

Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository

12-2-2011 12:00 AM

Total Men!: Literature, Nationalism, and Masculinity in Early Canada

Aaron J. Schneider, *The University of Western Ontario*

Supervisor: Dr. D.M.R. Bentley, *The University of Western Ontario*

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in English

© Aaron J. Schneider 2011

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd>



Part of the [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), and the [Literature in English, North America Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Schneider, Aaron J., "Total Men!: Literature, Nationalism, and Masculinity in Early Canada" (2011). *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository*. 320.
<https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/320>

This Dissertation/Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository by an authorized administrator of Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact wlsadmin@uwo.ca.

TOTAL MEN!: LITERATURE, NATIONALISM, AND MASCULINITY IN EARLY
CANADA

(Spine Title: Total Men!)

(Thesis Format: Monograph)

by

Aaron Schneider

Graduate Program in English

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

The School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario Canada

© Aaron Schneider 2011

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

CERTIFICATE OF EXAMINATION

<u>Supervisor</u>	<u>Examiners</u>
Dr. D. M. R. Bentley	Dr. Manina Jones
	Dr. Joseph M. Zezulka
	Dr. Patrick Mahon
	Dr. Gerald Lynch

The thesis by

Aaron Jacob Schneider

entitled:

Total Men!: Literature, Nationalism, and Masculinity in Early Canada

is accepted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Date: _____

Chair of the Thesis Examination Board

Abstract:

This thesis identifies the figure of the totally competent man (a model of early Canadian masculinity distinguished by an unprecedented breadth of competence) as a recurrent feature of early Canadian literary texts, and examines the development and representation of this figure with particular attention to its deployment as a model of national manhood by early Canadian literary nationalists. It argues that the production of a broadly competent model of manhood as an ideal model of national manhood by early Canadian literary nationalists was an anxious work carried out in the face of real and sensible threats to the new nation and their brand of nationalism, and that the figure of the totally competent man attained a position of prominence in their work because of how effectively this model of national manhood answered the anxieties that perplexed them. After tracing early Canadian literary nationalism's emphasis on masculine heroism, the catholicity of the national community, and the nordicity of the nation to the new nationalism's origins in German Romanticism, it explores the development of the totally competent man as a model of uniquely Canadian masculinity in Canadian texts preceding Confederation and the emergence of the new nationalism. The dissertation as a whole argues that the totally competent man evolved through an anxious process of adaptation that saw aspects of competing models of masculinity grafted onto genteel masculinity to produce a broadly competent model of masculinity whose heterogenous makeup allowed specific examples of this figure to serve double duty as both symbols of national unity, and active agents of social cohesion.

Keywords: Canadian Literature, Masculinity, Nationalism, Early Canada, Canadian Culture, Long Poem, Thomas Cary, John Richardson, Susanna Moodie, John Galt, Archibald Lampman, Ralph Connor

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Amy Mitchell.

Acknowledgements

I am profoundly grateful to my supervisor, Dr. D. M. R. Bentley, for his many thoughtful comments and suggestions, for having the patience to see this project through to its completion, and, most of all, for being so generous and gracious when I disagreed with him.

Thanks also to my mother-in-law, Diane Mitchell, for helping to proof read this dissertation.

Table of Contents

Certificate of Examination	ii
Abstract and Keywords	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
List of Abbreviations	ix
Introduction	1
I. Introducing...The Totally Competent Man!	1
II. (Masculine) Writing the Totally Competent Man	7
Chapter 1: “An Alchemy so Subtle”: Canadian Manhood, Literature, Anxiety and the Masculine Logic of Early Canadian Nationalism	21
I. Romantic Nationalism/Canadian Nationalism: The Origins and Influences of Nineteenth-Century Canadian Literary Nationalism	33
II. Confederating a Canadian Literary Manhood, or McGee’s Young Men: Dewart, Morgan, and Haliburton	46
III. Poet, Canoeist, Professor...and Politician: Lighthall’s Roberts, and Adam and Collins’s Macdonald	76
IV. “rest with babes and slaves?”: Nationalism, Anxiety, and the Active Male Body	93
Chapter 2: “Skalping-knives to Pruning Hooks”: Violence and Manhood in Thomas Cary’s <i>Abram’s Plains</i>	99
I. The Poet, the Poem, and the <i>Pax Britannica</i> : Colonial Society and Manhood in <i>Abram’s Plains</i>	102
II. “ <i>Britannia</i> ’s Conqu’ring Sword” to “a Grey-goose Quill”: The Management of British Masculine Violence in <i>Abram’s Plains</i>	106
III. “Skalping-knives” to Poets’ Pens: The Management of Native Canadian Violence in <i>Abram’s Plains</i>	116
Chapter 3: His “Active and Athletic Limbs”: <i>Wacousta</i> , the Aggressive Masculine Body,	

Readerly Pleasure, and the Possibility of a Just <i>and</i> Active Man	140
I. Passive Objects vs. Active Objects: Manliness, Effeminacy, and the Male Body in <i>Wacousta</i>	141
II. Just a Body, but What a Body!: Reading <i>Wacousta</i> 's Body as an Object of Readerly Pleasure	150
III. "Enemy of Man": <i>Wacousta</i> 's Body, Readerly Pleasure, and Readerly Antipathy	159
IV. Genteel Readers and Genteel Giants: Managing the Aggressive Masculine Body, and Imagining a Just and Active Man	165
Chapter 4: A Man of Fearful Proportions and Comforting Productivity: <i>Roughing It in the Bush</i> and Moodie's Management of Lower Class Masculinity	179
I. A Disconcerting/Ridiculous Jontleman: Defining and Disabling the "Fellow of Gigantic Proportions"	180
II. Jontlemen Making a Nation of Gentlemen: Imagining the Development of a Genteel Country	187
Chapter 5: "What [She Did] to While Away the Lagging Hours": Managing the Aggressive Masculine Body in Susanna Moodie's <i>Flora Lyndsay</i>	210
I. Too Genteel for Trade, Too Mercenary to be Genteel: Flora and John Lyndsay's Vulgar Doubles	212
II. (W)Righting Her World: Flora Lyndsay, Susanna Moodie, Class Anxiety, and the Aggressive Masculine Body	222
III. Managing Hercules' Labour	241
Chapter 6: Making One Man Out of Two: Doubling the Merchant with the Gentleman and Vice Versa in Galt's <i>Lawrie Todd</i> and <i>Bogle Corbet</i>	244
I. For Love or Money, but Not Both: Todd and Corbet's Many Marriages	249
II. Poorer Together, Happier Apart: Corbet, Todd, and Community	271
III. Their Better and Worse Selves: Todd and Corbet's Doubles	284

Chapter 7: Totally Competent/Totally Communal Men: Richard Stahlberg, Ranald Macdonald, and the National Community	309
I. From Self-Improver to Social Improver: The Socialization of Richard Stahlberg	310
II. Making a Great Man Good, and a Good Nation Great: The Development of Ranald Macdonald	338
III. Comprehending the Country/Comprehending the Totally Competent Man	364
Works Cited	367
Vita	374

List of Abbreviations

<i>Bogle Corbet; or, the Emigrants</i>	<i>BC</i>
<i>Flora Lyndsay; or Passages in an Eventful Life</i>	<i>FL</i>
<i>Lawrie Todd; or, the Settlers in the Woods</i>	<i>LT</i>
<i>Roughing It in the Bush; or Life in Canada</i>	<i>RB</i>
<i>The Story of an Affinity</i>	<i>SA</i>

I

Introducing...The Totally Competent Man!

Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Canadian literature is filled almost to bursting with male characters who do extraordinary things, accomplishing with ease often unbelievable feats of heroism, endurance, strength, cleverness, generosity, education, and development. Consider these examples: Max of Isabella Vallancy Crawford's *Malcolm's Katie* (1884) survives being pinned under a felled tree to return to his love, Katie, and, despite being "gaunt as prairie wolves in famine time, / With long-drawn sickness" (6:122-23), saves the man who left him to die and tried to steal Katie from drowning in a log slide. The Herculean Richard Stahlberg of Archibald Lampman's *Story of an Affinity* (1900) transforms himself from an ignorant, brooding and violent adolescent into a man who is as – possibly even more – intellectually accomplished as he is physically formidable. What is more, he manages this wholesale renovation of his character with a rapidity that strains credulity, charging like a late Victorian Billy Madison from "grade to grade" until

. . . passing beyond the scholar's rank,
 Replete with many honours, he bec[omes]
 Himself a teacher, first in lowlier sort,
 And then, *ere many busy months had passed*,
 A lecturer in a famous college hall. (Lampman *SA* 2:650-58, emphasis added)

The less ideal, but equally capable, Josh Smith of Stephen Leacock's *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town* (1912) overcomes legal threats to his business, saves the town's Anglican parish from debt and wins the Mariposa election, transitioning over the course of his life from the logging camps of the north to small town prominence and, finally, to the corridors of power in Ottawa. But arguably one of the oddest, most incongruous, and most revealing of the feats accomplished by Canadian protagonists is Ranald Macdonald's victory at cards in Ralph Connor's *The Man from Glengarry* (1901).

At a game in the back room of one of Quebec City's taverns, the young Ranald watches Lieutenant De Lacy maliciously and capriciously strip the logger Rouleau of his

entire season's worth of earnings.¹ Enraged by De Lacy's vicious behaviour and the mockery of one of the other players, Ranald joins the game intent on winning back Rouleau's money, and does just that. For, despite being a moral/religious² man whose solemn Presbyterian faith has recently been strengthened and deepened by the Glengarry County revival, and despite Ranald's own earlier protest that he "never play[s] for money"(Connor 332), he is an expert gambler:

It was soon evident that Ranald knew the game. He had learned it during the long winter nights in the shanty from Yankee, who was a master at it, and he played it warily and with iron nerve. He seemed to know as by instinct when to retreat and when to pursue; and he played with the single purpose of bleeding the lieutenant dry. Often did he refuse to take toll of Harry or Mr. Sims when Opportunity offered, but never once did he allow the lieutenant to escape. (Connor 338)

This revelation is unexpected, to say the least. It demands the question, is there anything, no matter how strange, outlandish or contrary to his character, that Ranald has not learned to do and do well during a youth spent in Glengarry County and the logging camps on the Ottawa? What is most striking is not so much Ranald's skill as his complete and total mastery of the game: he has an instinctive grasp of its tactics. He is, in fact, so dominant that he is able not just to win but to win money almost exclusively from De Lacy. It is Ranald's total dominance, over and above his victory over De Lacy, that is unexpected, even unbelievable. But rather than being a momentary, if glaring, lapse in the logic of the narrative, it is the incongruity of the scene and the unexpectedness of Ranald's mastery that are the point.

The scene falls at a key position in the novel. *The Man from Glengarry* can be

1

This scenario is characteristic of Connor's work. As Clarence Karr explains, "[i]n the typical Connor novel, an innocent worker sacrifices his season's wages at the gaming table before being rescued by the hero" (84-85).

2

Although (slightly) less overtly religious in tone than *The Sky Pilot* (1899), *The Man from Glengarry* manifests Connor's own deeply held beliefs, and effectively conflates religion and morality, implying that to be moral is to be religious and to be religious is to be moral. Essentially, in *The Man from Glengarry*, right action is inseparable from godly action.

roughly divided into three distinct units that are commensurate with the stages of Ranald's life: his introduction as a savage, uneducated and uncivilized adolescent; his education and development under the supervision of Mrs. Murray, the minister's wife; and his confirmation of the effect of that education and development on his character through his accumulation as a grown man of wealth, the respect of his peers, social connections and good deeds. The scenes set in Quebec City in which Ranald saves and reconciles himself with his old nemesis LeNoir, reunites with his immediate love interest Maimie, meets his eventual partner Kate, and bests De Lacy at cards are the first scenes set outside of Glengarry county and the Ottawa Valley, and mark the beginning of the third stage of Ranald's life. The shift in locale signals Ranald's transition from immaturity to an achieved and formidable manhood, and these scenes, specifically the one in question, establish the pattern of the remainder of the novel. Whereas in Glengarry county and the Ottawa Valley he was primarily occupied with acquiring new abilities and forming his character, the Quebec City scenes signal that he has entered a wider (more geographically expansive, more complex and, consequently, more suited to adulthood) world, and has now begun to demonstrate the extent of his abilities and to reveal the fixed contours of his character. He has stopped growing and started acting, and the remainder of the novel consists of a series of demonstrations of the extent of Ranald's capabilities and the strength of his moral fibre.

In this context, Ranald's unexpected skill at gambling makes a crucial point about the nature of his origins and the breadth of his abilities: rather than narrowly circumscribing his scope of action, his background opens an enormous range of accomplishment to him; rather than limiting him, his development in the Canadian bush opens the world to him. Having received what is, on the surface, the most parochial of educations in an isolated Ontario county and the even more isolated logging camps in the north of the province, Ranald might legitimately be expected to be a sort of working-class innocent, a man hardened by the rigours of his life but incapable of dealing with anything beyond bush farming and log driving. However, if his recent reconciliation with LeNoir shows that Ranald's religious conversion has allowed him to transcend the blood feuds

and violent competition of the logging gangs, his victory at cards suggests that his capacity for action far exceeds the restrictions of his origins. This suggestion is confirmed by a number of the elements of the scene. Specifically, Connor makes clear that Ranald's capacity for action is not restricted by the geographical, religious/moral or social limitations of his development. Yankee's foreign name and foreign origins (he is, as his name suggests, an American) imply that Ranald's upbringing was less isolated than one might expect, and, most important, that the geographical constrictions of his formative experiences have not resulted in comparable limitations in his abilities. Ranald is not a well travelled young man, but, in the backwoods, he has nevertheless had the chief benefit of travel: meeting and learning from foreign people. Ranald initially refuses to join in the card game and looks on in disapproval, giving ample evidence of the extent to which gambling offends his moral sensibilities. The fact that he has learned and, indeed, mastered the game implies that the strict Presbyterian morality that Mrs Murray taught him has no more limited him than his geographical isolation. This goes to show that, despite the depth and sternness of his belief, Ranald does not suffer from the parochialism that afflicts those with a narrow and judgmental faith. He is as capable when engaging (albeit for the generous and godly purpose of winning back Rouleau's wages) in religiously/morally objectionable activities as when carrying out acts that are unquestionably good. Finally, Ranald's defeat of Lieutenant De Lacy implies that his working-class upbringing has not limited him to the lower strata of society. The De Lacys are one of the preeminent families of the province: "one of the oldest English families of Quebec. . . . Their blood was unquestionably blue, they were wealthy, and besides, the only son and representative of the family was now a lieutenant, attached to the garrison at the Citadel" (Connor 283). The family's roots and their wealth place them at the top of the social order. Their "unquestionably blue" blood positions them as genuine aristocrats – a rare thing in early Canada. Lieutenant De Lacy is thus as high class a man as there is to be found in the city, if not the province or the country. His rank as lieutenant reinforces his status: the military title shows that his social standing is institutionally as well as socially recognized. Not only does Ranald defeat De Lacy, but he conclusively condemns

the other man's behaviour by giving Rouleau his money and then leaving the rest of his winnings on the table, declaring: "I want no man's money . . . that I do not earn" (Connor 339). Together, the victory and the condemnation demonstrate that Ranald cannot be intimidated by rank or social standing, and that his working-class upbringing has made him the equal of any man – a man capable of meeting, besting and chastising the most elevated members of society. Thus, at the moment of Ranald's transition from developmental adolescence to achieved maturity, the gaming scene proves that, rather than being limiting or restricting, Ranald's development is radically enabling.

As well as providing clear-cut evidence that Ranald's abilities are not characterized by the limitations normally associated with an isolated rural upbringing, the scene presents his mastery of cards as a revelation. After Ranald has joined the game and raised the stakes as high as they will go, the narrator interjects: "It was soon evident that Ranald knew the game" (Connor 338). This short and deceptively simple sentence does two crucial things. First, and most obviously, it apprises the reader of Ranald's unexpected skill at cards. Second, it contains a subtle shift in narrative perspective that opens the possibility that this is only one of many skills that the reader does not yet know that Ranald has mastered. Until this point, the novel has been narrated from the third-person-objective perspective by a narrator who has complete access to Ranald's interior life and history. In this sentence, however, the narrator does not relate a fact about Ranald's education or skills, but extrapolates from Ranald's actions to a statement about his abilities. Rather than simply stating that "Ranald knew the game," the narrator responds to the evidence that Ranald knows the game, inferring Ranald's mastery of the game from his play. For the brief moment of the sentence, the narrator shifts from an objective to a limited perspective, a perspective limited to what the narrator can "see" Ranald doing. As subtle and brief a shift as this may be, it has the effect of calling into question the narrator's thus-far unquestionable knowledge of Ranald, and of showing that there is much that the narrator does not know or, at the very least, has not chosen to reveal about the novel's main character. In effect, this sentence frames the revelation of Ranald's mastery at cards as a revelation to the reader *and* to the narrator. The

importance of this is that, despite taking the better part of 300 pages, the novel's account of Ranald's development is not comprehensive. The fact that the narrator immediately ties Ranald's skill back to "the long winter nights in the shanty" (Connor 338) does not lessen this effect. It merely suggests that there are other skills Ranald has mastered, his mastery of which will only be explained by reference to his development when his actions reveal them to the reader (and, for that matter, to the narrator). This opens the possibility of the narrative being interrupted by other equally incongruous, equally unexpected and equally abrupt revelations, suggesting that Ranald's development is a potentially limitless font of talents, skills, and abilities. It also implies that his development will retroactively explain and rationalize those talents, skills, and abilities. In this way, the revelation of an undisclosed ability is normalized within the context of a novel that is essentially a Bildungsroman, and the revelation of new, incongruous, unexpected talents, skills and abilities becomes an aspect of the illustration/confirmation of Ranald's character rather than an irrational deviation from the narrative logic of his maturation. Together, the scene and sentence serve as a striking and appropriate introduction to the more general figure of the totally competent man as he was conceived and represented in early Canadian literature. In doing so, they afford a fitting introduction to the figure with which this thesis is centrally concerned.

In *Practising Femininity: Domestic Realism and the Performance of Gender in Early Canadian Fiction*, Misao Dean observes that early Canadian literature and culture are distinguished by an "archetypal Canadian man who seemed oddly classless, happily competent at physical work yet educated and with refined tastes" (12). Ranald is one of the more prominent examples of this archetypal Canadian man, a type of man I have chosen to call the totally competent man due to the truly amazing (often, but not always, unexpected) breadth of his abilities. Dean's book is concerned with the development/construction of domestic femininity in early Canada and so, quite understandably, her discussion of early Canadian masculinity does not go beyond this astute observation. However, between her observation and Ranald's development, it is possible to sketch in the more salient features of the totally competent man: he is

limitlessly or apparently limitlessly capable, adept at the widest possible range of divergent and often contradictory tasks – in a phrase, totally competent; his development carries him through the full range of spaces Canada has to offer, from the backwoods to the big city and everything in between; he is at home in all strata of society or “oddly classless” because he integrates the full spectrum of classes of Canadian society (from backwoods logger to wealthy urbanite to powerful politician) into his identity; he is physically powerful; his intelligence, business acumen, social skills and aesthetic sensibility match his exceptional physique; he is always impeccably self-controlled and usually impeccably virtuous; and, finally, he has a privileged relation to nationalism and the Canadian nation. This thesis is dedicated to exploring the origins and development of this figure with particular attention to his importance for early Canadian nationalism and early Canadian nationalists.

II

(Masculine) Writing the Totally Competent Man

In addition to describing early Canadian masculinity, Dean makes another observation of relevance to the analysis of the totally competent man. In her chapter on Catharine Parr Traill’s *Female Emigrant’s Guide* (1854), Dean presents the *Guide* “as the mending basket of domestic ideology” (16), emphasizing the extent to which the construction of domestic femininity in early Canada was a process of “mend[ing] the gap[s] . . . that emigration opened up for nineteenth-century British women” (28) in the model of femininity to which they ascribed, and, no less, of stitching together hitherto unreconciled extremes such as the received ideal of genteel femininity and the economic necessity of domestic labour to make a new model of femininity out of the old, torn one. The early Canadian model of domestic femininity evolved out of the same circumstances and under many of the same pressures as the totally competent man, and the image of the mending basket is, if not gender appropriate, nevertheless helpful for understanding the process by which the totally competent man was constituted as an ideal of Canadian manhood.

Specifically, Dean's image serves to highlight two important features of the development of this figure: the totally competent man emerged out of early Canadians' attempts to mend a torn ideal of genteel masculinity and to restore it to a position of general cultural relevance; and, in the process of this mending, these same early Canadians stitched together disparate, often contradictory, elements of existing, often competing, masculinities to create a figure whose total competence derived from his patchwork composition. The image of the mending basket thus serves to illustrate how the totally competent man was produced and shaped through the distinct but related activities of, on the one hand, affirming the value of genteel masculinity, and, on the other hand, grafting aspects of other masculinities onto it. The structure of masculine writing outlined by Hélène Cixous in her landmark essay "Sorties" provides a useful framework for understanding the relationship between these two activities, and, more generally, for conceptualizing the complex amalgam of often wildly divergent features that is the totally competent man.

In "Sorties," which is one of several essays by Catharine Clément and Cixous collected in *The Newly Born Woman* and one of the first works in which Cixous explored the concept of *écriture féminine* or feminine writing,³ Cixous does not define feminine writing in fixed terms, rather, she argues that "*defining* a feminine practice of writing is impossible with an impossibility that will continue: for this practice will never be able to be *theorized*, enclosed, coded" (92). To the extent that Cixous attributes a specific structure to feminine writing, it is a revolutionary practice that "if it writes itself [,] it is in volcanic heaving of the old 'real' property crust" (97) of the status quo, of phallogocentrism, and of masculine writing. Feminine writing is a violent refusal of definitions and of the security of definite structures, and "Sorties" turns on an opposition between the determined formlessness of feminine writing and the formal rigidity of masculine writing. Feminine writing cannot, by definition, be defined. On the other

3

Other texts in which she discusses this concept include *The Laugh of the Medusa* and *La Venue à L'Écriture*. I have chosen to focus on "Sorties" because of its emphasis on the territoriality of masculine writing.

hand, because of its essential consistency and coherence, because it manifests as the “Law” of discourse, the nature and structure of masculine writing can be clearly and definitively articulated.

Cixous begins “Sorties” with the Derridean proposition that the basic structure of western thought is binary, that “the same thread or double braid [runs] throughout literature, philosophy, criticism, centuries of representation and reflection” (63), and that these binary oppositions are organized in a gendered hierarchy. “Everywhere,” she writes, “(where) ordering intervenes, where a law organizes what is thinkable by oppositions (dual, irreconcilable; or sublatale, dialectical). And all these pairs of oppositions are couples. . . . Logocentrism subjects thought – all concepts, codes and values – to a binary system, related to ‘the’ couple, man/woman” (Cixous 64). The dominant one of the pair is, of course, the male: “Philosophy is constructed on the premise of woman’s abasement. On the subordination of the feminine to the masculine order, which gives the appearance of being the condition of the machinery’s functioning” (Cixous 65). Cixous observes that there has been a “solidarity between logocentrism and phallogentrism” and that, furthermore, “the logocentric plan [has] always . . . been to create a foundation for (to found and fund) phallogentrism, to guarantee the masculine order” (65). In other words, the masculine is continuous with the logos. It is situated at what is both the centre of thought and the centre of power, and masculine writing flows from and expresses the phallo-logocentric order. But what form does this expression of the masculine order take? How does the phallus inscribe its power in writing? If feminine writing is a violent and revolutionary rupture of the structure of the masculine system, what does the writing which adheres to and affirms this structure – masculine writing – look like?

“All history,” Cixous argues, “is inseparable from economy in the limited sense of the word” (80). Moreover, “[t]his economy, as a law of appropriation, is a phallogentric production” and “[t]he (unconscious?) stratagem and violence of masculine economy consists in making sexual difference hierarchical by valorizing one of the terms in the relationship, by reaffirming what Freud calls *phallic primacy*” (Cixous 80). Within the masculine economy of phallo-logocentrism, “desire is inscribed as the desire to

reappropriate for himself [that is, for the masculine] that which seems able to escape him . . . [a]nd one becomes aware that the Empire of the Selfsame [one of Cixous' terms for the masculine order] is erected from a fear that, in fact, is typically masculine: the fear of expropriation, of separation, of losing the attribute" (80). She concludes:

Thus, there is a relationship between the problematic of the not-selfsame, not-mine (hence of desire and urgency of reappropriation) and the constitution of a subjectivity that experiences itself only when it makes its law, its strength, and its mastery felt, and it can all be understood on the basis of masculinity because this subjectivity is structured around a loss. (Cixous 80)

In other words, the masculine is structured around the desire to appropriate the non-identical (the "not-selfsame") to itself and control it, and, at the same time, to affirm its identity (the "selfsame") and its power. The dual desires for the affirmation of identity, and the appropriation of the non-identical map straightforwardly onto the dual actions of affirming the value of genteel masculinity, and grafting elements of other masculinities onto it at work in the production of the totally competent man. In effect, masculine writing provides a framework for understanding the development of the totally competent man's most distinctive feature: his total competence.

Both of the desires Cixous attributes to masculine writing are articulated under the rubric of, emerge from and are shaped by the fear of loss, loss of the self, of power, of primacy and of the phallus. Whereas feminine writing is writing "freed from the law, unencumbered by moderation, [writing which] exceeds authority" (Cixous 86), masculine writing is writing within the law, within limits, under the regulation of moderation, writing which enacts authority. Whereas feminine writing is the writing of the other, or, as Cixous puts it, "[feminine] [w]riting is the passageway, the entrance, the exit, the dwelling place of the other in me" (85-86), masculine writing is the writing of the Selfsame, of the origin and of the centre – which is to say, writing that subordinates the other to its power rather than welcoming it into itself. Cixous connects masculine writing with "activity" (64), with the preservation of the status quo, with "the origin" (65), with "the father" (65), with "the master" (70) of the Hegelian master/slave dialectic, with "hierarchically organized relationship[s]" (71), with "narcissistic glory" (73), and with the

“Empire of the Selfsame”(78), a term that handily conjoins masculine writing’s parallel emphases on self affirmation and power. For her, masculine writing is a form of “phallogentric narcissism” (Cixous 87) linked with “erection” (Cixous 88) and hoarding rather than with “diffusion” (Cixous 88) and expenditure, a form of “self-absorbed, masculine narcissism” (Cixous 94) strongly associated with closure. The recurrence of narcissism in her descriptions of masculine writing along with the emphasis of the masculine on the “Selfsame” makes it clear that masculine writing is essentially circular, organized around a return to and affirmation of the self, and that this return is motivated by the fear of a loss of that self. Thus, as well as providing a model that makes sense of the dual actions at work in the production of the totally competent man, the concept of masculine writing effectively captures the extent to which this production was an anxious work, a mending carried out under the immanent, sensible threat of the loss of self.

With Cixous’s concept in hand, the first chapter, ““An Alchemy so Subtle’: Canadian Manhood, Literature, Anxiety and the Masculine Logic of Early Canadian Nationalism,” explores the production of a broadly competent model of manhood as an ideal model of national manhood⁴ by early Canadian literary nationalists. After a reading

4

The term “national manhood” is borrowed from Dana D. Nelson’s *National Manhood: Capitalist Citizenship and the Imagined Fraternity of White Men*. Taking her cue from Herman Melville’s story “Benito Cereno,” Nelson coins the term “national manhood,” and adapts Benedict Anderson’s phrase “imagined community” to define national manhood as “an imagined fraternity” (204). The men of this imagined fraternity are united by a “shared ‘nature’” (Nelson 7), and, beyond that, by the more general quality of “sameness” (Nelson 19) – that is, the members of the imagined fraternity of national manhood have in common overlapping masculine and national identities. Nelson explains that “‘national manhood’ [is] an ideology that . . . work[s] powerfully . . . to link a fraternal articulation of . . . manhood to civic identity” (ix), and in the process “idealiz[es] [a specific model of manhood] as a ‘representative’ identity” (28). “National manhood”’s articulation of the connection between individual and collective (specifically, national) identities in the context of an understanding of both as constructed or “imagined” makes it uniquely suited to the analysis of early Canadian literary nationalism and the development of the totally competent man. As will be seen, Nelson’s term is a useful lens for bringing into focus the details of a range of texts that consistently understand individual masculine identities in terms of collective/national identities and collective/national identities in terms of individual masculine identities. An important

of Charles G. D. Roberts's poem "Canada" that serves to flesh out the connections between literature, masculinity and nationalism that characterized the work of early Canadian literary nationalists and were central to the production of the totally competent man, the chapter traces the origins of the new nationalism to German Romanticism via the intermediary of the Young Ireland movement, and argues that early Canadian literary nationalism derived from these influences an emphasis on masculine heroism, the catholicity of the national community, and the nordicity of the nation. An examination of the permutations of literature, nationalism, masculinity, heroism, catholicity, and nordicity in three texts published in the decade of Confederation (Edward Hartley Dewart's *Selections from Canadian Poets* (1864), Henry J. Morgan's *Bibliotheca Canadensis or a Manual of Canadian Literature* (1867), R. G. Haliburton's address, "The Men of the North and Their Place in History" (1869)) and in two texts by the second generation of Canadian nationalists (W.D. Lighthall's *Songs of the Great Dominion: Voices from the Forests and Waters, the Settlements and Cities of Canada* (1889) and G. Mercer Adam's edition of Joseph Edmund Collins's *Canada's Patriot Statesman: The Life and Career of the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald* (1891)) leads to two related conclusions. First, the construction of the nation by early Canadian literary nationalists was an anxious

difference between Canada and the United States inflects the use of Nelson's term in this thesis: unlike the United States, Canada did not become an independent nation until 1867. Many of the works discussed in this study predate Confederation. They anticipate the emergence of both a distinct Canadian nation and a related model of Canadian masculinity, but they do so to varying degrees, and are thus read as contributing to an evolving understanding of Canadian society that does not emerge as fully national until the decade of Confederation. Although this thesis makes use of Nelson's term, it is important to remember that prior to 1867 Canadian masculinity could only take the form of a "proto-national manhood." It is likewise important to recognize that, although "imagined fraternity" defines a group of men united by a shared masculine identity, it does not necessarily do so at the expense of excluding women from the national community. Indeed, women play such substantial roles in the communities described in many of the texts in this thesis that it is often appropriate to see them forming an "imagined sorority" of "national womanhood" next to the "imagined fraternity" of "national manhood."

work carried out in the face of real and sensible threats to the new nation and their brand of nationalism. Second, the figure of the totally competent man attained a position of prominence in the work of these writers in no small part because of how effectively this model of national manhood answered the anxieties that perplex the new nationalists – that is, because the totally competent man both served as a symbol of the harmonious integration of the disparate and divided Canadian citizenry into the Canadian nation, and legitimized Canadian literary nationalism.

At the heart of the totally competent man, standing as the figure's most readily distinguishable feature, is the Herculean body, and the following four chapters explore the representation of the active masculine body in some of the early Canadian texts that laid the groundwork for its deployment by the nationalists discussed in the first chapter and that shaped the cultural context out of which the totally competent man emerged. Chapter 2, “‘Skalping-knives to Pruning Hooks’: Violence and Manhood in Thomas Cary’s *Abram’s Plains*,” argues that, in its management of masculine violence and the masculine bodies that perpetrate this violence, *Abram’s Plains* (1789) establishes a pattern that echoes, with some variation, through early Canadian literature and bears directly on the production of the totally competent man. Cary manages the violence of both Native “savagery” and the British conquest, violence that is fundamentally antagonistic to the emerging social order celebrated by the poem, by appropriating it to the regulatory system of values the poem upholds. Under the rubric of the four stages theory and an unwavering faith in the social value of the *pax Britannica*, the poet constructs an historical community of men united across the entire scope of the colony’s history, a community in which earlier models of masculinity provide the building blocks for later models in a process of integrative development. Cary thus configures earlier models of manhood as originary identities that make essential contributions to contemporary manhood and envisions contemporary colonial masculinity and, for that matter, contemporary colonial society as the products of the sublimation of male violence and the aggressive masculine body. The chief example of this is the speaker himself: Cary constructs the masculine identity of the speaker of *Abram’s Plain* (an emerging, if not absolutely distinct, English-Canadian

masculine identity) through a set of explicit and implicit comparisons to “savage” Native Peoples and the British military hero Wolfe. The effect of these comparisons is to incorporate these developmentally and historically anterior manhoods into the identity of the speaker through a process of sublimation that redirects the socially corrosive violence attached to native “savagery” and British militarism towards more pacific, and socially and economically productive ends. In this way, *Abram’s Plains* positions the speaker as the manager of the aggressive masculine body, suggesting that within the complex and conflicted (conflicted to the extent that it contains multiple and potentially antagonistic models of manhood) cultural field of the colony the capacity to manage (in this case to sublimate) its multiple constituent masculine identities is one of the key features of the emerging English-Canadian masculine identity. All of this takes place under the auspices of the poem’s assertion that the management of the aggressive masculine body is, at least in part, a necessarily aesthetic project that consists of the neutralization of threatening, rebellious masculinities through their insertion into textual structures designed to affirm the very values those bodies challenge, and provide pleasure to the community of readers who upholds those values.

Wacousta; or, the Prophecy; a Tale of the Canadas (1832) resembles *Abram’s Plains* in its management of the aggressive masculine body, and Chapter 3, “His ‘Active and Athletic Limbs’: *Wacousta*, the Aggressive Masculine Body, Readerly Pleasure, and the Possibility of a Just *and* Active Man,” examines John Richardson’s treatment of his eponymous protagonist’s Herculean body, arguing that the novelist configures *Wacousta*’s body as the subject, object, and generator of readerly pleasure. By directing his reader to view the violent, vengeful, and rebellious *Wacousta*’s body as an object of his/her pleasure, Richardson subjects *Wacousta*’s aggressive masculine body to genteel desire, and neutralizes the threat implicit in his rebelliousness. *Wacousta*’s objectification, however, does not diminish his capacity for action; rather, Richardson stakes *Wacousta*’s appeal as a sexual object on the active vitality of his body, constructing him as an active rather than a passive object. This simultaneous neutralization of the aggressive masculine body and the preservation of its capacity for action echoes Cary’s

sublimation of masculine violence and anticipates the preservation in the totally competent man of the brute physicality of rebellious, socially corrosive masculinity. What is more, the juxtaposition of Wacousta with Frederick de Haldimar suggests an idealized figure that combines the best of both men – Wacousta’s powerful body, his equally powerful emotions, and his adaptation to the Canadian environment, and Frederick’s genteel, military code of behaviour, and the self-control that defines it – and that anticipates totally competent men such as Ranald Macdonald and Richard Stahlberg who combine powerful, destructive emotions, and just as powerful self-control with powerful bodies and unbending moral codes. This figure takes concrete form in Frederick’s sons who combine their father’s genteel civility with Wacousta’s brute physicality, and gesture towards the emergence of a model of colonial masculinity, looking back to the proto-Canadian masculinity of *Abram’s Plains* and forward to the totally competent man. *Wacosuta* also echoes the management of the aggressive masculine body in the work of Richardson’s contemporary, Susanna Moodie.

Chapter 4, “A Man of Fearful Proportions and Comforting Productivity: *Roughing It in the Bush* and Moodie’s Management of Lower Class Masculinity,” investigates Moodie’s management of lower class male bodies – specifically, her management of the threatening body of the Herculean Irish immigrant who she sees leap ashore at Grosse Isle. Like the authors examined in the preceding two chapters, Moodie responds to the Irishman’s emphatic embodiment of the lower class challenge to her genteel identity, first, by appropriating the Irishman’s body to genteel readerly pleasure, and, second, by inserting that same body into a narrative of national development that valorizes her identity rather than his. The Irishman’s challenge to Moodie’s identity thus affords an occasion for her to confirm her own genteel identity in particular and assert the social value of gentility in general through the discursive management of his body. An examination of Moodie’s Introduction and the poem appended to it illustrates that, even before he appears, Moodie has put in place the discursive structures necessary to manage the threat posed by the Irishman’s body, to manage his Herculean proportions and redirect them towards a comforting productivity. The Irishman’s productivity is made comforting

through its appropriation to a vision of national development shaped by Moodie's genteel values, and the Irishman's challenge to Moodie's identity is transformed into a confirmation of the continuing social and national value of that identity. What is more, Moodie's management of the Irishman's aggressive masculine body highlights the significant aesthetic dimension of the management of the aggressive masculine body in early Canadian literature, and foregrounds the important role writing plays in this management. Moodie's conclusion to her emigrant trilogy, *Flora Lyndsay or, Passages in an Eventful Life* (1854), expands on this aspect of *Roughing It in the Bush; or Life in Canada* (1852).

