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**Female Reformers in Victorian Nova Scotia:
Architects of a New Womanhood**

- Michael J. Smith

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This thesis is presented to the Faculty of Arts of Saint Mary's
University in Halifax as partial fulfillment of the requirement for
the degree of Master of Arts in Atlantic Canada Studies.

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Colin D. Howell

Thesis Advisor

John Reid

Committee Member

Pat Fawcett

Committee Member

Halifax, N.S.

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ABSTRACT

Female Reformers in Victorian Nova Scotia: Architects of a New Womanhood

- Michael J. Smith.
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Female reformers of Victorian Nova Scotia played a critical role in interpreting and shaping both their world and their womanhood. As industrialization transformed the modern capitalist order, Maritime women in the last third of the 19th century challenged traditional beliefs about religion, education, sexuality, physicality, politics, work, sports, consumerism, and even the nature of capitalism. These early feminists, from those who were firmly rooted in a maternal orientation to those who had a more critical perspective, all understood and deplored the exploitive characteristics of modern capitalism. By the turn of the century, however, these reformers had embraced a maternal feminist orthodoxy which celebrated notions of women's moral purity, nurturing ability, and finer sensibilities. In sports, for example, reformers moved from an ideology that promoted healthful recreation to one that emphasized the relation between sport and women's reproductive destiny. Similarly in the earlier period female workers - from teachers to domestic servants - demonstrated their awareness of both class solidarity and the need for gender equality. Reformers in the last third of the nineteenth century also questioned the nature of sexuality and marriage offering a critique of fashion and

capitalist materialism. Again the reform critique underwent a metamorphosis from critical to maternal feminism after the turn of the century. The results of this transformation were significant. While reformers achieved short-term gains, in the long run the emphasis on maternal feminism served to legitimate and institutionalize gender inequalities.

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INTRODUCTION

Female reformers of Victorian Nova Scotia played a critical role in interpreting and reshaping both their world and their womanhood. As industrialization transformed the modern capitalist order, Maritime women in the last third of the 19th century challenged traditional beliefs about education, religion, sexuality, physicality, politics, work, consumerism, and even the nature of capitalism. By the turn of the century, however, the critical edge of the reformers' inquiry had become blunted. In time their critique became indistinguishable from the broader liberal progressive movement, the basic objectives of which were to improve the system by reforming it in a piece-meal manner, and ensuring greater social efficiency by applying scientific principles of social engineering. For the most part, turn of the century reformers ignored what earlier feminists had often addressed: the roots of contemporary social inequality. In turn, these twentieth century reformers adhered to a maternal feminist ideology, one that celebrated notions of woman's superior nurturing ability, moral purity, and refined sensibilities, all of which were supposed to culminate in a destiny of marriage and motherhood for all womankind.¹

Various historians have addressed the nature of the turn of the century women's movement and the impact of maternal feminism, emphasizing its conservative character. In her recent book Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English Canadian Suffragists, Carol Bacchi has suggested that middle class reformers concerned themselves with a broad range of issues that served their class interests. These issues included the institutionalization of the feeble minded, immigration

restrictions, the servant question, social purity and censorship. All of these reflected the reformers' maternal feminism. Bacchi contends that suffrage was one vehicle that maternal feminists used to achieve their reform goals and that true liberation for women was delayed because of the emphasis on maternal feminism and suffrage. Catherine Cleverdon presented a different picture of the Maritime suffrage movement. She stressed that while suffragists in the rest of Canada had an aggressive platform and forward looking vision, Maritime women were bound by the traditional conservatism of the region. Cleverdon arbitrarily stereotyped the Maritimes as a "Stronghold of Conservatism". Bacchi's view that both twentieth century feminism and suffragism were conservative, and Cleverdon's contention that the suffrage movement was generally progressive, and conservative only in the Maritimes, suffer from the same limitation: they ignore feminism in an earlier period. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century suffrage and maternalism represented only a small portion of the feminist design; after the turn of the century they became its predominant elements. This fact requires a reappraisal of the nature of feminism in its origins as well as its results.²

There is important work by American historians which deals with this earlier critical period and the subsequent narrowing of the feminist vision. In True Love and Perfect Union William Leach has examined the struggles of early feminists and their belief in scientific knowledge, cooperation, humanitarianism, and rationality. These early feminists questioned both the liberal tradition and possessive individualism. After the turn of the century this critical

approach narrowed into a maternal feminism which occurred when feminists became caught within the limitations and strengths of a reform tradition that they in many ways, helped to create."³

This reform tradition was an integral component of feminism in Nova Scotia. This thesis examines that tradition in a period when Nova Scotian feminists possessed a critical view of both their world and the capitalist order and set out to reform many of the ills of that world. It also considers the early twentieth century narrowing of that vision into a conservative maternal feminist ideology.

Historians have mistaken this maternal feminist ideology - and the corresponding progressive reform impulse - as a critical component of the movement for change in the early part of the twentieth century. Since these historians do not consider social inequalities as deeply rooted in capitalism itself, they have tended to ignore both the impact of capitalism's early expansion and the early reaction to it. These same historians, moreover, having identified the progressive reform movement as a decisive attack on the perplexing problems of society, have applauded the maternal feminist stance. This permits them to identify the achievement of universal suffrage as both the ultimate goal and reward of a new and 'aggressive' reform orthodoxy.

This approach needs reappraisal. When one examines the rise of a critical feminism which accompanied the industrialization of Nova Scotia during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, it becomes possible to trace its eventual metamorphosis into the orthodoxy of maternal feminism. This argument is different from one that merely dismisses the early feminist movement as conservative as well as from

those that see it as progressive or radical. By the early twentieth century middle class feminists no longer criticized the inequalities existing in Nova Scotian society. In turn, maternal feminism allowed them to make certain improvements in society without challenging or threatening their own class interests.

While middle class women are often given primary consideration in this thesis, I have attempted to include the viewpoints of women of all classes. Many women - especially those from the underclasses - are known to us only by their initials or a pseudonym, as is the case in unsigned letters to newspaper editors. But just as middle class women drew upon their own class experience in offering their solutions to society's ills, working class women constructed their ideas out of their own class experience as well. Their vision often failed to coincide with that of the middle class reformers. Around the turn of the century, however, this neglected and obscure group seems to have lost its stridency, at the very time that maternal feminism was becoming the prevailing orthodoxy. Whether working class women willingly adopted that ideology or merely became less vocal it is impossible to say. What is important is that women of all classes had a substantial influence on their world. Indeed, these women created new notions of femininity and womanhood, many of which have endured to the present. As Elizabeth Fox-Genovese has written, "the world we have inherited could not have been built without them, neither the bad in that world nor the good."⁴

While middle class women left correspondence, diaries, reports, and society minutes behind them, it is difficult to locate and recon-

struct the opinions of the more elusive working class woman. One place where working women did express their views was in the public press - particularly in a leading Halifax newspaper, the Liberal Acadian Recorder. The society column of this newspaper offers a microcosm of the woman's movement, including the shift from critical to maternal feminism. "Lady Jane," a critical feminist column appearing throughout much of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, had by the turn of the century been replaced by the maternal feminism of "Joan". Unlike "Lady Jane", "Joan" revelled in 'Society' balls and fashion. For her, like the later reformers, maternal feminism embodied the truest ideal of womanhood. Newspaper columns, therefore, not only display individual responses to particular situations but also reveal the collective pulse of society over time.

Minute books and reports of various organizations and societies - despite their often limited middle class viewpoint - offer an equally abundant wealth of information. One is often struck by the candour, particularly in the earlier years, of feminists who were gaining an initial foothold in the public world. And, as with newspapers, the reader of these sources can gain an impression of an emerging collective consciousness amongst Victorian feminists.

While the primary sources for this thesis are almost exclusively Nova Scotian, secondary sources often are not. Sources relating to Eastern Canada are scarce. One should recognize the fact, however, that Nova Scotia was neither isolated from the rest of North America, nor indeed from Great Britain or the continent, and that the influences that affected these regions have often influenced Nova Scotia as well.

Nova Scotian women often replicated the thoughts and actions of women elsewhere, but they also injected their own experiences into the shaping of womanhood and their world.

Some women, of course, were more influential than others. In this thesis, I place a considerable emphasis on women in urbanized areas. This is not to dismiss the importance of the ideas of rural women; nor does it necessarily lead to their neglect. Rural women did not share in the same experience as urban women, but the staggering amount of outmigration from rural to urban areas made rural representation an integral part of urban life and consequently of this thesis as well.

Changing demographic patterns, the growth of factory work and sweatshop labour, and the impact of urbanization and industrialism on prevailing standards of morality, all affected Nova Scotian women - and many were agitated enough to participate in reform measures. Not surprisingly, women reformers of the Victorian era, like their male counterparts, exhibited a tremendous belief in the power of science to bring about social regeneration. The president of the Presbyterian Church Women's Foreign Missionary Society - a Mrs. Dodge - commented in 1898 that

all the forces in the world are moving towards the consummation of [the Lord's] work. All the paraphernalia of modern science are accessories towards this end; telephones; telegraphs, submarine cables, steam, electricity, rapid transit, are all bringing the world nearer to Christ.

Although Dodge spoke only in the spiritual sense, her words could have applied to the role of science in all aspects of society. Science and

technology it was hoped would bring a higher civilization to all man and womankind.⁵

Concomitant with the belief in science, Victorian men and women advocated a rational and orderly approach to all aspects of Victorian life, ranging from trade and commerce to personal behaviour. Reformers aimed at establishing an equilibrium in matters of sexuality, in bodily health and hygiene, in personal and class relationships, and in intellectual and physical training. Excesses of any sort, reformers believed, were detrimental to women, to future generations, and to society. According to this early feminist theory, rationality, order, and scientific progress could create the highest form of civilization possible. Nineteenth century feminism, as William Leach has argued, thus can be viewed "as a multifarious network of associations and apparatuses that produced an egalitarian ideology determined and limited by its historical matrix and that attempted, in its own right to shape contemporary historical conditions." In their struggle to define their world and their womanhood, female reformers gained short term results. But as their theories evolved from a critical perspective to a maternal feminist one, reformers lost the opportunity to achieve a fundamental reordering of society.⁶

This thesis examines this late nineteenth century metamorphosis from critical to maternal feminism in a number of different ways. First, it studies those women who throughout the late nineteenth century had avoided sharp social criticism - particularly those whose primary interest lay in philanthropic reform or in Christian regeneration - but who were nonetheless desirous of partaking in new educa-

tional opportunities and eager to pass their knowledge on to women of all classes. Often these women understood the inequalities that stemmed from the changing work world and tried to address and remedy this imbalance. But increasingly they feared social disequilibrium. Growing class conflict and threats to racial balance that accompanied turn of the century immigration led these women to retreat to a comfortable maternal position. Hereafter these reformers promoted motherhood and wifehood as the goal for all women, adjusting their reform agenda to reflect this new objective.

Second, it studies a similar transition in the work world. Here too, both reformers and female workers lost their more critical perspective. By the turn of the century they had substituted a maternal feminist ideology for their earlier critical viewpoint. In the area of work, the final result of this narrowed perspective meant more than the acceptance of the role of wife and mother. It also meant a diminished sense of solidarity with co-workers, and an end to demands for wage parity and sexual equality with men. Thus through the acceptance of maternal feminism, women were relegated to a marginalized job market. From the periphery of the employment world, women competed against each other for subordinate positions, while male workers, with their self-styled masculine, business, and administrative acumen forged ahead in positions of responsibility. The evolution of the teaching profession, for example, clearly demonstrates the transition from a critical stance to a limited maternal position. Teachers in the last quarter of the nineteenth century were exposed to the public world of newspaper criticism, criticism or support from taxpayers, and professional attitudes.

of their male peers. Female teachers were able to articulate an egalitarian position which supported equality in wages for men and women and promoted a solidarity and a new professional sensibility amongst all teachers. With the turn of the century retreat to maternal feminism, however, female teachers found that notions of woman's 'superior' nurturing ability limited them to teaching lower grades, while male teachers advanced to better paying positions both in teaching high school and administration.

In recreational pursuits as well women reformers moved from a critical to a maternal perspective and contributed to the marginalization of female athletics after the turn of the century. Early Victorian sport reformers argued that women and men needed to maintain a balance between brain work and physical exercise. Additionally, reformers believed that women would not only have improved good health but that ideals of graceful femininity and womanliness would be enhanced by physical exercise. By the turn of the century, however, following the rise in the popularity of team sports and bicycling, women sport reformers promoted sports and athletic participation in a different manner. They argued that sports such as excessive bicycling were hazardous to a woman's morality and reproductive capability, and that male dominated sports were unnecessarily individualistic, competitive and violent. Sports reformers of the early twentieth century eventually redefined women's sports to the point that sexuality and maternal potential became more highly valued than athletic ability. In sports, as in other areas, the acceptance of maternal feminism did create short term gains - in this case creating sports that were exclu-

sively female - but in the long run the demise of the earlier critical perspective meant that women's athletics lost more than they gained.

It is perhaps in the realm of sexuality and the sexual relation between men and women that the demise of nineteenth century critical feminism can be most clearly seen. Late nineteenth century women were adamant about the need for equality in all aspects of the sexual relation. They advocated a national utilitarian dress - one that did not depend on male admiration - an end to the double standard of morality for men and women, and an egalitarian approach to marriage. Similarly these reformers attacked growing materialism and consumerism. Reformers dropped this line of critical inquiry after the turn of the century and accepted maternal feminism as the prominent orthodoxy. After this point the debate about sexuality degenerated into a discourse about the practical and acceptable means to ensnare a husband, the ultimate objective of maternal feminist ideology.

Throughout the last quarter of the nineteenth century women maintained an interest in political affairs. Agitation for suffrage increased in the 1890's. Backed especially by the Influential Women's Christian Temperance Union of Nova Scotia, suffragists enjoyed a widening base of public support. Petitions to the legislature were frequent and expectations were high. In 1895 a Halifax municipal election demonstrated that women's support crossed class lines, and over 10,000 people signed a pro-suffrage petition that was presented to the Nova Scotia legislature. While these early suffragists used various arguments in support of their demands, most not only wanted equal political rights but also demanded economic equality with men.

After the turn of the century, however, this critical and egalitarian perspective narrowed as suffragists adopted a maternal feminist position, similar to that of Attorney General James Wilberforce Longley, the leader of the anti-suffrage forces. Hereafter suffragists argued that women's nurturing qualities would be important to the gradual civilization of politics. This maternal ideology perhaps assisted the attainment of suffrage, though many have argued that the granting of suffrage was a politically expedient move on the part of the government. Whatever the reasons for its achievement, however, suffrage by itself represents only a minor part of the broader objectives of earlier critical feminists.

It is important to speculate on the vision that the early Victorian reformers projected. While it is true that subtle nuances and differences characterized each woman's opinion, it appears that late nineteenth century reformers held an idealized dream of a future "cooperative commonwealth." They believed in a what might be termed a 'Bellamyite' vision of a world where modern scientific and technological advancements, a benevolent state, and a philanthropic minded citizenry would combine with the highly civilized nature of late nineteenth century man to form a utopian and classless society. Just as Edward Bellamy had implied in his utopian treatise Looking Backwards, nineteenth century reformers might achieve 'socialism without Socialism.' Believing that the ills of society could be overcome with a little good will and scientific knowledge these early reformers failed to develop a critique that challenged the existing social structure. Consequently, with the rise of the progressive movement, they

found in the ideology of maternal feminism the promise of quick short-term solutions to the 'women question', only to lose the possibility of more far-reaching change.⁷

FOOTNOTES: INTRODUCTION

1. See Richard Hofstadter, The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R. (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), James Weinstein, The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State: 1900-1918, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), Gabriel Kolko, The Triumph of Conservatism, (New York: The Free Press, 1963), Robert H. Wiebe, The Search for Order, 1877-1920, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967) and Michael Bliss, A Living Profit, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974) for the view that the early twentieth century vision was not a movement for radical social change but rather a liberal movement design to maintain and strengthen the existing order. For a more traditional interpretation of the Progressive impulse see Samuel P. Hays, The Response to Industrialism, 1885-1914, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957) and Harold U. Faulkner, The Quest for Social Justice, 1898-1914, (New York: MacMillan, 1931) and Vernon Louis Parrington, Main Currents of American Thought, (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1927-1930).
2. Carol Bacchi, Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983); Catherine Cleverdon, The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950, rep. 1974 with an Introduction by Ramsey Cook). Cleverdon's book is quite rightly attacked for its stereotyping of the Maritimes, see E.R. Forbes, "In search of a Post-Confederation Maritime Historiography, 1900-1967", Acadiensis, VIII:1 (Autumn 1978), pp. 3-21. On the other hand Forbes fails to see the conservative nature of the early twentieth century suffrage movement. See his review article on Bacchi's book. "The Ideas of Carol Bacchi and the Suffragists of Halifax", Atlantis, 10:2 (Spring 1985), pp. 119-126. For a similar treatment of both books see Margaret Conrad, "The Re-Birth of Canada's Post: A Decade of Women's History", Acadiensis, (Spring 1983), pp. 140-162.
3. William Leach, True Love and Perfect Union: The Feminist Reform of Sex and Society (New York: Basic Books, 1980), p. 351. Much of the problem in defining the limits of the feminist critique centers on the question of just what is a 'radical' orthodoxy. I would suggest that suffrage as a specific goal is not particularly radical; it does not challenge the existing social structure, it serves only to gain a specific political objective. Of course some historians argue that in terms of the Victorian constraints any movement towards the public sphere was radical. However, the thesis will demonstrate early feminists had goals that were more far reaching than mere suffrage. See Aileen Kraditor, Up from the Pedestal, (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968), and Ellen DuBois, "The Radicalism of the Woman Suffrage Movement: Notes Toward the Reconstruction of Nineteenth Century Feminism", Feminist Studies, 3:1/2 (Fall 1975), pp. 63-71 for the view that this movement out of the home and away from the family was a

radical departure. See William Leach, True Love and Perfect Union and Christopher Lasch, The New Radicalism in America, (1889-1963): The Intellectual as a Social Type, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966) for opinions more like my own. See Elaine Leslaw Silverman, "Reform as a Means of Social Control: Theodore Roosevelt and Women's Suffrage", Atlantis, 2:1 (Fall 1976), pp. 22-35 where suffrage is seen as "yet another tool of social and political control in the hands of middle class males." Wendy Mitchenson, "A Study in Nineteenth Century Feminism" in A Not Unreasonable Claim, Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s, Linda Kealy (ed.), (Toronto: Woman's Press, 1979), also has a more narrow view of the feminist position than may be appropriate.

4. Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Placing Women's History in History", New Left Review, No. 133 (May/June 1982), pp. 5-29.
5. Twenty Second Annual Report, Presbyterian W.F.M.S. (Halifax, 1898), pp. 15-16. See also the first two chapters of Ramsey Cook, The Regenerators, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985). Cook describes attitudes similar to Dodge's but restricts his emphasis to the religious influences of the day.
6. Leach, True Love and Perfect Union, p. 9.
7. Edward Bellamy, Looking Backward: A Romance of 2000 A.D., (London: Ward, Lock & Company, 1887 (rep.) 1921). "Doesticks", a writer for the Acadian Recorder commented in 1890 that even if the society described in Bellamy's book did not evolve there was no doubt that the future status of the working class would be bettered and indeed already had begun to improve. "The real producers of wealth are not and never had been rewarded to the extent which the heaven-born laws of Justice demands." Several years later the same newspaper editorialized on the collapse of an experimental housekeeping co-operative in Decatur, Illinois. While admitting that Bellamy's book had won many converts to Socialism, the editorial felt that the book ignored both human nature and economic realities. Still, some people continued their quest for various configurations of Utopia. For example Rev. A. Gandier in a discourse entitled, "Christian Socialism" felt that if the poor turned to Christ they would give up the vices that caused the most extreme poverty and consequently the position of the poor would improve, and they would "cease to be under the heel of the oppressor and usurer." Furthermore if the wealthy accepted Christ they would recognize that their riches were to be shared. "The time will come when it will be regarded a disgrace to be a millionaire." Acadian Recorder, August 2, 1890, August 8, 1893, November 20, 1899.

CHAPTER ONE

"The Intellectual Sphere of Women Reformers in Victorian Nova Scotia: From Enlightened Adventurers to Maternal Missionaries"

Late nineteenth century changes in religion and education paved the way for women to enter the public sphere. Contemporary religious thought, especially that of the social gospel, taught that salvation could be gained through the good works of mankind. In addition, improved educational opportunities gave middle class women the ability to make intelligent choices about life at home and in their world. These educated women at once hoped to escape the ennui of a constrained homelife, and worked to overcome the destructive side-effects of modern capitalism. As they pushed into the public sphere they became more and more aware of the injustices that existed in the modern world and sought a critical perspective that would make reform of industrial society possible. Reformers attempted to define a role for women in the reformation of society. But, unable to transcend their class backgrounds, they relied increasingly upon a maternal feminist vision. By the turn of the century these Nova Scotia women were apologizing for their public involvement. Rather than demanding reforms that would challenge the traditional order and expose the roots of social inequalities, women rationalized their involvement in reform as a natural extension of woman's special maternal qualities. Because of this maternal feminist orientation, women's place in society - indeed the very character of the social reform impulse - would be seriously affected.

The opening of common school education, and subsequently higher education to women, was one of the catalysts that prompted women to move into the public domain. In 1826 Mary _____ of Pictou wrote a letter to a Halifax newspaper decrying the lack of higher education for Nova Scotian women. The inferior treatment of women, she felt, could not "be from a consideration that we are defective in intellect." Rather Mary felt that women had "a capacity of improvement in scientific attainments. We cannot suppose for a moment that such powers of mind would be conferred upon more than half of the human race for no good purpose." Improved educational standards for women would enable them to detect the "worthless villain" who possessed only a pleasing manner, and as mothers, to teach children. In the public realm, Mary continued, improved educational opportunities would enable women to alleviate or prevent human misery. Mary stressed that she was speaking neither of common schools, where "a slight notion of some of the first principles of education" might be obtained, nor of establishments designed solely to enhance womanly graces. "In these places we learn to act the part of a machine, while the rational part of our nature is left a moral wilderness, fit only for the haunts of unruly passions and insatiable desires... I am of opinion that excelling in this way tends to withdraw our attention from those things which would be decidedly valuable." Mary based her demands on "natural right[s]" when she advocated that women be educated to the academy, or high school level.¹

While agitation for the education of women started early in the century it was slow to become a commonplace occurrence. In 1861, Alex

Forrester, the Nova Scotia Superintendent of Education advocated common schools claiming that "every child born in a professedly Christian country possesses an infeasible right to a common school education". By 1874, in an address to the Teacher's Association, Rev. C. B. Pitblado commented "that although it is shocking to the taste, and perhaps injurious to the morals to have the high and low mixing together," the lower class nonetheless needed to be educated. An editorial in the Acadian Recorder in 1879 raised new educational concerns. It acknowledged that no longer was the male intellect considered superior to the female; rather the major question of the day was whether co-education of older boys and girls was proper and feasible. The article noted with approval that the Lord Bishop of Nova Scotia "who will not be charged with a leaning toward radicalism stated ... at King's College, Windsor, that he was entirely in favor of the admission of young women to the University". The editorial commended the wisdom of this action and noted some of the "beneficial influence[s]" that might occur. Educational standards would improve. For boys, "it would be intolerable to be convicted of stupidity in the presence of ladies." Equally, girls would have a "keen spur to their ambition" as they attempted to demonstrate their intellectual equality. With exception of convent education, where young women were of necessity protected from the outside world, the sexes should not be separated for educational purpose. Common boarding schools, the editorial felt, caused "mischief" - rules could be broken, contact with young men made, and "horrible consequences" ensue. Either total withdrawal from the outside world, or free and unconstrained interaction

were preferable modes of education. Indeed there were particular benefits which might ensue from a free mingling of the sexes. "Young men are liable to grow boorish, vulgar, and rakish, when left to themselves. Young ladies hustled together in the confines of a boarding school are apt to grow effeminate, mawkish and sentimental." Women, the paper predicted, would soon compete on equal terms for academic honors.

Older biases, of course, were difficult to eradicate. In 1875, the Acadian Recorder gave a satisfied sigh when it commented on recent school examinations. "We were glad that some of the young ladies were not quite at home on the geometrical exercises, for no young women should study such things." A few years later in 1880, however, it praised Miss A. Mary Clayton, an employee of the firm Clayton and Sons, who had received a diploma from the Halifax Business College. The second female graduate, Clayton was "another proof that women are capable of receiving the highest mental training when placed in competition with men." But the belief in female intellectual inferiority still often appeared. A. H. Morrison, in an article in Canadian Magazine, claimed that the finer attributes of the sex would be lost if women persisted in entering "offices, emoluments, and professions for which, as a rule, [they] are not fitted either physically or mentally."²

If women were becoming more educated and more knowledgeable about the world outside the home, church officials and the general public worried about what effects their movement into the public sphere would have on them as mothers, wives, and daughters. The evils of education

were apparent in two ways. Firstly, as women became enticed into public life they would view marriage with less enthusiasm than before; secondly, as they became more educated in abstract ideas they would be uninterested in gaining the knowledge necessary to manage a household. Marriage, said "Doesticks" of the Acadian Recorder, was shunned by a large number of women. He lamented that women were "more and more poachers on man's preserves." He was afraid that they had forgotten "bake-ology and scrub-ology and knit-ology and cook-ology" and instead devoted themselves to "the ologies of scientific and business life."

If women were failing to gain the attributes needed to manage a household; overeducated women failed to spark the interest of men. A poem printed in the Journal of Education emphasized this.

Her education's unsurpassed
Her fond papa has spent
His money freely, - yes, and well,
That's clearly evident.

She speaks the modern languages
And writes them, too, with skill
She'd speak the dead ones quite as well
If they were spoken still.

She dotes on mathematics and
The sciences adores
She's up in all the ologies
And dates of all the wars.

She's pretty, witty, brilliant, wise,
You can't find many such -
And - I think I'd like to marry her
If she didn't know so much.

Education, many felt, lessened a woman's prospects of marriage. Women, said Rev. W. J. Armitage at St. Paul's Church, reign supreme in the home, "and the chief part of their life should be spent there ...

According to the opportunity, according to the strength, according to the time given her, she must do this work."

