.

In the 1830s, food and medicine were given to both the indigent and the sick, whether disabled travelers, strangers or county residents. But this would change, as the stranger became less welcome in the city due to disease and overcrowding.¹⁰ From 1834-1835, "ladies fairs" were held in the Presbyterian and Episcopalian churches to collect funds for the various philanthropies.

After the panic of 1837, the numbers of poor increased dramatically in Chicago, and the County Poor House proved

¹⁰William Bross, History of Chicago (Chicago, 1876), 26.

inadequate to respond to the need. \$5,000 was spent on the poor in 1839 alone, and Mayor B. W. Raymond donating his entire salary for one month to care for Irish workers of the Illinois-Michigan Canal. In the 1840s, public dollars for relief of the poor began to be supplemented and ultimately replaced by private charity, especially from the churches.

On Thanksgiving Day, 1840, the Chicago Daily American encouraged private societies to assist in giving support to the poor.¹¹ In the decade of the 1840s, the Chicago City Tract Society and women's sewing circles provided clothes, food, and economic assistance to the growing numbers of needy people.¹² In 1841, a new poorhouse was built, to save expense for "outdoor relief." "Indoor relief" was care for the poor that involved housing persons in a shelter. "Outdoor relief" was characterized by giving needy people food, clothing, or fuel without having to house them.

By 1847 to 1848, the system was overloaded, and all claims had to be audited by the presiding officer of the Board of Health. In 1848, Cook County dispensed with "outdoor relief" and focused on the more destitute cases of persons who had to be housed in the poorhouse. Immigrants who were coming to this country, disproportionately made up recipients of public charity, because they often arrived both economically poor and in poor health.

Faced with this problem, the Chicago Daily American, exploring

¹¹Chicago Daily American, Dec. 2, 1840.

¹²John C. Grant, ed. The Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago (Chicago, Second Presbyterian Church, 1891), 115-116.

options of what to do for poor relief, wondered if alms were creating dependency on the part of recipients and therefore was more unhelpful than helpful. In responding to the poor, the reader was asked to consider the benefits of employment over almsgiving.

To the class of persons the penny honestly earned is far more acceptable than dollars in the shape of alms. The intelligent philanthropist will rather direct his attention towards procuring employment for his fellow creatures in want of it, than to the humbling of them by treating them as mere objects of charity.¹³

From 1853, it was clear that the Cook County poorhouse was unable to provide for the growing needs of the indigent in the city. The Ladies Benevolent Society, comprised of women of several of the Protestant churches, raised money for direct relief, but could not address the magnitude of city problems and its issues of poverty and destitution. It soon became apparent that large facilities were needed, such as hospitals and privately funded asylums.

Hospitals were generally lacking in the city in the 1840s, and often sick people were crowded in with the destitute in the poorhouse. In 1843, the City Dispensary opened, and in connection with Rush Medical College, agreed to provide "relief to the indigent and practical instruction to medical students."¹⁴ In April of 1845, the Common Council presented a bill asking for \$300 to build a hospital, but it is not clear if this was carried out.

¹³"Sufferings in Cities," Chicago Daily American (Feb. 3, 1842), 2.

¹⁴Robert Fergus, Directory of City of Chicago, 1843 (Chicago: Robert Fergus, 1843), 13.

In a rare demonstration of public-private partnership, the Cook County Dispensary cooperated with Rush Medical College in 1846 to give free medical advice and medicines to the poor.¹⁵

In 1847, the "Chicago Retreat for the Insane" was established by Dr. Edward Mead, a neuropsychologist. Luther Stone of the Watchman of the Prairies, supportive of this venture, could give a very progressive view of mental illness for the time. For Stone, insanity was not the result of a lack of morals, but of "physical causes and the derangement of our physical nature." A site two miles North of the city was chosen, and a hospital for the insane was created with 130 beds.¹⁶ Unfortunately, the Retreat was destroyed by fire in 1852 and no replacement was built until 1900. Until then, the Cook County poorhouse was used to house the poor, the orphan, and the insane, a poor substitute.

It wasn't until 1847 that the first general hospital in Chicago was founded in a warehouse of Tippecanoe Hall, a building owned by Episcopalian John H. Kinzie. The hospital had one hundred beds, and was attended by Dr. H.S. Huber, physician, and Dr. Daniel Brainard, surgeon. In the first year, eighty patients were cared for.¹⁷ But this soon closed.¹⁸ Another attempt at establishing

¹⁵Chicago Democrat, Dec. 29, 1846.

¹⁶Watchman of the Prairies, March 7, 1848.

¹⁷James Nevins Hyde, Early Medical Chicago (Chicago: Fergus Printing Company, 1879), 42.

¹⁸Jim Bowman, Good Medicine: The First 150 Years of Rush-Presbyterian-St. Luke's Medical Center (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1987), 8.

a hospital was launched in 1850, called the Illinois General Hospital of the Lakes. Dr. Nathan Davis and Dr. Levi Boone oversaw the medical department, and Dr. Brainard was the surgeon. This was taken over in 1851 by the Sisters of Mercy, and the Rush faculty reserved several beds there in return for providing free care for the needy.¹⁹

Yet this hospital, as with most efforts in giving charity, was inadequate, and could not keep up with the expanding population, and the parallel increase of medical and charitable needs. Since many of the new arrivals were also coming to the city ill, the Public Health Officer, Dr. O.P. Hathaney, was sent up the river in 1851, instructed to detain those who were sick from coming to the city for fear of their bringing "the cholera."²⁰

In 1858, the Illinois Eye and Ear Infirmary opened. The churches raised money for the Infirmary and items were procured. Rush Medical College, Hahnemann Medical College, and the Chicago Medical College gave treatment for the poor as a way for young doctors to practice their craft, but there was no charitable hospital. In 1854, the Board of Health gave the okay to start another city hospital, and in 1859, the "Chicago City Hospital" was created, a building was leased and physicians were contracted with over a five-year period.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Chicago Daily Democrat, Aug. 11, 1851.

In 1863, this hospital passed into the administrative oversight of U.S. Military and the facility was used as a specialty institution renamed as the "De Marres Eye and Ear Hospital." It was not until 1866 that a city hospital was opened as a general hospital for the poor.

Private hospitals were established as well, but few of them had adequate financial backing or staying power. With unprecedented growth came destitution and illness, the city was unprepared. In 1854, the first Protestant hospital, St. James, was built as a charitable institution. This quickly dissolved and was followed in 1864 by St. Luke's Hospital, and finally the Lutheran Deaconess Hospital in 1865. Jews had their own hospital by 1868, and several Catholic hospitals were in operation by 1870 including Mercy (1853), St. Mary's (1866), and St. Joseph's (1868).²¹ The Presbyterian Hospital did not open until 1884, and the Methodist Hospital was begun also in the 1880s.

Health care was a tremendous need and problem in early Chicago. There were but few hospitals, as the dominant mode of Protestant response to urban ills were asylums and charitable institutions such as the YMCA, the Home for the Friendless or the Chicago Relief and Aid Society. The growth in the sophistication of health care would have to wait until after the Chicago Fire. Until then, Protestants were engaged in private charity in a more

²¹Fr. Gilbert J. Garraghan, The Catholic Church in Chicago, 1673-1871 (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1921), 158-160; 208.

direct way, through their homes, orphanages and other institutions of private philanthropy.

Private Charity

With the inadequacy of hospitals on the one hand and public assistance for the most vulnerable on the other, especially following the cholera epidemic of 1849, Protestants stepped in to form several significant private charity organizations. These efforts included orphanages, boarding houses, hospitals, and city missions. However, the most significant efforts to address poverty was provided by three renown Protestant relief organizations, the Chicago Protestant Orphan Asylum, the Chicago Home for the Friendless, and the Chicago Relief and Aid Society.

As early as 1843, private efforts in providing relief for the poor were complementing municipal efforts. For example, church groups established the "Ladies Benevolent Association" as a private charity. Parties, subscriptions, fairs, and the like raised money, and women volunteers visited the needy and the impoverished regardless of religious affiliation, including Irish Catholics.

The women organized ways to give medical assistance to the ill and established a "Repository" to assist the unemployed in efforts to find jobs. Employment assistance was deemed "better in most instances than pecuniary aid, which afterwards begets sloth and improvidence."²²

²²Daily Journal, Jan. 9, 1845.

In 1844, the City Saloon sold tickets at 25 cents to benefit the poor²³, and the Ladies Benevolent Association followed suit in 1845, raising money for poor relief.²⁴ The Ladies Association was predominantly Protestant, and was active in keeping alive poor families, most of whom were immigrants, including Irish and Germans. The Baptist paper, Watchman of the Prairies, noted that evangelicals were taking care of their own poor, as well as those of the Catholic persuasion.

The Protestant churches usually aid their own poor; and it has been hoped that the Sisters of Mercy would do something in visiting and supplying the destitute Catholics However, irrespective of religious persuasion, the churches of Christ should not only supply then our poor, but aid in supplying their poor, so far as they have the means, of whatever country, color, or faith they may be. Besides, if our ladies depend on the Sisters of Mercy to supply the Catholic poor, they will be mistaken. If the city should be visited with the pestilence, the nuns would probably earn a worldwide reputation for benevolence in attending the sick.²⁵

The Protestant churches had thus a dual impetus, of caring for the poor so as to lessen destitution and starvation and also for evangelical reasons, so as to not give place to Catholicism. In 1846, the Catholics established the Hibernian Benevolent Emigrant Aid Society, to assist the poor of Ireland who had come to Chicago. Many Irish had come to the Midwest after the disastrous potato famine of the 1840s. Funds were also raised and sent abroad to Ireland.

²³Chicago Democrat, Feb. 24, 1844.

²⁴Ibid., Jan. 8, 1845; Daily Journal, Jan. 9, 1845.

²⁵Watchman of the Prairies, Dec. 14, 1847.

The activities of the Sisters of Mercy and organizations like the Hibernian Benevolent Emigrant Aid Society had the effect of prompting Protestant leaders to assume a greater role in poor relief, despite dispositions towards individualism, and a general disdain for the "unworthy poor."²⁶

The biggest test for philanthropy in the city was the dreaded disease of cholera and the epidemic of 1849. Cholera was thought by many to be a consequence of vice and intemperance and seemed to be limited initially to the transient population. Chicagoans quickly discovered that the disease picked no favorites. In March, 1849, twenty-six cases were reported, "mostly among transient residents and the intemperate."²⁷

The prescription was stranger than the diagnosis. To rid one self of the disease, one person suggested that the victim "take 25 drops of Laudanum and 25 strong peppermint, and 15 camphor in a half tea cup full of water." The Watchman optimistically stated that "the cholera is not so fatal as many other epidemic diseases. Persons of irregular habits and those who have long travelled on the water are most exposed to it. Other persons with timely, and proper treatment can generally survive its attacks."²⁸

With this primitive view, Chicagoans braced themselves for the summer of 1849. The week of June 7-14th, only eighteen people

²⁶Daily Journal, Jan. 25, 1848.

²⁷"Cholera in Chicago," Watchman of the Prairies (May 22, 1849), 2.

²⁸Ibid.

died. However, deaths began to rise sharply. In the week of July 16-21, there were fifty-three deaths, followed by 120 deaths the last week of July.²⁹ The Watchman of the Prairies expressed a popular view of the disease in its July 31st issue. Cholera was linked in particular to intemperance.

On Sabbath the increase of Cholera was probably owing to the fire on Saturday night. While some prudently provided warm coffee for the fireman, others injudiciously provided ardent spirits. . . . It is known that some of the deaths on the Sabbath were from the persons who partook freely of ardent spirits the previous evening.³⁰

So, from the evangelical mindset, God sent the cholera, or tornado, for judgment on unbelief and immorality. At the end of the year, the Watchman would muse that "sickness and death" was a consequence of sin. "God is angry with the wicked everyday," and sought ways for the wicked to repent.³¹ Unfortunately, calamities and illness seemed to happen to both the evil and the just. It was not easy to reconcile calamity with one's theology.

The evangelicals of the day were convinced that they lived in a highly determined universe. Disease, economic collapse and poverty were interpreted as the results of sins, particularly vice, intemperance, or laziness. The victims were often thought to have brought misery upon themselves. Therefore, evangelicals were slow

²⁹Ibid., July 24, 1849; July 31, 1849.

³⁰Ibid., July 31, 1849.

³¹Ibid., Dec. 11, 1849.

to assist the poor, especially those thought to be the "unworthy poor."

Because of the cholera epidemic, many orphans were left behind. While orphans may have been victims of the intemperate sins of the parents, they were generally considered to be worthy of some help from the charities, public and private. The Catholics were the first to respond. In 1849, they purchased a house on Wabash Avenue for the purpose of building an orphan asylum.³²

The Catholic Orphan Asylum, under the care of the Sisters of Mercy, managed a home with twenty-five female children who were "deprived of their natural protectors by the late epidemic."³³ This was located between Jackson and Van Buren. By September, 1850, the Catholics had sponsored several fairs and planned to build a larger facility as an orphanage.

The Protestants responded with their own version of an orphan asylum the next year. The Watchman of the Prairies observed the prosperity and the good work of the Catholic Orphan Asylum, that the children, "marching 2 x 2, led by Sisters, [were] saved by the Church of Rome." Protestants feared that these children might become devotees of Catholicism and end up as Jesuits or Sisters of Mercy.

Would that these children would be placed where truth is taught? These children, thus withdrawn from a life of destitution and suffering, perchance saved from death itself, with a feeling of gratitude will they ever look upon an institution and a religion which has prompted its members thus

³²Chicago Daily Democrat, August 4, 1849.

³³Ibid., Sept. 4, 1849.

to extend to them a rescuing hand, and to welcome them to a home beneath its sheltering wing.³⁴

Thus, the establishing of the Protestant orphan asylum was motivated as much to counter the success of the Roman Catholics as to care for the orphans themselves. It seemed that Protestants found it hard to learn charity. "Have we no such institutions in our city? Have we none open to receive the destitute infant to take it and nourish it up to the Lord?"³⁵

The editor of the Watchman was beside himself. He noted that the Protestants had a home with but eight orphans, whereas the Catholic Asylum was caring for from seventy to eighty. He retorted, "is there more wealth in the Catholic Church in Chicago than in Protestant churches?" The editor wondered if the Protestants had lost faith in the "God of the fatherless, that they close up their hearts against the child of suffering and want?" However, if the appeal to compassion for "widows and orphans" was not enough, evangelicals could but mention the success of Roman Catholics in the area of charity. If Protestants lack compassion for the needy,

. . . let them, taking example from the policy of the Romish Church, receive and shelter the orphan child, instilling into the mind the principles of our holy religion, that our land may continue to be the home of truth, and a refuge to the oppressed.³⁶

³⁴"Chicago Orphan Asylum," Watchman of the Prairies, Nov. 19, 1850.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

In response, Protestants organized several charities from 1849 to the early 1860s. These efforts included the Protestant Orphan Asylum, opening on September 11, 1849. This was organized in competition with the Catholics and because orphans crowded the poorhouse, a place deemed unsuitable for children. Hence Protestant leaders, including the Rev. Gustavus Unonius, campaigned for a separate Protestant orphanage. Several other charities that were church-related were organized in the next decade.

The Chicago Relief Society, later the Chicago Relief and Aid Society, was officially organized in 1850 and incorporated in 1857, although the first annual report is dated, 1868. Other Protestant charity organizations included the Home for the Friendless, organized February 12, 1859; the Chicago Ministry at Large, a program of the Unitarian churches, organized in 1863; and the Nursery for Half-Orphans, organized in 1860. All of these were designed to take the pressure off the public charities. Protestants used the "placing out system," putting children in homes of "good families," whereas the Catholic charities were more institutional in the sense of maintaining the orphans in the Asylum, rather than placing them out in homes.

Protestant Orphan Asylum

The Chicago Protestant Orphan Asylum was formed as a result of the catastrophe of the cholera epidemic. Often, communities respond to a crisis during or after a fact, but not before. In its original Act of Incorporation, the founders stated that the object

of the Asylum was to engage in the "protecting, relieving, educating, and providing means of support and maintenance for orphan and destitute children in the city of Chicago."³⁷ Membership for life was set by the Board of Directors at \$25, a handsome fee for the times. This had the effect of maintaining control of the Asylum by the more affluent classes.

The Orphan Asylum was founded by some of the leading families in the city, including the Kinzies, also the founders of the Episcopalian Church, and the Botsfords, founders of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Botsford family was engaged with the oversight of the Asylum for almost 100 years.³⁸

Mrs. Kinzie was the first directress of the Asylum, and Mrs. Botsford was Vice President. The Asylum was a "public response to the growing numbers of orphan and homeless children" as a consequence of "man's inhumanity to man." For Protestants, interest in establishing an orphanage can be traced back to the early 1840s.

By 1844, Camp notes an interest among some of the leading women of the city to establish an orphanage. There were already in the city "buildings up everywhere, . . . eight public schools, one private female seminary, eleven Protestant, one Jewish and two Catholic churches, four temperance societies, a medical college,

³⁷Chicago Orphan Asylum: Act of Incorporation (Chicago: Democratic Offices, 1850), 185.

³⁸Ruth Orton Camp, "Chicago Orphan Asylum, 1849-1949," Ms. Collection, Chicago Historical Society, 1.

and a city dispensary which was supported by voluntary contributions."³⁹ A truly civilized city would need its share of voluntary societies as well, if it was to compete with Eastern cities.

In 1847 to 1848, the "new Asiatic cholera" emerged, and the poorhouse was full, and further admissions were denied. Immigrants who relied upon seasonal labor lived in squalid conditions, and many died from cholera, leaving scores of children. By 1849, the almshouse had sixty-one paupers, including twenty-seven children.⁴⁰ To deal with the problem, the Orphan's Benevolent Association was established, and out of this entity came the Chicago Protestant Orphan Asylum.

In the midst of the cholera year of 1849, United States President John Tyler proclaimed August 3, 1849, as a national day of prayer and fasting. A public meeting was held at the First Baptist Church to discuss what could be done about the orphan and destitute children of the city. The Rev. Tucker of the First Baptist Church offered a resolution to establish an asylum, and by August 13, the Board and officers were nominated, and "directresses" were appointed.⁴¹ On religious grounds, "their charitable intent was as broad as God's love. Not only did they propose to care for the orphan, but for the destitute, those worse

³⁹Ibid., 4.

⁴⁰Ibid., 6.

⁴¹Ibid., 7-8.

than orphaned, who appeal so frequently for aid."⁴² The object of the Asylum was to relieve, educate, and provide the necessary means of support for orphan and destitute children.⁴³

In the fashion of the times, men comprised the Board of Directors, but it was the leading women of the city who actually did the work. Chicago was still a frontier town in 1849, and most of the thirty-eight men and women involved in making up the Asylum were born in the Eastern states where orphan asylums were already operative.

Charles Gilbert Wheeler captured the sentimentality of the moment, as the founders saw in the Society the means to seek "out the poor, wandering, emigrant, enfeebled, by journey and privation, [which] laid its paralyzing hand on many a loving parent. Alone among strangers, with helpless children, clinging to their scanty skirts, they felt the death chill creeping over them . . . helpless and dependent."⁴⁴ This sentimental description of the needs of "helpless children" describes the motivation and concern of many of the respectable class of Protestants towards the plight of orphans.