Chapter 5, "'What [She Did] to While Away the Lagging Hours': Managing the Aggressive Masculine Body in Susanna Moodie's *Flora Lyndsay*," argues that *Flora Lyndsay*'s episodic, digressive and superficially fragmentary structure is unified by a set of related and readily identifiable interests: Moodie's own deep anxieties about her social position and the fate of her gentility, anxieties that are mirrored more or less exactly by Flora Lyndsay; the recognition that gentility itself is threatened by a combination of the failures of members of the upper and middle classes to live up to the values that define their social position, and the inappropriate aspirations of members of the lower classes, in particular physically imposing, lower class men; and, finally, the attempt to salve these anxieties and respond to this recognition through managing the aggressive, lower class masculine body by inserting it into textual structures designed for the production of genteel, readerly pleasure. These interests find their clearest, most comprehensive and most suggestive expression in a narrative within the narrative. In "Noah Cotton," the story that Flora writes to amuse herself while her ship is becalmed off of Newfoundland, the aggressive, lower class and powerful masculine body of the story's protagonist is appropriated for the amusement of the story's emphatically genteel writer. "Noah Cotton" is thus the literary mechanism by which Flora stabilizes her own, genteel identity by confirming her capacity to manage the aggressive, lower class masculine bodies that are the most obvious and immediate threat to that identity. In having Flora write a story within what is clearly an autobiographical novel, Moodie objectifies her own writing

process, and offers in *Flora Lyndsay* an implicit commentary on the first two books in her emigrant trilogy, *Roughing it in the Bush*, and *Life in the Clearings*, that foregrounds the reactionary reinforcement of Moodie's genteel identity through the submission of threatening, antagonistic individuals (usually, but not exclusively, lower class individuals who want to claim a genteel identity) to a disciplinary system of genteel values as one of the primary preoccupations of these works. The chapter closes by suggesting that the figure of Hercules serves as a compact summation of the management of the aggressive masculine body in the work of Cary, Richardson, and Moodie – more precisely, of their integrative appropriation of the aggressive masculine body to gentility, and their recursive self-affirmation of a core of genteel values.

Whereas Chapters 4 and 5 focus on Moodie's management of threatening lower class men, Chapter 6, "Making One Man Out of Two: Doubling the Merchant with the Gentleman and Vice Versa in Galt's *Lawrie Todd* and *Bogle Corbet*," explores the resuscitation of the gentleman (and of the genteel values that define him) through his reconciliation with lower class, aspirational models of manhood in John Galt's emigrant novels. *Bogle Corbet; or, the Emigrants* (1831) and its companion, *Lawrie Todd; or, the Settlers in the Woods* (1830), are read as Galt's assessment of the relative value of genteel and lower class models of masculinity as represented by their title characters in the context of the "commercial circumstances" of the early nineteenth century. The basis of this reading is a pattern of doubling that extends across the two novels, drawing them and their protagonists together, and inviting a direct comparison of Bogle Corbet and Lawrie Todd. The essential difference between the two men is one of class: Corbet is a gentleman, Todd is a lower class labourer, and the difference between them boils down to the conventional difference between gentility and trade. Galt ties the class difference between Todd and Corbet to their differing attitudes towards relationships: Todd approaches both personal and business relationships instrumentally, and Corbet takes the inverse approach, viewing both types of relationships as primarily affective affiliations. The difference between the two men determines their relationship as doubles of one another, positioning them as opposites whose respective strengths map exactly onto their

respective weaknesses, and suggests the figure of an ideal man who would combine Corbet and Todd's respective strengths. To the extent that this relationship is predicated on and pointedly reinforces the continuing importance of genteel values, the two books taken together serve as a treatment for Galt's own anxieties about the utility of those values. If combined, the two men would form a complete model of manhood that is ideal because it is complete, a model of manhood that would unite the lower class aptitude for trade with the behavioural norms of genteel sociability, manifest a breadth of competence spanning the social and the economic spheres of masculine activity, and make a powerful argument for the enduring value of the defining attributes of Galt's own social class as an essential ingredient in this ideal model of manhood. In short, the ideal man projected by the text would be a model lover, businessman, pioneer, and community leader, and be ideal because of his comprehensive mastery of all the spheres of masculine endeavor and action, because, in a phrase, of his breadth of competence. As well as imagining an ideal of broadly competent manhood, Galt forges a strong link between masculinity, the values that inform and shape communities, and the suitability of men who manifest his ideal model of masculinity for unofficial positions of authority and/or official leadership roles in their communities. This link suggests that the super competence of the ideal model of masculinity that he envisions extends to a unique and unmatched capacity for leadership, and Galt thus anticipates the emphasis that works that contain fully realized totally competent men place on these men's unique capacity for leadership. In the concluding chapter, attention turns to the totally competent man's complementary roles as community leader and national man.

Chapter 7, "Totally Competent/Totally Communal Men: Richard Stahlberg, Ranald Macdonald, and the National Community," examines the figure of the totally competent man in Archibald Lampman's *The Story of an Affinity* (1900) and Ralph Connor's *The Man From Glengary: a Tale of the Ottawa* (1901). This chapter specifically focuses on the development of the protagonists of these two works into totally competent men who stand as communally minded examples of this idealized model of manhood – that is, as men whose total competence is inseparable from their commitment

to the well-being of their communities. Both works tie the achievement of Richard and Ranald's total competence to their development of social consciences, of deep investments in the unity and health of their societies, and of a willingness to work actively towards the good of their communities. *The Story of an Affinity* and *The Man from Glengarry* thus unite individual and social ideals, presenting their readers with protagonists who are simultaneously paragons of individual achievement and super-competent agents of social cohesion. With their ability and willingness to secure, unite, and perpetuate their communities, Richard and Ranald make the forceful point that totally competent men are communally minded men, and they emerge from their respective narratives as trenchant examples of what Canadian men and, by extension, the Canadian nation might be.

The Story of an Affinity is not set in Canada, and Lampman never explicitly frames Richard as a model of national manhood; nevertheless, the poem provides an immediately relevant commentary on the state of Canadian politics that offers the ideal model of masculinity embodied by Richard as a solution to the problem of a political culture defined more by self-interestedness than a commitment to the good of the country. By promotion of the values of social responsibility, community, and selflessness over selfish individualism, Lampman's poem speaks to the complex of values endorsed by nationalists, and to the model of manhood that anchored those values. Whereas Lampman's poem contains no references that link it to Canada, Connor's *The Man from Glengarry* is tied to a set of specifically Canadian locales, and stands out as a quintessentially nationalist work. Not surprisingly, the mature Ranald brings the combination of his breadth of competence and his capacity for leadership to bear on the fight for national unity, and emerges as an exemplary national man. Ranald becomes a nationalist agent of social cohesion as an effect of the combination of his acquisition of total competence with a process of socialization that endows him with both the desire and the ability to consolidate the national community. His active promotion of social and national cohesion is complemented by a development that reads as an allegorical unification of the nation, and Ranald thus comes to serve double duty as both an agent and

a symbol of national unity. As well as uniting the nation, Ranald comprehends the history of the totally competent man, and this thesis closes with an overview of how his development recapitulates the development of the totally competent man from the figure's early manifestation in the work of Cary through the contributions of anxious genteel writers such as Richardson, Moodie, and Galt to its deployment by the first two generations of Canadian nationalists.

Chapter 1:

“An Alchemy so Subtle”: Canadian Manhood, Literature, Anxiety and the Masculine
 Logic of Early Canadian Nationalism

“Canada” (1886) is one of Charles G. D. Roberts’s most obviously patriotic and nationalistic poems, and, “to judge by the number of times that it was reprinted, excerpted, anthologized, and praised in the 1880s and ’90s, [it] was one of the best known and most admired poems by any Canadian poet” (Bentley, *Confederation Group* 71). D. M. R. Bentley points out that “the hortatory final stanza of . . . ‘Canada’” (*Confederation Group* 11) appears on the title page of J. E. Wetherell’s *Later Canadian Poems* (1893). The poem’s prominence in this anthology speaks to how quickly and conclusively it emerged as a touchstone of the nascent national literature. Indeed, in the first several decades of its reception, Roberts’s poem passed across the indefinite border that divides private ideology from popular sentiment, making this transition because of the willingness of the Canadian readership to embrace it – a willingness that certainly had a great deal to do with its construction of that readership, or, in other words, with the version of themselves that the poem offered the Canadians it addressed. As well as being immensely popular, “Canada” neatly conjoins the three concepts with which this study is concerned and constitutes one of the clearest articulations of the heady blend of literature, nationalism, and masculinity of which early Canadian national manhood was composed.

The poem’s organizing device is an enthusiastic and, at the same time, anxiously excessive personification of the new Canadian nation. “Canada” begins:

O Child of Nations, giant-limbed,
 Who stand’st among the nations now
 Unheeded, unadorned, unhymmed,
 With unanointed brow, –

How long the ignoble sloth, how long
 The trust in greatness not thine own?
 Surely the lion’s brood is strong
 To front the world alone!

How long the indolence, ere thou dare
 Achieve thy destiny, seize thy fame,—
 Ere our proud eyes behold thee bear
 A nation's franchise, nation's name?

The Saxon fore, the Celtic fire,
 These are thy manhood's heritage!
 Why rest with babes and slaves? Seek higher
 The place of race and age. (Roberts 18)

As Bentley observes,

[t]he most striking feature of these lines is their insistent personification of Canada as male rather than female: 'giant-limbed,' leoninly powerful, and possessed of 'manhood's heritage,' Canada is a fully grown 'Child of Nations' whose 'ignoble sloth' and lamentable 'ignorance' are the only barriers to its achievement and celebration of full independence. From Roberts's confidently masculinist perspective, the time has long since come for young, mature and male Canada to cease being dependent on Mother Britain and, more specifically, the 'Mother of Nations' (Roberts's term for Victoria in a poem written for her Golden Jubilee in 1887). (*Confederation Group* 71)

"Canada" conflates nationhood and manhood through the literary device of personification, implying as it does so that the new nationality is profoundly imbricated with masculinity. It also suggests that, as well as accomplishing the gendering of national identity, literature stirs the country from its "ignoble sloth," promotes national sentiment, and encourages national endeavour. This is not surprising. "Canada" is, after all, situated at the intersection of poetry and propaganda.

Yet the poem's language and its organizing trope suggest that Roberts's view of the situation is more complicated, less sanguine and more alive to the challenges facing Canadian nationalism than Bentley's assessment of the poet's perspective as "confidently masculinist" allows. The initial identification of Canada as a "*Child of Nations*" (emphasis added) highlights the country's youth, but also draws attention to the less positive aspect of that youth, namely Canada's relative immaturity. First published a scant eighteen years after Confederation, the poem's opening apostrophe inevitably reminds its readers that the new nation is still very much in its infancy. If Canada were a

human child, it would be at the threshold of adulthood, but as a nation it has barely been born. The immaturity suggested by Roberts's opening description of Canada is thrown into relief by the abrupt transition to the laudatory epithet "giant-limbed." The images of the child and of the giant rub uncomfortably up against each other in "Canada"'s first line and the abruptness of the transition, the ungainliness of the fit between the two serves to emphasize rather than to compensate for or to obviate the poem's initial acknowledgement of Canada's immaturity. The sudden and awkward leap from one image to the other mirrors the rapidity of Canada's development, recapitulating its growth from colony to nation and, in doing this, draws attention to the shortness of the country's history and the contentious political process that led to its foundation.

To this it must be added that the description of Canada as "giant-limbed" is at odds with the state of the nation at the time of the poem's writing and the height of its popularity. Certainly the new country was geographically expansive and Roberts and his contemporaries regularly emphasised Canada's size, but the implication that it is powerful as well as large ignores the fact that Canada's economic, political, and military might was dwarfed by its parent nation, Great Britain, and its closest sibling, the United States. In discussing post-Confederation writers like Roberts who "used a young-child metaphor [when] referring to Canada," S. M. Beckow somewhat stridently observes that "[t]hese commentators were simply flattering the national pride, though they implied a process of growth and maturation, and the coming of recognition upon maturity" (11-12). Roberts may be flattering Canadians by overestimating the development of the nation, but, if he is flattering them, it is with an image whose utopian hopefulness draws attention to the very reality it is designed to occlude. Because it is so excessive, so obviously an overestimation, the epithet "giant-limbed" highlights the disjunction between Roberts's personification and the real state of Canada in the 1880s and 1890s, and, at the same time that it presents its readers with an image of the new nation ascending to "[t]he place of age and race," reminds them that the country is at best a minor power.

What is more, the mid 1880s saw the revival of a direct internal threat to Canadian nationalism: the lobby for Continental Union and the annexationist movement. After the

brief economic boom of the early 1880s, the Canadian economy slumped and many of the country's citizens began to view the barrier between them and the United States, whose economy was strong and getting stronger, as a barrier to their prosperity, and started to agitate for solutions ranging from limited economic reciprocity to continental union.⁵ The unwillingness of Anglophone Canadians to form and endorse a coherent national community could only exacerbate preexisting anxieties about the French/English division that was then, as it has often been, the primary threat to national cohesion in Canada. The lobby for Continental Union and the annexationist movement raised the pressing and worrisome question: if Anglophone Canadians cannot agree among themselves to be Canadians, how can they resist the attempts of Quebec nationalists like Honoré Mercier, who founded the Parti National in 1885 and led it to victory in the provincial election of 1886, to introduce deep and permanent fissures into the new union? In 1885, The North-West rebellion, an event that saw a minority group take up arms against the nation, added to the prevailing sense among nationalists that the bonds uniting the national community were dangerously strained, and set a precedent that gave additional immediacy to other, less overtly violent, challenges to national unity. Simply put, the Canada that Roberts

5

In *The Idea of Continental Union: Agitation for the Annexation of Canada to the United States, 1849-1893*, specifically his chapter "The Rebirth of Continental Union, 1883-1887," Donald F. Warner provides a detailed discussion of the origin and activities of the continental union and annexationist movements in the 1880s. Of the causes of these related movements, he writes:

The sum of the following, then, produced the annexationism of the 1880's and early 1890's: despair at the economic distress of Canada and at the apparent failure of the National Policy, which had faded from bright hope to dreary burden; the revival of vicious English-French strife; the belief that annexation would benefit and not injure the mother country; the unconscious, or conscious, Liberal tendency to support measures which marched obliquely toward political union; and the melancholy conviction on the part of many that annexation was as inevitable as the climax of a Greek tragedy, twist, squirm, and resist as one might to escape the inexorable conclusion. (Warner 178-79)

See also Goldwin Smith's *Canada and the Canadian Question* (1891) for an example of the argument for continental union that responds directly to the economic anxieties of the time.

addressed was not merely immature and less than robust, but also divided enough against itself that a representation of it as an homogenous subject of any kind could be nothing more than an hopeful but unrealistic nationalist fantasy.⁶ Thus Roberts's "Canada" opens, not with a uniformly confident perspective on the new nationality but with a sort of double vision that implies at once a weak and immature country menaced by internal dissent, and a mature and powerful nation ready to claim its birthright. This ambivalence is born out in the remainder of the first four stanzas.

Rather than resolve the tension between the two versions of Canada Roberts introduces in his first line, he exploits the dichotomy between the presently mediocre and the potentially great nation in order to stimulate nationalist fervour in his readers and provoke them to nationalist action. The image of Canada as the "brood" (Roberts 18) of the British lion is bracketed by a lamentation for the country's lack of acknowledgement, acclaim and honours, and a series of questions that characterize the new nation as slothful, dependent, indolent, immature, and slavish. This itemization of the nation's failings is obviously designed to excite the nation to action, and the accumulation of exclamations and forceful questions builds to the injunction to patriotic endeavour to "Seek higher / The place of race and age" (Roberts 18). These lines are addressed as much to the reader who is an individual member of the nation as to the abstract personification of the nation. The singular figure of Canada apostrophized in the poem's first line is never again referred to in such striking terms and fades into the background to be replaced by "the lion's brood" (Roberts 18) or the image of a national collectivity made up of distinct

6

The inappropriateness of a single figure as a representation of the nation is made particularly clear by Roberts's choice later in the poem to simultaneously celebrate both Wolfe and Montcalm as national heroes. His treatment of two national heroes, rather than a single hero, acknowledges the duality of the nation and the complex heterogeneity of the national body at the same time that it promotes national unity. Rather than weakening "Canada" by introducing a contradiction into the poem, the discrepancy between the opening lines, and the celebration of Wolfe and Montcalm adds to the ambivalence of the initial personification of Canada, and to the rhetorical appeal that, as explained shortly, Roberts grounds in that ambivalence. Roberts's treatment of Wolfe and Montcalm is discussed at greater length at the end of this section.

individuals, a collectivity that includes the reader. Even the pronouns “thee,” “thou,” “thy” and “thine” (Roberts 18) begin to vacillate between the “Child of Nations” (Roberts 18) and the reader. The question “How long the ignoble sloth, how long / The trust in greatness not thine own?” (Roberts 18) refers grammatically to the personification of the nation but it is equally appropriate to the individual members of a national polity whose inaction has left Canada “Unheeded, unadorned, [and] unhymned, / With unanointed brow” (Roberts 18). In the next question,

How long the indolence, ere thou dare
 Achieve thy destiny, seize thy fame, –
 Ere our proud eyes behold thee bear
 A nation’s franchise, nation’s name?, (Roberts 18)

“thou” refers grammatically to “the lion’s brood” (Roberts 18) of the preceding stanza. Although the poem is initially addressed to the “Child of Nations” (Roberts 18), in the second stanza “the lion’s brood” replaces the “Child of nations” and, as the most proximate noun, is the referent of “thou,” “thy,” and “the” in the third stanza. That said, the above stanza would make just as much sense if directed to the “Child of Nations.” What is more, as with every passing line both the “Child of nations” and “the lion’s brood” become more distant, it becomes increasingly appropriate to read the pronouns as a direct apostrophization of the reader rather than as a reference to either of two nouns that are now a number of stanzas and more sentences behind the reader. Thus the exclamation “The Saxon force, the Celtic fire, / These are thy manhood’s heritage!” (Roberts 18) reads equally well as an apostrophization of the reader as a member of the collectivity of the nation, as a direct apostrophization of the individual reader, or as a reference to the manly, “giant-limbed” (Roberts 18) personification of the nation. The effect of the ambivalence of these pronouns is to collapse the individual reader, the collectivity of the national community, and the personification of the nation on each other, placing the reader in a privileged relation to the nation and impressing upon him⁷ his

7

“Him” is used because it seems clear that Roberts’s insistently masculinist perspective effectively excludes women readers from these aspects of the poem. It is difficult to

responsibility as a national. Rather than heightening the reader's uncertainties, Roberts's complex ambivalence situates the reader firmly within the network of connected images, concepts and sentiments that constitute the discursive space of the nation. It is, perhaps, the fact that the ambivalence in these stanzas serves to confirm rather than burst the bonds of nationalism that has prevented it from troubling readers, and allowed it to go unobserved for so long. Whatever the case may be, the key effect of this ambivalence is to cause the reader to become at once a member of the nation, a representative of the nation and the nation itself entire. Seen in this light, the injunction "Seek higher / The place of race and age" (Roberts 18) is directed at both the nation as an abstraction and the individual reader as a member of the nation. Because of the lack-luster state of the new nationality, it is clear that the future of Canada hangs in the balance of the reader's response to Roberts's call to greatness.

The fact that the main barriers to Canada's development are "sloth" and "indolence" (Roberts 18) – that is, a lazy unwillingness to embrace and promote nationalism – places a tremendous weight on the reader's participation in the nation or, in this case, on his affective response to Roberts's exhortations. If the reader's response is negative, neutral or only minimally positive, it confirms the apathy that is at present the nation's greatest detriment and has the potential to condemn Canada to a permanent adolescence. But, if the reader responds with patriotic fervour, if "Canada" stirs a rush of feeling in him, that feeling affirms his commitment to the nation and, in as much as his response mirrors Roberts's emotional investment in Canada, it strengthens the identity, the feeling in common and together, that is the base of the masculine, national community. What is more, at a moment when the popularity of Canadian nationalism has ebbed somewhat, such a response does not confirm or affirm the reader's membership in a strong, preexisting national community, but instead makes the reader a full participant in the act of originating the national polity. If, as Ernest Renan observes in his address

imagine them identifying with his "giant-limbed" personification of the nation or feeling themselves to be full participants in a national community defined by "Saxon force," "Celtic fire" and "manhood" (Roberts 18).

“What is a Nation?,” “a nation’s existence is . . . a daily plebiscite” (19), by responding to “Canada” with a rush of national feeling the reader is casting a vote with Roberts for Canada that yet again brings the nation into being.

In the context of this reading, Roberts’s overweening confidence cut with uncompromising realism, his shameless promotion of Canada’s potentially great future and simultaneous recognition of its less than auspicious present, appears as a pragmatic or rhetorical position designed to solicit the investment of nationals and impress upon them the urgency of acting as nationals for Canada. Rather than manifesting a “confidently masculine perspective,” Roberts shows a certain uncertainty that is no less masculine than confidence, for it preserves the sense of challenge, the idea of an obstacle that must be confronted and overcome, that conventionally legitimizes masculine action. In other words, not only does the nation hang in the balance of the reader’s response to “Canada” but so too does his manhood. If he refuses Roberts’s exhortations to invest himself in the nation, the reader leaves himself open to the accusations of cowardice and weakness traditionally levelled at men who refuse difficult tasks no matter how legitimate and reasonable their reasons. If the reader refuses his Canadianness, he effectively states his preference for “rest[ing] with babes and slaves” (Roberts 18), for, indeed, being babyish and slavish rather than “giant-limbed” (Roberts 18), leonine and forceful. The reader is Canadian *and* manly, or neither.

The presentation of the idea of the new nation’s achievable but not yet achieved maturity is not the only means by which Roberts solicits the readers investment in and commitment to Canada. The sort of nationalist exhortations among which “Canada” numbers invariably pair this sense of the nation’s futurity with a vision of its past. Renan observes:

Two things, which in truth are but one, constitute [the nation]. One lies in the past, one in the present. One is the possession in common of a rich legacy of memories; the other is present-day consent, the desire to live together, the will to perpetuate the value of the heritage that one has received in an undivided form . . . To have common glories in the past and to have a common will in the present; to have performed great deeds together, to wish to perform still more – these are the essential conditions for being a people. (19)

The present commitment to the nation's future is contingent upon an understanding of that future as a continuation of a shared heroic past. The remaining stanzas of "Canada" are largely devoted to an outline of the country's history that integrates the manifold conflicts of its origin into a coherent narrative of heroic achievement that has far more to do with Roberts's hopes for the future than any fidelity to the past. The fall of Quebec and the battles of the War of 1812 – that is to say, military endeavours carried out by and for Britain, albeit, in the second case, involving Canadian soldiers – are recuperated to a tradition of Canadian heroism that includes the French antagonists as heroes and occludes the British Loyalties of the men "that bor'st the battles brunt" (Roberts 19) in defence of the then British colony. Roberts's version of Canadian history is manifestly a manufactured tradition. As Bentley observes,

[n]owhere than in . . . the historical stanzas of "Canada" is it more apparent that Robert's "Child of Nations" is the offspring of a fantasy of union out of conflict and his narration of its past an hallucination of racial reconciliation that deploys an invented tradition to displace the harsh realities of Canada's past and present. (*Confederation Group* 76)

Roberts's primary interest is in the future of the nation, and his version of history dispenses with historical fidelity in favour of a pragmatic invention of "*common* glories in the past" (emphasis added) that legitimize "a *common* will in the present" (emphasis added) to secure a *common* national future.

Nowhere in the poem's historical stanzas is Roberts's "fantasy of union" and "hallucination of racial reconciliation" more obvious, or more sincere than in what Bentley calls the poem's "most resonant and deceptively simple line" (*Confederation Group* 75): "Montcalm and Wolfe! Wolfe and Montcalm!" (Roberts 19). Bentley explains:

With its chiasmatic reversal and then reiteration of the order in which the names of the opposing generals usually appear, the line bestows priority on Montcalm and generates associations that would have been especially vivid at the time of the poem's writing and publication in 1885-6. By then, a joint monument to Wolfe and Montcalm had stood in Quebec City since 1828 and supplied the inspiration

for numerous literary and artistic works . . . What Roberts says of the monument to Wolfe and Montcalm in *A History of Canada* (1897) applies equally well to the stanza in which they appear in his poem: it stands as ‘a fit emblem of the union of the two races who fought that day together for the mastery of Canada’ (159). (*Confederation Group* 75)

In addition to reflecting the influence of the monument to Wolfe and Montcalm in Quebec City, in its attempt to bridge the deepest cultural and political division in the country, this line evinces an impressively catholic inclusivity. The names of the historical representatives of “the two races” at the heart of the new nation are combined in a pair of laudatory exclamations that drive home their union through repetition and negotiate their priority through “chiasmatic reversal.” Bentley argues that “the line bestows priority on Montcalm.” “Montcalm” begins and ends the line, occupying the two key positions in the line and effectively bracketing “Wolfe.” Moreover, the first sentence of the line reverses the conventional order of the names. However, this bestowal of priority occurs in the context of a chiasmus – a device that relies equally upon “Montcalm” and “Wolfe,” and, by reversing the names, emphasises both their equality and their interchangeability. Thus the line bestows priority on Montcalm through the very means by which it asserts the equality and similitude of the two generals. Far from being self-contradictory or self-defeating, the line works to two related and mutually supportive ends. On the one hand, it asserts the equality “of the union of the two races” who together make up by far the majority of Canadians. On the other hand, it constitutes a generous acknowledgement by a member of the victorious “race” of the importance of a key historical representative of the defeated “race.” This gesture authenticates the sincerity of Roberts’s desire to include French Canadians in the new nation, and lends credence to his vision of a nation of united equals. Coming from a member of the party of Wolfe, Roberts’ bestowal of priority on Montcalm is a high-minded and powerful confirmation that his Canada will indeed include “Montcalm *and* Wolfe! Wolfe *and* Montcalm!” (emphasis added), and that this inclusion will not marginalise, diminish or cheapen French Canadians or their heroes.

The line also suggests that, as it includes French and English Canadians, the new nationality transcends both, establishing a stable frame within which the two identities are

significant but secondary. The “and”s conjoin the names of the two generals, and the repeated conjunction is the syntactic cognate of the nationality that seeks to accomplish a similar union of the cultural identities the generals represent. The chiasmus that makes up the line is so truncated that it gives equal space to the conjunctions that mark the point of reversal and the terms that are reversed. In effect, the line gives equal space and thus equal priority to French Canadians, English Canadians, *and* the new nationality that unites them. But this is not the end of the story. The conjoining “and” of the new nationality is the stable pivot point around which the names of the generals move. Its stability implies that the new nationality serves a foundational or structural function, establishing and underpinning the union of French and English Canada. The “and”s stability also distinguishes the new nationality from the identities it unites, intimating that it is more secure, more durable, less replaceable or interchangeable than those identities, and demonstrating that it transcends the factional divisions that plague the new country. Thus, in this line, “Canada” constructs a transcendent nationality which embraces the various identities held by the citizens of the nation, but, in embracing them, posits an additional layer of identity that transcends them without erasing or reducing them. With his poem Roberts attempts to embrace French and English Canadians with a vision of the nation that comprehends and celebrates the history of both groups. Although it is a “fantasy,” although it is a “hallucination,” the generous catholicity of the invented tradition⁸ that Roberts’s proffers to the reader is a potentially powerful justification for the reader’s

8

In his Introduction to the volume of essays he edited with Terence Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, Eric Hobsbawm explains

‘[i]nvented tradition’ is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past. . . . However, insofar as there is such reference to a historic past, the peculiarity of ‘invented’ traditions is that the continuity with it is largely factitious. In short, they are responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations, or which establish their own past by quasi-obligatory repetition. (1-2)

commitment to the new nationality – a justification that derives much of its force from Roberts’s sophisticated combination of openness and unity in his conception of the national identity. What is more, by committing to the new nationality as envisioned by Roberts, the reader both commits to the future of the nation and ratifies Roberts’s invented tradition, adding another member to the national community, and taking one more step towards making Roberts’s “fantasy of union,” and the common national future it entails a reality.

All of this takes place under the presumption that the reader who affirms his own nationalism by responding positively to the poem is much the same as Roberts – that is, regardless of his background (ie. of whether he is French or English), the reader shares Roberts’s beliefs and values. Consequently, “Canada” articulates a vision of a unified national community that is understood by its members to be the outcome of the resolution of past conflicts and to consist in the present of a group of like-minded, robust, and energetic men. Drawing together nationalism, masculinity, and literature in a network of mutually supporting and reinforcing relationships, the poem forcefully suggests that manhood is national, the nation is literary, literature is masculine and so on. What is more, Roberts’s conjunction of these three concepts reflects in significant, if subtle ways, the key structural features of the totally competent man. Indeed, in “Canada”’s conflation of the masculine personification of the nation as a “Child of Nations, giant-limbed” (Roberts 18) with the citizenry of the nation in the form of the “lion’s brood” (Roberts 18), can be glimpsed the outlines of men like Ranald Macdonald and Richard Stahlberg. The poem’s unique concatenation of physically imposing manhood, nationalism, the citizenry of the nation, and national history is suggestively similar to the makeup of totally competent men who combine powerful physiques with life trajectories and skill sets that draw from the full spectrum of the Canadian populace and unify the complete breadth of the nation’s history. If “Canada” constitutes an anxious call to engagement with the nation, it is a call, the poem implies, that is best or, at least, most appropriately and

effectively answered by men like Ranald and Richard.⁹

The complex networking of nationalism, masculinity, and literature found in “Canada” recurs throughout nineteenth-century Canadian literature, not least, in the prefaces, critical materials, and cultural statements surrounding this literature. In addition and most important, these supplementary documents usefully illustrate the interplay between the new nationalism, the emerging concept of Canadian literature, and the figure of the totally competent man that characterised the period between Confederation and the end of the century. The following sections of this chapter discuss the relationships established between masculinity, nationalism, and literature with particular attention to aspects of these relationships that relate to the totally competent man in three texts published in the decade of Confederation (Edward Hartley Dewart’s *Selections from Canadian Poets* (1864), Henry J. Morgan’s *Bibliotheca Canadensis or a Manual of Canadian Literature* (1867), R. G. Haliburton’s address, “The Men of the North and Their Place in History” (1869)) and in two texts by the second generation of Canadian nationalists (W.D. Lighthall’s *Songs of the Great Dominion: Voices from the Forests and Waters, the Settlements and Cities of Canada* (1889) and G. Mercer Adam’s edition of Joseph Edmund Collins’s *Canada’s Patriot Statesman: The Life and Career of the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald* (1891)). This discussion begins with a brief exploration of some of the more salient influences on Roberts’s poem, on the work of Morgan, Dewart, Haliburton, Lighthall and Adam, and, more generally, on nineteenth-century Canadian literary nationalism.

I

Romantic Nationalism/Canadian Nationalism: The Origins and Influences of Nineteenth-Century Canadian Literary Nationalism

9

Roberts was himself presented as an example of the totally competent man and, thus, a model of the ideal respondent to his own poem. See the discussion of Roberts’s friend W.D. Lighthall’s representation of the poet in the third section of this chapter.

As the title of this section indicates and is now well established, nineteenth-century Canadian nationalism was a species of the Romantic nationalism that inspired nationalist movements in Europe and the Americas from the late eighteenth-century through to the middle of the nineteenth-century. More specifically, literary Canadian nationalism was in communication with and often under the influence of the Young Ireland and Young England movements. Of the two, Young Ireland had the more sustained and profound influence.¹⁰ The core concepts of Irish nationalism were introduced to Canada by Thomas

¹⁰

Young Ireland was the disparaging name given by an English journalist to the nationalistic group of Repeal Association members associated with the newspaper *The Nation*. In "Patterns of Nationalism, 1842-1870" in *Nationalism in Ireland*, D. George Boyce provides a succinct account of the formation and naming of Young Ireland, and, in *The Young Ireland Movement*, Richard Davis offers a more comprehensive history of the movement, its inception, its principle and peripheral actors, and its dissolution. In brief, the group came together in the late 1830s, launched the newspaper whose name "became almost a synonym for the . . . movement" (Davis 2) on 15 October 1842, and fell apart after the 1848 rebellion failed and key members either fled Ireland or were transported. Although Young Ireland's membership was reasonably large and somewhat fluid, Davis identifies three men as "[t]he nucleus of the group" (2): Thomas Osborne Davis, poet and the author of the famous Irish rebel song "A Nation Once Again," Charles Gavan Duffy, the editor and proprietor of *The Nation* and later in life the historian of the movement, and John Blake Dillon, a writer and politician. The movement also eventually included Duffy's protégé Thomas D'Arcy McGee. Thomas Osborne Davis gave the newspaper its name and, in the "Prospectus" published in the first issue, detailed the goals its three founders hoped to achieve: "The necessities of the country seem to demand a Journal able to aid and organize the new movements going on amongst us — to make their growth deeper, and their fruit more racy of the soil — and, above all, to direct the popular mind and the sympathies of educated men of all parties to the great end of nationality" (qtd. in Sillard 3). Like Davis' choice of name for the newspaper, with its parallel emphasis on making the "fruit [of Irish nationalist movements] more racy of the soil," and on the connection between literature and national consciousness, his prospectus reflected his engagement with German Romantic nationalism. Patrick O'Neil points out in *Ireland and Germany: A Study in Literary Relations* that "[t]he struggle towards cultural re-nationalisation in Ireland followed almost exactly the same lines as it had in Germany, and the ideas, principles, and methods of [Gotthold Ephraim] Lessing and Herder were enthusiastically adopted by Davis and Young Ireland" (121). Davis and his fellow Young Irelanders self-consciously conceived of themselves as the Irish inheritors of the German nationalists, and of their literary productions as Irish versions of the work of their German predecessors. O'Neil observes: "When we compare the effects of Herder's collection of

D'Arcy McGee, an ex-member of the movement,¹¹ during the lead-up to Confederation and formed the basis of his vigorous and consequential co-promotion of Canadian nationalism and Canadian literature from the late 1850s until his death in 1868.¹² In the following generation, Joseph Edmund Collins continued McGee's legacy, adopting many of the ideas of the Young Ireland movement and transmitting them to the Confederation group and their circle.¹³ Another important feature of post-Confederation Canadian

popular poems in the 1770s with the effects of Davis' national poems in the 1840s it seems clear that Davis . . . was indeed . . . consciously trying to do for Ireland what Herder had done for Germany" (100).

11

When in Ireland, McGee was a protégé of Charles Gavan Duffy, one of the core members of the Young Ireland movement. David A. Wilson describes Duffy and McGee's relationship in the first volume of his recent biography of McGee, *Thomas D'Arcy McGee: Passion, Reason, and Politics 1825-1857*.

12

See Carl Balstadt's illustration of the important influence of Thomas D'arcy McGee on the conception of Canadian literature in "Thomas D'Arcy McGee as a Father of Canadian Literature."

13

Bentley details the influence of the Young Ireland movement and, in particular, of the ideas of the Young Ireland movement as introduced to them by Collins on the Confederation group in "Young Canada: 1880-1884," the first chapter of *The Confederation Group of Canadian Poets, 1880-1897*. The Confederation group was also influenced by Young England, but Young England's impact on the group was less obvious and less substantial than that of Young Ireland. Assessing the influence of Young England, Bentley concludes that "[i]t is . . . as difficult to discount Young England as a presence in the background of the Confederation group as it is to distinguish whatever impact it may have had on their literary nationalism from that of Young Ireland" (*Confederation Group* 40). Bentley explains that "[o]ne reason for this is that Young England, Young Ireland, and Young Canada are all offshoots of . . . Romantic nationalism" (*Confederation Group* 40). One could add Young Italy and Young Germany to the list of nationalist movements that resemble post-Confederation Canadian nationalism and, in particular, the Young Canada movement of the early 1880s. For Young Italy, Young Germany, Young Ireland, Young England and Young Canada were all "offshoots of . . . Romantic nationalism," sharing a progenitor and a resulting familial resemblance. Because the influence of Young England (or, for that matter, the other movements it resembles) is less pervasive than that of Young Ireland and not readily distinguishable from it, this section will focus specifically on Young Ireland and the

nationalism, if not its definitive feature, was the powerful, informing belief derived from Romantic nationalism that literature plays a crucial role in shaping, securing, and safeguarding the emerging nation. Beckow observes in his helpful article “From the Watch-Towers of Patriotism: Theories of Literary Growth in Canada, 1864-1914,” from Confederation until the First World War, “Canadians, concerned with the necessity of forging a distinctive and strong ‘national character,’ looked to literature to isolate the best in the country’s populace and situation, influence Canadians to exploit their national potential for greatness, and illuminate the choices to be made to achieve this promised greatness” (5). The belief in the national value of literature reflected the influence of German Romantic philosophers like Johann Gottfried Herder and Karl Wilhelm Friedrich Schlegel who “argued that literature, especially poetry, is an essential ingredient of national consciousness and cohesion” (Bentley, *Confederation Group* 40). As Bentley points out, it was via the intermediary of Young Ireland that German Romantic nationalism exerted much of its influence on Canadian nationalism.

