

The Ideas
Of
William Charles Good
A Christian and Agrarian Reformer
The Formative Years
1896 - 1919

by

Roy Thomas

'My aim is educational not controversial'

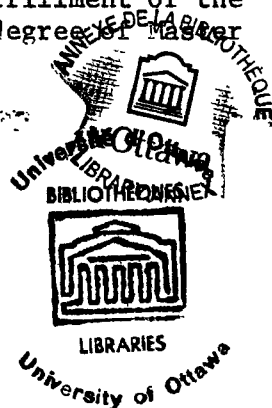
W.C. Good

As a farmer, officer of farm associations, co-operative evangelist . . . writer, philosopher, social reformer and idealist, W.C. Good has made a very great contribution to the history of this century in Canada.

H.E. Hannam
Ontario Farm Leader

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Ottawa, Canada, 1973.



R. Thomas, Ottawa, 1973.

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PREFACE

William Charles Good was a Christian and agrarian reformer active in the Ontario farm movement during the years 1896 to 1948, of whom Frank Underhill wrote: "He had the most philosophical mind of any of the Ontario farm leaders".¹ This is a study of Good's ideas.

The turn of the century saw the position of agriculture undergo a drastic change. The development of industry and the movement of people to cities were placing the farmers on the defensive. Many were angry at these developments and sought political and economic means to protect themselves from big financial urban interests. To justify their ideas morally they looked for guidance to anti-industrialist values which were being propagated by many ardent Christians who insisted that the whole economic system must be radically reformed. By 1919 this Social Gospel had become the 'religion' of the agrarian revolt.²

Paul Sharp, in writing of the Social Gospel³ and agrarian revolt, emphasized the important role of Christian philosophers

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1. Frank H. Underhill, 'Mr. Good's Political Philosophy' in the Canadian Forum, August, 1933, quoted by W.C. Good, "Farmer Citizen", Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1958, p.184.
 2. A.R. Allen, "The Social Gospel and the Reform Tradition in Canada, 1890-1928", Canadian Historical Review, Vol. 49, No. 4, issue of December 1968, p.184.
 3. The Social Gospel started as a Protestant reform movement in the United States. It was an active force from the 1860's to the First World War.

and idealists from western Canada.⁴ If he is right, and leadership played a crucial part in the west, then it could be argued that persons of comparable stature would be necessary for such a development in Ontario. However, W.L. Morton, while he recognized the Social Gospel and the prominence of its leaders in western Canada, largely ignored the presence of agrarian social gospellers in the east.⁵

Yet the agrarian revolt assumed considerable proportions in Ontario, after all in 1919 a provincial government dominated by farmers was elected, and in 1921 the province sent twenty two Progressives to Ottawa. But, in the classic accounts of the Progressive movement, hardly any attention is paid to the rise of agrarian revolt in Ontario.

If indeed the Social Gospel was important in the western case, it is certainly worth while speculating whether it did not contribute to the Ontario movement as well. An explanation of such a hypothesis would be much more ambitious than the scope of the present work. Yet surely it is of some significance that William Charles Good, one of the leading publicists of the Ontario farm movement, should have been an exponent of the Social Gospel. He was one of three agrarian representatives to speak at the Congress organized in March, 1914, by

4. Paul F. Sharp, Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada, Minneapolis: (University of Minnesota Press, 1948), p.61, ff.

5. W.L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada, Toronto: (University of Toronto Press, 1950), p.28.

the Social Services Council. This organization best expressed the Social Gospel in Canada at that time.

The purpose of this thesis is to study the ideas of Good, but in addition the author hopes to show the kind of values which an important farm leader held and which may well have been possessed by other leaders of the farm movement in Ontario.

Chapter One

The Setting and Personal Background

William Charles Good was the eldest of six children and the only son. He was born in 1876 at his family's farm, Myrtleville, near Brantford, Ontario, and like many farm boys of the period he was required to spend some of his time working on the farm. He passed his high school entrance when he was twelve and then attended, somewhat intermittently, the Brantford Collegiate Institute. He was a good student particularly in mathematics and science. He also developed an interest in the social histories written by John Richard Green.¹ These books reflected a concern for the welfare of the average man and they made an impression on Good and helped stimulate his interest in social reform.

Despite his haphazard attendance he obtained his Junior Certificate by the time he was seventeen. He then completed a six months teacher's training course after which he started teaching at a rural school. Because the salary was so small and the conditions

1. John Richard Green, 1873-1883, had been a Methodist minister but left the ministry to write popular social histories. A pronounced liberal, his best known work was The Short History of the English People, (London: Macmillan & Co., 1874).

so unattractive, he resigned after six months and went back to Brantford to pursue upper school work. His results in the departmental examinations of 1896 were so good that he was offered a scholarship which enabled him to enter University in 1896, at the age of twenty one.

During his university years he developed his interest in social problems. This concern for reform was whetted by an article in the Templer² by Henry George. Good was impressed by the writer's insistence that although Christianity ought to be a beacon towards social betterment, established religion allied itself with injustice.³

He also read Henry Drummond, whose greatest work, The Ascent of Man, argued that social environment was the prime factor in human development and that each change in it led to a higher stage in man's morality.⁴ Drummond's thesis so impressed Good that he prepared his own essay entitled "Evolution of Man"⁵ which maintained that the

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2. The Templer was a temperance weekly published in Hamilton, Ontario.
 3. William Charles Good Papers, Public Archives of Canada, Vol. 1, (Good to J. Ballachey, Sept. 25th, 1896), (33-38). Further references using this source will be titled Good Papers.
 4. Henry Drummond, The Ascent of Man, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1899), pp. 439-444.
 5. He wrote this essay in order to further his own thoughts on the subject.

law of evolution was in full conformity with God's aims in that it led to the perfectability of man.

About this time he became interested in and greatly influenced by the Social Gospel. Good probably read the Gospel authors' novels first. The one which stirred him most was In His Steps; What Would Jesus Do?, a sermon story by the Reverend Charles Monroe Sheldon of Topeka, Kansas; this allegory applied the teachings of Jesus to United States social problems and, Good claimed, clarified the true meaning of Christianity.⁶

Another book which influenced Good was Richard T. Ely's Introduction to the Study of Political Economy.⁷ In it the author discussed the evils of a modern industrial society and proposed the application of true Christian brotherhood as the only method to eliminate them. Good devoted parts of his diary to quoting those arguments which involved social reform; these condemned lives of luxury, a viewpoint which Good had already incorporated into his own social philosophy.

6. Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence, (Good to Fanny Doyle May 14th, 1899), (204-207).

7. Richard T. Ely was a leading Social Gospeller who became Director of the School of Economics and Political Science at Wisconsin University.

Another social gospel writer to be found on his reading list at that time was a preacher, Washington Gladden, who published his sermons in 1875 in a volume called Working Men and their Employers. Gladden viewed the relationship of man to society as analogous to a cell within a living organism, each part being dependent on the other. He further maintained that the organic theory had been present in Christianity since the writings of St. Paul's Epistles but had been misconstrued to apply to the Church only, rather than society as a whole.⁸ Learning to see society as interdependent strengthened Good's faith in co-operation.

Good shared a developing social consciousness with a number of young men who became his most intimate friends at University. All were deeply religious, all sought to apply the teachings of Christ to the improvement of society. His life long friend J. F. Coleman was also a strong advocate of the Social Gospel. A second intimate J. A. Martin was active in the Single Tax movement, and partly because of his influence Good became a proponent of that scheme of taxation. Martin also opened his friend's eyes to Christian socialist ideas and got

8. C. H. Hopkins, The Rise of the Social Gospel in American Protestantism, 1865-1915, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1940), p.59.

him involved with the Christian Socialist League.⁹ A third friend was Charles Shortt who later became a Church of England missionary in Japan. While both were still at University he aroused in Good an interest in missionary work abroad.

Unable, because of family reasons, to pursue this vocation Good turned his talents to spreading the Social Gospel at the University and founded the Inter-College Club devoted to the study of its works. He also became quite active in the Social Reform League, a liberal Christian group influenced by Gospel ideas, and was an energetic member of the Y.M.C.A. In 1899 he was the Association's delegate to an International Student Conference at East Northfield in Massachusetts. He returned to Canada more convinced than ever that Jesus' teachings must be applied to man's problems on earth.

Another area of Christian concern at that time was the production and consumption of alcohol. Good, a teetotaler, believed that its excessive use degraded man and that its promotion was immoral.¹⁰ He wrote the occasional article and, sometimes, attended a meeting of the Womens Christian Temperance Union although pressure of other events

9. He remained impressed by its humanitarianism. His reservations are dealt with in Ch. Four, The Co-operative Movement.

10. This is discussed in Ch. Two, Religion and Social Reform.

kept him on the fringes of the movement. It was not until the 1920's that Good was to hold a number of positions in the temperance movement.

His university career terminated in a rather unusual manner in 1900, for while he had proved to be an excellent student and was hopeful of obtaining post graduate scholarship in physics and chemistry, it was awarded to another man who had not even applied.

Although a university scandal resulted, the decision remained unchanged.¹¹ In retrospect Good was profoundly thankful for the turn of events, for he had come to realize that his real interests lay in the study of economics and politics.

After spending the winter of 1900-1901 in Toronto, Good returned to the farm. While there he studied the writings of Walter Rauschenbusch, a Baptist Minister and educator. The cleric evoked the aspirations of a genuine social fraternity which believed that Jesus' words, as applied to human relations, could be taken as the literal truth.¹² Good was sympathetic with this belief, but his own views on the role of Christianity within society had already matured by 1901 when he read the author's Christianity and Social Christianity

11. Good put this experience behind him and was later to become a member of the Board of Governors of the University.

12. Good, op. cit., p.19.

and Social Crisis; he and Rauschenbusch arrived independently at the conclusion that a genuine social fraternity would be achieved by following Christ's ideal of brotherhood.

He appears to have been in some confusion regarding his future plans; in the fall of 1901 he accepted the offer of a position in the Department of Chemistry at the Ontario Agricultural College, but remained there only two years and then returned to the farm. One reason was his father's poor health, but another was that W. L. Smith, the editor of the Weekly Sun, sought his help in organizing a new farm association.

Doubtless Good had become interested in the farm movement because of the new difficulties facing the farmers. As the century ended Canada was changing from an agrarian to an industrialized and urban society, and around the 1890's thoughtful farmers had become concerned over Ontario's farm de-population. There were fewer farm labourers available and the smaller farms were being absorbed into larger units, the consequence was that machinery became more necessary and financial problems more and more acute.¹³ The overall

13. R. J. Van Loon, "The Political Thought of the United Farmers of Ontario", Unpublished M.A. thesis, Dept. of History, Carleton University at Ottawa, 1965. pp. 47-48.

effect was to weaken the political and economic influence of the province's rural population.

General economic developments were also of concern to the farmers. In the 1890's the Canadian economy had begun to shake free of the depression of the previous decade, but the growing prosperity was not equally shared. The new rich were to be found, not among the farmers, but among the financiers, promoters, and owners of protected industries. The influence of private industry increased as that of the Ontario farmers declined.

The failure of the Conservative and Liberal Parties to offer effective remedies for agricultural problems finally forced farm leaders to establish the Farmers' Association of Ontario. Its primary aims were to educate the farmers about their problems and lobby for reform legislation.

The Association was the third Ontario farm organization in twenty five years. The first had been the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry, generally referred to as the Grange. It was founded in London, Ontario, in 1874, and its main concern was to eliminate the middle man by promoting farm co-operative production and merchandising.¹⁴ The growth of the Grange was rapid and its

14. Ibid.

decline equally so. Its collapse was partly due to the recession of 1874 which led farmers to concentrate on individual economic survival and put aside the idealism necessary for successful co-operative organization.¹⁵ Its refusal, too, to get directly involved in politics made it ineffective and hastened its end.

A more successful organization, politically, was the Patrons of Industry. It was established in Ontario in 1890, it opposed protectionism and advocated that tariffs be collected only for revenue, not for strengthening industry or agriculture. The Patrons in addition, favoured reciprocal trade agreements between Canada and other countries. Unlike the Grange it was politically active and succeeded in electing 17 M.P.P.'s in the election of 1894. This success was an indication of the sense of agrarian grievance in the province,¹⁶ but unfortunately for its supporters hopes the Patrons suffered almost complete collapse between 1895 and 1900; the strength of the established parties had proven too strong.

The farm organizations may have vanished but the problems remained, for as rural de-population continued to increase, inequality between classes in society grew, as did the domination of industrial

15. Jean MacLeod, "The United Farm Movement in Ontario 1914-43". Unpublished M.A. thesis Dept. of History, Queen's University of Kingston, 1958. p.8.

16. Ibid.

and political life by allied financial, railway and industrial interests. Thus a thoughtful farmer like Good was bound to consider the possibilities of trying again to form an organization to protect farm interests. Another influence directing Good towards the farm movement was the Weekly Sun, under the ownership of Goldwin Smith, whose new editor was W.L. Smith. As a matter of fact Good became a constant contributor to the paper.

During the spring and summer of 1902 many letters from those who had been active in the Grange or Patrons of Industry appeared in the Weekly Sun. The correspondents pointed out the problems facing farmers and urged the formation of a new organization. As a result of this groundswell of opinion the Farmers' Association was established that year under the leadership of Goldwin Smith, W. C. Mallory, and W. L. Smith. Goldwin Smith emphasized the importance of concentration on publicizing measures favourable to the farmers but he opposed entering the political arena as a separate party, his viewpoint prevailed. The objectives of the Association were determined at a preliminary meeting in 1902. The organization was to organize a study by farmers of the social and economic problems facing them, to disseminate information relative to the farm movement, and to formulate

legislation and bring it to the attention of the appropriate legislature. The new group further proposed that their members participate in both political parties; finally it urged the greater use of co-operative methods in the purchase and sale of goods.

It was the first time that Good had played an active role in the formation of a farm organization, for while he was not present at the incorporation meeting in 1902, he followed its affairs with great interest. He attended its first annual meeting in September, 1903, became a member of the Resolutions Committee and an active propagandist for the new Association in the Weekly Sun. At the 1904 meeting of the Farmers' Association Good was appointed to its executive. Through these activities he met future farm leaders including John J. Morrison and Ernest C. Drury. It was during this time he organized a local Brantford Association which ran without serious interruption for a decade.

Meanwhile the Grange had become a largely inarticulate and ineffective force, realizing this its leaders began to see an advantage in uniting with the more effective new group. In 1906 the Grange invited the Farmers' Association to send a representative to their annual meeting. Good was selected as the Associations representative and played a major role in persuading the Grange to amalgamate with his organization. A new constitution was ratified in 1907 under the

name, The Dominion Grange And Farmers' Association, its aims were basically the same as those of the Farmers' Association.