Thus the educated women of the late nineteenth century faced a dilemma. They had learnt reasoning and rationalization; they were aware of the differences and the demarcation between private and public spheres. Accordingly, these women felt assailed on the one side by a need to do more than housework, and on the other by traditional concepts of propriety, motherhood and wifehood, ideas which were reinforced by religious leaders. They saw ahead an intellectual vacuum, yet employment opportunities for educated middle class women usually involved a commitment few would undertake. At the same time if they were unable to advance into male employment preserves, they were also unwilling to retreat to the private sphere. As a result they chose to move sideways, into the realm of philanthropic reform. This was virtually an empty arena, for if males had moved sporadically within it, they were more involved in the management of the existing economic order than in addressing its faults. Convinced that their gender had no limitations, women reformers enthusiastically challenged problems in the industrializing world.³

Religious organizations, perhaps more than any others, took the lead in shaping the woman's reform movement. In 1876, for example, the Women's Foreign Mission Society of the Presbyterian Church (Presbyterian W.F.M.S.) was formed. One "very wise minister" generously allowed women "just two years to run the whole thing into the ground." In 1889 Mrs. Monró spoke to that same organization and claimed that there was room for all Christian women to take part in "women's work."

for women." The President, Mrs. R. F. Burns stressed the need for women to enter the philanthropic field. Those Christian women who did not help in reform work, she felt, were perhaps unaware that "God has endowed them with special qualities for this particular work." In 1894, Mrs. Dodge, President of the Presbyterian W.F.M.S., praised the gospel for having raised women "from the wretchedness and degradation of beasts of burden." No longer, she claimed, was woman "considered unfit to stand shoulder to shoulder with her fellow-man in every grand philanthropic and religious movement." Mrs. Dodge and many other reformers felt that because of woman's original fall from Grace, the deepest misery was reserved for their sex. "Oppressed and downtrodden, the helpless victim of the cruelty and caprice, the lust and lawlessness of savage and embroiled man, in the tragedy of [woman's] life there is no depth of misery which her experience has not sounded." The Christian gospel was the salvation of womankind. When women tackled "the intricate problem of how to help the lapsed and the lost, the sinning and the suffering masses," they raised not only their sex but themselves to an "exalted pedestal." When these devout and educated women entered the philanthropic arena they did so not because specific maternal and domestic qualities forced them to extend their home life, but rather because they, as women, had gained the right to enter the male domain on an equal, albeit separate footing. As Christians and as women, they felt called upon to assume public responsibility and address the evils of both modern industrial society and the heathen, unchristianized world. Many of the early reformers commenced philanthropic reform work as an extension of home life. For these

nineteenth century feminists "women's work for women" became a common rallying cry. While these women embraced an early maternalism, however, they tended to have a more advanced critique of their world than the next generation of maternal feminists would have. In addition, by the turn of the century the reform agenda of many women had narrowed substantially. Increasingly they concentrated upon those matters that revealed women's superior maternal virtues.⁴

This narrowing of the women's reform objectives was, in part, a response to the traditional attitudes of the church, society and of some women themselves. An 1893 correspondent to a Halifax newspaper complained about the "great deal of time frittered away by women who would be better occupied attending to household affairs and looking after children." The writer thought that it would be better to reduce the number of churches than to permit women to raise funds in the public sphere. Women had always been the primary supporters of the church. But churches faced a dilemma. Still adhering to a traditional view of woman's place, they also did not want to alienate their female parishioners who moved into the public sphere. The church resolved this dilemma by promoting the idea that reform involved merely the extension of women's domestic work to a broader sphere. Rev. Mr. Gandier spoke in Halifax in 1897 of the importance of mission work for women, which drew out the sympathies and broadened the liberality of womanhood. Rev. W. J. Armitage, several months later, agreed that women had a role to speak "a consoling word in ministry of sympathy and to lift up her brothers and sisters in the world." If woman was endowed for such work, with finer sensibilities, greater patience, more

tact and above all, purity of life, it must not be forgotten that they were "weaker in judgement", and as well, "weaker in will, in the power to act; in the power to carve out the life in strength." It was, Armitage stressed, in the home where woman found "her truest sphere, and there she must carry on her greatest work." A correspondent to the Acadian Recorder quoted:

Do the work that's nearest
Though 'tis dull at whiles
Helping when you meet them,
Lame dogs over stiles.

Home life, many felt, if properly attended to, would restrain women's desire to venture beyond the domestic sphere. In 1903 Rev. Armitage again preached in St. Paul's Church, Halifax, and admitted that "the sphere open to a woman's influence has been widening." Still, the home was woman's "greatest sphere, it was instituted at the creation." Women's noble virtues, "the spirit of sacrifice, sympathy, tenderness and love," could also, however, be useful in the "world of suffering and sorrow." In 1904 Rev. A. P. Logan, spoke in Bedford on "The Influence of Woman in Human Life". He noted that "if there is to be a reformation of society, every man of perception must see that it must be wrought by women." It was, he preached, their role as mother, wife and sister that would accomplish this. Philanthropic or reform organizations, on the other hand, would accomplish little.

Don't talk to me about societies reforming society. They are as incapable as a wooden dam to shut off the Niagara. Our mothers must reform society. Organizations of different kinds are doing a good work, but mothers can do a better work.

He concluded that when mothers promoted God's kingdom, evils such as vice, crime and war would disappear.⁵

Logan was hardly the first to question the value of philanthropic societies. In 1887 "Observer" criticized philanthropists for ignoring the "white slavery" of Halifax sweat shops. Two young women, the writer claimed, stayed up night and day sewing nineteen pairs of pants for a large establishment. After dividing their wages of \$5.13 between them, one woman was forced to apply for relief, the other to go out to service. In another case a woman lit fires, and swept floors and on Saturday cleaned towels and the interior of an institution for \$4.00 a month. "Observer" also denounced both "the dark side of some boasted development of industries under the N[ational] P[olicy]" and the charities of Halifax.

It will be probably said by those who divide the handsome Directors' allowance among them, that they don't know of this condition of affairs. But they ought to. These "great industries", these "manufactories" are actually furnishing a portion of the applicants for poor relief, in the way indicated. Halifax Philanthropy indulges a good deal in the way of figuring in annual reports and appearing on title-pages, wherein much of its munificence consists. It is, often very grinding, in its relations with the people.

It was probably the same "Observer" who wrote again in 1888 that "the average reformer skims too lightly to touch with his alleviating finger, the bruises inflicted by the triumph of wrong." Without prompt justice alleviating "the bitter trials, and suffering, and torturing anxieties that excite not the compassion of those who go about seeking the good of their fellowman," the writer warned, "there will be some-day, an outburst of public indignation that will carry destruction in its path."⁶

But if most charitable societies failed either to achieve their reform objectives or to present a coherent critique of modern industrial capitalism, women found that philanthropic clubs provided an available opportunity to direct their excess leisure time and enlightened education in useful directions. As a result, more and more women entered the public sphere under the umbrella of philanthropic reform.

The plethora of existing women's organizations in the last quarter of the 19th century demonstrated the popularity of philanthropic reform, but at the same time tended unnecessarily to splinter the women's movement. The formation of the National Council of Women, and subsequently in Nova Scotia various Local Council of Women unions, was intended to unite women through their common sisterhood and their common interests. The Antigonish Casket ridiculed the idea that "the possession of a common womanhood [was] a sufficient bond to hold a society together." For example, if men had chosen to organize for no other reason than to achieve a brotherhood of men, "the proper authorities would promptly institute a search for the writer with a view of placing him under treatment." While admitting that women who had specific objectives had the right to organize, the Casket, in ways reminiscent of the conservative attack on organized labour, ridiculed the notion of the National Council of Women.

Here we have a society which professedly does not exist to promote anything; which is founded upon no idea except the combination of an indefinite number of incongruous societies, with no other "link" than a common womanhood, and the vague notion of each as to what the golden rule demands of them. Such a thing is utterly opposed to reason and common sense.

There was, however, more than sisterhood that caused these societies to affiliate with each other. The rising social gospel which emphasized salvation through good works and implied a new ecumenical spirit, helped mould women's common experience into an essentially bourgeois reform programme. At the same time, however, religious sectarianism tended to undermine both gender solidarity and a common reform programme. The Halifax Local Council of Women, (Halifax L.C.W.) in its early months, for example, underwent religious trials over the use of the Lord's Prayer. A similar battle on religious grounds ensued during an attempt to incorporate the Women's Christian Association (W.C.A.) in 1886. Several of the women affiliated only with the Associations' Women's Home refused for religious reasons to become members of the W.C.A.; this in the face of the W.C.A.'s earlier (1876) claims that "denominational differences are forgotten." In 1889 the Home was still stressing its non-denominational nature, welcoming Roman Catholics and Protestants equally. "We interfere with no one's peculiar christian belief, we only seek to strengthen their moral and religious principles and aid and encourage them to do right, and walk in the paths of sobriety and virtue." Ironically, however, the very need to emphasize the non-denominational character of the organization reveals the continuing preoccupation of women with their own denominational allegiances.⁸

If religion played a major role in encouraging reform but undermining the sisterhood of women, personality differences were equally harmful to the various reform societies. In 1875, for example, supporters of the Infants Home were embroiled in a destructive conflict,

rooted in a disagreement between two ladies, that forced the resignation of several women. In addition, the offices of President and Vice-President were abolished and a general committee took charge of the organization.

Women's organizations worked to overcome these internal religious and personality problems, but even more difficult to resolve was the gap between the reforming class and those they intended to uplift. Sharing a middle class outlook, the later reformers often found it difficult to comprehend the lives and values of the recipients of their good works. During the formative years of women's societies, reformers attempted to understand and sympathize with the economic hardships of working class women. In Cape Breton, in 1893, for example, the Presbyterian W.F.M.S. reported that financial difficulties prevented many women from contributing to the foreign mission cause; however, if markets could be found for their commodities, funds would perhaps come available.

After the turn of the century, however, middle class reformers offered a somewhat less sympathetic portrayal of the working class. By this time, immigration to "great, free, unspoiled Canada" from Europe and Asia caused much anxiety among reformers. The imperialist stance that female reformers assumed, and which pervaded much of early 20th century society, derived in part from maternal feminist preconceptions. Believing that these immigrants threatened the existing social structure, reformers felt obligated to teach them 'Canadian' ways. These new citizens needed to be schooled in appropriate social values, yet taught not to question their class positions. In 1914 the Presbyterian

W.F.M.S. was warned that Christian ideals and good citizenship must be taught to these strangers. "And, if we are not thus ready, what of our country in the days to come? What of our sons and daughters?" Margaret Jamieson was even more explicit when she applauded restrictions of non Anglo-Saxon immigration in the W.F.M.S. "Home Mission Report of 1922-1923."

This is a matter for thankfulness; not because of any antipathy to other races, but because we already have a tremendous problem in the assimilation of so large a number of people of different races, different religions, and different moral standards from our own, a problem which is steadily growing, for apart from the fact that more of these people come to us every year, statistics show that they multiply four times as rapidly as the British born and native stock.

To counteract this growing threat of the underclasses, reform organizations at the turn of the century changed the focus of the various cooking schools, sewing classes and night schools that they sponsored. Usually such courses were directed at women of the middle class, and served the purpose of enlightenment and education. After the turn of the century schools were conducted exclusively as a programme of uplifting reform: that is to say that women of the lower classes were to be schooled in appropriate behavior in order to fulfil their duties as wives and mothers. Thus middle class reformers protected their own homes and society, no longer as enlightened philanthropists standing shoulder to shoulder with men, but from a platform of maternal superiority.

In 1881, for example, an attempt was made to educate and uplift middle class women. A licensed teacher from the South Kingston Institute, Miss Munro, came to Halifax in order to instruct middle class

ladies in high class cookery. A well known reformer, Mrs. J. W. Stairs organized this "new departure". It was notorious that in Halifax, while domestic cooking "was not behind any other place," only one lady was capable of cooking for dinner parties. "The first consideration with dinner giving citizens," said the Mayor of Halifax when he opened the school, "was not what day would suit them, but what day would suit this indispensable lady." The objective of the school thus was to create "amateur cooks" from middle class ladies who "hopefully would indulge [their peers] with constant exhibitions of their skill." Similarly in 1892 Caroline B. Courtney announced that a cooking course, consisting of twelve two-hour sessions would be starting in Halifax. A meeting was to be held at Government House; there ladies interested in studying cookery methods could purchase the \$6.00 tickets for the course. The teacher would be Miss Ormond from the National Training School of Cookery in Montreal. Ormond held a first-class diploma for household and for high class cooking and in 1892 was the winner of the bronze medal for high class artistic cookery at the Universal Food and Cookery Exhibition in London. Middle class reformers aimed this course, like that in 1881, at their social peers in the hopes of improving their domestic comfort. The next year, 1893 an editorial "Cookery in the Schools" appeared in the Acadian Recorder. It applauded attempts to teach cookery to girls in Minneapolis and London, England. The newspaper suggested that Nova Scotian girls should learn "practical and scientific" methods of cookery when in the upper departments. The editorial criticized the school system for basing older girl's education "upon the supposition that every girl is bent on

qualifying herself to be a public school teacher" and for letting them "learn household duties after marriage." Since good cooking was recognized "as part of the essential conditions of healthful existence," the newspaper felt its introduction in the public schools might cause the mortality rate to decline.¹⁰

As the 1890's progressed there was a subtle shift in attitudes towards cookery schools. Reformers directed their attention away from the middle class ladies in the home and students in the higher school grades and concentrated instead on working class women. In 1897 the ladies of the Halifax Local Council of Women (Halifax L.C.W.) obtained permission from the Archbishop to use rooms in the old St. Patrick School for Boys for a cooking school. It was offered on two conditions; firstly that the school teachers did not object to the smell of cooking and secondly that the ladies did not set the building on fire. Unfortunately even before the school could be established the rooms burnt. The major debate surrounding this school was whether it should be sponsored by philanthropic organizations or supported by public school funds. For example "XYZ" wrote to the Acadian Recorder, and felt that a school should be self-sustaining and reach "the girls who hang out in the street at night." "Doesticks," Acadian Recorder columnist, opposed a publicly funded school because "cooking comes natural to most young women." Not only was it unnecessary, but it was unduly expensive. "There is no room for it, there is no necessity for it, there is no money for it." "Observer" felt that since the school board "evidently had the authority to vote money as [it] liked" it could also donate the same amount "to procure for the poor material to

cook." The Dartmouth Women's Christian Temperance Union, on the other hand, felt that bad cooking and poor housekeeping drove men to the saloon. "No wonder such a man sought comfort in the saloon seeing he was denied it at home."¹¹

The school was established in 1897 by women reformers. Within a few months the teacher, Miss Helen Bell, was put on the school board payroll, confirming Commissioner McKerron's opinion that "the ladies who employed Miss Bell would in all probability hand over the teacher, kettles and all." By 1900 School Supervisor A. H. MacKay noted that the young ladies "are now beginning to see the advantage of the school and they are taking a greater interest in it."¹²

Not all young women were pleased with the reformers' assumptions about their future. "Kid" denounced such misconceptions in 1897 when the school was first opened.

I'm a little "maid" with apron white,
With rosy "cheeks" and eyes quite bright;
Anxious to acquire the "art"
Of making cake and "plum jam tart"
To "scrub" the floor, the "fire" to light;
The "pots and pans" to burnish bright;
Wash the "dishes" -- and what's more,
Polish the handle of the front door;
Sift the "ashes", wash the "clothes"
And do other "chores" the ladies chose
Thus fit me for my future life
When I become a poor man's wife.¹³

This antipathy of the working class to the reformer's plans was not new. The frustration early reformers felt is revealed in a Committee report on a night school sewing class offered by the Women's Christian Association in 1878. It claimed with relief that "the boisterous manners that we could not at first subdue have in a great measure

disappeared." The problems resurfaced the next year, however, and the following report noted

a large portion of the girls come more to pass the time than to learn, but if expelled would find other places where they could spend their evenings, or would be found on the streets. It has therefore been the aim of the Committee ... to bear as patiently as possible with their little annoyances, in the hope of being instrumental in doing them good.¹⁴

Obviously there was a vast difference between the needs of working class women and the goals of middle class reformers. Later reformers relied on stricter measures than patience to keep control in the classes and a steady attendance record. In 1911 a dress making class sponsored by the Halifax L.C.W., established a scheme whereby students were refunded a portion of their fees dependent on their attendance. During the class held at the Nova Scotia Technical College it was "impressed upon the students that the ladies in charge are teachers, and those in attendance pupils, who are obliged to remain in the class until the course is completed." The women reformers designed this class so that the students, many of them married women, could become independent seamstresses.¹⁵

Thus the reform measures of these middle class women went full circle. Earlier middle class reformers steeped in the traditional belief of women's true domestic abilities attempted to move into the public sphere. The early objective of these "enlightened adventurers" was to bring both the gospel and improved educational opportunities to women. Discouraged by working class attitudes, threatened by increasing immigration from Europe and Asia and the resultant challenges by different religious, racial, and class groupings, these middle class

reformers narrowed their objectives. If they had once been adventurers in a new realm, by the turn of the century women reformers were nothing more than maternal missionaries. In 1914, C. M. Murray, a well known reformer, wrote that women "have not trespassed upon 'man's sphere' nor indeed stepped out of 'women's sphere' which is bounded by that one word 'Home'. They have extended the significance of that word beyond what it should properly connote."¹⁶ Locked into the maternal feminist position, reformers saw all other women in the same light. Thus they challenged and changed their world, but in doing so they altered it in ways that differed very much from their original intent.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER ONE

1. Acadian Recorder, May 25, 1912.
2. Alexander Forrester, Address to the People of Nova Scotia on the Support of Common Schools, Superintendent of Education, (1861?), p. 5; Rev. C. B. Pitblado, Teacher's Association Annual Report, 1874, p. 31; Acadian Recorder, July 5, 1879; July 13, 1875, June 12, 1880; A.H. Morrison, "Education or Cram?", Canadian Magazine, 1:3 (May 1893), pp. 167-175.
3. Acadian Recorder, November 3, 1888, November 1, 1897.
4. Presbyterian Church (Eastern Division), Women's Foreign Missionary Society, Annual Report, (Halifax, 1897), p. 8; 1889, pp. 9-11; 1894, pp. 8-11; 1895, p. 9.
5. Acadian Recorder, April 8, 1893, September 18, 1897, November 1, 1897, November 25, 1893, November 2, 1903, September 20, 1904.
6. Ibid., March 8, 1887, May 9, 1888. Reformers did not often question why misery and poverty still existed amidst a plethora of philanthropic societies, but they recognized the societies' ineffectiveness. In 1912 a "prominent man" was quoted "We have women's societies to spare. But what about their effectiveness? They simply 'dabble' in charity - like children with new shoes, they try the tip of a toe in a puddle; then draw it away quickly lest they should get a splash of mud to dim the fine polish." Ibid., March 16, 1912.
7. Ibid., September 3, 1884.
8. Halifax L.C.W., Minutes, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 535, #1, July 1895; #3, April 13, 1899, September 6, 1899; Acadian Recorder, April 17, 1875, February 12; 1886, November 5, 1889; Women's Christian Association of the City of Halifax, Second Report, 1876, P.A.N.S., p. 7.
9. Presbyterian Church (Eastern Division), Women's Foreign Missionary Society, The Message, No. 3, (Truro, N. S., May 1893), p. 6; Presbyterian Church W.F.M.S., Annual Report, P.A.N.S., 1914-15, pp. 41-46; 1908, p. 13, 1916-1917, p. 40, 1917-1918, p. 39, 1922-1923, p. 53.
10. Acadian Recorder, May 24, 1881, October 19, 1893, The Menu for the first class was Alexandra Pudding, Croquettes of Chicken, Fillets of Fish a la Oriental, Parmesan Balls and Soup a la Reine. Ibid., December 17, 1892, In contrast cooking school principal Miss H. M. Bell prepared a sample meal of potato soup in a class at the North End Mission. Ibid., November 8, 1901. Rev. A. Gandier of Halifax claimed a north end doctor believed

"more physical wretchedness, disease and suffering were caused in this city by poor housekeeping, bad cooking and dirty homes than by strong drink. Daily Echo, March 18, 1895.

11. Halifax L.C.W., Minutes, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 535, #2, April 19, 1897. Acadian Recorder, December 18, 1896, January 16, 1897, February 6, 1897, May 6, 1897. See also Ibid., February 13, 1897. "Observer" was prompted to write after seeing an appeal by the School Board for donations of warm clothing for poor school children.
12. Acadian Recorder, June 4, 1897, October 11, 1900. See also Ibid., May 6, 1897.
13. Ibid., February 9, 1897.
14. Women's Christian Association of the City of Halifax, P.A.N.S., Fourth Report, 1878, p. 8, Fifth Report, p. 7.
15. Acadian Recorder, October 19, 1911, November 10, 1911; 100% attendance received a full refund of \$3.00; 90-99% - \$2.40 refund; 80-90% - \$2.00 refund; 70-80% - \$1.50 refund; 60-70% - \$1.20 refund.
16. Halifax Chronicle, January 1, 1914.

CHAPTER 2

"The Ideological Roots of the Marginalized Female Workforce: From Egalitarian Beginnings to Maternalist Compromise"

Attitudes of both women reformers and women workers changed dramatically during the Victorian period. While women had long participated in the work world, their numbers increased significantly with the industrialization of Nova Scotia in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. These female workers -- contrary to the assumptions of many middle class reformers -- were not simply young or single girls working for pin money, but often were women who supported themselves and their families. Throughout the last third of the nineteenth century, moreover, women worked to gain equal pay and better working conditions, and occasionally demonstrated notions of class solidarity. Critical of the role of women in an advancing industrial capitalist society, teachers, factory girls, and domestic servants alike revealed a stubborn commitment to a more egalitarian future.

At the turn of the century, however, many middle class women had begun to worry about the apparent threat to women's moral standards that accompanied the growing involvement of women in the work-a-day world. Faced with the decreasing availability of domestic servants in the labour market, turn-of-the-century reformers increasingly argued that women workers were safer in the confines of the home, where they gained skills that they would utilize in their married life. This middle class vision impacted significantly upon the earlier, more critical stance assumed by women workers. Instead of pursuing the

demands for equality in wages, reformers emphasized improvements in working conditions in order to protect women's superior maternal sensibilities. Furthermore in fields such as education, women's claim to equality gave way to a segregation of work along gender lines which the ideology of maternal feminism legitimized. Thus, while Nova Scotian women increasingly entered the workforce during the Victorian period, they gradually found their egalitarian impulses undercut by middle class maternal feminists. The result was widespread institutionalization of gender divisions in the workplace and the marginalization of women on the periphery of the labour force.

The transition from egalitarianism to maternalism and its relationship to work is particularly evident in the field of education. During the last third of the 19th century women entered the teaching field in considerable numbers. This was due not only to their own improved education or to the low level of pay for female school teachers, but also to the scarcity of men wanting the employment. The Morning Journal of September 1856 noted that the youth of the country were entrusted to "broken down, worthless drunkards, whose sole recommendation is that they are cheap, and seldom get drunk in school hours." The Sun a few years earlier was even more scathing about the sort of person attracted to the teaching profession.

A Country Schoolmaster of Nova Scotia!! Poor wretch! Look at him with his pale face, wrinkled forehead, bald almost to the crown, -- his weak eyes glimmering feebly through his rusty spectacles, ... his netherlip continually hanging down, as if in sympathy with his own misery, ... his bloodless complexion ... Poor devil! Most generous public! ... the poor debilitated, half starved, over-worked creatures ... who that can pack mackerel ... would be a Nova Scotia Schoolmaster?

There was obviously a large void in the teaching profession which women could fill.

The entrance of women into teaching was widely applauded. Indeed, the press, parents of school children, and women teacher's own male peers supported the entry of female teachers into the profession. For a time an active campaign for male and female wage parity ensued. In 1874, a resolution "that no distinction of sex be recognized in reference to the name or Grade or payment of same" was passed by the Nova Scotia Teachers' Association (NSTA). Equally important to women in this profession was the recognition that male teachers often gave to female teaching ability. At the 1874 meeting of the NSTA a Mr. George read a paper on "Teaching of Arithmetic," authored by a female teacher. Women, of course, were not willing to speak on public platforms at this time; obviously, therefore, the recognition given this lady's work reveals the kind of support they often received.

In 1875 a battle began over equality in wages for teachers of both sexes. At that time both male and female teachers were upgrading their licences but only men were receiving any corresponding benefits in pay. Women received widespread support from various sources. The Superintendent of Education favoured the notion that pay be accorded without regard to sex. The Halifax Citizen argued that "there is no earthly reason why a woman who has qualified herself to hold the advanced licence should not receive exactly the same amount as a man." A woman's natural ambition and improved salaries would encourage her sex, which possessed perhaps "the natural endowments of patience, forbearance and discrimination in character," to join the profession.

A few days later a Provincial Secretary's bill was introduced to give equality in pay to women teachers with the advanced licence.²

Despite these good intentions the injustice of the unequal pay continued and protests against discriminatory wages remained commonplace. The Acadian Recorder in October, 1875 reported that it had previously refrained from discussing salaries since the subject was involved in the "unpleasant issue" of women's rights. But a recently developed situation at the Morris Street School prompted comment. This school had a male principal in charge of the male department and a male vice-principal who presided over the female department. But Mr. Major, vice-principal, had been promoted to a position on the Normal School staff. The Commissioners recognized the value and efficiency of women principals and recommended that a lady vice-principal, Miss Sterns, be appointed. Her salary was to be fixed at \$500 - one-half the amount paid to Major. The commissioners, said the Acadian Recorder, would expect the same amount of work and the same results from this lady. While some people might be able to find reasons why lady teachers would be paid one-half the salary of their male peers, the Acadian Recorder noted that "it looks a little difficult of demonstration." Furthermore, although the Halifax Herald felt that women teachers were driving men out of the field, the Acadian Recorder suggested that equality in pay would allow the best teachers of either sex to obtain jobs. The reduction of female salaries was "a mode of economy against which we would protest while the bailiff was seizing our last coat for school taxes."

So convinced of the injustice was the editor of the Acadian Recorder that column space was offered to anyone who could demonstrate its rightness. Such a response was not long in coming. In a letter to the Daily Recorder, "D", a teacher, claimed that the salary offered Sterns was that which had always been offered to a lady vice-principal. No doubt she would be granted an increase in salary as she proved her worth. Major had formerly been a principal. It would not have been fair to send him into an inferior position with less pay, and thus it was quite right to reduce that pay upon his vacating his position. Under existing guidelines salaries increased over five years service to a maximum amount. "D" acknowledged that male teachers occasionally passed their maximum rate, but "there are few candidates of this class, and the demand exceeds the supply; the male teachers can almost dictate their terms."

What "D" ignored was the general inequality between male and female salaries. Mr. J. Jack, principal of Morris Street School, received \$1350. Mr. J. T. Mellish of Albion Street School received \$1150. The two other Grade 'A' male teachers received salaries of \$850 and \$700. Only the latter fell within the guidelines of the normal salary scale, and he received the maximum allowed. All Grade 'B' male teachers received more than the maximum of \$500; one received \$540; four earned \$580; eight received between \$620 and \$640; three received \$700 and two earned \$800. All female Grade "B" teachers earned greater than the maximum of \$300: Miss Miller of Brunswick Street School received \$700; the others received between \$340 to \$400. So even if female salaries often exceeded the scale, they generally averaged half

of male teachers' wages. It might even be surmised that "D"'s support of the salary reduction for Sterns was based on her relatively low ("C") licence and her relatively high salary (\$500) for a female.³

Inequities in salaries aside, there remained widespread public support for the objectives of women teachers. There were a number of reasons for this. Taxpayers were well aware of the ever increasing revenues that common schools consumed; in turn, however, that awareness ensured that issues involving teachers had high visibility. Furthermore the importance of children to parents and to society in general encouraged close public scrutiny of teachers and teaching methods. In this environment female teachers were able to make their grievances and their low salaries common knowledge.

One example of public support for women teachers is particularly instructive. This case involved a Mr. J. Jack, principal of Morris Street school, who had been charged with indecently assaulting a Miss McCulloch, another teacher. A number of parents from McCulloch's department supported her, and petitioned for Jack's dismissal. But a Committee composed of a majority of teachers reported that the charges of being drunk and indecently assaulting McCulloch could not be proven and recommended a suspension without pay for Jack. A minority of the Committee members requested dismissal. But parental pressure continued and Jack was dismissed. At a subsequent meeting to reconsider that dismissal, one of the teachers, a Mr. Brookfield, testified that he had seen Jack on the day in question and that Jack was under the influence of alcohol and had insulted him. Jack only apologized to Brookfield when the crisis became public. Brookfield felt that McCulloch had

given satisfactory explanations of the matter. Jack's dismissal was eventually upheld.

Because of their public visibility, therefore, teachers often had their concerns recognized and supported by the public. Such was the case in August, 1880 when a Dartmouth "Rate payer" condemned the Dartmouth School Board's decision to fire the two teachers from the primary grades as an economy measure. One of the teachers, a Miss O'Toole, had twelve years of experience and had taught over 140 children under the age of seven during the last season. This economy measure, "Rate payer" claimed, would provide only a token saving for the Board, and would harm the young children both because of the level of personal attention they would now receive and because of the crowded conditions of the school. "Parent" responded to these charges by claiming that the pupils would now have a better classroom, and if an extra teacher was needed one would be hired. Through refusing to discuss either teacher, "Parent" implied that there were perhaps additional reasons for their dismissal.