Many early Canadian nationalist literary projects bear the impress of the German and Irish works that preceded them. At least in their intent if not always in their effects, with books like McGee’s *Canadian Ballads and Occasional Verses* (1858), Dewart’s *Selections from Canadian Poets* and Lighthall’s *Songs of the Great Dominion*, nineteenth-century Canadian nationalists were consciously trying to do for Canada what the members of Young Ireland did for Ireland and what Herder did for Germany. McGee’s “[b]allads” and Lighthall’s designation of Canadian poems as “[s]ongs” seem to directly reproduce (given his membership in Young Ireland, especially directly in McGee’s case) Young Ireland’s promotion of Irish Ballads exemplified by the popular¹⁴ and influential *The*

German Romantic nationalism out of which Young Ireland and the other romantic nationalist movements developed.

¹⁴

Gavan Duffy points out in his “Preface” to the fourth edition that the first three editions sold out in less than a month (v).

Ballad Poetry of Ireland (1845), an anthology collected by Charles Gavan Duffy, one of the core members of the movement. At the very least, these Canadian books reflect the connection between nationalism, folk literature and popular songs, and literature that was an important feature of both German romantic nationalism and Young Ireland's program of re-nationalization. As Canadians followed the example of Young Ireland, "[R]acy of the soil' . . . found a Canadian habitation and name" (Bentley, *Confederation Group* 69), and nineteenth-century Canadian nationalism took on the contours of German Romantic nationalism. In addition to a conviction in the importance of "raciness"¹⁵ and the role of literature in nation formation, Canadian nationalists inherited from German Romanticism via the intermediary of Young Ireland three features that are of specific importance to this study: a conception of the nation as a union of disparate, often antagonistic, groups; a tendency to associate nationalism with masculinity, in particular, with robust, heroic forms of masculinity; and, an environmental determinism that manifested itself in a belief in the importance of Canada's northerness or nordicity.

When Young Ireland emerged, the Irish political scene was deeply riven by sectarian and political divisions that members of the movement sought to resolve by "creat[ing] political consensus through an inclusive nationalist project" (Dugger 471), proposing a national identity that would unite the Irish in spite of their many differences. In his "Prospectus" to *The Nation*, the newspaper founded by Young Ireland for this purpose, one of its most important spokesmen, Thomas Osborne Davis, outlined

15

As well as employing the phrase "racy of the soil," Young Irelanders used "raciness" to denote the quality of being complexly and deeply rooted in Irish culture, tradition, and history. For example, in his "Introduction" to *The Ballad Poetry of Ireland*, Charles Gavan Duffy writes:

The snatches of old sayings that imply so much more than they express; the traditional forms into which the liquid thought runs as unconsciously as the body drops into its accustomed gait; the familiar beliefs and disbeliefs that have become a second nature as much a part of himself as the first; the very tone and accent of passion by which his ear and heart were first mastered; these and a hundred other involuntary influences help to colour and modulate the poet's verse and to give it the charm of native *raciness*. (xxiii-xxiv, emphasis added)

a nationality which [would] embrace Protestant, Catholic, and Dissenter, Milesian and Cromwellian, the Irishman of a hundred generations, and the stranger who is within our gates; not a nationality which would preclude civil war, but which would establish internal union and external independence — a nationality which would be recognised by the world, and sanctified by wisdom, virtue, and time. (qtd. in Sillard 3)

This nationalism “embrace[s]” rather than erases the various, conflicting sub-groups that make up the Irish population, incorporating them into a unified national community in which their differences are preserved rather than expunged. Davis and his fellow Young Irelanders would consistently endorse a generously ecumenical or catholic nationalism, rather than a narrow or exclusionary one. The influence of this aspect of Young Ireland’s nationalism is most obvious in the writings of McGee. The Irish-Canadian Father of Confederation encouraged diversity just as enthusiastically as he promoted Canadian nationalism, imagining the new nation drawing strength from the impressive variety of its component parts. In his address “The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion,” he described the attitude that should characterise the new nationality: “I mean a mental condition, thoughtful and true; national in its preferences, but catholic in its sympathies; gravitating inward, not outward; ready to learn from every other people on one sole condition, that the lesson when learned has been worth acquiring” (McGee 2). Carl Balstadt points out that “[i]t appears that McGee, recognizing the varied ethnic nature of Canada, was striving for a moderate nationalism that would be characterized by ‘justice and courtesy, and magnanimity’” (91). And one can add to “justice and courtesy, and magnanimity” the crucial characteristic of Young Ireland’s Irish nationalism and McGee’s Canadian nationalism: “diversity.” Via McGee, among other influences,¹⁶ Young Ireland’s catholic nationalism had a lasting effect on Canadian nationalism, finding a home, as will be shown, in the writings of literary nationalists from Dewart, Morgan and Haliburton to Lighthall, Roberts, Adam, and, as has been seen in the discussion of the chiasmatic

16

See Bentley’s chapter “Young Canada: 1880-1884” in *The Confederation Group* for a discussion of several of the other important lines of influence that connected Young Ireland and post-Confederation Canadian nationalism.

treatment of Wolfe and Montcalm in “Canada,” Roberts.

Along with a generous catholicity, the German Romanticism>Young Ireland>Canadian nationalism line of transmission brought to Canadian literary nationalism a habit of associating nationalism and masculinity, and a related belief in the national importance of heroic manhood. The figure at the centre of this aspect of the influence of Romantic Nationalism and Young Ireland on Canadian nationalism is, quite predictably, the Victorian apostle of both German Romanticism and the hero, the author of *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (1841), Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle was one of the points of connection between Young Ireland and the German Romantics, and his ideas exerted considerable influence on the Irish nationalists.¹⁷ Moreover, his theory of the hero has deep roots in German Romanticism. In *Carlyle and German Thought: 1819-1834*, Charles Frederick Harold acknowledges that some of “the sources of [Carlyle’s] hero-theory” include “the ‘original genius’ of the eighteenth century; Hume’s theory of the deification of ‘mortals, superior in power, courage, or understanding,’ [and] the Romantic Rebels glorified in the work and the characters of Shelley and Byron” (181), and then explains that the primary sources of the theory are

17

O’Neill speculates:

A possible mediating influence between Young Ireland and Germany might well have been supplied by Thomas Carlyle, an enthusiastic champion of German values: he was acquainted with Mitchel, and several of the other leading Young Irelanders, knew Charles Gavan Duffy well, and contributed some translations from Jean Paul to *The Nation* as early as January 1843. (101-02)

In addition to providing the Young Irelanders with friendship and possibly introducing them to some of the work of the German Romantics, Carlyle set the tone for the thought of the core members of the movement. As Davis explains, “[t]he chief *Nation* contributors . . . secretly attended ‘frugal’ supper parties in their different houses on Saturday nights” (31), and at these gatherings the conversation turned so regularly to the enthusiastic appreciation of Carlyle’s work that they were soon dubbed “tea and Thomas” (Duffy, qtd. in Davis 32). These suppers and, in particular, Duffy’s personal passion for Carlyle had a significant impact on McGee, and the “influence of Carlyle, mediated through Gavan Duffy, is evident” (Wilson 111) in McGee’s work for *The Nation* and his subsequent writings on Canadian nationalism.

four German Romantics:

Goethe embodied [the hero]; Fichte conceptualized [the hero]; Novalis and Schiller added illuminating phrases; and Carlyle himself, with his wide knowledge of history, his eagerness to discern revelation in the world of fact, and his natural reverence for greatness, rounded out a doctrine which became the most popular of his teachings. (182)

There is ample evidence that Carlyle's (German) Romantic belief in the historical importance of heroism and heroic men found fertile ground in Young Ireland. In their work, the core members of the movement sought to affirm heroic virtues, celebrate the heroic past of the nation, and promote Irish national heroes – that is, to articulate and disseminate an heroic version of Irish history intended as an inspirational blueprint for the nation's future.¹⁸ McGee's *Canadian Ballads and Occasional Verses* is dedicated to

18

In his "Prospectus" to *The Nation*, Davis explains that among the editors' goals are to "inflare and purify [their people] with a lofty and *heroic* love of country" (qtd. in Sillard 3, italics added). In his "Introduction" to *The Ballad Poetry of Ireland*, Duffy, the most Carlylean of the Young Irelanders, argued that "[p]oetry[']s . . . special task . . . is to keep alive the *heroic* virtues" (xi, emphasis added). Duffy went on to directly associate a nation's literature, its heroic past as portrayed in its literature, and the heroism of its men:

Every household in Scotland, from the peasant-farmer's upwards . . . has its copy of Burns, lying side by side with the family bible. The young men, nurtured upon this strong food, go forth to contend with the world; and in every kingdom of the earth they are to be found, filling posts of trust and honour, trustfully and honourably. In Germany every boy . . . learns the ballads of Schiller and Goethe in his first catechism; and from boyhood to old age they furnish a feast that never palls, and a stimulant that grows stronger with use. In the Northern countries the national *skalds* . . . are still sung or circulated habitually as a section of their permanent literature. In Aragon and Castile the chronicles of the Cid, and the ballads of their long and heroic struggles against the Moor, still feed that noble pride of race, which lifts the Spanish people above the meaner vices, and makes them in spirit and conduct a nation of gentlemen. (xlvi-xlvii)

Duffy hopes that his collection will "exercise a corresponding influence" (xlvii) and that "a great Peasant-Poet may [as a result] be sooner or later expected to arise" (xlviii). In describing the Peasant-Poet "giv[ing] voice and form to sentiments and aspirations which are the common property of the entire people" (Duffy xlvii), Duffy's recalls Carlyle's hero as poet, who can give "a Nation . . . an articulate voice" and "who will speak-forth melodiously what the heart of [the nation] means" (Carlyle 114).

Charles Gavan Duffy, McGee's mentor and one of the founding members of Young Ireland. It is almost certain that McGee's assertion in the "Preface" to his book that "[i]t is . . . glorious to die in battle in defence of our homes or altars; but not less glorious is it to live to celebrate the virtues of our heroic countrymen, to adorn the history, or to preserve the traditions of our country" (vii-viii) and the ballads he includes on famous Canadian men like Jacques Cartier, Sebastian Cabot, Henry Hudson and René-Robert Cavelier, Sieur de LaSalle are the direct result of the influence of the passionately Carlylean Duffy. Thus one can trace a more or less straight line of influence from Carlyle's German Romantic, heroic masculinity via the masculinist nationalism of Young Ireland to Canadian literary nationalism.¹⁹ Indeed, Roberts's "Canada" can be seen as a

19

This line of influence lies in the background of, if not immediately behind, Roberts' "confidently masculinist perspective" (Bentley, *Confederation Group* 71) on Canadian nationalism in "Canada." With its personification of the nation as a "giant-limbed, leoninly powerful [man] possessed of 'manhood's heritage'" (Bentley, *The Confederation Group* 71), its exhortation to Canadian men to "Seek higher / The place of race and age," and its reference to historic heroes like Cartier, Champlain, Montcalm and Wolfe, Roberts's poem stands firmly in the tradition of masculinist Romantic nationalism endorsed by Carlyle, practised by the Young Irelanders and brought to Canada by McGee. This is not to say that Roberts was under the direct influence of McGee. Bentley suggests that the link to Young Ireland that most probably lies behind "Canada" is the Irish-born journalist, lawyer, politician, and poet Nicholas Flood Davin, and speculates that Roberts' poem registers the influence of Davin's "The Future of Canada":

It is also difficult to ignore the possibility that Davin's unusual conception of Canada as a 'strong,' male 'child' growing towards the maturity indicated in republican Rome by the wearing of the toga lies in the background of Roberts' depiction of the country in 'Canada' as a 'Child of nations, giant-limbed' who, as yet, 'stand'st among the nations ... with unanointed brow.' (*Confederation Group* 31)

Davin was a strong proponent of Canadian nationalism and Bentley raises the possibility that "[i]n [Joseph Edmund] Collins's (and, it may safely be assumed, Roberts's) reading of [Davin's essay] 'Great Speeches' may lie the inciting moment of the Confederation group – the motivating contact with the assumptions and perceptions that would power the Young Canada phase of their development" (*Confederation Group* 28). Rather than being the sole link between Carlylean heroism and early Canadian nationalism, McGee was one, albeit an important one, of many conduits by which ideas that soon became commonplace were introduced to Canada. For instance, Young Ireland and McGee were far from the only means by which Carlyle's immensely popular hero-theory exerted an

point of convergence of the influence of Carlyle, Young Ireland, and McGee that thus gestures towards the complex lineage of “the masculinist assumptions that permeated the writing and context of the Confederation group” (Bentley, *Confederation Group* 31) and post-Confederation nationalism more generally. From this perspective, “Canada” is powerfully suggestive of the extent to which the writing and context of Canadian nationalists was shaped by and complexly indebted to a particularly masculinist brand of Romantic nationalism.

One further aspect of the influence of Romantic nationalism, in particular of German Romantic nationalism, on Canadian nationalism merits consideration. Bentley points out that the Confederation group in particular and, one may add, post-Confederation nationalists in general ascribed to “a concept of environmental determinism whose roots lay in Locke’s theory of mental development and Herder’s theory of national identity” (*Confederation Group* 145). Indeed, the belief that national culture is determined by national geography forms the basis of Herder’s concept of the nation and features prominently in “the German Romantic political ideology of nation formation” that, Renée Hulan observes, “had a formative effect on the development of the Canadian state” (8). Hulan makes this observation in *Northern Experience and the Myths of Canadian Culture*, and arguably the most important expression of environmental determinism in nineteenth-century Canada was a conviction that Canada’s northernness or nordicity defined the new nation, and guaranteed its imminent greatness. Like the Romantic nationalism with which it was bound up, this conviction was an effect of the influence of German Romanticism, and of the longstanding German belief in the importance, value and essential goodness of nordicity.

Hulan explains that among “the profound influence[s] of the German Romantics

influence on post-Confederation Canadian nationalism. As Bentley explains, “[a]t university and for sometime afterwards, Lampman was heavily under the influence of Carlyle” (*Confederation Group* 19), and it hardly needs saying that many more Canadian literary nationalists were familiar with and swayed to greater or lesser degrees by the Victorian sage.

on nineteenth-century literary criticism” was the “determin[ation] [of] the relative merit of literature from the ‘sensual South’ versus that from the ‘disciplined North’” (7). The German Romantic distinction between a manly, vigorous, healthy and moral north and an effeminate, decadent, sickly and deviant south has its roots in the Roman historian Cornelius Tacitus’ *Germania; or, On the Origin and Situation of the Germans*. Tacitus used the Germans, who had famously and successfully resisted the Roman legions for some 200 years, as a means of criticising the Romans, establishing a north/south dynamic in which the north and northern peoples are emphatically positive, conclusively ascendent. In *Landscape and Memory*, Simon Schama comments on the contents of *Germania*:

Yet had any Romanized Germans ever read their first ethnography, they might still have been flattered rather than insulted by their characterisation as dwellers in swamps and woods. For though Tacitus makes them ferocious primitives, he also invests them with natural nobility through their instinctive indifference to the vices that had corrupted Rome: luxury, secrecy, property, sensuality, slavery. They were, in strong contrast to the Romans, bereft of wine and letters, a “people without craft or cunning” (77).

The *Germania* was rediscovered by Poggio Bracciolini during the Renaissance and, when reprinted in 1496, in Schama’s suggestive phrase, “came to lodge permanently in the bloodstream of German culture” (77), having a profound effect on, among many others, the German Romantics. The German concept of nordicity followed a similar line of transmission as Romantic nationalism, travelling from the German Romantics via Carlyle, Young Ireland, and McGee to Canadian nationalism.²⁰

Carlyle’s first lecture in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*,

²⁰

This is not the exclusive line of transmission of this idea. The influence of German Romanticism, especially as conveyed by the immensely popular work of Carlyle, was so pervasive that it would be profoundly inaccurate to suggest that any single line of influence (or, even, any handful of lines of influence) is responsible for introducing this idea to Canadian culture and, in particular, to Canadian literary nationalism. That said, it is difficult to overestimate the lasting and substantial effects of the transmission of the German concept of nordicity via the German Romantic>Carlyle>Young Ireland>McGee>Canadian nationalism line of influence.

“The Hero as Divinity,” uses Odin as its primary example, and, unsurprisingly, manifests throughout the influence of the German Romantic concept of nordicity. Carlyle includes a broad range (Danes, Norse, Saxons and, even, the Scots) of northern races under the umbrella term “Northmen.” In a passage that echoes the *Germania*, he declares:

To me there is in the Norse System something very genuine, very genuine, very great and manlike. A broad simplicity, rusticity, so very different from the light gracefulness of the old Greek Paganism, distinguishes this Scandinavian System. It is Thought; the genuine Thought of deep, rude, earnest minds, fairly opened to the things about them; a face-to-face and heart-to-heart inspection of the things, – the first characteristic of all good Thought in all times. Not graceful lightness, half-sport, as in the Greek Paganism; a certain homely truthfulness and rustic strength, a great rude sincerity discloses itself here. (Carlyle 19)

Given Duffy’s enthusiasm for Carlyle, it is more than possible that *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* prompted Duffy to reference “the nation *skalds*” of the “Northern countries” (xlvii) in his “Introduction” to *The Ballad Poetry of Ireland*, his immensely popular anthology of Irish folk songs and poetry. Given Duffy’s impact on McGee, whether directly or indirectly through Duffy, it is likely that Carlyle’s Romantic nordicity had a substantial influence on the Father of Confederation’s conception of Canada as a soon-to-be-great northern nation. Balstadt points out that, probably in at least partial imitation of Carlyle, “[t]hroughout his life in Canada McGee never wear[ed] of setting forth Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Denmark and Finland as examples to Canadians of northern countries which have revealed their richness in history, poetry and astronomy” (87). McGee regularly suggested that Canadians could aspire to similar accomplishments:

Cannot Newfoundland yield topics to the poet, or a new Urania to another Tycho Brahe? Cannot Canadian story supply the material for chronicles, equal in interest to those of Snorro, or to poetry as characteristic as “Frithiof’s Saga”? Has not Longfellow gone for his noblest themes to the Basin of Minas, and the Old Acadian life? Have we not in our wide northwest materials equal to any that Theodore Mudge has gleaned from the Laps? (qtd. in Balstadt 87)

Furthermore, McGee’s description of the Scandinavian’s veneration of their “poets, orators and historians” is so strongly reminiscent of Carlylean hero-worship as to almost conclusively establish *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* as one of the

sources of his northern nationalism:

Busts and statues of their poets, orators and historians, adorn the parks and squares of Stockholm and Copenhagen; garlands are annually, in the season of flowers, placed upon their tombs, and choruses in their honor are chaunted around them on their anniversaries. Thus is the noble passion for mental distinction kept actively alive in successive generations of Scandinavian people. (qtd. in Balstadt 93)

This combination of hero-worship and nordicity by, arguably, the most catholic of Canadian nationalists illustrates the concatenation of a generously inclusive conception of the national polity, a robust, heroic national manhood, and the northernness of the nation typical of many of the key texts of nineteenth-century Canadian literary nationalism.

As observed at the close of the opening discussion of “Canada,” Canadian literary nationalists drew nationalism, masculinity, and literature together in a network of mutually supporting and reinforcing relationships: manhood was national, the nation was literary, literature was masculine, and so on. The complex of manhood, literature, and nationalism was complemented by three additional concepts: catholicity, heroism and nordicity. Linked by a common origin in German Romantic nationalism, and a common line of transmission from German Romanticism to Canadian nationalism via Young Ireland, this trio of concepts was elegantly suited to responding to the specific challenges of the Canadian political, cultural and geographical context. The conglomerate of catholicity, heroism, and nordicity consistently inflected the nationalist equation of nation, literature and manhood such that the nation was inclusive, national manhood was heroic, literature was northern, the nation was northern, literature was heroic, national manhood was inclusive, and etcetera. In addition, with their combination of generous inclusivity, robust masculinity, and the determining influence of the environment, these three concepts contributed substantially to the emergence of the totally competent man, and did much to forge the links between this model of masculinity and Canadian nationalism. In his lecture on the hero as poet in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*, Carlyle writes:

the Hero can be Poet, Prophet, King, Priest or what you will, according to the kind of world he finds himself born into. I confess, I have no notion of a truly great man that could not be *all* sorts of men. The Poet who could merely sit on a chair,

and compose stanzas, would never make a stanza worth much. He could not sing the Heroic warrior, unless he himself were at least a Heroic warrior too. I fancy there is in him the Politician, the Thinker, Legislator, Philosopher; – in one or the other degrees, he could have been, he is all of these. (79)

The lecture's conclusion contains the emphatic statement "Yes, truly, it is a great thing for a Nation that it get an articulate voice; that it produce a man [a poet] who will speak-forth melodiously what the heart of it means" (Carlyle 114). Appearing in the work of a writer who mediated between the German Romantics and Young Ireland, drawing liberally from the first and powerfully influencing the second, this parallel insistence on the poet's breadth of competence and on his national importance suggests that the roots of the totally competent man run as deeply into Romantic nationalism as do those of post-Confederation Canadian nationalism.

II

Confederating a Canadian Literary Manhood, or McGee's Young Men: Dewart, Morgan, and Haliburton

Thomas D'arcy McGee's address "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion" given to the Montreal Literary Club in the year of Confederation concludes:

I am well convinced that there do exist, in the ample memories, the northern energy, and the quick apprehension of our young men, resources all unwrought, of inestimable value to society. I would beseech of that most important class, therefore, to use their time; to exercise their powers of mind as well as body, to acquire the mental drill and discipline, which will enable them to bear the arms of a civilised state in times of peace, with honour and advantage. If they will pardon me the liberty I take, I venture to address to them an apostrophe of a poet of another country, slightly altered to suit the case of Canada:

Oh brave young men, our hope, our pride, our promise,
On you our hearts are set,–
In manliness, in kindness, in justice,
To make Canada a nation yet! (21)²¹

21

The lines of the poem McGee concludes with are adapted from the final stanza of Samuel Ferguson's "Lament for Thomas Davis" first published in Ferguson's *Lament for the*

Invoking “northern energy” and designating Canada’s “young men” as the nation’s “most important class” at the end of a lecture that calls for a “new national character [that is] distinguished by a manly modesty” and is “catholic in its sympathies” (2), this passage is redolent of McGee’s inheritance of Romantic nationalism from Young Ireland. McGee stakes the nation’s future on the “hearty zeal [of its young men] for doing something in their own right, on their own soil” (20), effecting a conflation of the new nation and the new national manhood that reduces the nation to its “most important class” or, at the very least, makes the nation’s success wholly dependent on the success of this class. For McGee, Canada will be a nation defined by a northern manhood, or it will not be a nation at all.

Although McGee’s perspective on the new nation is explicitly masculinist and, at least in this regard, implicitly restrictive, he does not take a narrowly chauvinist view of the new national manhood. Nor does he recommend that Canada’s young men be defined by a limited masculinity. Rather, reflecting his appeal for a national “mental condition thoughtful and true; national in its preferences, but catholic in its sympathies . . . ready to learn from every other people on one sole condition, that the lesson when learned has been worth acquiring” (McGee 2), McGee endows the new nation’s young men with a broad range of features. Instead of identifying them with a single, definitive national trait (courage, honour, fortitude, loyalty, strength and etc.) or set of closely

Death of Thomas Davis (1847). The complete final stanza of the original reads:

Oh, brave young men, my love, my pride, my promise,

‘Tis on you my hopes are set,

In manliness, in kindness, in justice,

To make Erin a nation yet;

Self-respecting, self-relying, self-advancing,

In union or in severance, free and strong—

And if God grant this, then, under God , to Thomas Davis

Let the greater praise belong. (qtd. in Graves 44)

This provides further evidence of the substantial and pervasive influence of Young Ireland on Canadian nationalism. It also testifies to the masculinist bias of Young Ireland and nineteenth-century Canadian nationalism.

related traits, McGee sees the young men of the nation as “exercis[ing] their powers of *mind* as well as *body*” (emphasis added). In “bear[ing] the arms of a civilized state in times of peace,” they will comprehend both a facility for the work of peacetime and the militarism of wartime. What is more, they will exhibit “manliness,” “kindness,” and “justice” in equal measure. Like Carlyle’s hero as poet who has “in him the Politician, the Thinker, Legislator, Philosopher” (79), McGee’s young men possess “a large and generous [one might add, comprehensive] catholicity of spirit” (5) that is the antithesis of “narrowness[, . . . localism and egotism” (5). In “The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion,” McGee’s catholic nationalism is translated into the “mental outfit” of a nation that is “catholic in its sympathies” (2), and the nation’s “catholic sympathies” are expressed in the diversity of the national manhood’s defining features. More simply put, the diversity of the national polity is reflected in the diverse features of the class of men at the head of the new nation.

Although McGee does not go so far as to suggest that the new nation’s young men possess the breadth of competence that defines the totally competent man, his translation of catholicity from the communal identity of the nation to the individual identities of young Canadian men marks an important step in the development of the totally competent man as a privileged model of national manhood. Far from being specific to McGee, the conjunction of a broadly inclusive nationality and a broadly inclusive masculine identity in the context of a literary nationalism defined by nordicity, heroism and catholicity characterizes many of the literary nationalist texts published in the decade of Confederation. Dewart’s *Selections from Canadian Poets* (1864), Morgan’s *Bibliotheca Canadensis* (1867) and Haliburton’s “The Men of the North and their Place in History” (1869) in particular register the influence of McGee’s Romantic nationalism and to varying degrees mirror his vision of a catholic nation defined by an equally catholic national manhood.

The first anthology of Canadian poetry, Dewart’s *Selections from Canadian Poets*, displays the Romantic nationalist conviction that literature is one of the principle instruments of nation building. In his “Introductory Essay,” Dewart writes:

A national literature is an essential element in the formation of a national character. It is not merely the record of a country's mental progress: it is the expression of its intellectual life, the bond of national unity, and the guide of national energy. It may be fairly questioned, whether the whole range of history presents the spectacle of a people firmly united politically, without the subtle but powerful cement of a patriotic literature. (ix)

This passage is strongly reminiscent of Young Ireland's belief in the formative importance of a national literature, and several scholars have speculated that *Selections from Canadian Poets* registers the specific influence of McGee's Romantic nationalism. Balstadt, for example, points out that McGee's editorials in *The New Era* precede Dewart's anthology²² "and may, indeed, have influenced Dewart in his expression of ideas about Canadian literature" (86). The "basic premise" of the editorials – "no literature, no national life" – is "virtually the same" (Balstadt 86) as the observation that begins Dewart's essay. And Bentley follows Balstadt in suggesting that Dewart "may himself have been influenced by McGee" (*Confederation Group* 41). Dewart's assertion that "a national literature" shapes the "national character" – a term that comprehends both the communal identity of the nation and the individual identities of specific nationals – suggests that he shared McGee's interest in the formation of a strong national manhood. Furthermore, although it is not the main focus of his "Introductory Essay," the subject of Canadian masculinity does figure in the background of Dewart's discussion of the literature of the emerging nation.

Immediately after asserting the formative importance of a national literature, Dewart observes the ability of great writers to unite the nation:

it is easy to show, that, in the older countries of the world, the names of distinguished poets, enshrined in the national heart, are the watchwords of national union; and it has become a part of the patriotism of the people to honour and love their memory. To mention the names of Shakspeare and Burns, alone justifies this

22

The editorials in question are, in chronological order, "A National Literature for Canada" (June 17, 1857), "A Canadian Literature" (June 30, 1857), "Who Reads a Canadian Book?" (July 25, 1857), "Canadian Nationality–Literature" (January 26, 1858), and "Protection for Canadian Literature" (April 24, 1858).

assertion. It is to be regretted that the tendency to sectionalism and disintegration, which is the political weakness of Canada, meets no counterpoise in the literature of the country. (ix-x)

For Dewart, the nation's writers do not merely produce the "powerful cement of a patriotic literature" (ix), but, as objects of public veneration, they are themselves a crucial ingredient in the mortar that binds together the national community. This is reminiscent of Carlyle's hero-worship and may reflect the influence of McGee's description of the Scandinavian's reverential treatment of their "poets, orators and historians" (qtd. in Balstadt 93) in his editorial "Canadian Nationality – Literature." To the extent that Dewart echoes McGee and reproduces the Young Ireland movement and Carlyle's emphasis on the national importance of literary heroes, he places his anthology firmly in the tradition of the masculinist strain of Romantic nationalism.

Not surprisingly, his "Introductory Essay" implies that one of the effects of the work of Canada's two preeminent poets will be to form a community of like minded men defined equally by their manliness and their patriotism. Dewart awards "first place" (xvii) among Canada's poets to Charles Sangster. Describing Sangster and his work as robustly masculine and laudably nationalistic, Dewart remarks on "the richness and extent of his contributions, the originality and descriptive power he displays, the variety of Canadian themes on which he has written with force and elegance, his passionate sympathy with the beautiful in Nature, and *the chivalrous and manly patriotism* which finds an utterance in his poems" (xvii, emphasis added). In the anthologist's estimation, Alexander MacLachlan is a close second to Sangster. MacLachlan is just as "chivalrous and manly" as Sangster: "[b]ut in strong human sympathy, in subtle appreciation of character, in deep natural pathos, and in those gushes of *noble and manly feeling* which awaken the responsive echoes of every true heart, MacLachlan is . . . peerless" (Dewart xviii, emphasis added). MacLachlan's ability to "awaken the responsive echoes of every true heart" recalls Dewart's earlier descriptions of the aim of poetry: "[p]oetry is the medium by which the emotions of beauty, joy, admiration, reverence, harmony, or tenderness kindled in the poet-soul, in communion with Nature and God, is conveyed to the souls of others" (xi)

and “the object of poetry is to convey to others the emotions and conceptions which thrill the poet’s own soul, in his highest mental moods” (xvi-xvii). One might understand both of these instances of the verb “to convey” as “to communicate,” but, in the light of Dewart’s description of MacLachlan’s poetry “awaken[ing] . . . responsive echoes,” it is more correct to read them as “to transport,” as “to transmit,” or, even, as “to inculcate.” Between these three statements, Dewart presents poetry as the medium by which the “emotions and conceptions” of the poet are transferred to the reader such that in reading the poem the reader comes to feel and think what the poet felt and thought. Thus, in poetry, lies the possibility of forming and maintaining a like-minded, united community. Furthermore, Dewart explains, “it follows that the perfection of the medium [poetry] to which [the poet’s] thoughts are committed, is a matter of essential importance” (xvii) to the nation. “A national literature is an essential element in the formation of national character” (Dewart xi) because poetry, if not all literature, forms its readers in the image of its writers and, in so doing, establishes “the bond[s] of national unity” (Dewart ix).

The national character will be shaped by Sangster and MacLachlan and defined by, among their other distinguishing features, Sangster’s “chivalrous and manly patriotism” (Dewart xvii) and MacLachlan’s “noble and manly feeling” (Dewart xviii). Dewart’s repetition of the adjective “manly” intimates that, in keeping with his debts to Romantic nationalism and his emphasis on literary heroism, the new nation will have a distinctly masculine cast. In addition, there is a subtle suggestion in the “Introductory Essay” that the members of the masculine national community will be characterized by a broad range of features. In response to the “false conceptions” that poetry is “a tissue of misleading fancies, appealing chiefly to superstitious credulity, a silly and trifling thing, the product of the imagination when loosed from the control and direction of reason” (Dewart x), Dewart maintains that those who hold these views “ignore the essential unity of mind,” and declares that “[p]oetry is not the product of one faculty of the mind: it is the offspring of the whole mind, in the full exercise of all its faculties, and in its highest moods of sympathy, with all the truths of the worlds of mind and matter” (xi). This understanding of poetry as drawing on both “mind and matter” anticipates McGee’s

eighteen sixty-seven exhortation to Canadian manhood “to exercise their powers of mind as well as body” (McGee, “The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion” 21), and suggests that the national character formed by poetry will be a broad character, comprehending “all . . . faculties,” rather than focussing narrowly on one faculty or a handful of faculties to the exclusion of others. Although Dewart never goes as far as to nominate the “young men” of the nation as its “most important class” (McGee, “The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion” 21), his “Introductory Essay” lays out a vision of a prospective national community united by literature, and defined by a broad, masculine national character that is very much in keeping with McGee’s hopes for the new nation.

If, as Baldstadt and Bentley argue, Dewart was probably influenced by McGee, Morgan and his *Bibliotheca Canadensis* certainly were. In his brief survey of the efforts made by Canadians in support of Canadian literature in his address to the Montreal Literary Club, McGee refers appreciatively to Morgan and his work: “[a]nother most deserving man in a different walk – a younger man – but a man of very untired industry and laudable ambition – Mr. Henry J. Morgan, now of Ottawa, announces a new book of reference, *The Bibliotheca Canadensis*, which I trust will repay him for the enormous labour of such a compilation” (16). In addition, the epigraph on the title page of the *Bibliotheca Canadensis* is a truncated version of the final sentence of McGee’s address “American Relations and Canadian Duties” given to the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society in Quebec on 10 May, 1862:

All we have to do, is * * * each for himself – you and you, gentlemen, and all of us – to welcome every talent, to hail every invention, to cherish every gem of art, to foster every gleam of authorship, to honour every acquirement and every natural gift, to lift ourselves to the level of our destinies, to rise above all low limitations and narrow circumscriptions, to cultivate the true catholicity of spirit which embraces all creeds, all classes, and all races, in order to make of our boundless Province, so rich in known and unknown resources, a great new Northern nation. (qtd. in Dewart iii)²³

23

The complete sentence reads:

All we have to do, is, each for himself, to keep down dissensions which can only weaken, impoverish, and keep back the country; each for himself do all he can to

The contents of Morgan's "Introductory Remarks" and the structure of his book entire are, as one might expect given McGee's approbation and Morgan's choice of epigraph, very much in line with McGee's brand of Romantic Canadian nationalism.

In his "Introductory Remarks," Morgan reiterates McGee's much repeated (by McGee and other Canadian nationalists) assertion of the new nation's nordicity: "[i]t becomes every patriotic subject who claims allegiance to this our new northern nation to extend a fostering care to the native plant, to guard it tenderly, to support and assist it by the warmest countenance and encouragement" (viii). Invoking Canada's nordicity in a fervent exhortation of Canadians to make their nationalist sentiments the basis of nationalist actions, this sentence strikes much the same note as McGee's editorials in *The New Era* and the father of Confederation's appeal at the end of "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion" to the young men of Canada "to make Canada a nation" (20). Morgan follows McGee in giving the nation's young men a leading role in strengthening the new nationality and furthering the new national literature. He marks out the country's youth as his primary audience. Explaining that the production of the *Bibliotheca Canadensis* was motivated by

the not unworthy ambition to render some slight aid to the nascent Literature of our native country, by exhibiting to the rising youth of the New Dominion the extent of our intellectual development as evinced in the literary efforts which have from time to time been made in the country, and which would serve as examples and an incentive to those in the same field (vii),

Morgan positions the book as an attempt to establish a Canadian intellectual and literary

increase its wealth, its strength, and its reputation; each for himself—you and you, gentlemen, and all of us—to welcome every talent, to hail every invention, to cherish every gem of art, to foster every gleam of authorship, to honour every acquirement and every natural gift, to lift ourselves to the level of our destinies, to rise above all low limitations and narrow circumscriptions, to cultivate the true catholicity of spirit which embraces all creeds, all classes, and all races, in order to make of our boundless Province, so rich in known and unknown resources, a great new Northern nation. (McGee, "American Relations and Canadian Duties" 37)

tradition, and highlights the crucial role of “the rising youth of the New Dominion” in carrying that tradition forward. He goes on to draw attention to the already impressive contributions made by young Canadians to the nation’s literature, contributions made all the more impressive by the patriotism they display: “[t]here is just now, and has been for some years, a perceptible movement on the part of the two great branches, French and English, which compose our New nationality, and principally among the younger men, to aid the cause of Canadian Literature by their own personal contributions to that Literature” (viii). At the same time that he points to the work others have done “to aid the cause of Canadian Literature,” Morgan is not shy about foregrounding his own efforts. “This volume,” he writes, “is the result of many hours of painstaking toil,” and adds: “[i]t is an effort in the cause of National Literature, and as such I send it forth” (ix). What emerges from Morgan’s “Introductory Remarks” is an outline of a new nation defined by nordicity, a rising contingent of young male nationalists among whom Morgan counts himself, and the strenuous masculine effort of securing the nation’s future. Morgan is, by McGee’s own estimation, “a younger man . . . but a man of very untired industry and laudable ambition” (“The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion” 16). If McGee staked the nation’s future on the efforts of its “young men” (“The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion” 21), Morgan’s “many long hours of painstaking toil” (Morgan ix) and the contents of the book he assembled provide palpable proof that “that most important class” (McGee, “The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion” 21) was living up to the Father of Confederation’s expectations.