The following year found Good busy writing articles for a number of publications including the Weekly Sun. He dealt with such diverse questions as the evils of protectionism, influence of farm organizations on community life, and their role in developing good farming practices. Good was also active in the federal election in the summer of 1908 and spoke at meetings in support of farmer candidates, many of whom stood as Independent Liberals.

In November, he addressed the annual meeting of the Grange and Farmers' Association on direct legislation through the initiative and referendum. He also began discussions with the western farm leaders that were to lead to the formation of the Canadian Council of Agriculture.

The Council was established at the next annual Association meeting in November, 1909. A committee was then appointed to draft a constitution; its three members were E. A. Partridge of Saskatchewan, Roderick Mackenzie of Manitoba, and Good of Ontario. Their work was not completed until the winter of 1910, so that due to this and his farming obligations Good found no time to participate in the large farm delegation which visited Ottawa that summer, although he fully supported its aims.¹⁷

17. Farmer delegates from throughout Canada went to Ottawa to present their views in favour of tariff reduction.

When the final draft of the constitution appeared it clearly reflected the hand of Good; it was virtually identical in its aims to that of the Grange and Farmers' Association. The Council's stated role was to organize study groups to consider the social and economic problems of agriculture, to formulate demands for legislation, to encourage membership in one or other of the political parties, and to further co-operative methods.

Despite this new unity of purpose the combined efforts of the farm movement in Canada proved insufficient to ensure the passage of reciprocity. Its defeat in 1911 was a major blow to the majority of farmers, and in Ontario it became evident to some farm leaders that a still better and more comprehensive organization was needed. In 1913 the Dominion Granges' Master, W.C. Good¹⁸, joined by E. C. Drury and J. A. Fraser undertook to enlarge the existing association. It was decided to add strength by uniting with government sponsored clubs¹⁹ and special interest farm groups,²⁰ as well as the newly formed United Farmers' Co-operative Company.

18. Good served as Master of the Grange through 1913 to 1915.

19. The Farmers' Institute system was organized to further scientific farming. Ostensibly non-political the clubs were becoming increasingly concerned with political problems.

20. These organizations had to do with such areas as livestock, fruit growing, and seed grain.

The union was concluded on March 20th 1914 and called the United Farmers of Ontario. The platform was the same as that of its predecessor; the organization was to develop co-operation and serve as a forum for propaganda and discussion. Once more the leaders refused to consider direct political action but continued the previous attempts to influence legislation.

Meanwhile on February 7th, 1914, a month before the U.F.O. had been founded, the United Farmers' Co-operative Company was incorporated with W. C. Good as its President.

By 1914 Good had been active in the co-operative movement for nearly six years, starting in 1908, he, along with George Keen and Samuel Carter had helped found the first nation wide co-operative Company. The Co-operative Union of Canada's aim was to unite co-operative enthusiasts in English speaking Canada into a movement capable of reforming Canadian society in the interests of the consumer. This involved ending speculation and the influence of wealth.²¹ It was these ideals which Good brought to the United Farmers' Co-operative Company.

The period between 1908 to 1914 had seen only a slow development of the co-operative movement in Ontario. The Co-operatives that were established faced both strong competition from individualistic

21. G. R. I. Macpherson, 'The Search for the Commonwealth, the Co-operative Union of Canada, 1909-1939'. Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Dept. of History, University of Western Ontario at London, 1971, p.iii.

joint stock companies and opposition from the courts, for no adequate legislation existed for the provincial incorporation of co-operatives. Good's main contribution was to popularize co-operative principles within the organized farm movement, at the time of the Union with the U.F.O. in 1914, Good was President of the Co-operative Company, he relinquished that post in 1915 but remained on as Director.

Good, meanwhile, had been spending most of his time working extremely hard on his farm. In 1917, due to the pressure of work, he was forced to give up his executive post in the U.F.O. he had held since 1906. He continued, however, to write many articles dealing with the inefficiencies of the Department of Agriculture and the issues of profiteering and conscription raised by the war.

Upon the outbreak of hostilities in 1914 the United Farmers immediately threw themselves into support of the war effort. For the moment co-operation and tariff reform became less important in the farm movement. It turned its attention to the problem of increasing food production; this necessitated enlarging land acreage while keeping workers on the farms. The competition for labour became acute because many were attracted by the high wages offered in the factories. The added threat of conscription brought matters to a head and led to the clash between the U.F.O. and the government.

The U.F.O. became a strong lobbyist for the exemption of agricultural labourers from military service. The Canadian farmers forced Borden to promise that young men working on the land would not be called up. When, however in the spring of 1918, the Prime Minister cancelled all exemptions for the 20, 21 and 22 year age groups, the Ontario farmers were furious. Along with Quebec farmers they descended upon Ottawa on May 14, 1918 but were not allowed to present their case on the floor of the House of Commons.²² Aroused, those from Ontario called for a special convention of the U.F.O.

This call by the rank and file in 1918 caught the executive by surprise, as did their subsequent demand for a new policy of direct political action. Finally, in October 1918, in light of the upcoming Provincial election the leadership recommended the selection of farmers' candidates in rural constituencies. Good along with E.C. Drury, and Manning Doherty wrote the platform. It emphasized the need for promoting voluntary co-operation, improved general education, highways for use of country as well as city, a massive plan for reforestation, public development of hydro-electric power, the extension of the initiative and referendum, and electoral reform by use of the transferable vote.

22. A privilege which Laurier had accorded them in 1910.

This document showed Good's influence for the planks on the extension of the initiative and the transferable vote were patently his; indeed, as we shall see, they were opposed to Drury's own ideas. That Good was very influential in drafting the programme was confirmed when he was selected to tour the province explaining the platform.

Unexpectedly the U.F.O. won 44 seats in the election and were called on to form a government. The divisions within the group were such that they debated whether to accept the responsibility or not. Good exhorted the farmers to elect from the Legislative a Cabinet that would represent a diversity of interests, a co-operative form of government. This advice was not heeded, and in the end E. C. Drury, formed an alliance with Labour and became Premier of Ontario. In the deliberations surrounding the formation of the government Good played only a minor role, this was partly because of the demands of his farm, and partly because of his increasing interest in federal politics.

Encouraged by the provincial results and finally convinced that needed reforms could only be achieved through direct political action, Good allowed his name to stand in 1919 and was elected in 1921 as the National Progressive federal candidate for Brant. He remained a member until 1925.

His main concerns in the House of Commons were the reform of the banking and credit systems, basic changes in the tariff structure,

and the introduction of proportional representation. Of these only banking was a new interest, he proposed a central Canadian bank to allow for governmental control over credit.

The Progressive Caucus gradually split between those who tended to follow the lead of the Liberals, and those who were determined to maintain their independence. These latter members, which included Good, came to call themselves a Ginger Group.

He found his years in Ottawa were full of frustration, and he became increasingly critical of the Canadian political system, at the same time he was becoming more active as a co-operator. In 1925 Good retired from politics to take a full time position in the movement and he became one of the most active co-operative leaders in Canadian history, his span of service extending until 1948.

Good was a very serious man who never sought the humorous or the trivial, a trait that was reflected in both his public and private correspondence. His letters were filled with philosophy and ideas, proposals and criticisms, in particular his diaries contained much on morality and ethics.

Filled with a sense of mission Good was a most prolific writer, and as a publicist he had few equals in Ontario. His serious writings began early in his University years and continued until he had completed his autobiography at the age of eighty two.

The aim of this thesis is to study the ideas of William Charles Good as they were expressed during the years from 1896 to 1919. To try to do justice to the whole man, the philosopher, farm leader and co-operator would require a much larger work than what is being attempted here.

By 1919 Good had developed all the main ideas that were to guide him throughout his life. His views were determined on the role of Christians within society, on the importance of the farm environment, and on the spirit of co-operation. So too were his opinions set on methods of taxation, on imperialism, militarism, war and peace, and on partyism. Moreover from 1896 to 1919 Good had functioned in politics primarily as an educator. With the victory of the United Farmers of Ontario and the rise of the Progressives this period of his life ended and he became politician. This thesis then will study the ideas he had developed before he went into politics

CHAPTER TWO

Religion and Social Reform

Events in the United States influenced religious attitudes in Canada at the turn of the century. During the 1880's the U.S. was in the throes of industrialization and urbanization. The problems of adjustment were made more difficult by the actions of the ruling monied oligarchy which abused its power and caused distress to many. Various reformers sought remedies, among these were Protestant laymen and clerics who found the doctrines of the churches, less and less satisfying. These men needed a sense of mission, and they found it in the Social Gospel.

The Gospel arose in the United States as a Protestant crusade consecrated to social justice. It maintained that to assure man's progress on earth, the teachings of Christ must be applied to public problems. The chief vehicle for the Gospel in the U.S. was the American Institute of Social Service which dealt with practical questions, child labour, wealth and capital, and civic corruption. This and other organizations were the forerunners of similar councils in Canada.

In the years immediately prior to 1919 the Canadian Protestant churches were a powerful force and wielded considerable influence, they had grown up with the new settlements and tended to be close to the people. Regular church going was a common practice for many persons.

Some Canadian Protestants proved enthusiastic converts to the Social Gospel, an ardour kindled by their attendance at interdenominational conferences in the United States. In the short space of 12 years, 1906 to 1918, the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Church of England came to question aspects of 'laissez-faire' capitalism. In the process, elements of Canadian Protestantism absorbed some reformist views and came to make them their own. An ambitious effort was made at popularizing Social Gospel ideas, so reading and discussion groups in the form of Social Service Councils arose, they included among their prominent members W.C. Good.

Good was an exceptionally religious man, his devotional upbringing was the responsibility of his Aunt Annie Ballachey, a circumstance which proved to his advantage. She was an excellent teacher well able to arouse a keen interest in the spirit of the scriptures, under her tutelage he studied the Church of England catechism and developed his own attitude towards fundamentalism; he came to believe that the Bible was not a series of facts but rather a compilation of lessons that represented God's will.

Good's enquiring mind led him to examine critically his Aunt's literalist approach. He read Inspiration and Authority of the Holy Scriptures, by Dr. Sheraton¹, the fundamentalist Principal of the

1. Dr. Sheraton accepted the writings of the Bible as the literal truth.

Presbyterian Wycliffe College, whose views, while they failed to change Good's mind, made him inquisitive enough to try to meet with the author.² His inability to accept literalism did not worry Good as he doubted whether the act of questioning could ever adversely effect a truly religious person.³

By 1901 he had developed the theoretical base for his own views and presented it in a paper entitled 'Amos' Teaching Concerning God;' its three themes dealt with the equality of man before God, the concept of sin, and the perfectability of man.⁴

Good's God was a Spirit of social justice who looked upon all humans as His creations and loved them equally; discrimination on any grounds was therefore unchristian. He thus condemned the attitude of those Protestant Canadians who appeared to work on the premise that God was both white and Protestant.

Sin he saw exemplified by those who lived the 'good life' yet disregarded the welfare of others. This selfishness they compounded by hypocrisy in attempting to fool the public by returning

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2. Good Papers, Vol. 1, (Good to his mother, Apr. 30th, 1899), (191-192) It is not known whether he ever met the author.
 3. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Notes, (Good to ed. of the Canadian Churchman, Dec. 6th, 1903), a copy, (15825-30)
 4. Good Papers, Vol. 19/Religion, ('Amos' Teaching Concerning God", 1901, paper prepared for YMCA Meeting), (14057-60).

a part of their 'stolen' wealth and portraying it as an act of charity; Good labelled such behaviour as "the painting over of the consciences of mankind."⁵

Thirdly, he wrote of man's capacity for moral improvement; he fervently believed that the Universe was under the direction of a God whose aim was the perfectability of man. Accordingly it was essential that man be made aware of this in order to achieve the spirit of selflessness and social justice and so accelerate God's process.

His critical attitude led him to question the value of separate denominations. His desire for unity was evident and probably strengthened as early as July 1899, when he visited relatives in Manitoba; it was while there that he wrote approvingly of people from all denominations in the area who continually attended each others services and so promoted friendly feeling and fellowship. Presumably referring to the lack of interdenominationalism in southern Ontario he added, "I would like to see it adopted more or less in some of our larger places, where I know there is a great deal of sectarian narrowness and prejudice."⁶

His disenchantment with established churches, while gradual, was strengthened by the conviction that many clerics were more interested in raising monies from the wealthy than questioning the morality of

5. Ibid.

6. Good Papers, Vol. 19/Religion, (Good to sister Louise, July, 1899), (219-26).

the donor. This criticism was fortified by a further persuasion that the clergy themselves had failed to address themselves to the social problems of the day. He therefore came to judge all sermons by the degree to which they were 'practical' or tackled current ills. He reserved his wrath for those based on dogma and obstruse semantics for he saw them as mocking the scriptures by confusing and hiding rather than clarifying the questions of the day.⁷ Such forthright criticism aroused one cleric and his parishioners to look upon him as a dangerous outsider. They especially resented the fact that he refused to attend regularly any single church or denomination; this Calvinist minister accused Good of undermining the strength of organized religion, and claimed that some Brantford people considered him as being "a grouch at the Universe as a whole and the Church in particular."⁸ But even his critics never denied that he was a 'moral man' who attempted to live by the Christian code as he interpreted it. Nevertheless these criticisms helped isolate him more from organized religion and, by 1919, he temporarily abandoned regular church going and replaced it with private worship.⁹ His Christian convictions, however,

7. Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence, (Good to aunt Annie, Dec. 4th, 1898), (156).

8. Good Papers, Vol. 4/3, (Rev. F.J. Maxwell to Good Apr. 23rd, 1919), (2859-64). (Letter-head-Minister Calvin Church Manse, Pembroke).

9. He returned to formal religion in the 1920's under the banner of the Presbyterian Church.

never wavered and the Bible always remained his guide to social action, a continuing help in overcoming human trials and problems.

Good's identification with the Social Gospel deepened his social conscience and he condemned ever more strongly the hypocrisy of those who failed to practice what they preached. Foremost among such persons were those contemporary clerics who while praising martyrs ignored their examples. He recalled the story of Christ's life on earth and pointed out that He had died in poverty, and thus by the standards of the Christian establishment would have been judged a failure.¹⁰

Good did not accept all the credos of the Gospel; he disagreed that the Kingdom of Heaven must be approached on earth through an industrial state, rather he looked to a strong agrarian society to fulfill the pattern of God. In this he appeared a captive of his own belief in the Agrarian Myth.¹¹

His understanding of the Gospel caused him to scorn those who glorified the importance of material wealth. For him one of the most astonishing fallacies was the belief that rich men as such were beneficial to society; it was not surprising that his first quotation from Ely's Introduction to the Study of Political Economy was on the acquisition of wealth: "A defence is sometimes

10. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Diaries, (July 21st, 1899), (15359-61).