In Article Two of the Act of Incorporation in 1850, the management of the Chicago Orphan Asylum was defined to be by a

⁴²Ibid., 11.

⁴³Ibid., 14.

⁴⁴Charles Gilbert Wheeler, Annals of the Chicago Orphan Asylum, 1849-1892 (Chicago: Board of the Chicago Orphan Asylum, 1892), 10.

"Board of Directresses," comprised of twenty-one "Ladies," with a Governess, a Teacher, a Collector and a Steward. Committees were also organized to expedite the development and operation of the charity. These included Committees on Health, Diet and Provisions, Moral, Religious and Literary instruction, and the Committee on Wardrobe, Bedding, Order and Cleanliness.⁴⁵

The officers in 1849 included William H. Brown, President; Orrington Lunt, Vice President; Samuel Hoard, Secretary; and Richard K. Swift, Treasurer. The Trustees included some of the leading men of the city such as Thomas Dyer, William Butler Ogden, J. Young Scammon, William H. Clarke, Sylvester Lind, J.H. Woodwarth, John H. Kinzie, J.K. Botsford, Walter L. Newberry and B.W. Raymond. William H. Brown, a Presbyterian laymen and lawyer, was also President of the Chicago Bible Society. He served in many capacities as a School Agent, member of the Board of Health, and Cashier of the State Bank. In 1824, he was active as an antislavery activist, helping to keep Illinois a free state.⁴⁶

Orrington Lunt was a Methodist and abolitionist. He was a grain merchant, Director of the Chicago Board of Trade, and a founder of the State Street Methodist Episcopal Church. Mrs. Charles Dyer, the wife of Dr. C.V. Dyer, Episcopalian, was active in the underground railroad with Philo Carpenter (Presbyterian) and Calvin DeWolf (Presbyterian). Samuel Hoard was a judge, Clerk of

⁴⁵Ibid., 10-11.

⁴⁶Camp, 14-15.

Circuit Court of Cook County, and a member of the Board of Health. Ogden, among his many involvements, was an Episcopalian a real estate speculator, and at the time was President of the Rush Medical College. Richard K. Swift was a banker active in civic affairs.⁴⁷

In addition to the male officers and trustees, the women who were appointed Directresses included Mrs. John H. Kinzie, First Directress; Mrs. Pitney, Second Directress; Miss Julie Rossiter, Secretary; Mrs. Boone and Mrs. Porter, Committee on Health; Mrs. Hamilton and Mrs. Dyer, the Committee on Diet and Provisions; Mrs. C.W. Walker and Mrs. Horton, the Committee on Instruction, Moral, Religious, and Literary; and Mrs. Beecher and Mrs. McVicker, the Committee on Wardrobe, Bedding, General Order and Cleanliness.⁴⁸ The women of course actually ran of the orphanage, while the men provided the official and legal support necessary.

The Committees reveal the interests of the organizers, that the Orphanage would provide a proper diet, as well as religious and moral instruction, including dress and proper etiquette. The directresses comprised "a band of . . . earnest Christian women who year by year brought their best thought to the work."⁴⁹ They sought "to study the child, to develop and cultivate whatever was worthy of good, to correct every evil habit, kindly but firmly, and

⁴⁷Ibid., 15-16.

⁴⁸Ibid., 10.

⁴⁹Wheeler, Annals of Chicago Orphan Asylum, 70.

thus create a new being, better prepared to fill the position which might come to it in after life."⁵⁰

Further, the Asylum spelled out how children would be admitted. For no child would be accepted unless the parent or guardian would grant total responsibility to the agency to provide care as it saw fit, without further interference. In fact, the parent could not visit the child henceforward, without the consent of the Matron of the institution. Also, the Mayor of the City was acknowledged as having "the power of legally surrendering the said child,"⁵¹ thus having the power of attorney to petition the admittance of a child to the orphanage, with or without the consent of the parent(s).

Protestants began the "Chicago Orphan Asylum" to provide housing for these children, some victims of the cholera epidemic and others due to the destitution of the parents. In 1851, a fair was held for the Chicago Orphan Asylum "under the patronage of the women of nearly all the Protestant churches in the city," to raise funds for the erection of a building as a permanent home for the Asylum.⁵² By December 19, 1851, the Orphanage housed twenty-one children, who were in turn placed out in homes "by farmers and others."⁵³

⁵⁰Ibid., 72

⁵¹Camp, 11.

⁵²Chicago Daily Democrat, May 7, 1851.

⁵³Camp, 16.

However, this fair was not enough, as support for the orphanage was hard to muster. The Watchman observed that the Catholics had held four fairs in the last year for their orphanage, whereas Protestants have held but one for theirs. The explanation given for the lack of support for the Chicago Protestant Orphan Asylum is revealing.

The reason is that while the Protestants educate their children to be independent [and] good citizens, the Catholics shut up all girls [and] boys they can find, in Asylums, from all the social influences of the family [and] society, to make priests [and] nuns of them, or Catholics.⁵⁴

The Protestant Orphan Asylum managed to hold a fair late the following year, "for the purpose of raising funds for the relief of the destitute orphan children--a class which, if there be any that needs sympathy [and] charity of the public, it is this. We trust that there will be a general turn out of our citizens."⁵⁵ The Protestants assumed that the public domain was theirs and would be listening.

In January of 1853, the Daily Democratic Press would report that the Protestant Orphan Asylum had "placed out 62 children" in "situations in Christian families." "Of the total of 149 that were admitted since 1849 (three years), thirty have died, [and] 24 remained in the Asylum" as of early 1853.⁵⁶ In 1853, William Butler Ogden reported that the Chicago Protestant Orphan Asylum was

⁵⁴Watchman of the Prairies (Dec. 23, 1851), 2.

⁵⁵Chicago Daily Democrat, Oct. 27, 1852.

⁵⁶Daily Democratic Press, Jan. 19. 1853.

"flourishing" as "one of those public institutions which reflect credit on the character of any community which it is supported."⁵⁷

"A new and commodious building" was erected in the mid-1850s for the afflicted, "including those with cholera, whooping cough, [and] the measles." With some resignation, the Democratic Press noted that "Death will occasionally claim a victim. Seven have died during the present month."⁵⁸ In November of 1854, a fair was held, netting \$2,427 for the Asylum, and a donation of "100 cords of wood for fuel, from the Michigan-Central Railroad."⁵⁹ However, the desperation of William H. Brown reveals the situation four years later. In 1858, Brown would write that "35 helpless ones" were in a home under a Matron with no fuel or power. "The Public must help."⁶⁰

In 1853, Charles Loring Brace of the New York City Children Aid Society argued that the best solution for the children was to get them out of the city, initiating the "placing out system" popular with charities in the late nineteenth century. The object was to place orphans in "good, Christian homes" so that they could benefit from middle-class role models.

"Christian philanthropy could never allow young children to remain in the midst of vice and filth, necessarily attendant upon

⁵⁷Chicago Magazine I (1857), 372.

⁵⁸Daily Democratic Press, July 27, 1854.

⁵⁹Christian Times (Wed., Nov. 22, 1854), 3.

⁶⁰Chicago Press and Tribune, Nov. 17, 1858.

the family where common paupers congregate, after they arrive at the age when they are susceptible to moral impression."⁶¹ The tenements in the city were known for vice and such conditions as "leaky roofs, shaky floors, rickety doors, shabby windows, and lack of water indoors."⁶² Such conditions were considered intolerable from the standpoint of the better class of citizens, and it would be far better to have children removed to better circumstances than to live their lives in squalor, even with the legitimate parents.

The solution for these philanthropists, was to place these children out of the city. Hence, from 1854-1855, of one-hundred children taken into the Asylum, sixty were "indentured or adopted" or otherwise placed in "free homes." In one four-month period, twenty-six children were received in the Asylum, twenty-eight were bound out, and eight died.⁶³ The same pattern would continue for the next several decades. In 1872, 274 children were accepted in the Asylum, and of this number, 174 were "sent out to homes," and seven died.⁶⁴

The Chicago Orphan Asylum moved along slowly. By 1860, a festival for the Asylum was held, but the Tribune related that

⁶¹Quoted in Camp, "Chicago Orphan Asylum," 23.

⁶²Ibid., 30.

⁶³Ibid., 25.

⁶⁴Ibid., 46.

"each year, 125 children on average have been placed in a good home," while thirty were maintained in the home itself.⁶⁵

Protestants were reluctant to develop charitable institutions because they felt they were unneeded and tended to encourage people to dependency. However, they assumed a paternalistic responsibility for women and children, mirroring the domestic code of the era, for these were perceived as victims of society, whereas hard work and clean living would result in healthy families and healthy lives. Hence, the perception was that the ones who really needed to be placed in asylums were women and children, while those labeled the dependent poor or immigrants were perceived as social parasites.

Women like Juliette Kinzie and Mrs. John Wright of the Ladies Benevolent Association were able to assert themselves through these societies, and remained in the forefront of private charity effort. However, for most evangelical Protestants, the issue was not just how to care for the sick and the indigent, but also how to prevent Roman Catholics from winning more converts through their institutions. At issue was evangelism of the poor, and the inculcation of Protestant values, not just the relief of their social needs.

⁶⁵Chicago Daily Tribune, Nov. 17, 1860.

Chicago Home for the Friendless

The Chicago Home for the Friendless was begun in 1858 when "a handful of ladies, actuated by benevolent desire to save some of the many struggling widows and orphans from hopeless degradation, met together to consider ways and means to that end."⁶⁶ These women called a "public meeting," to seek a way to "befriend the homeless and the destitute," thus beginning the Chicago Home for the Friendless.

The Chicago Home for the Friendless was sponsored by a coalition of churches, including the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodist Episcopal, Protestant Episcopal, Unitarian, Universalist, Congregationalist, Dutch Reformed, German Lutheran, German Methodist, and New Jerusalem (Swedenborgian) churches. The Home responded to the need because "there was not public charity in the city that could meet the wants of the large class of the suffering poor."⁶⁷ The governance was by a Board of Managers consisting of twelve "ladies" and officers who were all men, including a President, a Vice President, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

For those who were homeless, there seemed to be little alternative between begging and the county poorhouse, which was full to capacity after the panic of 1857. Begging was considered a disgrace which led inevitably to "degradation and ruin." The County poorhouse was not much better, but would lead to dependency

⁶⁶Annual Report of the Chicago Home for the Friendless, For 1864 (Chicago: Deare and Ottaway, Printers, 1865), 3.

⁶⁷Ibid.

and "abandonment of all hope and courage." It was thus considered expedient to come up with an alternative. At the time, the Chicago Relief and Aid Society was nonfunctional, and the Chicago Orphan Asylum did not address the needs of the large numbers of children adults reduced to destitution.⁶⁸

Thus, the Home for the Friendless was established by women of the Protestant churches to provide a temporary home until the residents were "enabled to care for themselves."⁶⁹ Following the model of Charles Loring Brace of the New York Children's Aid Society, the Home adopted the practice of "placing out" the children away from the city because it was considered detrimental for their nurture. The rationale for placing them in "adopted homes" was because "they could be trained in such a manner as to fit them for positions of honor and usefulness."⁷⁰

Further, the ladies were essentially modeling out a religious vision on behalf of the users of the Home.

The benefactions for the poor and suffering, are the outgrowth of the religion of the Bible. No refuges for the oppressed, or asylums, for the aged, the poor, or the outcast, can be found in heathen or pagan countries. Hence, we know that in laboring for the good, we are doing the will of Him who "went about doing good," healing the sick, and comforting the distressed.⁷¹

⁶⁸Ibid., 3-4.

⁶⁹Ibid., 4.

⁷⁰Ibid., 5.

⁷¹Annual Report of the Chicago Home for the Friendless, 1865 (Chicago: Dean, Ottaway, and Stearn, 1866), 16.

The Constitution of the Home noted its purpose as "to afford protection and employment, or assistance to worthy destitute women and children, until other permanent homes and means of support can be secured for them."⁷² From the time of its opening in 1858 to the close of the Civil War in 1865, some 1,235 persons were "received as inmates" into the Home. The largest number of the total were "homeless and friendless" children, and the Home clothed, fed, and instructed them until they were placed with relatives, "or to new found friends, who pledged themselves to supply the place of parents."⁷³

The philosophy of the Home was not to foster dependency but "to help persons help themselves." In the Home, the "inmates" were required to work, "to perform such service as they are able, and . . . are encouraged . . . to seek such situation as will afford them suitable compensation" in "proper homes."⁷⁴

In 1863, only 284 persons were admitted to the Home. This increased dramatically in 1865, when there were 607 admissions to the Home, 320 children, and 287 adults. Of this number, over 195 were "American," with the rest divided according to the following nationalities. There were 180 Irish, forty-six were from either "Holland, Prussia or Germany," thirty-seven were English, twenty-five were "Scotch," thirteen were Norwegian, twelve were French,

⁷²Annual Report for 1864, 13.

⁷³Ibid., 4.

⁷⁴Ibid., 5.

ten were "colored," and two were "Welch."⁷⁵ The children were more easily "disposed" than the adults, and ended up in homes in either the city or the country, preferably the latter.

The adults who came were mostly women, as the men tended to avail themselves of the Relief and Aid Society or not at all. The women were of all ages, "from the young girl just entering womanhood to those far down in life's declivity." The women included "the genteel, well-educated American, whom the chances of war or some other dire misfortune have sent amongst us, to the most uncultivated Celt or Scandinavian."⁷⁶ Immigrants were looked upon with disdain.

The Annual Report described the work of the Home as "harmonizing and bringing down to quiet, well-ordered, christian family, this heterogenous, changing multitude . . . a task neither light nor enviable." The efforts of the Home were not just in placing out the children, but to "teach" the "young women, who can neither read or write," matters of religious faith, etiquette, and morals. In short, the Home was run by women of the better classes, and the design was to instill in them Protestant virtues. The organizers of the Home, all members of the dominant culture in the city, sought a method "for the mental and moral training of adults."⁷⁷

⁷⁵Ibid., 7.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid., 9.

The Home reported also in its "sanitary report" the unfortunate death of nineteen persons from "consumption, small pox, infantile diarrhea, and the measles." The Home also sponsored a school averaging forty-five in attendance. The children were given to the memorization of scripture, singing of hymns, and were noted for their "uniform obedience and docility." The Home administrators called the children an "affectionate band, full of fun and frolic, but rarely having any disputes or angry words among themselves."⁷⁸ Also, the Asylum distributed a periodical, the Home Visitor, a publication with a circulation of from 8-10,000 at a cost of 50 cents each per annum.

In 1865, the Home assisted 385 "helpless, ignorant, and destitute" children, many of whom were orphaned and deserted. It estimated that of this number, about one-third were driven to destitution by the War. The Board of the Home believed that the simple giving of food or clothing was not enough and did "not fulfill all the law of benevolence, nor discharge all the duties we owe them." Rather, much of the "suffering" was perceived to be traceable to "ignorance in the great practicalities of life, and idle, listless habits." In short, "needed relief" was not enough, for "instruction and skill in the art of living well and usefully" was of a higher priority.⁷⁹

⁷⁸Ibid., 10.

⁷⁹Annual Report of Home for the Friendless, 1865, 18.

In 1865, the Annual Report noted plans to develop an industrial school, so that women "inmates" could develop the skills necessary to become "housekeepers and skilled tradeswomen," so that they "could be usefully employed, while shielded from temptation, and taught the principles of virtue and religion."⁸⁰ The report also called for a school of instruction in "domestic and practical science." Finally the plans for expansion included ideas for a chapel, a library, a reading room, dormitories, bathrooms, and a gymnasium. Also, a "boarding department" with a large dining room would be available for "worthy females."⁸¹

In 1865, 700 persons were received into the home at one time or another, including 220 "Americans," 119 Irish, ninety English and Canadian, forty-five Germans, twenty "colored," and some Scandinavians, "not in large numbers."⁸² The report noted that "the recently imported Celt, the 'poor white trash,' and the dusky daughter of the bond-woman, all meet here in a common sisterhood." The Home went on to boast that a good proportion of the adults [unspecified] "have gone forth to fill places of honor and responsibility." However, "some have proved unworthy, . . . choosing darkness rather than light, [resulting in] utter ruin."⁸³

⁸⁰Ibid., 18-19.

⁸¹Ibid., 19.

⁸²Ibid., 20.

⁸³Ibid., 21.

Despite the designs to educate this population, the Annual Report for 1866-1867 noted that it was the policy of the Board not to keep inmates longer than necessary, but rather to prepare them for homes elsewhere. "The demand in good families for both women and children has been in excess of the supply, large as that has been."⁸⁴

It was not the intent or the design of the Home to provide a permanent residence for these poor, but rather to find situations as soon as possible, "in Christian families."⁸⁵ Again, the Home estimated that "5/6 of those placed out" were "in situations where they will be prepared, not only for taking care of themselves, but becoming useful members of society."⁸⁶ While not specified, it seems that those successfully engaged were employed or were housed as little more than domestic servants.

In 1866, the numbers of persons who were served by the Home included 208 "Americans," (many of which were the aforementioned poor white trash), 103 Irish, eighty-four English or Canadian, and sixteen colored. The numbers also included "many Germans, Swedes, Norwegians, indeed almost every nation in Europe and State in the Union," including "all classes and conditions," literally "the widowed, deserted, and betrayed."⁸⁷

⁸⁴Annual Report of the Chicago Home for the Friendless, for 1866-7 (Chicago: Dean, Ottaway, and Stearn, 1867), 9.

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid.

⁸⁷Ibid., 10.

In the Home, "idleness is the exception, activity and order prevail."⁸⁸ However, amid the order was the chaos of disease and death. There were thirty-two deaths in the Home in 1866, while forty-five children on average were in the Home-sponsored school. Diseases of many kinds were also found, including "miasma, cholera infantum, consumption, brain disease, cancrum oris, ophthalmia" and "puerperal fever."⁸⁹ Much of the disease was speculated to be the result of improper diet and the absence of "cleanliness and outdoor exercise." The Home nonetheless appealed for support for more room "for industrious virtuous women, instead of the opposite."⁹⁰

In 1869, the Home reported that the Managers, Board and Staff, all women, came from fifty-five different churches, including not just the evangelical churches but also the "Christian Unitarian," Universalist, Swedenborgian and Friends congregations. "The history of the institution" testifies to the belief that "humble, firm reliance upon God, and constant activity, develops best character."⁹¹ In other words, the Protestant ethic was considered normative for the Home. With the inclusion of the "Christian Unitarian," it is evident that shared values among these Protestants were more important than a shared theology.

By 1869, the Home received 1208 "inmates," including 706

⁸⁸Ibid., 12.

⁸⁹Ibid., 19-20.

⁹⁰Ibid., 19.