If parents and the public demanded justice for their teachers they were also vigilant in detecting teacher's deficiencies. One 1892 case illustrated parental concerns about appropriate standards of behavior for teachers. Although the teacher, Miss Bruce of Maynard Street School was initially exonerated by the School Board of charges of improper conduct, more than 60 ladies and gentlemen voted at a public meeting for her dismissal. This meeting was held at Zion Church in the north end of Halifax and was attended exclusively by black residents. Mr. P. F. McKerrow presided. McKerrow discussed the School

Boards' report, and criticized Miss Bruce's conduct. She had, he claimed, dangled a strap in the face of a woman who complained about the harsh treatment one of her children received. Mr. B. N. Davis also made a lengthy speech. He noted that the school children had been "called 'apes' and 'goats' and 'monkeys' and 'darkies'" and other "vile low epithets." Davis asked for any supporters of the teacher to stand. No-one did so. Mr. Russell spoke on the down-trodden negro race and the injustices it experienced under the British flag. Mr. Cooper condemned Miss Bruce for sleeping in the schoolhouse. Mr. Jackson noted the "tendency to insult the colored race; they were treated with contempt; white people put on airs, although there were ten of them in Dorchester to one of the Anglo-African race." Mrs. Compton questioned the individual conscience of the school commissioners, and noted that Miss Bruce dried her clothes around the school room on wash day. Mrs. Lewis noted that Miss Bruce put "impure suggestions in the minds of the children." One time a child had been knocked down and kicked. Rev. Mr. Crosby noted that in another case Miss Bruce had offered him money if he would influence children to testify in her favour. All present at the meeting indicated by a standing vote that Miss Bruce should be dismissed.⁴

Women teachers obviously placed a distinctive mark on their world. Because their position in the public eye gradually enabled them to assume the status of a profession, popular support for both equal wages and improvement in salaries continued to be widespread. In 1885 F. H. Eaton, a Professor of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at the Truro Normal College noted that salaries for women teachers were

scandalously low. In a similar view, D. Montgomery, Prince Edward Island Chief Superintendent of Education spoke to the Sixth Annual Convention of the Provincial Educational Association of Nova Scotia in 1889, arguing that he could not find a satisfactory explanation why women teachers were discriminated against in the matter of pay.

Given the widespread public support for women teachers it is hardly surprising that women were in the vanguard of the movement to form a teacher's union. At the Twelfth Convention of the Provincial Educational Association in 1895, Miss Margaret Graham made a plea for "A Teacher's Protective Union".

It seems to me that the time has come when we teachers should organize into some sort of a union, similar to the societies existing in the medical, legal and other professions. These societies have their code of ethics, etc., why should not we do likewise? There is a lack of professional honor among teachers that would, I am sure, be remedied by a union where we were pledged to help and stand by each other instead of working against each other by "underbidding for positions, as teachers now do." And surely the miserably low salaries now paid to teachers might be improved if we had a minimum rate fixed by the union. This is a matter that touches our empty pocket books as well as our full hearts.

Graham's resolution was passed. In making this resolution Graham showed an awareness of the need for co-operation among teachers of both sexes, and revealed the growing impetus towards professionalization already evident in other fields.

Graham especially criticized the divisiveness that inequalities in salaries caused. Underbidding for positions pitted teachers against other teachers and hurt all but the school boards. But the unionization of teachers tested the limits of public support: during the 1890s people were only too aware both of the growing power of organized

labour and the growing expense of education. Despite claims to the contrary, therefore, the Department of Education continued to encourage the practise of underbidding. In 1894, for example, the Acadian Recorder criticized advertisements for teaching positions where information on salary was requested, claiming that "the state pays for the best, and shouldn't allow itself to be put off with inferior."

The practise of underbidding allowed teachers who would work for the least amount to be hired. Because the underbidders usually were female teachers, moreover, the practise gradually led to the segregation of higher paid male teachers in the more advanced grades and low-waged women teachers in the lower grades. In turn, this gender segregation led many people to surmise that there were gender related differences in teaching ability. In 1891 "Doesticks" of the Acadian Recorder noted that an unnamed leading educationist believed that male teachers had a better influence on students and that the rapid influx of female teachers was responsible for the educational crisis of the time. No doubt this unnamed educationist subscribed to a viewpoint popular amongst an increasing number of reformers that male teachers were more capable of controlling older students while female teachers - because of their nurturing ability - were best suited to teach younger pupils. They pointed, for example, to a young woman's inability to handle her classes in 1895. Miss Laura Howell, who taught the Maynard Street colored boys, turned the classroom keys into the Commissioner's office, stating that she was unable to handle the boys. Gradually,

then, as women were seen to be especially suited to elementary instruction the egalitarian vision of an earlier day gave way to the ideology of maternal feminism.⁵

Reformers who adopted the maternal feminist orthodoxy no longer fought for equality in salaries. Instead they excused salary inequalities because of perceived gender differences in the teaching profession. Among other things, this shift reflected a growing concern about education costs. In 1897 for example, when the Halifax School Board submitted its budget, concern was expressed by City Council about the escalating cost of instruction. Although Alderman Lane suggested that the only way to stop cost increases was to stop people from having children, Alderman McFatridge criticized the "high" salaries of female teachers, arguing that \$700 was sufficient for a young lady. Furthermore, McFatridge argued, in a city where many cooks only received \$8 per month, a salary of \$500 was too much for a female cooking teacher.

After the turn of the century calls for reform were aimed at gaining higher pay for all teachers, not at eliminating differences between male and female salaries. The New Glasgow Times in 1903 noted that the best teachers were leaving the province for higher pay and demanded a general increase in salaries. The newspaper condemned that part of the press which supported underpaid labour and ridiculed those who declared that \$200 a year "is more than sufficient recompense to the faithful teacher and moulder of our children's destiny." Later that year columnist "Prudence" commented that salaries of teachers were "laughable." Another columnist referred to rumours that the mainly female teachers were thinking of forming a union in 1904 and supported

them. "The salaries are barely enough to enable them to live as women of education and refinement should live ... It is surely time for a change." By 1912, however, a society columnist was able to chide female teachers for their lack of participation in union activities and their failure to support male teachers on issues that interested them.⁶

Despite the waning support for equality in salaries during the first decade of the 20th century teachers had achieved some advances. Conscious of the amount of public money directed towards education, taxpayers kept teachers and their salaries in the public eye. Before the turn of the century, moreover, male teachers influenced their female peers to become more aware of issues common to either gender and to advance their claims for just treatment. In this context women teachers articulated and pursued a course of gender equality. After the turn of the century, however, female teachers were streamed into lower grades, where their supposed maternal virtues would reveal themselves. In turn male teachers came to dominate the higher levels of education, thus justifying in a perverse way their higher salaries. In the face of this gender segregation a splintering of the profession occurred, and as the earlier cooperation across gender lines dissipated, the dream of equality for women teachers was lost.

Domestic servants and factory workers had a much different experience than did women educators. Girls in these lines of work had little chance to meet their peers or develop ideas of co-operation in the workplace. Affected by the whims of a mistress, or by the scrutiny of the foreman, these girls and young women were also influenced by the interests pursued by middle class reformers. Yet even despite the

relative isolation of these working class women, and the attempts of reformers to instruct them in appropriate middle class values, a rudimentary class consciousness emerged which reflected the personalities and objectives of working class women rather than those of their employers or the proponents of moral "uplift."

Even though there was a high demand for domestic servants in Nova Scotia as elsewhere, many young women looked with aversion upon this work. Isolation, potential exploitation, and the lack of personal freedom all contributed to women's disdain for this employment. Bemoaning this fact, reformers established numerous schemes to increase the availability of servants. These schemes varied from importing British women - one woman suggested that Chinese "coolies" be brought to Nova Scotia - to training lower class women or even reclaiming prostitutes for domestic service. In 1875 the Acadian Recorder commented on a discussion of an English scheme that trained impoverished gentlawomen to be "Lady Helpers". The scheme would not work in Nova Scotia, the newspaper felt, because Canadian daughters of country farmers and mechanics seemed to prefer poverty at home rather than going out to service. The "terrible sense of social humiliation and degradation will present an inseparable barrier to the success of any such scheme." In any case the newspaper felt it was proper that a "well-behaved and sensible girl" secure the services of a husband to do the work.

Husbands, of course, were not always the answer, and many young women reluctantly entered the workforce as domestic servants. Domestic service was often demeaning. Mistresses and reformers continually

upbraided servants for their inefficiency, their performance, and their lack of training. In 1885 a correspondent to a Nova Scotian newspaper drew readers' attention to nurses who neglected and mistreated the children in their care. The writer felt that these "subordinates" were more interested in gossiping than attending to the children. "Visitor" wrote in 1894 about the nurses who took children to the Public Gardens and mistreated them while they "amuse[d] themselves with idle soldiers and civilians who gather there for that purpose."

Occasional glimpses of treatment received by servants helps to establish the often exploitive nature of domestic service. Take, for example, the case of the servant girl who while working for a respectable North End family found some lozenges and consumed them. When she became ill, she reported that she had been poisoned. In fact her employer had prepared a trap for her to cure her of "dangerous traits of inquisitiveness." The young lady was afterwards reported seeking a new position. In another case, a young woman from the Isle of Jersey, came to Canada in order to join her husband in Calgary. She had only enough money to reach Halifax. She worked as a domestic until her condition forced her into the Infants' Home where she remained as a wet nurse to another child. It was rumoured that she was turned out of the home after being accused of not giving equal attention to each child. She was then sent to the Poor House.

Often the servant girl had no protection against indignities that were forced upon her, including physical or sexual assault. In one case, a servant testified that her employer had grabbed her by the neck, thrown her over a chair and then tried to force her from the

house. When she screamed for help he put a towel over her mouth. Both the defendant and his wife testified that the girl was impudent and had refused to do work for the wife. He denied the assault, and admitted only to grabbing her arm after she had refused to leave the house when so ordered. He claimed that the girl had thrown herself on the floor in a rage and screamed. The case was dismissed.⁷

It is clear that servants were often mistreated, exploited and in their isolated workplace, subjected to the whims of their employers. Despite these difficulties many servants managed to speak out about themselves, their jobs, and their employers, and about the attitudes of middle class reformers in general. In 1880, "Minerva", a lady, "neither a mistress [n]or servant" wrote to the Acadian Recorder about disparaging remarks made in the press about servants.

As a woman I am not going to stand idly by and hear a class of useful, aye and much abused women, most of whom are unable to defend themselves with the pen, traduced by one of their own sex, through the public press; and not take up my own pen in their defence. Much has been said about the shortcomings of servants, ... much of this was induced, if not directly brought about by careless and incompetent mistresses, who too frequently leave the most important business of the household to be conducted by servants, while they and their young ladies spend most of their time in reading romances or novels or perhaps gossip.

"Minerva" was not the only person to recognize the hardships that a servant faced. The Acadian Recorder in 1886 reprinted a letter from the Toronto Globe. "A Servant" wrote of the need for a 'Servant Girls' Association which would sponsor lectures in housekeeping, and perhaps have a labour bureau attached. In general, the association would work

towards the "elevation of the despised, poor, isolated, degraded servant." "A.O.L." had her own complaints about the life of a Nova Scotian domestic and the danger that often lurked in the middle class homes.

I venture to say in very many houses which are called virtuous, domestics are in greatest danger; yes, and many an innocent young girl is often led into sin in such a place, and who is the tempter? Nobody but the very gents of the house, as they are called.

"A.O.L." also complained of the sexual double standard for rich men and poor girls. The Acadian Recorder's "Doesticks" demonstrated society's ambivalent notions about these matters when he sarcastically asked, "could not the girls have stopped all the trouble by being a little flat footed?" As public recognition of the poor working conditions that servants endured grew, however, so did the hope that a better relationship between servant girls and employers might emerge. Even "Doesticks" supported such a notion, pointing out that class distinctions of this world might not exist in the next. "A consideration of the fact that maid, as well as mistress, is human"; and kinder treatment of servants by mistresses, he argued, might improve the lot of the domestic.⁸

If turn-of-the-century domestics had gained a little better treatment, they had not always gained more respect. In 1896 at the Second Annual Halifax Local Council of Women meeting, Mrs. Montgomery Moore spoke "On Domestic Service in Halifax." Servants, she suggested, needed not only to learn domestic duties but must be taught the moral aspect of domestic work. In order to learn how to do as much as possible for their master and mistress, Moore suggested that an

association be formed to uplift the morals of servant girls, Mistresses would be obligated to join; domestics could join for a fee. The mistresses would teach the servant girls moral principles, and if necessary an assistant could demonstrate "technical details." Such an organization, Moore believed, would demonstrate to working girls that domestic service was a "dignified, sheltered, comparatively easy life." Mistresses and reformers alike felt that such training would improve the quality and abilities of domestic workers. From the point of view of the mistress there were many deficiencies among servant girls. Society writer "Joan" in 1898, for example, complained about servant's quitting their positions without giving notice. Mistresses should, she argued, hold a month's pay as security to prevent a domestic's premature departure. In a similar case a mistress complained in 1902 about a servant girl who disappeared without giving notice.

It is monstrous and fraught with more than domestic inconvenience that a lady who knows her duty to those living with her, and who is properly bound by law and custom to clearly and distinctly give a servant notice to leave, or payment of wages, should be liable to have her house opened at any hour of the night, and deserted by a servant.

If servants were to continue treating mistresses this way, the lady suggested, many middle class persons would vacate their homes for boarding houses with attendants.

If middle class mistresses were not happy with domestics, there were occasional divisions among the ranks of the domestic servants themselves. In 1896, a letter from "Fair Play" revealed a rivalry between male and female domestic servants. He complained that employers granted girl servants evenings out of the house and often

provided special treats that were denied to males. "Fair Maid" responded that while female servants did get their share of free time, some carried burdens that males did not. For instance, the competent well-trained servant often had untrained servants beneath her; ones that were often sent by charitable organizations to the city. The competent servant, "Fair Maid" suggested, was thus forced to do the work of two people. Another "Fair Play", this time a female servant, protested "Fair Maid's" portrayal of untrained servants and demonstrated a sense of class solidarity that "Fair Maid" did not.

I must say she speaks very small of the girls of Nova Scotia when she says they come to this city with their brush and comb in their pockets and their trunks on their backs; and she goes as far as to say that they only get situations through charitable organizations ... One would think by the way she speaks that the girls of Nova Scotia were immigrants from England or Germany, and that we were to be trained slaves ... I expect when she came to this city she had very little more than a paper parcel and her wonderful talent.

Obviously, despite isolation and poor working conditions domestic servants managed to gain some pride in their work, and at times even a solidarity with their peers. Nevertheless, sexual, ethnic, and status differences - not to mention isolation and low wages - kept domestic servants divided.

Despite these divisions, however, many servants demonstrated an ability to defend their class and their work against those who belittled them. When "Joan" a society writer complained in 1900 of the "sadly degenerated" type of servant available, and noted that her domestic was the most fashionable person in the household, she received a quick reply. Two days later "One of the Servants" angrily denounced the attack on her peers and criticized mistresses for their short-

comings. These "so-called ladies" would not have time to flirt with the neighbours' husbands if they attended to their business, she fumed. "If the servants, as you call us, dress a little elaborate when we appear on the street, it is none of your business as most of us work pretty hard for what little we get, and another thing we pay as we go, we do not credit as most of you do." The servant suggested that perhaps many mistresses would prefer it if domestics never got a day off and worked themselves to death.

I, for one, will not do it. If there were any ladies in Halifax, we would not mind working for them, but as it is there are few. Typewriters, Bank Clerks, Merchants, etc., who have a little money and can afford to give \$5 per month, as general, and again ones that think they can keep two, cook and housemaid at similar wages.

Obviously servants found as much fault with the quality of their mistresses as the mistresses found with them.⁹

For those women who wished and were able to escape domestic service, the developing industrial economy provided them with various employment alternatives. Although middle class reformers offered a variety of reforms to address the problems which they associated with women in domestic service, they could not stop thousands of girls from flooding into shops and factories throughout Nova Scotia. What reformers did do was to introduce reform measures aimed particularly at these female workers. There was, however, a shift in the ideology that rested beneath these reforms. Early reformers had criticized the exploitative nature of long hours and hard work, while turn of the century reformers focused on the protection of the physical, moral, and maternal qualities of female workers.

In 1880, for example, reformers worried about the "cruelty" of allowing shop girls to stand all day. "Correspondent" in 1886 suggested that perhaps shops should close early at night. Many women left their homes at nine in the morning often not to return until eleven o'clock at night. "Heartless employers" did not think of the wrong done to workers "by trying to exact from them the very utmost their strength can produce for pay that barely suffices to keep body and soul together." "Cleo" commended the paper for publishing "Correspondent's" letter and helping "the redemption of our white women from a servitude [both] adject and intolerable." "H." wrote to the newspaper and suggested that dry good stores close at 7 p.m. so that workers could have evenings with their families.

In 1887 the Women's Christian Association passed a resolution asking for stools for shop girls. Opposition to this move apparently came from employers who believed that lady customers would be insulted if they encountered sales girls sitting down. In a "communicated article" to the Acadian Recorder a reformer claimed that the women of Halifax would be willing to support this movement for the good of "frail and delicate" shop girls. Rather than seats, suggested a correspondent, the Ladies Christian Association should be concerned with the way poor girls and women were paid starvation wages. The debate is instructive. Whether these early reformers worried about working hours or wages, they expressed a concern about the harm done to women's health when employers exploited their labor. In 1895 an Early Closing Act was passed in Nova Scotia, but vigorous opposition from employers caused its abandonment.¹⁰

There are important distinctions between the earlier reform impulses and that of the late 1890's. Earlier reformers saw dangers to women's health arising from the exploitive nature of the industrializing capitalist order. After the mid-1890's however, middle class reformers became more concerned about the relationship between working conditions and a woman's reproductive ability. In addition, these later reformers feared that working class women would never master the essential techniques of home management. The ultimate role for all women, according to these later reformers, was that of wife and mother. In order to alleviate the seeming lack of domestic enthusiasm among workers, and incidently solve the shortage of domestic servants, reformers instituted a number of reforms that concentrated on protecting and improving women's maternal attributes. These reforms ultimately facilitated the creation of gender-segregated positions in the work world and the perpetuation of the maternal feminist ideology.

The moulding of good wives and mothers out of domestic or factory workers was the focus of many reformers. Helen Cameron Parker, in an 1893 Canadian Magazine article, for example, argued that physical ability of women to be mothers was declining. Parker advocated technical training in housework for girls entering their teenage years, a time when it was believed that excessive mental work would eventually harm her reproductive capacity. The benefits of such training would be "an army of well trained wives and mothers, and side by side with them, an army of girls to whom 'service' had become a science, and housework a profession." In 1902 the Acadian Recorder commended the idea of manual training for girls, complaining that so successful had been an

early attempt by a "certain titled lady" to uplift the well being of Canadian servants "that we haven't been able to get a girl worth her salt ever since." Mrs. May Sexton, a leading reformer and member of the Halifax Local Council of Women, supported training for the 500 girls who left school annually in Halifax. They needed "progressive hopeful work" to alleviate the "monotony and hopelessness" of factory work. While the idea of training girls for outside employment was a fairly progressive step, Sexton was tied to maternal feminist notions of womanhood. She reminded the Council in 1909 that they should keep "their ancient ideal, to make a girl a homemaker, still before them." In the following year she reiterated this ideal when she spoke before the Royal Commission on Industrial Training. These young girls were "dumped about the city and go into unskilled industries; where their development is stunted. What sort of homes do they make?"

Middle class reformers were interested in ensuring that lower class women learn proper homemaking skills. Their reforms in other areas had similar goals. In 1907 a Local Council of Women scheme to open an Official Employment Bureau was designed to increase the numbers of available domestics. It was expected that the International Council of Women would supply suitable girls. In addition, the Halifax Local Council of Women established and maintained a School of Domestic Science for a year until it was turned over to the School Board. It was hoped that specific ideals of wifehood would be absorbed by students.

It probably surpasses all other efforts in its influences for the future good of our citizens. Not that cooking a good dinner economically and appetizingly is the be all and end all of our girls, but because the precision and

attention to detail and neatness taught there inculcates a moral attitude that must make for integrity.¹¹

If the Local Councils of Women tried to instill proper moral values along with homemaking skills to the working class they also worked to bring "immigrants of the best and most desirable class" to their Welcome Hostel. In 1912 when Mrs. Black expressed hope that a better class of girls be sent to the Hostel, Mrs. Dennis assured her that an agent's name had been removed after he sent out inferior girls. Four such women were returned to the "old country".¹² Reformers obviously were interested only in women who could be decent wives and mothers.

There were many other schemes operated by middle class reformers which aimed at improving the maternal and moral abilities of working class women. In 1898 St. Mary's Parish opened a Catholic Working Girl's Room where working girls could attend classes of serving, academic and business work, music and physical drill, or if preferred peruse the parish's 450 volumes of books. In 1901 the Working Girl's Room helped "to keep girls off the streets, and shelter and protect them from paths which to say the least, have uncertain terminals." There were also boarding houses that catered to working women, one example being the Women's Christian Association boarding house which opened in 1908. The Women's Christian Association also started a club for girls. Despite the fact that "respectable young men" were allowed in the club failed because the girls seemed to prefer outside exercise. Attempts to protect the future mothers of Nova Scotia were obviously plentiful. Equally numerous were the various institutions dedicated to transforming prostitutes and other wayward girls into decent mothers and wives.

The objective of many of these reform institutions - beyond rescuing fallen women - was the training of domestic servants. In 1867 St. Paul's Alm House of Industry was established to save girls from temptation. At the same time, however, such girls were trained in domestic service. Similarly the Halifax Women's Home, which opened in 1874 claimed that its inmates were "reclaimed from lives of degradation and shame." These women were either returned to their families or placed in homes as domestics. The Girl's Home operated by the Women's Christian Association trained incorrigible girls in domestic service over a three year period. If their work warranted it they were sent to a position in the country away from the temptations of old acquaintances. Many of these women were the abandoned wives of soldiers whose regiments had left Halifax. Unable to remarry and often with families to support, these women turned to prostitution. By the mid 1890's however, many commentators failed to consider the economic necessity of this work and saw the issue simply in moral terms. For example, when Sarah Fisher was abandoned by her husband after several years of marriage, a doctor commented that "since [then] she has been on the loose." Another patient, Teresa Murphy, a 22 year old prostitute, was described as "living a wild life drinking hard and roughing it generally," while Sarah Mason was "a girl of scrofulous habits."

Often what reformers were most concerned about was the impact of fallen women and their offspring upon the coffers of various charitable institutions. William Dennis, Chairman of the Charities Committee in 1894, for example, observed that many military wives often ended up in the Poor House, and their children, because of their birth in Halifax,

often became a lifelong burden upon the city. He announced that in future soldiers would have to contribute one-half of their pay to support their wives and families when in the Poor House. Dennis also noted the injustice to the city that occurred when "the refuse of other counties" came to Halifax to "hide their shame."

Dennis was not alone in condemning women who lost their virtue. Women were also guilty of being contemptuous towards their fallen sisters. "It is hard to overcome all scornful loathing for one who has degraded her womanhood, but if she is trying to rise again and be clean should we not give her both hands to help her stand on her feet again?" asked Mrs. Turnbull of St. John, in her Presidential speech to the Maritime Women's Christian Temperance Union in 1889. The Rescue Home of Sydney, supported by the Presbyterian Women's Home and Foreign Mission Society, reported in 1916 that despite the fact that some of its girls were "now living consecrated Christian lives, making good wives and mothers", one auxiliary had noted its disapproval of such a home. Still, despite the fact that these later middle class reformers had adopted a less tolerant view of prostitutes, they persevered in their attempts to develop the domesticated and maternal instincts of these women. But the earlier critique - which considered economic inequalities and the sexual injustice as contributing to prostitution - was now supplanted by a more moralistic maternal feminist ideology.¹³

Turn-of-the-century reformers extended this maternal orthodoxy beyond both the reformation of prostitutes, and the improvement of women's domestic and reproductive abilities. These second generation reformers also used the maternal feminist argument to justify and

explain women's advances into various areas of public employment. Many occupations that opened up to women became women's exclusive territory because turn-of-the-century reformers particularly identified them as being extensions of woman's true domestic role. Women were now engaged in doing "women's work", work that was gender segregated and subordinate to male authority.

This maternalism, for example, impacted significantly upon the deaconess movement. At the Presbyterian Missionary and Deaconess Training Home in Toronto deaconesses and missionaries took a two year training course which included courses that dealt with various religious issues. In addition, these women learned voice culture, stenography, typing, and book-keeping, and received both lectures and practical training in physiology, hygiene, nursing and domestic science. Deaconesses needed to be at least 22 years of age, and preferably were over 35. Women past the normal marriage age, it was felt, were less likely to have their sensibilities injured by clients with uncertain moral standards. Furthermore, more experienced deaconesses were considered better able to teach "poor and ignorant wives and mothers" proper homemaking skills.

Some deaconesses felt able because of their gender to help in areas where male ministers often failed. "There are," said Mrs. Putnam, a Deaconess in Cape Breton,

many cases where a minister is simply helpless. Imagine a minister calling on a young shop-girl or factory girl in her cheap boarding house where there is no place to receive a caller except in her tiny bedroom. No very friendly or helpful call can be made in a dark, ill smelling, boarding house hall, but the deaconess can at once be invited upstairs, where the one chair will be pressed

upon her, while the little hostess sits on cot & bed or trunk and pours all her loneliness and homesickness, and often tales of temptation or failure, into sympathetic ears.

Her natural mothering ability, heightened by some practical training, allowed the deaconess to step into her role as support staff for male ministers. "One good, loving, consecrated woman is better than twenty men, be they ministers a dozen times over," noted Mrs. Putnam.¹⁴ At once maternal virtue propelled deaconesses into the public sphere and rationalized their limited position in that domain.

Women's entrance into the business sphere was also validated by the maternal feminist ideology. In 1884, female graduates of the Halifax Business College were praised for their abilities in book-keeping. Even then, however, there were seeming limits to women's business ability. In 1893, "Doesticks" of the Acadian Recorder was to comment that women succeeded in business because it was "new" to them. Furthermore, he claimed, much of the responsibility for dealing with intricate matters, which would normally rest with individual male employees, would in women's cases be shifted on to others. Employers would eventually decide, therefore, that business is a "man's place after all."

"Joan", also felt that business was not a suitable field for women, noting that women have finer sensibilities and a more delicate organization than men. Women would quickly find that home life was "more in keeping with the Divine plan" and that "stronger shoulders than hers [were needed] to take up the business end of life's problems." Annie Merrill in an article "The Women in Business" echoed these sentiments, claiming a year of outside work might be beneficial

to women but they would eventually find that "home life is the better life." Reformers still saw marriage as the ultimate career goal for women; girls needed to work for pin money, or to pass the time until they were married. And even when they were forced into the workforce by economic necessity women found their opportunities restricted to their traditional sphere.¹⁵

The Women's Exchange movement provides a particularly interesting example of the impact of maternal feminism and middle class moralism. On May 30, 1892 a group of ladies met to discuss the predicament of many "reduced" ladies whose economic circumstances dictated their need to earn money even though they were in a class "loath to come forward and push themselves sufficiently to earn a living." The Woman's Exchange proposed to sell cakes, breads and both fancy and plain work for these women. Mrs. J. C. Macintosh was voted president, Mrs. E. D. Tucker and Miss Allison were vice-presidents and Miss Burmester was secretary. Mrs. Daly was honorary president. The committee at first consisted of eight ladies; afterwards the number was increased to twelve. By August 31, 1892, the Exchange was established at No. 87 Granville Street. A lady who had operated a similar co-operative business in Boston was in charge for the first month and helped to establish the enterprise. "Lady Jane" recommended that the committee look for a manager with "a bright face and pleasant cheery manner" who would ensure the success of the venture. In a short time a young assistant was hired and a parcel express for the convenience of customers was established. The exchange was advertised in newspapers and at hotels.