11. Good always believed that an agricultural society was superior to an industrial.

offered for private luxury which is so manifestly weak that it scarcely deserves attention. It is said, 'It gives opportunity to work'¹². The same expenditure for humanity, he observed, would also have given an equal opportunity to labour.¹²

His condemnation of materialism did not alter his acceptance of the profit motive, rather what he decried was the single minded pursuit of material wealth. He disapproved of it because he believed that it led to the lowering of moral standards; he included in his papers the description of a scene at the New York Stock Exchange when the U.S. financier John D. Rockefeller made a profit of \$30,000,000 in a few hours.

The frantic-waving of hands, the distorted, red faces. The hoarse bellowing the rushing of messengers who were entangled in the swaying of the mob as it swayed to and fro made it look like a mob of savages bent upon each others' destruction. It was a struggle for wealth, for thousands of millions. Fortunes were tossed from one man to another at a wave of a hand They tore off each others' clothing. Shook their fists in each others' faces. 13

Good looked behind this spectacle to those who manipulated the money market and examined the morals and ethics of some individual plutocrats in North America; first he considered Rockefeller, founder of Standard Oil of New Jersey, whose methods of achieving wealth included having his employees burn Company books, blow up opposition oil refineries, murder competitors and

12. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Notebooks, (Good wrote out these passages, c. 1899), (15539).

13. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Diaries, (Feb. 19th, 1899), (15275-82).

persecute those who questioned his professional ethics. Yet this same man was considered by some as a 'practicing' Christian, for he was a prominent Baptist and a Sunday School teacher who taught the virtues of a frugal life and also was a philanthropist who gave handsomely to the Baptist Church and the University of Chicago. Such a person, Good concluded, held double standards, one for his business the other for his private life.

In his walks along Bloor Street in Toronto, Good had occasion to pass the stately mansion of Mr. George Gooderham, distiller and banker. He saw in it not only a grand house in spacious grounds but one built on foundations of degradation, of blighted workers' homes and of beastly drunkenness. What moral code, he asked, could justify such exploitation?

I do not know Mr. Gooderham personally; I dare say he is a very nice man He will probably tell you that it's none of his business what the saloon keeper may do, that he is in fair and square legal 'business' and who shall say him nay? 15

This attaining of money unbound by any moral restraint was, to Good, a most evil curse which had crept into man's relation to God.

Another estate that attracted his notice while walking was that of the biscuit manufacturer Mr. William Christie: "A man engaged in making as much money as possible, honestly, in order

14. Ibid.

15. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Diaries, (Feb. 19th, 1899), (1528^a-91)

to spend as he liked.¹⁶ He criticized, in particular, the use to which Christie put his wealth. He wondered if Christie's dawdling gardeners might not have been better employed in landscaping the slums of the biscuit workers, and whether it was necessary to build stables superior in most respects to the homes of these workers. What, asked Good, was the life aim of such a man?

Smoke, eat, drink and be merry, thank God
for blessed providence, retire from business,
leave a fortune behind with lots to the Church,
some to build a Christie Hall, plenty to his
family, die and then what? 17

Mr. Massey, Sr., a leading Toronto Methodist, a Bible Class Teacher and farm implement manufacturer came under Good's scrutiny. According to his view the Masseys had acquired their wealth by stifling competition and getting a monopoly. Now they were busy building large edifices including a mausoleum to add fame and glamour to their name.

It is much easier [Good observed] for a Massey
to build, nay, not build, but to cause others
to build a Massey Hall, than to build temples
of the Holy Ghost under his influence and power. 18

It was much simpler, in his words, for Massey to build an edifice while sending his employees home with docked pay to their comfortless houses and deprived families than forego his hall and do justice to his workers.

16. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Diaries (Mar. 1st, 1899), (15298-302).

17. Ibid.

18. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Diaries (Feb. 19th, 1899), (15275-82).

In these studies he was concerned with the materialist philosophy and its apparent distortion of Christian ideals. He saw an example of perversion of religious thought in the erection of great churches; such monuments represented, to Good, an insult to God insofar as their building attributed to Him one of the earthly vices, the love of flattery.

In analysing the attitudes of these capitalists Good appeared to arrive at two somewhat different conclusions: one view presumed that the plutocrats were unaware¹⁹ of any immoral acts, that they were in fact schizophrenic. 'They unwittingly killed by thousands in line of business but also wittingly saved by the hundreds as acts of Christian charity.'²⁰ This judgement appeared to accept the thesis that able, intelligent men were uninformed of what was going on in their enterprises, a highly questionable supposition. At another time he inferred that capitalists had a different set of morals, one for business another for their personal life; this suggested that they were aware²¹ of the dissimilarity in their attitudes and accepted it. Good never clarified the disparity in his own view but managed to give the impression that in neither case were the capitalists intentionally immoral. He was able to arrive at this conclusion probably because

19. My emphasis.

20. Good Papers, Op. Cit.

21. My emphasis.

he believed the best of his fellow man and blamed society for their moral lapses.

Good thereby concluded that it was the community that was at fault and must be improved and the only way to accomplish that was to encourage a new morality which, to be successful, had to be promoted by both faith and love. Faith was needed as a moral shield to protect the reformer from doubt, discouragement and despair, and to provide him with the required courage to persevere against opposition. However by itself it was not enough for it could not succeed without the second emotion, love.

Here indeed was the kernel of Good's Christianity for love, he believed, was the greatest force in the world and people responded to it more than any other sentiment. "Nothing can withstand the power of love; opposition melts away like snow before the April sun."²² He maintained that only when this fact was understood by Christian reformers, could they work effectively for a better world.

He always believed that Christianity was practical and capable of application. His approach to the Bible and to sermons reflected his confidence that religion was a force to enable man in overcoming human trials and problems and by so doing perfect himself.

22. Good Papers, Vol. 21/Sciences, ("Jottings on Evolution of Man", 1899), (15866-92).

He wrote:

Now as all roads used to lead to Rome, so every line of investigation leads us to the conclusion that... the whole environment...is of such a nature and changes in such a manner as to bring about...the evolution of a spiritual world, and the supremacy of the Principle of Love. 23

For him the guiding force in this Universe was a God of Love. Good saw his mission as one of accelerating God's own design for the perfectability of man and providing the intellectual climate which would nurture the ideals of Christian reform.

Good's idea of the Social Gospel was shared by other farm leaders, including Drury and Morrison. The Gospel however was not a programme in itself; what it furnished these men was the conviction, the certainty of progress. In the Church going society of rural Ontario it also provided them with respectability and enabled them to clothe their ideas in a biblical rhetoric familiar to the farmers.

But goodwill and moral rectitude do not necessarily lead to solutions, the Social Gospel was no substitute for a plan of social reform. Just because Good believed in it, did not ensure that he was able to develop correct legislative reform proposals which would command sufficient political support to ensure their passage, and as we shall see he failed to do so.

23. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Diaries, (Feb. 19th, 1899), (15275-82).

CHAPTER THREE

The Agricultural Myth

The years since 1890 in Ontario had been a period of increasingly large population shifts from country to city.¹ Not only was the size of cities growing rapidly but the industrial combines were rapidly increasing their power over society. The whole issue of rural depopulation and urban growth worried and became an obsession to the farmers. The responsibility for the decline in rural population was attributed to the attraction of shorter working hours and higher pay in the cities. The Farmer's Sun blamed most of the real or imagined ills of society on this development.

As international trade developed, the farmers became more vulnerable to world price fluctuations. This was an added problem for agriculture and made an already risky business even more hazardous. The era also saw the decline of the small farm and the progressive consolidation of the land to larger and larger holdings, thus the individual farmer working his own land was having a rough time. Under all these trying circumstances it was not surprising that farmers sought an ideology that would assure them of their own worth; such was the Agrarian Myth.

The Myth asserted that the farmer on his farm was a more moral person than the man who lived in the city, and that society

1. In 1901 the rural population of Ontario was 1,246,969, the urban 935,978. In 1911 the respective figures were 1,198,803, and 1,328,489.

could only be saved from decline by sustaining a strong agriculture; Good proved an eloquent spokesman for this myth.

Good viewed farming as a means of getting close to God, the communion with nature inherent in it held for him the emotion of a religious experience. This feeling was strengthened by his conviction that the gross inequalities of wealth apparent in the cities and the deprivations of the urban poor were threats to the physical and moral well being of all people.

Good agreed with the general sentiment of farm spokesmen that agriculture was the backbone of a moral society,² but he also extolled the other pastoral pursuits, lumbering and fishing. He was convinced that the constant struggle with nature inherent in these occupations was essential to the development of a stable and happy people.

Of the three callings, farming he believed, offered the greatest benefits and he attributed this partly to the particular relationship between man and woman on the farm. In no other situation was the work of each sex, so complementary one to another; the outside labour of the men was complemented by the farmhouse chores of the females, the harvesting of wheat reached its completion in the bakery oven and the milking of cows was essential in the production of butter.

2. This viewpoint was expressed by E.C. Drury when he addressed Laurier during the 'Siege of Ottawa' in December 1910. George F. Chipman, ed., The Siege of Ottawa, (Winnipeg (n.p.), 1913) p.51

This co-operative atmosphere developed an environment which Good viewed as a seed bed nurturing and preserving the 'best blood' in the nation.³ This was not a racist philosophy but an environmentalist theory; he believed that a person regardless of origin or a plant of species would, if well tended, develop into a healthy living thing. In man's case, Good's desired end product was the yeoman farmer who, strengthened by his struggle with nature and with a stake in society in the form of his own land, would become the cornerstone of the new society that Good envisaged. Any civilization which lacked a sound agriculture was unhealthy and doomed to die; this was a 'universal law', true for all countries and at all times.⁴

He expressed the essence of his feelings towards farming in characteristically Biblical style:

If life consisteth not in the abundance of things which a man possesseth, but rather in the clear understanding of eternal verities, then he who stands close to nature has much to be thankful for... 5

His philosophy maintained that urban development would lead to the eventual demoralization of man unless a greater emphasis was placed on country living. Any mass movement of people to the cities he deplored on both health and moral grounds: "Men

3. Good Papers, Vol. 18/Political Matters, (City and Country, c.1914-18), (13820-22).

4. Good Papers, Vol. 26/Agriculture, (c.1916), (12201-15) .

5. Ibid.

drift to cities, drift often out of pure air, health, strength, beauty, drift often in a few generations into physical weakness and feverish depravity."⁶ He saw these persons becoming both physically and morally soft and he blamed much of this on the absence of a struggle with nature. The urbanite, he portrayed, was one sheltered from the elements, spoilt by having milk delivered to his door, increasingly preoccupied with self and the acquiring of material wealth; such an environment inevitably sapped moral fibre.

He foresaw that the wealth of the industrialists also represented a threat to the farmers who remained on the land. The moneyed interests would ultimately invest a portion of their capital in agriculture; as absentee landlords, they would become social parasites growing rich on the toil of the cultivators, so that the tillers would become little more than tenant farmers as exploited as their brothers in the urban areas. They would suffer a corresponding lowering of their morale and efficiency. A country which tolerated this would become a state in which cities were serviced by an inefficient agriculture, a condition heralding the extinction of that civilization.⁷

6. W.C. Good, Production & Taxation in Canada from the Farmers Standpoint, (Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1919) p.xvi.

7. Ibid., pp. xvii - xviii.

Good saw that it would require a fight to avoid such a fate. The main weapon of the vested interests was propaganda, and in order to understand this threat he examined both its form and method. He concluded that it attempted to appeal to the selfishness and materialism in man. The media it used included rural classrooms, pulpits and even Eatons' catalogues. To oppose their effect Good advocated the establishment of an improved rural system of organization and education. "Without organization rural life degenerates and with its degeneration comes a collapse of the whole structure."⁸ He foresaw that opportunity for leisure had to be developed to ensure farm families a balanced life and lessen the attraction of the towns. He pleaded for the establishment of consolidated schools around which all local educational and social activities would revolve and suggested that the United Farmers of Ontario could utilize their local branches to assist in their organization, a proposal never acted upon.⁹

While Good's view of farming was strongly influenced by the prevailing concept of the 'Agrarian Myth' he nevertheless realized that industrial centres were necessary if for no other purpose than to provide machinery for the farm and, conversely, strong agriculture was essential for the real and permanent success

8. Good Papers, Vol. 16/Agriculture, (Good, "Rural Organization", unpublished article, c.1916,) (12201-15).

9. Good Papers, Vol. 24/Clippings, File U.F.O., ("The Farmer's Movement", address by Good at U.F.O. Convention, Dec. 16th, 1919), (Ottawa Citizen, Dec. 27th, 1919).

of secondary industry. His criticism was not then of industrialization, for he believed it inevitable, but rather that Canada had industrialized too quickly.

On the other hand his idea about the role of agriculture in society apparently underwent modification. Up to World War One he was convinced that the farmer deserved a special status, but by the end of the War his attitude had altered. He wrote, "I press the claims of agriculture - claims for justice, not for special privilege."¹⁰ The change may have been a result of accusations of class consciousness levelled at him, still even then it may be presumed he was convinced that farmers were more equal than others.

While some viewed the rapid growth of the city as something to be welcomed and perceived hope in the rise of industry and urban living,¹¹ many Ontario farmers saw the threat rather than the expectation, Good was among these. The excesses of the Provinces' industrialists and the plight of the urban poor affected his point of view. He was, as we have seen, willing to accept industrialization, but he always visualized it in a secondary role. His main interest was to make it more humane. His ideal was a farm society without great differences in riches, a co-operative state in which industry served agriculture and co-existed with it.

10. Ibid.

11. This attitude was exemplified by the Reverend J.W. Aiken in a speech to the Social Science Congress, Ottawa, March 1914, 'it is evident that God intends to use industrial life to bring in his Kingdom on earth.' Allen, op. cit., p.24.

Good idealized agricultural society but avoided examination of all of its realities. He was aware of the degrading life led by many farmers and their families, a state of affairs which could not be wholly blamed on rural de-population or the demoralizing influence of the cities; but he chose to ignore it because of his belief that agricultural life, with all its failings, was superior to that of the cities.

He never did dwell at length on the existence of the worker, and only on rare occasions did he deplore the conditions under which city workers lived and toiled. For him the average town dweller appeared to be one who, spoilt by the ease of achieving material needs, had become morally weak, while the farmer, steeled in his fight with nature, had become morally strong. He overlooked the fact that urbanites worked hard too. Whatever the merits of Good's conclusions, they were arrived at by the examination of some but not all of the realities. It was his acceptance of the Agrarian Myth that made it difficult for him to accept industrialization and urban living as a progressive step towards a more equitable society.

In sum Good overlooked the shortcomings of agriculture as well as the plight of the industrial workers, for he never wrote of the lives of subsistence farmers or of the sweat shop conditions

in the cities. While he believed he took the 'long view', he was unable to see that the wave of the future would be an industrial nation supported by agriculture, and that the greatest service he could perform was to assist his fellows in adjusting to such a development. Yet in his outlook Good undoubtedly reflected the views of many of his fellow farmers.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Co-operative Movement

Around 1900 the sanctity of private property in Canada was being put into question. Such prominent federal politicians as Andrew G. Blair and Robert Borden favoured the government ownership of railways. Then too the private ownership of public utilities came to be more and more questioned, in fact in response to the demands for inexpensive electricity the Ontario Government took over the production and distribution of hydro-electric power.