⁹¹Report of the Home for the Friendless, for 1869 (Chicago: Pigott, Webster, and Co., 1870), 3.

adults and 502 children. "Some remained a night, others longer, till they could obtain employment, or find a way to get to their friends."⁹² Of the children received, seventy-two were "surrendered" by either the police court (forty-eight), or by their mothers (twenty-four). Many of the inmates represented non-Protestant religious traditions. "Nearly 2/3 of adults received, were Catholics, a few French, and Germans, but mostly Irish." Also, it seems that staying in the Home was of a short duration, hardly enough time to be instructed very well, for in the year, 1,066 were placed out, of which forty-two were "indentured," twelve sent to friends, and six were "reclaimed" by the Catholic communities.⁹³

By 1871, the support for the Home for the Friendless still came from the leading Protestant churches, including the non-evangelical groups. The religious mosaic of the city continued to diversify, and such diversity only slightly influenced the sponsorship of the Home. However, these groups apparently shared the same essentially moral and functional theology. The stated reason for the Home was as follows:

The marked peculiarity of the ministry of Christ was that the poor had the gospel preached to them; and the same great teacher said, the poor ye have always with you, and when ye will, ye may do good Christ inaugurated more fully than the world had ever known before, concern for the poor, and left the poor as special claimants upon His church. The first public collection taken for the benefit of strangers known to history, was taken by apostles of Christ in the first century of the Christian era There must be

⁹²Ibid., 13.

⁹³Ibid.

planted deep down in the heart by those employed in this work, the Spirit of the Great Master, to do the work of caring for the needy poor.⁹⁴

The Fire did not destroy the Home, but the property bequeathed to the Home, so that three-fourths of the income of the Home was cut off. Like other charities, the resources of the Home were taxed to the utmost following the cataclysm. "The Home has been an asylum to the sufferers from the fire. Its halls were immediately crowded both day and night, thus greatly increasing the expenses of the institution."⁹⁵

In the Matron's Report for 1871, it was reported that over 1582 persons, including 1008 adults and 574 children, utilized the Home. And this did not include the two to three weeks surrounding the fire. During that fateful October, "the entire house, with all its accommodations and strength, were used for sufferers [from the fire]."⁹⁶ Meanwhile, during the normal course of the year, an average of forty-eight students attended the school, and twenty-five girls were in the "industrial school," anticipating the directions of the latter part of the century among churches and settlements.

The following year, the Home continued its work. According to the Fourteenth Annual Report for 1872:

The Home for the Friendless continues to throw wide its doors to worthy and friendless women and children.... It stands as

⁹⁴Thirteenth Annual Report of the Home for the Friendless, For the Year, 1871 (Chicago: Chicago Legal News, Co., 1872), 6.

⁹⁵Ibid., 7.

⁹⁶Ibid.

an asylum to the distressed, and a beacon light to those who are tempted to go astray showing the excellence of the path of rectitude and virtue, and encouraging them to work therein.⁹⁷

The Home accepted 1580 persons in 1872, the year after the fire. In addition, it sponsored the Home Industrial School, the Burr Industrial School and Free Mission, and a Library and Reading Room. The Home had become a full-service charity. Still, the leaders believed that the original purpose of the Home had not been lost. Like other Protestant charities, the Home supported what came to be known as the Protestant work ethic. For its mission remained as follows:

To support anyone in idleness is an injustice to the one receiving it [if able to labor], and also an injustice to society. Work is a blessing as well as a duty The great object of the Home is to place every inmate, whether adult or child, where he or she will be self-supporting, and at the same time receive the benefit of mental and religious training.⁹⁸

The managers of the Home considered it a noble achievement if the children were "placed in Christian families, [and] become Christians." The Home seemed to be doing "blessed missionary work."⁹⁹ In essence, the Home for the Friendless was a vehicle of the Protestant evangelical benevolent empire.

By 1873, the Home boasted fifty-eight different church sponsors, including eleven Baptist churches, thirteen Methodist,

⁹⁷Fourteenth Annual Report of the Home for the Friendless, for the Year 1872 (Chicago: Chicago Legal News, 1873), 7.

⁹⁸Ibid., 9.

⁹⁹Ibid.

eleven Presbyterian, seven Episcopal, six Congregationalist, four Unitarian, three Universalist, and one each for the Christian, Swedenborgian and Friends' congregations. Also, five suburban congregations were likewise involved. Twelve women were still listed as managers of the Home.

Several pressing social questions were addressed in the Fifteenth Annual Report, including the issue of labor and capital and the recurring problem of distinguishing between worthy and unworthy poor people. On the former, the Report noted:

Social problems have excited more than the usual attention during the past year. It is hardly possible for a foreigner, educated under the governments of the Old World, to comprehend the fact, that labor is capital in this country; and, that every man and woman has the possibilities of real wealth with the reach of industry and economy. . . . This is true as a rule, there are exceptions.¹⁰⁰

The exceptions included of course the "worthy" poor, who found themselves dependent upon alms, with the presumption that their poverty was undeserved and temporary. For these persons, the Report reflected that "Society" acts in a responsible way to deal with these poor, through legislation, taxation, or charitable contribution, "which provides for the support of the helpless poor, or the education of the blind, deaf, or imbecile of the community."¹⁰¹

However, the duty of Society toward all able-bodied persons, whether men or women, is to help them only so much as will enable them, by labor and frugality, to provide for themselves. . . . Any charity to persons who are able, by

¹⁰⁰Fifteenth Annual Report of the Home of the Friendless for the Year, 1873 (Chicago: Chicago Legal News, 1874), 6.

¹⁰¹Ibid.

labor, to take care of themselves, works an injury, both to the individual securing it, and to society.¹⁰²

For these Protestants, those unworthy were easily identified as those "who are clamorous to obtain charity." To the contrary, "the really deserving poor studiously conceal their necessities, rather than obtrude them before the public." For those who are truly needy, "society" has the duty to provide for them, "lest they become the dangerous classes." The State "cannot afford to permit the masses to grow up in ignorance, idleness and vice." This was particularly true of children, and the Home tried diligently to place orphans in homes that would provide nurture that was both moral and Christian.¹⁰³

Summing up the work of the Home for the Friendless, the Fifteenth Annual Report for 1873 boasted that the Home "provided a temporary home to worthy women, as well as to helpless children." It was still desirable to place children out of the city, removed "from the scenes of temptation, and saved by society, and thousands of children have been transferred from poverty, sin and want."¹⁰⁴

The Home had provided a place of hospitality for many of those who were friendless, coming with "disappointed hopes, of lives miserable, and desolate from sicknesses, neglect of wrong doing, or to seek some word of sympathy and encouragement." These were received in the Chicago Home for the Friendless, "without regard

¹⁰²Ibid.

¹⁰³Ibid., 6-7.

¹⁰⁴Ibid, 7..

to nationality, religion, or color; are provided with baths, and clothing, food, shelter, and medical aid . . . encouraged in the habits of industry and frugality."¹⁰⁵

Chicago Erring Women's Refuge for Reform

A less than public benevolent mission, due to its clientele, was the "Chicago Erring Women's Refuge for Reform," later, the "Chicago Home for Girls." This was a home for prostitutes, many of whom were African-American women from Bridewell. The Refuge was the Protestant answer to the "House of the Good Shepherd," or the "Magdalen Asylum," established in 1858 by Father John McCullen of the Church of Holy Name together with sisters of the Good Shepherd in St. Louis. Some seventy-three women annually were assisted, with 264 women discharged or "reformed."¹⁰⁶

Protestant women were involved in a number of reform or charitable activities, including the Sanitary Fair,¹⁰⁷ the Industrial Home for Refugees,¹⁰⁸ and the Ladies City Mission.¹⁰⁹ In addition, women were involved in the other notable charities, including the Orphan Asylum, the Chicago Home for the Friendless,

¹⁰⁵Ibid., 10-11.

¹⁰⁶Chicago Daily Journal, June 28, 1859; August 15, 1859; The Chicago Times, July 8, 1866.

¹⁰⁷Chicago Tribune (Feb. 10, 1865), 4.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., (Jan. 28, 1865), 4.

¹⁰⁹Chicago Times (October 3, 1863), 3.

and less so in the Chicago Relief and Aid Society. Other charities established before the Fire included an Old Peoples Home (1861), the Foundling Home (1870), and the Humane Society (1870).

Prostitution was a problem in Chicago. In 1870, a rare article in the newspaper noted that there was an estimated 7,000 prostitutes in the city and 250 homes of prostitution.¹¹⁰ While prostitution was a problem in Chicago earlier, the "social leprosy" was scarcely a public concern. The "Erring Women's Refuge" was begun in 1863 to "reform" such women.

The purpose of the Asylum was to shelter and provide an opportunity for such women to reform, and find a life of "usefulness" to society for "unfortunate women who wished to give up lives of prostitution." The interview was tough and matter of fact as the women were expected to adhere to a rigorous schedule, beginning at five o'clock in the morning. The governance of the Home included a Board of Trustees, all men, whose job it was to raise money and to provide legal assistance as necessary; and the Board of Managers, consisting of women from several of the forty-one sponsoring churches.

The Board of Trustees included J. Young Scammon, William Butler Ogden, Robert Collyer, James E. Burtiss, Roland Stevens, Tuthill King and Philo Carpenter. The President was Mrs. W.W. Everts, the wife of the pastor of First Baptist Church. On the Board of Managers were women of every denomination. The Refuge had

¹¹⁰Ibid., (Feb. 20, 1871), 1.

thus a particularly religious, even missionary motivation. Since the Orphan Asylum worked mostly with children, and the Home for the Friendless with women and children of all classes of people, there was little that specifically addressed issues of women in prostitution.

When the Refuge opened on Feb. 29, 1863, it quickly had its first "inmate."

The first inmate had until recently been a resident of one of the Clark Street dens, but had declared her wish to begin a new life. Her story is but a repetition of . . . seduction, elopement, desertion by the seducer, [and] a vain effort to obtain employment in a strange city. . . .¹¹¹

Soon, there were five inmates, "fallen women" and "outcasts" of society. The Society was run by a Matron and an assistant.¹¹² The Refuge, unlike many other agencies, such as the Chicago Home for the Friendless, was a long-term home for up to two years, as it was assumed to take longer to reform prostitutes. Again, the goal was religious conversion, as the religious condition of the inmates was perceived to be "the most interesting [of the work], as it is the most successful part of the work."¹¹³

The Home would receive "any person belonging to the class, for whose benefit it is open." Shelter would be provided for anyone until the Visiting Committee investigated each case, "provided

¹¹¹Chicago Times, Feb. 20, 1863.

¹¹²Ibid., (Feb. 7, 1864), 3.

¹¹³Annual Report for the Chicago Erring Women's Refuge for Reform, for 1871, 12.

submission to the Rules of the House is observed."¹¹⁴ Women were expected to help with the duties around the House. The Institution in turn, provided board, clothing, employment opportunities, instruction, and a "pleasant home" environment. The women were to stay for two full years, after which they would be honorably discharged and linked to family, friends, or employment, usually in some domestic service job.

In the second year, thirty-one women were received into the Home. At the end of the year, eleven remained, five returned to their homes, nine to domestic service, and eight "left voluntarily." Two were "given up as hopeless."¹¹⁵ By 1867, the number of applicants to the Home had reached such a level that many were refused for lack of space. In 1870, there were a reported ninety inmates in the Home over the year.¹¹⁶ The refuge was church-sponsored, and women represented over forty churches by 1871 including several of the non-evangelical groups such as the Unitarian, Universalist, and Swedenborgian communions.¹¹⁷

The Erring Women's Refuge was a small and specialized program for women prostitutes. Its stated purpose was evangelical and moral, with the goal of reforming the individual from her practice

¹¹⁴Third Annual Report of the Chicago Erring Women for Reform, for 1866, 23.

¹¹⁵Chicago Tribune (Feb. 3, 1865), 4.

¹¹⁶Ibid., Feb. 3, 1871.

¹¹⁷See also, Helen D. Haseltine, "A History of the Chicago Home for Girls, Founded in 1863 as the Chicago Erring Woman's Refuge for Reform" (M.A. Thesis, University of Chicago, 1934).

to something considered more virtuous including domestic service. Like most of the charitable efforts, issues of the economic system were seldom considered. Moral problems were considered caused by the individual, and solutions were designed to address issues individually.

Chicago Christian Union and the Liberal Christian League

For the most part, the liberal churches were not different from the evangelical congregations. Since only evangelical churches could be part of the YMCA, the liberal churches developed their own charitable organizations in response to poverty, and destitution among her own members. The "Chicago Christian Union" was organized in 1861 allegedly supported by "all sects." Its purpose was "to do good where good is most needed. It will work for the humbler classes" and "seek to instruct them to the right ways of living." This organization was similar to the YMCA in that it stressed the moral reformation of the individual. Also, it sought to set up employment options for "deserving women" and find homes "for boys and girls who have no parents."¹¹⁸

Similar to evangelical organizations, the Chicago Christian Union sought to "help them [the poor] reform their bad practices, to encourage them to lives of happiness [and] usefulness," and to assist in the "diffusion of religious knowledge and the promotion

¹¹⁸The Chicago Tribune, Feb. 22, 1868. [Title Varies, Chicago Daily Tribune to August 21, 1864; and Chicago Tribune, from August 22, 1864-September 14, 1867; and The Chicago Tribune, from September 15, 1867-1871].

of good will among men."¹¹⁹ The Advance wondered if the Chicago Christian Union was influenced more from the spirit of envy than from charity. The Union claimed to be "above bigotry and sectarianism." It acted on the principle of toleration, "to withstand the intolerance of orthodoxy."¹²⁰

Willing to be more distinct from evangelicalism, the Rev. Robert Collyer of Unity Church organized the "Liberal Christian League," in December 1866, "to investigate the subject of the improvement of houses and homes for the poor; as to what is the condition in general of such houses in this city; what is their average rent; what new plans are now being adopted for providing better dwellings, and what will be the cost of those the committee considers the best."¹²¹

Unlike most charitable organizations of the day, this organization would deal with the causes of the problems facing the poor, not just the consequences. Ahead of its time, the "Liberal Christian League" would "inquire as to the causes of prostitution, and what means could be employed to remove them, or for the rescue of its victims."

Also, the League would "investigate the subject of intemperance," the nature of the cholera epidemic, and "study various charities of the city, sources of reverence [and] success."

¹¹⁹Chicago Daily Tribune, March 20, 1861.

¹²⁰"Chicago Christian Union," Advance (Nov. 21, 1867), 2.

¹²¹Chicago Tribune, May 22, 1867.

Unlike the Chicago Christian Union, the Liberal Christian League was not so much interested "in the relief of poverty by the immediate distribution of charity, as the endeavor to reach the causes of it, and, if possible, to remove them."¹²²

In an era of charity-giving where the individual was the focus rather than the system or the condition effecting the individual, the Liberal Christian League was remarkably ahead of its time. Only in the mature stages of the Social Gospel movement thirty years later would a return to social structures be revisited by religiously-motivated reformers. Hence, by the late 1860s, two views of charity were emerging, the older view which emphasized the reform of the individual and a newer view which would emphasize the change of the social structure. The former view was clearly the dominant one at this time.

Significance

The agencies surveyed in this chapter were all distinctively religious, including the Protestant Orphan Asylum, the Chicago Home for the Friendless, and the Chicago Erring Woman's Refuge for Reform. While the purpose of these agencies was to provide relief to the poor, especially widows and orphans, there were strings attached. Participants were also expected to adhere to the evangelical theology as well as to the emerging Protestant middle-class code of ethics and morals.

¹²²Ibid.

Protestants were reluctant caregivers. Poverty was assumed to be a flaw and a problem with the poor who, ordinary circumstances, would not need such charity. Protestant caregivers assumed that the basic problem with the poor was religious and moral. If those who were poor were really industrious and virtuous, there would be little need for charity. There were unfortunate victims, such as women and children, who in a paternalistic culture might need protection and relief.

However, such was deemed to be only a temporary circumstance. If these people were provided a little help in emergency situations, they should be able to reintegrate back in society, and no longer need charity. Charity was considered, therefore, but a temporary expedient. The sure way to reroute wayward youths was through the means of placing them out in homes. Women and men could be helped-- on a temporary basis, but such help would only really help those who wanted to help themselves, otherwise, there was no real need for sustained charity.

Caregivers for the most part did not analyze the political or economic systems that might cause poverty. Nor were they fully cognizant of the hardships of immigrating from one country to another, and the adjustment problems that came with such migration. With the growth of poverty, and the growing pressures on the charities, public and private, it was assumed that charity should be given to "our" poor, but not the poor coming from other cities or lands.

For the most part, the Protestant charities were institutions

committed to the transmission of evangelical beliefs and morality. It was a way to instill in the poor and newcomer values that the Protestant better class held as in the public interest. In such a view, the individual was the target, and it was he or she who needed to be nurtured, educated and evangelized. Primarily, the Protestant charities was instituted to care for those, who in extraordinary circumstance, fell onto hard times.

The institution that served as a bridge between the distinctive Protestant charitable institutions and more secular institutional model of organized charity was the Chicago Relief and Aid Society. In the latter, the evangelists of the Protestant charities were gradually replaced by Professional altruists less directly connected with the churches.

CHAPTER XVII
THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF REFORM:
THE CHICAGO RELIEF AND AID SOCIETY

The Chicago Relief Society

Protestants, particularly laymen from the local Methodist, Baptist and Episcopal churches, started the Chicago Relief Society in 1850 in an effort to systematize and organize poor relief, to lend a help to the needy, and "to prevent the necessity of common begging."¹ Begging was on the increase since public relief officials curtailed outdoor relief. Similar to the tactics of Sunday Schools and City Missions, the Society divided the city into districts, and visitors were employed to give goods to the worthy poor and to discourage begging.²

The purpose of the Visitor, similar to the "Colporteur," was "to keep a record of names, color, and nativity of the persons he visits, of the amount and kind of aid rendered, and the number of visits made."³ The Visitors distributed clothing, food, fuel and medicines. The work was not just charity-giving, but also

¹Chicago Daily Democrat, Dec. 27, 1850.

²Constitution and Directory of the Chicago Relief Society, Established January 1851 (Chicago: Democratic Office, 1851), 6.

³Ibid.

educational. The Visitor's task was "to discourage vicious habits, provide for the education of the children, and promote industry, cleanliness, economy and virtue."⁴ At the time, there were eleven districts in the North, nine in the South and eighteen West.

The Chicago Relief Society was organized and operative in 1851 "for the purpose of receiving and distributing among the poor whatever the public may place in their hands for that purpose."⁵ This included fuel, groceries, bread, clothing and medicines.⁶ Charter members included John H. Kinzie, Philo Carpenter, Isaac N. Arnold, William H. Brown and Mark Skinner, some of the city's important Protestant leadership.

The Chicago Daily Democrat indicated the focus of the Chicago Relief Society. The purpose of the Society was "to provide a way whereby the wants of the really destitute and deserving poor might be supplied." The Democrat congratulated the public for having "made it possible for the Society to effectually fulfill the objects."⁷ The Society was intent on distinguishing between the "worthy" and "unworthy" poor. In addition to placing out children and attending to the sick, the Society also sought to expose unworthy applicants and to encourage industry, including work as

⁴Ibid., 7.

⁵Weekly Chicago Democrat, Jan. 4, 1851.

⁶Chicago Daily Democrat, Feb. 7, 1851.

⁷Ibid., Dec. 11, 1852.

a way for the indigent to earn money rather than relying upon charity.