At first the Exchange grew rapidly. By the end of the first year membership numbered fifty-five and the one hundred forty consignors were paid \$4,153.43. One problem for the Exchange was the widespread idea that consignors were ladies who did not need money, and the Exchange did what it could to combat this belief. "Almost all that is sold is sent by persons who are obliged to help themselves, and, who would have no opportunity of doing so were it not for the Exchange, where their work is disposed of quietly and advantageously." By August 30, 1894, moreover, the Women's Work Exchange affiliated with the Local Council of Women, with Mrs. Tucker its representative. This gave the Exchange even more visibility. In 1895 a fund-raising ball was held, "the most successful subscription ball ever given in Halifax," said the Acadian Recorder. Not only were the donations and music good but the "young and giddy" had sitting rooms that were attractive and yet not vulgarly private. Despite occasional setbacks - such as in 1896 when increasing debt forced a reorganization of the business and press criticism that the needy were not being helped - the Exchange continued to expand. By 1902, for example, there were 51 members and 252 consignors. Even though a few customers resented the adoption of a cash only system, the Exchange received over \$9,000 in 1902.

The Exchange continued its work and existed until at least 1912. While information is not available as to the composition of the consignors, and one might question as did the Mail whether truly needy women were being helped, what is most striking about the Exchange is its maternal feminist orientation. The female reformers who organized the Exchange established a system whereby impoverished gentlewomen

could earn a living without appearing to be working. Discretion and confidentiality guaranteed, organizers worked to maintain the social status of consignors who were willing to participate in the public world. The Women's Exchange allowed the consignors to reap some rewards from the public sphere without leaving their homes or challenging reformers' concepts of women's domestic nature.

Women also relied upon maternal feminist propositions to justify and explain the feminization of employment areas that were not yet considered the exclusive domain of men. For example many young women became telephone operators. "Nobody", said an article from Saint John, reprinted in the Acadian Recorder, "but a woman could do it." No man, "unless he be a Sabbath school teacher or a reporter" would be able to refrain from profanity in such a job. In 1892 "Doesticks" commented in his patronizing way upon the maternal attributes of the modern telephone girl.

[She] may not be highly educated; but she must be nice, and must be possessed of a medium grade of intelligence. She must be able to write a letter, make a clear statement in good English; hold her tongue, keep her temper under every provocation and give her undivided attention to the business of the office...Tact and judgement are indispensable and lacking one or the other she will break down in a very short time.

The first operators in the United States had been boys, "Doesticks" noted, but they soon proved unsuitable and were quickly replaced by older women. But "the old girls were stiff," and "sprightly young girls" finally proved best suited to the job's requirements.¹⁷ Popular perceptions of women's temperament thus eased women into this new field.

The relationship of maternal feminism to new employment possibilities can be seen in particular in the expanding opportunities for women in the nursing field. The Victoria General Hospital Training School for Nurses was established in 1891, and offered instruction for nurses in both hospital and private work. The teaching staff was composed of the visiting Physicians, Surgeons and specialists of the Victoria General Hospital and also the Resident Staff of the hospital. Although the first nursing class consisted of five men and ten women, a study of the nursing profession demonstrates the eventual identification of nursing as a "female" career and the eventual subordination of female nurses to male physicians. The number of male nurses declined over the years as both the general public and the medical profession - nurses included - perceived nursing as a career that demanded special nurturing qualities. This attitude pervaded an early attempt to organize a branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses in Nova Scotia in 1898. The V.O.N. would "disseminate in the homes of the poor where they go, valuable knowledge of a most helpful and practical kind, about ventilation, sanitation and cleanliness." They would also be responsible for food preparation and teaching other family members to care for the patient. They were expected to show kindness and helpfulness to the patient. "Adaptability, tact, good judgement, self-denial and devotion" were attributes of a good nurse, all of these being appropriate "female" characteristics in the maternal feminist pantheon.¹⁸

Similar ideals were eventually absorbed and adopted by hospital nurses. In 1897 for example, a battle between nurses and doctors at the Victoria General Hospital erupted, which demonstrated the profes-

sional power of medical doctors and the fledgling professionalism of nurses, and also the constraints inherent in a profession whose power rested upon maternal feminist principles. For several years prior to this upheaval doctors had been dissatisfied with the nursing standards at the hospital. They complained in particular about the reluctance of graduate nurses to remain at the Victoria General; most nurses, doctors felt, preferred the relatively easier and freer life of private duty. The climax came in 1897 over the enforcement of a new rule designed to compel female nurses to supply bedpans and urinals to male patients and to preside over the passing of the male catheter; a task formerly done by male nurses. While both Miss Elliot, the Lady Superintendent of Nurses, and the members of the Medical Board felt that all nurses should comply with the rule, a Commission appointed to inquire into hospital management disagreed for both medical and moral reasons. While Elliot saw these activities as part of the nurse's professional responsibilities, those that she supervised demurred, citing the damage which would be done to women's delicate sensibilities. The result of battles fought on grounds such as these was the subordination of nursing as a profession. Commenting on the situation, the Committee concluded that nursing was really women's work and hence that male nurses should be orderlies. Furthermore, it concluded, the problem between Elliot and the nurses was due to her lack of womanly tact. It would seem, therefore, that nurses who adhered to the maternal feminist position were partly responsible for the eventual feminization of nursing. The results of this process, however, were ambiguous. In creating a role in medicine for their gender based upon their feminine

virtues, women ultimately relegated themselves to a supportive and subordinate role within the world of medicine.¹⁹

Once nursing became an exclusively female preserve, doctors regularly cautioned nurses against gaining too much medical knowledge. The editor of the Maritime Medical News made this clear.

Fortunate is the physician who has not had a nurse who has discoursed learnedly to her patients upon the significance of various symptoms presented by the patient, and the treatment which other doctors would doubtless adopt under similar circumstances ... There is no need for making an amateur doctor out of the nurse.

Nurses, the article claimed, needed to learn patient care and sickroom cleanliness techniques and not "be stuffed with imperfect ideas of the abstrusities of medicine, and led to think herself capable of passing judgement upon the capabilities of the doctors who employ her." A few years later in 1906 another editorial in the same journal reiterated the medical practitioner's view of nurses.

There is no danger of over-training in the practical work of nursing, but the tremendous burden of theoretical instruction -- most of which is quite inapplicable in practice -- is not only needless but doubtless harmful. Every doctor has had annoying instances of interference by nurses whose ethical knowledge has been turned by a smattering of such information as need belong to the physician alone.

By this time, of course, the medical profession was segregated along gender lines, and prevailing notions of maternal feminism legitimized this segregation.

This maternal feminist outlook continued well into the 20th century. In 1911 the Presbyterian Witness claimed that nursing would be the highest vocation for a girl if she had to leave the confines of her home and earn her living. Similarly, when Margaret Spence won the

Gold Medal for General Excellence and the Alumnae Prize for Practical Work in 1923 she was praised for demonstrating the 'feminine' qualities valued in a nurse. Spence was

adaptable, courteous, dignified, enthusiastic, industrious, reliable, resourceful, accurate, conscientious, punctual, excellent initiative, very much interested in work, rapid worker, excellent observation, very fine executive ability, marked neatness of person. Generally a very capable and excellent nurse.

Feminine maternal qualities were not only necessary for a hospital nurse but for nursing supervisors as well. A Directress of Nurses, for example, needed more than education, tact, and ability, she needed to recognize the subordinate nature of her profession. A woman in a position of authority said G. E. Strum, superintendent of nurses, must be "so skilled in administration that she realizes that her school cannot exist as a small kingdom in the midst of a greater one with out any lines of authority reaching from without inward." The marginalization of nursing was thus ensured. Not only did the maternal vision restrict women to a job publicly perceived as 'feminine', but nurses were advocating their own subordination to a masculine medical profession.²⁰

After the turn of the century women in general - from nurses to teachers, to working class women - subscribed to the maternal feminist ideology. Until the mid-1890's, however, women workers had a critical vision rooted in a rudimentary class consciousness that existed despite their isolation from their peers. Female teachers, more than any other group of women workers, were able to translate their public position and their close association with male peers into a more conscious awareness of their position in the work world. But even teachers

gradually conformed to a maternal feminist vision that considered women the more desirable teachers for young children. Segregated by gender and experiencing salary discrimination, women teachers lost their earlier critical sensibility. Similar circumstances confronted women in the range of new occupations opening for them. Women moved into these positions arguing that they had the specific feminine abilities that made these jobs more suitable to them. In nursing for example, women quickly outnumbered men, largely because they rationalized their entry into the field in terms of maternal feminism. But to gain this short term goal, they isolated themselves from other areas of medicine which were becoming male-dominated. Middle class reformers, like the women in the work force, adopted a maternal argument. But as a maternal feminism hardened into a new orthodoxy, women became part of that marginalized, gender-segregated workforce which emphasized women's maternal abilities rather than equality with their male peers.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER TWO

1. Crockett, John Everett, 'Origin and Establishment of Free Schools in Nova Scotia, M.A., Dalhousie University, 1940, p. 109.
2. Annual Report of the Teachers' Association, (Halifax: 1874), pp. 6, 9; Halifax Citizen, April 3, 1875, April 22, 1875.
3. Acadian Recorder, October 8, 1875, October 9, 1875, October 26, 1875.
4. Ibid., August 5, 1880, August 7, 1880, November 4, 1880, June 17, 1892.
5. Report, Sixth Annual Convention, Provincial Educational Association, 1885, P.A.N.S., pp. 45, 53. Report, Twelfth Convention, Provincial Educational Association, 1895, (Halifax, 1896), p. 171. Graham also presented a critique comparable to that of other early critical feminists when she commented that the solution for incorrigible pupils would ultimately depend on "the abolition - not relief - of all unnecessary poverty." She also presented a paper to the Convention "On Woman's Right to Vote at School Meetings", pp. 15, 55. Acadian Recorder, June 30, 1894, November 7, 1891, June 3, 1894, September 12, 1895, December 8, 1897.
6. New Glasgow Times, September 12, 1903; Acadian Recorder, December 12, 1903, April 19, 1904, August 31, 1912.
7. Acadian Recorder, January 24, 1903, October 6, 1875, June 25, 1885, September 2, 1894, April 17, 1890, September 12, 1889. See Ibid., April 5, 1888 and May 22, 1897 for a glimpse into the lives of female factory workers in Nova Scotia.
8. Ibid., May 13, 1880, January 26, 1886, August 4, 1888, August 9, 1890.
9. Halifax, L.C.W., Second Annual Report, 1896, P.A.N.S. MG20, Vol. 1054, #4, pp. 59-61. Acadian Recorder, September 24, 1898, September 25, 1902, February 8, 1896, March 7, 1896, March 21, 1896, September 24, 1900, September 26, 1900.
10. Acadian Recorder, June 12, 1880, April 5, 1886, April 8, 1886, January 6, 1887, March 10, 1887, February 19, 1895, May 22, 1897. See also The Maritime Merchant, 4:17 (March 5, 1896), p. 9, 8:11 (December 7, 1899), p. 14.
11. Helen Cameron Parker, "Technological Schools for Women," Canadian Magazine, 1:8 (October 1893), pp. 634-637. Acadian Recorder, February 15, 1902; July 20, 1910; Daily Echo, February 18, 1911, Halifax L.C.W. Minutes, P.A.N.S. MG 20, Vol. 535, #3, November

- 21, 1907, Vol. 535, #5 February 15, 1912; Halifax L.C.W. Photocopies, P.A.N.S. MG 20, Vol. 1015, #37a. May Sexton was a well known reformer and a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
12. Halifax L.C.W. Minutes, P.A.N.S. MG 20, Vol. 535 #5, October 19, 1911; Acadian Recorder, November 22, 1898, November 15, 1898, December 9, 1901.
 13. Acadian Recorder, June 16, 1875, November 13, 1889, November 5, 1895, December 15, 1876; May 10, 1894. Victoria General Hospital, Surgical and Syphilitic-Ward Records, 1875-1881, P.A.N.S. RG 25 B, Sec. 3-4, pp. 51, 560-1, 578-9, Maritime W.C.T.U. Minutes, Seventh Maritime W.C.T.U. Convention, 1886-9, P.A.N.S. MG 20, Vol. 506 #20, p. 113. Fortieth Annual Report, Presbyterian W.F.M.S., (Halifax, 1916), p. 42. See also A.H. Morrison, "Education vs. Cram", Canadian Magazine, 1:3 (May 1893), pp. 167-175.
 14. Margaret Jamieson, "Report of Home Mission Secretary", Thirty-Sixth Annual Report, Presbyterian W.F.M.S. (Halifax, 1912), pp. 33-34.
 15. Acadian Recorder, May 31, 1884, April 22, 1893, March 22, 1902, Annie Merrill, "The Woman in Business", Canadian Magazine 21:5 (September 1903), pp. 407-410. See also Margery W. Davis, Woman's Place is at the Typewriter: Office Work and Office Workers, 1870-1930. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1982), in particular pp. 85-96.
 16. Acadian Recorder, September 24, 1892, May 6, 1893, September 30, 1893, April 20, 1895, October 21, 1896, January 16, 1903; Halifax L.C.W. Minutes P.A.N.S. MG 20, Vol. 535, #1, August 30, 1894, Vol. 535, #3, June 1, 1900; "Earn Your Own Pin Money: Profitable Employments for Women," Distributed by Halifax L.C.W. at the 1912 Provincial Exhibition, Halifax L.C.W. Scrapbook, 1908-1917, P.A.N.S. MG 20, Vol. 204. The Women's Exchange is mentioned in this pamphlet as a viable means by which women might earn an income.
 17. Acadian Recorder, September 19, 1887, January 30, 1892.
 18. "Yearly Report of Training School for Nurses", Nova Scotia Legislative Assembly Journals, (hereafter N.S. Journals), Appendix 3(B), First, 1894, Second 1895, Third 1896, Fourth 1895, Fifth 1896, Sixth 1897. "Report on Public Charities", N.S. Journals, Appendix 3(B), 1896, 1897. "Medical Board's Report", N.S. Journals, Appendix 3(B), 1896, 1897; Acadian Recorder, July 7, 1897, April 22, 1898, October 3, 1898; Victoria General Hospital, Records, notes of Hospital Training School for Nurses (1891), P.A.N.S., RG 25 B Section 10.

19. Editorial: "The Trained Nurse", Maritime Medical News, 12:6 (June 1900), p. 203. Editorial: "The Evolution of the Nurse", Maritime Medical News, 18:4 (April 1906), p. 168.
20. Ward Nursing Registrar 1920-1924, P.A.N.S. RG 25 B Sec. 10, p. 22; [C.E. Strum], "A Good Directrice of Nurses", Notes, P.A.N.S. RG 25 B Sec. 10, Acadian Recorder; October 19, 1911.
21. In 1916, Mr. Nash, Manager of the Bank of Montreal in Halifax claimed that lower wages were necessary for women. Women were unable to hold responsible positions for physical reasons. Moreover many worked only for a short period before leaving their employment either for marriage or because of ill health. This then was the ironic result of women adopting the maternal feminist ideology in the hope of gaining entrance to the work world. Y.W.C.A. Scrapbook, October 1912-May 5, 1929, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 776.

CHAPTER 3

"The Sporting Culture of Women in Victorian Nova Scotia: From 'Fish-like Girls' to Robust Mothers"

The sporting culture of the late 19th century embodied many of the essential characteristics and beliefs of Victorian society.¹ Aspects of health and sexuality, class antagonism, conceptions of social equilibrium, dress reform, and the maintenance of separate gender identities were all manifested in the controversy over and eventual acceptance of sports as a legitimate pastime. But just as changes in the nature of sporting activity during the Victorian age impacted upon notions of womanhood, so did concerns about the relationship between the sexes influence the nature of sport itself. Important as an experimental field for "that mix of missionary work and social engineering that was rational recreation,"² sport was an important catalyst in transforming sexually precocious but physically fragile maidens into respectable yet robust Victorian mothers upon whom the preservation of the Anglo-Saxon race depended. In addition social reformers saw sport as both a form of commercialized entertainment in late Victorian capitalism and a vehicle for ensuring class harmony and social stability.

The early Victorian elite felt that sports contributed little to the health of either society or the individual; sport demanded time and energy that could be better utilized in work. Public acceptance of particular sports, therefore, depended at least in part on whether they were considered respectable by the middle and ruling class.³ As

tolerance grew into support, reformers endeavoured to shape sports to their own social vision, in the process challenging and changing its boundaries. By the end of the century there was a growing belief in the potential usefulness of sport. While early sports promoters had been content to advocate the incorporation of calisthenics or exercise programs into the common schools, by the end of the century this had given way to the so-called "manly" sports. Those who promoted sports in this fashion believed that sports would improve the physical health of the individual and society, contribute to the health of the Empire, and eliminate class antagonism without challenging the existing social structure.

Female reformers attempted to modify this broadening sporting field. Male sports, they believed, were spoiled by excessive competition and roughness. Young ladies needed to be protected from such activity. In order for girls to develop proper maternal qualities, they needed sports that promoted fair play and that emphasized participation over competition. Female reformers changed both sport and society, molding them to their particular vision of womanhood. Ultimately, however, their maternal feminist critique limited women to activities where their 'special' feminine qualities took precedence over their athletic ability.

The early advocates of sports emphasized not only the advantages to an individual's physical and mental well-being, but saw sport as an important element in the broader reform of society. Finding that in Halifax there was

a very large proportion of young men spend[ing] the best share of their time in gawking lazily at the street corners to stare at passersby, lounging about drinking saloons, smoking and guzzling, and in other irrational modes of getting over life, equally injurious to both moral and physical health

the Acadian Recorder demanded gymnasiums and affordable yet beneficial recreation.⁴ Reformers considered that the lower classes, who lived amidst squalor and seeming immorality, could benefit in particular from physical training. So could women. It did not take long for reformers to attack the "pallor and languor" of "pale and weak young ladies who exhibited loads of expensive dry goods upon their persons." Cautioning that Nova Scotian "parents had better not raise any more girls of that kind," and openly praising "rosy cheeks and stout figures," reformers warned these "feeble women" that "young men ridicule[d] the idea of tying themselves for life to sickly girls."⁵

As the acceptability of sports grew, its middle class supporters stressed its democratic nature. Yet sport was never truly classless; nor was equality truly the objective of sports promoters. Instead reformers hoped the lower classes would emulate their 'social superiors' and adopt the values that games embodied. Cricket, for example, was seen to educate its disciples in such Anglo-Saxon virtues as

cooperation, division of labour, specialization, obedience to a single organizer (perhaps with a council to advise him), national character, geography and its influences, arts and artistic anatomy, physiology and hygiene, ethics and even - if the play be learnt rightly - general education methods.⁶

But the hopes of reformers were often dashed. Despite changes in rules to ensure moral improvement and the lessening of the vulgarity and

violence of many sports, working class athletes brought to sport their own interpretation. Many subsequent contests witnessed working class groups challenging ruling class teams. Furthermore, as Alan Metcalfe has claimed, class divisions were never overcome at the administrative level, and even at the playing level "there were various methods of social discrimination which varied from sport to sport."⁷

If the working classes often resisted being co-opted by a class program which masqueraded as democratization, it is also true that the high costs of clubs and gymnasiums simply kept many workers from participating in sport. For example, when the Nova Scotia Horticultural Society obtained land from Halifax city to create the Public Gardens, only shareholders, subscribers and guests had free access to the grounds at all times. The Gardens contained the first covered ice rink in the area, "a wooden edifice, 180 feet by 60 feet with arched roof, illuminated with coal gas" where skating took place in winter and roller skating and dancing in summer. Subscriptions to the rink sold out within three weeks in 1862. When financial difficulties forced the society to sell the Gardens to the city in 1874, the general public finally gained more access. Thereafter it was opened for dancing on concert nights. But, even then, not all approved of the change. The Presbyterian Witness claimed that "the women who go there to dance are usually such who have no character to lose." The rink was condemned as a "low dance house" drawing together "persons who are a moral pestilence." Social contamination was avoided in Halifax, a New York Sun correspondent claimed, by holding separate concerts at the Gardens: on Wednesday for the middle and upper class and on Sunday for the working

class. "One concert is as good as the other, but the classes never mix, each keeping to its own appointed day. This promotes peace, pleasure, and satisfaction." It demonstrated as well a strict division along class lines in recreational activities, which restricted the sporting opportunities of the working class.⁸

As the century wore on, there was a growing realization of the poor physical condition of many school children and young adults whatever their background. In an article for the Maritime Medical News in 1900 Clara Olding lamented the neglect of physical training, particularly for girls.

The present system of educating may give to the world large numbers of well read men and women, but it also sows the seeds of consumption, hysteria, neurasthenia, and insanity; in addition to such minor afflictions as eye strain and nervous headaches.

This was hardly the first or only complaint about the physical condition of students. Dr. T. Newell in an 1875 report to the Rhode Island Medical Society reprinted in the Halifax Citizen maintained that physical culture, as well as pure air, good ventilation, shortened school hours, and a prohibition against work outside school, should be the objective of educational reformers. He argued that

in the haste for intellectual culture the physical is too much neglected; the nervous system is developed to the omission of other portions of the body, thus giving rise to a long train of ills and producing an unsymmetrical and distorted organization in the young, entirely unfitted for the stern duties of life.¹⁰

In the last quarter of the 19th century, sentiments stressing the value of physical culture for both boys and girls were commonplace. In 1880, for example, a young student named Mary MacGregor read an essay during the examinations at Brunswick Street school, deploring the

lack "of attention paid to the education of our bodies." In it she praised the capable hands of Mr. James S. McKay, and suggested that a person such as McKay could visit city schools instructing both students and teachers in this art. Not only should schools have a calisthenics master but the Brunswick Street school needed a larger playground. At the time there were two small yards, each used by two hundred fifty pupils. There were serious dangers, she claimed, of older girls being strangled in skipping ropes, and of younger girls being trampled. On rainy days the students either played in the coal cellar - "though to tell the truth, we are not allowed in the cellar at all" - or had to sit quietly in the seats "for such a thing as playing in the school room never enters the heads of our worthy teachers." She did not want to "undervalue mental culture, but only to bring forward the far greater claims of physical exercise."¹¹

In 1887 the Supervisor of Halifax City Schools echoed MacGregor's concerns when he called for development of industrial training for boys in school and claimed that the lack of muscular education would cause boys to lose "the love and habit of work." James McKay of the Hall of Health in Halifax, questioned the value of industrial training for physical improvement, however. McKay pointed out that he had "examined and measured carpenters, blacksmiths, printers and other tradesmen and found them all well developed on the right side" only. He further questioned how the large numbers of boys (127) could be taught effectively and stressed that in physical training all pupils could be taught at once. He also wondered if girls were to receive enhanced development by learning needlework. Furthermore, not

only were American schools and colleges starting courses of physical culture, but the nearby Ladies Academy in Satkville, New Brunswick, was going to secure a teacher of calisthenics. McKay emphasized the need for a balanced or symmetrical education, both physical and intellectual. This balance could only be achieved through the application of scientific principles to education. An education left to chance would result in asymmetry. The body was not a single organ which, if exercised, would be sure to grow in the correct fashion, McKay argued. On the contrary, it was "an exceedingly complicated machine, the symmetrical development of which requires discriminating studied management." McKay supplemented his argument with charts revealing the advanced physical development of a boy who regularly attended a class at his own gymnasium in contrast to another who rejoined after a four year absence. He condemned the growing trend of military drill in public and private schools feeling that it was deficient in the development of the chest and upper body, and only promoted "uprightness."-12

Military drill did gain acceptance in other quarters though. An editorial in the Maritime Medical News in December 1903, openly advocated that physical training, especially military drill, should be compulsory in schools. J. A. Sponagle praised the marching of the boys of the Protestant Industrial School during the 63rd Rifle tournament. "I almost felt that I wouldn't mind being a boy again, and a bad one at that, if I could march as well as they." Sponagle suggested that equipment such as dumbbells and miniature rifle ranges would be beneficial to schools. He noted that the McDonald School in Middleton was

advertising for a Vice Principal with a certificate from a military school. A few months later W. C. Outhit, a former vice principal of the Kentville Academy, complained about

the products of our modern school-room are rounded and stooping shoulders, narrow and concave chests, shortened and catchy breathing, and a general listless and wobbly gait... a race [is growing up] of anaemic, fish-like girls and round shouldered, weak-kneed boys.

Outhit outlined a military drill programme for very young children that consisted of singing songs, simple swinging motions, and marching to music. By the ages of ten and eleven stretching motions and squad drill would be started; followed at fourteen by training with a dummy rifle, field work, and attack and defense positions. If possible, cadet camps or working with a regiment for battalion drill might be introduced. Feeling that girls were in need of the same "moral and physical training as their brothers," Outhit advocated that they have the same program up to the age of fifteen. Not only were there few dangers of "Amazon" tendencies developing amongst young girls, Outhit concluded, but without military drill the leisured young woman of society faced worse dangers.¹³

Despite Outhit's support for co-educational military drill, women's athletics before 1900 concentrated upon gaining "graceful movement, good posture, and the correction of physical deficiencies." Most exercise programs for girls were designed to enhance their womanliness, just as other sports defined the manliness of the male. Womanliness embodied ideals such as good health, moral strength, attractive appearance, strength without aggression, charity, kindness, and a vulnerable

femininity.¹⁴ Reformers regarded more active participation with a considerable ambivalence. On the one hand, involvement in sport seemed to detract from one's femininity; on the other, athletics reduced excessive leisure time and kept young women away from sexual temptation. Those sports which maintained femininity while blunting desire were therefore particularly attractive to middle-class Victorians. Bathing was one such activity, provided that women wore suitably modest costumes. Reformers believed that cold water bathing reduced sexual desire, while sea-bathing cured menstrual cramps and contributed to fertility in the future. Certain sports such as lawn tennis and skating were permissible in moderation, but women were cautioned to "leave the field sports and rough outdoor pastimes to those whom they are naturally intended-men."¹⁵

In order to perpetuate standards of appropriate femininity, many schools, private schools in particular, had established various programs of calisthenics and exercises. At the Halifax Presbyterian Ladies College in June 1888, a "most interesting exhibition of calisthenics" or "lighter athletics exercise" charmed the audience. Not only would calisthenics "educate, develop and strengthen the body," said the Acadian Recorder, but the exercises would "give the brain some sustaining power." The girls had "back straight, shoulders square and thrown back, and arms gently swaying," as they demonstrated their physical vigor to the audience.

What a contrast to the average "effeminate", fagged out, laced to death, crippled by high heeled shoes young ladies so common now-a-days; with round shoulders, narrow chest, twisted spine, back bent forward at from 5 to 20 degrees, limping walk and general look--and no doubt feeling of languor, if not of pain.

By this time there were annual calisthenic contests at the Sacred Heart Convent; these students having been taught by James McKay. Similar displays had been held at the Mount Saint Vincent Academy as early as 1880.