While these actions were aimed at making capitalism work better, socialists were seeking to replace the capitalist system itself with one based on public ownership. Socialism attracted support from industrial workers to a greater degree than is evident today.¹ As early as the 1880's a Socialist Labour Party had appeared in industrial centres of Ontario. It was succeeded by the Socialist League, organized by G. Weston Wripley, an acquaintance of Good's, and editor of the Citizen and Country. The League emphasized government ownership. There was also a Canadian Socialist Federation whose headquarters were in Berlin, Ontario. Its organ, Cotton's Weekly, was published in Quebec, but had a considerable circulation in the neighbouring province.

1. Almost every local of the sizeable Western Federation of Miners had its corresponding socialist club or party.

Among farmers, too, there was to be found movement to constrain private property. In Manitoba they forced the provincial government to adopt ownership of local grain elevators and urged the Dominion government to take over the terminal elevators. Under farm insistence, government owned rural and urban telephone systems were formed in all prairie provinces. The western farmers also called for a government owned railway to Hudsons Bay. Meanwhile in Winnipeg the Grain Growers' Company was developing into a vigorous co-operative marketing agency. Good also joined the movement to put ownership of property on a more co-operative basis.

In 1896 he read Henry Georges' The Condition of Labor and studied the whole question of individual possession. The author advocated co-operation and while not condemning the basic concept of private ownership attacked the holding of land by the very few; George questioned whether Cain and Abel could have justly divided the earth between them; this argument impressed Good for after reading the book he deliberated in almost the same vein: "If it is right for some to have exclusive ownership of land, while others have not, then it might be right for one man 'to own the earth'. All but this one man could live by suffrance."² He saw such a claim was absurd.

2. Good, Production and Taxation, op. cit., p.32.

He found support for his co-operative opinions in Henry Drummond's The Ascent of Man in which the author stated that a co-operative society was the highest form of civilization and God's desire, in fact the Divine Will. Both he and Drummond looked upon co-operation as an extension of Christian teaching and the Scotsman's opinions were reflected in Good's "Jottings on the Evolution of Man" written shortly after reading the book.

In these 'Jottings', Good discussed two factors which he found present in the development of evolution; altruism, the struggle for the life of others and self interest, the struggle for one's own life. He admitted the importance of the second for it was the basis of his own concept of the invigorating role of man's struggle with nature,³ but he maintained that altruism as exemplified by co-operation was at least of equal consequence. He reasoned that without selflessness the species would have become extinct, he gave an example of a family: The energies of the parents were devoted to supporting the lives of their children so that within the family there was "co-operation, harmony and struggle for the life of others."⁴ This he concluded was good and should be extended to society as a whole.

3. Good Papers, Vol. 21/Sciences, ("Jottings on the Evolution of Man", 1899), (15866-92).

4. Ibid.

He was aware that outside the family egoism, remained the dominant factor in society as people competed for food and sustenance. While he had previously admitted a degree of competition and struggle was healthy for man, he believed it tended to be wasteful. His conclusion was that co-operation was a more efficient means to ensure survival. To illustrate this he pointed to the development of language which, he argued, could never have evolved on an individual basis. Learning in any form depended on the transfer of accumulated knowledge which was impossible to acquire without co-operation.⁵ He maintained that the greater the harmony, between those in different fields of experience, the greater the development of civilization. Co-operation was necessary so that some might specialize and learn from others, the alternative would be a people shut up into their own spheres without knowledge of each other. On the basis of this reasoning he argued that altruism as embodied by co-operation was crucial for the advance of civilization.

A critic attacked Good's view in The Farmer's Advocate and claimed it gave the brainy man no advantage over the stupid and inefficient. Good agreed but replied that the strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak.⁶ Predatory braininess and

5. Ibid.

6. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, (Good to ed. Farmer's Advocate, No date).

efficiency regulated by selfishness only led to misery and disaster; the spirit of co-operation, on the other hand, even if it did involve the sharing of wealth with the inefficient led to a healthier and happier life. Without this individual commitment and desire, Good foresaw the co-operative movement becoming a hollow mockery of what it should be.⁷

His study of co-operativism gained momentum in 1901 when he made detailed notes on Ely's Introduction to the Study of Political Economy. The Professor's work made such an impression that Good sought to become his student at Wisconsin and wrote immediately to the author.⁸ Ely's thesis maintained that in the modern industrial society with its specialization of labour, man was really freest when combining with others.⁹ This philosophy strengthened Good's views although it is unlikely that it caused him to arrive at any new conclusions.

The book helped him to develop his views on monopoly. He was willing to concede that the extension of co-operativism could lead to a concentrated control of production but he did not see this as a bad thing; for under the co-operative system personal and individual liberty was placed first. He quoted

7. Ibid.

8. Ely replied that Fellowships in economics were difficult to obtain; however the demands of the farm became such that Good would have been unable to continue graduate studies, Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence (R.T. Ely, Wisconsin University, Director of School of Economics and Political Science to Good, Feb. 25th, 1901) (602).

9. Richard T. Ely, Introduction to the Study of Political Economy, (New York, Eaton, 1899), p.29.

Ely: "What shall be our policy? Monopoly is inevitable. Private monopoly is odious, Public monopoly is a blessing, and the test of experience proves it."¹⁰

This attitude made him somewhat sympathetic towards state control, as he saw it both as a possible curb against the threat of private monopoly and as a form of voluntary co-operation between individual corporations operating under government guidance. He looked to it as a potential step towards an eventual co-operative society.

State ownership however was another question, his experiences with the Department of Agriculture had made him distrust bureaucracies so that he was unwilling to extend partial regulation to complete control. An exception was the railway system since he believed it had appropriated an unfair share of the profits of farming and so should be placed under public ownership.¹¹

Another panacea which caught his attention during his student days was socialism. He attended meetings of the Canadian Socialist League and the Social Reform League. Both promoted a Christian variety of the philosophy. Good attended one of the latter's meetings. The subject of the lecture was "The Possibilities

10. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Notebooks, (c.1899), (15566-67).

11. Good, Production and Taxation, op. cit., p.90.

of Reform under the Present Industrial System¹² and described the organization of the National Cash Register Company of Dayton, Ohio. He gained the impression from the speaker that the company's internal organization was largely socialistic. He apparently saw socialism as primarily a humanitarian philosophy which practiced kindness and consideration.¹² His major reservation was his fear that it would result in a complex bureaucracy which stifled individuality.

Communism also came to his attention while at University, it meant for him simply communal ownership: Theoretically he believed in it and like Henry George conceded it might be the highest possible state attainable by man. Good defended it against charges of being either immoral or illogical and saw co-operation as a possible step by which it might evolve. He insisted, however, that it was a development for the future and he did not greatly concern himself about the issue.¹³

While examining these various alternatives his hopes remained firmly with the practice of co-operativism which had, for him, the humanity of socialism without its supposed stifling bureaucracy. The struggle for co-operation was his great moral crusade whose immediate object was the establishment of justice in industry and commerce. Ultimately he foresaw a new social order demanding

12. Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence, (Good to his sister Louise, Jan. 14th, 1900), (323-326).

13. Good Papers, Vol. 3/Correspondence, (Good to G. Waldren, Sept. 16th, 1916), (2126).
There is no evidence that he ever read the works of Karl Marx. Good would have opposed the concept of class conflict.

and developing a new character in which individual and social responsibilities were blended. Thus co-operation was the major motif in history, the theme which should and would dominate. This belief was an essential element in his philosophy.

The plight of the farmers in Ontario led them to seek in co-operation way out of their difficulties. The two major influences upon this movement in Ontario were the Populists in the United States, and the Rochdale Pioneers in Britain. While the U.S. co-operators applied their philosophy to a wide range of businesses, the British concentrated on consumer co-operatives, and it was this type that found favour with Ontario farm leaders.

Co-operation did not play the part in Ontario's life that its supporters had hoped, and survival for consumer 'co-ops' was most difficult. Among the problems faced were those of a scattered and mobile population, a strongly established system of private enterprise, a spirit of frontier style individualism, and a lack of the type of class consciousness which had helped motivate the English co-operators.

Individual consecration was very important; in it Good saw the reason for success of the movement in Great Britain while its lack was the cause of its relative weakness in North America. To illustrate his first premise he approvingly quoted the leader of the British Labour Party, J. Ramsay Macdonald:

You should take care that your cash does not lose your soul. The Co-operative Movement is not a money making concern. Money making with co-operators is a means to an end, and that end is the uplifting of the people of the country; to put them on a strong, firm, unassailable foundation of personal and individual liberty. 14

Good maintained that North America had allowed a far lower ideal to prevail, too often money making had been the primary concern of co-operators with the result that the movement had lost its essence and failed in its primary objective of developing a new morality.

As previously noted, Good, George Keen and Samuel Carter had founded the first nation-wide co-operative company, the Co-operative Union of Canada in 1908.¹⁵ By 1913 a series of circumstances gave impetus to the movement. The cost of living had increased and there had been an influx of co-operators from the United Kingdom, also the emergence of huge economic empires unregulated either by government or morality had fanned the flames of popular discontent. The Union now counted twelve affiliated societies including four in Ontario, its object was to unite co-operative enthusiasts in English speaking Canada into an integrated movement capable of reforming Canadian society. Keen, Good and Carter approached this challenge with a willingness for self-sacrifice

14. Good Papers, Vol. 3/Correspondence, (Good to J. Frewster, a co-operator, Sept. 17th, 1916), copy, (1925-27).

15. Ch. One; The Setting and Personal Background, p.19.

and sense of humanitarianism bordering on the religious. Their hope was to create a new society based upon the interests of the consumer in which speculation and the influence of wealth would be eliminated.¹⁶

Good was aware that his co-operative commonwealth was, as yet a vision, and he was under no misconceptions that it would be achieved soon. He foresaw the decline of 'laissez-faire' capitalism, the rise of state socialism, and the increasing trend towards dictatorship. He believed that through education in the co-operative philosophy, people could learn the virtue of selflessness. If this judgement was wrong it was due to his faith in man's ability to improve. However naive this might appear today, it does not detract from his role in mapping out the course for the co-operative movement. This led to farmers applying co-operative principles in segments of credit, banking, housing, manufacturing, merchandising and a variety of community services. Apart from his work as an educator Good's greatest social contribution was in fact this wedding of co-operative principles to the organized farm movement in Ontario.

16. Macpherson, op. cit., p.iii.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Tariff and the Single Tax

Canada, during the years 1896 to 1919, was a society of growing economic inequality. An increasing number of farmers were becoming uneasy at the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few, they feared the domination of industrial and political life by small groups of allied interests, and resented a plutocracy apparently sustained by tariff protected industries whose profits did not filter down to the common people.

Originally many farmers had supported the National Policy but gradually a conviction arose among them that it discriminated against agriculture. Although the Liberal Party had stood for low tariffs when it came to power in 1896, it in general, continued a high level of protection. But in 1910 it proposed free trade with the United States in natural products as well as in a selected list of semi-finished and fully manufactured articles. Unfortunately for the hopes of the farmers the Laurier Government was defeated in the election of 1911 before reciprocity could be carried through.

For a number of years the tariff question lay dormant, but towards the end of the war it became important again and provided the impetus in Ontario as well as the West for the formation of the Progressive Party in 1919.

Meanwhile some farm leaders had become interested in another form of taxation, the Single Tax which was designed to replace the use of tariffs as a source of revenue. It was first proposed by Henry George, the American economist, in his book Progress and Poverty. It was not right, according to the author, that an owner reap the full benefit of the increase in the value of land; rather it should be returned to the society in the form of a tax. Urban people would bear most of this tax because land values increased more quickly in cities. Many farm leaders were proponents of the Single Tax, prominent among them in the West were T.A. Crerar, H.W. Wood, and G.F. Chipman. In Ontario farm circles both Good and Drury were its advocates.

I

Good always maintained that the existing tariff system mirrored the lack of selflessness among Canadians. "We are yet", he lamented, "as a people strangely individualistic"¹; he was therefore not surprised that many accepted a protectionist method which catered to select individuals. Although his moral indignation arose while he was still young, his economic criticism evolved more slowly; indeed as late as 1903 he observed there was no satisfactory solution of the tariff problem possible.²

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1. Good Papers, Vol. 17/Tariff, (Good to ed. Weekly Sun, May 6th, 1903), (13161-70).
 2. Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence, (Good to J. Ballachey, Sept. 25th, 1896), (33-38).

Up to then he accepted protectionism as a necessary evil. His slowness in completely condemning the tariff may have been caused by some hope that the Liberals would evolve an economic policy satisfactory to farm interests.

When he began his attacks on tariffs in 1903, he examined and criticized the claims of its proponents. One assertion made was that the tariff was good because it cultivated nationalism. He was willing to agree that such might be true but believed it would be a bad kind of nationalism which would discourage trade, develop chauvinism and promote international animosity and mutual dislike.³ To substantiate this he cited the example of the United States where the tariff had had to ... "the teaching of enmity towards its neighbours and destroying the U.S.'s sense of brotherly feeling";⁴ He warned that no good could come from such economic isolation.

Another defense held that tariffs helped build a diversified national economic life, a fact which Good admitted might be true, but he doubted whether artificial measures were necessary in such a variegated country as Canada. He also questioned if a diversity of occupation, tending to a very widely extended division of labour, was always desirable... "particularly when it is secured at the expense of directing industry into relatively unprofitable channels..."⁵

4. Good Papers, Vol. 27/Tariff, (Good to ed. Weekly Sun, May 6th, 1903). (15161-70).

5. Ibid.

One of the major defenses of protectionism was that it enabled native infant industries to compete on an equal footing against large foreign counterparts. Good was, at first, willing to grant such industries short term subsidies if they were established in particularly favourable locations.⁶ Nevertheless it was his general view that it would be better to pay more for articles from abroad than offering a heavy subsidy to 'domestic tyrants'.⁷ However even this attitude hardened further; in 1908 he asked, "When did any 'infant', ever maintain and voluntarily relinquish its hold over the bottle?"⁸ His answer, never. Perhaps the reason for his stronger view was the relatively high Liberal tariff of that year.

He finally examined the argument that a tariff helped maintain a high standard of living by ensuring that 'cheap' goods were not imported thereby forcing a lowering of the wage scales at home. Good argued that this failed to present the whole picture; for if the workers' wages were reduced by foreign competition they nevertheless benefitted by getting their supplies more cheaply.⁹

6. Favourable, it may be presumed, meant access to raw materials, labour and markets.

7. Good Papers, op. cit.

8. Good Papers, Vol. 17/Tariff, ("Tariff, Bounties and the Farmer", University Magazine article by Good, Oct. 1908), (13171-92).