However, support for the Chicago Relief Society was usually inadequate. Initially, the society was not a very well-organized or well-supported endeavor. By March 1856, the Chicago Relief Society suspended its operations for the season, "for the lack of funds. . . . The amount of relief afforded has been unusually large, on account of the severe and protracted cold weather."⁸

However, it was again in operation by the next winter, and by January the Daily Democratic Press would plea for "charitable citizens" to donate "money, bedding, clothing, fuel and other necessities of life. Remember the poor if you would best enjoy your own comforts." At the time, the Society was allegedly serving from sixty to one hundred persons daily.⁹

The Chicago Relief and Aid Society

With the panic of 1857, the state granted a charter to the Society as the "Chicago Relief and Aid Society" to administer private efforts to provide "a permanent, efficient and practical mode of administration and distributing the private charities of the city of Chicago."¹⁰ However, the Society was not just

⁸Daily Democratic Press, March, 1856.

⁹Ibid., Jan. 8, 1857.

¹⁰Report of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society of Disbursements of the Sufferers of the Chicago Fire (Chicago: Riverside Press, 1874), 124-126.

interested in the provision of relief to the poor. It was also concerned to create "the best system of relieving and preventing want and pauperism."¹¹ In short, the charity was to be designed according to the structures of the business world, as the Society was the first such charity that had as its design to become a professionalized bureaucracy.

As an efficient business, it was the intent of the Society aiding only those who gave evidence of being "partly able to help themselves" so as to prevent the "injurious and wasteful result of indiscriminate giving."¹² The rules of the CRAS were designed to discriminate between the worthy and unworthy poor. Aid was to be administered to those persons who, through no fault of their own, needed assistance to restore them to the condition of self-sufficiency. This was not far from the original Constitution of 1851 but shows some development. The goal of the Society as stated in 1857 was as follows [my underlining]:

. . . to afford temporary relief to the destitute, but also rendering timely counsel and assistance to deserving but indigent persons, to place them above the necessity of aid; and without positively limiting itself to any one class in the distribution of its charities, the Society shall discriminate in favor of those in whom habits of temperance, industry, and thrift, give promise of permanent benefit from the aid furnished, and shall not embrace in the sphere of operations

¹¹E. B. McCagg, "The Chicago Relief and Aid Society," in Rufus Blanchard, ed. Discovery and Conquest of the Northwest (Wheaton: Rufus Blanchard and Co., 1881), 543.

¹²Ibid., 544.

such as are the proper subjects for the poorhouse, or action of the County officers.¹³

The concern was to eliminate dependency and to encourage self-sufficiency. The Society, by definition, sought not to respond to the desires of the unworthy poor, those responsible for their own situation due to intemperance, bad investment practices, corruption and the like. Rather, the Society was interested in helping those "deserving" and those who demonstrated the preferred virtues of the time, including temperance and thriftiness. In short, the CRAS was influenced by what many call the Protestant work ethic.

To this end, twelve general rules for giving of charity were adopted by the Relief and Aid Society, and a thirteenth was added in 1868:

1. Aid would be limited to temporary assistance;
2. After careful examination;
3. relief would be given after visitation and inquiry;
4. would deal with the immediate need, only necessary relief;
5. dependence on alms, rather than on one's "exertions" would be grounds for discontinuance;
6. no aid to Destitute coming from other cities, lest, "other cities . . . send their poor to us to be supported;"
7. "Able bodied men" are not clients for relief, but "will be furnished with opportunities for employment;"
8. Applicants having claims with other charities will be referred to those charities;
9. Recipients are not to ask alms or assistance of the public, "either on the streets, at residences, or in places of businesses;" [no begging allowed];
10. No loans would be made from the funds of the Society;
11. Relief would be made in supplies, not money;
12. Subscribers are "entitled to send persons for relief . . . and will be furnished with cards for that purpose;"

¹³"Constitution of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society, 1857," in Report of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society of Disbursements for the Sufferers of the Chicago Fire, 126-127.

13. if the able-bodied refuse the offer of employment, "either in the city or in the country, no further relief shall be extended to them [added, 1868]." ¹⁴

The Society thus sought to provide guidelines for charity-giving, which in effect constituted a safety-net for those considered worthy, suffering hardship through no fault of their own. The Society was not interested in providing relief to those persons likely to become dependent upon the charities given, because of the extremity of their condition or some character defect. Such was the dutiful responsibility of public coffers.

For the worthy poor, the Society felt it could do a better job of dispensing charity dollars than the public institutions. However, the reputation of some of the leaders was such that sensitivity to new immigrants such as the Irish, was likely not forthcoming from the Society.

The Society hoped to attract the support of city government, but met with resistance. In 1857, the Articles of Incorporation gave the Mayor of the city status of Ex Officio member of the Board of Directors.

It shall be lawful for the City Council of Chicago to appropriate, from time to time, such sums of money as they shall deem expedient, to aid in carrying out the charitable purposes of the said corporation, also to allow said corporation to occupy without rent any lot belonging to the city, for the storage of wood, coal, other supplies intended for charitable distribution. ¹⁵

¹⁴Ibid., 127-128.

¹⁵"Articles of Incorporation of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society," (1857), in First Annual Report of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society (Chicago: Rand, McNally and Co., 1868), 31.

The Chicago City Council was not always supportive. The leaders of the Society pressed the Common Council to allow them to distribute some \$1500 in poor relief. However, such a proposal, though allowed in the State Legislature, was objected to by one Alderman, on the grounds that the Society was "a first class nuisance, sectarian, illiberal, and anti-Irish." So, by a vote of 8-7, the Council voted to maintain the responsibility to distribute its own funds.¹⁶

From 1858-1866, the Agency was less active, but in 1867, a meeting of the leaders was called, to consolidate efforts of relief. The Agency's First Annual Report was released in 1868, summarizing the results of the year 1867. One can only conclude that in the previous decade, due in part to the city's mobilization for the Civil War, the agency existed in name only.

During this decade, the public coffers gave more to the poor than did private sources. Also, other agencies assisted in the relief of the poor, including the Chicago Orphan Asylum, the Chicago Home for the Friendless, the Ladies Benevolent Association, the Bricklayers and Mason's Benevolent Association, the YMCA, the United States Christian Commission and the Northwestern Sanitary Commission.

By 1868, the Districts were not just administered by Visitors, as there were eleven districts with "committees of businessmen appointed to canvass the same" and "special committees for

¹⁶Chicago Democratic Press, Jan. 20, 1857.

railroads, banks, elevators, packers, lumbermen, mills, and machinery, distillers and brewers."¹⁷ The Society was approaching a full-scale bureaucracy, with involved leadership from the business community. The committees were presumably to identify jobs for the men.

For the Society, those incapable of self-sufficiency were presumed a public responsibility. The Society was willing to assist "deserving persons," but was wary of the "unwise distribution of charity [that] would do more harm than good." Street begging was proof of worthlessness of the applicant, and such persons were automatically disqualified.¹⁸ The Society did not see it as its responsibility to assist those "permanently dependent" or those "whose vices and improvidence always keep them in a condition of chronic destitution."¹⁹ Neither beggars nor paupers fit the criteria for a better class of people.

From 1868 to 1869, the Society, bent on controlling pauperism, established a work department. The unemployed could earn supplies, not wages, by "sawing, splitting, and piling wood and coal" in the Society's woodyard. This not only encouraged self-respect but was also a way to distinguish between those worthy of CRAS charity. For those who needed wages, the leaders of the Society encouraged

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Otto M. Nelson, "The Chicago Relief and Aid Society, 1850-1874," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society LIX (Spring, 1966): 57.

¹⁹First Annual Report (1868), 6.

the establishment of a Public Workhouse, to go along with the County Almshouse.

The intent of the Society was to provide temporary relief for those deemed worthy by the standards of the Agency. The express duty of the Society [my underlining] "was to aid that class of worthy and industrious poor who, by reason of sickness, accident, loss of employment or property, have fallen temporarily behind to prevent a permanent condition of pauperism."²⁰ The Society would discriminate "in favor of those whose habits of temperance and industry give promise of benefit from the aid furnished, not embracing in the sphere of operations such as the proper subjects for the poorhouse."²¹

The CRAS felt it was clear regarding who were truly deserving, those deemed worthy to benefit from the Society's charity. These persons included those who due to illness, unemployment, women and children, those deserted by their husbands, those victims of calamities, and so forth.

It is from this class that the demand for relief largely comes. . . . Of all classes in our community, none more deserve our sympathy than those toiling mothers, who amid poverty, want and discouragement, are bravely trying to bring up their children and keep a home for them.²²

At least someone in the Society, probably Wirt Dexter, the current President, did not perceive that poverty was always the

²⁰McCagg, "Chicago Relief and Aid Society," in Discovery and Conquest, 544.

²¹First Annual Report (1868), 6.

²²Ibid., 7.

result of immorality or lack of virtue, although he likely assumed with his contemporaries that the virtuous could rise above their circumstance. For those few progressives among the leadership, the problems facing the poor were similar to those in other cities. It was not so much their lack of virtue, but "overcrowding in tenement houses, with insufficient light, drainage, and bad ventilation, is a prolific cause of pauperism and vice; and we think is not outside the duty with which we are charged."²³

The writer went on to note "the importance of municipal legislation as shall prevent the construction of those immense tenement houses, which exist more in other cities than as yet here." The latter statement is revealing. Despite this forward-looking analysis, it seems that the writer assumed that crowded tenements were not yet a problem in Chicago, so that the older view of personal victimization was maintained. In an analysis that would surface again 30 years later, the writer concluded:

Without light or ventilation, the poor are crowded into narrow quarters, destroying both morals and health, and placing them so far beyond the reach of reformatory measures that . . . the occupants of such habitations have given up in despair.²⁴

The Report went on to utter a similar concern regarding "indiscriminate almsgiving." Giving to the undeserving or the unworthy was considered a waste of scarce resources and an invitation to the poor to remain in such circumstance. To give alms to the undeserving was still perceived as an injustice to both

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., 8.

the individual and to society. Such giving could only encourage "indolence and beggary" in the adult, and "criminal activity" in the child.²⁵

The Society believed that there were successive steps from virtue to the debasement of one's character. If street begging were allowed in the child beggar, it would soon lead "to thieving and prostitution [as] regular and natural." The Society encouraged the city to "arrest . . . all persons found begging in the public streets."²⁶ Apparently, street begging was an embarrassment to city boosters, as it created a bad climate for business and reflected negatively on both employment opportunities and the reputation of the city.

In 1867, the first year of accurate records, some 1363 families and 5428 individuals were assisted. The causes of destitution were reiterated as follows:

TABLE VII

CRAS DISTRIBUTION OF CHARITY, 1867

Widows with Dependent Children	378
Desertion and drunkenness of father	142
Sickness	281
Want of Employment	439
Old Age	43
Blind	10
Burned Out of Home	15
Crippled and Disabled	<u>55</u>
Total	1363

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶Ibid., 9.

The statistics point to problems of illness, unemployment, death of husband and domestic violence as significant situations where aid was needed.²⁷

Despite the anti-foreign sentiment that seemed to dominate the thinking of private charities, the foreign-born were major recipients of private aid. The following is a breakdown of recipients by nationality for the year 1867.

TABLE VIII
RECIPIENTS OF CHARITY BY NATIONALITY, 1867

Americans	258
Irish	507
German	209
English	105
Norwegians and Swedish	143
Scotch	19
Bohemian	16
Colored	43
Canadian and French	32
Italian	2
Hollander	27
Poles	2
Total	1363 ²⁸

Significantly the major immigrants at the time included Germans, Irish and the Scandinavians. Equally significant are the

²⁷Ibid., 10.

²⁸Ibid.

Germans, Irish and the Scandinavians. Equally significant are the numbers of "Americans" and English persons. Likely, many of the former were "poor whites" recently migrated from the South. Along with the "colored" population, these were all peoples considered less than cultivated or virtuous from the standpoint of the "better class."

In the Third Annual Report of the Society, the following was described as its express purpose:

We do not aim at the permanent support of any class, but such temporary help to the deserving poor, suffering from sickness, accident, bereavement, or loss of employment, as will tide them over those hard places in life which single-handed and alone they are unequal to- discontinuing at the earliest moment that it is possible for them to provide for themselves, thus guarding carefully against encouraging a feeling of dependence upon the society.²⁹

It was again assumed that the "permanently dependent" should approach the public charities, not the voluntary societies. The Society seemed quite willing to help those who were poor, "through no fault of their own," but ran into many that did not fit this criteria.

In 1870, the Society assisted some 1559 families, including 606 Irish; 317 Americans; 190 Scandinavians; 178 Germans; 119 English; forty-five Colored and others of Scotch, French, Dutch, Welch, and Canadian descent. The causes unemployment (528);

²⁹Third Annual Report of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society (Chicago: Guilbert and Clissold, Printers, 1870), 4.

decease of spouse (371); sickness or disability (367); desertion (137); old age (sixty-six); and "other."³⁰

These included growing numbers of able-bodied men. To deal with this, the Society conceived of a strategy to find ways to put these people to work. First it would offer work in its woodyard or employment similar to that offered by any of the other charities in the city. However, it was not the policy of the Society to give aid to the "healthy and able-bodied."³¹

The second idea was to refer these men to other places. With many blacks leaving the rural South for the cities, there were inquiries of plantation owners for laborers. This was thought to be a good idea, as it would "relieve our city of an army of destitute, transient men who filled the streets, as well as large numbers of families."³²

Unfortunately, there were not as many takers as had been hoped, as many of the men claimed it their right to stay in the city rather than be transported to another place, especially in the South or in the country. "We supposed that large numbers would avail themselves to our offer, but in this expectation we were utterly disappointed. Almost to a man they refused to leave the city." To this, the Society added rule number thirteen, that "in all cases, [when] families or persons aided by the society . . .

³⁰Ibid., 12-13.

³¹Ibid., 6.

³²Ibid., 5.

[are] offered employment in the country and refuse, then, no further relief shall be extended to them."³³

The Society was also interested in discouraging other trends observable in the mushrooming city. Since many of the immigrants who came were destitute, the Society believed it had a role, in discouraging the attraction to the city of those coming from other cities or countries in need of public aid or private charity. Stated the Director:

Something must be done to stem the tide of improvident and destitute people toward this city, or its increasing volume will swallow the charity which you have committed to our hands."³⁴

The Society reasoned that shelter and fuel, expensive in cities, were cheaper in the country. Hence, the Society saw its role as assisting the able-bodied unemployed to find work-situations in the country, while refusing to give aid to incoming poor from other cities or foreign countries.

With the increase in numbers of immigrants, migrants and the foreign population, there also seemed to be an increase of that urban scourge, street begging. The CRAS believed that its efforts, coupled with that of the public charities, were sufficient to eliminate the need of street begging.

We are doing all in our power to discourage street begging and indiscriminate alms giving, knowing the first to be unmitigated evil in the community, and that the second encourages vagrancy.... With the present efficiency and thoroughness of the legal and voluntary charities of the city, there is no excuse for street begging, and its existence

³³Ibid., 7, 8.

³⁴Ibid., 8.

should be taken as a prima facie case of the worthlessness of the applicant.³⁵

Despite these efforts, the increase in the population of the city, and its destitute continued to mount. It seemed that the Protestants and business leaders were losing control of the city. However, a catastrophe occurred that added to the misery of thousands of poor people, and would make destitute thousands of people who were normally self-sufficient. This was the Great Chicago Fire. Yet, the fire united the city under the control of the Protestant-business elite in other ways, just as the Protestants in charge of charity would insure that the better class would return to their proper and respectful place after the fire to rebuild the city from the ashes.

The Chicago Relief and Aid Society and the Great Chicago Fire

Up to the time of the Fire, the CRAS seemed just as active at setting limits on who could be recipient of its services as in giving away needed services. The Society was careful to examine the circumstance of the recipients and, following rule number thirteen, was reluctant to give relief to those who refused an offer of a job somewhere else, even if on a Southern plantation. Still, "more were accepting of this offer" the year after it was officially enforced, apparently having no other recourse.

The Society continued to assist many immigrant newcomers, including 402 Irish, 144 German, 129 Scandinavian, 117 English, and

³⁵Ibid., 9.

296 "American." These families were assisted with fuel, medications, shoes, lodging and so forth. Those receiving aid were those who were suffering from illness (315), want of employment (278), old age, those victims of husbands who were drunkards (fifty-five), deserters (101); and those widowed due to death of spouse leaving the family without the male breadwinner (420).³⁶

With the coming of the Great Chicago Fire in October of 1871, the downtown, North and West sides of the city were all devastated, resulting in almost 200 million dollars in losses, over 300 deaths, and a homeless population of 100,000 people. By policy, the Society would assist those temporarily poor, sick, or unemployed. However, the catastrophe of the Fire forced the Society to become involved on a larger scale.

Since the chronically destitute was presumed to be a public responsibility, this practice also effected the way the CRAS dispensed charity in the wake of the fire. Widows and dependent children, wives abandoned by their husbands, and those who were unemployed through no fault of their own were perceived "worthy" of the Society's assistance. The Society paid for medical bills, furniture, transportation, funeral expenses, meals and lodging, for these people, but not for the dependent poor. Relief was automatically discontinued for "those who manifest a purpose to depend on alms rather than their own exertions."³⁷ Ineligible too

³⁶Annual Report of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society, Ending October 31, 1871 (Chicago: J.M.W. Jones, Stationary, 1871), 5.

³⁷Cited in Nelson, "Chicago Relief and Aid Society," 51.

were persons without an address, or those "destitute persons sent from other cities."³⁸

However, with the devastation of the Fire, the CRAS was thrust into an unprecedented role of being the major vehicle, public or private, to address the problems of homelessness and general devastation wrought by the conflagration. In response to the fire, the Mayor of the city, R. B. Mason, proclaimed that the Chicago Relief and Aid Society would be the organ to distribute goods and funds to victims of the fire.³⁹ However, such distribution would be highly selective, dependant in no small part on the history, policy, and practice of the Society in the past.

In Springfield, State Legislators from Chicago had sought such a position by the CRAS in 1857. Such legislators included Edwin C. Larned, Mark Skinner, Joseph T. Ryerson, Isaac N. Arnold, George W. Higginson, Philo Carpenter, and William H. Brown. These men were among the business and lay religious leadership in Chicago. Further, the Constitution of the Society declared it legal for the City Council to raise funds for the Society, to grant use of public lands for purposes of charitable relief, and also named the Mayor of the city as a an Ex Officio member of the Board of Directors. Hence, the Society was in a position politically to be the major instrument of charitable relief after the fire, launching it as the major charitable institution in the city at this time.

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹First Special Report of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society (Chicago: Culver, Page and Hoyne, 1871), 5.

However, the CRAS did not assume such importance until the catastrophe of October 1871. At the time of the Fire, there was no other organization seemingly capable of providing the organized relief necessary to rebuild a city. The Chicago Relief and Aid Society was able to fill that function.

On October 15, 1871, the Board of the CRAS created several committees to deal with victims of the fire. These included committees on Shelter; Employment; Transportation; Clothing and Fuel; Reception and Correspondence; Distribution of Food; Sick, Sanitary and Hospital Measures; and an Executive Committee to provide overall administration of efforts.

The Committee on Shelter targeted not the destitute, but families who had lost their homes, or "that class of citizens" who would most assuredly contribute to the rebuilding and reordering of the city.

These were mechanics and the better class of laboring people, thrifty, domestic, and respectable, whose skill and labor are indispensable in rebuilding the city, and most of whom have accumulated enough to become the owners of their own homesteads either as proprietors or lessees of the lots.⁴⁰

The purpose of the Committee on Shelter was "to restore them to these homes would be to raise them at once from depression and anxiety, of not despair, to hope, renewed energy and comparative prosperity."⁴¹

⁴⁰Ibid., 8.