In addition to reproducing McGee’s particular mixture of nordicity, masculinism, and nationalism, Morgan displays a similarly generous approach to who counts as a Canadian, in essence, adopting McGee’s “true catholicity of spirit” as the organizing principle of his *Manual of Canadian Literature*. Morgan lists the authors included in his volume alphabetically according to their last names. As conventional as such a decision is, it is not a necessary nor an inevitable one. It does, however, serve to emphasise the commonality that underpins the new nationality, and make Morgan’s manual strikingly egalitarian and democratic. Specifically, the alphabetical ordering of the *Bibliotheca*

Canadensis effectively suppresses differences of race, culture, language, and religion in favour of the broadly and equally applied *Canadensis*, “of Canada,” or Canadian. For instance, the Mohawk chief Joseph Brant is listed next to John Brass, the French priest L’Abbé Brasseur de Bourbourg, and the Upper Canadian Barrister John Breakenbridge. Morgan of course records these writers’ differences in the biographical sections of their entries, but the exclusion of Brant’s native heritage, Brasseur de Bourbourg’s French heritage and Breakenbridge’s British heritage from the ordering framework of the *Bibliotheca Canadensis* implies that they are secondary to the basic Canadianness of the writers. Thus Morgan’s work solidifies the national polity by emphasizing the essential commonality of nationals and recognizing, but marginalizing, their differences. As well as “exhibiting . . . the extent of [Canada’s] intellectual development” (Morgan vii), the *Bibliotheca Canadensis* makes the quiet but forceful point that Canadians are Canadians first, and Canadians foremost.

Interestingly, Morgan’s organizational decision echoes, and may indeed register the influence of McGee’s approach to the new nationality in the address from which Morgan takes his epigraph: “A Canadian nationality, not French-Canadian, nor British-Canadian, nor Irish – Canadian – patriotism rejects the prefix – is, in my opinion, what we should look forward to, – that is what we ought to labour for, that is what we ought to be prepared to defend to the death” (“American Relations and Canadian Duties” 35).²⁴ In excluding authors’ religious, ethnic, racial, etc. identities from the structure of his manual, Morgan appears to be following McGee, and “reject[ing] the prefix” in favour of the singular, un-hyphenated new national identity. Whether or not McGee’s speech lies

24

This sentence directly echoes the sentiments expressed in Davis’ “Prospectus” to the *Nation*:

a nationality which [would] embrace Protestant, Catholic, and Dissenter, Milesian and Cromwellian, the Irishman of a hundred generations, and the stranger who is within our gates; not a nationality which would preclude civil war, but which would establish internal union and external independence—a nationality which would be recognised by the world, and sanctified by wisdom, virtue, and time. (qtd. in Sillard 3)

directly behind Morgan's organizational choice, the *Bibliotheca Canadensis* is clearly nationalist in its structure as well as in its intended effects. Morgan is self-consciously engaged in exhibiting the accomplishments of Canadians to Canadians, and, no less important, in making the authors whose work he catalogues into Canadians proper without a prefix.

What is most striking about Morgan's work is that, for all its ardently and deeply felt nationalism, it manifests a remarkable hospitality, and an impressive openness to the racial, linguistic or cultural other. As already observed, in the *Bibliographia Canadensis*, Brant, Brasseur de Bourbourg, and Breakenridge are equals within the neutral order of the alphabet. Moreover, Morgan's principle of selection (he includes authors born in Canada and abroad) implies that the *Bibliotheca Canadensis* and Canadian literature itself are open to anyone who chooses to live and write within the evolving geographical boundaries of the country of Canada. Indeed, although the book, as a physical object, is necessarily limited, its conceptual structure is not. The *Bibliotheca Canadensis* closes with an "Addenda" that adds twenty-one additional authors, and then includes a "Supplement" that tacks on twenty-six more.²⁵ This implies that the work of recording the literature of the new nationality, and limning the nation itself is a serial rather than a delimited work, and that the new nation remains open to a diversity of new nationals. In *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Benedict Anderson observes that "[t]he nation . . . has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations. No nation imagines itself coterminous with mankind" (7). It is certainly true Morgan is not "dream[ing] of a day when all the members of the human race will join [his] nation" (Anderson 7), but he is imagining a nation whose remarkably elastic boundaries appear capable of accepting immigrants from all other nations and incorporating them smoothly into the new nationality. In keeping with the spirit of its

25

The "Addenda" and the "Supplement" appear at the end of the first edition of the *Bibliotheca*. Presumably, they were added late in the printing process. They thus suggest that the book was conceived in the process of its production as a supplementary structure, not merely transformed into one after the fact.

epigraph, the *Bibliotheca Canadensis* outlines a genuinely catholic nation.

Unlike Dewart and McGee, Morgan does not conflate the catholicity of the *Bibliographia Canadensis* proper with the energetic masculinity of his “Introductory Remarks” to assert that the new national manhood – the nation’s “younger men” (Morgan x) – will be defined by a broad range of features and capabilities. There is a hint of breadth in the combination of Morgan’s call “to extend a fostering care to the native plant [Canadian literature], to guard it tenderly, to support and assist it by the warmest countenance and encouragement” (x) and his underlining of the strenuous effort of producing the volume. But this is only the barest of hints. The juxtaposition of the masculine physicality of “to guard,” the difficulties of literary scholarship, and the exhortation to tenderness and warmth is definitely in line with Dewart and McGee’s statements, but it is merely a suggestive juxtaposition, and does not constitute a conclusive comment on the breadth of competence or lack thereof of the new national manhood. Dividing them between the structure of his manual and his “Introductory Remarks,” Morgan keeps catholicity and national manhood more or less at arms length from each other. However, by emphasizing both, he contributes to the context that enables the translation of national catholicity into the breadth of competence of individual men, helping to set the stage for the emergence of the totally competent man, if not contributing more directly to the formation of that national type.

Like Morgan’s *Bibliographia Canadensis*, Haliburton’s “The Men of the North and Their Place in History” is substantially indebted to McGee. McGee’s writings were widely available and highly influential, and, by his own admission, Haliburton was a devoted admirer of the older man: in the midst of a discussion of national spirit and the essential role of national enthusiasm in forming nations, Haliburton compares McGee favourably to the Italian nationalist Giuseppe Garibaldi,²⁶ and mourns the country’s recent

26

Haliburton writes:

But for the wild aspirations of one man Italy would still be the home of the Bourbons. Garibaldi, though he would make but a poor minister of Finance and a bungling drill sergeant possessed what was of far greater value in the creation of a

loss.²⁷ “[i]t was this generous enthusiasm [the nationalist enthusiasm exemplified by Garibaldi and manifested by McGee] that gave the martyr of Union, the lamented McGee, such power, while his youthful, hopeful temperament attracted to him the affections of the young men of the Dominion” (6). In fact, Haliburton was one of the young men attracted to McGee, and, when Haliburton was in Ottawa in the late 1860s, he and McGee became friends and political allies. Haliburton was a leading advocate for a tariff on American coal, and he found a sympathetic ear and a willing supporter in the Irish-Canadian MP. Bonnie Huskins explains that Haliburton’s pamphlet “Intercolonial Trade: Our Only Safeguard Against Disunion” (1868) “is sometimes referred to as ‘McGee’s legacy,’ for Thomas D’Arcy McGee had discussed similar sentiments on the night of his assassination.” Significantly, there is a connection between Haliburton and McGee that suggests that there is a specific line of influence and a specific text by McGee lying behind “The Men of the North.” Both McGee’s “The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion” and Haliburton’s “The Men of the North” were delivered to the Montreal

nationality than financial skill or precision in drill; and his boyish enthusiasm, foolish though it might have seemed, proved to be a tornado that swept away every thing before it. He was long a dreamer, but his dream became at last infectious, and a whole nation began to dream of liberty. A disorganized ill-armed mob led by a wild visionary, was able to defeat the well-trained troops of Austria and the Bourbons, and to work out the dream of the dreamer—a united Italy. (5-6)

Given Garibaldi’s accomplishments, Haliburton’s equation of the Italian and the Irish-Canadian is high praise indeed.

²⁷

McGee was assassinated on April 7, 1868. Haliburton delivered his address on March 31, 1869, only slightly more than a week before the first anniversary of McGee’s death. It is both possible and appropriate to read “The Men of the North” entire not only as an expression of Haliburton’s own nationalism, but also, and no less, as a commemoration of McGee and his thought that pays tribute to the Irish-Canadian by perpetuating and extending McGee’s core beliefs, implicitly elevating McGee to the role of secular national saint. If Haliburton’s “Intercolonial Trade: Our Only Safeguard Against Disunion” is often referred to as McGee’s legacy, it may be just as legitimate to say the same of “The Men of the North.”

Literary Society.²⁸ Haliburton gave his address in 1869, two years after McGee's, and it is possible, even likely, that "The Men of the North" was influenced by "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion" in particular and not just by McGee's ideas in general.²⁹

Haliburton's description of the "young men of the Dominion" that McGee gathered around him may thus be a reference to McGee's own emphasis on the national importance of Canada's young men and/or a fairly direct allusion to the conclusion of McGee's "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion." Beyond this likely allusion connecting the two addresses, Haliburton picks up the key elements of McGee's nationalism as expressed in "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion" (nordicity, catholicity, and masculinity), intensifies them, and binds them together in his own address to form the basis of a prophetic vision of an ascendent northern nation. Indeed, as if completing the gesture towards a broadly competent northern man made by McGee at the end of "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion," Haliburton integrates McGee's catholicity into his description of northern manhood, envisioning an emergent national masculinity defined as much by its openness to a wide range of cultures and creeds as by the breadth of competence of northern/Canadian men.

In *Northern Experience*, Hulan summarizes the core concepts of Haliburton's address: "Haliburton . . . exhorted the members of the Montreal Literary Club to become the 'Northmen of the New Word' [and] signalled two issues that would become perennial in Canadian history . . . : the preoccupation with national unity and the relationship between national identity and the environment" (7). She makes the additional observation that "[t]he equation of race and nation is at the heart of Haliburton's comments" (7). The

28

Berger observes that Haliburton's address "was delivered in several centres in 1869" (53). However, the published versions of both Haliburton and McGee's speeches were delivered to the Montreal Literary Society in 1869 and 1867 respectively.

29

Berger observes that "McGee became [Canada First's] patron martyr and his speeches saluting the rising northern nation became their litany" (52), suggesting that it is possible, even probable, that Haliburton's address is directly indebted to McGee's "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion."

issues Haliburton foregrounds and the equation that he makes are the basic ingredients of a narrowly exclusionary vision of the new nation as a community whose unity and homogeneity are indistinguishable from each other – that is, of a vision of the new nation as a rigidly bounded community tightly united by an environmentally determined racial purity. However, the racial/national identity that Haliburton zealously promotes is, as far as national identities go, especially racialised/national ones, a strikingly and generously open one. Exhorting his audience to “in [their] national aspirations take a wider range and adopt a broader basis,” he explains “that the peculiar characteristic of the New Dominion must ever be that it is a Northern country inhabited by the descendants of Northern races,” and argues that the new nation consists of “a fusion of many northern elements which are here again meeting and mingling, and blending together to form a new nationality,” a nationality that “embrace[s] the Celt, the Norman French, the Saxon and the Swede [as] noble sources of national life” (Haliburton 2). In other words, Haliburton sees the new nation as being united by a singular (northern) racial identity that is at once unified and capacious enough to include, without strain, contradiction or dilution, all of the major ethnic/racial groups that make up the population of the country with the notable exception of Native Peoples.³⁰ Thus the address reproduces McGee’s parallel emphasis

30

Haliburton’s exclusion of Native Peoples from the new nation marks the limit of his generosity, and constitutes the address’ greatest rational and ethical failure. According to Haliburton’s own reasoning, the environmental determinism that secures the identity of the new nation should place the Native Peoples who have been influenced by the very same climactic factors as European Canadians on equal footing with them. Simply put, the logical implication of Haliburton’s argument is that Native Peoples are also northmen, also members of the “dominant race” (1). Haliburton, however, simply ignores this implication. He makes reference to Native Peoples twice over the course of the address. First, he compares Native Peoples to the “Ugrian or Turanian race” that was driven out of Europe by Indo-Europeans and explains that “the Indian tongue still lives and will forever survive in the names of the Mississippi, the Ohio, the Missouri, the Ottawa, and the Alleghanies” (9). Second, he discounts Huron, Mohawk, Micmac and any other Native language as a possible source for the name Canada. In both cases, Native Peoples are cordoned off from the list of ethnicities/races that make up the northmen of the new world. Furthermore, Haliburton goes on to make it clear that one of the defining characteristics of these new world northmen is that they are “sprung from old stock” (10)

on the nordicity and catholicity of Canada, and advances the thought of the father of Confederation by making catholicity an effect of nordicity and underpinning both with an environmentally deterministic conflation of race and nation. Like McGee's, Haliburton's Canada is homogenous in its sentiment and heterogeneous in its composition, but more complexly homogenous and more durably heterogeneous because both its homogeneity and its heterogeneity are guaranteed by its nordicity.

It is important to note that Haliburton's nordicity did not derive solely or necessarily primarily from McGee. Haliburton refers to the work of the eighteenth-century historian Edward Gibbon, whose *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* itself references Tacitus' *Germania*, and adopts and elaborates on the Roman's critique of Roman values and society. Most significantly, Haliburton specifically refers to the work of Tacitus himself, quoting the passage in the *Agricola* where he mourns the death of "his illustrious Father-in-law, the Roman General Agricola, the conquerer of Britain" (Haliburton 6) by way of a eulogy for McGee. As well as mourning and commemorating his father-in-law, in the *Agricola*, Tacitus provided a brief overview of the history, peoples and geography of Britain that, as in the *Germania*, favourably contrasts the simple purity of the northern Britons with the corruption and moral deterioration of their southern conquerors. The fact that Haliburton was sufficiently familiar with one of the lesser known of Tacitus' works to quote it at length strongly suggests that, although he does not mention the *Germania* in his address, he was directly familiar with that much more widely read text, rather than merely indirectly acquainted with it by way of Gibbon. Although Haliburton rails against the teaching of classics in Canadian "colleges and schools," and objects to those who "teach [Canadians] to speak their Northern tongue by the aid of what are known as 'the dead languages'" (8),

or from European roots. Thus Haliburton's empirically minded, if not strictly scientific, approach is distorted by a straightforward racism that causes him to violate the logic of his arguments and present Europeans as the privileged object of climactic influence. The implication of the address can be summed up: humans are determined by their environment, but Europeans are more fully human and more fully environmentally determined than Native Peoples.

he is himself a reasonably accomplished classicist whose own nordicity seems to be drawn in no small part from the same source as the nordicity of German culture in general and German Romanticism in particular.³¹ What is more, whether Haliburton came to Tacitus' nordicity via McGee's or to McGee's nordicity via Tacitus', his use of a passage from the *Agricola* as a eulogy for McGee is convincing evidence that the nordicity of "The Men of the North" was strongly inflected by the thought and writing of McGee, if not exclusively or directly derived from the Irish-Canadian father of Confederation.

In addition to rationalizing Haliburton's conflations of race and nation, and nordicity and catholicity, Haliburton's environmental determinism underpins the homology that he establishes between the nation and its male constituents. Haliburton introduces this homology with the analogy that begins his second paragraph: "With nations as with men, youth is the spring time of life, full of freshness, vigour, hope and generous enthusiasm, and it nearly invariable constitutes the purest, and the noblest period of their history" (1). This anticipates Roberts's personification of the nation in "Canada," and, like Roberts, Haliburton collapses the two terms of the trope on each other, conflating individual and collective identities. For Haliburton, the nation and the men of the nation are continuous with one another; both northern, they are shaped by the same climatic forces, and display the same features and characteristics. In his own words, "the peculiar characteristic of the New Dominion must ever be that it is a *Northern* country," and the peculiar characteristic of its citizens is that they are "the descendants of *Northern* races" (2, emphasis added); as an effect of their common nordicity, the nation and national men blur into each other, forming a coherent, organic conceptual unit. Thus the environmental determinism that conditions Haliburton's thought transforms the analogy "[w]ith nations as with men" into the homology "nations/men." And the title of Haliburton's address could just as easily be "The Nation of the North and its Place in History" or, even more accurately, "The Nation/Men of the North and its/their Place in

31

See the discussion of Schama's identification of Tacitus' *Germania* as the origin of German nordicity in the preceding section of this chapter.

History.” As the conflation of manhood and the nation, and the new nation’s catholicity are effects of the same cause, it is not in the least surprising that in Haliburton’s address the catholicity of the nation’s composition is mirrored by the broad range of characteristics that define both the new nation and the new national manhood. If Haliburton exhorts his audience to “take a wider range, and adopt a broader basis” (2), he follows his own advice when highlighting the salient features of both the Canadian nation and Canadian men.

Haliburton’s argument for Canadian men to embrace the nordicity of the new nation as a source of national vitality turns on a distinction that he draws between the wealth of nations and the spirit of nations. Complaining ironically, even bitterly, of the bureaucratic, non-heroic, non-populous and decidedly uninspiring character of the foundation of Canada, he writes that “Confederation has been the work, not of the people, but of able statesmen and politicians, and the august convention at which our constitution was framed, created as little excitement among the masses, as they would feel in the organization of a joint stock company, where the only question for the corporators is when they should sell, and for the public when they will be sold” (1). This complaint closely follows his exclamation on the inability of Canadian history to inspire Canadians with an adequately and appropriately fervent patriotism: “[w]hat is our past? What is our future? We have come forth from no historical struggle. We have no battle of Morgarten, no daring deeds of Tell, no Bunkerhill monument, no Faneuil Hall, no tradition of the stern patriotism of a Washington.³² Never did an infant nation crawl into existence in

32

Haliburton’s list is a list of exactly the sort of objects of patriotic fervour that he thinks Canada lacks. The Battle of Morgarten (November 13, 1315) saw the Swiss defeat the Austrian soldiers of the Holy Roman Empire. The victory contributed to the expansion of the Swiss Confederation, and thus stands as a crucial event in the history of the Swiss nation. William Tell was a folk hero venerated by Swiss nationalists since the early modern period. The Bunker Hill Monument (completed in 1843) was built to commemorate the Battle of Bunker Hill, a battle that was considered one of the turning points in the American Revolutionary War. Faneuil Hall is a marketplace and meeting hall in Boston, Massachusetts that was the site of a number of speeches by American revolutionary leaders like Samuel Adams. The final item in the list is, of course, a

such a humdrum, common place, matter of fact way” (1). The juxtaposition of nation-making battles and heroic sacrifices with the image of the nation as a “joint stock company” draws into stark relief the inability of a collective commitment to profit to compel allegiance in times of national crises. From Haliburton’s perspective, Confederation has secured the wealth of the nation, but mere wealth, mere “humdrum, common place, matter of fact” mercenariness cannot inspire the affective bonds required to bind nations together. Only national spirit can unite the nation and guarantee its future. Predictably, he proposes Canada’s nordicity as a source of national spirit and as a guarantor of both national greatness and national unity, concluding his complaints about Confederation with a rhetorical question that reiterates the distinction between the wealth and the spirit of nations: “but may not our snow and frost give us what is of more value than gold or silver, a healthy, hardy, virtuous, dominant race?” (1).

Although the distinction between national wealth and national spirit forms the basis for Haliburton’s argument for embracing the nordicity of the new nation, he does not simply reject the utilitarian capitalism that he sees as characterising Confederation in favour of a purely and exclusively Romantic perspective on the nation. Instead, he takes a “wider” perspective and a “broader basis,” pragmatically recognizing that both wealth and spirit are necessary for the health of a nation. The address’ opening sentences establish the equal value of the two terms of Haliburton’s opposition:

I do not come here this evening to speak to you of intercolonial and foreign trade, of canals and freights, or of our chances for the prize of commercial and maritime supremacy in the new world, topics which I have had the honour of discussing in the presence of business men, and through pamphlets and the press. Important as they [issues of trade and more generally the wealth of nations] may be, there are other subjects [the spirit of nations] of not less vital moment to the Dominion. (2)

Haliburton’s reference to his own not inconsiderable contributions to the ongoing debate about trade in pamphlets such as “Intercolonial Trade: Our Only Safeguard Against Disunion” demonstrates that he is a thoughtful capitalist, rather than a fanciful Romantic, and, moreover, that he has a real, rather than a merely rhetorical, commitment to Canadian

reference to George Washington, the first President of the United States of America.

prosperity. He goes on to reiterate in no uncertain terms his belief that wealth and spirit are of equal value and equal importance to nations, declaring that “‘Man cannot live by bread alone,’ nor can a people become a great nation by its commerce only” (2), and implying that wealth is necessary, if not sufficient, for a vital national life. He immediately clarifies: “National wealth without public spirit is like capital without enterprise. National spirit without trade is like enterprise without capital” (2). The chiasmatic structure of these sentences reinforces both the equivalence between “[n]ational wealth” and “[n]ational spirit,” and their essential difference. The address’ first paragraph entire makes it clear Haliburton sees national wealth and national spirit as the two necessary, opposed but equally valuable, and, because opposed but equally valuable, mutually completing elements of the nation. Thus, although the tenor of “The Men of the North” is emphatically Romantic nationalist, Haliburton’s understanding of the nation is expansive enough, generous enough, and pragmatic enough to contain, and even welcome, its opposite. As such, Haliburton’s nation is distinguished by a broad range of contrasting, but not conflicting, characteristics: it is in its “youth” (2), but it is rooted in the long history of northern races, and its people “practi[ce] the cool wisdom and the cautious indifference of old age” (2); its political origins are “humdrum [and] common place” (2), but its racial origins are “dominant” (2) and heroic; it is an artificial, politically constructed entity not unlike “a joint stock company” (2), but it is a natural, environmentally determined community; finally, its leaders are materialistic, self-interested “corporators” (2), but it is capable of evoking a unifying, altruistic “public spirit” (2). This breadth recalls the breadth that characterized the young men of the nation whom McGee called on in his earlier address to the Montreal Literary Club, and the balance that Haliburton strikes between national wealth and national spirit may even obliquely register the influence of the Father of Confederation’s exhortation to embrace both the material and the non-material dimensions of accomplishment – “to exercise [the] powers of mind as well as body” (“The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion,” 21). These similarities extend to Haliburton’s description of the men of the new nation: Haliburton and McGee’s versions of the new national manhood coincide in their emphasis on

youthfulness, and catholicity of character or breadth of competence.

Haliburton insists, often stridently, on the hypermasculinity of the men of the north throughout his address, repeatedly remarking on their health, vigour, and dominance. After stating that northmen are a “healthy, hardy, virtuous, dominant race” (2), he explains that “the children of the North inherit health and energy from the land of their birth [and] the North [has] been favoured by fate by having been the home of dominant races, that have made her name famous in history” (8). Later he reassures his audience that “though we have emigrated to the Western world, we have not left our native land behind, for we are still in the North, in the home of the Old Frost Giant, and the cold north wind that rocked the cradle of our race, still blows through our forests, and breathes the spirit of liberty into our hearts, and lends strength and vigour to our limbs” (10). Combining “strength,” “vigour” and the Norse figure of the Old Frost Giant, this passage anticipates Roberts’ “Child of Nations giant-limbed,” and figures the “*Northmen of the New World*” (Haliburton 10) as the preeminent ideal of muscular manhood.

Haliburton reinforces this image by contrasting the hypermasculine men of the north with the effeminate men of the south, describing how in the case of ancient Rome

[a] warm sun, and a luxurious vegetation had enfeebled the man, and developed the instincts of the brute. Instead of bringing forth a rich harvest of what was needed for the health and happiness of men, the soil was overrun by a rank vegetation, amid which the vilest weeds took the strongest hold. Even the effete superstitious of Old Egypt began to creep out of the grave, and finding a congenial soil were fattening on corruption and decay. (6)

The net effect of this straightforwardly black and white distinction between the strong, healthy, masculine, and morally upright north and the enfeebled, diseased, effeminate, and degenerate south is that the men of the north are not only hypermasculine but also (legitimately, even righteously) hyperaggressive. Haliburton writes that “[i]n every age such will be the title and the mission of the avengers, for to the end of time the North is destined to be ‘the Scourge of God’ upon the enervated and enervating South” (6), and he affirms this historical role with a litany of examples: for the Egyptians “Destruction cometh. *It cometh from the North*. The daughter of Egypt [was] confounded, and [was]

delivered into the hands of the people of the North” (3); the Assyrians are destroyed by “a people . . . come from the North . . . a great nation [that] hold the bow and the lance[,] [that] are cruel and will not show mercy” (4); and, in the case of degenerate Rome

[n]othing but a flood of waters could purify the earth [and] [t]he floodgates of the North were let loose, and nation after nation of ruthless savages swarmed over the civilized world, stern barbarians sparing neither age nor sex, neither the altar, nor the hearth. Millions perished. Cities the abodes of wealth and luxury were left without inhabitants, and whole provinces and vast fertile districts were in a few years converted into deserts. (6)

In the last of these three examples, the positive act of purification is, to adapt Haliburton’s own image, swamped and submerged by the excesses of the “ruthless savages.” Although they are “the Scourge of God,” the men of the north are, also and no less, indiscriminate mass murderers, destroyers of civilisations and despoilers of the earth. Thus what emerges from the first ten of the twelve pages of Haliburton’s address is a conception of the men of the north as a one-dimensional collection of the most typical and most extreme masculine characteristics that is so narrowly and starkly drawn as to surpass caricature in its flatness and excessiveness. However, as will be seen in a moment, in his closing paragraphs and his concluding poem, Haliburton shifts his tone and emphasis, substantially softening the “stern” character of the northman, and adding depth, complexity, and breadth to this model of manhood.

At the end of “The Men of the North,” Haliburton also turns to the women of the north, and remarks on the high esteem in which northmen hold northwomen: “[n]othing surprised the Romans more in the character of the Northern nations, than the respect paid by them to women” (11). Explaining that “[t]he respect which Northern women thus merited and received, developed in time into the romantic feeling of chivalry, and it still lingers in that deference which is paid in modern society to the sex” (11), he complains that the prevailing consensus among “our poets” that the “sunny South [is] ‘the land of love and song’” (11) is mistaken, and “domestic love and affection find *only* a congenial home in the North” (11, emphasis added). Northmen are thus at once the violent agents of divine retribution and the preeminent examples of affectionate lovers. They are at once

chivalrous and deferential, and “ruthless savages [who] spar[e] neither age nor sex” (6). In short, the northman incorporates the extremes of the epic and the domestic, and, in so doing, spans the full breadth of masculine action. Haliburton’s shift towards the domestic transforms the northman from a caricature of hypermasculinity into an ideal of manhood when manhood is understood in the fulness of its multiple, complex and contradictory possibilities. This sudden expansion of the northman’s defining characteristics is reiterated, and extended to the literature of the new nation in the poem that concludes the address, “The North – ‘The Land of Love and Song.’”

The poem varies wildly in quality and complexity, and its tone and form move abruptly between extremes that are, if not overtly contradictory, at least unreconciled within the context of the poem. “The North – ‘The Land of Love and Song’” begins with three short, mournful lines describing autumn. The sonorant rhyme – “flying,” “sighing,” and “dying” (11) – that unites these lines strikes a melancholic and wistful note that is appropriate to the “[f]ading and dying” (11) of the year, but is starkly at odds with the robust muscularity of nordicity. Although the form of the poem changes significantly, Haliburton maintains the mournful tone of the opening triplet through to the end of the triplet³³ that closes the first stanza:

Till I wept at the wail of the little birdie,
For I knew ‘twas the spirit of song I heard
That sang to me thus with the voice of a bird. (11)

The first of these three lines combines a sadness powerful enough to make the northman speaker weep (no mean feat given Haliburton’s characterisation of northmen) with the doggerel of “the little birdie,” uncomfortably mashing together solemn emotion and the lowest form of poetry. The uncomfortableness of the fit is exacerbated by the shift in sound that happens across the line. “[W]ept” and “wail” repeat the “w” of the “away” of the preceding lines, and their alliteration echoes the mournful, drawn out syllables of the

³³

Although these lines are not rhymed, they are here treated as a triplet because they are the only lines in the first stanza that begin at the left margin, and they consequently form a visually and formally distinct unit.

opening triplet. This onomatopoeic conjunction between the sound of the lines and the emotion that they describe is broken by the short, sharp, clipped sounds of “little birdie.” The speaker’s sentiment is further cheapened/undermined by the cumbersome, even ridiculous, rhyming of “heard” with “bird.” The juxtaposition of these lines with the first of the two quatrains discussed above broadens the scope of the contrast. Rather than ending with the first stanza, the sentence that contains this triplet continues into the second stanza, drawing together the weeping of the speaker and the robin’s farewell to the north. The effect of this is to shove the doggerel of “the little birdie” awkwardly together with the high seriousness of a nationalist encomium whose content consists of the key tenets of Haliburton’s environmentally determined nationalism. The sentence combines some of the poem’s best and some of its worst writing, violently and seemingly arbitrarily yoking together its highest and its lowest moments.

The phrase “little birdie” is also at the centre of the poem’s final example of sharp contrast and aesthetic disjunction. “The North – ‘The Land of Love and Song’” follows the robin’s migration to the south and its return. In the poem’s closing lines, The speaker transcribes the song the robin sings to celebrate its arrival:

The song of the little birdie,
 ‘We have come,
 We have come
 To the land of our home
 From far across the sea;
 We have come,
 We have come,’
 And the woods whisper ‘come,’
 And my heart it says ‘come’ to the little birdie,
 For I knew ‘twas the spirit of song I heard,
 That sang to me thus with the voice of a bird. (12)

“Come” – in both the phrase “We have come” and alone in the eighth and ninth lines of the stanza – gathers significance as it is repeated across eight lines, functioning as both an invitation to embrace the national community and as an affirmation of that collectivity’s full emergence. “We have come” is the song of the little birdie, but, as it is repeated, it becomes the incantatory affirmation of the confederation of the audience of the address as

a community of nothernmen, and, beyond this, of the confederation of the new, northern nation in its entirety. The imperative “come” and the present perfect “We have come” draw together the paradoxical newness and antiquity of Haliburton’s Canada, signalling on the one hand that the new nation is very much still in the process of formation and on the other that its nordicity roots it in prehistory. The stanza builds to what could have been a climactic affirmation of the new nationality made all the more powerful by the repeated verb’s capacity to speak to the newness of the nation, and to the newness of the model of national manhood finding its first explicit articulation in the address at the same time that it points towards Haliburton’s grounding of the new nationality in geography and, consequently, in the depths of geologic time. The stanza builds towards its climax, but the climax is preempted by the bathos of “the little birdie,” and the poem clunks its way to its conclusion with the rhyme of “heard” and “bird.” Thus, just as in the case of the poem’s first stanza, at its key moment, the poem’s closing stanza combines the most solemn, serious and elevated nationalist rhetoric with doggerel. This makes for a decidedly uninspiring end to “The North – ‘The Land of Love and Song’” and an even less inspiring end to the address, but there is at least one respect in which the stanza serves as a fitting conclusion to both. The final, abrupt transition from the epic solemnity of nationalist affirmation to the twee doggerel of the phrase “the little birdie” reflects the poem’s consistent vacillation between unreconciled extremes of quality, complexity and tone, and affirms in the poem’s final lines the breadth of aesthetic expression available to the Canadian poet. Although it is at best indifferent and at worst painful reading, the conclusion of “The North – ‘The Land of Love and Song’” drives home the point that the literature of the new nation comprehends the same multiple, complex and contradictory possibilities as the national manhood,³⁴ that, in short, the new national literature is as

34

The two extremes in “The North – ‘The Land of Love and Song’” (epic solemnity and doggerel) come very close to mirroring the two extremes (epic violence and domestic tenderness) that define the limits of Canadian manhood in the address itself. Even if the two sets of opposites do not map exactly on to each other, the distance (a very great one!) separating each pair is suggestively close.

broadly defined as the northmen who will write it.

At the same time that it asserts the breadth and complexity of the national literature, Haliburton's closing poem reiterates the expansion of the northman's defining characteristics that he introduced in the final pages of his address. "The North – 'The Land of Love and Song'" is a ventriloquization of the robin in verse, the reason being that the robin is one of "[t]he tuneful warblers" that, he maintains, far from being southern, "are all natives of the North, and annually return to their home to make it [rather than the South where they winter, but to which they are not native] the land of love and song" (11). Thus it is in what is effectively the voice of the north itself that Haliburton affirms the breadth of northern masculinity. "The North – 'The Land of Love and Song'" follows the robin's migration and employs the same four line description of the north when the robin leaves in the fall and when he returns in the spring:

Farewell to the North, the stern cold North,
 The home of the brave and the strong,
 To the true, the trusting, tender North,
 Dear land of love and song!

. . .
 We have come to the North, the stern cold North,
 The home of the brave and the strong,
 To the true, the trusting, tender North,
 Dear land of love and song. (11, 12)

With their juxtaposition of the adjectives "stern," "cold," "brave," "strong," "true," "trusting," and "tender," these stanzas³⁵ enact a repetition of the address' juxtaposition of the epic and the domestic, and affirm the breadth and complexity of the northman model of masculinity. The stanza's rhymes further reinforce the juxtaposition of opposed qualities and the unity of diversity that Haliburton sees as characteristic of both the northman and the new northern nation. The rhyme of "strong" with "song" yokes together the northman's physical might with his romantic and aesthetic refinement.

³⁵

In their first iteration, these lines are part of a much longer stanza, but, in their second, they are a self-contained, stand-alone stanza. For ease of reference, they are referred to as a stanza.

Moreover, by rhyming single syllable words that each designate key contrasting characteristics of the northman and that are almost entirely (the difference is two consonants) the same, Haliburton implies that, beyond being conjoined, these two dimensions of the northman are essentially the same. In other words, the indiscriminately murderous barbarian sacking Rome is only as different from the chivalrous, deferent lover as “strong” is from “song.” In effect, this rhyme makes a sonic case for the essential, foundational comprehensiveness of the northman, northern nations, and the north itself. Haliburton’s use of “North” as a rhyme word in the first and third lines of these stanzas also reinforces the conjunction of the opposing qualities he attributes to the north, enacting the unifying function Haliburton attributes to the north. The four line stanzas are visually divided through the indentation of the second and fourth lines into two couplets, and this division is carried through to the subject matter of the couplets: the first couplet deals with the epic dimensions of the north, and the second with the domestic. Closing the two lists of opposing adjectives, uniting the two couplets and their disparate subject matter, and establishing a precedent of similitude in advance of the “strong” / “song” rhyme, “North” forms the backbone of the stanzas, and occupies a central structural and conceptual position in the poem that reflects the central conceptual position it occupies in both the address and in Haliburton’s understanding of the new nation.

It is also worth noting that the position of “North,” “strong” and “song” in the stanzas replicates the relationship of priority between nordicity and the distinguishing features of northmen and northern nations articulated in Haliburton’s address. The first and third lines are, respectively, two and three syllables longer than the second and fourth lines, a difference that is highlighted by the indentation of the shorter lines. In addition, the phrases “The home of the brave and the strong” and “Dear land of love and song” are appositive phrases expanding on the noun “North” that ends the first and third lines. Thus, the “strong” / “song” rhyme links the two lines of the stanza that are visually, grammatically, and in terms of length secondary/subordinate to the lines linked by the “North” rhyme. Furthermore, the positioning of the “strong” / “song” and the “North” / “North” rhymes in the structure of these stanzas reflects the relative positions of nordicity,

strength and domestic love in the conceptual structure articulated by the address. “North” is the foundational, definitional constant of the new nation; it is the nation’s essence, and it occupies a position of priority in these stanzas. “Strength” and “song,” and the epic and domestic qualities they embody are the secondary effects of the nation’s northerness; they occupy a significant position in the lines, but one that is secondary to that of “North.”