9. Good Papers, Vol. 27/Tariff (Good to ed. Weekly Sun, May 6th, 1903), (15161-70).

In the period 1910 to 1919 he was preoccupied with both farm and family and apart from three short intervals his public fight against protectionism lapsed. In 1911 he was active in supporting reciprocity seeing it as a renewal of the struggle for free trade. While not involved with the Liberal Party during the 1911 election he worked to endorse reciprocity through farm organizations by encouraging farmers to get out and vote. He re-stated his views that protection created international hostility, countenanced special privilege, operated against agriculture and made for political corruption. Good meanwhile attacked the Conservative Party in playing on the people's fear of annexation; he characterized such a claim as unrealistic nonsense.

The defeat of reciprocity left him despondent and it was not until 1915 that he returned to the anti-protectionist fray to assail alleged wartime discrimination against agriculture. He used a meeting of the Dominion Grange as a platform to deliver a fighting speech attacking the immorality of the protected interests, "of those who would 'take something for nothing' and much for little."¹⁰ 'Thoase' referred to the financiers who allegedly offered little of their own capital while demanding subsidies and tariffs from the government. Such persons he considered as anti-social and he warned his audience against their activities. A way to defeat

10. Good Papers, Vol. 16/Agriculture, (Good's address to the Dominion Grange, Dec. 20th, 1915), (12188-200).

their machinations was by abolishing the existing tax system which was "fallacious in theory, vicious in practice, unchristian in principle, the prolific leader of political occupation."¹¹ The final damnation, in his eyes, was that it thwarted his dictum that if a man did not work neither should he become wealthy, a view which illustrated his conviction that the 'protected class' was parasitic.

The next occasion that he became involved was in 1917 with the Oleo-Margarine issue, when butter producers sought protection against this cheaper substitute. Good sympathized but advised the dairymen it would be hard to convince a poor man that prohibition of margarine was anything but selfishness on their part. He defended his sentiment on two counts: first that no one should have the right to dictate to others, second that it was a necessary tactic in the fight against the protected interests. He realized that he could not support protectionism for one group and oppose it for the other, a claim for discriminatory legislation could only strengthen the demand for the same by industry so a victory by the dairy farmers would likely prove a boomerang.¹²

He had become increasingly conscious of the similarity of interests between the urban and agrarian consumers and

11. Ibid.

12. Good Papers, Vol. 4/1, (Good to J. Miller, ed. Canadian Countrymen Feb. 18th, 1917), copy, (2489).

aware that if the industrial workers got the idea they were being exploited by the butter producers it would be the easiest thing in the world for the 'interests' to feed this antagonism. The manufacturers would then pit farmer against factory worker and continue to bleed them both mercilessly.¹³

In 1918 he analyzed the effects of the tariff system upon the agriculturalists and maintained it had caused a 20% rise in the cost of goods from the United States while at the same time local manufactured products increased in price by 30%.¹⁴ His figures raise a question for while protection increased the price of foreign goods it is difficult to see why that of Canadian manufactured merchandise rose even more. He did not attempt to explain this inconsistency and one is left to presume that, in his view, protection resulted in the opportunity of the few in all countries to profit at the expense of the many.¹⁵

13. Good Papers, Vol. 16/Agriculture, (Good to ed. Weekly Sun, No date), (12165-69).

14. Good, Production and Taxation in Canada, op. cit., pp. 38-40.

15. As a footnote in his book Production and Taxation in Canada he included a quotation ascribed to Canadian manufacturers that the tariff allegedly brought about neither higher prices to the consumer or protected industries. He kept this material only as an illustration of the perfidy of the industrial interests, it was opposite to his own views. W.C. Good, Ibid., pp. 39-40.

II

Prior to entering University and long before his attitude towards the tariff had hardened, Good was searching for an alternate and more equitable way of raising money and he found it in the Single Tax. He had been introduced to this theory by Henry George's book, Condition of Labor and also by related articles in The Templar. Essentially the tax was on land values, not on improvements to land, it aimed at providing a deterrent to speculation. The value was to be determined by such factors as the land's position, condition, resources and fertility. If the property was serviced by newly built schools and shops, its land value would rise because its location had been improved; unused or not the owner would still pay an increased tax. If a structure was built on the lot the owner would be able to pay this increased assessment with the rents accruing from the building. If the same piece of land was left unused, the real estate would bring in no income and the owner would have difficulty in paying the larger tax. In effect the resulting levy would have a confiscatory effect, the non-user would not have his land appropriated by the state but would probably go bankrupt. Good's initial reaction was hopeful, "if it will do what is claimed for it i.e. prohibit any person living from the labor of others, or monopolizing natural opportunities' [resources], 'then the sooner it is established the better.."¹⁶

16. Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence, (Good to J. Ballachey, Sept. 25th, 1896), (33-38).

By 1916 he was convinced that the Single Tax was practical, and quoted Henry George: "... all land values are confiscated by the state, and the only way in which land owners can escape ... certain bankruptcy is for them also to become users of land ..."¹⁷ He was convinced that the Single Tax would provide more than a sufficient revenue for government and so enable it to abolish all other means of impost thereby relieving wage earners from the burden of taxation.

A further advantage to the farmer was that land would be initially cheaper. Good argued that the agriculturalist would not pay an increase in taxes until his improvements had resulted in a larger income by which time he would be able to pay more easily.¹⁸ To illustrate this premise he wrote an article that portrayed an imagined frontier community in which the first arrivals appropriated the best lands and so benefitted most as the society grew; inasmuch as they probably founded their properties near the centre of the community they were able to share more fully in the improved facilities. Also as the fertility of their land ensured them a high income, they were in an improved position to use the gradually increasing labour force; thus as their land values grew at a greater rate than those of the late comers in

17. Good Papers, Vol. 6/1 (Good to ed., Weekly Sun, No date, c.1916), copy, (2456-59).

18. Good, Production and Taxation in Canada, op. cit., p.47.

the outskirts, they were better able to pay the higher tax rate. The exact method of determining or assessing this charge was not specifically mentioned but it was to have been such that all abnormal increases in land values would have resulted in an extremely high tax upon those not using their property. In this context Good referred to it as a socialized tax by which he meant that 'excess profits' would be put to communal use. They would be returned to the community for the benefit of all.¹⁹

Good denied the charge that the tax was socialistic, he maintained that there was no similarity between the philosophy of George and that of Marx.²⁰ To substantiate his view he quoted George:

I do not propose either to purchase or to confiscate private property in land. The first would be unjust; the second needless ... let them continue to call it their land ... We may safely leave them the shell, if we take the kernel - It is not necessary to confiscate land; it is only necessary to confiscate rent. 21

Good used this quotation to emphasize that the tax was not aimed against private ownership.

19. Ibid.

20. As already noted there is no evidence that he ever read Marx. His knowledge of the various schools of socialism was apparently limited.

21. Henry George, Progress and Poverty, (New York, D. Appleton & Co., 1886), p.364.

To justify this levy on land, he compared the alleged effect of the tariff system upon Ontario farmers with the hypothetical result if the Single Tax had been used. He gave the period 1910 to 1914 as an example. He claimed that under the direct tax on land values the farmers would have paid \$8,000,000, all of which would have gone into the Federal Treasury, whereas under the direct tariff tax Ontario farmers did pay \$80,000,000 of which \$60,000,000 went into the pockets of the tariff beneficiaries, the industrial interests.²²

After World War One fell upon Canada, the Borden government saw fit to introduce the income tax which Good condemned as at best a makeshift or palliative. "It works abominably in practice because of its impossibility of determining with any degree of justice what one's income really is."²³ However difficulties of assessment did not deter him from advocating the Single Tax; his main reason for opposing the imposition on income was probably because the burden of taxation could be more readily placed on the wage earner than on one with an unearned increment. His primary concerns were economic equalitarianism and the ending of land speculation and he believed that the land tax offered a better

22. Good, Production and Taxation, op. cit., p.105.

23. Good Papers, Vol. 3/Correspondence, (Good to G. Waldron, June 2nd, 1916), (2093-94).

opportunity to achieve these aims. Certainly the levy on income during World War One failed to halt speculation or profiteering and while the National Income did grow and farmers prospered in the wartime boom, the polarization between the wealthy and poor continued to increase. Such circumstances confirmed Good in his belief that ultimate moral and economic salvation lay in the imposition of a Single Tax.

In 1919 he compiled and elaborated on his tax proposals in a book called Production and Taxation in Canada, a work of which O.D. Skelton wrote: "If we had a few more such honest and informed attempts to deal with Canadian economic problems, our public opinion would be in a healthier shape.."²⁴ In his book Good accepted the premise that agriculture was the basis of society and the most important primary industry; thus he concluded, the prosperity of a country rested fundamentally on the affluence of its farming. He was concerned that Canada's agriculture was not in a healthy condition and believed there were two causes: firstly, certain industries were taxing for their own private profit, by means of a tariff; secondly, the existing system of taxation operated against

24. Good Papers, Vol. 4/2, (O.D. Skelton to Good, Jan. 9th, 1918), (2677-80). O.D. Skelton was then Head of the Department of Political and Economic Science at Queen's University.

labour in that it taxed toil rather than land. He maintained that production rested on a dual basis of land and labour which in turn produced rent and wages. Of these two factors, a man had a greater right to call his labour his own than he had to appropriate a piece of land exclusively to himself. This conclusion led to his further expounding the virtues of the Single Tax and the need to abolish the tariff, he particularly noted the moral need of such a reform.

In Canada we have, by human enactment, violated the moral law which commands a just distribution of wealth. Our governments have been too ready to listen to the Circean song of the social parasite. Taxation has been made an instrument for extortion. 25

The few, he maintained, had enriched themselves at the expense of the many, a class of idlers lived in luxury upon other people's earnings.

The Single Tax proposal faced strong opposition not only from vested interests but from such friends of the farmers as Goldwin Smith who opposed throwing the whole burden of taxation upon land.²⁶ In 1919 the Manitoba Assessment and Taxation Commission made the most rigorous examination of the tax. It stressed the difficulty of distinguishing land values from improvement values, and concluded that the tax was too narrow and unreliable a basis for civic revenue. Nevertheless farmer agitation for the Single Tax continued into the war years.

25. Good, Production and Taxation, op. cit., pp. 132-133. Circean was an island sorceress in the Odyssey who turned her victims into beasts.

26. Goldwin Smith, Labour and Capital, (London: Macmillan, 1907), p.35.

III

In 1919 when the war had ended Good observed that surely now the command to "wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice"---must be followed with renewed energy.²⁷

Thus Good judged the tariff system as a moral issue; he saw in protectionism a device which enabled a small group of unscrupulous and strong persons to acquire 'God's natural gifts to mankind,' by stopping the free flow of physical resources throughout the world; this was bad. Free trade was needed to develop amity and understanding between classes and nations; without it a peaceful world would be difficult to achieve.

Meanwhile the campaign against the tariff increased in scope and reached a climax in the federal election of 1921. The movement for freer trade was led by the National Progressive Party whose success in having twenty two members elected from Ontario alone, bore testimony to the public's support for tariff reform.

That Good's ideas on the tariff were in tune with the news of the party was illustrated by the fact that he was selected to explain and defend the Progressive's platform at the opening session of the House of Commons in 1922.

27. Good, *Production and Taxation*, op. cit., pp. 132-133.

CHAPTER SIX

Imperialism, Militarism and War

By the late 19th Century many of the concepts about British imperialism were in process of change. In one instance the old idea of colonial paternalism was being replaced by a vision of a centralized federation of English speaking white colonies and the mother country, the proponent of this new imperialism was the Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain. This strategy was opposed by many Liberals who believed that the Empire could best be preserved by each English speaking Dominion having as much autonomy as was consistent with the preservation of the imperial tie.

In Canada a good number of people subscribed to the idea of a centralized Empire as the best instrument to carry out their aims. This idea was propagated first by Canadian branches of the Imperial Federation League, originally established in 1885, and later by its successor in Canada, the British Empire League. Their main objectives were to promote imperial unity, and to attack the movement for commercial union with the United States. Another agent of imperialism were the Round Table Groups, established in Canada in 1909 and backed by monies secured by Lord Milner. Their objective was to turn the empire into a centralized partnership. They included among their membership many distinguished figures including Sir

Joseph Flavelle, a friend of Good's.¹ By 1919 the Round Table had become well established in Canada.

As distinct from the centralists, the autonomists had only mild concern for the Empire, they were interested in Canadian affairs. Nevertheless they too wished to keep the British connection and were prepared to help the mother country. A typical representative of this school was Laurier who agreed to Canadian participation in the South African War, favoured a Canadian Navy which could be turned over to Britain, and supported Canada aiding the British war effort in 1914..

Imperialism and militarism were considered by most Canadians as synonymous, as both ideologies believed in military preparedness. The militarists were convinced that cadet training produced a better class of citizen, some went as far as to glorify war as an adventure. Given the stimulus of the South African War, and the armaments race, militarism emerged as one of the values which made up Canadian imperialism.

Militarism was opposed by a variety of people such as the Trades and Labour Congress, the Grange, the Society of Friends, some Methodist congregations, Goldwin Smith's Weekly Sun, and the pacifists. The source of opposition was to be found in British liberal thought transplanted to Canada.

1. Sir Joseph Flavelle was a member, with Good, of the Board of Directors of the University of Toronto. Good disagreed with many of Flavelle's views.

Allied to this mistrust of militarism was indigenous North American isolationism. After 1900 opposition was increased by a growing pacifist movement which owed much of its strength to an economic interpretation of war. Most pacifists reflected the liberal conviction that armament trusts were the sole beneficiaries of war.

Good was an autonomist who believed in the preservation of the British Empire. He attacked a strongly centralized system and by so doing appeared to some imperialists to be threatening the integrity of the Empire.² Good however was convinced that the imperialists had misread the lessons of history by failing to see that centralization could lead to collapse of the Empire.³ He advocated instead a loose association of sovereign states, for he was convinced that Canada by achieving a measure of autonomy peacefully had strengthened the Empire proving that decentralization was not only possible but preferable.⁴

In his study of imperialists in Canada he had, at first, looked upon them as misguided but relatively harmless persons but he gradually came to see them as a clique of outsiders with Canadian connections striving solely for their own personal

2. Good Papers, Vol. 4/1, (P. McArthur to Good, Mar. 5th, 1917), (2499).

3. Good Papers, Vol. 4/1 (Good to McArthur, Mar. 13th, 1917), (5506) copy.

4. Ibid.

profit.⁵ This view reflected his belief in the 'conspiracy of the few'.