⁴¹Ibid.

On December 29, 1871, the Executive Committee of the CRAS passed a resolution giving authority to a newly designated "Committee on Special Relief." This committee had as its objective not just relief of the victims of the fire, but the rebuilding and redevelopment of the city. Its design was to aid "parties to re-establish themselves in business . . . to aid persons in the purchase of tools, machinery, furniture, fixtures, or professional books, which are necessary for engaging in any business which has a sufficiently assured prospect of providing a support for the applicant and his family."⁴²

Money was given to skilled laborers or business people in an effort to reestablish the "better class" in their former businesses. The Society presumed that "there was no lack of employment, particularly for unskilled labor, since the fire."⁴³ Relief went to "carpenters, tanners, bookbinders, locksmiths, tailors, shoemakers, and workers in almost every branch of mechanical industry, have been supplied with tools, machinery, [and] instruments of their respective callings."⁴⁴ The aim was to aid the skilled worker or entrepreneur with the necessities of

⁴²"To the Executive Committee of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society, Feb. 20, 1872," First Report of the Committee on Special Relief (Chicago: Horton and Leonard, Letter Press Printers, 1872), 6.

⁴³First Special Report of the CRAS (1871), 23.

⁴⁴Report of the Committee on Special Relief (Feb. 20, 1872), 8.

their trade, so that they would have no further need to apply for charitable assistance.

Again, the focus of the CRAS was not on the destitute or transient population, but to reinstate the "better class" of citizens to their former place in society.

There are many worthy families who had received no aid since the fire, and who were in the greatest destitution. [This] class of sufferers [included] those suddenly reduced to conditions of greatest privation and distress. They were once in comfortable circumstances. They were not accustomed to exposures and hardships which were easily borne by the laboring people, and at the same time the change in their condition was greater and more disastrous.⁴⁵

Money from the CRAS aided "destitute sewing women," who presumably lost their machines in the fire, to obtain new machines. These women were presumed to be "least accustomed to deprivation and hardship."⁴⁶ The Society made arrangements with Singer, Wheeler and Wilson to extend credit to women. The Society contributed one-fourth of the cost of the machines, and the women were to pay off the remainder to Singer over time via credit arrangements. The Society was interested in extending such limited help to "worthy and industrious sewing women."⁴⁷

Victims of the fire were initially placed in schools and churches. The Church of the Messiah, Rev. Robert Laird Collier, Minister, provided initial space for the administration of CRAS relief efforts. The Society was flooded by applications for

⁴⁵Report of the Committee on Special Relief, 5.

⁴⁶First Special Report of the CRAS (1871), 17.

⁴⁷Report of the Committee on Special Relief, 8.

relief. From October 1871 to February 1872, 6983 applications were processed, 300 letters daily requiring eight fulltime employees.⁴⁸ The demands were so heavy that, on Feb. 13, 1872, E.R. Larned resigned as Chairman of the Executive Committee, and the role was assumed by Rev. Robert Laird Collier.

The Society employed the firm of T.M. Avery and T. W. Harvey in one of the most ambitious of urban redevelopment projects in American history. By November 1, 1872, over 25,000 persons were housed in 5,000 structures, 16 x 20 feet or 12 x 16 feet square. Those housed were given utensils, a stove, chairs, table, a bed and kitchenware. By May 1, 1873, another 3,000 such homes were built, housing another 15,000 people.

Some 40,000 people had left the city after the fire, the remainder finding temporary lodging with neighbors or relatives or in shelters in churches. In short, the Chicago Relief and Aid Society was singularly responsible for providing shelter for over 40,000 people, almost half the total homeless due to the fire.

Similarly, Dr. H. A. Johnson was employed to oversee a huge medical relief program, and over 64,000 people were vaccinated by the Society, preventing spread of disease. Employment was found for 20,000 persons, and "special relief" was given to numerous families. "Thus the society strove to end dependence on relief and

⁴⁸Ibid., 10.

to reestablish fire victims as self-reliant and self-respecting members of society."⁴⁹

The Society thus specifically targeted skilled laborers and the members of the professional classes for assistance. The Society saw its duty as to assist "this class of our population who were the keenest sufferers of all. They were not accustomed to exposures and hardships which were easily born by laboring people."⁵⁰ In short, it was presumed that the "laboring class" would persevere without help from the Society, since they were used to deprivation. One supposes that this group had little choice. However, it was presumed that the better class needed the relief, and it was the duty of the CRAS to provide such relief.

It was thus the role of the Society after the fire to assist the better classes to become reestablished. This was the chosen way to rebuild the city, as it was assumed that the other classes were not able to provide the leadership and resources necessary. Still, the list of those assisted included quite a few recent immigrants. Of 16,299 persons helped from November 6, 1871-May 1, 1873, the breakdown of persons assisted included 5013 Germans, 4230 Irish, 2933 Americans, 1385 English, 1189 Scandinavians, 570 Scotch, 365 French, 244 Canadian, 111 Italian, eighty-one Negro, sixty-seven Bohemian, sixty-two Welsh, twenty-seven Swiss, and

⁴⁹Nelson, "Chicago Relief and Aid Society," 63.

⁵⁰Report of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society Disbursements and Contributions for the Sufferers of the Chicago Fire, 198.

twenty-two Poles.⁵¹ In addition to \$10,000 worth of tools, and \$138,000 worth of sewing machines, the Society gave away over \$6,000 in rent subsidies and other goods including clothing, groceries, furniture, forks and spoons, coal, "crockery," "piece goods" (fabrics), and "sundry dry goods."

Considering the stringent conditions of assistance, it appears that a sizeable number of Germans and Irish had become, to the surprise of the Americans, members of the skilled and better class of citizens. Also, many of those who were "American" or English required aid. It seemed obvious that the fire had affected all classes of Chicago's citizenry as well as new arrivals.

The Professionalization of Charity

Still, the Society made a special effort to avoid "irresponsible and promiscuous distribution" to the undeserving. "What darker disgrace could overtake our beloved city than the waste and the spoilation of the fund?"⁵² Rather, it was the role of the Society not to encourage dependency on relief, but "to aid in establishing order by withholding encouragement to idleness."⁵³

Rather, the Society sought to determine the worthiness of each of the applicants, a herculean task fit not for the churches, but

⁵¹Ibid., 202.

⁵²First Special Report of CRAS (1871), 30.

⁵³Ibid., 11.

for professional visitors and staff in the employ of the Society.

The visitor's job was to . . .

learn by observation and inquiry the exact condition of the registered; whether they be well or ill; whether they are idle or industrious; whether they are voluntarily idle, in which case they are peremptorily cut off from aid; whether they are entitled to entire or only partial support; whether they have otherness of support than public bounty; and in short any circumstances in relation to their condition, or habits, or character which will be a guide as to the care which should be given them.⁵⁴

The Chicago Relief and Aid Society was moving in the direction of professionalization of charity organization. In the past, the Society relied upon ministers and churches to give testimony as to the worthiness of recipients of aid, but this seemed inefficient. Voluntary visitors at first sought to examine the worthiness of applicants for relief, and churches were used to distribute goods, with the recommendation of the pastor in charge.

However, this proved to be unworkable. The Society thus moved towards hiring paid visitors who performed the task of evaluating the needs of applicants more thoroughly. Also, the churches and pastors were gradually phased out. Instead of a voluntary system connected with the churches, the business leadership of the Society moved in another direction, establishing professional standards of charity-giving.

Experience soon demonstrated that we could not rely with sufficient confidence upon the method of investigation as affording reliable evidence of the nature and amount of the applicant's needs; and, subsequently, the course was adopted, of sending all applications which were suitably recommended, to the District in which the applicant resided, for the case

⁵⁴Ibid., 12.

to be personally investigated and reported upon in writing by one of the official visitors in the employ of the Society.⁵⁵

The Board remained in the hands of the business leaders, but the actual responsibility of administration of the Society was left in the hands of professionally trained visitors, who were hired fulltime. The Society's leaders were among the most respected leaders of the city and were known for their presumed honesty and ability to manage money and resources.⁵⁶

In 1874, the Board of the Society added George M. Pullman, Marshall Field, J.T. Ryerson, A.B. Meeker, Julius Rosenthal, and Robert Laird Collier. Significant at this time was the inclusion of a Jewish businessman and a Unitarian clergyperson along with several of the business elite of the city, not the least of whom were Pullman and Field. The Protestant empire was slowly expanding to include non-evangelicals in its circle of a better class of citizens, but most certainly included the business leadership of the city.

Still, links with evangelical Protestantism were maintained, probably due to the fact that the churches were still major contributors to private charity. In 1872, the Rev. Charles G. Tuesdell, a Methodist minister and former Iowa businessman, became Superintendent of the Society and remained in that post until 1903.

⁵⁵Report of the CRAS of Disbursements and Contributions for the Sufferers of the Chicago Fire (1874), 197-198.

⁵⁶Timothy L. Naylor, "Responding to the Fire: The Work of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society," Science and Society (Winter, 1975-1976): 456.

By 1874, Charles G. Hammond, a congregationalist, railroad executive, founder of the Chicago Theological Seminary, and later President of the Chicago Home for the Friendless, became President of the Chicago Relief and Aid Society. The Society thus had prominent backing and staffing from lay Protestant leadership.

The Society moved quickly away from economic development just after the fire, retreating to the ideology that carried the institution just prior to the fire, that of providing relief and aid to those "worthy" of such. The Society moved away from giving supplies, to cash relief, and seemed to look with disdain upon the multitudes of the indigent in the city. The problem was less with the system, or with historical situation, but rather lay with the "multitudes who . . . though not now needy or worthy, still seek most persistently to impose upon us by fictitious tales of loss or want."⁵⁷

The Society by definition refused applications from "able bodied" men, accepting applications from those who were sick, aged, infirm, or widows with their families. In 1873, the organization closed its books on the Fire with a surplus of \$581,000, and had the reputation of being tight-fisted and often less than charitable.⁵⁸

According to the analysis of Timothy J. Naylor, the Society was driven less by a philanthropic ideology and more by "the desire

⁵⁷Cited in Nelson, "Chicago Relief and Aid Society," 64.

⁵⁸Report of the CRAS Disbursement and Contributions for the Sufferers of the Fire (1874), 439-440.

of the Society's leaders to restore the base of their power and wealth. . . ."59 The leaders of the Society, representing the business elite of the city, utilized business techniques developed during the Civil War to lay again the social fabric of the city. "Fear of anarchy provided the frame of reference for the relief work." Fears of looting, or of communist revolution as found in the Paris Commune drove these leaders to provide an orderly, efficient, controlled strategy to rebuild the city.⁶⁰

The Chicago Relief and Aid Society was founded by "gentlemen of the city" who shared the view that a "system" of distribution and record-keeping was necessary to help the deserving and to refuse those who were adjudged to be unworthy. One cannot escape the opinion that the leaders of the Society did not want to waste too much time helping the poor but wanted to have relief available for those who were like themselves, but had come into hardship that taxed their resources. The better class did not like philanthropy, nor did they respect recipients of charity, for it was presumed that the virtuous and the industrious would not need charity at all, or would quickly outgrow any temporary dependency.

A "model of efficient social control," the Society served half of the city's population after the fire. It provided jobs or tools for 20,000 professionals or skilled laborers. It prevented a serious epidemic by means of its Committee on Sick, Sanitary and

⁵⁹Naylor, "Responding to the Fire," 452.

⁶⁰Ibid.

Hospital Measures. The "administration and control of public health, on a scale unknown in any American city in peacetime before, was one of the most successful undertakings of the Relief and Aid Society."⁶¹

The Committee on Charitable Institutions worked with the asylums, hospitals, and homes upon which destitute Chicagoans depended. Its Special Relief corps came to the aid of members of the "better class" ruined by the fire. According to Naylor: "By giving a sack of flour to a mechanic and the money to buy books to a lawyer, it reestablished the proper class divisions which the fire had threatened, and ensured that each individual filled his proper role in the rebuilding effort."⁶²

The Chicago Relief and Aid Society and its Protestant business leadership were able to make a solid contribution to the rebuilding of a city after a huge catastrophe. That it was able to do so is testimony to the power and influence of the Protestant business elite in Chicago's society at the time. That it was able to assist the "better classes," and not those deemed "unworthy," is evidence that the Society's concern for others was limited to those, who like themselves, represented the better-class of society, those who supported the hegemonic character of the dominant cultural ethos fueled by Protestantism.

⁶¹Ibid., 461.

⁶²Ibid., 462.

Significance

By 1870, there were several private philanthropic organizations in the city, sponsored by Catholic, evangelical Protestant, liberal Protestant churches and several institutions not specifically related to the churches, including the Chicago Relief and Aid Society. While efforts of the YMCA and the Chicago Relief and Aid Society were made to organize relief efforts, the institutions were supported by a cross-section of religious and business leadership. The fire forced the city to depend on an agency most supported by the business elite, an agency perceived as being in the best position to provide a mechanism to deal with the overwhelming charitable needs.

After the fire, with demands on the increase, newspapers partnered with churches and other agencies, appealing to the public spirit among the citizenry to assist the city's growing number of poor persons by supporting private philanthropy. Among evangelical groups such as the Union Bible Society, the Sabbath School Union and the Union Tract Society, there was some coordination of resources to provide material assistance to unfortunates.

However, the relative success stories in private philanthropy were the agencies surveyed here, including the Protestant Orphan Asylum, the Home for the Friendless, and the Chicago Relief and Aid Society. All three were Protestant, and supported by a number of churches. Each shared some of the common assumptions about caregiving at the time. The first assumption was that the chronic, long-term dependent or the "unworthy" poor should not get

assistance from private charity, but were proper candidates for public institutions.

Second, private charity was presumed to be a temporary expedient for otherwise virtuous and industrious people, who through no fault of their own found themselves destitute. Temporary help was in order for these people, for it was assumed that the "worthy poor" were those who, with a little assistance, would rise quickly above their situation to return to their former "comfortable circumstances" due to a demonstration of proven character traits such as thriftiness, industry, temperance, and self-control.

Third, women and children were of special concern for these relief societies, as they were perceived to be victims, helpless, and vulnerable, needing the paternalistic care of society. Children needed to be placed out of the city in "Christian homes." Women were presumed suited to work in a domestic situation or needed "sewing machines" which would provide them with the chance for economic self-sufficiency.

Finally, the evangelicals of the period shared a common vision and had a common motivation for philanthropic endeavor. They appealed to the example of Christ, but not in a sectarian fashion as they were more interested in the ethical questions of what Christ did among the poor and oppressed of his day. This was a highly functional theology, ethical, utilitarian, and ultimately very pragmatic in concern.

The Protestant charities assumed that the industrious would

need aid only temporarily, and with a little help, would be well on the way to financial independence. Those unworthy were the "able-bodied," but lazy or improvident. For the most part, they were either recent arrivals to the city, or were those who were poor because of presumed habits of gambling or drinking.

This practical theology, ethics, and shared ethos was central to the self-understanding of the "better class" of citizens. Protestants viewed themselves as virtuous, benevolent, hard-working, thrifty, and temperate, providing the normative vision of the good society. While non-evangelicals like Robert Laird Collier and even Jewish businessmen like Julius Rosenwald had a different theology, they nonetheless shared the leadership with evangelical Protestants because they assumed basically the same worldview and moral practice.

Philanthropy was less directed to those who were chronically poor or to new arrivals and seemed more directed to those of the "better-class" who, because of temporary misfortune, needed a vital safety net to reenter society as productive citizens. Philanthropy in the early nineteenth century was limited in nature. Public coffers were designed to arrest the condition of poverty or maintain those who were perceived to be permanently dependent. The purpose of private charities was to assist temporarily those who were worthy, people who either shared the worldview of the caregivers, or would likely benefit from the charity given so as to never again need additional aid.

The presumption of worthiness meant that the recipients

already exhibited qualities valued by the "better class," but had found themselves in need of charity due to no fault of their own. Private charities did not understand their role as assisting the dependent poor, for that was the assumed responsibility of the public realm or was, at worst, a waste of scarce resources.

The Chicago Relief and Aid Society was different from the other Protestant charities in that it moved more towards a model of private charity that was professional in nature, and therefore less connected and controlled by the churches. As such, the CRAS became the model of charity for the next generation, gradually leading to the form of Protestant charity giving known as the United Way. The CRAS developed a model of caregiving that was more "efficient" and was more under control by Professional altruists, distinct from the churches. Protestant charitable institutions more directly connected with the churches continued to proliferate, but the dominant model of private charitable giving became more and more secular organizations such as the Chicago Relief and Aid Society.

CHAPTER XVIII

CONCLUSION

A Better Class of People

The Protestant reform impulse was alive and well in Chicago in the early nineteenth century. This work has surveyed the contribution of the major denominations, their flagship churches, para-church agencies, benevolent societies, philanthropies, and revival organizations that gave its imprint on the city. The thesis of this dissertation is that the early Protestants in Chicago comprised a culturally dominant social grouping. They were a "better class of people," with mores, attitudes and etiquettes deemed superior and more beneficial to the welfare of the city than that brought to the new nation by immigrants, southern white migrants, freed slaves or the poor. Their influence in the city and the institutions they built formed a cultural hegemony in early Chicago.

The Protestant movement in Chicago was a "class" movement in the sense that it was motivated and led by those who saw themselves self-consciously as a "better class of people." This was not a stratum of society by income distribution. Rather, the Protestant "better class" refers to the dominance of a culture, a lifestyle,

and values of a people, as these people sought to influence the nature of Chicago's society and political economy.

In the eighteenth century, Benjamin Franklin spoke of a "publick religion" characterized by a particular set of virtues, including thrift, self-control, temperance, justice, charity, benevolence, sincerity, honesty, integrity, and "character." These virtues comprised what became the values of the middling-sort, the emerging middle-class in society.

However, this was not the middle-class professionalism of the late nineteenth century. Class lines were not easily drawn along economic lines, especially in the west. Rather, by "better class," is meant the culture, the shared values, and the ethos of entrepreneurial Protestants who laid the groundwork for society in antebellum Chicago. The "better class" included those who were fast becoming the middle and upper class elites, in the sense that they were economically self-sustaining or those who accepted the dominant Protestant cultural ethos of the time.

Whether or not there was an elite in Chicago has been the subject of debate. According to Frederick Cople Jaher, author of the Urban Establishment, there was an elite in Chicago, an aristocracy that "sought to disseminate identical principles of community and private behavior, and religion was thought to encourage Christian culture and benevolence."¹ This elite of some 130 "big names" sought to declare as normative their "religious

¹Frederick Cople Jaher, The Urban Establishment (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1982), 466.

traditions and beliefs, a family centered life, [yet with] an absence of opulence [that] contributed to the straight-laced tone of the 1840s and '50s."² It was this commonly held set of assumptions that provided the bedrock of society in Chicago in the early period of its history. And for Jaher, the assumptions were reinforced by an identifiable elite.

But was this really a social "elite?" Was there really an "urban establishment?" Against Jaher's thesis, there is evidence to the contrary. According to Joseph Kirkland, author of The Story of Chicago, there was "no true Aristocracy" in Chicago. Wealth in Chicago was not inherited, but was obtained by labor, power, good luck and good management.