This compact, aesthetic embodiment of a complex conceptual hierarchy points to, or, rather, exemplifies one of the definitive aspects of northern cultures as conceived by nationalists such as Haliburton: aesthetic sophistication and accomplishment. From the German Romantics’ insistence on the crucial cultural/national importance of both Germany’s northerness and the country’s folk literature to the Young Irelanders’ veneration of the nordic skalds and McGee’s habit of pointing to the nordic sagas as examples which Canadian writers should and could aspire to equal,³⁶ the strain of romantic nationalism that bore most directly on the development of Canadian nationalism counted among its distinguishing features a persistent tendency to conflate nordicity and aesthetic value. This tendency is nowhere more evident in Haliburton’s address than when he complains that he is “sick of hearing our poets forever harping upon the Sunny South as ‘the land of love and song’” (11), declares that the “bright winged birds of the South have no song, and even the annual emigrants from the North, lose the gift of melody when they leave their own shores” (11), and maintains that the North is, thus, the true “land of love and song” or the true home of domestic love and poetry. Coming at the close of the address, these complaints form the context for the “interpret[ation]” of the absent robin’s song in the stanzas under discussion, and position the poem as a closing flourish that constitutes Haliburton’s attempt to prove his claims by enacting their content after having argued them at length. In other words, whatever might be thought of the quality of “The North – ‘The Land of Love and Song,’” the address demands that the poem entire, and the lines in question in particular be read as Haliburton’s demonstration of the aesthetic superiority of northern cultures, and, more specifically, of the new,

³⁶See the discussion of nordicity in the preceding section of this chapter.

northern, Canadian nation.

Although the work of Dewart and Morgan reflects to varying degrees and in various ways the core tenets of McGee's nationalism (catholicity, masculinity, nordicity, and an abiding belief in the foundational/formative role of a national literature), it is in Haliburton's address that they are most comprehensively and evocatively reproduced. However, rather than merely repeating McGee, in "The Men of the North," Haliburton extends and intensifies the Father of Confederation's nationalism by taking the key features of McGee's Canada and combining them in such a way that they are organically unified, and logically (given the geographical basis of Haliburton's argument, it could just as appropriately be said, "scientifically") inevitable outcomes of the geographical and historical³⁷ context of the nation's inception. This points towards the key difference between McGee and Haliburton: the first exhorts the "brave young men [of the country] [t]o make Canada a nation yet," and the second articulates and affirms the conditions that necessitate the emergence of the national polity imagined by the Father of Confederation. For McGee, Canada is a possibility that he must encourage others to work towards. For Haliburton, it is a *fait-accomplis* that need only be proclaimed. It is the coherence, comprehensiveness and confidence of Haliburton's national vision that are its distinctive features and that justify the address' identification by Sherrill E. Grace in *Canada and the Idea of North* and Hulan in *Northern Experience and the Myths of Canadian Culture* as one of the earliest and most important assertions of the nordicity of Canadian national identity.³⁸

³⁷

Critics routinely highlight Haliburton's emphasis on geography in the address. However, Haliburton spends just as much, if not more, time outlining the historical exploits and origins of the northern races as he does explaining the effects of the northern climate on the character of Canadians. In other words, the address is equally concerned with situating the northman geographically *and* historically. Indeed, the title of the address, "The Men of *the North* and Their Place *in History*" (emphasis added), signals Haliburton's parallel commitment to both dimensions of the northman as well as his recognition that they are of equal importance to his project.

³⁸

Grace sees Haliburton's address as representative of the early Canadian tendency "to

As well as occupying a place of substantial importance in the articulation and development of Canadian national identity, Haliburton's address provides an explicit, rational justification of the reflection of the diversity of the national polity in the diverse features of the national manhood that is implicit in McGee's "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion." Haliburton attributes the breadth of competence of the northman and the heterogeneity of the new nation's composition to the same cause. It is the nordicity of the nation that compels Haliburton and his fellow nationalists to "take a wider range, and adopt a broader basis" (2) in their "national aspirations" (2) or that, to use McGee's term, defines the new nationality as a catholic collectivity. Furthermore, it is his nordicity that endows the northman with his complex character and his strikingly wide range of competence. Thus Haliburton rationalizes the homology between the nation and the men who constitute it, and, in the process, attributes the same inevitability to the emergence of a new "race" of northmen in Canada as he does to the emergence of the new northern nation – the two events are, in the context of Haliburton's address, continuous with each other. Like Dewart and Morgan, Haliburton can be counted among McGee's "brave young men [who are] mak[ing] Canada a nation yet!"³⁹ but Haliburton goes beyond the other two by contributing to the making of the nation by integrating the key nationalist ideas that derive from McGee and inform the work of Dewart and Morgan into a unified, coherent structure that allows nationalists to confidently project the image of the new

link the North inextricably with Canadian nationality" (59). Interestingly, although she follows Berger in grouping Haliburton with fellow Canada First members such as W.A. Foster and Charles Mair, Grace ignores the influence of McGee on Haliburton and the fact that, as Berger puts it, "McGee became [Haliburton's and the other members of Canada First's] patron martyr and his speeches saluting the northern nation became their litany" (52). Hulan uses a passage from the address as an epigraph for her book, and credits Haliburton with "signall[ing] two issues that would become perennial in Canadian history and in the representation of the north: the preoccupation with national unity and the relationship between national identity and the environment" (7).

³⁹

Although Haliburton was 38 in 1869 (only 5 years younger than McGee when he was assassinated), he is counted here as one of McGee's "young men" because of the enormous debt his address owes to the older man.

northern, masculine nation into the future, imagining it not just as emergent, but as inevitably, conclusively and triumphantly ascendent.

The confident tone of the address, however, was not borne out by subsequent events. Morgan and Haliburton channelled their nationalist fervour into the Canada First movement, but, as Berger explains in *The Sense of Power*, the movement never achieved anything more than fleeting popularity, and by the mid 1870s had effectively disintegrated.⁴⁰ “After the breakup of [Canada First], Haliburton concerned himself with scientific researches” and, for his part, Morgan became wholly “uninterested in politics” (Berger 77). It would fall to a new generation of Canadian nationalists, a new generation of young men, to advance the work done by men like McGee, Dewart, Morgan and Haliburton, and to fill in the masculinist literary nationalism they outlined.

III

Poet, Canoeist, Professor...and Politician: Lighthall’s Roberts, and Adam and Collins’s Macdonald

The Confederation group of Canadian poets⁴¹ adopted the romantic Canadian nationalism of the nationalists of the 1860s, moving over the course of the 1880s from a commitment to a “literary and independent Young Canada” (Roberts qtd. in Bentley, *Confederation Group* 24) to the Canadianism of the latter half of the decade that inspired Roberts’ nationalist lyric “Canada.”⁴² As Bentley explains at length in *The Confederation Group*,

⁴⁰

See the chapter “Canada First” for Berger’s complete account of the origins, rise and fall of the movement.

⁴¹

See the introduction to Bentley’s *The Confederation Group* for a discussion of the origin of this designation as well as of the membership of the group.

⁴²

See, respectively, the chapters “Young Canada: 1880-1884” and “Canadianism: 1885-1890” in Bentley’s *The Confederation Group* for a detailed analysis of these two phases of the Confederation group’s nationalism as well as a comprehensive discussion of the

this new generation of nationalist writers picked up and perpetuated the environmental determinism, the nordicity, the catholicity, the masculinism, and the “viciously circular conviction . . . that only a distinctive Canadian literature could validate Canada’s nationality and that only the full achievement of that nationality could produce a distinctive Canadian literature” of the preceding generation of nationalists (Bentley, *Confederation Group* 16) . Not surprisingly, in the process of perpetuating the core principles of 1860s nationalism, the Confederation group refined and extended them. Specifically and most important for this study, the new generation of nationalists moved from calling for or elaborating the conditions of the emergence of a group or community of national men (McGee’s “young men” and Haliburton’s northmen) to the nomination of specific men who exemplified the ideals of national manhood as national heroes and as rightful leaders of the nation. In other words, the 1880s saw a number of nationalist writers draw an explicit connection between a model of national masculinity that exhibited many, if not all, of the features of the totally competent man and positions of cultural and political authority, placing exemplary, individual national men at the head of the nation and justifying this placement by reference to their masculinity. Two of the more salient and interesting examples of, respectively, the nomination and the justification of individual men as leaders of the nation are W.D. Lighthall’s description of Roberts in the introduction to *Songs of the Great Dominion*, and Joseph Edmund Collins and G. Mercer Adam’s construction of Sir John A. Macdonald in the editions of their biography of Canada’s first prime minister.

Written in 1888 in consultation with Roberts⁴³ and published in 1889, Lighthall’s

influence of earlier nationalists, including but not limited to McGee, Morgan, Dewart and Haliburton, on the group.

43

Bentley explains that Roberts “assumed [a] role as [an] informal editorial adviser to Lighthall in the creation of [*Songs of the Great Dominion*]” (*Confederation Group* 94). Bentley also points out that Lighthall was “very probably a major influence on [Roberts’] new-found ‘Canadianism’” (The Confederation Group 94). And it is clear that, at least for a period during the 1880s, the two men’s relationship was one of mutual influence.

exuberantly nationalist Introduction to his anthology of Canadian poetry, *Songs of the Great Dominion*, exhibits all of the key features of the romantic Canadian nationalism as outlined by McGee and the men he influenced. Lighthall affirms the nordicity of the nation and evinces the environmental deterministic cast of mind characteristic of romantic nationalists. He refers to the “Winter Carnival” (xxi) in the context of praising Canada as “the most athletic country in the world” (xxi), and enthuses about the Carnival’s “gay Northern arts and delights,” asserting that “something of a future lies before the poetry of these strange and wonderful elements” (xxxvi). The related beliefs that literature forms nations and that it expresses the essential character of nations most certainly influenced Lighthall’s conception of the anthology and motivated his resistance to Roberts’ pressure to make his criteria of selection and principles of organization less nationalist, more cosmopolitan, and more properly aesthetic.⁴⁴ They also and just as certainly lie behind a number of statements in his Introduction, such as his declaration that “Australian rhyme is a poetry of the *horse*; Canadian, of the *canoe*” (xxiii), and his equation in his final sentence of reading the anthology with physically exploring/discovering the country: “[a]nd now, the canoes are packed, our *voyageurs* are waiting for us, the paddles are

44

Bentley writes, “Clearly, cosmopolitanism was still very much a presence in Roberts’ thought as he assumed his role as informal editorial adviser to Lighthall in the creation of [*Songs from the Great Dominion*.] Despite Roberts’ cosmopolitan pleadings, Lighthall selected and arranged the contents of his anthology on the principle that it should be ‘Canadian in tone throughout’” (*Confederation Group* 94). In his general remarks on the anthology towards the end of the “Introduction,” Lighthall addresses the limitations of his collection:

The present is by no means a perfect presentation of Canadian poetry from a purely literary point of view, on account of the limitation of treatment; for it is obvious that if only what illustrates the country and its life *in a distinctive way* be chosen, the subjective and unlocal literature must be necessarily passed over, entertaining the omission of most of the poems whose merit lies in the perfection of finish. (xxxiv)

This along with his acknowledgement that “[i]t is therefore greatly to be desired that a purely literary anthology may soon be brought together by some one” (xxxiv-xxxv) reads as a recognition of the validity of Roberts’ points, and as an attempt to mollify the poet’s more cosmopolitan sensibilities.

ready, let us start!” (xxxvii). It hardly needs saying that Lighthall highlights the “young might . . . and heroism” (xxi), the “virility” (xxi), vitality and athleticism, the basic, essential masculinity of Canadian manhood. More surprisingly, the Introduction and the anthology itself exhibit a catholic willingness to admit a wide range of difference into the literary-national community that would have pleased McGee. At the same time that he emphasizes the masculinity of Canada, Lighthall remarks that “[o]ne peculiar feature of this literature . . . is its strength in lady singers” and singles out writers such as Sara Anne Curzon, E. Pauline Johnson, and Susanna Moodie for approbation. Lighthall admits that “[t]o omit a bow to the French would be ungracious” (xxxvi) and includes one appendix dedicated to “The Old Chansons of the French Province” and another to “Leading Modern French-Canadian Poets.” Lighthall also makes room for some examples of Native Canadian literature. He explains that Johnson is the “daughter of Head-Chief Johnson of the Mohawks of Brantford, [and] gives us poetry of high stamp, and of great interest on account of her descent” (xxxiii). In addition, Lighthall uses a paragraph in the Introduction to draw the reader’s attention to his solicitation of a translation of “[a] curious Indian song, representing a small but unique song-literature which has sprung up among the tribe at Caughnawaga Reservation” by “Mr. John Waniente Jocks, the son of a Six-nation chief of that Reservation” (xxx) – a translation done “specially” (xxx) for Lighthall himself, and, presumably, “specially” for the anthology. Thus Lighthall combines the often strident and exaggerated masculinism that was typical of the Confederation group and their affiliates with a generous and solicitous catholicity. Indeed, for Lighthall, masculinism and catholicity are intimately related.

From the very beginning of the Introduction, almost from its first sentence, Lighthall ties the catholicity of his conception of the nation to his masculinism, presenting the first as the effect of the second. Beyond its blatantly chauvinistic celebration of filial piety, masculine endeavour, and male violence, Lighthall’s first paragraph is remarkable for its breadth of temporal, geographical, and cultural scope. In five sentences, it moves smoothly from Niagara Falls to the vanishing Natives, the building of rural settlements, the military conflicts with the French and the Americans, and, finally, concludes with the

contemporary generation of Canadians. Although this list is triumphantly climactic, its contents are anything but harmonious. A celebration of the sublime, unblemished natural beauty of Niagara Falls and “the haunts of the moose and caribou” (xxi) is juxtaposed with a utopian vision of a man-made landscape cut violently out of nature in the form of “rural . . . Arcadias just rescued from surrounding wilderness by the axe” (xxi). The development of white society in the colony is set against the extinction of Native Peoples represented by “the lament of vanishing [Native] races” (xxi).⁴⁵ This opposition is in further contrast to the inclusion of a section of poems entitled “The Indian” in Lighthall’s anthology. Similarly, Lighthall invokes historical conflicts with the French and, by implication, French Canadians but includes a section on “The Voyageur and the Habitant.” His list of past military conflicts moves from Indian wars, to “contests with the French and Americans” (xxi) and closes with the invocation of the “stern and sorrowful cries of valour rising to curb rebellion” (xxi). Conflicts with racial, linguistic and political others move towards a solemn celebration of the dignity of fraternal conflict, of violence whose final goal is integrative rather than divisive and that suggests the unifying function that Lighthall will attribute to violent conflict before the end of the paragraph.

It is, in fact, under the auspices of a valorization of violent conflict that the divergent elements of Canadian culture and history are incorporated into a coherent community. Lighthall’s opening paragraph closes with an equivocal but nevertheless firm assertion that “Canadians are, for the most part, the descendants of armies, officers and men, and every generation of them has stood up for battle” (xxi). In a neat rhetorical manoeuver, Lighthall transforms the conflict that animates his Introduction’s first paragraph and that seems antithetical to any form of social compact into the very

45

This is a fairly straightforward example of the stereotype of the vanishing Indian. See Bentley’s “Savages and Relics: the Commemoration of Native Peoples in the Nineteenth Century” in *Mnemographia Canadensis, Volume 1: Muse and Recall* for an overview of the legacy of the belief that Native Canadians were, as Frances Wright put it, “a wasting remnant that must soon disappear with the receding forest” (qtd. in Bentley, *Mnemographia Canadensis* 1:167) in early Canada.

foundation of the national community. In other words, Lighthall recognizes the diversity of the Canadian population, acknowledges the conflicts that have historically arisen from that diversity, and then transforms those conflicts into the basis of the formation of the national community. This transformation involves a complex concatenation of catholicity and masculinism. By affirming “the virility of fighting races [as] the undertone” (xxi) of the poets in the anthology and of Canadians more generally, Lighthall sublimates socially corrosive violence into the criterion of participation in the nation, and frames the catholicity of the nation as an effect of the masculinity of the nation. His celebration of the mutual heroism of the participants in a conflict as a means of overcoming the barrier that conflict presents to the integration of the participants into an harmonious national community echoes Roberts’s treatment of the conflict between French and English Canada in “Canada,” a poem that Lighthall predictably includes in his anthology and singles out for praise in his Introduction. Thus, far from being idiosyncratic, Lighthall’s attitude towards masculine violence is characteristic of the nationalist/aesthetic tradition to which he belonged. In short, Lighthall’s assertion of the essentially military, militant and masculine character of Canadians fulfils the promise of the second sentence of the Introduction that the disparate elements of his list and, indeed, the many disparate elements of the Canadian population can be “taken all together” (xxi).

Although Lighthall places tremendous emphasis and tremendous weight on the militarism of Canadian manhood in his first paragraph, he also and at the same time outlines a range of masculine action that far exceeds simply “st[anding] up to battle” (xxxix). With characteristic exuberance, he declares that “[t]he tone of [Canadian poets] is *courage*; – for to hunt, to fight, to hew out a farm, one must be a man!” (xxxix). Although hunting is not strictly speaking militaristic, it is nevertheless a logical extension of masculine violence. “[H]ew[ing] out a farm” (xxi) or the peaceable production of “rural . . . Arcadias” (xxi), however, is so far from the destructiveness of warfare that it is practically its opposite. Nevertheless, Lighthall’s list treats the three activities as structurally equivalent, and positions all of them as “*courage[ous]*” (xxi) expressions of Canadian masculinity. The parallelism of the list is reinforced by the alliteration of “for,”

“fight” and “farm,” and “hunt” and “hew,” which draws the activities closer and suggests an essential commonality between them. This suggestion is strengthened in two respects by the order of the activities. First, the list tracks a rough temporal progression from the subsistence of the country’s origins to the battles to secure it to the nation building activity of pioneering, replicating the historical sweep of the preceding sentence, compounding the nation’s history in a compact epigrammatic bundle, and intimating that the historical development of the nation is the expression of a singular Canadian “virility” (xxi). Second, the pattern of alliteration points to masculine violence being the constant that unites the three activities. The alliteration of “f” draws together all three of the activities, but the alliteration of “h” only links the first and the last. In combination with its position in the middle of the three term list and its blunt, two word simplicity, this makes “to fight” the focal point of the list and highlights its function as a bridge between “hunt[ing]” and “hew[ing] out a farm.” Although the three activities are structurally equivalent, “fight[ing] has a primacy the others do not. Just as militarism unites the disparate elements of the Canadian population into a national community, Canadian manhood’s affinity for masculine violence is the basis on which a relatively broad range of activities are made available to Canadian men. In addition, the sentence in question establishes a causal relationship between masculinity, the activities it lists, and the tone of Canadian poetry, and, in the beginning of the paragraph, Lighthall observes that “[t]he poets whose songs fill this book are voices cheerful with the consciousness of . . . public wealth” (xxi). Taking all of this into account, what emerges from the first paragraph of the “Introduction” is a model of national manhood defined by “the virility of fighting races” (xxi), that is, by a virility that is complexly and radically enabling, forming the triumphal, heroic “undertone” of a spectrum of activities that stretches from warfare to agriculture, and from aesthetic pursuits to commercial ones. In effect, Lighthall imagines Canadian men as totally competent men. It is far from surprising that the man Lighthall nominates as Canada’s leading poet and, indeed, as one of its leading men is a preeminent example of this model of manhood.

Lighthall declares that “[t]he foremost name in Canadian song at the present day is

that of Charles George Douglas Roberts,” and that it is he “who has struck the supreme note of Canadian nationality in his ‘Canada’ and ‘Ode for the Canadian Confederacy,’” memorably describing Roberts as a “poet, canoeist, and Professor of Literature” (xxiv). This description of Roberts presents the same problem as the first paragraph of the Introduction: it is, at first glance, wildly disjunctive. What, one is tempted to ask, do writing poetry, the physical act of canoeing, and the institutional position of a Professor of Literature have in common? Certainly, Roberts was all of these, but there must be more reason than this for Lighthall’s selection of these particular items from the writer’s ample biography. However, as with the list in the opening paragraph, the disparity of Roberts’ achievements is the point rather than the problem. As the divergent and contradictory elements of Canadian history are ordered and united in the singular national character of Canadian men, so the elements of the emerging Canadian national culture are united in the single figure of the preeminent national writer.

This compact description comprehends the breadth of history and the breadth of masculine activity outlined in the opening paragraph, implicitly legitimizing Roberts’s position as the leading national writer on the basis of his total competence. Of the three accomplishments Lighthall lists, the second is the richest, the most complex and arguably the most interesting.⁴⁶ Canoeing looks back to the natives who were the first to use the canoe as a mode of transportation and the *coureurs de bois* who exploited it for commercial gain at the same time that it refers to the emerging Canadian middle class that was adopting it as a leisure activity. Beyond this, as illustrated by his use of canoeing to distinguish Canadian from Australian poetry, canoeing is for Lighthall a uniquely Canadian activity that has a privileged relationship to the nation’s literature. Moreover, Lighthall twice tropes the reading of his anthology as canoeing, writing “You [the reader]

46

It is worth noting that Lighthall’s description of Roberts as an athletic man may owe something to Collins’s description of the poet in his *Life and Times of the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald* as an “athlete of the muses” (435). Lighthall was certainly familiar with the biography, and Collins and Lighthall held Roberts in equally high esteem.

shall come out with us as a guest of its [Canada's] skies and air, paddling over bright lakes and down savage rivers; singing French *chansons* to the swing of our paddles" (xxiv), and returning to the same image in his final sentence. Thus the single word "canoeist" gathers up the past, present and future of the nation along with its key cultural groups (Native Canadians, French Canadians, and English Canadians) under the rubric of an activity that is uniquely Canadian, intimately, at least according to Lighthall, related to literature, and that involves masculine athleticism typical of "the most athletic country in the world" (xxxix). On its own, the moniker "canoeist" endows Roberts with a surprising breadth. However, bracketing "canoeist" with the aesthetic and intellectual professions of "poet" and "Professor of Literature"⁴⁷ further broadens the scope of Roberts' accomplishments, and conclusively establishes him as an exemplary totally competent man.

Two further aspects of this description merit consideration: the apparent redundancy of "poet" and "Professor of Literature,"⁴⁸ and the form of the description. The repetition built into "poet" and "Professor of Literature," repetition that is highlighted by alliteration, reflects Lighthall's romantic nationalist conviction in the crucial role of literature in nation building. Simply put, this repetition drives home the point that Roberts is preeminent because he is, first and foremost, a producer and disseminator of literature, which is to say, from Lighthall's perspective, a producer and cementer of the

⁴⁷

The title "Professor of Literature" is not, technically speaking, accurate. Roberts was a Professor of English at King's College, Windsor, Nova Scotia. "He was also head of the Department of Economics except during the first year [of his tenure] when, owing to the absence of Professor Jones, he was appointed Professor of French *pro tem*" (Pomeroy 59). Lighthall and Roberts corresponded regularly and Lighthall almost certainly knew Roberts' actual title and position. Lighthall's inaccurate characterization of his friend as a "Professor of Literature" may be accidental, but it is more likely an intentional strategy for foregrounding the importance of literature in the context of his programmatically nationalist and masculinist Introduction.

⁴⁸

Although "poet" and "professor of literature" are two distinct professions, they are redundant to the extent that they both belong to the class of intellectual professions, and are both equally distant from the physical activity of canoeing.

nation. This repetition is also necessary to effectively establish Roberts' breadth of competence. In conjoining literary accomplishment with athleticism, Lighthall is drawing together activities from opposite ends of the spectrum of masculine endeavour, activities that do not sit easily together and whose relationship is not easily rationalized. As James Eli Adams explains in *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Manhood*, there was "a contradiction within Victorian patriarchy, by which the same gender system that underwrote male dominance also called into question the 'manliness' of intellectual labour" (1). Thus the combination of literary accomplishment and athleticism is further complicated by the questionable "manliness" of poetry and scholarship. From this perspective, the repetition in the description reads as an overcompensation designed to rectify this basic imbalance and conclusively establish the two as distinct, but equal, aspects of Roberts' masculine identity. The form of Lighthall's description of Roberts echoes the form of the list of masculine activities in the opening paragraph of the Introduction. Specifically, "poet, canoeist, Professor of Literature" (xxiv) echoes the pattern of alliteration of "for to hunt, to fight, to hew out a farm" (xxxix). In both cases, the lists consist of three items, and the first and third items are linked by alliteration. Moreover, in both cases, this pattern of alliteration makes the second item the focal point of the list, highlighting the richness and complexity of "fight[ing]" and "canoe[ing]." This formal repetition presents Roberts not just as a totally competent man, but as a totally competent man struck from the mold of Canadian manhood outlined by Lighthall in his first paragraph. Lighthall firmly positions Roberts as both a totally competent man and as an exemplary national man, or, rather, as a totally competent man whose total competence makes him an exemplary national man.

Lighthall closes his discussion of Roberts by drawing a direct connection between the poet's masculine identity and his suitability as a national leader:

The personal quality of his poetry is distinguished, next to richness of colour and artistic freedom of emotional expression, by *manliness*. Roberts is a high-thinking, generous *man*. He speaks with a voice of *power and leadership*, and never with a mean note or one of heedless recklessness. This *manliness and dignity render him particularly fitted for the great work which Canada at present offers her sons*, and as he is only twenty-nine we hope to see his future a great one.

(xxv, emphasis added)

This passage continues the pattern begun in the Introduction's first paragraph of emphasizing the national importance of masculinity or "manliness," and elaborates on it by making "manliness" the key criterion of leadership. From Lighthall's perspective, Roberts is an exemplary national man and because of this he is "particularly fitted for the great work" of nation building. Thus the anthologist ties a model of national manhood defined by total competence specifically to a position of cultural and national authority, intimating that totally competent men are the rightful leaders of the national community. Just as Lighthall does with Roberts, Collins and Adam turn to Macdonald's masculine identity to justify/explain the seminal role he played in the politics of the nation.

The first biography of Canada's first prime minister, *Life and Times of the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald, K.C.B., D.C.L., &c., Premier of the Dominion of Canada*, was written by Collins and published in 1883. A second edition, revised and added to by Adam,⁴⁹ was published in 1891, the year of Macdonald's death, with the new title, *Canada's Patriot Statesman: the Life and Career of the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald*. Like Lighthall and Roberts, Collins, Adam, and Roberts were joined by bonds of friendship, mutual admiration and influence. Bentley speculates that "Adam's 'Outline of Canadian Literature' in Henry Winthrop's *History of Canada* (1876) provided Collins with a model for the 'Thought and Literature' chapter in *Life and Times*," and explains that Adam was an ally of both Collins and Roberts,

us[ing] the various positions that he held in the late 1870s and early 1880s – editor of the *Canadian Monthly Magazine* and *Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly Magazine* from 1872 to 1882, literary assistant to Smith and business manager of the *Bystander* between 1880 and 1883 – to assist [them] in their foray into the literary and journalistic worlds of Toronto. (*Confederation Group* 56)

49

The title page of the second edition has the following note directly under the title: "Based on the work of Edmund Collins, revised, with additions to date" (i). By the early 1890s, Collins had moved to New York, and his geographical remove in combination with the alcoholism that would take his life in early 1892 prevented him from being involved in the production of the second edition of the biography.

For his part, “Collins was one of the most important influences on the formation and early activities of the Confederation group” (Bentley, *Confederation Group* 24) in general and on Roberts in particular, placing them in contact with romantic nationalist texts and shaping their literary nationalism. So great was Collins’s influence that Bentley suggests that “[i]n Collins’s (and, it may be safely assumed, Roberts’s) reading of [Nicholas Flood Davin’s essays] may lie the inciting moment of the Confederation group – the motivating contact with the assumptions and perceptions that would power the Young Canada phase of their development” (*Confederation Group* 28).⁵⁰

As well as stimulating and shaping Roberts’s literary nationalism, Collins and a passage from his *Life and Times* may very well have directly influenced the composition of Roberts’s “Canada.” The chapter “Thought and Literature” concludes:

We need not repeat what we have expressed so often, that [for Canadian independence] are we heart and soul; that no other change will satisfy the manly, yearning spirit of our young Canadians; and that it is our duty now to bestir ourselves, to organize, and to tire not nor rest till our Colonialism shall have become a thing of the past, and our Canada stand robust, and pure, and manly, and intelligent, among the nations of the earth. But we must awake from our sordid ignominy, our cowardly sloth; unless, indeed, the chains befit us, and we are happy in the bondage. If we be, then liberty is an impertinence upon our lips, and the rights of free-born citizenship a boon of which we are not worthy. If we be, then it is the duty of our press and our public men to stifle the impulse of manhood, till coiling the chain about us, we lie down in our dishonoured rest. (498)

Roberts replicates Collins’s impassioned endorsement of Canadian independence, exclaiming “Surely the lion’s brood is strong / To front the world alone!”⁵¹ Furthermore,

⁵⁰

See Bentley’s chapter “Young Canada: 1880-1884” in *The Confederation Group* for a complete account of Collins’s influence on Roberts and the other members of the group.

⁵¹

Bentley explains Roberts was, at the time, still committed to Canadian Independence:

Within three years, Roberts would find himself supporting Imperial Federation as a bulwark against Annexation, but in 1885 he is convinced that ‘the vital germ’ of ‘Canadian Nationalism’ that was planted by Canada First ‘has sprung up from

the opening stanzas of “Canada” contain the other key elements of the passage, tellingly reproducing the trajectory of their development. In Collins, one finds the emphasis on vital, robust manliness, and the vision of future preeminence that animates the beginning of “Canada.” It is easy to see Roberts’s “Child of Nations, giant limbed” emerging from Collins’s description of a “Canada [that] stands robust, and pure, and manly, and intelligent, among the nations of the earth.” However, the juxtaposition of triumphant, ascendant manhood with slavish surrender is by far the most telling similarity between the two texts. Collins asserts the “manly, yearning spirit of our young Canadians” and then outlines a stark choice between embracing manly “liberty” and “stifl[ing] the impulse of manhood, till coiling the chain about us, we lie down in our dishonoured rest.” Roberts’s poem tracks a comparable trajectory, moving from the assertion of the nation’s vital manliness to a choice between unmanly surrender and the apotheosis of the nation. Phrases such as Collins’s “sordid ignominy,” “cowardly sloth,” and “lie down in our dishonoured rest” seem to find a direct echo in Roberts’s lines: “How long the ignoble sloth,” “How long the indolence,” and “Why rest with babes and slaves?” In addition, both texts present the choice between manly apotheosis and slavish irrelevance to a community of male readers in a fairly direct attempt to stimulate nationalist sentiment and form the very national community they are celebrating. “Canada” was written in 1885,⁵² two years after Collins’s *Life and Times* was published, and, given Roberts’s close relationship with Collins, it is safe to assume that Roberts was familiar with the work, and more than possible that he had this passage in mind when composing the opening stanzas of “Canada.”

Considering the many and significant connections between Collins, Adam and

border to border of the land, till now it has a thousand centres [and] is clothed in a thousand shapes’: the dream of Young Canada had gone the way of the Round Table, but in Roberts at least its ideal and goals were a long way from extinction. (*Confederation Group* 70-71)

⁵²

See Bentley, *The Confederation Group*, 71 for an outline of the publication history of “Canada.”

Roberts, it is far from surprising that Collins and Adam's portrait of Macdonald falls neatly in line with the conception of national manhood popular with the Confederation group and their affiliates: just as Lighthall does with Roberts, they link the prime minister's masculine identity to his ability to unite the divided national community and, thus, to his success as a national leader. Collins's *Life and Times* is a somewhat haphazard, diffuse, and initially perplexing biography (more on this later), and Adam's interventions in the body of the text did little to change this. However, the introduction that Adam added constitutes a clear, direct and succinct summation of the two men's cumulative vision of Macdonald that functions, despite its position at the beginning of the second edition, as a coda for both editions of the biography.⁵³

Like the other romantic nationalists discussed, Adam emphasizes the indispensable role national literature plays in uniting the nation. After a lengthy and decidedly pessimistic survey of the divisions and conflicts fracturing the national community, Adam argues that “[t]o contend against the separating forces in Confederation, we want . . . the infusion of patriotic feeling and the diffusion of national sentiment” (xvii), and declares that “[t]hrough no influence more potent than literature and literary spirit can this nationalizing of the Dominion effectively operate. Nothing will better contribute to the welding process, or be more potent in bringing about homogeneity and the consolidating influences the country so urgently needs, than a healthy native literature and an ardent national sentiment” (xvi). Although here Adam presents literature as uniquely suited to uniting the nation, in the concluding pages of his Introduction, he attributes a similar influence, a similar “welding” function to Macdonald.

Adam is careful to distinguish his own assessment of the prime minister from that of Collins. Adam explains, “If the present writer cannot rise to the pitch of enthusiasm to

53

The final chapters of Adam's edition of the biography cover the addresses delivered on the occasion in the House of Commons and “English and other Estimates of the deceased Premier's Life-Work” (549), omitting any concluding statement by Adam. The biographer's own assessment of the prime minister's legacy is found in the Introduction, which is why it is here seen as serving as a coda despite its position in the text.

which Mr. Edmund Collins had attained when he wrote the bulk of the following pages, he is none the less conscious of the gifts and endowments of the subject of Mr. Collins' lively panegyric, or in any way unwilling to do justice to his theme" (v). The paragraphs that follow this clarification, although "lively" in their denunciations of the contemporary political situation, are the furthest thing from a panegyric or naively enthusiastic encomium. Adam is as attentive to Macdonald's flaws and failures as to his strengths and successes, balancing every compliment with a criticism. For example, Adam describes Macdonald's behaviour in the House of Commons as "alert and sagacious," but adds the cutting qualification, "but rarely profound" (x). Most significantly and most damningly, Adam accuses Macdonald of excessive devotion to the party system. This accusation is particularly damning because Adam traces the country's present problems, "the strike of jarring interests and the din of faction" (xii), to "party and its evils" (xi). He explains that "[u]pon [the party system] sectionalism, both of race and creed, and the other ills that affect the body politic, have long been nourished and fed" (xi), judges that "what [Macdonald] has done for party will cloud what he has done for nation" (x-xi), and predicts optimistically that "[t]he passing away of the great Tory leader, and the disintegration of party likely to follow the event, will create the opportunity for some measurable approach at least to national government" (xi). This is undoubtedly a reference to the scandals of various kinds generated by Macdonald and his party. Allowing this scathing condemnation of Macdonald's methods and his legacy to stand without modification, supplementation, or some degree of retraction would break Adam's initial promise "to do justice to [Collins's] theme" (v), and Adam concludes on a more appropriately positive note.

Throughout the Introduction, Adam contrasts Macdonald's unwavering commitment to the nation with his devotion to party, and it is to Macdonald's nationalism that he turns in his closing paragraphs. Adam predicts that, if the tendency of regional governments to "gather . . . round the office of the Minister of Finance and play . . . snap-dragon from the Federal chest" (xv) continues, then "the end [of Confederation] is not far off" (xi), and points to Macdonald's "devotion to duty and [his] single eye to the

country's interests" (xvii) as an alternative to the present, mercenary approach to politics. After praising Macdonald's resolute nationalism and tireless nation building, Adam traces his success not to his self-interest and his partyism, but to the unique and uniquely unifying nature of his character:

But what he has accomplished has not been the work only of an opportunist however nimble and tactical. Neither has it been achieved by mere adroitness in the methods of personally governing, still less by the wizardry, great as it was, of his manner. Not one gift, but many gifts, have gone to the making up of his record. Of these, even the superficial observer will own as pre-eminently his—commanding ability, steadfast and disinterested purpose, and a phenomenal faculty of not only winning men, but of fusing heterogeneous elements, and by an alchemy so subtle as to seem to be his own secret and exclusive possession. Great was his opportunity, but great, unquestionably also, were his gifts. (xvii-xviii)

Adam draws a direct causal link between Macdonald's "many gifts" and his capacity to unite the national community: the "union of gifts in the man" (xvii) carries over into the unification of the social/political/national sphere. Thus the prime minister's breadth of competence – given the emphasis Adam places on the breadth of Macdonald's competence, one might justifiably say, his total competence – explains his success as a politician, and Adam effectively justifies Macdonald's career as a national leader on the basis of his masculine identity. Significantly, Adam aligns Macdonald's capacity to unite the nation with the ability of literature to do the same. The verb "to fuse" bears a familial resemblance to "to weld" (the verb Adam uses to describe the consolidating and homogenizing function of literature), and Macdonald's "fusing [of] heterogeneous elements" is reminiscent of "the infusion of patriotic feeling and the diffusion of national sentiment" accomplished by "literature and literary spirit" (xvi). What emerges from Adam's description of Macdonald is a national man composed of the same elements as Lighthall's Roberts, although ordered in slightly different fashion: a broadly competent literary man whose breadth of competence and literariness are the basis of his capacity to unify the divided national polity and justify his position as a national leader.