Before World War One Good had given a great deal of thought to militarism and war. He came to believe that militarism was the manifestation of extreme nationalism; although he himself had faith in a sovereign Canada and its mission,⁶ he opposed ultra chauvinism as contributing to a potentially war-like atmosphere. He cited two examples of how militarism used jingoism. One incident occurred at the outbreak of the South African War, the other at its conclusion. The first, occurred at the gala send off of the Canadian contingent, caused him to ask, "What is the meaning of all this? The body of men going to South Africa to shoot Boers, their human brothers... Whence all this enthusiasm?"⁷ He concluded it was but nationalist hysteria spurred on by militarist propaganda and doubted whether such emotion would have been evoked if, instead of war, the men were going on a mission of peace to help the African peoples. The second case at the end of the conflict Good acknowledged was an opportunity for rejoicing; yet the celebrants, he observed, were motivated differently from himself. The crowd seemed

5. Good Papers, Vol. 19/Social Problems, (Good to ed. Farmer's Advocate, article entitled "War Mongers", c.1915), (14437-41).

6. Good considered that Canada had a mission to spread the spirit of co-operation throughout the world.

7. Good Papers, Vol. 19/Social Problems, (Good to ed. Farmer's Advocate, article entitled "War Mongers", c. 1915), (14437-41).

stirred not by joy alone but by rancour against their recent enemies; he blamed this sentiment on militarist propaganda and feared that such hate might be carried to future generations.⁸

That he found the churches culpable in the promotion and maintenance of such a martial spirit particularly distressed him. He presented several occurrences to substantiate his fear. The use of church bells to herald allied victories he considered reprehensible especially as each battle had been won at the cost of many human lives.⁹ He was also concerned about the singing of the National Anthem in Church and refused to join in the second stanza because the prayer for victory over the Queen's enemies was at variance with the Christian profession of faith in the brotherhood of man.¹⁰ A third example was a sermon which glorified war entitled 'The Baptism of Blood.' He condemned it as 'one of the most barbarous utterances that has ever come from the mouth of a professing minister of the gospel.'¹¹ Such incidents tended to loosen his ties with organized religion.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence, (Good to sister Louise, March 4th, 1900), (355-6).

11. Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence, (Good to his mother, Feb. 11th, 1901), (532-533).

As a youth Good had a romantic attitude towards war similar to that of Colonel George T. Denison¹² but in Good's case it was a temporary aberration.¹³ Maurice Hutton's¹⁴ acceptance of war as a means of weeding out the unfit always remained an anathema to him.

Good's first writings on the subject concerned the Greek-Turkish hostilities of 1897, he saw them as a game fought by two brave evenly matched sides;¹⁵ the rights or wrongs of war did not apparently concern him until the outbreak in South Africa in 1899. That same year he studied the importance of fighting in history and concluded that past conflicts may have been explicable; this did not necessarily mean just, but rather they were an unavoidable factor in the progress of man.¹⁶

He conceived a just war as one in which one party had a moral right; for them it was just, for the others it was not. Justice, he believed, was on the side of the United Kingdom in South Africa and World War One. He accepted the premise that

12. Colonel Denison saw active service in rear areas only. He looked upon war as an exhilarating sport.

13. Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence, (Good to his mother, Apr. 25th, 1897), (116-117).

14. Hutton was Principal of University College.

15. Good, op. cit.,

16. Good Papers, Vol. 21/Sciences, ("Jottings on the Evolution of Man", 1899), (15856-92).

as societies advanced towards greater democracy, the number of conflicts would decrease although the proportion of those that were just would increase. He reasoned that as nations acquired, through democracy, a higher degree of morality they would be less prone to get involved in immoral hostilities.¹⁷ Just or unjust he never, after 1899, reconciled himself to any act of war and while admitting that it might be necessary and productive of Good he maintained that it still involved bloodshed, "...put it in the best light possible and it is still murder."¹⁸

Yet Good was not a pacifist. He believed in just wars, and unlike the 'peace' school in Canada he was not isolationist, he considered that Canada had a major role to play in the search for world peace by providing an example for the rest of the world. Before the First World War he had agreed with Norman Angell on the desirability of unilateral disarmament,¹⁹ arguing that an unarmed Canada could not be dragged into others quarrels and would therefore be more likely to remain on friendly terms with all powers. He outlined his idealistic and messianic views in a letter to Laurier in 1909.

17. Ibid.

18. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Diaries, (Oct. 25th, 1899), (15572-4).

19. A leading British pacifist who was influential in Canada. J.A. Macdonald, 'The Peace School', Canadian Annual Review, 1914, pp. 132-143.

Are we not on this continent free from many of the ancient wrongs that crush the people of the older countries bound by all that is sacred to live up to our own opportunities and to show other nations that we can get along without armies and navies(?) 20

In his reply the Prime Minister expressed sympathy with Good's views but pleaded the realities of power politics, "... unfortunately our standards of civilization was (sic) not yet high enough for that ideal."²¹ Good was probably not surprised and certainly not persuaded by the answer.²²

He remained highly critical of persons who advocated armaments. While he attacked those motivated primarily by profits he reserved his main attack for the imperialists. He wrote a critique on an article in The Globe; the paper had voiced the imperialist viewpoint and claimed that once the Germans realized the Empire would not be beaten in the naval race,²³ a great thing would have been done for the cause of world peace. Good in a letter to The Weekly Sun enquired..."Is it upon such a basis that peace is realized, forced upon other nations at

20. Good Papers, Vol. 2/Correspondence, (Good to Laurier, 1909), (001479-001500).

21. Good Papers, Vol. 2/Correspondence, (Laurier to Good, Oct. 29th, 1909), (001479-001500).

22. Both letters were primarily concerned with Laurier's advocacy of a Canadian Navy. That the Prime Minister replied at all reflected the importance he placed on Good's influence in the Farm Movement.

23. The British Government had sought aid from Canada to build battleships. Good opposed both assistance to the Royal Navy and Prime Minister Laurier's plan for a Canadian Navy.

the cannon's mouth?"²⁴ His answer was no; that Canada was being asked to build a navy for such a purpose he considered arrogant and foolish.

Good viewed the philosophies of imperialism and militarism as dangerous weapons employed by self interested persons to stampede people into war. therefore these concepts had to be exposed and destroyed before any advance could be made towards peace. But even after their destruction absolute peace would not result immediately. There would be a further period during which 'protected interests' would continue to wage economic warfare using tariffs instead of guns.²⁵ This conclusion seems naive for it presumes that economic warfare would never turn to military force. His attitude may best be explained by his pre-occupation with the aims of business co-operation and the threat of industrial confrontation; his engrossment in peacefully promoting a co-operative society may have blinded him to the fact that persons rarely gave up private profits without a fight, whether the sources of such gains were at home or abroad.

In the final analysis Good believed that international behavior depended on individual morality. It was therefore

24. Good, "Letters to the Editor," Weekly Sun, (Nov. 24th, 1907), p.7.

25. Good Papers, Vol. 21/Sciences, ("Jottings on the Evolution of Man", 1899), (15866-72).

imperative that each person reassess his attitudes so that the world could live in harmony. It was thus necessary to revise those aspects of nationalism which denigrated other countries. National interest should never be put above that of mankind.²⁶

We are bidden now to subordinate local and provincial interests to the welfare of the whole nation or Empire, the next step must be the subjection of national interests to the welfare of the world community.²⁷

In his view this could best be served by sovereign states co-operating together and cultivating the Christian spirit of love and understanding.

The 'conspiracy of the few' represented a continuous thread in Good's thought; he saw it responsible for both imperialism and militarism.²⁸ He was therefore receptive to the thesis of U.S. Congressman Clyde, H. Taverner who claimed that World War One was promoted by a World Trust comprised of militarists and armament manufacturers.²⁹ Good believed that outside the Trust were persons who conspired to support its aims. These individuals included army contractors, sinecure seekers, protected

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26. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, ("The Problem of Disarmament", Article to ed. Brantford Expositor, Jan. 14th, 1911).
27. Good Papers, Vol. 19/Social Problems, ("Master's Address to the Annual Session of the Dominion Grange", 1915), (1447-51).
28. This belief is also evident in his views on taxation and partyism.
29. Good Papers, Vol. 19/Social Problems, (Good to ed., Farmer's Advocate entitled "War Mongers", c. 1915), (14437-41).

interest, privileged classes and 'yellow' journalists, all of whom through war hoped to increase their material wealth or prestige.³⁰

The warlike atmosphere was exploited, Good maintained, by the governing class in Canada to divert peoples attention from much needed reforms. The threat of war was thus used as a means of retaining the status quo. When war broke out his worst suspicions were confined. The demands for increased food production were making themselves felt upon agrarian Canada. Good was sympathetic to this need but argued that agriculture had to be guaranteed a greater share of the national wealth if it were to increase productivity; the mere act of urging the farmer to be diligent and patriotic was useless unless accompanied by a more equitable distribution of consumer goods.³¹ He also saw a dangerous trend in the increasing number of farm labourers lured off the land by the high wages of munition making.

30. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, (Good to ed., Brantford Expositor, Jan. 14th, 1911), p.16. It might appear that Good's acceptance of Taverner's theory destroyed his argument that World War One was a just war for the British Empire, but he was able to separate the acts of the trust and those supporting it from the philosophies and deeds of the actual belligerents; the roles of the latter, particularly of the German militarist, determined his attitude towards that conflict.

31. Good Papers, Vol. 11/Clippings (Good to ed., Financial Post, Jan. 22nd, 1915), Copy. (1669-70).

A further cause for farmers' complaint was the government's failure to consult them about methods to raise production. Good blamed the bureaucrats in particular for disregarding farmers' advice and ordering the tilling of poor land. He cited this marginal land project as an example of the need for farmer participation in deciding agricultural policy.

He was also bitter about the effects of conscription particularly when troops who could have helped in the fields had failed to co-operate; Good gave an example of officers in the Brantford area who refused to allow their men to assist in the harvesting. Such incidents led to further estrangement between established authority and the agricultural producers.³²

The situation had become so critical by 1918 that Good wrote to T. A. Crerar, himself a farm leader and then Federal Minister of Agriculture, and demanded that the government recognize agriculture to be of equal importance to other industries. Good elaborated on economic injustices and specifically suggested that the cost of land, labour and capital be decreased and brought under government control. He advocated increased farmer-government liaison in all production matters and concluded his letter

32. Good Papers, Vol. 3/Correspondence, (Good to W. Toole, Aug. 6th, 1916), (1905-06).

by proposing an increase in the farm labour force, to be achieved by the better organizing of urban industry.³³

Good's support of Canada's role in World War One was consistent with his belief, that it was just for the British Empire. He considered German militarism as a much greater evil than its Canadian or British counterpart and maintained that Canadians were fighting to preserve the liberty of the individual, to maintain democratic ideals and to defend the rights of the weak. He was consistent, too, in his criticisms of the waging of the conflict. Throughout he emphasized the important role of farmers in determining war policy and reflected their view on the conscription of men and wealth. Finally, when victory was near he spoke out for a just peace and foresaw the consequences of vengeance and recrimination.

33. Good Papers, Vol. 4/Correspondence, (Good to T.A. Crerar, Jan. 16th, 1918), copy, (2681-89). There is no record of an answer to the letter. This is not conclusive as Crerar knew Good and would likely have replied.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Partyism

Partyism was the term applied to a tendency within the political system by which the only objective of a party was the achieving and retaining of power. Under this arrangement the party was of first importance and principles, second. Of the means most used to achieve office, patronage and private financial contributions were the most significant.

The worst aspects of this system prevailed in Canada during the early 1900's. The Parliamentary sessions of 1906, 1907, and 1908 were full of accusations of inefficiency, waste, and misuse of public funds. The business world was said to be closely implicated in the funding of the Liberals, a serious indictment of the Laurier government. Many critics of the party system believed that both Liberals and Conservatives were ready to promise tariff privileges and special concessions to industrial interests in return for possible financial support.

The situation became so bad that many people of diverse political persuasion became critical of partyism. Stephen Leacock, attacked the mud bespattered politicians who in place of statecraft involved themselves in the worldly traffic of political jobbery.¹ Henri Bourassa spoke up against the public

1. Ramsay Cook, "Stephen Leacock and the Age of Plutocracy, 1903-1921" in Character and Circumstance, ed. John S. Moir, Toronto: Macmillan, 1970, pp. 163-181.

authorities as being nearly always in league with the thieves and public perjurers.² In western Canada the influential Grain Growers' Guide reflected the views of western farmers in its distrust of the political system. The paper attacked what it termed the "new feudalism," the "new plutocracy" which dominated the political and economic systems.³ In Ontario Goldwin Smith was also a bitter critic of partyism and maintained that its survival would result in the destruction of the nation. This attitude found support from J. J. Morrison and other farm leaders. Good was thus but one of many who condemned the system.

Good believed that the party system was a facade behind which the few ruled the many, a sham which not only encouraged economic discrimination but condoned low moral standards in public life. Parliament under the party system was the very negation of democracy, a deliberative assembly turned gladiatorial arena.

So far as I am concerned, the whole idea of parties competing for 'power' seems as antiquated and as mischievous as the idea of competition among nations.

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2. Joseph Levitz, Henri Bourassa and the Golden Calf. The Social Program of the Nationalists of Quebec, 1900-194, (Les Editions de L'Université D'Ottawa, Ottawa 1968), pp. 72-75.
 3. W.L. Morton, op. cit., p. 15.
 4. Good Papers, Vol. 25/Diaries, (May 20th, 1902), (15457-59).

He was exasperated that the average person refused to associate politics and religious morality and feared that such a denial boded ill for Canada's political future. He was adamant that Christians must take an active interest in their system of government and use their faith as a standard to judge it by. He wished the clergy to take off their frock coats, roll up their sleeves and get into the fight; "let them try to apply their great doctrine of brotherhood to the practices of political campaigns!"⁵ If this happened, the political leaders would be faced with a choice of abandoning current policies or leaving the church; either was preferable to the existing practice of trying to serve both God and Man.⁶

Good had been encouraged by his father to be a sympathizer of the Liberal Party and its free trade policies; up to the turn of the century he continued to consider the 'grits' as the lesser of evils but disillusionment had begun by 1890 with the Liberals' introduction of a relatively high tariff. By 1899 he was becoming critical of the whole system of partyism and he wrote of a Conservative meeting of that year: "Although my

5. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Notes. (Good to editor of the Brantford Expositor, no date), (A5838-43), copy, (c. 1963).

6. Ibid.

sympathy was largely departed⁷ from the Liberal Party, yet such an exhibition of the triviality and pettiness as was given last night I never recollect having seen before."⁸

There is some doubt as to whether Good was ever an active party man. He himself stated that "as long as I could think I opposed partyism,"⁹ but a letter addressed to him in 1902 suggested the opposite.

From what you have said in your last (letter) I infer you keep away from Partyism...but it runs in my mind that you used to work with the 'Old Lib' party. Does my memory serve me false?'¹⁰

It probably did as none of Good's notes, diaries or other correspondence give a hint of such activities. Certainly by the time he graduated from University he opposed partyism on three counts: it was undemocratic, it led to inefficiency and corruption, and it failed to meet the specific needs of the farmer. He believed that the system masked, divided and confused the electorate by appearing to offer a choice to the voters when in fact little existed.