Not one of the hundreds of millionaires, and scarcely one of the thousands of small fortune-holders, is rich by inheritance. . . . The old-world "nobility" which "draws the line" at any travel or profession where money is to be made, the supercilious indifference to all things and persons outside a narrow pale . . .³ is beyond the scope of the present generation of Chicagoans.

According to William Corkran, a New Yorker working under the employ of the Chicago Historical Society as a librarian in 1871, there was anything but an elite in Chicago, at least by the standards of society-life on the East coast. For Corkran, few other cities like Chicago could represent "an extraordinary melange of vulgarism, snobbery, and attempt at the narcissism of refined

²Ibid., 470.

³Joseph Kirkland, The Story of Chicago (Chicago: Dibble Publishing Company, 1892), I: 337-338.

society as did the so-called elite in Chicago."⁴ The "Chicago aristocracy, so-called" was more myth than reality. For Corkran, the Chicago elite included those who a short time previously were "nobodies living nowhere, knowing nobody, and living the life of their own exertions for their daily bread." Corkran rejected any notion of an elite of Chicago. Rather, they were "descendants of a suddenly made wealthy community, the women (dressing) to a pitch of extravagance."⁵

Society-life in Chicago included those of ill-refined manners. They were "pork meatpackers, butchers, and railroad men." A few were bankers, "one lawyer, and eight doctors without practice and a number of clerks." For Corkran, there were "no real prominent men in Chicago, no one eminent." When compared to his native New York, Chicago had no Aristocracy, no real society. "In using the word prominent as describing the persons, we must apologize for debasing the true value of the word. . . . There was not an eminent in Chicago, or men whose example in life we would have felt proud to copy."⁶

Corkran may have been reflecting the snobbery of the East coast mindset, but his analysis is revealing. Both Kirkland and Corkran viewed Chicago as a frontier city, a city of the west. Its citizens included speculators, adventurers, manufacturers, and

⁴William Corkran, "Chicago and the Chicago Historical Society," (1871), 95. Ms. Collections, Chicago Historical Society.

⁵Ibid., 97.

⁶Ibid., 99, 121.

entrepreneurs who might yet become the "nouveau riche" of the city. Because they still had "mud on their boots," they had not carved out a society or a culture that was distinguishable from "the moral majority" of evangelical Protestantism at the time. Some were better off than others, but those of means included everyone from the artisan "class" to the railroad baron and real estate speculators like Ogden, and everything in between. The Chicago aristocracy had not yet emerged as a distinguishable class of people, nor was there a distinguishable "middle-class" at this time. The Protestants of early Chicago were a "better class" of people as a distinct social-grouping, but not yet an identifiable middle-class grouping based on income distribution. Social designations at this time were more cultural than economic.

The Better Class and the Middle-Class

Was there a distinctive "middle-class" in antebellum Chicago? Part of the answer depends on a definition of terms. Webster's Dictionary defines the "middle-class" as follows:

The social class between the aristocracy or very wealthy and the working class, or proletariat: owners of small businesses, professional and white collar workers, well-to-do farmers, etc., are generally included in the middle-class.

One scholar on the subject of social class, T.B. Bottomore, captured the more fluid and ambiguous quality of the term:

Generally speaking, the middle-class has been taken to include the various levels of clerical workers, those engaged in technical and professional occupations, supervisors and

⁷Webster's New World Dictionary. College Edition (New York: World, 1964), 931.

managers, and self-employed workers, such as small shopkeepers, farmers, and (in some societies) the wealthier peasants. At the top--in case of wealthy professional men or managers in large corporations, for example--the middle class merges into the upper class, while at the bottom--where routine and poorly paid jobs in sales, distribution, and transport are concerned--it merges into the working class. When a contrast is drawn between the middle-class and working class styles of life it is often based implicitly upon "ideal types": the middle-class individual is conceived as a professional or senior clerical worker, the working class individual as a factory worker.⁸

The above reveals the problem of ambiguity inherent even in formal definitions of the "middle-class." On the one level, the middle-class is identified with "professional" persons with values that tend to merge into the upper class. On the other hand, the middle-class person is contrasted with the landed aristocracy at the top and tends to merge with the working class at the bottom. The middle-class is thus hard to define, even if there appears to be such an entity in a given society.

However, our findings indicate that in antebellum America, professionalism had not quite taken off in the way it did as a self-identifying feature as in the late nineteenth century. By the 1880s and 1890s, professionals had degrees, specialized competencies, and memberships in professional societies that demonstrated middle-class status. This was not so in the antebellum period in Chicago. And even in the later period, professionalism had its limits as a particular way to define the middle-class. Not all middle-class people were professionals, as

⁸T.B. Bottomore, "Social Class and Mobility," Encyclopedia Britannica 16 (1975): 952.

some were managers or entrepreneurs within a similar or perhaps better salary range than teachers, lawyers, scientists or physicians.

In addition to the problem of definition, in antebellum society there not much of a distinction between a landed aristocracy and those who might be considered "middle-class." There was not enough time to be "landed," nor was there time for a particular identifiable group of people to become established as members of a gentry or aristocracy, although such emerged in Chicago after the Fire.

In this environment, the "better class" were those who got here first, and presumed that their values and culture were normative social standards for the city. These values were shared by Yankee Protestants, but were presumed absent among immigrant newcomers such as the Irish. Yet, definable elements of what would emerge as "middle-class values," including social etiquettes and mores, were to be found among the Protestants in this early period.

Those who later might be looked upon as the aristocracy or the establishment were "on the make" in this period. Those who made it well and those who made it less prosperously embodied the difference between what would become an aristocracy, on the one hand, or the middle-class on the other. Before the fire, they shared a common culture and assumed that hard work would pay off economically, a "Protestant ethic" if you will. The only difference seems to be between those who aspired to and those who

achieved prosperity and financial independence. Even so, both groups saw themselves as part of the same dominant culture.

If there was not an "aristocracy" as such, there was a group of people who emerged as "working-class," the new immigrants. No "native-born American" in his right mind saw himself as working for others. Most "nativists" saw themselves as farmers, small independent shopkeepers, or perhaps "professionals" such as bankers or lawyers. There was little to distinguish between "white collar" and "blue collar" laborers in this period, at least among Yankee Protestants.

However, by mid-century there appeared an identifiable "working class," and these were the recently-arrived immigrants such as the Irish who dug the Illinois and Michigan Canal. Those who came later from other countries were considered "foreign," and not a few of them came poor and destitute. It was these people who worked for the Yankee Protestant entrepreneurs and seemed to comprise the "laboring classes" in early industrial society.

The immigrants built the canals and railroads, and served as workers in the packing houses, the reaper works, or the lumberyards. These people were not among the "better class," but were despised as either parasites or infiltrators in a Protestant empire, yet were needed to extend the power and wealth for those in power.

Nevertheless, the Protestants, when comparing themselves with the Irish, the African-American, the "poor white trash," or other "unworthy poor" saw themselves as "a better class of people." The

former were the "respectable and the virtuous," those who understood themselves as thrifty, temperant, self-controlled, genteel, pious, and responsible for seeking and preserving the public good. They were the guardians of the Protestant moral, commercial and social order. The culture of the better class was not based on monetary standards, but moral ones. The "better class" identified with the shared ethos, shared values and shared hopes for the city they were creating.

The "better class" were Protestants who either came from or were strongly influenced by Eastern, "Yankee," evangelical ideas. The "vast majority moved to the city in the 1830s and 40s. . . . A majority of the elite originated in New England and New York and were self-made."⁹ These were "transplanted northeasterners, versatile entrepreneurs who assumed community leadership."¹⁰

The "Dangerous Classes"

There was little tolerance among Euro-American Protestants for the poor, the new immigrants, or African-Americans. The later arrivals were never accepted for who they were, but were judged on the basis of how well they reflected and internalized the value-system held by the dominant culture. Protestants did not accept poverty or an alternative lifestyle that was counter to the standards of culture-Protestantism.

⁹Jaher, 455.

¹⁰Ibid., 454.

The poor were understood to be in one of two groups, as either "worthy" or "unworthy" depending on their responsiveness to Protestant evangelical culture. The "worthy" poor were those who were believed to be poor through no fault of their own. They were the victims of fire, disease, unemployment, the war, or some other calamity outside their control. These poor were perceived as "hard-working" and "thrifty," but were temporarily set back by circumstances. It was acceptable to assist these poor, for their thrift and industry would pay off, and they would quickly rise again to independent status. They were those who were "once in comfortable circumstances" but were temporarily hurt by some catastrophe.

The "unworthy poor" were another lot. These people exhibited character traits unbecoming to Protestant middle-class culture. The unworthy poor were such because they were assumed to be thriftless, intemperant, beggarly, dependent, immoral, or unrighteous. It was presumed that their destitution was the result of such vices as gambling, gaming, drinking, or prostitution. Since most evangelicals were also temperance reformers, they assumed that most of the unworthy poor were poor because of intemperance, a lack of self-control, or "uncultivated gentility."

The idle or the thriftless were looked down upon as persons undeserving of charity. Those who refused jobs, however menial, and those known to have participated in the degrading activity of begging, in public or private places, were by definition unworthy of Protestant benevolences. Protestants were slow to become

involved in public charities because they believed that the industrious would find a way to make it financially, for poverty was considered a moral flaw of character. It was only after obvious calamity or natural disaster that Protestants responded to the needs of others, preferably the worthy poor or the destitute from their own people. It was after the public acclaim and success of the Roman Catholic charities that Protestants became more completely involved in benevolent efforts.

Since the Protestant business "class" were those on the boards of most charities, the charities were supported as a way of taking care of the sores on the body politic, so that they were less apparent on the streets and hallways of business. If necessary, the charities were useful in removing such problems from society, or at least discouraging unacceptable practices.

Immigrants in particular were judged for their poverty. They were perceived as "uncultivated" and easily drawn to public drinking (the Irish) or to "social communism" (the Germans). Protestants who comprised the charity leadership in general were quick to point out that most of the recipients of public aid or private charity were immigrants, especially the Irish; or they were "colored," or the "poor white trash." These people were perceived as parasites dependent on the public or private coffers because they had not cultivated the necessary virtues nor did they manifest the character development necessary to prevent them from slipping into destitution or "pauperism." Today, we might suspect that the

Protestant leaders were guilty of the trinity of evils: racism, classism and sexism.

Protestants in early Chicago, as elsewhere, were influenced by the Puritan idea of vocation and the notion of rugged-individualism bred on the American frontier. Vocationally, they assumed that certain persons were destined to be people of wealth and means, while others were destined to be persons of less status and significance. While some might rise up the scale due to their achievement and demonstration of "character" and the list of expected virtues, such mobility was not anticipated in large numbers. It was thus assumed that the cultivated Easterners would be the ones to frame and order western society, and that those from the rural south, from slavery, or from other countries such as Ireland or Sweden would not have it within themselves to provide the necessary leadership.

Not that the all the poor were unteachable or unreachable. In fact, the conviction that things could change as the result of moral suasion, education, hard work, and character development fed the various benevolent societies, as well as the various efforts at evangelization. It was possible to "convert" a person to the dominant evangelical culture, but it would take time and indoctrination in the knowledge of the Bible, virtue, ethics, and the necessary etiquette before the newcomers would be considered respectable and virtuous. Classist assumptions were wed to religious and moral ones. If the Protestants could not convert the

foreigners, at least they could instil in them essential character traits to better preserve order in society.

The Protestants feared the masses of people that seemed to be flooding their shores and their cities. It was more than they could control, although they tried hard to do so. Not only was Roman Catholicism a different religion, but it represented the old world of decadent Europe. It represented the hierarchical structure of popes, kings and bishops who were perceived to be the enemies of free institutions. Further, the Catholics who came were foreigners. That is, they came from "undemocratic" countries such as Ireland, Germany or Scandinavia. These were the places of monarchy, and the new arrivals seemed to constitute a threat to the social order in America--in particular the white, Protestant, middle-class, western Euro-American definition of culture and society.

It is this context that helps develop an understanding of why the Chicago Protestants reacted as they did, and what motivated them. And what happened in Chicago was found elsewhere. The Chicago-experience epitomized in a large way the national mood at this time.

In a sense, early Chicagoans, beginning in the 1830s, constructed a Protestant empire. It was an empire in which the politicians, the business leadership, and the leading families were either Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Methodist, Baptist or one of the other Protestant sects such as the Unitarians, Universalists or

Swedenborgian. The functional tie of class and culture transcended differences in theology.

Conclusions

The Protestant Leadership in the City

The hegemony of Protestant evangelical culture in antebellum Chicago included the religious and the commercial leadership of the city. Several of the Mayors were prominent members of the Chicago Protestant churches. These include William Butler Ogden (Episcopalian), "Long John" Wentworth (Presbyterian); Levi D. Boone (Baptist), and Augustus Garrett (Methodist).

Many of the business leaders were also members of the Protestant churches. These included Philip D. Armour (Presbyterian); Cyrus Hall McCormick (Presbyterian); Orrington Lunt (Methodist), Benjamin W. Raymond (Presbyterian, mayor and realtor); Philo Carpenter (Presbyterian and Congregationalist), druggist and real estate speculator; John V. Farwell (Presbyterian and retailer); John T. Temple (Baptist and physician); Grant Goodrich (Methodist and lawyer, and Giles Spring (Episcopalian and an attorney). These were just some examples. With or without mud on their boots, they were prominent in their own religious communities as well as in the commercial life of the city.

Each of the churches produced some outstanding lay leaders. For example, the Baptists boasted Dr. Levi Boone, a mayor and member of the Know Nothings in the city; Cyrus Bentley, one of the founders of the YMCA, a lawyer and historian; Luther Stone, a

journalist; and Benjamin Franklin (B.F.) Jacobs, a grocer and businessman in produce. Jacobs was very interested in missions and in the Sunday school movement, of which he was an avid participant.

The Presbyterians attracted, and sought to attract, many of the business elite of the day, including Cyrus Hall McCormick, the founder of the famous McCormick Reaper Works. Other famous Presbyterians in the history of early Chicago include Philo Carpenter; John Wentworth, mayor and politician; William H. Brown, lawyer and philanthropist; Mark Skinner, Judge; and Philip D. Armour, meatpacker. The list of trustees of Second Presbyterian Church included Brown, Skinner, Armour, John Crerar, Thomas B. Carter, Benjamin W. Raymond, William R. Gould, Walter Kimball, and George C. Clarke. These men, surpassed only by the list of business leaders supplied by the Episcopalians, provided leadership for the church and the city.

The Episcopalians included John H. Kinzie, Juliette Kinzie, Walter Newberry, William Butler Ogden, Joseph T. Ryerson, Isaac N. Arnold, Gurdon S. Hubbard, Julian and George Rumsey, Palmer and Thomas Dyer, Thomas Drummond, Bertha and Potter Palmer and Levi Z. Leiter. They were real estate speculators, bankers, lawyers, and well to do businessmen.

These people comprised the "better class" of citizens, the "creme of society" in Chicago. Compared to Boston or New York, the "elite" in this city was perhaps not so distinguished. They were not yet an "urban establishment" since Chicago had had a short

history to this point, but they did provide the necessary leadership in city and church.

Episcopalians shared the ethos of evangelical Protestant morality, especially temperance, thrift, industry, benevolence, and the like. However, they formed institutions that benefitted Episcopalians exclusively. In this sense, perhaps, the Episcopalians saw themselves as the "best" of the better classes. Episcopalian churches were all elaborately constructed with Gothic style architecture and chancel furniture befitting the social elite. Their choirs and liturgies were elegant and social gatherings genteel.

The "successful" ministers also had the respect of the city and were frequently in the forefront of benevolent crusades and leaders in the philanthropies. Flavel Bascom, a Presbyterian pastor, was the founder of abolitionism in the city. Robert H. Patterson of Second Presbyterian was involved in many of the philanthropies, and Robert Laird Collier (Unitarian) hosted the Chicago Relief and Aid Society after the Great Chicago fire.

Successful pastorates were those that combined some of the following: an increase in the numbers of the church communities, a creation of institutions that endured, and participation in one of the societies or philanthropies. Such leadership was considered a good thing, and gave the pastor standing and status in the community. Successful pastors, such as Robert H. Patterson, not only survived but led a constituency to survival and growth. Some were "successful" in that they survived their own controversies,

bringing their congregations with them to a new understanding, or even into a new church, as when Charles E. Cheney moved from the Episcopal to the Reformed Episcopal denomination. Others, such as Charles Walker, Episcopalian, did not survive the pressures of controversy and was removed from his post.

Many of the leaders in the churches were key laymen not clergy. One may mention some notables, such as Philo Carpenter's secession from Third Presbyterian Church to start the First Congregational Church. John V. Farwell, had an important role in beginning the YMCA, and was a major supporter of Dwight L. Moody. Many lay leaders such as John H. Kinzie and William Butler Ogden were active in the asylum and philanthropic movements in Chicago. Lay people such as Cyrus McCormick established institutions such as the Presbyterian Seminary of the Northwest, just as Philo Carpenter bankrolled the Chicago Theological Seminary for the Congregationalists and the widow of Augustus Garrett, two-times mayor of the city, funded the Garrett Biblical Institute for the Methodists.

In short, the business leaders of the city were active in the churches and in para-church institutions. Protestantism in this period was not just led by the clergy but was very much influenced by the lay business community.

Institution Building

The religious leadership who dominated Chicago's religious history built a world meant to last. They all made their imprint

on the city through the media of their institutions. These included churches, schools, benevolent societies, philanthropies, asylums, hospitals, missions, denominational offices, periodicals, and their schools of theology. Chicago thus became a city of spires, and not just spires, but elaborate and costly edifices. The churches initially dotted the public square, and even as some churches moved out of the downtown, many chose to stay rather than give in to commercial expansion.

Many of the Protestants who came to the city were of humble means. These included in particular the Methodists and the Baptists. The Methodists were very much at home on the frontier. But, despite the frontier character of Methodism, Methodists generally held much in common with other evangelical groups, and they seemed to find it relatively easy to grow up with the city, developing urban social life-forms. They were farmers, but they were also small shopkeepers, and a few of them were professionals, such as lawyers or bankers. In this respect, there was social diversity even among the Methodist population. They also shared perspectives of the prevailing Protestant empire that both held the Methodists together and also helped to link them with other religious bodies.

Like other evangelicals, the Methodists believed in the benevolent causes of the day. They were avid temperance crusaders and shared the disdain of vices such as gambling, profanity, and sexual immorality. They were active in the temperance, Sunday School, city mission, and anti-slavery societies. Like other

members of the evangelical culture, they were vitally interested in education. Henry Whitehead, the "father of Chicago Methodism" was a lover of books and sold books and pamphlets in his store while later staffing the Methodist Book Concern for over two decades.

The Methodists were also builders of institutions. In addition to the Methodist Book Concern, several missionary societies were founded in Chicago, and an important journal was sponsored, the Northwestern Christian Advocate. In addition, the Methodists were responsible for founding two very important educational institutions in the city, Northwestern University and the Garrett Biblical Institute. The Methodists shared not only the values and the concerns of other Protestants, but also shared a concern for an educated public and a hope that their presence in the city would be authoritative and lasting. Hence, Methodists too established institutions, periodicals, and schools of higher education so as to impact the development of the city.