It is worth noting that Adam's description of Macdonald provides an explanation of the perplexing nature of both editions of the biography. Although Collins's and

Adam's opening chapters are significantly different, both men place the biography and its subject in the tradition of the great man theory of history and the Victorian cult of the hero. Collins compares Macdonald to Napoleon when detailing the "marked talent for mathematics" (24) that he displayed at an early age. Adam deletes this reference to "one of the most appalling characters in history" (Collins 24), but adds a reference to Carlyle's discussion of Goethe's genius, and argues that the limits of literary genius should "be extended . . . to include the few who are born leaders of men" (18).⁵⁴ In both cases, the reader is set up to expect a straightforward, conventionally Victorian treatment of Macdonald as a hero. Neither edition, however, fulfills this expectation. The focus of the biography regularly slides away from Macdonald, and, when it does, the narrative of his life is interrupted by a variety of digressions, including biographical sketches of Macdonald's contemporaries, explanations of political events that are peripheral to Macdonald's own political career, and, in Collins's edition, a final chapter entitled "Thought and Literature."⁵⁵ As an effect of this shift in focus, Macdonald regularly fades into the background of his own biography, sometimes disappearing for several pages in a row, or even for entire chapters. It is as if Collins and Adam have combined a biography of Macdonald with a general overview of the politics and culture of Canada during Macdonald's lifetime. Adam's Introduction rationalizes what would be an ungainly combination if it were seen exclusively from the perspective of more conventional Victorian biography. As already observed, according to Adam, Macdonald is characterized by a "union of gifts" (xvii) chief among which is the "fusing [of the] heterogeneous elements" (xviii) of the national polity. With its multiple digressions and manifold shifts in focus, the biography carries out a similar fusion. It is, indeed, uniquely

54

This is another example of Adam's equation of literature with leadership that reinforces the connection made by Adam in his "Introduction" between Macdonald's "fusing" (xviii) of the nation and the "welding" (xvi) of the nation by literature.

55

This chapter consists of a broad ranging survey of the literature of French and English Canada that does not once mention Macdonald.

appropriate for the portrait of a man whose greatest quality was in the estimation of his biographers his selfless devotion to the nation to blur somewhat into the picture of that nation itself.

Lighthall, Collins and Adam present their subjects as totally or, at least, broadly competent men, and associate their breadth of competence with the ability to comprehend and unify the divided national community. Simply put, Lighthall's Roberts, and Collins and Adam's Macdonald are exemplary national men because their masculine identities carry over to the national community. In both cases, the homology between masculine and national identity is exploited to create a dynamic within which the microcosm of personal identity is understood to inform, shape, and, even, originate the macrocosm of national identity. In other words, the identity of the national man begins to determine the identity of the nation, and masculinity becomes the crucible within which nationality is forged, strengthened, and perpetuated. To adapt Lighthall's trenchant phrase, to be Canadian, to make Canada, to advance Canada, "one must be a man!" (xxi). Lighthall, Collins and Adam, however, all go a step beyond this, either nominating their subjects to or justifying their possession of institutional positions of cultural, social and/or political power on the basis of their special brand of manhood. For them, Roberts and Macdonald are not just the crucible in which the nation is forged, but its rightful leaders as well. Not surprisingly, in subsequent decades, the assumption of roles of positions of institutional power would figure significantly in the narratives of totally competent men like Richard Stahlberg, Ranald Macdonald, and Josh Smith.

IV

"rest with babes and slaves?": Nationalism, Anxiety, and the Active Male Body

Written over four decades, the works examined here show a remarkable degree of similarity. This is not to say that they are carbon or even loose copies of each other. Instead, they each respond and contribute to an evolving complex of concepts that can be roughly summed up as follows: the nation is a unified community formed out of a variety

of diverse and potentially conflicting cultural groups; literature plays an important if not essential role in the formation, unification and perpetuation of the national community; and, the national community is defined by a national manhood that is itself defined by the ideal of total competence. These texts gather up literature, catholicity, national identity, national history, masculinity and total competence, and bind these concepts into a tense discursive bundle best, although not adequately, described as early Canadian literary nationalism. I say “a tense bundle” because of yet another signal similarity between the work of McGee, Dewart, Morgan, Haliburton, Lighthall, Collins, Adam and Roberts.

Perhaps the most obvious and remarkable affinity between these introductions, addresses, and descriptions of Canadian men is the degree of anxiety that they express about the origin, present state, and future of the nation and literary nationalism. Dewart goes to great lengths to defend literature, revealing a tremendous anxiety about the public’s assessment of its value. Moreover, as his defence largely consists of a defence of “native literature” (x) that is carried out in the context of his belief that no “people [may be] firmly united politically, without the subtle but powerful cement of a patriotic literature” (ix), his Introduction implicitly registers a deep concern about the present and future unity of the emerging national polity. For his part, Haliburton laments the lack of a heroic past for the nation and his appropriation of nordic history to Canada must be read as an anxious attempt to remedy this lack. Haliburton is also the first of these five writers to express worries about the bureaucratic origins of the new state, but he salves these worries through a lengthy explanation of how a new national community will emerge naturally and organically to match the extant artificial political entity. Lighthall’s lengthy list of Canada’s resources and his overly forceful assertion that, “[i]n losing the United States, Britain lost the *smaller* half of her American possessions” (xxii) reveals his fear that Canada is being outstripped by its southern neighbour, a fear that could only have been deepened by the number of Canadian voices, among them men like Goldwin Smith, who were loudly declaiming the economic benefits and, indeed, the inevitability of continental union. In fact, it is possible to read the exuberance of Lighthall’s Introduction as a sign of overcompensation in the face of numerous, powerful, contemporary

challenges to Canadian literary nationalism and his itemization of the riches of the Canadian geography as an economic justification for an emotional investment in the new nationality, as an attempt, in effect, to buy his readers patriotism. Moreover, the displacement of conflicts into the nation's past that Lighthall effects in his opening overview of the nation's history amounts to an anxious and perhaps self-conscious refusal to acknowledge the numerous violent divisions in the national polity or what, two years later, Adam will call "the strife of jarring interests and the din of faction" (xii). In other words, each of these documents, with the possible exception of *Bibliotheca Canadensis*, can be read in varying ways as defensive responses to contemporary threats or challenges to early-Canadian literary nationalism. By at once acknowledging divisions in the polity and promoting an alternative vision of national unity, these anxious responses effect a doubling of history, a doubling that is a result of their anxiety and the necessary condition of their nationalism. What is more, the lines of tension that tie together these two visions of the nation are primarily charged with worries about the depth and sincerity of the commitment of nationals to the very polity of which they are a part, with apprehensions about the willingness of white, British-Canadian men to be Canadians in spirit and in action.

In essence, McGee, Dewart, Haliburton, Lighthall, Collins, Adam, and Roberts (Morgan differs from them in this instance) are most obviously and consistently anxious about the willingness of men who ought to be their fellow nationals to endorse the nation and their brand of literary nationalism. As they see it, the first challenge they must overcome is not from outside the national community but, instead, the simple fact that men who are white Anglophones of British descent, who according to all appearances and all ethnic, racial, cultural, religious and linguistic designations ought to be the new nationality's most committed and energetic proponents, are at best lukewarm Canadians and at worst active opponents of Canadian nationalism. Many such men had little enthusiasm for nationalism in general and even less interest in the brand of literary nationalism promoted by these authors. Rather than appealing to a preexisting popular sentiment, as Roberts does in "Canada," McGee, Dewart, Haliburton, Lighthall, Collins

and Adam attempt to instill that sentiment in their readers and, by instilling it in increasingly greater numbers of men, make it a popular one. This in part explains their emphasis on the catholicity of the new nationality. In establishing and emphasizing the rigid barriers demarking the limits of the national community, they would have run the risk of alienating potential nationals at a moment when they need all the support they can get. What is more, there is little to be gained by obsessively parsing who is in and who is out when those who are in do not act like it. Simply put, these authors, anthologists, editors and scholars are very pragmatically and, one might justifiably add, forcibly concerned with writing to the core constituency of the nation. As they write, they each reflexively reassure themselves and their fellow literary nationalists that *writing* to this core constituency is the most effective way of gaining its support. What is more, this strategic writing tends to consist of a presentation of the men who should compose the core of the nation with an image of a national manhood that will compel their participation in the nation.

Thus an attentive reading of the key documents of early Canadian literary nationalism shows that the totally competent man plays an important, if not an indispensable, role in this nationalism. This figure emerges in the work of these writers as the model of national manhood because of how effectively it answers the anxieties that perplex the new nationalists. Specifically, the totally competent man's amalgamation of abilities drawn from the full spectrum of the national populace allows the totally competent man to serve as a symbol for the harmonious integration of the disparate and divided Canadian citizenry into the Canadian nation. In the breadth of the "poet, canoeist, Professor"'s competence, there is a "subtle" "alchemy" that proffers the possibility of uniting the nation. Even more significantly, the totally competent man offers the potential to resolve "the strife of jarring interests" and quiet "the din of faction" by making the achievement of an individual masculine ideal continuous with and complimentary to the achievement of a unified national community. At a time when self and country were as likely to be at odds as not, the totally competent man allowed nationalists to redraw the field of individual and collective identities such that personal and national interests

coincided.

In 1861, six years before Confederation, at the first meeting of the parliament of the newly united Italian kingdom, Massimo d'Azeglio famously observed: "We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians" (qtd. in Hobsbawm 44). In saying this, he acknowledged that the state of Italy preceded the nation of Italy and, moreover, that it fell to the newly formed state to produce the collective affective investment in both its own institutions and the idea of the Italian polity that will form the country's heterogeneous citizenry into a people and weld the state of Italy to the nation of Italy. Furthermore, he demonstrated that the first concern of a new nation-state is not policing its territorial and ideological borders, but unifying the populace that falls within its immediate purview, a project that takes place as much at the level of the single person as at the level of the community at large. d'Azeglio showed that the first order of business of a nation is the production of its citizens as nationals, that the first objects of the nation are its ideal rather than its marginal members, and that nation formation, of the type being called for by d'Azeglio and preoccupying nationalists like McGee, Dewart, Morgan, Haliburton, Lighthall, Collins, Adam, and Roberts, occurs at the intersection of collective and individual identity, at the point of contact between manhood and nationhood. The importance of this conjunction of distinct levels of identity for early Canadian nationalists is demonstrated forcefully by the dependence of the reader's manhood on his nationalism in "Canada," and, moreover, by the unique relationship between the totally competent man and the new nationalism.

Thus it is clear that the works examined in this chapter and their authors share the same basic aim: the first and foremost concern of McGee, Dewart, Morgan, Haliburton, Lighthall, Collins, Adam, and Roberts is the solidification of the core of the nation, the formation of its foundational interior, a solidification and formation to be achieved through the creation of a distinctive national manhood. To adapt d'Azeglio's phrase, the position of early Canadian literary nationalists can be summed up: "The politicians have made Canada, now *we* have to make Canadians." And one of the more important ways new nationalists went about making Canadians was by making Canadian men totally

competent men.

It is also clear that this making of Canadians was a process of masculine writing. All of these works follow the circular pattern outlined by Cixous, moving outward, gathering up the fragments of the fractured, often fractious national community only to make a return to a core constituency and reinforce the core values of early Canadian literary nationalism. At the very centre of the complex of concepts to which these works persistently return, taking the form of McGee's young men, Haliburton's northman, Roberts the canoeist, and Roberts's own "Child of Nations, giant limbed" is the figure of the active masculine body. Occupying an axial position in the thinking and writing of early Canadian nationalists, this body plays an essential role in drawing together the core concepts of early Canadian literary nationalism, and bears much of the weight of these men's idealized national community on its admittedly broad shoulders. The following chapters examine the representation of the active masculine body in some of the early Canadian texts that laid the groundwork for its deployment by the nationalists discussed in this chapter and shaped the cultural context out of which the totally competent man emerged.

Chapter 2:

“Skalping-knives to Pruning Hooks”: Violence and Manhood in Thomas Cary’s *Abram’s Plains*

As observed in the Introduction to this thesis, early Canadian literature is filled with men of exceptional ability, men who accomplish with ease sometimes unbelievable feats of heroism, endurance, strength, cleverness, generosity, education and development. But not all of these men are good, generous men, not all of them are as ethically exemplary as Ranald Macdonald from *The Man from Glengarry* (1901) or Richard Stahlberg from *The Story of an Affinity* (1900); rather, a subset of these super capable masculine figures consists of men who are as threatening as they are capable.⁵⁶ Combining profound physical gifts with an antagonistic attitude towards the emerging social order, such men and, in particular, their aggressive masculine bodies present an immediate and potent challenge to their societies, and a no less potent challenge to the identities of the writers who portray them. It is a challenge that is rendered particularly potent by the significance of the male body in early Canada.

In the colonies, male bodies and the work they did were central to the production of a developed society. As well as securing the prosperity of early Canada with their labour, male bodies transformed the landscape, built the infrastructure of civilization, and, in establishing the material and economic conditions underpinning the emerging social order, guaranteed the future of colonial society. Far from being a simple and regrettable irritant, masculine violence, in particular masculine violence directed towards the

56

These men include, but are not limited to, General Wolfe and the savage Native Canadians in *Abram’s Plains*, the eponymous villain of John Richardson’s *Wacousta*, the Herculean Irish emigrant who leaps ashore at Grosse Isle in Susanna Moodie’s *Roughing it in the Bush*, and Noah Cotton, the main character of the novel within a novel of *Flora Lyndsay*.

emerging social order, was a challenge to the very core of the colonial project that needed to be confronted, contained and, ideally, redirected towards more productive, less socially corrosive ends. Thomas Cary was one of the first early Canadian writers, if not the first, to confront this challenge directly, and in *Abram's Plains* (1789) he established a pattern that recurs throughout a variety of early Canadian texts – a pattern that lies behind and shapes the production of the totally competent man, and that, in its broadest outlines, amounts to the management of the aggressive, recalcitrant masculine body through its appropriation to a regulatory system of values.

In his chapter on *Abram's Plains* in *Mimic Fires: Accounts of Early Long Poems on Canada*,⁵⁷ Bentley identifies Cary's work as a topographical poem, places it in the tradition of Pope's *Windsor-Forest* (1713) and John Denham's *Cooper's Hill* (1642), and observes that it displays five of the distinguishing features of the genre:

In addition to the three elements mentioned by Johnson [in his definition of local poetry] – “some particular landscape,” “historical retrospection,” and “incidental meditation” – *Abram's Plains* evinces two other characteristics of topographical poetry: a “controlling moral vision” and an “attempt to project . . . stability into the future” (Foster 403, 402). (26)

Bentley goes on to show that the poem's survey of British holdings from Lake Superior to the mouth of the St. Lawrence, its overview of the battle of the plains of Abraham, and its meditative digressions on matters ranging from taste to the wildlife of the colony are part and parcel of an endorsement of the *pax Britannica* that celebrates the peaceable productivity resulting from British rule, praises the achievements of the present mercantile class, and looks with confidence towards future triumphs.

At the same time that *Abram's Plains* functions as a fairly conventional (if unusual for being set in Canada)⁵⁸ topographical poem, it is also, and no less, a poem

⁵⁷

Bentley makes a similar point about the genre of *Abram's Plains* in his Introduction to the Canadian Poetry Press edition of the poem.

⁵⁸

Although it would be incorrect to argue that such an adamantly British poem is Canadian, Bentley does make the perceptive point that “Cary's commitment to his adopted country .

about manhood. The “communal consciousness founded on the sense of a shared past and a common future” (25) that Bentley identifies in the poem is a consciousness of a historical community of men united across the full breadth of the colony’s history, such that past models of manhood serve as the building blocks of contemporary manhood which is itself the foundation for yet more advances. Specifically, *Abram’s Plains* views human development through the lens of the four stages theory of social development, a temporal structure that distinguishes earlier, more savage and barbaric forms of masculinity from more contemporary, more civilized and more genteel models of manhood. But rather than employing the theory to construct earlier modes of manhood as the negative antitheses of contemporary masculinity – as historical curiosities that were once necessary but are now outmoded and best abandoned – the poem treats earlier models of masculinity as necessary stages of development that each make essential contributions to contemporary manhood. The socially corrosive violence of Native Peoples and the heroic violence of General Wolfe – violence that is necessary, and laudable, but still not preferable to the peace of the present – are framed as the antecedents of a contemporary model of masculinity that sublimates their violence and channels it into forms of socially constructive productivity. In this way, Cary presents his readers with a vision of an historically continuous English-Canadian manhood that develops through an integrative rather than an exclusionary process. If, in *Abram’s Plains*, men transform “skalping-hooks to pruning knives” (61), they are all the more successful in their peace-time activities for having been successful in war. Thus the poem manages masculine violence by appropriating it to the regulatory system of values of the *pax Britannica*. At the centre of this management and appropriation, serving as the focal

. . . aligns *Abram’s Plains* with an *emerging* English-Canadian identity” (*Mimic Fires* 26, emphasis added). If this poem is to be read as a Canadian poem, rather than as a British poem about Canada, it must be as one that reflects a (barely) emerging national identity and suggests certain features of that identity without fully manifesting or partaking in it. It is for this reason that this chapter argues that *Abram’s Plains* contributes to the development of a uniquely Canadian model of manhood – the totally competent man – without representing that achieved masculine identity or fully articulating its relationship to early Canadian nationalism.

point of the incorporative process that defines the poem's approach to masculinity, is the speaker of the poem, and, more specifically, the speaker's masculine body.

I

The Poet, the Poem, and the *Pax Britannica*: Colonial Society and Manhood in *Abram's Plains*

As well as being the focus of the poem's treatment of masculinity, the speaker and the poem that he speaks stand, within the context of the work, in a privileged relation to the poem's controlling system of values. It is, in fact, the speaker's privileged relation to this system of values that allows him to serve so effectively as the locus – the privileged centre – of the process of productive appropriation and integration by which Cary manages masculine violence. No man in the poem is more consistently or forcefully associated with the present state of peaceable prosperity than the speaker, making him the poem's representative of contemporary British-colonial society and its chief example of the model of masculinity associated with that society.

Cary himself presents *Abram's Plains* as evidence of the development of colonial society effected under and facilitated by British rule. In his Preface, Cary writes: "I venture to usher into day the following little poem, the offspring of a few leisure hours; which I hope will not be displeasing to the lovers of polite learning" (1-5). In his Introduction to his edition of the poem, Bentley observes that here Cary makes "the connection between leisure and [the production and consumption of] literature" (xxix), or, more generally, between the production and consumption of complex cultural artifacts and the advanced state of Lower Canadian society. The opening paragraph of the Preface implies that the poem can only have been written and offered to the public in the expectation of being read as a result of the development of the colony, under the management of the British, to the point of boasting a leisure class or, at least, a class not entirely and exclusively preoccupied with procuring the necessities of survival. Bentley himself makes this connection, pointing out that this passage is "resonant with

implications in the direction of the ‘leisure theory’ of Canadian literature” (Introduction xxix). The implicit connection between leisure, literature, and social development is confirmed by Cary’s explicit identification of his audience. Bentley has convincingly argued that “*Abram’s Plains* was directed mainly towards the literate, English-speaking inhabitants of Quebec” (Introduction xxix-xxx). Thus, in defining his audience, Cary defines Lower Canadian society and, specifically, defines it as sufficiently advanced as to boast a sufficient number of “lovers of polite learning” to form an audience for his poem.⁵⁹

The connection between Cary the writer and speaker of *Abram’s Plains*, and the state of the society that is his subject is made in the text of the poem itself in much the same terms that it is in the Preface. The speaker begins by drawing repeated attention to his own passivity. He “*sit[s]* and court[s] the muse” (Cary 2, emphasis added). He is “lost in thought” or “musing” or “h[olding] blest converse with the learned dead” (Cary 5-6). He explains:

Oft, on the green sod *lolling as I lay*,
 Heedless, the grazing herds around me stray:
 Close by my side shy songsters fearless hop,
 And shyer squirrels the young verdure crop:
 All take me for some native of the wood,
 Or else *some senseless block* thrown from the flood. (Cary 11-16, emphasis added)

In this passage, the speaker is so thoroughly passive that he effectively fades into the

⁵⁹

Bentley states:

a printing of some two hundred copies of *Abram’s Plains* was planned and, presumably, executed. Since Cary’s cost for the production and distribution of the poem was recorded by Brown [the publisher] totalled £4.18.3d. he needed to sell only fifty copies to break even. Poet and mercantilist that he was, Cary evidently hoped to turn a tidy profit on the sale and fruits of his pen. (Introduction xliii)

Two important conclusions can be drawn from this. First, Cary’s assessment of Lower Canadian society was not a fanciful and hopeful exaggeration, but an accurate one on whose accuracy he was willing to stake his own money. Second, that given the limited print run of the poem, he was far from claiming that the colony had even begun to approach the apogee of its development. However much the colony had developed since Wolf’s victory at Quebec, he thought that much more progress remained to be made.

landscape. His inactivity is highlighted by the contrast with the “grazing,” “hop[ping]” and “crop[ping] animals that surround him. The speaker concludes the lines with two criticisms of his capacity for action. First, he likens himself to “some native of the wood,” effectively stripping himself of the agency that accrues to men by likening himself to an animal. Second, he compares himself to a “senseless block” or to an inanimate object whose inert, inhuman materiality is emphasized by Cary’s use of the, strictly speaking, redundant adjective “senseless.” The first sixteen lines of *Abram’s Plains*’ repeated emphasis on the speaker’s passivity, especially on his recumbent, relaxed pose, echoes the Preface’s assertion that the poem is “the offspring of a few leisure hours” (Cary 3-4), and reinforces its connection between the poet’s leisure and social development by making an analogous connection between the speaker and the present state of the colony. The speaker’s ability to spend his time “sit[ting],” “lolling” and lying implies that he is part of an advanced society capable of supporting individuals who have the liberty to cultivate the aesthetic dimensions of life.

Even the moments of activity in the opening lines are moments of unproductive recreation, or moments that, for all their vitality, are unmistakably moments of leisure.

Cary writes:

Else, like a steed, unbroken to bit or rein,
 Courting fair health, I drive across the plain;
 The balmy breeze of Zephyrus inhale,
 Or bare my breast to the bleak northern gale. (7-10)

However active the speaker is, he is not productively so. This is reinforced by his comparison of himself to “a steed, unbroken to bit or rein.” The bit and rein are instruments for domesticating horses or transforming them into the animal equivalent of labourers. The image thus strongly suggests that in this moment the speaker is able to liberate himself from and fully forget the exigencies of economic productivity. The passage’s emphasis on the cultivation of personal health – a luxury, not a necessity – also confirms the connection of the speaker to leisure and a comparatively advanced stage of social development. Finally, the peacefulness of the speaker’s passivity and the opening

line's emphasis on freedom in combination with "the present tranquillity on the Plains of Abraham" (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 26) align the speaker with all of the positive effects of the *pax Britannica*.⁶⁰ As Bentley observes, "[w]ith its 'fearless' birds, 'grazing herds,' and 'learned dead' (presumably the classical and neo-classical writers and thinkers 'who blest Mankind / With Arts, and Arms, and humaniz'd a world'" [Thomson, 'Winter' 432-35]), the Plains of Abraham are in Cary's poem a metaphorical microcosm of a Lower Canada that for thirty years has enjoyed the benefits of British peace, order, good government, and mercantile economics" (*Mimic Fires* 27). To this it may be added that the speaker owes his present state and capacity to speak the poem to these thirty years, and is consequently representative of British rule and society in the colony. In effect, Cary stakes his very identity as the speaker of *Abram's Plains* on his assessment of the development of colonial society, making himself the product/representative of that society.

Although Cary contrasts the present tranquillity of the plains and the violence of their history to which Bentley draws attention, the poet does not see the past as the antitheses of the present. The pacific present and militaristic past *are* markedly different, but their relationship is far more complex than that of antagonistic opposites. Both Wolfe's victory over Montcalm and the *pax Britannica* are effects of British power and, as such, expressions of Cary's "Tory vision of the British Empire as a force for good" (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 26). Despite their differences, they are two faces of the same imperial coin. The violent past is the origin of a peaceful present that it informs and guarantees. If, as Bentley contends, the poem evinces "a communal consciousness founded on the sense of a shared past and a common future" (*Mimic Fires* 25), it does so to the extent that it unites the past and the present in a productive, rather than an antagonistic, relationship. Central to the poem's unification of these seeming opposites is the body of the speaker whose actions and whose poem are so definitively representative

⁶⁰

Bentley speculates that the unbroken "steed" is "an emblem, perhaps, of British liberty" (*Mimic Fires* 29). It is not possible to adequately confirm this speculation, but it is certainly in line with my reading of this portion of the poem.

of contemporary colonial society. Cary achieves the reconciliation of the violent past and peaceable present by configuring the speaker's masculine identity as the product of the models of manhood that preceded it. The question then is: how, exactly, is this reconciliation of models of manhood effected? How does Cary show that his passive, recumbent and thoroughly pacific speaker is a product of the blood drenched history he surveys and, crucially, embodies the full spectrum of the active, violent and socially corrosive masculinities that feature in that history? To answer these questions, the following sections examine the relationships between the speaker and the poem's two most significant and sustained examples of masculine violence, the British conquest of the colony and the pre-colonial "savagery"⁶¹ of Native Peoples.

II

"*Britannia's Conqu'ring Sword*" to "a Grey-goose Quill": The Management of British Masculine Violence in *Abram's Plains*

Cary's endorsement of the *pax Britannica* and the peace and prosperity that it brings with it presents him with a problem: his values are manifestly at odds with the violence of the military conquest that secured the colony for Britain. To solve this problem, Cary resolves the tension between his pacifism and the violence of the past, by affirming the conquest as a necessary, albeit problematic, event, and positioning it as a formal model for his poem while rejecting its violence. As part of this solution, Cary draws an analogy between the speaker of *Abram's Plains* and Wolfe, presenting Wolfe as the antecedent of the speaker, thus managing Wolfe's aggressive masculine body, and sublimating Wolfe's militaristic violence into the pacific identity of the poet. In this way, *Abram's Plains* establishes an historical continuity, at the level of individual masculine identity, that

⁶¹

All references to the "savagery of Native Peoples" are to Cary's portrayal of Native Peoples, a portrayal that was shaped by his investment in the four stages theory of social development and his profound belief in the goodness of British colonial society, and that was grossly inaccurate.

suggests the emergence of an “authentic” colonial model of masculinity.

The pacific Cary takes a predictably dim view of the violence of war. His rejection of martial violence is, however, complicated by the fact that he is a direct beneficiary of the British Victory at Quebec city, and the length of his explanation of his views on the battle reflects the complexity of his relationship with it. After describing Wolfe’s victory and relating the general’s final words – “Anxious, he hears the shout – ‘they fly, they fly,’ / ‘Who fly?’ ‘The foe’ – ‘contented then I die.’ (Cary 328-29) – Cary offers a detailed, nuanced and decidedly critical assessment of war. His criticism of war is thirty lines long or exactly equal in length to the stirring description of the battle of the Plains of Abraham that immediately precedes it. Thus Cary balances the heroism of battle with a pacific critique of war in such a way as to suggest that war and peace have equal, but irreconcilable, claims to legitimacy. This careful balance (of ideological positions as well as the number of lines dedicated to those positions) flies in the face of the conventions of patriotic poetry, which is typically jingoistically partisan, mono-positional rather than multi-positional, and anything but self-consciously nuanced. The symmetry of these two portions of the poem formally reflects the considered rationality that characterizes the speaker’s critique of war and, in concert with his more explicit criticisms of “conquest” (Cary 332), clearly distinguishes the speaker from “the patriot [who cannot] restrain / The noble ardour of his boiling vein” (Cary 344-45). The speaker separates himself from the English conquest of Upper and Lower Canada by contrasting the single minded, wasteful partisanship of the warrior with his own balanced, conservative, considered and pacific rationalism.

Cary foregrounds these qualities in the substance of his criticisms of war. Immediately after declaring that Wolfe’s “fame echoes through the realms of day” (331), Cary praises the men who defended Quebec from an American army lead by General Montgomery, for a “prudence [that], without rashness, wise maintain’d / What Wolfe, with loss of life, so bravely gain’d” (336-37). Cary asks, “If so much praise to conquest then be due, / Can man less honour saving wisdom shew?” (332-33), suggesting that defensive violence is deserving of praise at least equal to, if not greater than, the violence

of Wolfe's conquest. Cary immediately confirms the suggestion that defenders are more praiseworthy than conquerors when he exclaims, "Praise, double praise, surely to him is due, / Who, tender, saves man's blood and conquers too" (338-39). He also affirms the legitimacy of this sort of patriotic violence when he acknowledges that it is necessary to defend against those who are "studious alone of greatness, not of right" and to "stay the torrent of inroaching pow'r!" (Cary 347, 354). His celebration of defensive violence is immediately followed by an emphatic plea that such violence will never again be necessary: "O never more may hostile arms distain, / With human gore, the verdure of the plain!" (Cary 341-42). The opening lines of Cary's critique of war thus establish a three tier hierarchy that climbs from good to better to best or from the praiseworthy violence of Wolfe's conquest to the "doubl[y] praise[-]"worthy defence of the city to an ideal state of peace in which neither offensive or defensive violence is necessary. In effect, Cary balances a powerful, idealistic condemnation of war with the recognition of the legitimacy of patriotic fervour (the opposite of the speaker's own equitable, bipartisan rationalism) and the pragmatic necessity of armed conflict. Most significantly, he ends his critique of war with the damning observation that "Where flies the flaming shell or hissing ball, / Guiltless and guilty, undistinguish'd, fall" (Cary 360-61), indicting war for producing situations in which death is dealt out at random, situations to which discrimination (choosing between "guiltless and guilty") and justice (the moral/legal framework that underpins that choice) are fundamentally alien.

Judgement (in the moral if not the legal sense), discrimination, and justice form the basis of Cary's aesthetic project. His topographical poem is an exercise in a form of description that relies on the careful delineation of the features of the landscape, on sorting or discriminating one thing from another, this place from that, here from there. For instance, discussing Cary's "description of the Plains themselves near the middle of the poem,"⁶² Bentley makes the point that,

62

The lines in question read:

Here hill and dale diversify the scene,
There pensile woods cloth'd with eternal green;

[i]n this passage Cary creates a vivid sense of the pictorial . . . and, by means of repeated adverbs of locale such as “Here” and “There” . . . succeeds in composing the landscape as a painter would a picture space. More specifically, Cary adheres to the picturesque convention . . . of dividing the scene into “three-distances”, the foreground (“hill and dale”), the middle-ground (“woods” and “plain”), and the background (the “distant wood”), and of using the “Here” / “There” direction to lead the reader’s eye from background to foreground and to convey the illusion of three-dimensional space. (Introduction xxxv)

Although not all of the descriptive passages in the poem are as schematic as this one, they nevertheless consistently rely upon divisions and discriminations similar to those that Bentley identifies. Bentley makes the additional point that the discrimination of topographical description rests solidly on a bedrock of justice, on a powerful, informing moral sensibility:

Like *Windsor-Forest*, its primary model as a ‘local’ or ‘topographical’ poem, *Abram’s Plains* fuses the scenic and the historical, the pastoral and the political, and does so within a ‘controlling moral vision’ based, in Cary’s case, on a perceived need in Lower Canada for the peace, harmony, freedom and moderation that he associates with the British presence in the Colony. (Introduction xiv-v)

Cary’s method fuses description and morality, stressing as it does so the poet’s capacity for discrimination. Moreover, the equitable and pacific rationalism that characterizes Cary’s critique of war is one of the poem’s more obvious expressions of the “peace, harmony, freedom and moderation [in this case of patriotic fervour and of the desire to jingoistically celebrate martial conquests]” that Cary associates with British colonial society and, as a member of that society, strives both to celebrate and to express in his work.

The russet plain with thorny brambles spread,
 Where clust’ring haws deep blush a ruddy red;
 The distant wood, wide-waving to the breeze,
 Where shining villas peep through crowded trees;
 Here babbling brooks gurgle adown the glade,
 There rise mementos of the soldier’s spade;
 Where on the green-sward oft incamp’d they lay,
 Seen by the rising and the setting ray. (Cary 272-81)

The net effect of Cary's equally balanced description of the battle of the Plains of Abraham and critique of war is to present the speaker as an enthusiastic supporter of Wolfe and his accomplishments who is, nevertheless, distinct from the heroic general. Cary distinguishes the speaker from Wolfe and the British conquest on the basis of the fact that the balanced, equitable, moderate, and rational discrimination that characterizes both the poet's critique of war and his project entire is fundamentally antithetical to martial values, and the destructive and wasteful confusion of battle. This is not at all surprising in a poem that consistently values progress written several decades after Wolfe's victory. Cary's distinction of his speaker's values from those characteristic of the British conquest signals that British colonial society has progressed past the violence of its inception. From the perspective of the present, the poet can be both critical of the past conquest and, by making his criticisms from the perspective of the ongoing British control of the colony – that is, from the viewpoint of a beneficiary of and participant in the *pax Britannica* – wholeheartedly endorse its effects. Although Cary works to clearly distinguish his speaker from the martial violence of the conquest, he puts just as much effort into productively incorporating martial violence into contemporary British colonial society and the identity of his speaker.

Cary presents the violence of Wolfe's victory on the Plains of Abraham as a necessary precursor to the peaceful present that is a *necessary* precursor because it is instrumental in establishing the *pax Britannica*. In effect, he acknowledges that, in a very real sense, his cultural identity, his identity as a poet, and the project of his poem depend entirely on this event. In keeping with this acknowledgement, the violence of the conquest is fully integrated in the poem into a cultural identity that comprehends the historical event of the battle (without repudiating it or its effects) at the same time that it fully (and, given the length and substance of Cary's critique of war, emphatically) transcends that event and the ideological position Cary attributes to it. This is abundantly clear at the moment that the poem approaches the walls of Quebec city. As the speaker reassures the city that his muse "comes no foe thy streets with blood to fill" (Cary 452), he draws a comparison between his poem and the British and American armies that

approached Quebec city years ago. At the same time that he highlights their similarity, Cary distinguishes between the martial violence of the two invading armies and his own peaceful muse whose “only weapon is a grey-goose quill” (459). The poem makes only a passing reference to Montgomery and the American invasion while dwelling at great length on Wolfe and the British conquest; not surprisingly, the comparison between Wolfe and the poem is richer, its resonances are more meaningful, and its ramifications are more substantial than that between the poem and Montgomery.⁶³ In drawing an analogy between the British conquerors and his poem, Cary emphasizes the extent to which the army (which sought to subject Lower Canada to British rule) and the poem (which seeks to celebrate British rule and, in celebrating, perpetuate that rule) are both agents of the British imperialist cause. Thus these lines present the British conquest as the formal antecedent to Cary’s poem, announcing through their comparison that Wolfe established the pattern that Cary follows by other means, peaceable means, but means which nevertheless recall the battle of the Plains of Abraham.

This formal homology between the poem and Wolfe’s army extends beyond the approach of both to Quebec City, and Cary’s comparison invites the reader to consider a more general symmetry between the British conquest and *Abram’s Plains*. Wolfe’s victory led directly to the Treaty of Paris and the transfer of New France to Great Britain. As a topographical poem whose primary method is to survey British holdings in North America, *Abram’s Plains* replicates the conquest in which the battle of the Plains of Abraham plays a seminal role. In other words, the poem comprehends the same territory the British conquered and, as such, is formally analogous to the conquest. Thus *Abram’s Plains* functions, to adapt Cary’s phrase, as a “peaceful parallel” (Cary 460) to the

63

Additionally, Cary’s deeply felt patriotism – a patriotism that puts him fundamentally and irrevocably at odds with Montgomery and his army – forecloses the comparison between his poem and the invading Americans. Although the line “comes no foe thy streets with blood to fill” (Cary 458) certainly recalls Montgomery along with Wolfe, the length of the ensuing extended analogy (a dozen lines) indicates that there is a substantial basis for the comparison, and makes it implausible to read Montgomery and the American army as the object of the analogy.

military exploits of the British in North America. In essence, the poem sublimates military violence into an aesthetic project and, in so doing, maintains the formal structure of the violence while redirecting it to more positive, less socially corrosive ends.