Some of these programs were based on Dr. Dioclesian Lewis's "New Gymnastics," first tested at the State Lunatic Asylum of Utica, New York, before its introduction at the American Institute of Instruction in Boston in 1860. Lewis had sought to improve the muscle strength, agility and grace of movement of both the sexes through the use of Indian Clubs, light wands, wooden rings and two pound dumbbells. In addition to exercise he advocated a simple diet and dress, and condemned dancing, horseback riding, and skating.¹⁶

Public schools were slower than private schools to accept the responsibility of introducing exercise to the classroom. In 1894, however, lectures were given to Halifax teachers emphasizing the need for "systematized relaxing movements to invigorate the nervous system, exercise the vital circulation and improve proper digestion and general health." This course demonstrated the Ling system of "harmonious development of all parts of the body." Needing no special apparatus this system had been introduced in Boston Schools in 1890. Miss Holmstrom, a graduate from Baron Nils Posse's gymnasium as a Kinesiotherapist and gymnast, demonstrated the exercises. She was "flexible and graceful in her movements, and show[ed] strength in repose and economy of nervous energy." Another speaker praised what exercise had done for German children - "building up vigorous and elastic bodies, giving dexterity, courage and self command, improving the morals, and giving

the claim of gracefulness to every movement and pose." There was great praise for the talks. Both Principal Kennedy and Secretary Wilson felt that its introduction would "reduce the evils of overpressure in the schools if such a thing existed." The next month the Halifax Ladies College offered a similar system of physical culture combining both Swedish and Delsarte systems. It aimed for the "development and elasticity of the muscles," "control of the nervous system" and "a graceful bearing or culture." Apparatus was used "simply as a pleasing variety" and was not meant to contribute "materially to the ends in view." Simple freehand movements, rather than showy callisthenic drill, were employed: slow ones quieted the nervous system, more forcible ones developed the muscles. Much of the theory behind programs like this involved the belief that the nervous system of females needed special exercise: imitation of boys' exercises would cause nervous strain and excitement and rest would be needed before studies could be resumed. More appropriate were breathing exercises, relaxing exercises, voice training, and simple exercises for "suppleness, finer balance and spring." These ideas were based on the theory that there was a reaction from every action: that total rest was needed after total activity. By teaching these ideas to females - by nature more excitable - a newly developed feminine repose would influence their spouses and, in turn benefit the next generation. The one drawback to this system of relaxation was that "highly bred women with generations of nervous strain back of them" would take longer to learn the relaxation techniques.¹⁷

Much of the decline in the physical condition of women that turn of the century reformers bemoaned was blamed upon their disdain for the traditional method of feminine exercise - domestic labour.

Years ago the young ladies did part of the housework, they learned in addition to the few "ologies" taught at the day school college then, bakeology, scrubology and washology. Now-a-days there is no such muscular exercises for the maidens, and something must of necessity be substituted to give the muscles a chance, when the brain has so much to do.¹⁸

Accordingly, if women would return to their household duties the moral perils of sport could be avoided. Doctors, for example, suggested that operating treadle sewing machines would develop the same muscles as bicycling. Even some women, such as Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell, supported this back to housework movement. She addressed a gathering of the National Council of Women of Canada as follows:

She could swing a six pound dumb-bell
She could fence and she could box,
She could row upon the river,
She could clamor on the rocks,
She could do some heavy bowling,
And play tennis all day long
But she couldn't help her mother
As she wasn't very strong.¹⁹

The belief that certain activities were morally threatening contradicted earlier contentions that sports would delay the precocious sexual development of young teenage girls. Moral concerns escalated with the growing popularity of dancing and bicycling during the 1890s. In the words of one minister, "dancing meant hell - nothing more - nothing less", while activities such as skating rink attendance, card playing and theater-going were "roads to perdition." In a similar vein, Rev. Mr. Gandier warned his parishioners at the Fort Massey Church, that to become a Christian one must give up frivolities such as

dancing and theatre. In 1891 a parent wrote "Lady Jane", the society writer of the Acadian Recorder, complaining that while dances, such as lancers, waltzes and polkas were "lady like", "modest", and "pleasant", the new society dance, the "Militaire", which required young ladies to kick was "most disgusting and vile." Kicking was best left "to those who enjoy being made little of." "Lady Jane" countered that the Militaire was often danced in aristocratic circles, with the song most popular for it "Dancing in the Barn", having been played years ago at the Old Halifax Temperance Hall by negro comedians. Suspicions about the morality of dancing continued into the new century. In 1914 the Dalhousie University Senate objected to the short dances held at the end of the Dramatic and Glee Club practices. As this was the only social organization besides the skating club, such an edict had immediate repercussions. The club soon dwindled to cast members only. In November of the same year, the Dalhousie football team, visiting the University of New Brunswick, found that new dances had been banned and that they were limited only to the waltz and the two step during their visit. Prudence seemed the safest way to avoid promiscuity.²⁰

It was bicycling, however, that was attacked most often as a threat to the morals of the women and girls who enthusiastically pedalled. The bicycle gave a new freedom to women. Women could leave the home, travel unattended, and to the trepidation of some, experience "unexample opportunity for undisturbed flirting." The Women's Rescue League of Washington denounced the bicycle as a vehicle that ruined lives and promoted immorality. The Acadian Recorder's "Lady Jane" defended the bicycle, however. In her mind the gains in physical and

mental development including a "new strength of character" overrode other objectives. "Lady Jane" felt that the immorality belonged to the Rescue League, and that the League needed chaperones even more than "the young women whom they gratuitously and piously insult."²¹

An even greater fear was that the bicycle caused pressure on and excitement of the sexual organs of women. Many felt, as the editor of the Dominion Medical Monthly, that bike riding produced a distinct orgasm, others that it encouraged masturbation, or could be used to induce miscarriages. At the same time it could cause the brains to vibrate and later require the use of forceps in childbirth.²² As the bicycle mania spread, however, these dire warnings were tempered somewhat. Reformers gradually came to argue that with care, moderation, and appropriate guidelines, bicycling could be a proper recreation. Women were thus cautioned to

avoid all unnecessary motions, particularly with the knees; learn to pedal as much as possible from the ankle. Have your machine well adjusted to you. Sit up straight, move your handle bars sufficiently high to allow you to take a firm hold with forearms straight, and the elbow on a line with your waist.²³

There were other dangers, of course, besides orgasm and sexual excitement. Following the discovery that a woman had apparently gone insane from bicycle riding, and also had her spine afflicted, the Acadian Recorder noted that "it appears to be generally agreed that over-indulgence in bicycling will induce one of the most malignant forms of insanity, owing to the long continued pressure on the spine." Doctors also cautioned that in future there was not only a danger of wheel

insanity but "bicycle hump", "face", "foot", and "arm". Their solution, as the bicycling craze spread, was moderation and a proper seat.²⁴

Bicycling also influenced the dress reform movement. While bloomers do not seem to have been fashionable in Nova Scotia, there were patterns and descriptions of the new divided skirt, "a sort of mongrel something [grown] between the divided skirt and full Turkish trousers.... The name is merely a concession to les convenances." Society writer "Lady Jane" felt that once balance and competence were achieved "a skirt almost as long as an ordinary walking one could be worn." The corset, condemned and praised by doctors and women alike, was also threatened by the popularity of bicycles. "The Lord forbid," said "Lady Jane". "Stout females are bad enough, but sans corset! Imagine!" Many doctors felt that women should take part only in sports where they could wear some form of elastic support.²⁵

Both high society and working class women eagerly accepted bicycling. While costs were high, installment plans and a growing market for second hand bikes made the sport accessible to all people. The Halifax Company, "the oldest bicycle concern in the city," the Forbes Manufacturing Company, Craig Brothers, a number of jewellers and other stores all handled sales of various makes of bicycles. Formation of bicycling clubs, such as the Ramblers and the Wanderers Amateur Athletic Bicycle Club are evidence of its popularity. Bicycling parties and picnics abounded, and even group trips to church were popular. This last novelty was questioned by Rev. A. Hockin of the

Brunswick Street Methodist Church. He felt that such an activity left "room for the evil one to be let in."²⁶

The bicycle affected society in other ways. Rev. Ralph Wilson, chaplain of HMS Crescent, suggested bicyclists work to improve the poor quality of the Halifax area roads, which riding had at least partially caused. There were hazards of the physical type as well. Accidents were commonplace. Brakes were not standard equipment until 1897, and few bikes were equipped with lights. In 1899 Halifax Police complained about young ladies laughing at them when they inquired about the absence of lanterns on their bikes; and, because the police could not "catch hold of them" to ascertain names, the young ladies usually went free.²⁷

As female bicyclists became commonplace, sports reformers and maternal feminists began to revise their opinion on female physicality. The early Victorian notion that sports and physical activity promoted good health gave way to the belief that sports were beneficial only if they protected and enhanced a woman's moral and maternal sensibilities. Immoderation in any sport, not only bicycling, could threaten society's morals. In 1885, for example, the Halifax press printed a concerned discourse by Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage on the effects of roller skating. He stressed that restrictions should be imposed to keep the sport healthful and moral, including an end to "the vulgarity or immodesty of young women going along the streets of these cities unattended." Along with chaperones he advocated "quick justice" to the "well dressed devils who haunt skating rinks, and sometimes stand at church doors." Talmage also recommended an end to competition, gambling and "crazes"

gambling and "crazes" in sport. Ball playing, he noted, while a healthful activity, had robbed many of both their purse and their morals.²⁸

If bicycling raised questions about prevailing standards of virtue, athletics in general brought a new respectability to the human body. Athletes often posed in classical positions and promoters of perfection suggested that the body could be molded to a state of elegance similar to that of Greek statues. Classes were taught in which students posed wearing Grecian robes, while photographic representations of athletes in nude or semi-nude poses revealed that the physical body could be improved without threatening morals. Of course, many reformers did not appreciate such "demoralizing and harmful" portrayals. In November 1897, Mrs. Archibald, Mrs. Montgomery Moore, Mrs. MacKintosh, Mrs. Glendenning and other ladies representing various Halifax societies complained about veriscope pictures of the Corbett-Fitzsimmons fight in Carson City. They wanted the semi-nude poster of the men in fighting costume, then displayed throughout Halifax, removed. While Recorder MacCoy felt that the posters were tasteless, he was of the opinion that the exhibition of pictures involved "merely photographic representations, not immoral and not contrary to law."²⁹

The classical model of the human body also shaped notions of physical fitness. The suggested proper proportions for a woman were based on the Goddess Venus. A woman of five feet five inches could weigh 138 pounds, and with a good form could carry ten pounds more. Other appropriate measurements were a twenty-four inch waist, a thirty-

four inch bust, six-inch wrists, eight inch ankles, twenty-five inch thighs and fourteen and a half inch calves.³⁰

Those who achieved such perfect forms were inclined to want to display them. Popular skating carnivals were ideal for displaying both costume and figure. But there were dangers in such displays. "There does not live the girl who will spoil the lightness and delicacy of her figure by putting on sufficiently thick underclothing," said Lady Jane. Despite threats of "lung and chest troubles" women persisted in their dress.

I honestly confess I nearly froze, but pride (for I looked very nice in my silk and satins) sealed my tongue, and as each shiver crept through me I skated harder and harder, but the cold came all the same.

Paper, worn across the shoulders and chest helped to prevent cold from penetrating the inappropriate costumes, but women often refused to resort to such unflattering apparel.

Skating had been a popular pastime for some time, first on the icy ponds and lakes, and later in enclosed rinks. Like many other sports skating attracted women both as participants and spectators. In early January of 1875 the Windsor Rink not only contained a Ladies' Cloak room, but was heated by stove and lighted by gas. In New Glasgow the Brass Band played once a week at the rink in 1879. It was hoped that carbolic gas lights would shortly enable evening use. Considered "one of the healthiest and most enjoyable recreations during the winter months," skating was so popular in Halifax in these early years that the Rink could barely hold the number of subscribers. The Halifax Citizen suggested that, as in previous years, the Public Gardens pond

Gardens pond be cleared and flooded. Paupers and prisoners, it was suggested, could be called upon to do this work.³¹

Much of the popularity of skating and other sports came from displays of talent by local and visiting athletes. Mabel Davison gave Halifax an exhibition of her fancy skating skills in 1896. In 1897 her sister Tammy and brother Payson demonstrated their finesse. Another brother, Harley Davison, the celebrated bicyclist and speed skater, had already set a world's bicycle record on an earlier visit to Halifax. It was noted that both young ladies used skates similar to hockey skates. The 'Mabel Davison' skate was manufactured by Starr Manufacturing Company of Dartmouth.³²

Skating clubs were extremely popular. The Dalhousie Gazette claimed that their club provided "healthy exercise for the body and pleasant relaxation for the mind," and a chance to form "acquaintances and friendships." The social importance of various sports, not only skating, should not be overlooked. Reformers hoped that women's involvement in sports would have a refining influence on men, would ease the competitive spirit, and in general add decorum to games. Ladies did not always view sports in that way however. A Miss Tremaine admitted that football was a "horrid brutal game, fit for nothing but savages," but confessed that "to watch it is perfectly fascinating." Like men, women supported their team enthusiastically, and were berated when they did not. Citing lack of "enthusiasm" and "organization" for Dalhousie University's "decisive defeats" in football, for example, the Dalhousie Gazette urged:

Dalhousians' men and women! Up with the old flag. Tack
it to the mast and let us loyally and generously turn out
and cheer our lads to victory on every field.

But the female spectators' motives were always under scrutiny. The
Gazette hoped, for example, that it was "love of the sport" which drew
the ladies to rugby games "rather than a desire to display their charms
to the thousands who thronged the ropes at the games."³³

The number and type of sports in which women took part
increased at the turn of the century. Women participated in various
individual sports such as golf, bowling, tennis, rowing, track and
field, swimming and diving, and did so with an enthusiasm which would
have created severe anxieties among the previous generation of sports
promoters. For instance, while women were at first only spectators on
the golf links, by the turn of the century they were well established
in the sport. Most clubs had lady members. The Halifax Club which was
formed in 1896 by Reverend Dyson Hague, Rev. Thos. Fowler, Lieutenant
C. Smith and five others, had only four lady members in 1896; by 1901
there were 115. In 1899 "Collins Fields" was established. Here there
were nine holes, varying from 200 to 350 yards. Only four ladies
played up to 1898; there was then a dramatic increase to sixty-three by
1901. Other popular sports for ladies were bowling, curling, and
rowing. In 1902 over a dozen boats were entered in a ladies dinghy
race; there was mixed doubles rowing during Dartmouth Natal Day cele-
brations, and a rifle club was started for ladies by military men.
Tennis was even more fashionable; ladies were "quite mad" about tennis.
Walking contests, races, swimming and field hockey were also popular.
At a swim contest at the Waegwoltic Club in 1910, girls and women's

... races covered the same distances as those for men and boys. Diving contests were held for both sexes. In all of³² these cases women revealed a new willingness to engage in competitive sporting activity and demanded nothing in the way of special treatment from their male counterparts.³⁴

The development of team sports gained momentum after the turn of the century. The growing influence of the United States, improvements in transportation, greater leisure time, increased population, urbanization, and increased inter-regional rivalry contributed to this form of sport participation, as did the growing involvement of universities in sporting activity. As the century developed universities realized the physical, mental and moral benefits that were gained from investing in sporting facilities. Saint Mary's College in Halifax claimed that

The need of good healthful sport for the students is recognized by all persons of sane judgement, and the efforts of the authorities will always be to make this sport a "means toward good work and not an end of college life."³⁵

Students of Saint Mary's agreed with the analysis. In a discussion of whether there was too much attention given to sports it was concluded that if the "duties of life" were affected then sports were not serving their purpose. "The physical vigor" and "rest of brain," would serve to "make us accomplish much better the different duties which life sets before us." Dalhousie students, a few years later, were less philosophical. They complained about the lack of tennis courts at the university; tennis was, they believed, a "healthy outdoor sport admirably adapted to all classes of students." Asking for a

gymnasium at the same time, the editor of the Gazette implied that such a deficiency had created problems in the past.

May not the lack of it be responsible to a large degree, for the terrible riots (?) downtown? Men cramped for hours in classrooms and boarding houses, must have some exercise and relaxation.

If male sports still embraced ideas that promoted strong healthy minds and bodies, the same could not be said of female athletic activity. Increasingly concerned about destructive implications of sport on female morals and concerned that appropriate distinctions between the classes were becoming blurred, reformers began to revise their opinions about the value of female recreation. One reason for this was the bicycle craze which reached its zenith around 1896. Bicycling could no longer be regarded as simply a fad of the elite. The sport transcended class boundaries and challenged conventional attitudes about class and sexuality. Another source of concern was the growing emphasis on team sports with their extreme competitive character and the tendency towards professionalization. Sports reformers perceived bicycling and the developing team sports as a threat to their vision of womanhood and subsequently to society itself. They attempted to maintain strict divisions along gender lines in physical activity. But if women avoided some of the pitfalls of male dominated sports, women reformers created conditions that in the long run devalued women's sport.

After 1900 sport reformers stressed more and more the maternal benefits of women's athletics. Sports would improve a woman's reproductive organs thus strengthening the superior stock and numbers of 'real' Canadians, which reformers saw threatened by the swelling

numbers of immigrants to Canada from central and eastern Europe. By the First World War women's precreative ability became almost the sole concern of physical educators. Girls needed to develop those traits which would attract worthy fathers and ensure healthy offspring. In the words of one twentieth-century commentator:

Intense forms of physical and psychic conflicts, of which athletics provide the best example in modern life and of which Olympic games provide the extreme type, tend to destroy girl's physical and psychic charm and adaptability for motherhood.³⁷

Reformers stressed similar maternal feminist ideas as team sports for women expanded after the turn of the century. While reformers tried to impose a specific kind of sportsmanship upon women's games, the athletes quite often played with so-called 'masculine' aggression. By 1910 there were a number of highly competitive hockey teams in existence throughout Nova Scotia. In one playoff game between the Kanenites of Halifax and the Dartmouth Imperials, Mr. Weaver, the referee, was threatened with upraised sticks when he allowed a questionable goal. Rather than the genteel behavior and fair play advocated by sport reformers:

the ladies showed a knowledge of the game, combined with a proficiency which stamped them as excellent players. There were a few of them who indulged in tripping; there were a couple who were inclined to "mix it up" while most were ready to assert their rights when the occasion arose.³⁸

Women's competitiveness, however, was often limited simply because of traditional attitudes towards their sex. When in 1921, for example, the New Glasgow team, Maritime champions of the previous year, toured the province, their new costumes received as much notice as their

playing. Eight hundred spectators saw for the first time their red toques, white sweaters, and bloomers, and in particular the large numbers sewn to their jerseys. Several even wore kneepads. A short time later the New Glasgow club played a game against Glace Bay under protest. Miss A. L. MacDonald refused to wear bloomers. The skirt she did wear was "not exceptionally long" and "reminded most of the fans of those Paris creations we read about in this part of the world but seldom ever seen." Dress, demeanor, and moral womanhood, it seems, had become more important than athletic ability.³⁹

Basketball provides a prime example of how women's sports were modified over time. In 1891, James Naismith, a Canadian, invented the game of basketball at the YMCA Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts. Naismith, an instructor, introduced the game to a group of "unruly" men, who were learning how to organize a YMCA. Three of these men were Nova Scotians, and they brought the sport home. Senda Berenson of Smith College introduced the game to girls. Roughness was a problem at first. During the first Smith College game one of the girls suffered a dislocation of the shoulder. Berenson then introduced new rules, adapting the game specifically for women. Attempts were made to eliminate roughness, and quell the development of specific star players. In 1907 with several ladies' teams playing in the Halifax area, proper ladylike behaviour was expected. Only ladies were permitted to watch and after the game the winning team served tea to the losers. Formalities such as this, it was hoped, would quell any lingering competitive spirits.

As male sports declined during the war years, girls' teams kept up spectator interest in athletics. The Spalding Ladies Basketball League consisted of six teams playing in the Ladies College gymnasium. Record crowds, including many servicemen, came to watch. Despite this wartime interest, however, women's basketball had less spectator appeal than men's. Much of this was caused by rules that emphasized team play, decreased competition, and tried to avoid some of the baser elements of male sports. There was a growing belief that women's sports should embody such maxims as "sports for sports sake", "a game for every girl and every girl in a game", "participation not competition", "play for play's sake", and "the good of those who play". By the 1920s there was general agreement among women reformers and athletes alike that excessively competitive intercollegiate women's sports was an "evil practise". Women had wanted to control female sports, and to do so they tried to avoid competitiveness and other "problems" associated with male sports.⁴⁰

The physical education reformers of the 1860s and 1870s would not have recognized the modified female sports of the 1920s. Their original aims had been to instill good moral values, improve health, and establish a balance between mental and physical training. But as mild physical exercise gave way to more aggressive and competitive sporting activity, maternal feminists were prompted to raise questions about appropriate standards of female behaviour. If female athletes disregarded the warning of these reformers about the destructive consequences of excessive competition and unruly play - thus injecting their own identities and attitudes into games - the influence of sport

reformers, both male and female alike, helped shape attitudes towards women and influenced their activities in the sporting sphere. As reformers idealized team spirit and the goal of motherhood for all women, women's sports gradually lost their competitiveness. The slower, less spectator-oriented matches allowed issues of dress, demeanor, and sexuality to take precedence over sport itself.

Maternal feminists, including sports educators like Senda Berenstein and Elizabeth Burchard, concentrated on improving and protecting maternal interests especially after the rise of both female team sports and female bicyclists. These feminists and reformers promoted the moral superiority of femaleness over the aggressive and competitive nature of male sports. In turn, women lost the opportunity to have their own athletic abilities recognized. The importance and significance of women's sports thus fell into the shadow of aggressive, competitive, and professionalized male athletics which, though dominant in our own time, have become degraded in their own way.⁴¹

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER THREE

1. In reviewing the historiography of sport and recreation in the Victorian period one is struck by the paucity of scholarly work on the subject of sport and society and the whiggish character of much of that literature. This is disappointing and surprising. Maxwell Howell, "Towards a History of Sport", Canadian Journal of History of Sport and Physical Education, 1:1 (May 1970), pp. 8-16; Don Morrow, "Canadian Sport History: A Critical Essay", Journal of Sport History, 1:1 (Spring 1983), pp. 67-79. For examples of this uncritical perspective see Henry Roxborough, One Hundred - Not Out: The Story of Nineteenth Century Canadian Sport, (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1966); Margaret Ann Hall, A History of Woman's Sport in Canada Prior to World War I, M.A., University of Alberta, 1968; Kevin G. Jones, Sport in Canada, 1900-1920, Ph.D., University of Alberta, 1970.
2. Peter Bailey, "Review Article: Sport and the Victorian City", Urban History Review, XII:2 (October 1983), p. 75.
3. Donald J. Mrozek, Sport and American Mentality 1880-1910, (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983), p. xiii.
4. Alan Metcalfe, "Some Background Influences on Nineteenth Century Canadian Sport and Physical Education", Canadian Journal of Sport and Physical Education, V:1 (May 1974), p. 67. Acadian Recorder, July 18, 1857.
5. Acadian Recorder, August 16, 1875.
6. "Let's Play the Game or the Anglo-Saxon on Sporting Spirit", 1904, quoted in Brian Dobbs, Edwardians at Play: Sport 1890-1914, (London: Pelham Books, 1973), p. 28.
7. Bryan D. Palmer, A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, (Montreal: McGill - Queen's University Press), p. 58; Brian Sutton-Smith, "Games, The Socialization of Conflict", Canadian Journal of History of Sport and Physical Education, IV:1 (May, 1973), p. 2; Alan Metcalfe, "Organized Sport and Social Stratification in Montreal-1840", in Richard S. Gruneau and John G. Albinson, Canadian Sport: Sociological Perspectives, (Don Mills, Ontario: Addison-Wesley (Canada) Ltd., 1976), p. 97.
8. Patricia Vertinsky, "Effects of Changing Attitudes Towards Sexual Morality Upon the Promotion of Physical Education for Women in Nineteenth Century America", Canadian Journal of History of Sport and Physical Education, VII:2 (December, 1976), p. 36; Susan Evelyn Markham, An Investigation of the Common of Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1749-1979, M.Sc., Dalhousie University, 1980, pp. 81-82; Acadian Recorder, August 2, 1884, October 7, 1901.

9. M. Clara Olding, "Hygiene for School Children", Maritime Medical News, XII:2 (February, 1900), pp. 27-41.
10. The Citizen, February 11, 1875.
11. Acadian Recorder, July 5, 1880.
12. Ibid., January 20, 1887. See also Ibid., March 29, 1887, June 7, 1887.
13. "Physical Training in Our Schools", Maritime Medical News, XV:12 (December 1903), p. 570-572; J. A. Sponagle, "Should Physical Training and Especially Military Drill be Compulsory in Our Schools?", Ibid., XV:10 (October 1903), pp. 439-443; W. E. Outhit, "Military Drill in the Public Schools", Ibid., XV:12 (December 1903), pp. 560-563.
14. Morris Mott, "One Solution to the Urban Crises: Manly Sports and Winnipeggers, 1900-1914". Urban History Review, XII:2 (October, 1983), p. 63. See also Morris Mott, "The Winnipeg Vics 1890-1903: The Meaning of Hockey at the Turn of the Century", Canadian Symposium on the History of Sport and Physical Education, 5th Proceedings, University of Toronto, 1982, p. 7-8; Morris Mott, "The Anglo Protestant Pioneers and the Establishment of Manly Sports in Manitoba, 1870-1886", Canadian Symposium on the History of Sport and Physical Education, 4th Proceedings, University of British Columbia, 1979, pp. 4-6. Sports were divided into classes. The most manly were swimming, rowing, snow-shoeing, track and field, and games such as cricket, rugby and football. In the 1890's lacrosse, curling, and hockey would join this elite group. Trap-shooting and riflmg were valued for their military skills. Lawn bowling, quoits, tennis and later golf, were less valued but acceptable for older people. Cards, horseracing, billards, and boardgames were not considered manly; croquet and later ping pong were borderline and not very vigorous.
15. Patricia Vertinsky, "Sexual Equality and the Legacy of Catherine Beecher", Journal of Sport History, 6:1 (Spring 1979), pp. 35-36. Badminton Magazine, 1900, quoted in Dobbs, p. 177. Males were also expected to be suitably dressed. The North West Arm Rowing Club reserved the right to approve the shoulder to knee costume. One member protested that one man "emerged from the waters [with] his scant clothes ... considerably shrunk." Acadian Recorder, September 6, 1904. See also Ibid., July 12, 1886, July 29, 1897 for other bathing issues.
16. Betty Spears and Richard A. Swanson, A History of Sport and Physical Activity in the United States, (ed.) Elaine T. Smith (Duburque, Iowa: William C. Brown, 1978), p. 120; Acadian Recorder, June 9, 1888, May 20, 1887, June 14, 1888, June 14, 1880; Patricia Vertinsky, "Rhythmics - A Sort of Physical Jubilee: A New Look at the Contributions of Dio Lewis." Canadian

Journal of History of Sports and Physical Education, IX:1 (May, 1978), pp. 31-41.