7. My emphasis.

8. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Diaries, (Oct. 22nd, 1899), (15370-71).

9. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Notes, (Good to J. A. Macdonald, ed. The Globe, Mar. 8th, 1903), copy, (15790-93).

10. Good Papers, Vol. 1/Correspondence, (N. F. Coleman to Good, July 29th, 1902), (786-94).

To decide how partyism evolved and how it justified itself he began the study of its background in Canada. His research had already started when he read J.R. Commons' Proportional Representation in 1908.¹¹ He used this book to illustrate, defend and develop his own ideas. Commons maintained that in colonial times there had been two interest groups, one, the 'party' of privilege and prerogative as represented by the Governor and Council, and a second group or 'party' that reflected public opinion and was represented by the Legislative Assembly.¹² Commons saw that these were essentially groupings of self interested persons.¹³ After reading this book Good concluded that a similar system remained in the post-colonial period although the need for it should have disappeared. The substitution of oligarchical government by a responsible one ought to have ended both the rule of prerogative and privilege; yet the obsolete party system remained, albeit in a modified form.¹⁴

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11. Good Papers, Vol. 2/Correspondence, (Robert Tyson to Good, March 1st, 1904), (001025).
 12. John R. Commons, Proportional Representation (2nd Ed. New York; Crowell, 1907), p. 28.
 13. Ibid., pp. 34-35.
 14. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, (Letter to the Brantford Expositor, 1908, entitled "The History and Problems of Representation").

The new oligarchs were representatives of private corporations and corporate power and had ascended to the seat previously occupied by colonial administrators; though they lacked a Governor or Council to do their bidding they had successfully infiltrated the two political parties. Privilege still survived though one aspect, prerogative or special privileges of office, had been curtailed. The whole system disguised the fact that control remained in the hands of the few.

Good defined democracy as rule by the majority with the rights of the minority ensured and guaranteed. He judged the degree of democracy within a state by the extent to which varying views were made known and taken into account. By his yardstick Canada was found wanting; parties were controlled by vested interests and able, under the guise of the party solidarity, to stifle the views of their members and make useless the votes of many people. To demonstrate this he wrote of Ontario where, he claimed, only about one half of the eligible votes in one quarter of the province determined the government policy, the rest being in effect disfranchised. The blame he attributed in large measure to the single member constituency and he offered three reasons: votes given a defeated candidate were essentially lost even though

15. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, (Letter to the ed, Brantford Expositor, 1908, entitled "Ways and Means of Improving the District System.")

the number case for each might have been very close; an elected member could represent minority views within his party and in effect the votes for him were wasted: In both cases the government in power ignored the voters' views. Finally, constituency lines were drawn in some areas to the political advantage of one party so that supporters of the other were effectively disfranchised. Accepting these premises, Good concluded that while it was still possible to have a government supported by a majority it was not very likely.¹⁶ As an independent, the most repugnant aspect of the single member constituency to Good was its tendency to disfranchise those of independent views; it gave such voters little opportunity to record their opinions unless they were numerically strong enough to elect a candidate against either or both of the 'straight party' men. As this was seldom the case, the system perpetuated the 'status quo'.

It was also difficult to determine the policies of the established parties. The only time that the electorate had a fair chance of recording its opinion was on the rare occasions when issues between the two parties were clear cut and opposite. Normally however constructive criticism was difficult and the non-party voters were discontented and left with an attitude of 'a plague on both your houses'.¹⁷

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid.

Good did not blame the general population for this state of affairs although he agreed with Justin Miller, the editor of the Canadian Countryman, who had stated that "a democratic people secures exactly the kind of government it deserves to have."¹⁸ He differed with him however on the presumption that Canada was democratic. For Good the true purpose of partyism was the preservation of the rights and privileges of a financial aristocracy. As the system was maintained by encouraging ignorance and apathy among the electorate, the people had no real voice. They were the dupes of a method which though vaunted as responsible and democratic was in reality a sham.¹⁹

His second criticism of partyism was that it was inefficient and corrupt. The former evil he saw expressed by the politicians of both parties and the latter by the major financial interests. To him "the prosiness, prolixity and emptiness of our politicians is beyond comprehension."²⁰

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18. Good Papers, Vol. 4/1, (Good to J. Miller, ed. Canadian Countryman, Feb. 4th, 1917), copy. (2481-83).
19. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings ("The Failure of Modern Legislatures", one of a series of letters by Good on Political Reform. The Brantford Expositor, 1908).
20. Good Papers, Vol. 4/1, (Good to J. Miller, ed. Canadian Countryman, Feb. 23rd, 1916), (2004-5).

Although this remark was made in 1916, shortly after the failure of the farmers to gain lower tariffs,²¹ it nevertheless reflected his views during those years. However his belief in the ultimate perfectability of man made him optimistic enough to believe that things would eventually change for the better even under the existing system. In the Farmers Advocate of 1917 he wrote that while the developing of efficient leaders was a slow process with many backward slides, "on the whole good seed is never lost, but is harvested in God's good time."²² He believed that inefficiency was primarily the result of the party system not the man.

He laid the blame for corruption at the doorstep of the vested interests. He visualized the millionaires, captains of industry and corporation magnates as holding the role of the Kings of yesteryear and was convinced that such persons by using the press, pulpit and to some extent the schools exercised considerable influence in the formation of public opinion.²³ By propaganda they tried to gain influence over both parties and the bureaucracy. Whenever this proved ineffective, they resorted to bribery and intimidation of public officials.

21. In 1916 farm deputations were sent to Ottawa to ask the government to reconsider its tariff policies.

22. Good Papers, Vol. 16/Agriculture, (Good to ed. Farmers Advocate, c. 1917), (12221-27).

23. Good Papers, Vol. 21/Notes, ("Political Purity", Rough Notes, no date), (16197-98).

Good's third major criticism with partyism was its failure to give adequate consideration to the needs of the farmer. While both parties were dominated by some interests, farmers had very little say.²⁴ What he wanted was increased farm representation in Parliament so that all groups could formulate a policy fair to everybody while making impossible the undue influence of one.²⁵

One aspect of the system that gave him particular concern was the practice of electioneering; he believed it was an exercise in propaganda that misused the science of psychology by spreading ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of injuring the other party. Good claimed that anyone who critically studied the typical stump speech could see how cleverly the average politician appealed to the prejudice and ignorance of his audience.²⁶

Good visualized elections as a game of musical chairs played under the control of a few vested interests; the contest was unprincipled because it hid the real issues and gave the voters little opportunity to exercise effective control.

24. Good Papers, Vol. 28/Political Matters, (Farmer's Advocate, no date), (can be dated from Correspondence (13843-44). Vol. 3/Correspondence, W. Toole to Good Jan. 30th, 1917, refers to above as just received).

25. His views on 'group' government are considered in Ch. Eight, Political Remedies.

26. Good Papers, Vol. 16/Agriculture, (Good to ed. Farmer's Advocate c. 1917), (12221-27).

He maintained that, between elections, the party politician voted on measures mainly on the basis of party loyalty and emotional bigotry. He tended to equate the two, for loyalty to party was founded on unthinking emotion, an intolerance of other viewpoints. He graphically illustrated this outlook by quoting Commons' descriptions of a political party as "one which emerges from its caucus like an enemy from its fortress, runs upon the enemy, listens to no quarter or compromise, beheads its own deserters and then carouses over its victory."²⁷

This approach ran counter to Good's ideal of democratic representation, for he visualized a body politic in which all persons actively participated in the formation of laws and which fully recognized the rights of the minorities. Christianity determined his views on co-operation and accounted for his suspicions of corporate power, his tolerance of individual opinion and his stress on the necessity of morality in public affairs. As his concept of democracy was for the betterment of all mankind its implication also reflected the will of God. The system therefore had to be changed in a manner which would make Parliament "The Express image of the nation".²⁸ Good undertook to promote a series of reforms to achieve that end. His approach mirrored the belief that people should control their own destiny not because

27. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, (Letter to ed., Brantford Expositor, "Ways and Means of Improving the District System", c. 1908).

28. W. C. Good, Farmer Citizen (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1958), p. 180. Good credited this quotation to Edmund Burke. No further reference was given.

their decisions would always be right but that it was the only just way to govern.

Partyism remains, and much of Good's criticism is still valid. However by maintaining the party system to be incurably evil he denied the possibility of its improvement. While he condemned the concept of party solidarity he failed to recognize the need for restraint and discipline in any political formation if it was to be effective. Concerned with the political power exerted by vested interests, he believed that abolishing the party system would end excessive influence. He failed to grasp the essence of power, or that it was exercised under many varied conditions.

On the issue of equal rights for farmers his concern was understandable but in an increasingly industrial and urban society no democratic system was likely to assure agriculture equal representation. The best that could be hoped for was fair representation. Ironically today many urban dwellers claim that farmers are over represented. Certainly partyism invited criticism, but what really separated Good from many other critics was his proposals for replacing it with something new.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Political Remedies

Dissatisfaction with the practice of party government led to suggestions by its critics aimed at creating a truly democratic society. Among the most important of these proposals was that of direct legislation. Its object was to give the people an opportunity to bypass party control, initiate legislation and to judge the merit of proposed bills.

An American idea, the proposal for direct legislation made the greatest impact in Western Canada. By 1912 it had become one of the most important planks in the platform of the Manitoba Liberal Party. The Conservatives attacked it as a degenerate republicanism and anti-British, and it failed to gain acceptance. Interest in direct legislation soon died away and following World War One Canadian farmers turned to more traditional ways of protest and established an agrarian radical party.

Another remedy for partyism was found in proportional representation. Again the Canadian source of this idea was American, and once more it gained greatest favour in Western Canada, this time through the speeches of Henry Wise Wood¹ and William Irvine. The main progenitor was John R. Commons, whose views were publicized through Proportional Representation Leagues in the United States and Canada.

1. Wood proposed it as a means of achieving his aim of group government.

Group government was the third, and most radical remedy advocated. It visualized replacing the conglomerate parties by occupational groups, Henry Wise Wood was it's foremost Canadian advocate. There is little evidence that this theory ever found fertile ground in the United States. The American farmer, even at his most militant, wanted to make changes within the system of government, not to change it completely. Wood, disillusioned with the failure of the Populists in the United States, thought differently.

Good was influenced by the view of the western farm movement in particular by those of William Irvine,² and became a strong advocate of direct legislation, proportional representation and group government.

Good believed that one of the greatest challenges facing him was to persuade the general public that political change was not only desirable but possible. He wished to make Parliament fully representative of the people. To do so he advocated political involvement; the mass of the electorate was to be encouraged to participate in the legislative process so that the House of Commons could become a true popular forum. More confidence in the lower house would make the abolishing of the

2. Good and William Irvine proposed a form of group government to the U.F.O. in 1919. It was rejected.

Senate an easy matter. For him the upper house was but an obsolete appendage of partyism.³

"What a strange system of government is this by Party!"⁴ he remarked and noted that most people looked upon political parties as the ultimate answer. He was particularly annoyed that suggestions for change were dismissed as impracticable. "Impracticable! I hear said, yes any reform is impracticable if people set themselves resolutely against it and won't have it."⁵ Governmental reforms he perceived were only unfeasible if party animosities remained as bitterly and consciously perpetuated as they had been and as long as brute strength was allowed to predominate over Christian love; otherwise he concluded "reform is not at all impracticable it is eminently sane and practicable."⁶ Convinced that ideas for improvement had a moral foundation he sought to induce the Christian churches to promote actively political regeneration. He particularly chastized the

3. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, ("The Initiative and the Referendum" Farmers Magazine, no date, post 1910).

4. Good Papers, Vol. 20/Diaries, (May 30th, 1902), (15457-59).

5. Good Papers, Vol. 18/Proportional Representation, (Good to ed. of The Globe, 1901), (15484-92).

6. Ibid.

clerics for failing to realize "that there isn't much use preaching the Kingdom of Heaven and quietly letting the devil rule in this world."⁷

The political remedies which he sought were the introduction of direct legislation, proportional representation and the ending of the party system; the first two were aimed to ensure the last. An immediate objective of his proposal for direct legislation was to ensure that voters had the continuous opportunity to control the activities of their representatives. At the Federal level he saw it as a splendid substitute for the Senate. He viewed the upper house as undemocratic, "... filled with creatures of the dominant party it is either no check at all, or merely a stupid brake upon the wheel of progress."⁸

Direct legislation, as he proposed it, incorporated initiative by which a number of persons could launch legislation, referendum to enable the electorate to accept or reject government proposals, and recall which placed the representative under constant surveillance of his constituents by making him accountable to them for all his activities in the legislature.

7. Good Papers, Vol. 15/Political Matters, ("The Reformer and his Methods", a paper read at a Meeting of the Tax Reform League, Sept. 1913), (13881-95).

8. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, ("The Initiative and the Referendum," Farmers Magazine, no date, post 1910).

Commons strengthened Good's own belief in the initiative. Both saw it as a means to by-pass the 'unrepresentative' character of the legislatures by enabling people to draw up their own measures.⁹ However while the American stressed its educational value he considered it virtually valueless as a means of ensuring good laws. Good disagreed; although in time he too became less enthusiastic about the practical results and came to regard it as being primarily of benefit in educating people in law making.

In promoting the referendum Good maintained that it had proved effective in some cities and states of the United States. This led him to accept a number of generalizations; first, that greater care was generally used in voting on measures than in voting on men; secondly, that while the average man voted for a party with a vague platform of which he had little knowledge, he was, when called upon, able to exercise his own judgement on specific measures more intelligently; thirdly he considered that complex and difficult measures were

9. Commons, op. cit., p. 190. In 1908, as we have seen, Good read J.R. Commons' Proportional Representation. This book covered all the major areas of political reform advocated by Good. While Good's views had been largely formed by that time this work gave him an opportunity for analyzing and questioning his own ideas by comparing and contrasting them with those of Commons.

usually rejected as being suspect of concealing tricks or corruption. The supposed value of this third assumption was that it forced direct legislation to be both simple and clear, its effect being to clarify issues and simplify the law.¹⁰ A fourth generalization was that the referendum tended to disfranchise automatically the unfit as they would not understand it.¹¹

The recall which was associated with the initiative and referendum in the realm of direct legislation did not greatly concern him. Good considered it mainly as an admonitory or precautionary instrument, the existence of which would prevent the necessity for its use and was, in any event, an entirely secondary device.¹²

His second broad proposal for reform was proportional representation; he saw in it the means to break up the system of single member constituency which failed to give full weight to minority views. In a letter to The Globe, dated 1901, he

10. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, ("Reasons for Direct Legislation", article to the Brantford Expositor, 1908).