It is important to note that Cary is careful to make it clear that this sublimation is conservative *and* transformative or that, for all that it preserves certain formal aspects of the violence of the Seven Years War, his writing is substantially distinct from the British conquest. He does so, first, by invoking the martial content of classical poetry and, second, by distinguishing the surveys of topographical poetry from the reports of spies. Cary says that, if his muse “fights,” it is “perhaps [in] some Trojan’s cause; / Or else some hero’s of renowned Rome, / E’er sunk to slav’ry, Ceasar seal’d her doom” (461-63). The inclusion of two equivocations – “if she fights” and “perhaps” – in the same line, equivocations that do not apply to the same subject but are rare in a poem that favours direct, confident statement, stress the improbability of Cary’s pacific and poorly-armed muse engaging in conflict. What is more, the causes his muse would support, if it were to become militant, are variably aligned with the defenders of New France and with the British conquerors. On the one hand, to fight for a Trojan’s cause implies an affinity for the defenders of cities and suggests an alignment with Montcalm, or, more generally, those defending against Montgomery, rather than Wolfe. On the other hand, the muse’s willingness to join with a Roman hero before Rome’s decline seems to indicate a preference for empires, like the British Empire, at the height of their powers. The emphasis on the freedom of Rome before it has “sunk to slav’ry” recalls Cary’s various celebrations of the freedom secured by the *pax Britannica* and strengthens the link here between Rome and Great Britain. The double valance of the muse’s allegiance looks back to Cary’s balanced praise of offensive and defensive violence and, thus, even as the poet flirts with the possibility of a militant muse, he refuses it by alluding to his description of the battle of the Plains of Abraham and his subsequent critique of war. Finally, the references to Troy and Rome are to the ancient past. Consequently, they draw attention to the period of time separating the battle of the Plains of Abraham from the poem and to the peace that has reigned since the battle, stressing the fact that, as Cary sees

it, the violence of battle belongs to history, not to the peaceable present. By accentuating the temporal distance between poetry and any violent subject matter it might fix on, the references draw a clear distinction between writing and martial violence. The poet's muse draws "peaceful parallels" (Cary 460), and, if writing and martial violence are paralleled, like two parallel lines, they will never meet.

Cary's explicit differentiation of his work from writing and observation done in the service of military endeavour confirms this distinction. The poet's assurance that his muse is "no spy [come] to draw the secret plan" may seem rather pat. Although topographical poetry and spying both involve careful observation and description, they are otherwise utterly and quite obviously unrelated. However, I would argue that the object of Cary's assurance serves, not so much to divide topographical poetry from spying, as it does to drive home the point that, although it is an agent of British imperialism, his muse is not an adjunct to the British military, nor directly implicated in the conquest that British forces effected. In short, because she is not a spy Cary's muse cannot be directly linked to the British military and his poem cannot, despite the formal resemblances between the two, be construed as a straightforward recapitulation of the British campaign against New France. In summary, the violence exemplified by the battle of the Plains of Abraham is sublimated by the poem. Indeed, it is incorporated into Cary's aesthetic project and, through this incorporation, turned towards the more socially acceptable, economically advantageous, morally correct, and aesthetically productive ends of *Abram's Plains*. Cary presents the violence of the British conquest as formally analogous to his poem at the very same time that he stresses the differences that divide the two, underscoring the extent to which his poem replicates the conquest in crucial ways but, also and even more crucially, transcends it. Thus *Abram's Plains* presents the British conquest (and, one must add, the violence it entailed) as the key event that established the social conditions necessary for the production of poetry in the Canadas *and* as a formal model which the poem both references and exceeds. In addition to positioning the British conquest as the enabling condition of colonial poetry and as a formal model for *Abram's Plains*, Cary also incorporates the model of manhood associated with the conquest into the identity of his

speaker, drawing a parallel between himself and the heroic General Wolfe, firmly grounding his identity as a poet in the British violence he questions elsewhere.

In the poem's opening verse paragraph, the speaker replicates the actions of Wolfe during the battle: Cary describes Wolfe "lead[ing] on foot the line" (312), falling when he is struck and uttering his final words from a prone position. The speaker likewise "drive[s] across the plain" and then lies "on the green sod" (Cary 8,11). It is, in fact, tempting to see the speaker here as engaging in boyish fantasy play, replicating the movements of his hero on the very terrain on which he originally made them. What is more, the speaker "bar[ing] [his] breast to the bleak northern gale" (Cary 10) is suggestive of Wolfe's vulnerability at the head of the charge and faintly echoes the description of the British soldiers: "High beat their breasts, strangers to abject fears" (Cary 311). But by far the most obvious similarity between the speaker and the general is their recumbent position. The speaker "sit[s] and court[s] the muse" (Cary 2). In the most famous image of Wolfe at the battle, West's *The Death of General Wolfe* (1770), Wolfe is lying down, propped up by some of the men who surround him, in a position that one could easily characterize as "lolling" (Cary 11). Cary, in keeping with both the painting and the popular version of the event, has Wolfe utter his final words, "contented then I die" (329), from a similar prone position. Bentley speculates that "Cary may have seen either . . . the original (it was exhibited at the Royal Academy in London in 1771) or . . . the immensely popular engraving of William Woollett" (*Mimic Fires* 26), a speculation that serves to draw attention to the fact that the speaker and Wolfe both speak from the same position on the Plains of Abraham, and are the only figures in the poem to do so. The alignment of the speaker and Wolfe makes perfect sense in the context of a poem that, as already shown, models itself in important ways on the British conquest of New France: to the extent that he delivers such a poem, the speaker is in a position analogous to that of the general.

There are, however, some obvious and important differences between the two men. Within the temporal frame of the poem, one is an historic figure, the other a contemporary one. One is famously militaristic, the other determinedly pacific. But,

most important, Wolfe is associated with death and destruction, whereas the speaker is identified with life and vitality. Cary describes the wounded Wolfe as “hid[ing] the purple flood, / His courage kindling with the loss of blood” (322-3), and the dying Wolfe declaring his own death. All of this is in stark contrast to the speaker who celebrates the many and profitable achievements of peace: he “inhale[s]” (Cary 9) the “‘balmy breeze’ of the classical Zephyrus (the West Wind, traditionally associated with health and renewal)” (Bentley, Introduction xvi) and “bare[s] [his] breast to the bleak northern gale” (Cary 10). The Zephyrus is, as Bentley points out, healthful and the northern gale, although less pleasant than the Zephyrus, is less deadly than the hail of “bullets, charg’d with fate” (Cary 316) that rain down on Wolfe and his men. Bentley sees these as “two very different winds” (Introduction xvi), but that is not entirely the case. The winds are different, but related to the extent that both bear on the health of Canadian manhood. The northern gale is less an injurious wind than an opportunity to demonstrate one’s colonial fortitude and vigour, an opportunity which the speaker seizes by “bar[ing] [his] breast” (Cary 10). Thus the first wind fills the speaker with health, the second provides him the opportunity to prove the effects of “the invigorating qualities of Canadian nature” (Bentley, “Introduction” xvii), and, together, the two winds explain and exhibit his essential vitality. Finally, in voicing the poem, the speaker speaks what, for lack of a better term, one might call words of life. While Wolfe pronounces his own death, through his economically minded survey of the colony the speaker announces the strength and vitality of British society in the Canadas. The contrasting content of Wolfe and the speaker’s enunciations is encapsulated by their referents: Wolfe speaks about himself in a moment of circular self-referentiality that is violently foreclosed by the death he announces; the speaker speaks to and of a society, looking as he does so past himself over his colonial compatriots to announce the abundant possibilities of its promising future. The effect of the juxtaposition of Wolfe and the speaker is to frame the speaker in terms of the masculinity exemplified by the general, integrating British military heroism into the identity of the speaker by establishing Wolfe as a model for the speaker’s manhood. Significantly, this integration is also an instance of sublimation in which the socially

corrosive violence of the military hero is redirected towards more positive, socially productive ends: British war is replaced by British peace; masculine aggression is replaced by masculine celebration; male violence is replaced by male productivity; the wounded, expiring male body is replaced by the vital, healthy male body; and, deathly words are replaced by living poetry.

The juxtaposition of Wolfe and the speaker foregrounds the similarity between their bodies. Cary bases the parallel between the two men on the congruence of their movements and the position of their bodies. Thus this juxtaposition may be read as an instance of the sublimation of male violence (as exemplified by British militarism), but, more specifically, as an instance of the management of the violent male body (as exemplified by the body of the British military hero) through its symbolic incorporation into the body of the speaker. What is more, the juxtaposition of the speaker and Wolfe allows Cary to gesture towards a proto-Canadian masculinity, endowing his speaker with an “authentic” colonial identity that legitimizes his evaluation of the colony. By incorporating Wolfe’s militarism into his speaker’s identity, Cary legitimizes his celebrations of peace and criticisms of war by framing them as logical extensions, albeit transformative ones, of military endeavour. This establishes an historical continuity, at the level of individual masculine identity, between the British conquest and the present that implicitly validates British colonialism and lends credence to Cary’s belief in the continued success of British society in the Canadas. The historical continuity of British-colonial manhood is part of a larger pattern within which colonial masculinity is constituted through comparison, juxtaposition and transformative replication, through, in short, the making of “*Britannia’s* conqu’ring sword” into “a grey-goose quill” (Cary 434, 459). There is an analogous pattern at work in Cary’s treatment of the “savagery” of Native Peoples and of their aggressive masculine bodies.

III

“Skalping-knives” to Poets’ Pens: The Management of Native Canadian Violence in

Abram’s Plains

Despite the fact that the violence of Native Peoples makes a less obvious historical contribution to the development of the pacific present than the British conquest, rather than rejecting or abjecting that violence, Cary appropriates it to the system of regulatory values celebrated in *Abram's Plains*, framing Native "savagery" as constitutive of the speaker's identity and as no less constitutive of contemporary colonial society. Within the context of the poem, Native violence and the masculine bodies of violent natives become both culturally and economically productive, and it is in this management of Native violence, in turning of it from socially corrosive to constructive/productive ends, that Cary completes his gesture towards an emergent proto-Canadian masculinity.

One of the more striking and significant features of *Abram's Plains* is the comparison that Cary draws between his speaker and Native Peoples, a comparison that, like the one that he draws between the speaker and Wolfe, focuses on the speaker's body. In the poem's opening description of the Plains of Abraham, at the same time that the leisurely speaker presents himself as the product of a developed society, he likens himself to Natives, integrating British civilization and Native "savagery" in a unique individual identity. After describing how animals surround him as he lies on the "green sod" (Cary 11), the speaker explains: "All take me for some native of the wood, / Or else some senseless block thrown from the flood" (Cary 15-6). Cary's use of "native" evokes autochthony and belonging, suggesting that his identity contains Canadian as well as British elements. This suggestion is confirmed by the link made between the speaker and Native Peoples in the second line of the couplet. Bentley speculates about the meaning of "senseless block":

It is more than possible that Cary's use of the word "block" brings with it to this context a double valency and two meanings, one derived from its traditional (Shakespearean, Popean) usage as an image of inertia and senselessness, the other deriving from the implication that this Canadian "block" is a piece of flotsam from Quebec's burgeoning timber industry, described by Cary in some detail later in the poem. If this possibility is granted, then it would appear that Cary's doubly suggestive "block" serves to reconcile old-world concepts with new-world realities and, beyond that, to show, like the entire context in which it appears, that on the Plains of Abraham there is to be found in 1789 a peaceful and harmonious

relationship between man (even man with commercial connections) and nature (even wild nature). (Introduction xvii)

Bentley's reading is consistent with the various attempts these lines make to reconcile new- and old-world masculinities, cultures and aesthetics. In addition, it establishes a signification of "senseless block" that links the identity, and, indeed, the body of the speaker to Native Peoples.

As Bentley points out, "block" looks towards Cary's lengthy descriptions of "Quebec's burgeoning timber industry," but it does more than simply present the speaker as the product of the British exploitation of the colony's forests, for embedded in Cary's description of logging is a legend that conflates the natural resource it exploits with Native Peoples:

Hence, as they [the Saint Charles and Montmorenci rivers] flow, they stretch their
 spacious bed
 And, here and there, an isle uplifts its head;
 Whilst from *Malbay*, the mill's remorseless sound
 And piteous groans of rending firs, resound;
 Within whose rind, I shudder while I tell,
 Spirits of warriors close imprison'd dwell,
 Who in cold blood, butcher'd a valiant foe,
 For which, transform'd to weeping firs, they grow:
 Down their tall trunks trickling the tears distill,
 'Till last the ax and saw groaning they fell. (144-53)

Native warriors who have been transformed into trees that provide fodder for loggers whose work, one may reasonably presume, produces the flotsam that is the vehicle of Cary's metaphor. In effect, through the intermediary of the "senseless block," Cary establishes a link between the speaker and Native Peoples. This link is a complex and multilayered one that encapsulates many of the salient features of Cary's productive management/sublimation of Native violence in the poem.

Taken together, these two passages (the couplet of the introduction and the later description of logging) conjoin British economic exploitation of the colony with adaptation to it. The transformation of the fir tree into the block is accomplished by white loggers and, consequently, British industry forms the first very real condition of

possibility of the association of the speaker with Native Peoples. The second condition of possibility of the link is, of course, the Indian legend that Cary relates.⁶⁴ Thus the new- and old-worlds are united at two levels: in the comparison itself, and in the conditions (British industry and Indian legend) that establish the possibility of the comparison. This amounts to an assertion that the economic exploitation of the colony goes hand in hand with the adaptive appropriation of elements of the culture and society of Native Peoples. Not surprisingly, it is a similar process of adaptive appropriation, of management and sublimation, that is at work in the passages' construction of the speaker's identity.

The comparison of the speaker to a "senseless block" links the speaker to the utmost extremity of Natives' violence and "savagery." This is the most significant difference between the two comparisons in the couplet. Whereas the speaker is initially likened to "some native of the wood" on the basis of his ability to blend perfectly and peaceably into the natural environment, in the subsequent line, he is linked to the "cold blood[ed] . . . butcher[y] [of] a valiant foe." In fact, Cary's version of the Indian legend implies that the warriors whose souls are trapped in the trees have been so transformed because their crimes are so dishonourable that they violate the laws of Native culture. In a poem in which Native Peoples are consistently defined as destructive and violent – that is, until they are introduced to agriculture by white settlers – the warriors in the trees are the worst of the worst. It is striking, then, that Cary would chose to incorporate this violence, however chastened it may be by the punishment of the transformation, into the identity of his speaker. In doing so, he effectively allows that violence to define his speaker through a relationship, not of difference, but of similarity, implying that the speaker's identity incorporates, rather than proscribes, the worst of the poem's violence, the worst of "wild-wasting war . . . [,] [d]estructive war!" (Cary 51-52).

This incorporation is effected through an image of sublimation or of the

64

In his Introduction to the poem, Bentley identifies this as an Indian legend: "he [Cary] draws upon an Indian legend, albeit one that would have been accessible with minimal difficulty to a European familiar, as Cary very likely would have been, with Ovid's *Metamorphoses*" (xxiii).

redirection of socially corrosive violence to socially productive ends: the extremity of savage violence is objectified in the fir trees which are then cut and shaped into, and among other things (such as masts, and, indeed, ships), “senseless block[s]” by colonial labourers. These blocks are among the colony’s commodities, the means to continue the development of British civilization in the colony and, one at least, is the vehicle for illuminating the speaker’s identity. The materiality of the image, its foregrounding of the objectification of the “[s]pirits of warriors” and the reduction of the speaker to a mere body implied by the adjective “senseless,” positions the image as an example of the management of the violent masculine body through a process of incorporative sublimation. In the interplay between the comparison of the speaker to a “senseless block” and Cary’s description of the timber industry, the violent bodies of Natives are, to play on Cary’s word, transformed into the building blocks of British colonial society and, most significantly, of the speaker’s own, individual identity. Instead of seeing it as exclusively negative, the poem presents the “savage,” violent male body as contributing to the individual male identity of the speaker and, consequently, to an emerging proto-Canadian masculine identity the speaker exemplifies. This productive appropriation of Native savagery extends beyond the speaker’s individual identity to Cary’s construction of colonial society and the emerging colonial masculinity that defines that society.

The violence of Native Peoples presents a challenge similar to that of the violence of the British conquest, but a much greater challenge because, in Cary’s view, it is more chaotic and destructive than British violence, and makes a less obvious historical contribution to the peace and prosperity of the present. Rather than minimizing the difference between Native “savagery” and colonial society, Cary confronts it head on, painting it in the starkest of terms: while celebrating the *pax Britannica*, he associates natives with savagery, bloodthirstiness, and the indiscriminate destruction of war:

Such are thy blessings peace! superior far
 To specious conquests of wild-wasting war.
 Destructive war! at best the good of few,
 Its dire effects whilst millions dearly rue.
 How blest the task, to tame the savage soil,
 And, from the waters, bid the woods recoil!

But oh! a task of more exalted kind,
 To arts of peace, to tame the savage mind;
 The thirst of blood, in human breasts, to shame,
 To wrest, from barb'rous vice, fair virtue's name; (50-59)

These lines firmly align the chaotic violence of battle with the “savages” of the new world, and with a barbaric past that will, ideally, be transcended through a process of social development. The exclamation “Destructive war!” is juxtaposed with the “blessings [of] peace,” which, in turn, are linked to “tam[ing] the savage soil” or “civilizing” both the “savage” tendencies towards destruction and the wild landscape. As Bentley puts it, in these lines, Cary “parallels the physical development of the Canadian terrain with the moral development of the Native peoples” (*Mimic Fires* 33) and, it could be said, juxtaposes this development with the regressive violence of armed conflict. This set of juxtapositions, parallels, and links effectively positions white (British) civilization as the opposite of “Destructive war!” *and* as the means of foreclosing war as a possible avenue of human action.

Cary’s use of the adjective “specious” is particularly significant in this context, for it implicitly divides reason and rationality (intellectual cognates of social development and the exclusive possessions of white civilization) from the “conquests of . . . war,” alienating contemporary colonial society from destructive violence. This effect is maximized by the originality and position of the word. To the extent that the adjective denotes that which is false and hollow, but also deceptively beautiful, misleading and sophistic, and, thus, frames “conquest” in terms of truth value, aesthetics, duplicity and false argument, it is a strikingly unique and complex use of language in a poem that consistently relies on conventional figures and shopworn phrases. The adjective stands out and has a commensurately greater effect for standing out.⁶⁵

65

In his Introduction to the poem, Bentley discusses the originality or lack thereof of *Abram’s Plains’* language:

As repeatedly shown by the Explanatory Notes in the present edition (even those to the descriptions of the Great Lakes and Niagara Falls), Cary’s poem is in many places little more than a pastiche of phrases from *Windsor-Forest* and *The*

As well as disassociating contemporary British colonial society from violence, the language of this passage works to associate it with Natives. The compound adjective “wild-wasting,” and the analogy drawn by Cary between pioneering or “tam[ing] the savage soil” and “tam[ing] the savage mind” strengthen the association between violence and Native Peoples, setting them up as the stark antithesis of a colonial culture characterized by the “arts of peace.” This, however, is not an opposition, no matter how stark, that will be resolved through the forceful eradication of one of the opposites. On the contrary, as the repeated use of the verb “to tame” suggests, the “savages” must be “weaned from the nomadic life of hunting and improved through contact with European

Seasons. No doubt the entropic element of pastiche in *Abram's Plains* speaks to an extent of Cary's limitations as a poet. It also speaks, as implicitly does the bulk of his Preface, of his search for a literary lexicon that is both acceptable to his “judicious and poetical” readers and adequate and answerable to the Canadian scene – a search that led him sometimes to a North-American source (Carver's *Travels*) and occasionally to a prosaically local word (“tomi-cod,” 1. 266, for instance), but, more often, took him to such phrases as “russet plain” (1. 274) and “feathered game” (1. 410), which are taken directly from Pope and Thomson. Yet Cary's borrowings from the English poets whom he admires should not be too hastily condemned as a lack of originality verging on plagiarism. The practice of literary and artistic imitation was a more central and creative aspect of the neo-classical aesthetic than many post-Romantic writers and critics are prepared to remember, and, moreover, by the end of the eighteenth century such phrases as “russet lawn” and “feathered game” were part of the conventional diction of most descriptive, topographical and pastoral poetry. (Introduction xxxiii)

Two comments are worth making. First, Bentley and this study both focus on the same aspects of the poem when considering the conventionality of its language, namely on the noun-adjective pairings. The juxtaposition of “specious conquests” with “russet plain” and “feathered game” drives home the above point about the comparative originality of the pairing of “specious” with “conquests.” And “specious conquests” seems just as original when compared with noun-adjective pairings that are more proximate to it, like the prosaic “yellow harvests,” “Destructive war,” “dire effects,” and “barb'rous vice” (Cary 46, 52, 53, 59). Second, to be clear, this is not a criticism of Cary for his poem's lack of originality. To make such a criticism would be, as Bentley appropriately points out, to disregard the neo-classical aesthetic governing the work. Indeed, such a criticism would countervail the above argument about Cary's use of “specious,” for it is only against the background of conventional noun-adjective pairings that “specious conquests” can stand out and do the important work that it does.

civilization” (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 33, emphasis added) or, put differently, appropriated to and integrated into white “civilisation.” There are two means by which the poem accomplishes this integration or, at least, accomplishes it discursively.

First, by viewing Native Peoples through the lens of the four stages theory, Cary situates them within a conceptual structure that allows them to be integrated into British colonial society, *and* to contribute to that society as they are integrated into it. It is by no means an equal relationship, but, under the governing rubric of British power and European developmental theory, Cary does allow Native Peoples to make an imprint on colonial society. In *Mimic Fires*, Bentley provides a brief, but invaluable, summary of the four stages theory and its relevance to *Abram’s Plains*:

[Cary] relied conceptually and perceptually on the so-called “four stages theory” of social development which, as Ronald L. Meek has shown (230), was “a very common and a very important ingredient in Enlightenment thought in the field of the social sciences during the whole of the period from 1750 to 1800” (and, it may be added, continued to be common and important in Canadian poetry until at least the end of the Georgian period). According to this theory, which Meek traces to two independent progenitors—Adam Smith in Scotland and A.R.J. Turgot in France—all societies develop through four distinct phases, each defined by the mode of subsistence of its constituent members: (1) a savage stage based on hunting; (2) a barbaric or pastoral stage based on herding; (3) an agricultural stage based on farming; and (4) a commercial stage based on trading. Of these four stages, the savage was held to be the “least civilised” (Meek 141-43) or the most “rough and rude” (Burwell, *Talbot Road* 565) and the commercial the most refined (Pye) or “polish’d” (Cary 418). The great leap forward in what Henry James Pye (the poet laureate from 1790 to 1813) called *The Progress of Refinement* (1783) was held to occur with the advent of agriculture, when self-sufficiency begins to give way to the superfluity that, in conjunction with “property in lands,” results in the creation of “civil society,” commercial prosperity, and—in the words of Sir William Blackstone—the “leisure...to cultivate the human mind, to invent useful arts and to lay the foundations of science” (2:7-8). In efficient agriculture lay the seeds of advanced culture. (31-32)

Under British rule, Native Peoples are shown developing from stage (1) savages to productive members of a stage (3) or (4) society. After exclaiming “But oh! a task of more exalted kind, / To arts of peace, to tame the savage mind” (57-58), Cary characterizes the process of “taming savagery” as the facilitation of Native Peoples’

transition from lower to higher stages of development: “Bid tomahawks to ploughshares yield the sway, / And scalping-knives to pruning hooks give way” (60-61). Specifically, this transition from “tomahawks to ploughshares” and “scalping-knives to pruning hooks” is from a stage (1) hunting society to a stage (3) agricultural one. It is important to note that this is both strikingly paternalistic – the imperious “Bid” that begins the couplet locates the agency affecting the transformation exclusively in white colonial culture – and inaccurate to the extent that it totally disregards the fact that many Native Peoples, especially the Huron at Lorette, were already accomplished farmers.⁶⁶ In keeping with the lines that precede it, this transition is from destructive, socially corrosive violence to civilized, pacific productivity.

Cary sees the civilizing influence of British rule eliminating not only the implements of war, but also the desire to wage it. He writes:

By British magnanimity repaid,
The foe triumphant dare no more upbraid:
But wish he had so lost so to have gain'd,
Pleas'd with the *now*, the *past* no more had pain'd. (68-71)

These lines describe the French Canadians acceptance of British rule, and the development of French Canadian society under that rule from stage (3) agrarianism to stage (4) mercantilism. In an intriguing shift, the rhetoric of civilized virtue and savage violence that has dominated the preceding twenty lines is replaced by language redolent of trade. The parties offended by the British’s “specious conquests” are “repaid,” and what they “lost” is compensated for by what they “gain’d.” This moral accounting suggests the initiation, as an effect of British government, of French Canadians into a commercial society characterized by economic exchanges – that is, by losses, gains, debts and repayments. In placing a passage outlining French Canadians’ development from stage

⁶⁶

In *Mimic Fires*, Bentley points out that this passage evinces “the combined logic of British imperialism and the four stages theory, in actual or willed ignorance of the fact that the Hurons had practised agriculture for thousands of years in what is now Ontario” (34).

(3) to stage (4) immediately following one that treats the development of Native Peoples from stage (1) to stage (3), Cary implies a continuity of development that will culminate in Native Peoples' eventual initiation into stage (4) mercantilism.

This implication is reinforced by Cary's description of the Natives settled at Lorette:

Here, of the copper-tribes, an half tam'd race,
As villagers take up their resting place;
Here fix'd, their household gods lay peaceful down,
To learn the manners of the polish'd town. (414-17)

The shift in verb tense in these lines indicates that the Native residents of the village have achieved a stage (3) agricultural existence and are proceeding towards full integration in the stage (4) mercantile society of white colonists. Cary repeats the verb "to tame," a verb he has already used to describe the development of both the Canadian landscape and Native Peoples (see lines 54 and 57). Here, however, the infinitive is replaced by the past tense "tam'd," announcing that the civilizational transition from a violent and nomadic to a pacific and agricultural society outlined several hundred lines prior has been completed. This announcement is confirmed by the description of the village as a "resting place" or an end to the peripatetic movement characteristic of earlier stages. The shift back to the infinitive "to learn" (417) in the following couplet signifies that the process is not yet complete or that exchanging tomahawks for ploughshares is a step in the transformation and not its conclusion.

The Natives' position between the third and fourth stages of development is reflected by their geographical position. Lorette occupies what is effectively a midway point between the "savage soil" (54) of the wilderness and Quebec City. Cary emphasises the economic importance of the "Great mart" (80) of Montreal,⁶⁷ but Quebec City is still,

⁶⁷

Bentley observes that,

[a]lthough Cary's notion that the Indians themselves brought their furs to Montreal for sale – "Within thy walls," he says "the painted nations pour, / And smiling wealth on thy blest traders show'r" (ll. 82-83) – seems to rest on a slight misunderstanding of the mechanism of the fur-trade (generally speaking the

in his view, a significant commercial centre where ships that are “kept-mistress[es] to the god of trade” are built and launched, and under whose influence “commerce a footing gains” (Cary 115, 107). Thus, the distinction between the agriculture of stage (3) and the commercialism of stage (4) is framed in terms of the conventional distinction between the country and the city, and the “copper-tribes” of Lorette are portrayed as newly minted rustics in the process of acquiring the urbanity of city dwellers or “the manners of the polish’d town” (Cary 417). In these lines, individual Natives are presented as productive members of colonial society and Cary goes on to assert that Native culture – as distinct from the individuals who, as they progress to higher stages of development and “their household gods lay peaceful down” (Cary 416), leave their culture behind – makes a contribution to that society as well.

In his closing description of the rigours of Canadian winters, Cary lauds the ability of colonials to survive the trials of the season:

Fearless, amidst the fragments, as they flow,
 The skilful peasant guides his long canoe.
 The trav’ler dauntless the snows depths distains,
 He stalks secure o’er hills, o’er vales and plains;
 On the spread racket, whilst he safely strides,
 Tales of Europeans lost in snow derides.
 Here, (blush ye London fops embox’d in chair,
 Who fear, tho mild’s your clime to face the air)
 Scorning to shrink at every breeze that blows,
 Unaw’d, the fair brave frosts and driving snows. (558-67)

Indians sold furs to *coureurs de bois*, who then brought them to Montreal), he is, of course, quite correct in seeing Montreal, where the North West Company had been operating since the 1770s, as the metropolitan centre of the fur-trade in 1789 – that is to say, two years after the “blest traders” Simon McTavish and Joseph Frobisher had established their famous partnership there. (Introduction xxi)

Cary’s slight misunderstanding of the fur-trade can be explained by his treatment of Natives in the poem. Although the image of them carrying their furs into Montreal is factually inaccurate, it fits perfectly with his vision of Native Canadians being integrated into the stage (4) mercantile society of British colonial culture, a culture whose commitment to trade found some of its clearest expressions in companies like the North West Company and in men like McTavish and Frobisher.

Bentley observes:

[n]owhere else in *Abram's Plains* does Cary pay higher tribute to the fortitude and adaptability of the inhabitants of his adopted colony than here, where he offers his readers for contemplation two images of a culture superbly adapted to the Canadian environment: the canoe and the snowshoe, two devices which, to use Harold Innis's word, had been "elaborated" from aboriginal and European models to meet the stern needs of a Northern climate and a Northern economy. (Introduction xxxviii)

The devices that allow the colonials to adapt to and thrive in the Canadian winter are "elaborat[ions]" from aboriginal and European models, or devices that bear the mark of both Native and European cultures. In drawing attention to the value of the canoe and snowshoe, Cary shows clearly that Native culture (specifically the devices that characterize it) makes an invaluable contribution to colonial society. Even more important, he demonstrates that the integration of Native Peoples is paralleled by acts of cultural appropriation through which colonial society adopts specific features of Native society. These lines are particularly significant because they feature devices that have both a Native origin and were essential for the success of the colony's main industry – the fur-trade or what Bentley alludes to with the phrase "Northern economy." In other words, by drawing attention to the importance of the canoe and the snowshoe, Cary partly grounds the thriving mercantile economy of British Canada in Native culture, making the highest stage of societal development dependent on the lowest and intimating that the contributions of Native culture, no matter how small they may seem, are indeed invaluable.

What is perhaps most striking about these lines is that they make these connections and associations at the same time that they draw a distinction between European, and colonial and proto-Canadian masculinity. While celebrating the resourcefulness and hardiness of colonial men, Cary derides the shrinking effeminacy of "London fops . . . / Who fear, tho' mild [their] clime, to face the air" (564-65). This amounts to a rather cantankerous – in what is potentially an example of conventional provincial defensiveness – assertion that a new and better form of manhood is emerging

in the colony. Significantly, this new model of manhood is linked not only to the rigours of the Canadian climate, but also, through the canoe and the snowshoe, to Native culture. In other words, these lines suggest that colonial Canadian manhood is superior because Canadian men have been toughened by the harsh winters *and* because they have access to a reservoir of (Native) cultural knowledge that their London-bound compatriots do not. In this way, these lines establish the importance of the Native contribution to the central British economic project in the colony, and hint strongly that, just as individual Natives are being integrated into colonial society, features of Native culture are being integrated into the identities of colonial men through a process of indigenization. This process is beginning to engender a superior model of manhood that is superior because it integrates multiple stages of societal development (stage (1) and stage (4) in this case) and multiple cultures, making colonial manhood hardier, more broadly competent and more economically productive than its British, non-indigenized antecedent.

These lines are also one of the moments when *Abram's Plains* seems most clearly to take up a place as one of the points of origin of the development of the totally competent man. Their constitution of a colonial masculinity through an appropriative/integrative movement and their insistence on the distinction of that masculinity from its British counterpart makes it difficult not to see Cary's brief celebration of the Canadas' hardy inhabitants as one of the first steps towards the conceptualization of a uniquely Canadian manhood. His use of the canoe in this context seems to anticipate its deployment as a potent symbol by Canadian nationalists from the middle of the nineteenth-century onward. For instance, it is possible to see in the lines an antecedent of Lighthall's description of Roberts as a "poet, canoeist, professor" (xxiv) and his assertion that "Australian rhyme is a poetry of the *horse*; Canadian, of the *canoe*" (xxiii). Finally, the lines play on the distinction between "peasant" (Cary 559) or lower-class economically productive manhood and genteel economically unproductive manhood that appears in Moodie's books, features in Galt's emigrant novels, and crops up again in the work of Lampman and Connor. As tempting as it may be to see these similarities as the effect of literary influence, there is no clear path from Cary to writers such as Roberts

and Lighthall, let alone to Moodie, Galt, Lampman and Connor. Instead, it is more appropriate to view these similarities as literary expressions of persistent cultural forces and literary appropriations of the cultural work being done by objects like the canoe. These similarities speak to the endurance of certain features of the Canadian context and their ongoing effect on the literature produced in early Canada, and, in so doing, help to confirm that the totally competent man developed in response to a set of abiding, if not permanent, social/cultural/economic factors.

It is important to note that the process at work in the constitution of the individual identity of the speaker and the collective identity of colonial society is a process of sublimation in which the violence of antecedent models of masculinity is not just managed, but transformed, and thus dispensed with. Nowhere is this more evident than in the poem's conclusion. Bentley takes the title of his book *Mimic Fires* from the closing lines of *Abram's Plains*:

Now shade o'er shade steals gradual on the sight,
Darkness shuts up the scene and all is night.
Except, where daring cross the swampy marsh,
From shining fire-flies lucid lightnings flash.
When, from black sultry skies, long silver streams
Send through the atmosphere their forked beams;
With brighter glow than shoot the mimic fires,
Each insect, *Caesar* like, to rival Jove aspires. (Cary 580-87)

Bentley points out that, “[i]n the final lines of [the poem], Cary marries neo-classical diction and local content in a way that is as typical of the poem, as a whole, as it is representative of its author’s English-Canadian identity” and argues that “Cary seems to see in Canada’s ‘shining fire-flies’ a metaphor for his own small but bright colony on the St. Lawrence, as well as, perhaps, a metaphor for his own ‘mimic’ yet distinctive poetic efforts” (*Mimic Fires* 38). The “mimic fires” are, indeed, an apt image for Cary’s attempt to represent a colonial society through the lens of European poetry, and the phrase serves as an equally apt description of the similarly indebted and imitative works Bentley considers in his study. But, while Bentley’s use of Cary’s “shining fire-flies” to represent the adaptation of European aesthetics to the Canadian milieu is intelligent and richly

suggestive, it by no means exhausts the image's possible significations. The image serves just as readily and effectively as a metaphor for the speaker's masculinity in particular and colonial manhood, seen from Cary's perspective, in general. To the extent that Cary establishes the historically anterior masculinity of Wolfe and the developmentally anterior masculinity of Native Peoples as models for the masculine identity of his speaker, one can see the speaker as a "shining fire-fl[y]" to his predecessors' "long silver streams" of lightning, as kindling his own mimic fire in imitation of his incandescent antecedents. The image is a particularly fitting representation of the difference between the rather common-place speaker and the brilliantly heroic and immensely famous Wolfe, but it is an equally appropriate depiction of the difference between the speaker and Native Peoples. The contrast between the pacific speaker and his violent antecedents is neatly captured by Cary's juxtaposition of a violent, potentially destructive, meteorological phenomena with the harmless glow of a few insects: lightning, native warriors and British Generals kill, but mimic fires and poets burn nothing, destroy nothing.

It is important, however, not to see this as casting the speaker's identity as a lesser version of the masculinities on which it is modelled, for this would be clearly at odds with the content of the poem up until this point and specifically at odds with Cary's emphasis on the progressive development of colonial society. Certainly, Bentley sees the "mimic fires" of early Canadian poems as lesser versions of the English poetry that they imitate. He himself acknowledges that "[e]ighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canadian poetry . . . is colonial and derivative" (*Mimic Fires* 11) and the title of his study invokes the more negative connotations of mimicry. It seems commonsensical to see lightning as more forceful and authentic than the imitative lights of fire-flies, as fundamentally superior to them. But, however commonsensical and straightforward such a reading might be, the poem suggests an alternative interpretation of the image. Bentley observes: "[t]he 'task' of clearing land in Lower Canada is admittedly 'hard' (130) but, once, accomplished, the result is both commercially rewarding and aesthetically appealing. In a word, it is picturesque" (*Mimic Fires* 34). He adds:

If the picturesque aesthetic was tainted with 'profound pessimism' following the

enclosures in Britain (Bermingham 70), in Canada it was attached to landscapes marked by agricultural success and potential . . . In *Abram's Plains*, as later in *Talbot Road* and *The Rising Village*, the picturesque becomes, in the words of John Galt, an aesthetic of 'profitable beauty' (*Bogle Corbet* 3:3). (*Mimic Fires* 35)

In *Abram's Plains*, the picturesque aesthetic is equated, by the way of fully developed, agricultural and economically productive landscapes, with the apotheosis of British colonial society in Lower Canada.