Methodists were the first to develop a multi-use building downtown, the Methodist City Block. This building had shops and stores on the first floor and the church and offices such as the Methodist Book Concern on the second floor. While many other church structures represented a return to Romanesque or Gothic designs, the Methodists decided on a very urban structure, one that allowed for a diversity of usages. Such practicality and utility for the downtown area of a city came from a church tradition allegedly more comfortable with the countryside. Despite the

frontier character of early Methodism, Methodism in the city was organized, ecumenical, and developed a decidedly urban presence.

The Baptists too shared in such institution-building. Like the Methodists, the Baptists profited a great deal from revivalism, a religious phenomenon that added many new members to the evangelical churches, especially from 1839 to 1858. The revival was directed not only at saving individual souls but combined with attempts at addressing some of the ethical concerns of the day, especially temperance.

The Baptists were interested in education, and many prominent educational institutions in Chicago were the result of their efforts. The real founder of the Baptists in Chicago was a medical doctor, Dr. William Temple, and several of the pastors in early Baptist history, including Isaac T. Hinton and C.B. Smith, were well-educated, and renowned for their scholarship.

In addition to churches, the Baptists, more than any other group, were interested in mission societies, especially Bible, tract, and Sunday Schools. They were also interested in evangelism and education of "young men" and were instrumental in establishing the Chicago YMCA. Also, the Baptists were responsible for two major educational institutions in the city, the old University of Chicago, and the Baptist Union Theological Seminary. Baptist leaders had enough clout with Senator Stephen A. Douglas to obtain both land and funds for these institutions.

Presbyterians too were instrumental in the city's development and contributed as much as the other religious denominations in the

building of institutions, as well as in providing leadership in most of the reform causes of the day. Jeremiah Porter was instrumental in starting the Chicago Bible and Tract societies. The first Sunday School and the first public school class were begun by Presbyterians, by Philo Carpenter and Eliza Chappel Porter. Jeremiah Porter himself described his initial attempt at launching the temperance issue in the city by distributing the paper, the Temperance Recorder. Porter helped lay the foundations for Protestant social concern in the city.

Zebina Eastman, a Presbyterian, was lured to the city to start the Western Citizen, the leading organ of abolitionism and of the Liberty Party in Illinois. Eastman records that the beginnings of abolitionism in the city was due to the coming of Flavel Bascom, the third pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. Bascom gathered around him some of the leading churchmen in the First Presbyterian Church, giving rise to the antislavery controversy in the city. Members of First Presbyterian, unwilling to mix politics and religion, withdrew to start the Second Presbyterian Church in 1842.

Yet the pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, Robert W. Patterson, became perhaps the most important minister in the city, remaining in the pastorate of the church for three decades. Second Presbyterian Church supported many of the charitable movements of the day, including the Chicago Orphan Asylum, the Chicago Home for the Friendless, the YMCA, the American and Chicago Tract Societies, the Chicago Bible Society, and schools such as Beloit College (Wisconsin), Lake Forest College (Illinois), and the Presbyterian

Theological Seminary of the Northwest, later the McCormick Theological Seminary.

Patterson claimed responsibility for the founding of each of the above. In addition to large churches, and several schools, the Presbyterians made several attempts at establishing a literary organ, before settling on the Interior, first published in 1870.

Most of the early Presbyterians were Congregationalists, and it was the "Congregationalized Presbyterians" that left the Presbyterian churches in the 1850s to form the First (1851) and Plymouth (1852) Congregational churches. The Congregationalists were slow to start up churches in the midwest, due to the partnership with the Presbyterians and the Plan of Union of 1808. However, it was a Presbyterian, Philo Carpenter, who led "come-outers" to start the first Congregational churches in the city.

The issue was abolitionism, and while the Congregationalists shared similar perspectives and values on every other issue and moral crusade, there was considerable difference by 1850 on the subject of abolitionism. Ironically, it was the First Presbyterian Church under Flavel Bascom that led the movement to found the first abolitionist society in Chicago. Jeremiah Porter and Eliza Chappel Porter, after leaving Chicago, were well known for their abolitionist stance, as was the radical Presbyterian Zebina Eastman, editor of the Western Citizen.

However, the Presbyterians as a denomination were reluctant to part with their brothers and kinsmen to the South and could not adopt the abolitionist slogan, "no fellowship with slaveholders."

This was not radical or moral enough for Carpenter and his followers, and so the Congregationalist churches were founded to allow the more radical Presbyterians a chance to talk and act politically, especially on the issue of slavery.

The Congregationalists, despite sharing similar values and beliefs with the Presbyterians and other evangelicals on most every other issue, were more radical on the subject of abolitionism than the others. It was easier for Congregationalists to be more politically intolerant of slavery since, compared with the other denominational bodies, most of their churches were in the North.

On the other hand, the Congregationalists were in another sense more conservative than the Presbyterians in that they intentionally looked Eastward for inspiration. Hence, the names Plymouth and New England Congregational churches reflected the pro-Eastern bias of Congregationalists. These churches sought to replicate New England Yankee culture in the city and looked to the east for models of society and culture. This was only slowly broken down, as Dutch, Scotch, Swedish, and German immigrants became involved in Congregational churches. There were no African-American Congregational churches in this period and comparatively little in the way of Mission Sabbath schools or churches among the other immigrants. Congregationalists were radical on the antislavery issue but still very monocultural on other fronts.

Two major institutions served the city as the result of the Congregationalists, the newspaper The Advance and the Chicago Theological Seminary. The Advance was a repository of reformed

evangelical perspective at the time and gave commentary on the prevailing social issues, the actions of the societies, and the activities of churches and evangelistic efforts of the time, including the work of the YMCA. Before going independent, Dwight L. Moody was a member of the Plymouth Congregational Church.

Still, the Congregationalists shared the values and perspectives of the evangelical sub-culture in early Chicago. Like the other evangelicals, the Congregationalists too were temperate, industrious, pious, moral, genteel, and involved in all the various benevolent, charitable, mission, and educational efforts in the city.

Episcopalians were the models of gentility. While sharing for the most part in the values and ideals of the other evangelicals, Episcopalians were not eager to evangelize others or to assimilate the poorer classes into their churches. The pew rental system was superb in keeping out such classes and allowed certain well-to-do citizens and the "better classes" to maintain exclusive control and participation in the churches.

Like the Unitarians, the Episcopalians were harbingers of culture and intellectual stimulus to the city. The first attempt to organize a library in Chicago occurred at the St. James Church; including the Chicago Athenaeum, Chicago Polemical Society, and the local Philosophical Society. These societies were not started so much with the public in mind, but were created to serve the social elite, or at least a social clique of educated inquirers. Walter L. Newberry, another Episcopalian, developed a proposal for

a library for Chicago, (not completed until 1885), but it was a private, not a public library.

The activities of the Ladies Sewing Society of St. James church in raising money were first of all to build a church in the classic pattern and thereafter to furnish the facility with respect to the whims of the better classes. Episcopalians were involved in philanthropy and other forms of benevolence. Episcopalians such as William Butler Ogden and Isaac N. Arnold were active in philanthropies, particularly the Chicago Home for the Friendless, the Chicago Orphan Asylum, the Chicago Relief and Aid Society, and the Chicago Historical Society. Episcopalians were also involved in the creation of health institutions, including the Eye and Ear Infirmary and the St. James Hospital.

In the case of Chicago's Episcopalians, the "better classes" saw their responsibility as providing direct care for the poor and were thus intimately involved in the creation of many of the private charities. Men like Ogden were noteworthy for their boosterism and their willingness to grant land to other religious bodies, including Roman Catholic and Unitarian communions.

Other sects only slowly entered the orbit of the evangelical empire. Protestants seemed more afraid of immigrants and Roman Catholics than they were of alternative perspectives such as Unitarians and Universalists. There was some concern about the differences in theology, but there was more concern as to whether or not the free-thinking churches shared in the functional theology and general culture of mainline Protestants. Unitarians were

largely responsible for the bringing of intellectual ideas to the city, and were hosts for the Chicago Lyceum and the lecture circuit. This was applauded by the dominant evangelical sub-culture. The Unitarians and Universalists were also active in all the major philanthropies, earning the respect of the major evangelical denominations.

Pastors like Robert Collyer of Unity Church and Robert Laird Collier of the Church of the Messiah gave Unitarianism a positive and viable reputation in the city. It was their dedication to the city in the times of crises such as the Civil War and the Fire that gained entry for the Unitarians. The Universalists were perhaps more helped by the work of a woman, Mary Livermore, than by their pastors. Universalists like Unitarians developed more public acceptance by the time of the Civil War. By 1860, the liberal churches were listed among the evangelical churches in virtually every philanthropic organization in the city. They were active during times of crisis in the city and were renowned for their contributions to the general culture, sharing, for the most part, the moral theology of the evangelical consensus at the time.

Each of the above Protestant denominations differed on matters of doctrine and polity. Yet, they were all very similar in other ways. Each was active in the business life of the city. Some were wealthier than others, and many were owners of large firms, while others were mere shopkeepers. But each church had some representation among the business leadership in the community.

The groups were also alike in that each sought to build

institutions like churches, educational facilities, temperance societies, philanthropies, and evangelical and missionary institutions. Each of the churches recognized a unique role in the development of the city and participated in city politics, cultural and philanthropic efforts, boosterism, and the financial and administrative development of the city.

The churches, the pastors, and the lay leaders were active in the development of institutions in the city, including hospitals, asylums, universities, churches, societies, and the like. They envisioned, rightly or wrongly, a Protestant city that exuded the values and perspectives of a white, Yankee, evangelical, Euro-American culture. It was a culture of those who saw themselves as the guardians, protectors, and perhaps moral policemen of a wild midwestern city. It was they who sat in judgment, and it was they who acted in limited benevolence for the poorer, immigrant and migrant classes of the city.

If limited benevolence did not help over the long term, it was presumed that there must be something wrong with the receiver, not the giver, nor was there much constructive analysis of the impact of the socio-economic system, or the impact of migratory dislocation, economic depressions or natural disasters that happened often enough.

Protestants were builders of institutions. These included not only the churches but also schools of higher learning, hospitals and asylums, public schools, political institutions, banking and credit institutions, large and small businesses, philanthropic

organizations, literary societies, young men's associations, and benevolent societies. The institutions created were the foundations of a Protestant empire, a world built to withstand the perceived assaults of the day.

A Variety of Models of Urban Ministry

The Protestants invented a variety of forms by which to influence society. One of the enduring methods of influencing society by Protestantism was revivalism. Revivalism was common in the period from 1838 to 1858. It was a way to add new members to the churches and influence the morality and civic virtue of society. It was a culturally accepted method of warning against vice, especially intemperance.

Revivalists believed that worldliness and worldly aggrandizement were the causes of financial collapse. In a deterministic universe, it was easy for revivalists to connect an assumption of divine intervention with worldly phenomena. On the other hand, revivals provided a way to reform society and to instruct citizens in the ways of righteousness, mercy and justice. Revivals helped to instill civic virtue and to instruct the citizenry in the ways of morality and biblical teaching. In short, the revival was a way to influence the whole of society to adopt the virtues of the better class.

Sunday Schools were a phenomenon in the city. Begun in Chicago by the Presbyterians, the Sunday Schools were perceived to be necessary as an institution for the civilization of the west,

especially the "young men" who flocked to the city. They were a way to teach and indoctrinate the young regarding morality, virtue and the Bible. It was a successful method of reaching the poor and new immigrant with Yankee Protestant culture, so that they too might share in the evangelical cultural ethos. The Sunday Schools were partner in other benevolent causes of the day and were believed to be needed to protect the social order against the threats of Romanism, despotism and rich capitalists.

From 1835-1860, the Sunday Schools reached from 30 to 40% of the children in the city and were perceived as being the chief means of educating city dwellers, the poor and the immigrant classes. The Schools were the medium to educate these people with the beliefs, expectations, and the values of Protestantism. They were a vehicle of the temperance movement as well as a way to evangelize, proselytize, and instruct this population in the values and virtues of evangelical Protestant faith and practice. The Schools were also the media that enabled Protestants to share their worldview while upholding the standards of respectability in the city.

City missions such as the Bethel Seamen's Mission were instrumental in addressing problems of idleness, swearing, and public drunkenness among sailors, practices considered immoral and impious to Protestants. The Railroad Mission was begun in an area noted as having "an illclad population, in the midst of wickedness

and unthrift."¹¹ Numerous other city missions were established in this period. The difference between a city mission and a Sunday School is that the former might include a Sunday School, but would also have other direct service ministries. Also, the "Mission Sabbath School" would occur not in a church but in the community, especially communities of the poor and working classes. The Sunday School was more limited as it was largely an education strategy to influence the youth as well as the new population regarding the authority of the Bible in public life.

Revivalism was combined with another of the city mission models in the city, the YMCA. Associated with Dwight Lyman Moody, urban revivalism moved beyond the spontaneity and the emotionalism of the earlier days and, in the 1850s and 1860s, was directed to specific populations including the business community, the new immigrants, the soldiers, and ultimately those already in the churches. Moody was not only a great evangelist but one of the leaders of the Chicago YMCA. In short order, the YMCA became, by 1869, the distribution center for religious tracts, an employment agency, a relief agency, a library and lecture hall.

But the main forte of the YMCA was evangelism. Visitors made frequent stops in nearby saloons, preaching a mixture of gospel and temperance, actually total abstinence. Moody conducted revival meetings in Farwell Hall and hosted a noontime Bible study as a

¹¹Advance (December 12, 1867), 6.

way to evangelize and involve the better class, the business community leadership.

The goal of the YMCA, from the beginning, was allegedly to protect young men from the saloons, the gambling dens and the "confidence men and painted women." The YMCA was an institution that the evangelical business leadership could utilize to influence the young people in the city, or convert and instruct them in the morals and teachings of the evangelical subculture.

The charities begun by the Protestants were designed to test out the poor, to see if they were worthy, and then to take appropriate action. Such tests as working in the wood yard, on a farm, or even on a southern plantation were suggested as a way that the poor could get beyond relief.

There was little in the way of social analysis or understanding of the history of the immigrants, the nature of social systems, or the impact of the economy, so as better to appreciate the plight that many poor found themselves in. The poor were, for the most part, blamed for their plight and might be given charity to address a temporary condition, but not to maintain them in a state of dependency. That was more the role of the public coffers. Children were "placed out" in "christian homes," and women were taught in "industrial classes" matters of "domestic science." It was presumed even in 1870 that the best way to help industrious women was to give them a sewing machine.

The objective in such charity was to help the poor help themselves and to help only those considered "worthy," those

assumed as having a good chance to move beyond pauperism to independence. With temporary help, the poor, especially those victims of events or situations beyond their control, would quickly arise to the status of self-sufficiency. Poverty thus could be avoided or overcome. One only needed to be thrifty, virtuous and industrious to make it. Those who did not, and needed continuous charity, were not deserving or worthy of the benevolences of the better class.

Chicago became a mecca for the benevolent empire. Those societies that were considered a part of such an empire included the Bible, tract, missionary, temperance, colonization, education, and anti-slavery societies. The societies were organized ways to infiltrate the public realm. They were channels of benevolence. The Bible society was believed to be a vehicle to spread democracy and to eradicate poverty, as it would curtail "despotism and wretchedness from the globe."¹² The Bible and tract societies were instrumental in the cause of evangelism--but also to instruct the poor and the immigrant in matters of public morality.

The temperance movement was perhaps the single most important of the benevolences. Temperance was a sign of the virtuous, as it united evangelicals with Episcopalians and Unitarians, and to a lesser extent Catholics and Jews. Drinking was considered a sin, and teetotalism was considered a badge of virtue and self-control. The Temperance Movement drew from each of the groups and evolved

¹²Chicago American, Dec. 5, 1835.

into a political movement in the Washingtonian Society and in the Maine Law Alliance as a way to prohibit the manufacture or sale of liquor. Those who accepted the pledge were restored to society and respectability.

Temperance was attached to another reform effort, the pursuit of Sabbath Laws to prevent the sale of distilled liquor on Sunday. The pursuit of temperance and sabbatarianism appeared also to be anti-foreign, as it seemed to some degree to be a war against the Irish, German, and other European drinking cultures. However, some of the immigrants themselves sponsored such organizations as the Catholic and Hibernian Temperance Societies.

Temperance advocates combined moral suasion with legislation against drinking, especially on Sunday. Unfortunately for the evangelicals, temperance candidate Amos Gaylord Throop was defeated in 1854 by Isaac L. Milliken and his perceived support from "Catholic priests, the rumsellers, Irish Whiskey drinkers, [and] German beer-drinkers."¹³ Intemperance was linked to anti-Catholicism and anti-foreign sentiments.

While all evangelicals and not a few others believed in temperance, many balked at prohibition. This divided the temperance movement, as did the discussion of tactics. Those raised with revivalist tactics of "moral suasion" were countered by those who believed that the only sure tactic was legislative reform. Others of a more practical mind were concerned that

¹³Northwestern Christian Advocate (Feb. 15, 1854), 2.

temperance might hurt the city revenue and would accomplish little if anything in the creation of virtue for citizens, since it would lead to the selling of liquor underground. This debate certainly anticipated the national debate of the post World War One era in the United States.

The other great legislative reform movement in this period was antislavery. Most of the evangelicals in Chicago, even in the early period, were antislavery. However, only a few were abolitionists who called for an immediate end to slavery. Most were agreed that slavery needed to be stopped, but few called for the drastic measures of absolute destruction of the slavery system. Robert W. Patterson castigated the latter as fanatical and "ultraist," preferring the more conservative posture of antislavery which would limit slavery to the slave states, not allowing its spread to the North. Those who were antislavery were often also in favor of colonization, of sending African-Americans back to the continent to a state called Liberia.

To abolitionists, slavery was a sin, and there could be "no union with slaveholders" in any way. This posture had the effect of splitting some of the churches, including the congregations of the Baptists and Presbyterians. The Episcopalians seemed to hold together without effect. The Congregationalists were mostly in the north, and hence were unaffected by the controversy as a denominational body. The debate was so strong among Presbyterians that "Congregationalized Presbyterians" withdrew to found the first

two Congregational churches in Chicago, First and Plymouth Congregational Churches.

The beginnings of abolitionism in Chicago are attributable to the coming of a Presbyterian minister, Flavel Bascom, in 1839. Those favoring abolitionism, including Philo Carpenter (Presbyterian turned Congregationalist), and Orrington Lunt (Methodist) argued for the immediate end of slavery as an institution. People of virtue stood on both sides of the issue, but abolitionism spelled out two different theologies, two different tactics for how society would deal with the evil of slavery.

Antislavery proponents assumed that the problem was individual and that "moral suasion" of individuals was the way to change people's minds. They believed in the political system and were gradualist in their view of social change, and many held separatist views regarding the relationships of European and African-Americans. That is, many who were antislavery were also the ones who supported legislation to keep blacks out of Illinois through high bonds, certificates of freedom, etc. Abolitionists, on the contrary, tended to believe that the problem was structural and systemic. The system had to be destroyed, not just the conversion of the hearts of individuals.

Further, for abolitionists, there was no gradualism, but a call for immediate legislative action; even civil disobedience in the underground railroad was necessary. Abolitionists also tended to believe that African-Americans, though victims of oppression,

could learn to read, compute, and participate in church activities and in public life. In short, abolitionists tended to see African-Americans as victims of an oppressing system, but with potential to participate in society as equals.