11. Ibid.

12. Good Papers, Vol. 23/Clippings, ("The Initiative and Referendum", article to the Farmers Magazine, no date, c. 1910).

suggested combining six constituencies into one to enlarge the number of voters. He supposed that there would be twelve candidates in this larger constituency, six of whom were to be elected. Both numbers were given as examples only; there could be more or less. There might be only six candidates in which case all would have been elected by acclamation. This was not his aim for he wished to ensure a choice of personalities as well as platforms.

With his hypothetical twelve aspirants a member might need in excess of one twelfth of the total vote to be elected. Each voter would have six votes, six choices in fact. He would mark his ballot, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 in order of preference. The six selections from all voters might well include all the candidates but their leading choices would be counted first. If an elector's first preference was not the man with the highest vote he would not be totally unrepresented, for on the next round his second option would be taken into consideration. This second count would result in the election of another person and although a voter's second choice might still be defeated, his third, fourth, fifth and sixth selections were yet to be weighed. This process continued until six individuals were elected. In all

probability the elector would be assured of having at least one of his preferences among the representatives.¹³

Good believed that the use of proportional representation would speed the withering away of political parties. The variety of views presented to the electorate would erase the "artificial lines of distinction splitting both province and nation into two warring camps."¹⁴ He did not doubt that the abolishing of parties was a practical reform. He maintained that it was possible for varying interest groups to subordinate their differences and achieve a state of unity in diversity. He observed that a non-party approach had been in use at various levels of politics for some time:

our municipal councils strive to work as units and not as dual bodies, and were it not for the deadly insulation of party prejudices, derived from provincial and federal governments, they would succeed better than they do. 15

He also noted that the directorates of Canada's vast commercial and financial institutions continued to flourish yet were not split into artificial 'reds' and 'blues'.¹⁶

13. Good Papers, Vol. 18/Proportional Representation, (Good to ed. The Globe, 1901), (13484-92).

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid.

Good advocated group government, by which he meant representation by occupation. Essentially his concept was the same as that of Henry Wise Wood. Indeed his knowledge of the theory was obtained partly from the Reverend William Irvine, who was an associate of Wood's.¹⁷ Good however had a more flexible approach than the Albertan. While the westerner maintained that the farmers should be "independent of any class or party and free from any sectional influence,"¹⁸ Good on one occasion advocated a formal alliance with labour,¹⁹ but despite this difference in emphasis, both men believed that all groups in society should and would be able to co-operate for the common good.

In the privacy of the caucus which followed the U.F.O.'s surprise victory in 1919 Good promoted this concept of government. It was to have included an executive proportionally representative of all 'groups' in the legislature, responsible to it and holding office until being dismissed by a want of confidence vote. A variation of this idea was incorporated in his The Story of the U.F.O. of December 1919, when he advocated an alliance between

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17. Good, as we have seen, was associated with Irvine in proposing group government in 1919.
18. William Kirby Rolph, Henry Wise Wood of Alberta, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950, pp. 73-80.
19. Good Papers, Vol. 14/U.F.Co/op., ('The Story of the U.F.O.,' article written by Good for Canadian Countryman, Dec. 1919), (10329-39).

two groups, Farm and Labour. He argued that each economic segment had its own vested interest and therefore an alignment by occupation was desirable.²⁰

Good in both cases looked to the phasing out of the party system and the turning of parliament into a deliberative assembly in which each question would be considered and decided on its own merits regardless of any party policies.

To achieve this new representative system he recognized it would be necessary to change unwritten portions of the Constitution. He believed that the very strength of the Anglo-Saxon system of government lay in its adaptability to change and growth and it "had yet to reach the ultimate in political wisdom."²¹ This attitude annoyed those who considered the constitution as inviolable. They accused him of disloyalty to the mother country, a charge which he denied.

He believed that his vision of democracy was the only system both rational in theory and workable in practice; it alone contained within itself the seed of future progress. Within this structure the majority of people would rule not because they were necessarily or usually right but because no other

20. Ibid.

21. Good Papers, Volume 23/Clippings, ("The Initiative and Referendum," article in the Farmers Magazine, no date). (19104).

alternative was practicable, nor, in the long run wise.²² He realized that such an association involved the subordination of the interests of the individual to those of the majority. This suggested, to him, a need for a certain development of intelligence and moral character which ultimately implied the perception of the truth that the highest welfare of the individual was identical with, and only obtainable by, the greatest good to all. When this lesson had been learned the nation could then become an example to the world in the active promotion of Christian co-operation.

Good was not alone in his advocacy of change, J.J. Morrison proposed reform of the party system along similar lines, and their views achieved some grass roots support. A number of organized farmers in Ontario became convinced that the party system was a positive evil and should be replaced by one which allowed for the representation of interests co-operating in government. However their proposals were fiercely opposed by a more conservative section of the farm movement led by E. C. Drury who rejected direct legislation. He condemned the referendum believing that it was easy to get people to sign any sort of petition; as for the initiative he feared it would result in all sorts of frivolous legislation.

22. Good, Production and Taxation, op. cit., p. 124.

The recall, he believed, would only make a bad situation worse as even then members of parliament often spoke, not according to their convictions, but rather for the effect on their constituents.

The whole concept of group government was an anathema to Drury for he feared it would develop class consciousness. Moreover he saw the party system as a necessary part of democratic government in that the public could only be kept informed on the merits of proposed legislation by debates in Parliament.

These criticisms had merit for although Drury may have lacked the vision of Good, he understood that for any segment of the population to win power it must have a political party.

Moreover to abolish parties, to introduce group government meant the doing away of the parliamentary system as it existed in Ontario. Good never understood that to bring about such a revolutionary change in the Constitution would probably have unleashed a fundamental political crisis.

Good's opposition to a disciplined political party was due to his faith that only through a system where all co-operate in government could democracy flourish. In later years he was to attack the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation for struggling for power. He believed its role should be educational and entreated it to become and remain a federation of political independents devoted to promoting a co-operative commonwealth society.

CHAPTER NINE

The Reformer And His Impact

William Charles Good was a reformer who believed that through education change could be assured. He was convinced in the efficacy of his proposals and showed impatience towards those who failed to see their value. The very depth of his convictions, his compassion for the poor, his despising of hypocrites and loathing of war led to a degree of intellectual arrogance and dictatorialness, traits unfortunately not leavened by a sense of humour. Such failings, however, appeared unimportant when compared with his obvious love and concern for his fellow man.

His main concern was with inequalities within society. He tended to look upon the poor as morally superior to the wealthy and included a quotation in his notes, 'it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.'¹ He defined the rich man as he who obtained from society more service than he gave, and the poor he who gave more than he got. Justice could only be served if one received the equivalent of what he contributed; service rendered and service commanded must be equal.²

Good's philosophy and ideas were based on his understanding of Christian teachings. He believed that his role was to use

1. Good, Production and Taxation in Canada, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

2. Ibid., pp. 61-65.

these to smooth and accelerate the path towards a better world. He asked God, "give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown way."³ While he postulated that all true reformers should be religious, he did not demand adherence to any sect or church. They must however be aware of the Great Force of Love that motivated Good in his search for a truly Christian society.⁴

He saw himself as an educator who was sowing intellectual seed that would bear fruit in the future. He stressed unity of purpose and while he did not seek controversy,⁵ he was aware and appreciative of that aspect of his own ideas.

I am well aware that much of it will be controversial. But that fact, provided the reader strives for an open mind, should augment rather than decrease the stimulating effect of what may seem to be a "voice in the wilderness".⁶

In his activities within farm organizations he attempted to discourage political alignments and sought to develop an atmosphere in which the ideals of the Social Gospel and agrarian reform would prosper.

3. Good, Farmer Citizen, op. cit., p.275.

4. Good Papers, Vol. 18/Political Matters, ("The Reformer and his Methods," a paper read at a Meeting of the Tax Reform League, Sept. 1(13), (138381-95).

5. Good Papers, Vol. 3, (Good to G. Waldron, Apr. 30th, 1916), (2053-55).

6. Good, Farmer Citizen, op. cit., p.viii.

To fulfill God's divine plans a knowledge of history was essential to enable the reformer to discern the moral law beneath all social growth. As a result of study the reformer would become profoundly conscious of the slowness and fitfulness of human progress; this would prepare him for the frequent failure of his own efforts.

Being convinced that reforms were essentially moral questions, or had moral implications, Good judged each issue on whether it was right or wrong.⁷ He realized that this was difficult to determine for morality in politics was different to that in the home and it was hard for many to recognize an absolute, all that could be achieved was to improve ethical standards.⁸ In this process the church must play an important role by reflecting the needs and aspirations of the people for as he visualized life as a harmony, he recognized no distinction in the fight for social change between the secular and the sacred.

7. Good Papers, Vol. 18/Political Matters, (138881-95).

8. Ibid.

Good was a utopian reformer in that he believed that his political theory was a norm to which political practise ought to conform and that the good of self interest should be subordinated to loyalty and sacrifice for a higher ideal.⁹ While the Social Gospel influenced him greatly, he never clearly defined his ideal state. It emerged as a vague Kingdom of Righteousness in which all good things would be possible. "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."¹⁰ His Utopia appeared to be a primarily agricultural society serviced by industry and practicing the ideals of co-operativism; he never faced the issues of a fully industrialized society or class conflict. He found both distasteful and believed that by just taxation and political reform the first could be kept under control while in a just society the second would wither away.

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9. A. Sorel explained the difference between utopianism and reality as the eternal dispute between those who imagined the world to suit their policy and those who arranged their policy to suit the realities of the world. A. Sorel, L'Europe et la Revolution Francaise, p.474, quoted in E.H. Carr "The Twenty Years Crises," 1919-1939, p. 11.
10. Good, Production and Taxation, op. cit., p.133.

His acceptance of the Agrarian Myth had little relevancy to non farming workers, indeed beyond his feelings of humanitarianism he did not greatly concern himself with the urban proleteriat. There is no record of his views on the Winnipeg General Strike or upon any particular militant action by factory workers. Apart from one article which led to his being unjustly accused of a bias against trade unionism he made no mention of industrial organizations.

His pre-occupation with the ideals of the co-operative movement made the concept of class conflict, unpalatable, and often blinded him to the realities of society; this was particularly evident in his approach to political matters. His belief that the concerns of the farmers and manufacturers could be resolved by simply sitting down together in committee, showed an ignorance of the depth of the differences of class interest.

His greatest impact upon farming opinion was as a co-operator, yet even here he was to see much of his basic philosophy cast aside. He failed to imbue most of his colleagues in the United Farmers' Co-operative with his own concept of co-operativism,¹¹ and he found himself continually deploring the de-emphasis of democratic control and the 'excessive' concern with profits within the organization.

11. This is made clear in Good's conversation with Mr. Burnaby, President of the United Farmers' Co-operative Company, after the installing of Mr. Loblaw as manager. Good, Farmer Citizen, op. cit., pp. 103-105.

As a propagandist against protectionism he had, few peers but once again his efforts and those of many farmers came to nought in the election of 1911. The degree of his enthusiasm for the cause can be measured by the depth of his disillusionment upon the failure of reciprocity.

After World War One Canada ceased to play a prominent role in international affairs and turned to the isolationism which Good had opposed; furthermore, despite his warnings, revenge had been exacted upon Germany. His proposed political reforms also fell on deaf ears; partyism grew as both direct legislation and proportional representation became dying issues.

That he did not see the adoption of his specific ideas did not surprise Good; he had foreseen the difficulties facing reformers in Canada and realized that change would take a long time. He feared however that the people would not wait and that revolution might be the only way to attain the desired reforms.¹² This conclusion was based on three beliefs: firstly that most men were like a flock of sheep. He quoted Carlyle: "mankind sail their life-voyage in huge fleets, following some single ... commodore."¹³ Moreover an evil few conspired to block all legitimate and peaceful channels of change. In these circumstances to bring

12. Good Papers, Vol. 17/Banking, Credit, ("Some Reflections on Money and Interest," an essay, c. 1898). (12533-96).

13. Ibid.

about change radical measures were needed. "Old notions might need force to wipe them out."¹⁴ This was the closest he came to advocacy of force. Although he never elaborated on the justice of revolution, one may presume that he equated it with war, he hated it but believed that at times it was justifiable.

Good's failures were partly due to his idealism, he imagined the world to suit his policies, not as it was. A case in point was his acceptance of the Agrarian Myth, in which he shut from his mind the harsh realities of Canadian farm life.

Nevertheless while he lacked success in achieving particular reforms, his ideas had a stimulating effect upon the climate of thought in Ontario. This was due largely to his activity as a writer for he was among the most active publicists in the Province. Apart from his book on production and taxation he was a constant contributor to papers and periodicals.¹⁵ He also made many speeches including one to the Social Service Council

14. Ibid.

15. Among them: The Weekly Sun, The Canadian Countryman, The University Magazine, The University Monthly, The Farmer's Advocate, The Farmers Magazine, Farm and Dairy, The Brantford Expositor, The Globe, and the Citizen and Country. He was offered the Editorship of the Citizen and Country but turned it down. (Good Papers, Volume 1, a letter to his mother, Dec. 10th, 1900) (456-466).

meeting in Ottawa; it was there that he and Drury represented the views of the Social Gospel farmers of English speaking Canada.¹⁶

During Good's intellectually formative years Ontario saw a great growth of Social Gospel ideas; they played an important part in the Province's agrarian revolt. A number of new organizations and movements arose, one, the Social Service Council of Canada was centred in Toronto and made the Province a focal point of Social Gospel activity. The first Dominion-wide agricultural organization and the first national co-operative association were both founded in Ontario. The Province's voters elected the first farmers government in Canada and in 1921 sent twenty two Progressives to Ottawa. While these achievements were not the work of any one man, William Charles Good contributed much. His philosophy and ideas were to be found expressed in all these activities; his views assisted their birth and nurtured them when established. In fostering the intellectual atmosphere that enabled them to arise he earned the right to be included among Canada's great Christian and agrarian reformers.

16. This Council expressed the ideals of the Social Gospel in Canada. Good and Drury were two of three farmers who addressed the meeting. The third was Alphonse Desjardins, the founder of the Caisses Populaires in Quebec.

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Coleman, N.F. - A student at Toronto at the same time as Good he maintained a life long friendship. He went to the United States and took up school teaching later he taught at the University. He was a very devout Christian.

Cowan, H.B. - Editor of Farm & Dairy. Closely connected with the beginnings of the U.F.O. He and Good were apparently close in ideas and sided together on issues concerning policy of U.F.O. and the Co-Operative Company.

Doyle, Fanny, Clara et al. Cousins of Good. They had a farm in Manitoba where he stayed in the summer of 1898. Not as 'strict' in outlook as Good.

Martin, J.A. - A friend in Toronto, met 1897-98, shared the same boarding house with Good for a time. / very hard working, scholarly man, involved in the Canadian Socialist League and the Single Tax Movement. He was deeply religious in outlook.

Shortt, C.S. - A missionary in Japan for a number of years. He met Good when the latter was a student at Toronto. They began to correspond about 1901.

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