17. Acadian Recorder, September 13, 1894; October 9, 1894; Annie Payson Call, "The Greatest Need of College Girls", Atlantic Monthly, LXIX (1892), pp. 102-109. Baron Nils Posse was an immigrant to the United States and a graduate of the Royal Gymnastic Central Institute of Stockholm. Betty Spears, "Influences on Early Professional Physical Education Curriculums in the United States," Canadian Symposium on the History of Sport and Physical Education, Second Proceedings, University of Windsor, 1972, pp. 86-99.
18. Acadian Recorder, June 9, 1888.
19. Helen Lenskyj, "Femininity First: Sport and Physical Education for Ontario Girls 1890-1930", Canadian Journal of History of Sport, VIII:2 (December 1982), p. 5; M. Tremaine, "Social Life in Halifax", Dominion Illustrated Monthly, 1:8 (September, 1892), pp. 470-481.
20. Acadian Recorder, November 19, 1886, March 3, 1896, February 7, 1891. A similar religious service was held in St. John, New Brunswick, Ibid., December 7, 1886. Dalhousie Yearbook, 1914, p. 320; Dalhousie Gazette, 3 (November 4, 1914), p. 10.
21. Acadian Recorder, August 22, 1896.
22. "Immorality in Canada", Canada Lancet, XXIX:4 (December, 1896), pp. 213-4; John S. Haller and Robin M. Haller, The Physician and Sexuality in Victorian America, (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1974), pp. 176-184.
23. Daily Cardinal, Wisconsin, May 20, 1897, quoted in Nancy Struna, "Physical Education for Women at the University of Wisconsin, 1863-1913: A Half Century of Progress." Canadian Journal of History of Sport and Physical Education, IV:1 (May, 1973), p. 14; Acadian Recorder, April 25, 1896; Mainland Guardian, New Westminster, British Columbia, December 13, 1884, quoted in Nancy Howell and Maxwell Howell, Sports and Games in Canadian Life: 1700 to the Present, (Toronto: MacMillan of Canada), p. 132.
24. Acadian Recorder, March 4, 1896. The "Review of Reviews" also claimed that bicycling "whipped" the heart beyond its natural pace, produced unsymmetrical development, harmed the nervous functions; and caused "a kind of intoxication when walking." Ibid., October 5, 1895.
25. Ibid., September 13, 1894; May 2, 1896; December 3, 1894; August 22, 1896; Haller and Haller, The Physician and Sexuality in Victorian America, p. 175. "A rare mention of women wearing bloomers occurred when several girls purchased bicycles on credit.

- The Acadian Recorder reported that "It is said they intend wearing bloomers" to practise. May 14, 1896.
26. Ibid., March 11, 1896, June 15, 1896.
 27. Ibid., January 15, 1896, August 24, 1896, May 20, 1899. See the Halifax Herald, April 16, 1895 for a discourse presented to the Nova Scotia Institute of Science by Dr. Martin Murphy on the topic "Cheap Bicycle Tracks."
 28. Acadian Recorder, April 29, 1885.
 29. Mrozék, Sport and American Mentality, pp. 189-225; Katherine Adelman, "Statue Posing in the Late 19th Century Physical Culture Movement", Canadian Symposium on Sport and Physical Education, 5th Proceedings, University of Toronto, 1982, pp. 308-317; Acadian Recorder, November 5, 1897; Halifax Local Council of Women, Minutes, P.A.N.S. Mg. 20. Vol. 535 #2, Nov. 4, 1897.
 30. Acadian Recorder, December 28, 1895.
 31. Ibid., March 23, 1897. Harley Davison set the world's record for one mile on a bicycle on a 4 lap unbanked track - 2:06:15. Nancy MacDonald, The Wanderer's Amateur Athletic Club of Halifax, 1882-1925: Its Contribution to Amateur Sport, M.Sc., Dalhousie University, 1974, p. 18; Roxborough, One Hundred - Not Out, p. 79. In 1860 John Forbes of Dartmouth, Nova Scotia patented the first spring skate. This skate allowed the sole and heel of the boot to be gripped by clasps, which easily released the boot. A factory was opened in Halifax in 1861 and in 1864 operated in Dartmouth as the Starr Manufacturing Company. It had a reputation throughout Canada, the United States, and Europe.
 33. Dalhousie Yearbook, 1913, p. 366; Mott, "One Solution to the Urban Crises", p. 64; Tremaine, "Social Life in Halifax", p. 476; Dalhousie Gazette, June 19, 1912. Dalhousie Gazette, quoted in Ralph M. Davis, A History of Rugby in Nova Scotia, M.Sc., Dalhousie University, 1979, p. 27.
 34. W.A.R. Kerr, "Golf in Canada", Canadian Magazine, XVII:4 (1901), pp. 340-9; Tremaine, "Social Life in Halifax", p. 477; Gerald Redmond, The Sporting Scots of Nineteenth Century Canada, (Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1982), p. 137, 232; William J. Adams, Competitive Paddling on Dartmouth Lakes, 1846-1950, M.Sc., Dalhousie University, 1974, p. 80. Power Scrapbook, P.A.N.S. No. 111, 1902, p. 183; No. 119, 1910, p. 219. Girls and boys under 12, 50 yds.; girls and boys under 16, 50 yds. with 4 foot diving contests; ladies 50 and 100 yd. races, 4 foot diving contests, and a tandem race. Men swam the same distance, but the height of their diving contest was not given.

35. Howell and Howell, Sports and Games in Canadian Life, p. 134; John R. Fairs, "The Athletics-Physical Education Dichotomy: The Genesis of the Inter Collegiate Athletic Movement", Canadian Journal of the History of Sport and Physical Education, II:1 (Spring 1975), pp. 65; Donna M. Rae, The Impact of the Automobile on Selected Sports in Nova Scotia, 1910-1939. M.Sc., Dalhousie University, 1983; St. Mary's College, Calendar, 1909-10, p. 11.
36. Santamarian, 1 (November 1908), p. 5; Dalhousie Yearbook, June 27, 1910, p. 284.
37. Frederick Rand Rogers, "Olympics for Girls, School and Society" 1929, quoted in Laura Robicheux, "An Analysis of Attitudes towards Women's Athletics in the U.S. in the Early Twentieth Century", Canadian Journal of History of Sports and Physical Education, 6:1 (1975), pp. 12-23.
38. Power Scrapbook, P.A.N.S.; No. 119, 1910, pp. 85, 90; No. 126, 1920, p. 45; No. 127, 1927, pp. 51, 58.
39. Power ScrapBook, P.A.N.S., No. 117, 1907, p. 128; Ronald A. Smith, "The Rise of Basketball for Women in Colleges", Canadian Journal of Sports and Physical Education, 1:2 (December, 1970), pp. 18-36. Gary P. Stephens, A History of Male Basketball in Halifax 1894-1930, M.Sc., Dalhousie University, 1977; especially pp. 48-55. For more on women's basketball see Dalhousie Gazette, November 1913, pp. 321-2; May 1913, p. 322; Dalhousie Yearbook, 1912, pp. 391-2.
40. Mrozek, Sport and American Mentality, pp. 136-160; Smith, "The Rise of Basketball for Women in Colleges", pp. 26-34.
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CHAPTER 4

"Materialism, Sexuality and Victorian Reformers: From Critics of Fashion to Fashion Plates"

If many Nova Scotian women idealized their late 19th century role, stressing their duties as wife, mother and sister, many others lived a reality far from that ideal. While it is true that many women lived out their lives with the goal of achieving the repose and purity of life that "true womanhood" promised, it is also true that many women openly questioned the nature of marriage, concerned themselves about matters of sexuality, and - with the industrialization of the Maritime region - inquired critically into the role of women as fashionable consumers in an advancing capitalist order. By the close of the century, however, female middle class reform leaders believed that the social structure was endangered by the widening gap between the classes, by immigration, and by a declining respect for the existing social order. In order to overcome these problems, turn of the century feminists now promoted notions of women's universal purity and moral superiority. In elevating women to this exalted pedestal, however, they ultimately restricted her to the world of motherhood and fashionability.

Initially, however, women attacked marriage and wifehood with a surprising regularity. On December 6, 1879, for example, the Acadian Recorder published a letter from Mattie Strickland of Michigan announcing a civil and conjugal union between herself and Leo Miller. Denounced by her parents as "our poor, deluded, misguided and insane

daughter," Strickland denounced the concept of marriage believing it to be "founded upon the principle of master and slave." She referred to the "ghastly spectres of buried hopes and lost ambitions" of bright young girls who after marriage "drag their weary bodies just this side of the grave, daily praying to die." Strickland knew only her own small town, but she knew that the evils of marriage existed elsewhere.

Deny this not; I know it and so do you all. The excessive demands of husbands ... the constant blighting fear of maternity - when that should be the golden hope of womanhood - the soul-destroying subjection of one individual to another, the indifference and disgust that spring from enforced familiarity are sapping the strength of body, mind and soul of the women.

If Strickland's pronouncements shocked many Nova Scotians, there were many others who would have agreed, if not with the solution, then at least with the problem. In Nova Scotia, as elsewhere, women in the last third of the nineteenth century were openly questioning the desirability of marriage and commenting upon young people's seeming aversion to that institution. One month before publishing Strickland's letter, for example, the Acadian Recorder published an editorial noting that young men "seem reluctant to change their state of single blessedness to one of wedded happiness, and the young women perforce remain unmarried, whatever their secret inclinations may be." The usual reason given for this state of affairs was that young men could not properly support a wife. The Acadian Recorder had its own explanation. Older values such as prudence and common sense had been lost, and both men and women now felt deprived when restricted by the economics of managing a household. Extravagant individualism, the article continued, not only injured the national prosperity but caused these men

"who consume[d] their entire income" and "young women who flaunt[ed] in finery and indulge[d] in frivolities" to become "not particularly marketable commodities themselves."¹

The "marriage question" as the newspaper termed it caused great concern among Victorian Nova Scotians. Parents, newlyweds, and the betrothed all worried about the stability of marriage itself. A discourse reprinted in the Acadian Recorder by Rev. Mr. Talmage, a popular, albeit eccentric preacher at the Brooklyn (New York) Tabernacle, for example, tried to allay these fears, reassuring blondes that they could marry brunettes "with perfect safety" and noting that "a maiden with a nervous temperament need no longer hesitate about fearlessly bestowing herself upon a phlegmatic young man." Talmage stressed the need for compromise and mutual consultation in marriage, indicating the church's growing recognition of the perilous shape of the marriage institution. Just who was responsible for ensuring the success of marriage, of course, was a question of great debate. Women, guardians of purity and the home, were often blamed for the declining interest in marriage. And there was some truth to the charge. Many women scorned society's prescribed modes of behavior in matters of sexuality, questioning the time-honored virtues of feminine obedience and self sacrifice.²

In November of 1883, a series of missions sponsored by the Church of England, in Halifax centred on sexuality and the marriage bond. Given the sensitivity of the issue, separate services were held for men and women. On November 18, 1883 an all male crowd packed the Academy and listened to Rev. Mr. Osborne and Rev. Mr. Maturin, while women

attended the Bishop's Chapel where Rev. Mr. Cogswell delivered his address. Rev. Mr. Osborne spoke of male lust and the importance of religion as an antidote to sin. Osborne claimed that man was created in the image of God; every failure of mankind was thus a desecration of the image of God. He referred in particular to the removal of religion from the schools; a local case of abortion - "you may call it what you will, but it is the taking away of life designedly and there is no name for it but murder" - and the need for self control and the restraint of passion. Rev. Mr. Maturin continued this theme and spoke on the unmanly and unchristian character of seduction. "This evil - the enticing from the paths of innocence - to say the least of it was unmanly, to say the height of it; was unchristian. What would you do," asked Maturin, "if she was your sister or your daughter?"

At the Bishop's Chapel, however, women were given a different guide to behavior. Where the missionaries had told men to guard against their male passions and lust, Rev. Mr. Cogswell spoke on the duties of women. Disinterestedness in self, solicitude for husbands, and cheerfulness, he argued, would improve the home life. On November 20, 1883 Rev. Mr. Osbourne lectured to women about the marital relation. Even though the pastor left the church after playing an opening hymn, one man, "probably one of the survivors of the battle of Trafalgar" resolutely sat through the proceedings. Osbourne spoke on the attitudes of women to their husbands and to marriage. He illustrated many evils which might result from their too frivolous behavior and suggested that young wives should dress and conduct themselves more demurely than their unmarried peers. They should nevertheless maintain the cheerful-

ness and neatness that they showed when first courted. "It will be seen," said the Acadian Recorder, "that the general gist of the remarks was to confirm the good opinion most husbands have of themselves." Osborne also alluded to the loss of the word "obey" from marriage services, "for what reason he did not know." The Acadian Recorder noted that Osborne "seemed to be under the impression that there wasn't as much obedience among the married women of Halifax as the obligations they had assumed would call for."

Osborne's discourse "had quite an effect on the ladies present," but not quite what he might have wished. Some of his audience revealed a decided antipathy to masculine assumptions about the obligations of women to men. "Cecelia" was one such woman who protested the missionary's belief in woman's subservience. She claimed that while she did not rule the home "with a rod of iron" she did object to the "abject home slavery" that Mr. Osborne and others propounded.

They have preached to the women of Halifax a sort of slavery, a cringing sort of feeling to be indulged in before their husbands which would, I am sure, be unsatisfactory to the men, and wrong and dishonorable in the woman.

I think and I know that I hold tenable ground when I say that no man should marry a woman if it was not to take her as his equal, as his helpmate, not as a mere machine to provide a comfortable meal and to have nothing to say regarding his life outside the home.

Obviously some women were demanding that marriage be reshaped to make it a less individualistic and more cooperative institution. Cecelia's analysis, based on sexual equality both inside and outside the home

extended the question of marriage beyond the issue of sexuality as it had been posed by Mattie Strickland and beyond the economic analysis suggested by the Acadian Recorder.³

Other women willingly satirized traditional notions of romantic marriage. When in 1888 "Doesticks", a columnist for the Acadian Recorder, referred to a matrimonial bureau in London, and offered to act as 'agent' for such a venture in Halifax, Fannie Jones replied in a less than humble way. Praising "Doesticks" on his generous offer, Jones claimed that "Its just what we stock of 'old maids, widows and giddy young things' have long been waiting for." Jones asked why the young men who bravely fought in the North West were so bashful when it came to marriage.

Yes, dear Doesticks, they'll buy us ice-creams, take us walking in the silvery moonlight, pour soft nothings into our ears until we almost wish we had [been] born without these appendages, or that men had been born with more common sense, when down in the bottom of our hearts (as you who know so well say) we are "pining for the illimitable ecstasies of mutual confidence". We don't want them to come to us (when the morning sun shining full on their mirror reveals to them that crow's feet and gray hairs are becoming their portion), and lay at our feet a poor, battered, scarred article ... Well that they tell us what it is: we would never have recognized it as a heart.

Jones laughingly commented that perhaps this dearth of brave young men was a result of the National Policy - the liberal Acadian Recorder's pet peeve - and suggested if so the "old maids, widows and giddy young things" could perhaps unite to suppress it; if it was mere bashfulness perhaps "benevolent citizens" could fund an institution to treat those young men so afflicted. Jones indicated that she was a "young woman of _____ summers, very good looking, remarkably intelligent, (these from authority)" with a sweet disposition and numerous domestic and

artistic accomplishments. She would do her part for the proposed Bureau by offering herself with a "modest request" for a man. Her requirements were simple:

None by the name of "John" need apply. Neither any under 5 ft. 8 in. in height: must be dark; no matter how dark, if he may still be termed a white man: must have good education, professional man preferred; must not be a member of any clubs, unless I also am admitted as a member of same.

He must also avoid liquor stores, tobacco, and fashions that dictate "pantaloon" either too wide or "side-splitting in more senses than one." Preferably he should be between the ages of 25 and 35 although "excellence of quality" would allow him a few years leeway. He must not be a "dude", he must have brains, and she would not object if he had "surplus cash." Since she had quickly eliminated most Nova Scotian men, Jones obviously preferred her lot as one of Doestick's stock of "old maids, widows and giddy young things."

Not everyone would have agreed that the institution of marriage was in need of rehabilitation or that men were responsible for its failings. Instead, revealing the commonplace Victorian emphasis on self-control, rationality, and restraint of passion that applied even in society's approach to love, male defenders of the institution attacked marriage's female critics blaming them for the rising divorce rate. "Frank", a respondent to Jones, felt that she was too harsh on men. Nor did she really understand them. Men, he claimed were not blinded with love but rather sought "to please and gratify women" through compliments. Frank thought that friendship was the basis of a

good marriage. If women accepted this - as many no doubt did - then women could be happy in marriage as were most men.

If on the surface Victorian marriage seemed characterized by a stability buttressed by notions of prudery and feminine self-denial, this was merely an illusion. Women, of all classes ridiculed, condemned, or regretted the notion of marriage. One such person was Sarah Rutledge, a thirty-seven year old woman hospitalized with tertiary syphilis, which she had contacted from her husband. Rutledge managed to scribble her brief, unhappy story in a record book of the Victoria General Hospital.

7 Sarah Ann Rutledge, Amherst N.S. took her maiden name she was some time ago called Mrs. Louis Gould but she though as she was compelled to go to her own people for help she would take her maiden name again. Young girls take warning do not be in a hurry leaving your people take friends advice not like poor foolish Sarah.

In light of widespread venereal afflictions and unhappy marriages, women often found themselves in degraded situations having been taken advantage of by men. "The spoiler quickly wearies of his prey; and his "deluded victim" has no recourse but if they live, [these] wretched, broken-down women drift back perchance to their native place," said the Acadian Recorder.⁵

Louise Chandler Moulton, in the Ladies Home Journal claimed that the happiest moment of a woman's life was "when Love is a sweet, shy new comer, and Hope leads it by the hand." The Acadian Recorder's "Lady Jane" felt it was when a woman saw her children doing good and remaining pure. One can be sure however, that for many women, neither love, hope, children, nor even riches brought happiness. In 1892

"Equal" noted that while she didn't know much about the Bible she did believe that it claimed the sexes were equal.

But why is it ... The general opinion it is the wife's place to do all the grovelling, play humility['s] role, or in other words, keep the affairs of the house with a never failing glossed surface, in order that the Lord of the Manor may be kept in humor?

While society writer Lady Jane found it relatively easy to claim that woman's lives had improved compared to that of their ancestors, many other women recognized that luxury and wealth were not conducive to happiness. Indeed, if many acknowledged that fact, there were others who were cognisant of both cause and solution. In 1894, Lady Jane received a letter from an "Emancipated Woman", a woman so "dangerous" that the society columnist felt that "the sooner she is annihilated the better for us." "Emancipated Woman" wrote on the "rude awakening" a woman would suffer when she discovered "that money cannot buy everything." A drowning woman, the writer continued, would grasp a "white and weak and soft fingered" hand that was filled with gold coin, rather than "one broad and brown, with the leather of toll stretched across its palm." The old superstition "that money; marvellous magic money is ever present to sooth and solace [and] allay every irritation of the mind," must be recognized as an invalid ideal of life.

Well, in the near by and by, when woman shall stand no longer under man's domination, but be as absolutely free as the bird's of the air to choose a mate - then shall we see her turn with horror from the modern Midas; in whose embrace she would feel her heart turning slowly but surely to something as cold, if not as hard, as stone, Yes those marital muddles will undoubtedly tend to make divorce respectable, and that will be another gain for us women, for many and many a poor woman bears the ills of matrimonial infelicity rather than fly into the face of Madame Form, and many and many a brute in trousers pursues the

even tenor of his way adding one indignity to another, simply because he knows that his wife will do nothing not sanctioned by Madame Form.

"Emancipated Woman" concluded saying that 'Madame Mode' regulated fashion, 'Madame Form' conduct. So far there was no fashionable dress for divorces - but only because 'Madame Form' had refused "to remove the stigma of lack of respectability" which divorce signified. In one letter this "Emancipated Woman" condemned not only marriage and fashion, but the capitalist pursuit of wealth.⁶

In critiquing these institutions "Emancipated Woman" also condemned traditional attitudes towards women's sexuality. In the Victorian period subtle changes in ideas and public sentiment had made sexuality one of the prominent questions of the last quarter of the 19th century. Of primary importance was the belief that men were driven by animal lusts while women - good women that is - felt no passion. Once a woman was contaminated, however, her decline in society's eyes was far deeper than that of any man. Where a man could be excused for his sexual indulgences, a woman could not. While many of these ideas stemmed from the notion of women as male's property, they also reveal economic realities. Of the few women who were in the labour force, fewer still were able to achieve economic independence. Thus women were forced to 'sell' themselves on the marriage market in order to achieve financial security. This opportunity of course was open to women of all classes. Though they were forced to use their sexuality to gain a mate, the misuse of that exploited sexuality ironically brought consequences "more terrible and irreparable than the taking of life itself."

The transgressions of women were condemned by the same society that excused those of men. In a discourse on "The Public Morals" in 1879 the Acadian Recorder recognized this fact.

The erring girl has no defender, no apologist. Her one transgression is visited by hopeless ruin. The villain who has caused her ruin escapes condemnation. The injustice of this is pretty fully recognized.

If the inequality was recognized, still there was little done to alter the public's opinion of 'fallen women.' In 1883, Mrs. Bridget O'Conner, a 26 year old widow, died after having a doctor perform an abortion. The father was a married man, policeman Lewis Huffer. While he received a suspension from duty, general opinion was that he was a good officer with "decided proclivities, however, in the female line - to such an extent as to make it marked." He was, however, not "a man who neglected his family." A loss of purity for women meant her exclusion from society. In an 1882 talk to young women Rev. Mr. Chubbuck cautioned:

Let the breath of sin, of scandal, touch her and there is no place in society again for her; she is ... a being to be abhorred - to be spurned. She is beyond hope. Women are more bitter against women than men are against men.

If middle class society condemned those women who made the one mistake, it was even harder on those who did not follow its prescribed rules of behavior. In 1882 laws were passed restricting the presence of children in various questionable establishments. It did little to control the problem of "dirty little street walkers, who ought to be spanked and sent to bed." These girls aged ten to fifteen years of age were "hoodlums of the worst sort." Groups of them appeared in public - some "barelegged", others in "scanty skirts," - and calls were often made by

reformers to suppress this "moral sewage of the most deleterious kind."

An article in an English journal, for example, was published in Nova Scotia by request of a female reformer. It cautioned that "night prowling" must be shunned by young women. Neither curiosity nor love of exercise would excuse women from risking the loss of their modesty and innocence - their "greatest charm."

When a little girl named Moody was indecently assaulted by George Rossi, an Italian shoemaker, the examination by lawyer Mr. Hanwright demonstrated that "the morals and training of the child [were] depraved." Apparently Moody had "introduced" two or three little girls into Rossi's shop. Judge Johnson felt she "was a very bad girl." While women and girls were 'asexual' when kept in a restricted environment, those who were 'contaminated' by their home environment, associates, and the public world possessed a dangerous sexuality.⁸

However, even the home environment could not protect women from sexual attack, scandal, and moral decline. The double standard for the sexes left many women open to sexual exploitation. Nowhere, perhaps, can this vulnerability be revealed than in the story of Rebecca Ross. Ross was an emigrant servant girl who had worked as a nurse for a Mr. and Mrs. George C. Jamieson for nearly two years. She became pregnant, and at first refused to name the father. Mrs. Jamieson, as was correct in these situations, asked her husband to pay the girl and to discharge her. Ross eventually confessed that in fact Jamieson was the father. Jamieson, was to excuse his conduct. "It happened to many a better man," he claimed. Once thrown out of the house, the girl unsuccessfully attempted suicide. Afterward Jamieson set Ross up in a house at

Hubbard's Cove and lived with her as if man and wife. When the child was about one month old, in February of 1882, Jamieson brought Ross and child back to Halifax and abandoned them. Ross went first to the Poor House, then to the Infant's House where her child eventually died.

Despite Jamieson's conduct, -- even the judge admitted "he couldn't behave like a gentleman; he didn't know how to" -- Rebecca Ross was still considered "the principal cause of the trouble." It is perhaps Ross's own words, that best express the injustice and inequality of the double standard for sexual conduct. "Mrs. Jamison", she wrote in her suicide note, November 4, 1881

do not be too hard on me. If I did not tell you about this, you have just found it out by chance; had you known, you would not have given me your own little things. I have not told anyone, but you don't know how unhappy I have been and I did not care what became of me. I was ashamed of myself all the time. I have been to blame as well as your husband, but he forced me. God knows how I have felt. I did not care if I lived or died, and that is what has made me as you say lighthearted. Forgive me now for you will not have the chance of seeing me again, -- ten dollars is all he gave me. I will say goodbye forever.

R. R.

Even in the sanctity of a house environment, in the domestic work that women reformers so often praised, a woman's sexuality could be both threatened and suspect.⁹

If women were forced to hide their sexual feelings in order to avoid the condemnation of society, they were equally forced to flaunt that same sexuality in order to achieve society's ultimate goal for women -- marriage. In order to 'ensnare' men, women were obligated to use a multitude of devices. Men, were often cautioned about the 'wiles' of women.

The sisterly flirt, whose name is legion, the kittenish flirt, whose is all innocence, the dignified flirt, who is too lady like to rouse your suspicions, the evangelical flirt, whose interest in your soul you weakly imagine to be intended for your heart - all these and many more may have designs on your personal liberty.

Women used a cultivated demeanor in order to attract men. Equally important was their apparel and appearance. Women were encouraged to use their sexuality yet condemned for doing so. In 1884, for example, Esther wrote from Big Bras d'Or complaining of the popular hair fashion. Nova Scotian mothers should instruct their daughters "in the modest and abstemious way of parting the hair in the middle." With this "proper-sense way of arranging the hair" girls could "grace the country with loveliness."¹⁰ But it was women's fashion that caused the greatest controversy. For many women, corsets and bustles indicated their femininity, while other women considered them both a threat to health and a form of sexual exploitation. At its triennial in Washington, the National Council of Women, held a session on dress reform. The Rev. Ida C. Hutton, attired in a clerical costume, suggested that the body and all that pertained to it "must be used as an avenue for the education of the inner self." The passions and desires of the body should be subjugated but not destroyed. Economy, comfort and beauty should take precedence in the selection of dress, not man's potential admiration of a woman's figure. Lady Cook, the former Miss Tennessee Chaplin of the United States, and a regular contributor to the Acadian Recorder wrote an article entitled "Rational Dress" published in 1895. Cook noted that while fashions for women were changing, women were not - as many opponents claimed - adopting male dress. They were instead

wearing clothes made especially for them. Cook commented on the "amusing" habit of women who regularly appeared "half-nude" in décolletée at public functions to speak disparagingly of women who showed "to the extent of a few inches, the shape of a pair of well-covered legs." Cook claimed that neither those with unshapely legs nor the "peeping Toms, Paul Prys, and lip-pursed prudes who howl at any change" had any "lawful concern" to remonstrate against women who wore rational dress. This rational dress "must be one which gives the largest freedom to the body, is healthiest, lightest, most comfortable and best adapted to climate and season." Cook suggested that cross sex dressing might even be popular - kilts and petticoats for men, breeches and Turkish trousers for women. "As the race improves in symmetry, and well-formed limbs become general, it is likely that very short dresses for the women, and knee breeches, as in the graceful olden times, for the men, will be the universal fashion." Rev. J. K. Adams of Toronto, condemned the rational dress movement. While he would not deny women their rights, including suffrage, masculine apparel on women, he argued, was condemned in the Bible. Furthermore, Adams claimed, "my mother never wore bloomers." His mother apparently was the woman to whom neighbourhood women went for "advice about their babies and everything else." The women in bloomers, were not only condemned but ridiculed. It was strongly felt that these 'New Women' would lose their femininity by adopting this mode of dress.

Now, Tommy, dear, just run down stairs and get your papa's shawl;
I mustn't make you mother wait - we're going to the ball.
I left her in the dining room at her cigars and wine;
She looks so brave and manly in that new dress suit of mine.

If there were fears that dress reform could change women into men, equally great was the fear of what might happen to men as they became dominated by their partners.

In Nova Scotia, the question of corsets was hotly debated. Nova Scotians read that Dr. R. J. Blackham of England thought "corsets are desirable because most women wear them." Society writer Lady Jane promoted them and vigorously protested against "those horrid strong-minded women, who should by rights be men, constantly bring[ing] a blush to our cheeks by making all sorts of suggestions about them." Corsets, she felt, could even help the complexion. "One of the most beautiful complexions I ... ever saw is owned by a Canadian woman who wears her stays so tight that she can't, to save her life, take a long breath." On the other hand, a "stayless" American woman possessed a "thick, muddy, coarse complexion." Lady Jane was certain that any man who advocated abolishing corsets had never danced with women who did not wear them. "How horrid she feels, all soft and flabby and squashy? Surely a firm, pliable graceful figure is much nicer to dance with than one of those flabby, fleshy kind of things."