However, unknown to most Protestants, the most effective organizers of the Underground Railroad were the black churches. It was they who were daily influenced by the problem, and it was they who in their own quiet way helped thousands of former slaves to freedom. To most white Protestants, ex-slaves needed to be educated; but to abolitionists, the real sin was the system of slavery which needed to be abolished. White Protestants could not avoid paternalism towards blacks due to the obvious imbalance in power relationship, and the hold that whites had on cultural norms and practices. Among white Protestants, abolitionists were in a better position to understand that the issue was as much systemic as moral, a justice question and not merely the question of character development in the victim.

The urban mission models in currency during the early period varied from evangelism and attention to the individuals, to community economic development and legislative change. Some evangelicals assumed that the problem was with the individuals, particularly the newcomers from Europe. Others recognized that there was something wrong with the systems and structures of society. The individuals were seen, in this perspective, not as perpetrators of their condition, but as victims of an oppressive system that needed to be changed.

One might say that there were two distinct kinds of urban mission paradigms. The dominant paradigm was that of moral reform. This focus was on the individual, and the assumption was that the problem was with the individual, and demanded a solution directed at the individual. Such solutions might be evangelism and conversion, or it could be the moral reformation of the individual via character development. In the worst of the characterizations, the individual was presumed to be the problem and was blamed for his or her own condition.

In the second paradigm, structural reform, the assumption was that there was something wrong with the social system, and the poor or the enslaved were considered victims of an oppressive system. This was clearly the case with abolitionism, as it was the system of slavery as an institution that needed to be changed. For women, laws and cultural practices that subjected women needed to be reformed, and the first women's movement in Chicago sought to alter the laws of the state so that such laws could be more fair to women.

Although the poor were often unemployed, or were victims of economic downturns or natural disasters, there was not enough analysis of why the poor were poor. Some hints of an analysis of the plight of workers began to emerge, suggesting that it was the practice of capitalists that led to labor discontent. On a rare occasion, some caregivers began to understand that the housing condition, the job market, or the problems with assimilation to a new culture were the causes of poverty and destitution. However,

for the most part, structural reform options were not explored on behalf of the poor, for such would have to wait for another era, particularly the Social Gospel and the Progressive eras for a corrective that emphasized the need to look at the environment and to pursue structural, not just individual moral change.

A Functional Theology

There was not an sophisticated theology operative in Chicago. This may have been true because of the lack of schools of higher learning early in the city's history. And it may have been due to the character of the society as a western frontier community. Most needs were of a practical nature, and while differences of theology were discussed in denominations and within the churches, for the most part the theology that was communicated to the wider public was simple, and the debates regarding the fine points of theology was relatively absent.

It was an evangelical theology that emphasized the importance of morality and virtue, of thrift and hard-work. It was a functional, practical, utilitarian theology and a system that was able to unite the churches, including, for the most part, even non-evangelicals in their cultural network. Their ideas were less doctrinal, and more ethical, moral, and behavioral. In short, the Yankee Protestant in Chicago was defined more by what he did than by what he believed.

The nascent ecumenism of the period allowed many options for church membership, each of them relatively interchangeable, and

with equivalent representation in each of the reform societies, organizations and crusades of the time. In short, whether one was Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, or Congregational made little difference. What mattered was whether or not one shared in the notions, values, and aspirations of the "better class."

Episcopalians, due to their historic ties with the old country and their concern for the preservation of high liturgy might see themselves as "a little better" than the rest of the "better class." And Unitarians, Universalists, or Swedenborgians, while excluded on one level because they championed a more liberal theology, were still integrally part of the benevolent crusades of the period, underscoring the more functional and cultural similarities among Protestant groups rather than doctrinal differences.

Of course, each of the groups had its share of doctrinal issues. For the Baptists, the issue was closed versus open communion as in the case of Isaac T. Hinton. For the Presbyterians, there were serious disagreements between old school and new school rival denominations for three decades, not to mention the rather serious breach over abolitionism. The Methodists seemed to allow for abolitionist radicalism from within their ranks, in both the white Tabernacle church and in the African-American churches such as Quinn Chapel and Bethel African Methodist Episcopal churches. The Episcopalians probably spent more time fighting within than controverting with other groups, as the Walker, Cheney and Bishop Whitehouse controversies indicate.

However, these were all family squabbles and eventually were settled enough to keep and preserve the denominations. Even old school and new school Presbyterians reunited before 1870, healing bitter differences over slavery on the one hand and attitudes towards revivalism and social reform on the other. In short, despite heated debates, schism, and bitter rivalries, the denominations managed to stay or come together by the end of the period surveyed.

"Gentlemen" certainly were free to disagree, but they still remained "gentlemen." They remained tied together by a host of shared values, attitudes, and practices as those who saw themselves, self-consciously, as a "better class of people" in contrast to white southerners, immigrants, or African-Americans. The latter groupings, called in the literature "classes," were excluded for their presumed lack of appreciation or understanding of evangelical norms.

A Commitment to the Public Realm

William Butler Ogden, the first Mayor of the city, was Episcopalian. Two-time mayor Augustus Garrett was Methodist. "Long John" Wentworth was a member of the Second Presbyterian Church, and Dr. Levi Boone was a Baptist. These were just a few examples, but they represented some of the leadership of the city and their religious commitments. The evangelicals of the early nineteenth century in Chicago were committed to the public square.

The population of the city expanded from just over 300 in 1833

to almost 300,000 just 37 years later. This brought culture shock and represented an unprecedented influx of peoples. Of course, such mobility to the city does not include the numbers of people passing through Chicago on their way to other points west. Such a large population would surely put pressure on any city and its military, economic, political and religious institutions.

Further, when one adds to the number the kinds of people who came, including those from the rural south and from two dozen European countries, there emerges a picture of a society that was rapidly increasing, diversifying, and presenting numerous challenges to the existing structures of society.

Also, the economy of the city did not always cooperate. There were significant financial panics in 1837 and 1857. There were several fires prior to the great conflagration of October 1871. The city was also beset by floods, by cold weather, and by disease, particularly the terrible cholera years such as 1849. Finally, the city was interrupted by the Civil War of the 1860s. All of these events, coupled with the influx of immigrants who were unlike the Protestants who arrived first, put a severe strain on municipal institutions.

Still, most of the Protestants were committed to the materialism of the age. Commercial life seemed foremost, and buildings dedicated to such life gradually replaced the downtown churches and cathedrals. From the standpoint of the churches, some elected the quieter settings on the periphery of business, and others preferred the residential settings along boulevards or

around the parks. However, there was as strong a movement among some downtown churches to fight commercial expansion, or to at least remain in the public domain to counter the pursuit of wealth, corruption and the misuse of political and economic power. On the other hand, many Protestant churches wanted to be sure that their churches continued to benefit from such commercial prosperity.

The remarkable story is that the city survived and prospered. Churches were erected, societies were formed, institutions were created, and the city was built and rebuilt, even quickly after one of the great catastrophes in American history. After the fires of 1871 and 1873, the city was almost totally rebuilt by 1875 as a remarkable testimony to the vision, will and commitment of a people. Such is the testimony to the impact of the virtues, if not the ideology, of the emerging Protestant middle-class in the shaping and building of the city of Chicago.

Summary

Protestantism in Chicago was very influential on the growth of the city. Most of the business elite of the city, including William Butler Ogden, John V. Farwell, Cyrus Hall McCormick, and Philo Carpenter were also members in good standing of the churches, and brought their religious perspective to the public square. They were the "better class" of citizens, concerned with the historical development of the city as well as developing and maintaining the "social fabric," which meant their values, ethics, and world view.

Even in the early period before the Chicago Fire, these

Protestants were faced with large numbers of immigrant and poor populations, and were forced to develop public and private institutions for the sake of providing relief. Not least among these are the Chicago Orphan Asylum and the Chicago Relief and Aid Society. These were only some of the ways that Protestants responded to urban society.

The city was indeed the city of churches, and great preachers were effective in the sense that their sermons made the secular press and that they were responsible for institution-building in the city. Jeremiah Porter, Flavel Bascom, and Robert W. Patterson were the prominent Presbyterian ministers, and they were those who understood and appreciated their public role in society. Other prominent preachers included Isaac Taylor Hinton of the Baptists, Isaac Hallam of the Episcopalians, Robert Collyer of the Unitarians, and of course, Dwight Lyman Moody.

Preaching was certainly one important way that Protestants influenced opinion on major religious, moral, and at times even civil issues, such as the Compromise of 1850, the Fugitive Slave Law, or Dred Scot. The churches, at least the flagship churches of the major denominations, conducted what they knew to be public worship. One can imagine much of the town coming to the public square on Sundays, not for business, but to attend one of the many churches downtown. The Universalist Church once had to close its windows on one side of the church in hot weather, so as not to be disturbed by the noisy Baptists.

Protestants were involved in many ways in society, through the

churches and the church-sponsored institutions and societies. These included Sunday Schools, city missions, benevolent societies, revivalism, and even political campaigns, particularly in reference to temperance. Decisions regarding the future of the city, such as the decision to build the Illinois and Michigan Canal, were made in one of the churches.

The noon-time prayer meetings in 1857-1858, at the end of the Panic of that year, caused many business leaders to abandon their activities for a demonstration of penance in hope that such might somehow affect economic fortunes. It was this same business class that also started the YMCA, the various philanthropic organizations, schools, and other systems to compliment poor relief at this time.

Abolitionist, colonization, Bible, tract, temperance, and various missionary societies were very much in vogue and were the way that Protestants could organize themselves and distribute tracts and other pieces of literature to persuade the public of their perspectives, and thereby to shape public opinion. The Chicago Relief and Aid Society established the procedure of reporting each year activities to the City Council, and the Mayor sat on the committee ex officio.

Each of the denominations, despite very different traditions, seemed to accept the general revivalist reform ideology of the time. This was especially true of Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, and New School Presbyterians. Despite the doctrine of separation of church and state, the Baptists understood

this horizontally, not vertically, and saw their role as prophetic critics of society from the standpoint of a higher law, particularly on matters of abolitionism and temperance.

These groups were united in their stand against public drinking, swearing, thriftlessness, and impiety. They shared a common evangelical worldview, and saw in their institutions the modes by which to shape society, assessing the worth or virtue of newcomers on the basis of their shared ethos.

The Episcopalians tended to be more exclusive and less ecumenical than the other groups. They seemed more interested in the development and preservation of culture, such as the Athenaeum or Literary Society, than they were in participating in evangelism. Sunday Schools for the Episcopalians were more a way to educate their youth and less a medium of evangelism. Episcopalians were also active in philanthropy and seemed to see this avenue as the acceptable way to participate in society. If you will, the Episcopalians were the early examples of the noblesse oblige.

With the Episcopalians, the Unitarians were responsible for introducing intellectual and cultural currents to the city. These churches tended to inform the public on matters of social life, particularly in reference to intellectual questions, cultural events, as well as matters of doctrine and reform involvements. Non-evangelical groups, such as Jews, Unitarians, Universalists, Swedenborgians, and the Society of Friends, despite differences in perspective, were involved ecumenically around issues of philanthropy, but not in ways that were expressly evangelistic.

In fact, the YMCA ruled out participation with non-evangelical Protestants, as they did with Jews and Catholics. Nor did the non-evangelicals participate in the Bible, tract, or missionary societies, societies with the express goal of evangelism. As a result, the liberal churches formed their own philanthropic organizations.

The Unitarians, for example, formed their own ministry in poor communities, the "Ministry at Large," made popular through the efforts of Robert Collyer. Robert Laird Collier of the Church of the Messiah became very active in the Chicago Relief and Aid Society, and after the fire, the Society was temporarily housed in his church. Of course, the CRAS did not have as an objective the conversion of the other, unless it was to a particular set of ethical values.

Finally, we are left with the question of what motivated these people? There was a self-conscious "better class" of people, those who shared broadly the perspective and culture of evangelical Protestantism. This perspective was more functional than doctrinal, more ethical than creedal. The ecumenical nature of the early period shows this common worldview among the churches and their efforts in establishing institutions to settle the west and to settle the city.

Hence, the concerns were more practical than theoretical and thus allowed much partnership in societies, missions, relief agencies, at the exclusion of public debate over issues of theology.

This ecumenicity broadened considerably after the Civil War. Thereafter, Unitarians, Universalists, Swedenborgians, and even Jews could join the evangelical Protestants on matters of relief of the poor, and in the rebuilding of society. On this level, there was less partnership with fundamentalist or millenarian sects, such as the Mormons, the Millerites, Campbellites, Adventists, or the Disciples, because these groups represented religious options that were less than respectable, and not befitting the better and more established class of citizens.

The Protestants were motivated to participate in urban life and on public issues as an expression of their faith perspective. They sought to instill ideas and practices of virtue to all the people in the city. It was not merely the expression of social control, although that was a factor. Institution-building was a consequence, not the cause of the reform impulse. Evangelicals were partially motivated by their theology, essentially a post-millennial version that anticipated that work in the present would gradually evolve into a future golden age. But mostly, the Protestants were motivated by their own ambition to extend and declare as normative their cultural assumptions and practices which were institutionalized in the churches, societies, schools and even in the political and economic systems. Those who shared this perspective were preferable to those who did not.

While the above were factors on many levels, what really motivated the evangelicals was their culture, their values, their shared ethos. They assumed that all people should share in this

ethic, and that all people should share in the presumed morality of the times. These evangelicals believed that what was good for society, especially newcomers, migrants, the poor, and orphaned children, was to be instructed in the ways of morality and etiquette, as well as in correct religious teaching. Protestants anticipated that society would best be governed by divine law in the Bible, and they believed that the Bible taught a normative ethical vision that should be important for all those in society, especially the new immigrants.

Protestants in early Chicago believed that because they were harbingers of a vision and practice of community, they were a "better class" of people. They understood themselves to be a "respectable and virtuous" people, and biblically a "peculiar people." They believed that citizens should be benevolent, participating in the betterment of society through all its institutions. They believed that charity was necessary only in the short term, because those good and virtuous would eventually rise to prosperity, despite temporary cataclysm or financial disaster.

Hence, those poor were either worthy or unworthy, for it was impossible to conceive that the beggarly poor, the pauper, or the "dangerous classes" were such as the result of mere circumstance. Presumably, there must be something wrong with their virtue, something must be amiss about their character.

The good evangelical was of course prosperous, or on his way to being so. He was temperate and did not give in to strong drink. He was strong, hardworking, thrifty, self-controlled, industrious,

and therefore virtuous. He was pious, and regarded his faith, his participation in benevolent societies, and his charity as evidence of his conversion. "Disinterested Benevolence" and therefore participation in public life or in one of the evangelistic endeavors or reform activities was presumed evidence of a reformed character.

The Protestants thought themselves to be a better class because they knew these things and practiced them. They were also the primary benefactors. They took care of the worthy poor, the widow, and dependent women and children, because they understood this to be their duty. Those permanently disabled or those proved to be unworthy, because of their begging, or refusal to work, were either not to be helped, or should be helped by the county, but not by private charity. To the better class, there should be no support of the lack of virtue in the poor or their "uncultivated" habits of vice, idleness, sloth, and certainly intemperance. Protestants thus gave charity resentfully, for a better class would not demand or need such charity.

The Protestants of early Chicago were a self-aware, self-conscious, "better class" of people. However, the usage of class in the literature of early Chicago refers to a shared culture, not to a socio-economic grouping. There was not a distinguishable middle or upper class at this time in Chicago. The Protestants of the period shared a culture, with certain beliefs, values, attitudes, and moral expectations.

They believed that prosperity followed virtue and that self-

control and industry would pay dividends. While there was a difference between those who aspired to prosperity, and those who achieved it, there was nonetheless a shared sense that for those who were pious and virtuous, prosperity and respectability would naturally follow. It was those who had achieved their longings, together with those who longed to achieve, that constituted a religiously grounded "better class" of people in early Chicago. It was this better class that assumed that their culture was in the public interest, and hence they operated on the assumption that their's was a dominant culture, and their institutions extended and manifested this hegemony over those who came later or came poor and destitute.

APPENDIX

TABLE I-A

Major Cities Worldwide and Nationally, 1857

<u>Principal Cities Worldwide</u>	<u>Population</u>
London	2,500,000
Paris	1,200,000
St. Petersburg	600,000
Constantinople	575,000
Vienna	420,000
Berlin	400,000
Naples	350,000
Glasgow	336,000
Lisbon	280,000
Dublin	265,000
Amsterdam	220,000
Madrid	220,000
Rome	180,000
Milan	175,000
Edinburgh	160,000
Hamburg	130,000

<u>Principal Cities, United States</u>	<u>Population</u>
New York City	800,000
Philadelphia	325,000
Boston	250,000
San Francisco	210,000
Baltimore	200,000
New Orleans	175,000
Cincinnati	175,000
St. Louis	120,000
Pittsburgh	110,000
Buffalo	100,000
Chicago	100,000 ^a

^aSource: Gager's Chicago City Directory, Ending June 1, 1857
(Chicago: John Gager and Co., 1856).

TABLE II-A

Numbers of Immigrants in Chicago by Ethnicity.

The following shows the numbers of immigrants by year among the larger classifications.^b

Nationality	1843 ^c	1850	1860	1870	1880
Germany	816	5035	22,230	52,318	75,205
Ireland	773	6096	19,889	39,988	44,411
African	65	323	917	3,559	6,480
England/Wales		1883	4,354	10,027	13,045
Scotland		610	1,641	4,197	4,152
France		234	883	1,418	1,590
Sweden			816	6,154	12,930
North America				9,648	13,914
Norway				6,374	9,783
Bohemia				6,154	11,887
Denmark				1,243	2,556
Poland				1,205	5,536
Holland			305	1,640	2,045

^bSource: The People of Chicago, (1976), 9-20.

^cJ.W. Norris had the following for 1844: 816 Germans and Norwegians, 773 Irish, 667 Natives, 65 Africans, and 533 "transient persons." See, J.W. Norris, General Directory and Business Advertiser of the City of Chicago for the Year, 1844, With a Historical Sketch and Statistics Extending from 1837-1844 (Chicago: Ellis and Fergus, Printers, 1844).

TABLE III-A
Growth of Protestant Churches, 1848-1871.

The following captures the growth of Protestant churches in Chicago.^d

	1848	1852	1859	1861	1865	1871
Episcopalian	2	5	9	9	11	16
Methodist	4	8	8	6	11	20
German Meth			1	3	3	
African Meth				1	2	2
N S Presbyterian	4	5	10	8	8	17*
O S Presbyterian					4	
Baptist	2	2	6	7	11	18
Congregational		1	6	6	5	13
Lutheran	2	3	9	2	11	12
Evangelical	1			2	3	17
Christian Reformed						4
Society of Friends						5
Bethel	1	1	1	2	2	2
Universalist	1	1	1	2	2	1
Unitarian	1	1	1	2	2	3
New Jerusalem	1	1	1	2	2	2
Jewish		1	2	3	5	2
Catholic	4	6	9	12	25	5
Totals	25	35	58	67	108	25

(* Presbyterians are united after War. @Total figures vary depending on the list available).

^dSources are from the Chicago City Directories, 1848-1871.

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University of Illinois At Chicago, History, 1984-1987.

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