Those who opposed corsets could be even more direct and unsubtle in their critique:

Here lies a girl
Whose brief, brief days
Were briefer still
For wearing stays.!!

Many Nova Scotian women established a critique of fashion that extended beyond mere corsets. Out of this critique in general came a deeper analysis of consumerism, capitalist materialism and the role

women played in modern society. In 1883 a female "Citizen of the World" wrote to the Acadian Recorder, and commented on the increase in crime in a time when a person seemingly could acquire all that they needed in a legitimate manner. What was startling about this was that "the man in high position of trust" now stood "upon the same platform as the felon." While the poor man, driven by hunger was condemned by society; that same society regarded the upper class criminal with amusement or indifference. It was time to examine the cause of such an occurrence. Often, "Citizen" felt, women were responsible. It was

that vampire - fashion - that is destroying so many homes; and to keep pace with its mad changes, women unconsciously are becoming not helpers of their husbands, but are dregs of destruction, and turning the quiet nest of home into a troubled sea of worry, doubt and despair ... Fashions make a slave of women, keeps the purse ever crying "give, give."

Upper class women, "Citizen" thought, must show "their lowlier sisters" that such display was not "cultured." Such flamboyant displays of fashion were often condemned, as was Halifax society in general. "I don't mean to say the men are snobs, not a bit," said "Adam Phoolie" in 1887. "It is the women." He charged the women of Halifax with being eager "to catch a soldier". Most were "vain, vulgar, selfish and unprincipled." Many women agreed. A "lady" wrote in 1888:

Can there be no thing done to stem this torrent of "society" business that has taken possession of our small districts? Has the price of fish gone up to such an extent within two or three years that we can abandon ourselves to taking art in, or recording "society" movements.

In a lecture reprinted in the Acadian Recorder in 1897, Rev. James Elliot, pastor of a Toronto Methodist Church condemned "selfish individualism." Like "Emancipated Woman" and "Citizen of the World" he saw

a growing problem in society. Selfish individualism he claimed cursed the home, trade and legislation. "Selfish individualism crushes the weak - indeed, it would extract the last drop of blood from their veins could it be sold for a dollar." Elliot and many others either refused or failed to argue for an end to wage labour, but their attack on the accumulation of wealth shows a critique that was more sophisticated than turn of the century reformers would subsequently advocate.¹²

If many women were questioning and discarding traditional notions of sexuality and marriage, many others still saw marriage as the only legitimate goal of women. "Doesticks" in the Acadian Recorder noted that in theory women could remain single and maintain a career, yet because "the sex is inclined to be impulsive," oftentimes a promising career was discarded in favour of marriage. The belief that a woman could not have both a career and marriage was commonplace, at least among women of the middle class. Many women were reluctant to chose a career at the expense of marriage. Thus, as the 19th century closed, with its growing class divisions, and labour radicalism, not to mention the economic inability of many families to support a large immediate home-circle of adults, reformers placed a more intense emphasis on marriage.¹³

The North American Review in 1895 urged men to marry. A single man, it claimed, dooms a woman to celibacy, and "defrauds himself of the opportunity for mental and moral development" as well as stunting his manhood, and impoverishing his heart and brain. It was, claimed the article, "face responsibility" to marry. "Doesticks" referred those men who were untaught in lovemaking to an article in the New York

Home Journal. The article suggested that both happily married couples and couples contemplating marriage form clubs. Then the married pair could entertain the other members with "a faithful and realistic rendition of the principal scenes in their courtship ending the performance with the grand and affecting scene in which the thrilling and soul stirring question was put and answered."¹⁴ The emphasis on the importance and sanctity of marriage permeated all aspects of courtship.

Since divorce was still considered scandalous - "let them live apart but let them remember that they are man and wife" - and because remarriage was "just another name for sin," women were often cautioned about choosing husbands wisely. For example, a young man "whose neck falls in folds lives to eat and drink". A man such as this is "selfish and stupid" and "loves his meat and drink far better than he can ever love his wife." Of course, after locating one's ideal mate, mothers and daughters needed to obtain a proposal. "Lady Jane" argued with an article which claimed that neither garden parties or five-o'clock tea would "lead to matrimony."

When a man has dined well and had a little wine, he is apt to feel comfortable and perhaps a little maudlin, and then after dinner the girl sings sentimental songs to him and he thinks it is about time he settled down, and he isn't so cautious as he was in the afternoon and so he proposes more easily.¹⁵

Of course men had their part to play in this game, and they were often berated for selfishly spending money at clubs rather than saving it, and for not participating in dances and other activities. They had; said "Joan", a society writer, "no sense of social obligation." Instead of partnering the girls "half the men will congregate in the

smoking room while the girls hold up the wall in the ballroom." While "Joan" blamed the selfishness of young men for this, "Omega" in 1902 claimed otherwise. These society women "of whom 'Joan' is the special champion," "Omega" claimed, failed to find husbands because of their pretensions, their idleness, and their lack of knowledge of proper house-keeping. "One who is Interested" responded to "Omega" and suggested that men should look for middle class girls "who have some purpose in life" rather than the society girls who had little training in domestic matters.¹⁶

Along with the importance of marriage, there was more and more stress laid on the value of 'home' and woman's role in it. Marriage said Rev. W. J. Armitage at St. Paul's Church, was the means to "promote human happiness, to furnish the blessings of a home life, spread the human race and [be] ... the very nursery of heaven." The maintenance of this institution fell to women. Paraphrasing an "old author" Armitage noted three things a wife should be, and paradoxically, should not be.

1. She should be like a snail to keep within her own house but she should not be like the snail to carry all she has up on her back.
2. She should be like an echo, to speak when spoken to; but she should not be like an echo always to have the last word.
3. She should be like a town clock, always to keep time and regularity; but she should not be like a town clock that speaks so loudly that all the town may hear her.

Armitage also claimed that submission was the "ruling principle that governs the wife's part in marriage, although he also noted that some

people in modern 19th century Canada would find fault with this notion.¹⁷

If women were to be submissive however, they were also to exert their influence on men and on society. "We demand purity in women; let women demand purity in men," said Mr. Crossley at the Union evangelical services. Indeed, by the turn of the century reformers had heeded the call. Using the maternal feminist critique of women's moral purity and special nurturing abilities, reformers tried, no matter how it disgusted them, to bring fallen women up to the same level as themselves. While special institutions for prostitutes and fallen women had long been established, after the turn of the century reformers tried to enforce their particular moral standard in order to save all of society. Some women applied their own personal moral standards to society. One woman excused her vandalism of a new library book because she felt its views and thoughts were wrong. Other reformers used the growing influence of women's organizations to attack immorality.

By the turn of the century female reformers were challenging everything that might offend or alter their moral standards. Jessie Smith, Superintendent of the W.C.T.U. Social Purity Department cautioned about the dangers of school outhouses. "Boys and girls have to dodge each other and modesty is in danger of strangulation," she claimed. In 1907 the Halifax Local Council of Women Objectional Literature Committee drew up a resolution suggesting that the Post Office suppress papers printing immoral details. In the same year they complained about writing on the bathing houses' walls, walls that perhaps should be washed daily. They also tried to detect any breach of morals

that might occur. One such occurrence was in September 1907 when "bad" postcards were found, another was when a "very bad book" was found in circulation in a town library in October 1908. This was particularly offensive, Miss Mary Ritchie pointed out that many more people could pay five cents to borrow a book than could buy it. Dr. Ritchie also reported at this meeting that she had written to the Chief of Police about postcard shows; he had ordered two of these cards withdrawn. Similarly in 1910 the Pernicious Literature department of the Halifax L.C.W. worked to suppress prize fight pictures, stopped a play billed for the Academy and had various pictures removed and books suppressed. These reformers also mentioned concern about the sort of reading material that little boys had. They believed that bad books were secretly distributed to these children. "Keep away from these godless productions," warned Rev. Father Etchebert at St. Mary's Cathedral. They were "inculcating society with venomous snake-like poison."¹⁸

These concerns with immoral literature, plays, and art were all part of the maternal feminist critique. Steeped in the belief of woman's superior morality, middle class women used their now established position in the public sphere in order to impose their standards of appropriate behaviour on all women. Only the work of "pure" middle class women could stop widespread immorality and social degradation. Thus the middle class reformers of the early 20th century tackled not only such problems as slum housing, feeble-minded children, and insufficient playgrounds, but impure literature as well. The maintenance and safety of their own homes and families was foremost in their minds.

Gone was the earlier critique of the conceptions of female sexuality, fashion and capitalist materialism.

The critique of sexuality, marriage and consumerism advocated by feminist reformers of the late 19th century collapsed, giving way at the end of the century to the growing maternal feminist movement. While the notion of marriage had never been totally discarded, the early reformers had advocated a more cooperative and equal status for women in marriage. Similarly, calls by the 'New Women' for dress reform were based on more than issues of health and comfort; they involved a critique of the traditional exploitive nature of woman's dress. Even more important to the woman's movement was the critique of consumerism and materialism. By the turn of the century, however, these ideas had been replaced by maternal feminism and its more traditional notion of women's place in home and society. Women's role had been enlarged. In addition to mother and wife; as a major consumer she had now become an important legitimator of the capitalist order.¹⁹

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER 4

1. Acadian Recorder, December 6, 1875, November 4, 1875.
2. Ibid., October 25, 1880.
3. Ibid., November 19, 1883, November 20, 1883, November 21, 1883.
4. Acadian Recorder, August 4, 1888, October 6, 1886.
5. Victoria General Hospital, Surgical and Syphilitic Ward Records, 1892-1893, P.A.N.S., RG 25 B, Section 3.6, p. 30; Acadian Recorder, April 13, 1889.
6. Acadian Recorder, July 26, 1890, February 14, 1892, November 10, 1894.
7. Ibid., April 30, 1877, June 3, 1879, October 9, 1883, October 10, 1883, December 19, 1882. See Angus McLaren, "Birth Control and Abortion in Canada, 1870-1920", in Medicine in Canadian Society: Historical Perspectives, S.E.D. Shortt (ed.), (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1981), pp. 285-314; Colin D. Howell, "Elite Doctors and the Development of Scientific Medicine: The Halifax Medical Establishment and 19th Century Medical Professionalism" in Health, Disease and Medicine Essays in Canadian History, Charles C. Roland, (ed.), Hannah Institute for the History of Medicine, 1982.
8. Acadian Recorder, March 7, 1882, October 9, 1883, June 26, 1883, March 26, 1890, April 14, 1887. See also Acadian Recorder, April 18, 1891; K. Margaret Morrison, The Social Evil in Halifax in the Late Nineteenth Century (1880-1900), B.A. (Hons.), Dalhousie University, 1979, Haller and Haller; J. Ian Casselman, The Secret Plague: Venereal Disease in Early Twentieth Century Canada, M.A., Queen's University, 1981, and Michael Bliss, "'Pure Books on Avoided Subjects': Pre-Freudian Sexual Ideas in Canada", in Shortt, Medicine in Canadian Society, pp. 255-284.
9. Acadian Recorder, July 19, 1887, July 20, 1887, July 21, 1887, July 26, 1887, August 1887, November 15, 1887, November 24, 1887.
10. Ibid., November 30, 1887, April 15, 1884.
11. Ibid., March 2, 1895, December 3, 1895, September 21, 1895, March 30, 1895, September 15, 1894. "Dress Reform", Dominion Illustrated, 2:38 (March 23, 1889), p. 191. See also, "False Taste in Dress", Dominion Illustrated, 4:95 (April 26, 1890), p. 271. The Poem, "The New Man" appears in Appendix I.
12. Acadian Recorder, November 21, 1883, February 12, 1887, February 28, 1888, November 24, 1897.

13. Ibid., July 19, 1890, April 6, 1889, August 2, 1890.
14. Halifax Herald, March 4, 1895; Acadian Recorder, November 10, 1900.
15. Acadian Recorder, July 30, 1892, August 25, 1894, September 15, 1894.
16. Ibid., May 4, 1912, October 11, 1902, October 14, 1902, October 27, 1902, October 13, 1902.
17. Ibid., November 8, 1897. See also Armitage's sermon to women Ibid., November 7, 1904.
18. Ibid., November 16, 1897, February 4, 1893. For a similar service see Ibid., September 26, 1896. See also A. P. Logan, "The Influence of Women in Human Life", Acadian Recorder, September 20, 1904.
19. Nova Scotia W.C.T.U., Minutes, Third Annual Convention, 1898, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 536, p. 60; Halifax L.C.W. Minutes, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 535, #3, February 11, 1907, Vol. 535, #4, October 15, 1908, September 15, 1910, Vol. 535, #5, February 20, 1913. Acadian Recorder, April 3, 1912. "Lady Jane" suggested in 1910 that the values of an earlier age were of a higher civilization and a more genuine religion. "What would our grandmothers say if they were permitted to revisit the earth and to take a peep at the bathers, of both sexes, disporting themselves at the various bathing places, sitting tete a tete on the settees, clothed chiefly in sunshine, drops of salt water, smiles, blushes and 'abbreviations'?" Acadian Recorder, September 10, 1911. See also Rev. A. J. Duke's sermon on immodesty of dress. Ibid., August 16, 1911.
20. That women had become the chief consumers of society is easily seen in one article in a New Glasgow newspaper which singles out women for their interest in newspaper advertisements and thanks them for their support of the advertised firms. Evening News, July 12, 1911.

CHAPTER 5

"The Political Awareness of Women Reformers in Victorian Nova Scotia: From 'Sexless Citizenship' to Community Housekeepers"

Female middle class reformers of late nineteenth century Nova Scotia struggled for political recognition. In this struggle they drew upon an eclectic mix of ideas that ranged from dreams of social and economic equality, to frustrations with attitudes of male politicians, to the belief that the franchise was needed to extend woman's 'proper' role as housekeeper and mother of society. While it is true that many women shunned the thought of political activity of any sort, there were many others who addressed the problem of female suffrage. If feminists were particularly confident and outspoken in the 1880's and early 1890's, after 1895 suffragism lost its momentum. When suffragists regrouped at the end of the first decade of the twentieth century they argued almost exclusively from a maternal feminist perspective. Eventually they won the vote. When the government found it politically expedient it granted the franchise to women as a reward for the work and sacrifices that they, as wives and mothers, had endured throughout the war years.

But if these reformers won victories in the public sphere because of their maternal feminism, they lost much more. Their growing political acumen, their belief in sexless citizenship, and their chance for social and economic equality were all casualties of this maternalist persuasion. Nova Scotian reformers formed a new political order. As

we shall see, however, it was not necessarily the one the early feminists envisioned.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, many women reformers struck out on their own, not only to promote suffrage, but to offer opinions on larger political and social questions. In 1881, for example, "Minerva", an occasional correspondent to the Halifax Acadian Recorder, wrote about the uncertainty of Nova Scotia prosperity and the benefits of establishing a cotton industry. She commented that she was "well aware that it is unusual for a woman to meddle with political affairs"; had it not been for recent forays into the public sphere by her sex she would have apologized.¹ Obviously some women were confident that their sex should play a larger role in the political and economic life of the community.

While many men and women accepted the movement of women into the public sphere as right and just, there were others who contemplated it with horror. Church officials, for the most part, opposed the early suffrage movement. Occasionally even women's participation in church matters was suspect. In the New Brunswick Synod of the Church of England a heated discussion arose over the question of women's eligibility to vote in church matters. While Nova Scotian Rev. F. H. Almon felt that women were much more competent than men in carrying out church business, the Bishop felt that sexual equality would be "dangerous" for women. He believed that "women would deteriorate" from their true role as "man's helpmate." He used an imaginary scene from the British House of Commons, "the Irishmen raving on one side and the women raving on the other" to illustrate his point. Voting rights in

the church, despite Rev. Canon Brigstock's claim that they have "got to come someday", were subsequently voted down.²

Women, as well as men, were divided on the question of public service. In an article entitled "Woman's Greatest Danger", the Ladies Home Journal felt that women belonged in the home "and nowhere else." She would perform her greatest duty to "her God, her family and mankind" if she kept evil from her home no matter how rampant public evils became.³

The apparent threat to home life, indeed to the very structure of society, was only one objection of the anti-suffragists. Many men, and even some women, believed that females did not possess the intellectual or emotional vigour needed in public life. An editorial in the Halifax Acadian Recorder claimed that neither woman's "natural qualifications [n]or her usual training have fitted her to shine" in areas of political controversy where both "calm and logical handling" were needed. The purpose of franchise laws was to ensure that "anybody reasonably qualified" was permitted to vote. "The average woman is not reasonably qualified to exercise that privilege intelligently."⁴

Another major antisuffragist argument suggested that women would lose their feminine qualities if they entered the public realm. Not only were men better qualified to vote, but as they headed the family their opinions should remain unquestioned. When a Cumberland County 'Elector' wrote stiltedly to the Halifax Daily Echo he expressed views that were commonplace. "There is none too much of a pleasant state of good feeling between the sexes now to admit any more cause of disturbances. The more commonly women mix with men ... the more they

become like men." Obviously the fear of domestic strife and unsexed women was real and pervasive.⁵

If the threats to womanhood were great, the perceived dangers to society were even greater. Many people, led by the outspoken-anti-suffragist James Wilberforce Longley, believed that enfranchisement would lead to the end of the family unit. Longley, not only as the Attorney General of Nova Scotia but also as the editor of the Liberal Acadian Recorder, influenced the sympathies of both the undecided and the anti-suffragists. Longley believed that the influence of women was so great that the very structure of society depended on their role in the home. Under the maternal guidance of women, home life provided the only barrier against a corrupt, competitive, and incomprehensible world.

Longley was long known to oppose suffrage. In 1894, Albert Hameon of Queens County, introduced a bill supporting enfranchisement for single and widowed women who possessed real property worth \$150. Longley concluded that his opponent may be "quite right that the agitation had come to stay," and felt that "the women of the country were to be unsexed." He was none the less confident that after a brief experiment the people would revert to sound principles. In turn women would find that "it would be better for them to remain women than to participate in these functions in which the tendency was to obliterate the very highest qualities of their sex." Longley argued in 1894, more pragmatically than in earlier campaigns perhaps, that newly enlarged elector lists could not possibly be finished in time for an election.⁶

In the 1895 session when a similar bill was advanced, Longley opposed it because he believed it

to be inimical to the best interests of women and therefore inimical to the best interests of the world. Nothing could occur to injure the status of women or deteriorate their influence and power which would not tend to the injury of all mankind.

It was not, Longley continued, that women were intellectually unable to use the ballot. He was willing "to concede at once that woman was the equal of man in all respects and of the same value." However, not only had the Almighty given men and women separate functions, but women were created "physically and morally better fitted for functions that were equally important, infinitely higher" than that of men. To force woman from her domestic realm was a "crime against nature" which would "deprive her of the exercise of her natural functions and destroy those softer and finer qualities which constituted her chief value in the world." The higher influence of women, Longley believed, softened the asperities of life, mollified the coarser tendencies of men, purified the social circle and exuded moral grandeur. If women "threw off the sweet garb of femininity and fought their way to the hustings" they would lose this ability to inspire mankind.

Longley opposed the notion that women had an abstract right to vote, claiming that the legislators of Nova Scotia, and of all civilized countries, had shown their concern for women by legislating equal rights for women and men. He feared that "an army of vicious women" could possibly be given the franchise; this "vicious class of women" would be open to corrupt influences. He dismissed the petitions which

had been received at the legislature, claiming that many had signed but few truly wanted suffrage. One man, Longley claimed did so because "Mrs. So and So bothered him so that he signed it to get rid of her." Of the 10,000 names, half were women and not voters; so in fact out of 80,000 electors only 5,000 had signed, and many of them, Longley conjectured, were probably boys. Temperance workers, who had instigated the petitions, were mistaken if they thought female suffrage would achieve their aims. Longley felt that if "venerable widows and ancient spinsters" were allowed to vote, it would be ridiculous to restrict the "young and good looking married women." It was but a small step for women to seek office and again the effects on homelife would be deleterious.⁷

Those who supported the Attorney-General in the House based their arguments on the maternal perspective. Mr. Sinclair, member from Guysborough, felt that "there was no present necessity for making such a radical change; women could best serve society by elevating the public conscience and purifying it and standing for whatever was best and purest in public and social life." Mr. Wilcox, from Hants, felt that no-one had produced arguments "which would justify the interfering with that great family system which was the structure upon which society rested." Religious leaders preached from a similar text. Rev. Allan Simpson of the Halifax Park Street Church used Biblical examples to show women's subordination to man. Simpson stressed that "subordination did not mean inferiority." He claimed that "society could not exist without order, and subordination was necessary to secure that order." Rev. Mr. A. Gandier, spoke in the Fort Massey Church on the

significance of family. He claimed that the highest compliment for a young woman was to praise her housekeeping. Candier felt that suffrage was evil because it would take an increasing number of women out of the home.⁸ Anti-suffragists incorporated maternal feminist ideas into their critique of feminist reformers. While feminist reformers themselves adopted some of this maternalism - and often for tactical purposes - it was only a small part of their early campaign.

The agitation for female enfranchisement had commenced long before Longley made his 1895 speech. Strong support for the movement came from the Women's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.). While Mrs. Turnbull, of St. John, New Brunswick, President of the Maritime W.C.T.U., pleaded in 1889 that the organization not be made a political body, others took steps to ensure otherwise. In the same year Mrs. A. M. Bell, wife of a prominent Halifax businessman, led a delegation to the City Council deploring the lack of enforcement of liquor laws. W.C.T.U. reformers were becoming aware of the futility of such gestures. Most became firm supporters of women's suffrage.⁹ Individually, however, these suffragists offered diverse reasons for supporting the movement. Armed with petitions, feminist reformers forced the government to consider the question of suffrage six times from 1891 to 1897. Bills which supported an unlimited franchise for women on the same basis for men were twice introduced, once by Albert Hemeon in 1893 and again in 1897 when Firman McClure, of Truro, sponsored a franchise bill. In these early years many people felt that a favourable vote was imminent. "The day of equal political rights has already dawned, and soon will be at high noon" said an article written for the Acadian

Recorder. It claimed that "sex is the only bar to unrestricted franchise." Indeed, "from municipal suffrage to full electoral franchise there is but a difference in degree, not in kind." An address given in Truro by Miss Woodill, daughter of F. D. Woodill of Halifax, and printed in the Truro Daily News, echoed this position claiming that "in 1893 [suffrage] took root in Canada, from then to 1894 it has developed the stem, and in 1895 let us look for the blossom and fruit." An article in Canadian Magazine, 1895, which surveyed the suffrage movement across the country predicted that the women of the Maritime Provinces would soon gain their political rights. Throughout Nova Scotia suffragists believed that the attainment of their goal was within range.

Our light is shining dimly girls -
And each year 'tis growing stronger;
Truth must prevail and error fall -
Just wait a little longer.

So ended Miss Woodill's paper presented to the Truro W.C.T.U. in 1894.¹⁰

Indeed, in 1893, when a favourable vote seemed imminent, a writer for the Halifax Acadian Recorder, a newspaper generally opposed to the enfranchisement movement and edited by J. W. Longley, wrote that Mr. Hemen's name would be associated "with the notable circumstance that it was the first affirmation of the principle in the new world; if I mistake not - certainly under the British flag on this continent." He prophesized that women would soon be able to seek public office, "an exciting break in the monotony" of city council. Eventually, however, "this measure was eliminated bit by bit until there was nothing of it left to be dealt with - then it dropped altogether."¹¹

Defeats such as this and the one of 1894 sparked lively interest in the cause. In February of 1894, for example, a suffrage meeting was held in Truro under the auspices of the W.C.T.U. Miss Jessie Smith read a paper with "startling facts" and "irresistable argument" on the topic "The Disabilities of Women in View of the Laws of the Land." Rev. Dr. Hearty spoke on the social purity motivation of suffrage workers. Rev. Mr. Adams advocated women's suffrage on the grounds of their role in the home, the church and society. Mrs. McDowell read a paper on "Why Women Teachers Should Vote." Miss Woodill, of Halifax, spoke on "A Young Woman's View of the Woman's Suffrage Movement." She expressed the opinion that "Woman suffrage should be granted. Women should vote" and predicted that womankind would gain her rights - "depend upon it she will succeed." Miss Woodill stressed that a young woman had as much right to live in the world as man had and that she "is as much entitled to the things of the world as he ... She is just as much a person as he is."¹² One year later, in Halifax, Mrs. Charles Archibald gave a lengthy public address on "The Why and Wherefore of Woman Suffrage." She emphasized that women suffered from laws made by men in the belief that they were protecting the female sex. Women had made some gains, she admitted, such as obtaining higher education, but even then there were barriers to their sex. Mount Allison College might admit females, for example, "yet its debating club draws the line at women." Furthermore, Archibald noted, while men claimed that charity work was suitable for women they themselves "were beginning to study the underlying causes and to see the need of better legislation, and their present helplessness to remedy it. Our position would be

amusing if it were not sad." Archibald stressed that the "fearless, honest, intelligent, true and hardworking woman" who was the supporter of suffrage would not abandon the family in order to vote. She went on to say "motherhood is not always the greatest crown a woman can wear. It may be a crown of shame. Womanhood is the crown of glory for a woman."¹³ This speech, in early 1895, as the pressure for woman's suffrage increased, was designed to lay the groundwork for a formal enfranchisement movement. A few days earlier, a suffrage meeting had been held at Mrs. Archibald's house. The first speaker was Mrs. Anna Leonowens, who spoke on the need for female voting rights. Mr. Hector MacInnis, staunch Conservative and lawyer from the firm of Drysdale and MacInnis, Miss Kate MacIntosh of the Halifax Academy, and Mr. T. R. Black, M.P.P. also spoke. The W.C.T.U. petition was circulated and many present signed it. At a subsequent afternoon meeting, a Woman's Suffrage Association was formed.

the object of [the Association] is to awaken interest and qualify women to take a more active and intelligent part in the grave responsibilities that environ them on every side in all questions affecting their home duties, as well as in all public measures relative to their civic and state rights and obligations.

That evening Mrs. Leonowens requested that the Association be allowed to affiliate with the Halifax Local Council of Women (L.C.W.). The motion was put by Mrs. Whiston, seconded by Mrs. Black and approved. There is no mention of these proceedings creating discord within the Halifax L.C.W. This involvement between the L.C.W. and the suffrage association took place long before 1910, when the National Council of Women met in Halifax and endorsed the principle of enfranchisement. An examination of Halifax L.C.W. minutes shows that the suffrage society

was affiliated with them until at least July of 1897.¹⁴ In addition, Edith Archibald attempted to start a suffrage paper that year, though it fell through for want of capital. This high level of activity shows the interest with which feminists viewed the legislative proceedings of 1895.¹⁵

In 1895 women seemed secure in the belief that the time was coming when they would have "the rights and duties of rational and responsible members of society." Armed with a petition of over 10,000 names, they were unprepared for Longley's speech and the reaction it generated. Many "old parliamentarians", said the partisan Acadian Recorder, felt that "its force yet studied moderation" made it the best speech in many years. The "dear old girls" who filled the galleries, said an unkind commentator in the Daily Echo, "were amusing to watch ... with indignation in their voices and fire in their eyes." One went so far, he claimed, to suggest that an injunction was needed to stop Mr. Longley's tongue.

[They] stamped their feet and shook their canes (women's suffragists all carry canes; they will smoke next) but nothing came of the indignation meeting.... Many a hard-working man went without his supper on Wednesday and many a child was put to bed that evening without saying its little prayer, all because the dear wife and mother wanted to see the great emancipation measure carry in the house.

The same "Silent Observer" felt that the vote of 21 to 12 should convince the suffragists that "they had better settle down to domestic affairs."¹⁶

The suffrage reformers did not take his advice. Rather they attacked Longley for his distorted perspective of womanhood. The didactic approach of the suffragists of 1895 can be easily seen in

their many letters to the Halifax papers. These women attacked Longley and his supporters and advanced various arguments in favour of the enfranchisement of women. Even before Longley's speech, Eliza Ritchie, a noted educator from Wellesley College, pressed suffragists "not to slacken our efforts until the end is actually gained." Ritchie felt that a youthful Canada should be a leader in this movement "since if we wait till the whole community is in favour of woman suffrage, the change will come rather as a revolution than as an evolution." She not only felt that women of the "so called leisure class" should take a wider interest in public affairs, but that working class women needed the franchise. "No class should be left to the mercy of legislators who, as regards that class, are totally irresponsible." Mrs. M. R. Chesley, of Lunenburg, wrote a lengthy "scathing reply" to Longley which appeared in the Halifax Herald. A longtime suffragist and member of the W.C.T.U., Chesley was devastated by the defeat of the 1895 bill, and, as well, by Longley's dismissal of the W.C.T.U. supported petitions. "Men", she felt, "are not, unaided, capable of regulating the morals of a community." Chesley felt that women were able to risk "the strain upon our delicate moral fibre" of depositing a ballot once in four years. She suggested that Mr. Longley's "vicious women" were the "respectable wage earning women all over the province." Not only did "vicious women" not constitute an army; but for every one such woman there were "probably a dozen vicious men." She stated that not only did the W.C.T.U. and provincial clergymen support the petition but that suffrage support throughout Nova Scotia was growing.¹⁷

Hannah Curtis Brown, of Yarmouth, expressed her "mingled emotions of surprise, shame, (and) indignation." She was surprised "that men in public life, are so unfit for the society of decent refined women," and that exposure to such men would "contaminate" a lady. Brown claimed that "men had "proved unfaithful to their trust. They have neither been just nor generous towards women. She scoffed at jeers of unscrupulous women; not only were they in equal proportions to "vicious men" but such traits occurred because "they have been trained to regard themselves as mere chattels, subject to the will of their lords and masters." She criticized the assumption that every woman was sure to become a wife and mother. This was impossible said Brown, "firstly there are not men enough, and secondly, a large majority of them are not worth marrying." Attorney General Longley had said that the true and highest function of women was firstly to bear and bring up children, secondly to improve homelife, thirdly "to charm men and make the world pleasant, sweet and agreeable", and fourthly "to be kindly and loving, to be sweet and to be cherished, to be weak and confiding, to be protected and to be the object of man's devotion." Brown stated

one half of the married women have to bear, rear and maintain their children. And sometimes support their husbands, as well. How "sweet and confiding" the hard-worked mother of a large family can be whose "protector" is a profligate, a drunkard, whose tenderest "devotion" is expressed by a curse or a blow, one can easily imagine.

She claimed that women occupied a "degraded" position politically, sexually and in the domestic realm. Brown also considered the possible economic benefits of suffrage. Longley's contention that women might usurp male jobs made her wonder if "he would define the special sort of labor which belongs exclusively to the masculine sex." In an argument

far from the position of maternal feminists, she stated that "women ask only the right to protect themselves; they demand equal payments for equal skill, irrespective of sex."¹⁸

C. J. Willis, of Halifax, felt it was "strange how those who oppose women's suffrage harp on the one string, namely that of home." She felt that Longley led people to believe that the only women who would vote were those who were "conscious of their inability to charm men - awful thought - [and] have nothing left in life but to plant themselves at the ballot box, and hustle for dear life", thus creating a "reign of terror" in the home. Willis stated that Longley's view of women was that of the society women who "have never thought of life ... beyond their own narrow circle of balls and endless rounds of pleasure." The same women who felt it "unwomanly" to vote did not consider that it was "unwomanly" to charm men at balls - "we have all seen them and it can hardly be called dressed, can it?" asked Willis. She emphasized that "home is always the first thing considered by every true woman". But, she continued,

this leads me to say that if women want the franchise for one thing more than another it is for fair play in wages. In no employment are they paid as well as men ... Women do not wish to underbid men, but are forced to take what they can get in the way of pay, or go without, which to many means starvation.

In similar vein Mary H. Elliott, of Lawrencetown, the Superintendent of the franchise division of the Maritime W.C.T.U., wrote that laws did not protect women. "It suits some", she said, "to keep women where they are, and to make laws to that end."¹⁹

There were supporters of the female enfranchisement movement, such as "Canada", Mr. J. L. Dawson, the husband of the first woman graduate of Mount Allison University, J. S. Coffin, and "J. O. S." of Truro, who approached suffrage from a maternal position and felt that "women trouble themselves little with politics except in so far as the moral reforms which are desired." The majority, however, saw the vote as a way to obtain total social and economic parity with men and perhaps eliminate the inequalities in society. Suffrage mottos such as "Canada's Daughters Should be Free", "No Sex in Citizenship", "Women are half the People" and "Woman, Man's Equal" indicate that the true motivation behind the suffrage movement of the late 1800's was not maternal feminism, but rather a desire for equality between the sexes.²⁰

The suffragists, even after the defeat of the franchise bill in the legislature in March of 1895, remained confident of victory. In April J. S. Coffin, of Auburn, Kings County, referred to the granting of suffrage to South Australia women and said, "The legislature of Nova Scotia will go and do likewise as surely as the sunrise shall come tomorrow."²¹

In order to keep their position alive in the public mind, and to demonstrate the solidarity behind the franchise movement, many women participated in a Halifax municipal election in April 1895. The municipal vote had been extended a few years earlier to unmarried women and widows who fulfilled certain qualifications. Previous to 1895 "only a few availed themselves of the privilege, - half a dozen or so on an average perhaps in each ward." Female supporters of mayoralty

candidate J. C. MacKintosh sent a circular to all women entitled to vote. It disclaimed party affiliation but suggested support for MacKintosh as he was "opposed, not supported by the saloon element." The letter demonstrated the interest of "prominent women in Halifax", such as Mrs. A. M. Bell, Mrs. C. Archibald, Mrs. A. Leonowens, and the Misses Ritchie, most of whom were affiliated with the W.C.T.U. The letter explained "Why Every Woman Who is Qualified Should Vote. Firstly, as taxpayers, women had a "direct interest" in the expenditure of taxes; secondly, they had a responsibility to promote and influence good men in the council; and thirdly, they had the moral duty to oppose the liquor interests. The fourth point was that failure to oppose the liquor interests helped "to swell the vote of those who favor the liquor traffic." Finally the circular dismissed the "foolish idea" that voting was unwomanly. The ladies who supported this letter had formed a committee of ladies to escort the timid to the polling place.²²

The election showed the growing strength of the feminist phalanx. In the Acadian Recorder "Doesticks" commented on the "very strenuous effort that has been made to induce the sex to 'come out' on the occasion". There were two new elements in this civic contest. One was that electors were entitled to vote even with their taxes unpaid. The second was that "where heirs or devisees of estates are assessed as such, their names were entitled to go on the list". This last point was little known; it was discovered by the MacKintosh forces shortly before the election. Subsequently, many female voters were added to the lists. The Acadian Recorder felt "It may have been legal, all

right; but it led to great absurdity." Estates that previously had never had more than one vote now had from three to six names on the lists and a large number of persons were "greatly surprised to find that they had the suffrage, but in nearly every instance availed themselves of it - either on one side or the other." These voters, the newspaper commented, did so "principally in the Lower Wards." The newspaper later contradicted itself, however, claiming that large numbers of women refused to vote on the grounds that "they didn't think women should vote."

While voting lists for this election are unavailable, given that approximately 150 female names were on earlier lists, and that an additional 200 new names were added, it would appear that the total list included some 350 to 400 female voters. In the Halifax municipal election of 1895 three hundred sixty seven women voted. Representation from all six wards was fairly equal, from a low of 38 in Ward 3 to a high of 91 in Ward 5. This shows a fairly even distribution from all classes of active voters throughout the city.²³

In 1897, in the next municipal election, despite the fact that female heirs to estates were no longer entitled to vote, 282 women cast ballots. Interest had dropped off most in the upper class wards, but it is still fair to say that women of all classes voted when they obtained the municipal franchise. Others, who were excluded from the franchise, also tried to vote at these elections. The Acadian Recorder humourously reported cases in previous elections when women tried to vote:

representatives at the polls tell of a would be voter who reluctantly admitted that her husband was alive, "but he

was not much good to her"; and another, that "the last time she heard from him he was very sick and not expected to recover."²⁴

With encouragement and support from female reformers Halifax women enthusiastically exercised the franchise. While some felt that were it not for certain exciting issues these women might not have voted, Nova Scotia women showed a far greater interest in voting than has ever been attributed to them.

If historians have ignored the early Nova Scotia suffragists, in general, this is even more true of the female voters of the lower classes - women who constituted the rank and file of the suffrage movement. Lower class support for female enfranchisement, like that of the reform leaders, was based upon the idea of equality between the sexes. Yet after 1896 the momentum for female suffrage declined, and implicit critique of industrialized society inherent in the early enfranchisement movement was gradually supplanted by an essentially conservative maternal feminist vision. After the turn of the century middle class reformers stopped addressing questions of social and economic equality and increasingly emphasized the superior nurturing virtues of womanhood in order to appropriate that very terrain from the anti-suffragist opposition. In doing so, however, they eventually found that superiority in moral and maternal attributes made real equality an impossibility.

The first step in this direction, and one that many suffragists bitterly resented was the change in the enfranchisement bill that would exclude married women from voting. There was a general feeling that the 1895 bill "did not claim more than half enough." In April of that

year J.S. Coffin of King County wrote to the Halifax Herald:

It was a poor emasculated affair ... It seemed to have been framed so prudently and cautiously ... that its passage would have been a calamity to the cause it aimed ostensibly to promote. Thus it has often been that many a well-intentioned movement has crept discretely and warily into a nameless grave ... let the next bill that shall be introduced be far more radical in its scope.²⁵

In 1897, a revised bill, based upon the 1893 bill, which supported enfranchisement of women on an equal basis with men, was quickly defeated in the legislature by a vote of 23 to 6. This defeat temporarily killed the enfranchisement movement in the legislature. But reformers attempted to keep suffrage in the public eye. During the next few years various debates, lectures, and discussions demonstrated the continuation of reform efforts in Nova Scotia.²⁶ If the reformers maintained the movement they did so differently than in 1895. The suffragists, having lost the battle to people who promoted maternal feminist principles, regrouped around that same banner. Now suffragists joined anti-suffragists in proclaiming female superiority in the domestic sphere. In turn issues of sexual equality were largely forgotten. Indeed, when the next major suffrage promotion emerged, the ideology of maternal feminism prevailed.

The issue involved the placement of women on Nova Scotian school boards, a topic which percolated for the next fifteen years. Although there were calls for representation as early as 1902, it was not until 1909 that a forceful drive for this reform commenced. Rather than attempting to fight the issue in an election, the Halifax L.C.W., leaders in the movement wanted the government to appoint a female schoolboard member. The L.C.W. had a certain type of woman in mind.

As a letter to the Halifax Daily Echo claimed,

the right kind of woman, whose sympathies have been nurtured in the environment of her own children possess a deeper insight into child life and child nature than is possible for any man, even for the trained teacher.

For suffragists and anti-suffragists the eventual acceptance of women on schoolboards was rationalized as a product of woman's "Intuitive knowledge of child nature, and their keen personal interest in child welfare ... [that] supplements the knowledge of business and executive ability of men commissioners."²⁷

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, maternal feminism became the only ground for female enfranchisement. Occasionally there was a rare person such as author and social reformer Marshall Saunders who wrote to the Echo in 1909 stating that "there should be no sex in citizenship ... Liberty and equality for all, and co-operation for perfect work." But more generally the ideology of maternal feminism prevailed. Appeals both for votes for women and for women to vote were based on woman's supposed abilities in mothering and housekeeping. In 1915, when Mary Ritchie wrote a letter to female voters urging them to participate, she reflected the views of almost all suffragists. Women needed to vote in this municipal election, she claimed, in order to improve "dear old dirty Halifax." Clean water, meat killed under hygienic conditions, pure milk, and no more "microbe-laden dust" were the issues for female voters to consider. The issue of equality had been supplanted by a commitment to municipal housekeeping.

The early suffragists wanted more than political equality; they also desired sexual and economic equality. Like other feminists who

concentrated on challenging traditional notions of women's sexuality, physicality, and the 'proper sphere' - whether they be philanthropic reformers or paid workers - suffragists eventually narrowed their vision to one that emphasized woman's moral and maternal superiority. Eventually female enfranchisement became a reality. Without the wider scope of the early critical feminist vision, however, suffrage was hardly a radical achievement. The metamorphosis from a critical to a maternal feminism eventually allowed the attainment of suffrage to masquerade as the triumph of the woman's movement. In the long run feminists would discover that the loss of a critical feminist perspective eliminated the possibility of a broader economic and social equality for women.

FOOTNOTES: CHAPTER FIVE

1. Acadian Recorder, March 11, 1881.
2. Ibid., July 7, 1884.
3. Ibid., November 14, 1891.
4. Ibid., July 21, 1892, January 26, 1894.
5. Daily Echo, March 6, 1895.
6. Nova Scotia, Debates and Proceedings of the House of Assembly, (hereafter (N.S. Debates), 1894, pp. 123-131.
7. Ibid., pp. 130-138. See also Ibid., pp. 83-87, 126-129, 138-147.
8. Acadian Recorder, March 11, 1895, March 18, 1895. N.S. Debates, 1895, pp. 143, 145.
9. Maritime W.C.T.U., Annual Report, 1889, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 506, #20, p. 109, Acadian Recorder, November 19, 1889.
10. Ibid., April 5, 1893, February 2, 1894. Truro Daily News, January 30, 1894, February 3, 1894, Edith M. Luke, "Woman Suffrage in Canada", Canadian Magazine, 5:4 (August 1895), pp. 335-336.
11. Acadian Recorder, April 15, 1893, April 22, 1893.
12. Truro Daily News, January 30, 1894, February 3, 1894; Acadian Recorder, February 2, 1894. Miss Jessie Smith was the sister of Mrs. Dr. Fluck.
13. Halifax Herald, February 23, 1895. The Acadian Recorder also covered this address. Ibid., February 13, 1895.
14. Daily Echo, February 18, 1895, February 23, 1895; Minutes, Halifax L.C.W., P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 535, #1, February 28, 1895. See also Catherine L. Cleverdon, The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada, 2nd Edition, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), p. 163; Carol Lee Bacchi, Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), p. 27. Halifax L.C.W., Minutes refer to the group as the 'Women's Suffrage Association; Bacchi refers to it as the Halifax Suffrage Association; Luke, in 1895 refers to Mrs. Leagnowens as president of the W.E.A. of Halifax [Women's Enfranchisement Association]. Later Halifax L.C.W. Minutes, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 1 and 2 refer to it as

simply "Enfranchisement". See also N.C.W.C., Women of Canada: Their Life and Work; Compiled for distribution at the Paris International Exhibition, 1900, rep. 1975, pp. 270-271.

15. Nova Scotia W.C.T.U., Minutes, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 356, 1896, p. 85. Maritime W.C.T.U. Minutes, 1895, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 357, #2, pp. 53-58, show a high level of activity. The Lunenburg Union for example sent contributions on suffrage issues to the Halifax Herald, St. John Sun, Montreal Witness, Western Chronicle and Woman's Journal, Boston.
16. Eliza Ritchie, Halifax Herald, March 12, 1895. Acadian Recorder, March 14, 1895, Daily Echo, March 16, 1895.
17. Halifax Herald, March 12, 1895, March 23, 1895.
18. Ibid., March 27, 1895; N.S. Debates, 1895, p. 132.
19. Halifax Herald, March 30, 1895, March 29, 1895.
20. Ibid., March 7, 1895, March 11, 1895, April 5, 1895, April 10, 1895. See other letters in the Halifax Herald, "Cobequid", March 7, 1895, Miss Mary Smith, March 30, 1895, and one against suffrage - "Reasoner", March 19, 1895. Luke, p. 333.
21. Halifax Herald, April 5, 1895.
22. Acadian Recorder, April 1, 1895, Other names on the circular were Mrs. MacPherson, Mrs. Murphy, Miss C. Creighton, Miss Mitchell, Dr. Maria Angwin, Mrs. W. B. Freeman, Mrs. Dr. Lathern, Mrs. J. A. Rogers, Mrs. Watt, Mrs. George H. Starr, Mrs. Parker, Mrs. R. Baxter, Mrs. Whiston, Mrs. Thomas Fyshe and Dr. Isabel Hamilton.
23. Acadian Recorder, April 20, 1895, April 25, 1895; April 27, 1895. In noting the "unusual" events of the election the newspaper commented on the fact that a leading educationist, probably Dr. Eliza Ritchie, had escorted two colored ladies to the polls. Ibid., April 25, 1895. The female vote by ward was as follows: Ward 1(A) 18, 1(B) 23; Ward 2(A) 43, 2(B) 34; Ward 3(A) 20, 3(B) 18; Ward 4(A) 31, 4(B) 37; Ward 5(A) 31, 5(B) 39, 5(C) 21; Ward 6(A) 27, 6(B) 25. April 25, 1895. There would be, of course, normal fluctuations in the voting registration.
24. Acadian Recorder, May 18, 1897. The female vote by ward was as follows: Ward 1(A-L) 8, (M-Z) 13; Ward 2(A-J) 29, (K-Z) 28; Ward 3(A-K) 17, (L-Z) 15; Ward 4(A-L) 30, (M-Z) 18; Ward 5(A-K) 30 (L-Z) 37; Ward 6(A-K) 24, (L-Z) 33. Ibid., December 12, 1896.
25. Halifax Herald, April 5, 1895. Mary H. Elliott of Lawrencetown the Superintendent of the Franchise Department Maritime W.C.T.U. had written to Mr. Frederick Andrew Lawrence of Colchester asking him to support their cause. His appointment as speaker ended

that possibility. The W.C.T.U. planned to prepare their own bill, but before they could Mr. A. M. Hemeon "thinking to give us a half loaf first" brought in his own bill to enfranchise widows and spinsters. Maritime W.C.T.U., Thirteenth Annual Convention, 1895, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 352, #2, p. 62. See also P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 356, 1896 for more reaction to this move.

26. Acadian Recorder, February 13, 1897. Some of the many activities, debates, and suffrage promotions which took place between 1895 and 1909 include mock elections at the County Academy in April of 1897 and at the Truro Normal School in February of 1898; in 1897 a debate was held between Mrs. Sewall, an American suffragist, and Attorney General Longley; another debate was sponsored by the Morning Glory Lodge, No. 18, I.O.G.T., and one at Mount Allison College for which the Nova Scotian W.C.T.U. supplied information. The W.C.T.U. remained active in the suffrage movement. In 1898 Amherst, Bridgewater, Canso, Lunenburg, and Truro all had individual franchise departments. In 1899 Windsor W.C.T.U. formed a franchise department. In 1905 the president of the W.C.T.U., Mrs. Olivia C. N. Whitman of Canso, suggested that the organization was too conservative in its approach to the franchise problem and its bearing on the liquor trade. Acadian Recorder, April 9, 1897, June 22, 1897, February 24, 1898, August 13, 1901, May 17, 1904; Nova Scotia W.C.T.U., Minutes, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 356, 1898; n.p., 1904 p. 70; Windsor, Nova Scotia W.C.T.U. Minutes, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 364, #1, May 30, 1899, pp. 167-8, various unnumbered pages; Nova Scotia W.C.T.U. Minutes of the Annual Convention, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 506, #1, 1905, p. 25.
27. Acadian Recorder, November 15, 1902; Daily Echo, March 25, 1911; Halifax L.C.W. Scrapbook, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 204, letter from Superintendent of Schools McKay endorsing the idea of women school commissioners and quoting Dr. Eliza Ritchie. n.p. While a female school commissioner had served in Yarmouth in 1896 little progress was made. See Acadian Recorder, November 11, 1911; Halifax L.C.W. Scrapbook, P.A.N.S., MG 20, Vol. 204, various pages.

CONCLUSION

The women reformers of Victorian Nova Scotia influenced important changes both in the definition of womanhood, and in woman's place in the broader public sphere. But - as this thesis has demonstrated - the feminist abandonment of a critical response to the development of industrial capitalism led to results that were much more limited than early feminists had originally intended. When these women eventually embraced a maternal ideology, they unwittingly encouraged the marginalization of women within the working, recreational, educational and political world. In addition, they allowed women's sexuality to become the most important aspect of all feminine endeavors.

A comparison of the late nineteenth century women's movement to that of the early twentieth century demonstrates the change of direction from a critical to a maternal feminist position. Even those nineteenth century women reformers who were firmly entrenched in a maternal orientation understood and deplored the exploitive characteristics of modern capitalism. This analysis was discarded, however, after the turn of the century, when reformers emphasized the preservation of women's social, moral and reproductive qualities.

The emphasis on these feminine qualities dominated the twentieth century world of work and recreation. In sports, female reformers adjusted their early objectives of encouraging healthy and graceful women to a position which saw the utility of athletic endeavors only in terms of its relationship to women's reproductive destiny. Similarly in the work world, turn-of-the-century feminists discarded an analysis that at once demanded gender equality in wages and condemned the

exploitation of labour. Instead they rallied around the ideology of maternal feminism - often opening new doors for women - but eventually limiting women to marginalized gender-segregated roles in a world where male workers dominated.

Twentieth century reformers also ignored the early feminists' critique of the relation between the sexes, including its analysis of fashion and materialism. Like the reformers involved in sport, work and philanthropy, second generation reformers emphasized specifically 'feminine' qualities such as virtue and morality, and, of course, women's maternal and reproductive capabilities.

The ultimate achievement of the Victorian women's movement in Nova Scotia was the attainment of suffrage for women. But even suffragism reveals the transformation from an earlier concern with political and economic equality to twentieth century maternalism. In the later period feminists saw the vote as a device which would allow women's nurturing virtues to come into play. Given the broader objectives of nineteenth century feminists, therefore, the eventual granting of the vote to women was at best a partial victory.

It is impossible to confirm why the metamorphosis from a critical to a maternal feminist sensibility occurred. However, it appears that class conflict in Victorian Nova Scotia society may be at the root of this transformation. The leaders of the women's movement, both before and after the turn of the century, were educated middle class women. While they no doubt had a sincere desire to reform society, often they had no definite blueprint of how change could be effected. Without a clear and coherent analysis of the way in which their world worked,

they approached social problems in a piece-meal fashion. Furthermore some early feminists, despite their critical sensibilities, may not have desired a full social transformation. Such a thorough-going change might well reduce their social standing, a status that many women obtained because of their roles as middle-class wives and daughters. In addition those women who did comprehend that real equality depended upon challenges to the system of wage labour, found that the fledgling Maritime socialist movement had little room in their ranks for women. Socialists, like the staunchest supporters of capitalism, adhered to the maternal role for women.¹

Ultimately, therefore, women reformers adopted a course of maternal feminism that at once undercut opposition to the woman's movement -- such as in the case of suffrage -- and which provided both an accessible and comfortable vehicle for reform. What would have been hard for them to foresee at the turn of the century, was that the limited scope of maternal feminism promised only short-term solutions to the problems of society. In the long term, however, maternal feminism also resulted in the legitimation and institutionalization of gender-related inequalities.

FOOTNOTES: CONCLUSION

1. Linda Kealey, "Canadian Socialism and the Woman Question, 1900-1914", Labour/Le Travail, 13 (Spring 1984), pp. 77-100; Carol Bacchi, "Divided Allegiances: The Response of Farm and Labour Women to Suffrage", in Kealy (ed.), A Not Unreasonable Claim, pp. 89-108. See also Kealey, "Introduction", Ibid., pp. 1-14.

APPENDIX I

The following poems represent the attitudes of Nova Scotians to various social issues.

Suffrage:

WHEN THE LADIES VOTE

What will the country be,
When the ladies vote?
Still the land of liberty,
When the ladies vote?
Will they govern every town,
Will they crush the poor man down,
Sage, philosopher and clown,
When the ladies vote?

Will they stand up in the cars,
When the ladies vote?
Will they close up all the bars,
When the ladies vote?
Will they wait and watch at night,
For a husband when he's tight?
Not by a something sight,
When the ladies vote.

Will conductors pull their bells,
When the ladies vote,
While the fair exchange farewells,
When the ladies vote?
Will they start their cars and go
As they do just now, you know?
No, they will not dare do so,
When the ladies vote.

Oh! the men won't be so mean,
When the ladies vote,
And go out the acts between,
When the ladies vote.
Nor the funny writers say
What they've said for many a day,
Of the high hats at the play,
When the ladies vote.

Oh! we'll all see better days,
When the ladies vote;
We will walk in wisdom's ways,
When the ladies vote;
All the kinds of trade will hum,

And the happy times will come -
The grand millenium,
When the ladies vote.

Acadian Recorder - November 6, 1888

"If a body pays the taxes
Surely you'll agrée,
That a body earns the franchise
Whether he or she.

Every city has its fathers
Honors them I mean;
Then every city must have mothers
That the house be clean."

W.C.T.U., Enclosure, Annual
Convention, 1912, P.A.N.S., MG20,
Vol. 356

Home Life:

The home is a refuge from strife
A comforting shelter from storm,
The dearest of places, the glory of life
Where hearts are most tender and warm.

W.C.T.U. "Buy Your Own Cherries"
P.A.N.S. MG20, Vol. 506 #17

Temperance:

Buy your own cherries, your dear ones
Are longing for cherries and bread.
O let not strong drink rob the children
Buy cherries, fair cherries instead.

W.C.T.U. "Buy Your Own Cherries"
P.A.N.S. MG20, Vol. 506 #17

Playground Reform:

"Proud is the city she finds a place for many a lad to-day,
But she's more than blind if she fails to find a place for the
boys to play,
Give them a chance for innocent sport,

Give them a chance for fun -
Better a playground plot than a court and jail when the harm is
done.
Give them a chance - if you stint them not, tomorrow you'll have
to pay,
A larger bill for a darker ill, so give them a place to play!"

Halifax L.C.W. Photocopies
P.A.N.S. MC20, Vol. 1015 #37 b-c.

Dress Reform and the New Woman

I stand in the cold as this story is told,
with naught but an old flannel skirt, and
my legs are all frost for my trousers I've lost -
my wife has a new harem skirt.
When abroad she doth roam I have to stay home,
arrayed in her old linen dress, since this
fashion from France, She's taken my pants
and will wear them forever I guess.

Acadian Recorder, April 13, 1911

THE NEW MAN

Now, Tommy, dear, just run down stairs
and get your papa's shawl;
I mustn't make your mother wait - we're
going to the ball
I left her in the dining room at her cigars
and wine;
She looks so brave and manly in that new
dress suit of mine.

To night I should have worn it, Tom, but
Sarah's sage decree
Declares your mother's ball dress is the
very thing for me.
To night I put my male attire forever on
the shelf;
And assume the airs and graces of my
feminine self.

There's only one thing, Tommy, love, that
mars the doctor's plan -
'Tis not my voice alone which will pro-
claim I'm still a man;
With arms and neck décollete, I do not
dwell with joy

On how some South Sea Islanders tattooed
me as a boy.

I've a cross upon the left arm and an
anchor on the right;
I'm afraid the girls will titter when my
shoulders come in sight.
There's a fancy sketch of Satan feeding
souls with brimstone stew,
And a most exciting picture of a cock-fight
in Corfu.

Now, Jane, just get my smelling salts -
'twill help me with my nerves,
And brace your master up while he dis-
plays his curves.
Tonight I'll die or conquer all the gallant
hearts in town -
Confound that flannel petticoat - I hope it
won't slip down.

Oh, I hear your mistress calling, and it's
getting pretty late.
A touch of rouge; some powder there; and
set my hip pads straight.
I'm coming! Ta, ta, sonny. Now your
papa'll cut a dash,
And he'll show 'em how a married man
can make and keep a mash.

Acadian Recorder, March 30, 1895

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