Bentley expands on these observations in *Mnemographia Canadensis: Essays on Memory, Community, and Environment in Canada, with Particular Reference to London, Ontario*, drawing a distinction between what he terms the settler sublime and the pioneer picturesque that can be usefully applied to the closing image of *Abram's Plains*.

Discussing the work of John Galt and Catharine Parr Traill, he writes:

Both . . . were steeped in the aesthetic conventions whereby, as Anne Bermingham has shown in *Landscape and Ideology: the English Rustic Tradition, 1740-1860* (1896), the most "pleasing landscapes" and occupations were those that had become "economically [un]productive" and "anachronistic" (66, 81), but as emigrant advisors they redirected the picturesque aesthetic to scenes that combined aesthetic appeal ("beauty," "prett[iness]") and economic viability ("profit," "rich[ness]"). In the process, they not only replaced the "profound pessimism" of the British picturesque tradition (Bermingham 70) with the buoyant optimism of a developing country, but also helped to create the economic aesthetic – the pioneer picturesque – that underpins the agricultural lessons of *Malcolm's Katie* [and many, many more works of early Canadian literature]. (83)

Whereas the pioneer picturesque applies to the landscapes that are the final outcome of the work of pioneering – that is, to by-in-large fully cleared, economically viable and aesthetically pleasing agricultural vistas – the settler sublime pertains to the spectacular early steps of development. Bentley explains:

A perceptive gloss on these and other instances of what might be called the settler sublime is provided by John Strachan when he remarks in *A Visit to the Province of Upper Canada in 1819* (1820) that the sight of "burning masses [of logs]" at "night...through a large extent of country present[s] a brilliant spectacle" that becomes "powerfully interesting" when "it is considered that these are the first steps towards reducing the wilderness into a fruitful country" (76). Unlike those strains of sublimity that affirm the grandeur of the external world and the insignificance of the individual observer, the settler sublime speaks to the capacity

of humans to develop nature in accordance with God's injunction to Adam and Eve in Genesis 1.28 to "[b]e fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it." Nowhere more than in the settler sublime is there evident the close relationship between the sublime aesthetic and British imperialism that has been brilliantly illuminated by Sara Suleri in *The Rhetoric of English India* (1992) and Mary Louise Pratt in *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992). (*Mnemographia Canadensis* 86-87)

Thus the settler sublime finds aesthetic/economic value in the violent, potentially terrifying, scenes (Bentley's chief examples are the felling and burning of trees) of the initial work of producing the landscapes which, with time and more work, will satisfy the parameters of the pioneer picturesque. As a necessary step towards the goal of the pioneer picturesque, the settler sublime is important and valuable, but it is nevertheless fundamentally secondary to the pioneer picturesque.

This elevation of peaceful and productive agricultural landscapes over the violent spectacles of their creation informs many elements of *Abram's Plains* and, most significantly for the present argument, bears directly on how to read Cary's lightning and fire-flies. The "long silver streams / [that] Send through the atmosphere their forked beams" (Cary 584-85) are decidedly sublime and, when juxtaposed with the "mimic fires" (Cary 586) of the fire-flies recall the areal displays of the conflagrations with which settlers cleared felled trees, anticipating Burwell's "raging fires [that] . . . upward shoot a thousand . . . spires" and Traill's "[f]iery columns . . . sending up showers of sparks that are twirled around like rockets and fire-wheels in the wind" not to mention Strachan's "burning masses [of logs]" (qtd. in Bentley, *Mnemographia Canadensis* 85-86). The fire-flies, for their part, are quite obviously picturesque. Reading through the lens of the settler sublime and the pioneer picturesque reverses the dynamic that Bentley invokes in *Mimic Fires*. From this perspective, the violent and powerful displays of lightning are secondary to the picturesque lights of fire-flies, lights that are less awe-inspiring, but more readily connote the peace and prosperity of the *pax Britannica*, and the advanced state of British colonial society. Cary's association of the lightning with obscurity and affect, and of the fire-flies with clarity and rationality reinforces this reading. The lightning descends

“from *black sultry* skies” (584, emphasis added). On the other hand, the fire-flies are “shining” and “brighter glow” (Cary 583, 586). Even more significantly, Cary describes the lights of the fire-flies as “lucid lightnings” (584), employing an adjective that conjoins “brightness” and “rationality,” and suggesting, as he does so, that the fire-flies are improvements on the lightning they imitate. Moreover, the fire-flies are the main focus of the lines, and literally bracket the lightning that only appears in a single couplet. It is thus more than possible to see the fire-flies not as pale imitations of the lightning, but as improvements on it that contain and sublimate its sublime violence into the controlled, pacific rationality of the picturesque. It is certainly possible to see in Cary’s “mimic fires,” as Bentley does, the lesser, imitative (in its most negative sense) adaptations of a genuine, original European aesthetic to the Canadian milieu. But it is also and equally possible to see in the same image a complex and suggestive representation of the construction of a colonial masculinity through the imitation of temporally and developmentally antecedent models. Seen from this perspective, mimicry or imitation has a positive rather than a negative valence, denoting a process by which atavistic and socially corrosive masculine violence is sublimated into the peaceable productivity of the speaker and the British-colonial mercantile class with which he identifies. One can see in Cary’s “forked beams” and “mimic fires” (585, 586) a compressed representation of the parallel developmental movements from the furious conflagrations of the fires with which settlers cleared their field to the lesser, more controlled, yet more deeply pleasing, home fires of farm houses, and from the originary (developmentally so in the case of Native savagery, and politically so in the case of the British conquest of the Canadas) violence of Native Peoples and British soldiers to contemporary, peaceable, masculine activities that recall, but do not reproduce, their origin. The speaker’s masculine identity is a “mimic fire,” but it is better, not lesser, for being a “*mimic* fire.”

In addition to this, Cary’s use of the picturesque and, even more important, of the heroic couplet suggest that this productive management of masculine violence and of the aggressive masculine body has an aesthetic dimension. Bentley provides a useful explanation of Cary’s use of the heroic or decasyllabic couplet:

Bringing with it an aura of authority from such poems as *Windsor-Forest* and *An Essay on Man*, *The Deserted Village* and *The Traveller*, the decasyllabic couplet provided colonial poets such as Cary with the formal equivalent of the order, balance, and governance that they valued in their social world and physical landscape, and sought to reflect in their “descriptive poetry” (Cary, Preface 7). Rational in its implications and rectangular in its shape, the decasyllabic couplet is a poetic analogue of the fenced field, the stone house, and other more-or-less symmetrical forms of European settlement. More than this, it is analogous to the “symmetry and convenience . . . [of] the new buildings of London and Edinburgh” that one British visitor found conspicuously lacking in the old French houses of Quebec city (Hollingsworth 210). In sum a topographical poem in decasyllabic couplets is to early Canadian poetry what a well-managed mixed farm centred on a house with a Palladian porch was to the landscape of the time: a manifestation in Lower Canada of British organization, power and progress (Ruddel 222-23). (*Mimic Fires* 28)

The connection between the picturesque, in particular the pioneer picturesque, and the heroic couplet is obvious; however, there is a less obvious but equally significant connection between the social theory underpinning Cary’s representation of masculinity and the form of his poem. Just as the heroic couplet is a poetic analogue for the “more-or-less symmetrical forms of European settlement,” so too does it function as a poetic analogue for the “symmetrical” conceptual structure of the four stages theory. The four stages theory organizes the historical field in a manner not at all unlike the organization of colonial geography effected by settlement, and similarly reflects European “power, and progress.” The “topographical poem in decasyllabic couplets,” the four stages theory and “the well-managed mixed farm centred on a house with a Palladian porch” are all, at least in the context of *Abram’s Plains*, if not more generally, part of the homogenous complex of British values that they express through analogy and also enact as they are applied to new world material (in the loosest, most expansive sense of the word “material”) by poets and settlers. If “a topographical poem in decasyllabic couplets is to early Canadian poetry what a well-managed mixed farm centred on a house with a Palladian porch was to the landscape of the time,” then the heroic couplet stands in a similar relation to the aggressive masculine body. Or, to adapt Bentley, the heroic couplet is to the aggressive masculine body “what a well-managed mixed farm centred on a house with a Palladian

porch was to the landscape of the time: a manifestation in Lower Canada of British organization, power and progress” and an instance of the aesthetic management of masculine violence.

Bentley points out that the “[r]ational . . . implications” and “rectangular . . . shape” of the heroic couplet function as “a poetic analogue of the fenced field, the stone house, and other more-or-less symmetrical forms of European settlement,” and there are similar parallels between the heroic couplet and Cary’s construction of colonial masculinity. The heroic couplet’s “[r]ational . . . implications” – its integration of two lines into a coherent unit and the open structure in which one couplet is added to another in theory ad infinitum – function as a poetic analogue for the process by which a colonial masculinity (exemplified by the masculine identity of the speaker) is constructed through the integration and sublimation of the aggressive masculine body under the informing rubric of a rational theory of social development, an integration and sublimation that consists of the addition of historically and developmentally anterior manhoods to colonial masculinity. In other words, the heroic couplet is an accurate poetic analogue for the process by which Native masculinity and British military masculinity are added to/integrated into/sublimated within the identity of the speaker. Cary’s use of the couplet also neatly highlights the connection of the concern for the management of masculine violence to the central importance of masculine labour for carrying out the colonial project that was pointed to at the beginning of this chapter, and draws together in a single aesthetic unit the core concerns of the poet, the poem, and colonial society as Cary sees it.

But the heroic couplet is more than an analogue for the complex process of development. In his Preface and in the poem itself, Cary positions his poetry as an effect or outcome of the development of British colonial society. Thus the heroic couplet is both analogous to and deeply implicated in the developmental process at work in *Abram’s Plains*. It is both a representation and an outcome of development, implying that the progressive development of colonial masculinity consists of a movement towards a model of manhood defined by aesthetic values and, moreover, that the insertion of the aggressive masculine body into aesthetic structures like the heroic couplet plays an important role in

this development. If the aestheticization of the wilderness (through the adaptive innovations of the settler sublime and the pioneer picturesque) is in the period generally conceived as coextensive with its development, then in *Abram's Plains* the aestheticization of masculine violence (through an adaptive or “mimic” deployment of the heroic couplet) is conceived as coextensive with the management of the aggressive masculine body. In short, through its complex affiliation of settlement, social development, and masculine identity, Cary's poem presents the management of the aggressive masculine body as a necessarily aesthetic project.

The significant aesthetic dimension of Cary's treatment of masculinity raises the issue of pleasure: to whom is the managerial work being done by *Abram's Plains* meant to provide pleasure or, put differently, who is Cary's intended audience? Bentley argues persuasively that Cary's audience was the colonial gentility, and “that *Abram's Plains* was directed mainly towards the literate, English-speaking inhabitants of Quebec” (Introduction xix-xxx) – that is, to readers who were deeply and immediately invested in the ongoing development of British society in the colony, and who would derive substantial pleasure from Cary's often rhapsodic report on the present state and future prospects of the Canadas.⁶⁸ Cary presents his readers with a description of the colony “that exhibits a picture of the real scenes of nature” (Preface 7-8), and that, moreover, confirms that British colonial society has reached an advanced stage of development. His

⁶⁸

Bentley suggests, on the basis of evidence in the body of the poem, that *Abram's Plains* was directed towards three specific groups in Quebec – the first being the merchants of the metropolitan centres of the colony, particularly Montreal with its McTavishes, Frobishers, McGills and their like, of whom Cary speaks as “blest traders” (1.83) and for whom he includes what must have been, to them, satisfying catalogues of the colony's potential wealth and future prospects; the second being the members of the British garrison and its entourage for whom are included, as has been seen, numerous paeans to the benefits of British peace and to the power of the British armed forces; and the third being Quebec's colonial administrators, particularly Lord Dorchester (Carleton), to whom Cary, “a clerk in one of the government offices” in 1789 (and later secretary to Governor Prescott), delivers a flattering panegyric. (Introduction xxx)

vision of the colony says to its audience emphatically “*we* are here and *we* will prosper here,” and, also and no less emphatically, “*we* are civilized and developed here – literate, polite and learned here.” In effect, Cary’s poem stakes its claim to its readers attention in large part on its ability to provide them with the pleasurable confirmation that they are members of a vital, vibrant community of like-minded members. What is more, as this analysis of *Abram’s Plains* has shown, part of the pleasure *Abram’s Plains* offers its readers is that of the spectacle of the neutralization of threatening, rebellious masculinities through their incorporation into social and aesthetic structures that support the readers’ community and the values shared by its members. If in *Abram’s Plains* “skalping-knives to pruning hooks give way” (61), they do so in no small part to provide Cary’s “polite” (Cary, Preface 5) readers with the pleasure of witnessing the transformation and all it connotes. One may conclude that, for Cary, an important part of the management of the aggressive masculine body is its insertion into textual structures designed for the production of genteel readerly pleasure, as well as the confirmation and validation of a genteel community of readers.

In its management of masculine violence and the masculine bodies that perpetrate this violence, *Abram’s Plains* establishes a pattern that echoes, with some variation, through early Canadian literature and bears directly on the production of the totally competent man. Cary confronts the violence of both Native “savagery” and the British conquest, violence that is fundamentally antagonistic to the emerging social order, and manages it, not by rejecting or abjecting it, but by appropriating it to the regulatory system of values the poem celebrates. Under the rubric of the four stages theory and an unwavering faith in the social value of the *pax Britannica*, Cary constructs an historical community of men united across the entire scope of the colony’s history, a community in which earlier models of masculinity provide the building blocks for later models in a process of integrative development. Rather than rejecting earlier, more savage, more barbaric, and more violent masculinities as the antitheses of more civilized, more genteel contemporary manhood, Cary configures earlier models of manhood as originary identities that make essential contributions to contemporary manhood and, in so doing,

ground it in the historically continuous community of colonial men. He envisions contemporary colonial masculinity and, for that matter, contemporary colonial society as the products of the sublimation of male violence and the aggressive masculine body. Cary does so by drawing attention to the contributions native Canadians and British soldiers have made and continue to make to colonial society. More importantly, he constructs the masculine identity of the speaker of *Abram's Plain* (an emerging, if not absolutely distinct, English-Canadian masculine identity) through a set of explicit and implicit comparisons to "savage" Native Peoples and the British military hero Wolfe. These comparisons have the effect of incorporating developmentally and historically anterior manhoods into the identity of the speaker through a process of sublimation that redirects the socially corrosive violence attached to native "savagery" and British militarism towards more pacific, and socially and economically productive ends. To the extent that the construction of these individual and collective contemporary colonial identities is effected in the poem, through the poem, and by the speaker who speaks it, *Abram's Plains* positions the speaker as the manager of the aggressive masculine body, suggesting that within the complex and conflicted (conflicted to the extent that it contains multiple and potentially antagonistic models of manhood) cultural field of the colony the capacity to manage (in this case to sublimate) its multiple constituent masculine identities is one of the key features of the emerging English-Canadian masculine identity. As well as making economic and political arguments for the ongoing success of the colony, *Abram's Plains* argues emphatically that the current, ruling class of English-Canadian men of which the poet is a member are legitimized as English-Canadian men and as the colony's ruling class by their ability to productively manage potentially socially corrosive aggressive masculine bodies. Finally, the poem clearly asserts that the management of the aggressive masculine body is, at least in part, a necessarily aesthetic project that consists of the neutralization of threatening, rebellious masculinities through their insertion into textual structures designed to affirm the very values those bodies challenge, and provide pleasure to the community of readers who hold those values.

Through its representation of masculinity, *Abram's Plains* introduces not only an

emerging English-Canadian masculine identity, but also some of the key recurrent features of early Canadian writers' attempts to manage the aggressive masculine body. In particular, the poem introduces the circular pattern of masculine writing, of moving outwards, gathering up divergent models of manhood (models defined, in this case, by their propensity for violence) for the purpose of returning to and reaffirming a core set of values, that characterizes both the management of the aggressive masculine body in early Canada and the production of the totally competent man. Although Cary's emerging English-Canadian masculine identity is not an early version of the totally competent man, the poem nevertheless marks a significant moment in the literary/cultural development of this figure. It marks this moment, not least of all, because the appropriation/sublimation, the circular process of masculine writing at work in the poem, endows both the speaker and the colonial society of which he is a representative with a breadth that suggestively anticipates the breadth of the totally competent man. In *Abram's Plains*, "tomahawks to ploughshares yield the sway, / And skalping-knives to pruning hooks give way" (Cary 60-61), or – to adapt the couplet to more accurately and completely represent the developmental movement charted by the poem – "tomahawks to ploughshares yield the sway, / And [plowed fields] to [poetry books] give way" (Cary 60-61), and this process of development produces a masculine identity that encompasses "skalping-knives," "Britannia's conqu'ring sword" (Cary 434), "ploughshares," and the poet's own "grey-goose quill" (Cary 459).

Chapter 3:

His “Active and Athletic Limbs”: *Wacousta*, the Aggressive Masculine Body, Readerly Pleasure, and the Possibility of a Just *and* Active Man

Published more than 40 years apart by writers who emerged out of circumstances that were similar only to the very limited degree that they were colonial, and who put their pens to very different purposes, there are few, if any, obvious affinities between Thomas Cary’s *Abram’s Plains* and John Richardson’s *Wacousta; or, the Prophecy: A Tale of the Canadas* (1832). One was written in Canada by an immigrant from Britain. The other was written in England by a Canadian-born writer. One is a high-minded topographical poem deeply and immediately engaged with the issues of societal development and social good. The other is a gothic romp that, for all its sophistication, is consistently more interested in titillating its audience with the extreme and the perverse than with presenting a “controlling moral vision” (Foster qtd. in Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 26). One is by a man who hoped to realize a profit from the publication of his poem, but whose primary income was the salary he received as a government clerk. The other is by “Canada’s First [professional] Novelist”⁶⁹ or the first Canadian writer who tried, succeeded for a time, and then failed quite spectacularly and tragically to earn his living exclusively through his writing.⁷⁰ That said, there is at least one significant similarity between the two works: both manage the aggressive masculine body by incorporating it into textual structures

69

This is an adaptation of the title of the 1977 conference on John Richardson at the University of Western Ontario that led to the publication of the collection of essays *Recovering Canada’s First Novelist: Proceedings from the John Richardson Conference*. It is possible to make the contrary case that Frances Brooke is Canada’s first novelist. However, the aim of this study is not to wade into this debate, but to drive home the fact that Richardson was emphatically a commercial writer.

70

John Richardson starved to death in 1852 in New York City because he was, quite literally, unable to live off his earnings as an author.

designed for the production of genteel pleasure. Although this management takes a much different form in *Wacousta* than in it does in *Abram's Plains*, it has many of the same effects, confirming a set of genteel values and affirming the community who holds those values.

Within the context of a genre (the gothic) that privileges readerly pleasure and a text that persistently submits masculine bodies to an objectifying gaze, Richardson configures his eponymous protagonist's body as the subject, object, and generator of readerly pleasure. In directing his audience to view the violent, vengeful, and rebellious *Wacousta's* body as an object of his/her pleasure, the novelist subjects *Wacousta's* aggressive masculine body to genteel desire, and neutralizes the threat implicit in his rebelliousness. Significantly, the objectification of *Wacousta* does not diminish his capacity for action; rather, Richardson stakes *Wacousta's* appeal as a sexual object on the active vitality of his body, constructing him as an active rather than a passive object. This simultaneous neutralization of the aggressive masculine body and the preservation of its capacity for action echoes Cary's sublimation of masculine violence and anticipates the preservation in the totally competent man of the brute physicality of rebellious, socially corrosive masculinity. In addition to this, the juxtaposition of *Wacousta* with Frederick de Halimar suggests an idealized figure that combines the best of both men – *Wacousta's* powerful body, his equally powerful emotions, and his adaptation to the Canadian environment, and Frederick's genteel, military code of behaviour, and the self-control that defines it – and that anticipates totally competent men such as Ranald Macdonald and Richard Stahlberg who combine powerful, destructive emotions, and just as powerful self-control with powerful bodies and unbending moral codes. This figure takes concrete form in Frederick's sons who combine their father's genteel civility with *Wacousta's* brute physicality, and gesture towards the emergence of a model of colonial masculinity, looking back to the proto-Canadian masculinity of *Abram's Plains* and forward to the totally competent man.

Passive Objects vs. Active Objects: Manliness, Effeminacy, and the Male Body in
Wacousta

A productive place to begin an analysis of the interplay between desire and the masculine body in *Wacousta* is with Peter Dickinson's brief analysis of homosociality in the novel in *Here is Queer: Nationalisms, Sexualities, and the Literatures of Canada*.⁷¹ Dickinson employs the theory outlined by Eve Sedgwick in *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* as a framework for understanding the relationships between men in the book. As he observes, Sedgwick "outlines a basic paradigm of 'male traffic in women,' whereby *active* male homosocial desire is refracted/triangulated 'asymmetrically' through the *passive* positioning of women as displaced objects of nominal/patrimonial heterosexual desire (see ch. 1, 21-7)" (Dickinson 11). Dickinson then goes on to identify the tri-partite relationship that most obviously reflects this pattern:

And yet, while the romantic rivalry between Colonel de Haldimar, Clara Beverley, and Reginald Morton/Wacousta, initiated in the Old World fuels the text's revenge plot, it is the triangulation of desire between Sir Everard Valletort, Clara de Haldimar, and Charles de Haldimar, all unfortunate victims of this revenge plot in the New World, which is more clearly homosocial. (13)

71

The use of Dickinson here requires clarification. Although his reading of *Wacousta* through the work of Sedgwick is intelligent and illuminating, it occurs within the context of a book whose informing assumptions are fundamentally at odds with the present study. Dickinson explains that his "book interrogates the (hetero)normative assumption that 'nation' and 'sexuality' are somehow discrete, autonomous, historically transcendent, and socially uninflected categories of identity" (3). Seen from the perspective of early Canadian literature, the presumptions underpinning this statement are patently ridiculous, fundamentally out of touch with the historical realities of nationalism and sexuality in Canada and beyond, and deeply ignorant of contemporary theories of nationalism. How, it is tempting to ask, is it possible to reconcile Dickinson's "interrogation" with Anderson's widely accepted conflation of nationalism and fraternity, let alone with the close relationship between masculinity and nationalism that was one of the distinguishing features of early Canada and is the subject of this study? That said, Dickinson's reading of *Wacousta* is intelligent and illuminating, and merits consideration, even if it does occur in the midst of a study that is otherwise ill-informed and poorly thought out.

Sir Everard Valletort and Charles de Haldimar's homosocial desire for each other is displaced onto Charles de Haldimar's sister Clara, and results in Charles effectively offering Clara to Valletort as a romantic partner.

Dickinson makes the important observation that the close relationship between Charles and Valletort is between two men who are "rather effete" (13) and links this to their inability or unwillingness to function as soldiers:

in comparing him with his [militarily accomplished and masculine] brother, Frederick, the narrator notes that Charles was particularly esteemed "for those retiring, mild, winning manners, and gentle affections, added to extreme and almost feminine beauty of countenance for which he was remarkable" (44). As for Valletort's fighting prowess, the narrator discloses that while "he concealed a brave, generous, warm and manly heart," he was also somewhat of a "feather-bed soldier" (79, 80). (13)

Thus homosocial desire is bound up with an effeminacy that is itself manifest in a reduced capacity for masculine action. Within the rigidly heteronormative confines of the text, homosocial desire is associated with the reduction of men from active agents to passive objects, from soldiers to women.

Dickinson rightly argues that the moment in the text with the most "striking resonances with Sedgwick's thesis of the triangulation of male homosocial desire" (14) and, it may be added, the most obvious manifestation of the complex of homosocial desire, the objectification/pacification of the male body and effeminacy is the passage in which Valletort extrapolates from his observation of Charles to his sister, Clara, and, in so doing, stimulates his romantic interest in the sister:

as he [Valletort] gazed upon the countenance of his friend, he was more than ever inclined to confess an interest in the sister he [Charles] was said so much to resemble. With that facility with which in youth the generous and susceptible are prone to exchange their tears for smiles, as some powerful motive for the reaction may prompt, the invalid [Charles] had already, and for the moment, lost sight of the painful past in the pleasurable present, so that his actual excitement was strongly in contrast with the melancholy he had so recently exhibited. Never had Charles de Haldimar appeared so eminently handsome; and yet his beauty resembled that of a frail and delicate woman, rather than that of one called to the manly and arduous profession of a soldier. It was that delicate and Medor-like beauty which might have won the heart and fascinated the sense of a second

Angelica. The light brown hair flowing in thick and natural waves over a high white forehead; the rich bloom of the transparent and downy cheek; the large, blue, long, dark-lashed eye, in which a shade of languor harmonised with the soft but animated expression of the whole countenance, – the dimpled mouth, – the small, clear and even teeth, – all these now characterised Charles de Haldimar; and if to these we add a voice rich, full and melodious, and a smile sweet and fascinating, we shall be at no loss to account for the readiness with which Sir Everard suffered his imagination to draw on the brother for those attributes he ascribed to the sister. (Richardson 111)⁷²

Here, with “his friend’s hands closely clasped in his own” (Richardson 110) and his face fixed in his gaze, Valletort has physically and visually laid hold of his friend, establishing a power dynamic within which Charles appears as the passive recipient of Valletort’s attentions. The characterization of Charles as an “invalid” even after the realization that his brother Frederick may still be alive has replaced “melancholy” with “excitement” emphasizes his passivity – a passivity that is itself linked directly to effeminacy. Richardson compares Charles’s face to “that of a *frail and delicate woman*” distinguishing it from “that of one called to the *manly and arduous* profession of a soldier” (emphasis added).

Moreover, the ensuing description drives home this point by piling one feminine feature on another: Charles’ cheek is “transparent and downy,” his eye has long lashes and contains “a shade of languor,” his countenance is “soft,” his teeth are “small,” and his smile is “sweet and fascinating.” Charles’ languorous eye and the softness of his countenance make the connection between effeminacy and passivity particularly obvious. In juxtaposing effeminacy with the “manly and arduous profession of a soldier,” the passage draws a distinction between feminine passivity and a masculine capacity for action that is exemplified by the specific capacity for masculine violence. Within the framework of the homosocial relationship between Valletort and Charles, and under Valletort’s desiring gaze, Charles’ body is reduced to a passive object, an object incapable of the violent action that defines masculinity. This homosocial relationship and the

72

Dickinson quotes the same passage but does not provide an analysis of it.

resulting objectification/pacification/feminization of the masculine body is offered for the titillation of the reader at the same time that it is implicitly condemned by the heteronormative text. As Dickinson observes, “[t]he triangulation of desire . . . cannot be allowed to flourish . . . especially if the nature of that desire is sexually suspect” (14). To drive home this point, he notes that “Charles, Clara, and Valletort all eventually join th[e] litter” (14) of bodies whereas the married, and thus non-suspect, Frederick and Madeleine survive – a sure sign of disapprobation if there ever was one. This, however, is not the end of the story.

Valletort’s observation of Charles does not stand alone as the sole instance of the subjection of the masculine body to a sexually charged, objectifying gaze. Coming hot on the heels of the communion between the two British officers – echoing or doubling the earlier scene – is an example of the objectification of the masculine body that has far different effects and connotations, preserving, even foregrounding, a male body’s capacity for action. When the detachment passes through the village, on the way to the bridge to execute Frank Halloway, it surprises the proprietor of the Fleur de Lis, his daughter and Wacousta conversing in front of the establishment. Wacousta leaps to the ready and, when he does so, the proprietor’s daughter subjects his partially clothed body to a frankly sexual and objectifying gaze:

We have already stated the upper part of his [Wacousta’s] leggings terminated about mid-thigh; from this to the hip, that portion of the limb was completely bare, and disclosed, at each movement of the garment that was suffered to fall loosely over it, not the swarthy and copper-coloured flesh of the Indian, but the pale though sun-burnt skin of one of a more temperate clime . . . To dash his [Wacousta’s] pipe to the ground, seize and cock and raise his rifle to his shoulder, and throw himself forward in the eager attitude of one waiting until the object of his aim should appear in sight, was but the work of a moment. Startled by the suddenness of the action, his male companion [the proprietor] moved a few paces also from his seat, to discover the cause of this singular movement. The female [the proprietor’s daughter], on the contrary, stirred not, but ceasing for a moment the occupation in which she had been engaged, fixed her dark and brilliant eyes upon the tall and picturesque form of the rifleman, whose active and athletic limbs, thrown into powerful relief by the distention of each nerve and muscle, appeared to engross her whole admiration and interest, without any reference to the cause that had produced this abrupt and hostile change in his movements.

(Richardson 138-39)

There are two immediately obvious differences between this and the preceding passage. First, this is a bipartite rather than a tripartite structure; the observing gaze and the desire it transmits travel directly towards their object without being displaced onto or redirected through a third party. Second, the observer is a woman rather than a man. In fact, this is a rare example, perhaps the only example in early Canadian literature, of a woman gazing sexually rather than romantically at a man and, moreover, of a woman directing her gaze specifically and exclusively at the man's body as a sexual object. For all the scene's remarkable and potentially disconcerting frankness, it is distinguished from Valletort's objectification of Charles by being a rather straightforward instance of heteronormative desire that is neither perplexed by homosociality nor complicated by the addition of a third party. Although desire travels from the "dark and brilliant eyes" of a woman to the body of a man, inverting the conventional trajectory of the heterosexual desiring gaze, the basic constituents of the scene (man/woman, desirer/desired, gazing subject/observed object) are in line with the novel's investment in conventional heterosexual sexuality, and this scene prefigures, rather than resists, "the re-establishment of domestic harmony . . . enacted in the closing tableau⁷³ of 'Captain [Frederick] and Miss [Madeline] De

73

Dickinson calls into question this re-establishment, writing that it is "*supposedly* enacted in the closing tableau" (15, emphasis added) and pointing to the unknown whereabouts of Ellen Halloway as evidence of its failure. He observes that

Ellen, in her transgression of both gender and racial boundaries (she masquerades as a drummerboy in order to witness the mistaken execution of her 'first' husband, Frank Halloway, and later 'goes native' for her 'second' husband, Wacousta), in 'her' movement 'beyond the pale' of the European fortress into the space of 'savagery,' remains an 'unassimilatable' figure of otherness within the 'garrison mentality' of a fledgeling New World nation (15),

and argues that her disappearance at the end of the novel undermines the closing domestic tableau. However, the point can also be made that her expulsion from the text – an expulsion signalled by the book's final clause "but she never was heard of afterwards" (Richardson 531) – actually confirms both the re-establishment of domestic harmony and the ability of this structure to utterly proscribe its others. The absolute "never" of "she was never heard of afterwards" (Richardson 531) drives home the power of the white,

Haldimar, Francois the Canadian, and the devoted Oucanasta' (431)" (Dickinson 15).⁷⁴

Although the scene is determinedly heteronormative, it is no less an example of the sexual objectification of the male body for being so. Just as Valletort's gaze reduces Charles to an object, so too does the daughter of the proprietor of the Fleur de Lis' look reduce Wacousta to a "mere" body, to a "mere" collection of "nerve and muscle." The difference between the scenes is not a difference between objectification and non-objectification, but between the types of objects that Charles and Wacousta become. Put simply, under the sexually objectifying gaze, Charles is reduced to a passive object and Wacousta is transformed into an active object; Charles becomes a body that appears and Wacousta becomes a body that acts. This difference is most clearly expressed by the difference in Charles and Wacousta's capacity for masculine violence. As has been pointed out, Charles' "beauty resemble[s] that of a frail and delicate woman, rather than that of one called to the manly and arduous profession of a soldier" (Richardson 111). He is physically unprepossessing, to say the least, and utterly unsuited to the rigours of combat. It would be difficult to find a more different figure from Charles than Wacousta. Whereas Charles is "frail and delicate," Wacousta is "tall and picturesque" (Richardson 138). Whereas the lieutenant is physically weak, Wacousta is "active and athletic" (Richardson 138). Whereas Charles is prostrate in bed as Valletort looks at him, Wacousta is poised for action, "each nerve and muscle" (Richardson 138) distended, ready to fire his rifle. Whereas Charles' fitness as soldier is called into question, Wacousta is the very picture of military readiness and swiftly confirms his capacity for masculine violence by firing his rifle at the advancing column. The passage in which

heterosexual norm to abject difference rather than undermining it or calling it into question.

74

It is important to remember that this closing tableau is arrived at through the invaluable assistance of Oucanasta at several key points in the narrative. The native woman assists Frederick because of her unrequited love for him. Thus the restoration of the domestic is due in large part to female heterosexual desire, and it is more than appropriate to see the above scene as prefiguring the novel's conclusion, despite the fact that it stars the book's villain.

Valletort gazes on Charles drives home repeatedly and in multiple ways the young man's passivity, while the passage in which Wacousta takes aim at the approaching British soldiers consistently emphasizes his capacity for (violent) action.

Their contrasting passivity/activity is further emphasized by the contrasting functions of their bodies. The features of Charles body are, in the long moment that Valletort gazes at him, standing in for corresponding features of his sister's body, and Charles' body thus functions as an intermediary between Valletort and Clara: "Sir Everard suffered his imagination to draw on the brother for those attributes he ascribed to the sister" (Richardson 111). Charles' body has a primarily representative function, serving as the sign to the referent of Clara's body and subordinating itself to the stimulation of Valletort's "interest in the sister [Charles] [is] said so much to resemble" (Richardson 111). More simply put, the primary function of Charles' body in the scene is to appear. His fundamental passivity is confirmed, first, by his position lying down in bed, and, second, by the passage's explicit denial of his suitability to the "manly[,] [active] and arduous profession of a soldier" (Richardson 111). Not only does the passage intimate that Charles' primary function is to appear, it also suggests that the passive act of appearing marks the limit of his capacity for action. If Charles' recumbent position signals his fundamental passivity, Wacousta's erect, forward leaning, "eager attitude" (Richardson 138) indicates the extent of his capacity for action and, moreover, that he is doing much more than merely appearing. While Wacousta is being looked at, he is also himself looking, gazing in the direction of the approaching detachment and "waiting until the object of his aim should appear in sight" (Richardson 138). Whereas Charles stands in for Clara and in so doing satisfies Valletort's curiosity and emerging desire, Wacousta both satisfies the optical desire of the woman who observes him and expresses his own desire. The gaze that he directs at the approaching British detachment makes it emphatically clear that, although he is the object of desire, he is himself a desiring object. What is more, Wacousta's gaze is the indispensable preamble to taking the violent action of discharging his rifle. At the same time that Wacousta is being objectified by the sexual gaze of the daughter of the owner of the Fleur de lis, despite the fact that he is motionless,

he is in the initial stages of completing an action – a fact that is driven home by Richardson’s designation of Wacousta as “the rifleman” (138). Moreover, it is the effect of this action on Wacousta’s body that has solicited or provoked the woman’s gaze. It is his “active and athletic limbs, thrown into powerful relief by the distention of each nerve and muscle” in the act of taking aim, that “engross her whole admiration and interest” (Richardson 138). In effect, the woman is captivated by Wacousta flexing his prodigious muscles, not for the benefit of her gaze, but in the process of accomplishing an action that is distinct from (neither determined by nor secondary to) the circuit of observation that connects them. Whereas it is Charles’ passivity that allows him to represent his sister and is, thus, the precondition of his objectification, it is Wacousta’s manifest capacity for action, the very fact that he is in the midst of acting, that establishes him as a sexual object. In these scenes, both Charles and Wacousta are objects. The difference between them boils down to this: Charles is a passive object and Wacousta is an active object; Charles is a body whose primary function is to appear and Wacousta is a body whose primary function is to act.

This difference goes a long way towards explaining the differing valuation of these two scenes and the two forms of desire (male-male and female-male) that they illustrate. As Richardson’s description of the profession of a soldier as “arduous and manly” (111) makes clear, in *Wacousta* masculinity is fundamentally defined by a capacity to endure hardship and carry out physical actions. It goes almost without saying that Charles lacks both of these capacities and that this lack is highlighted by Valletort’s desiring gaze. As Valletort gazes on Charles he calls into question in the most basic way Charles masculinity, and the scene itself stands as a disturbing (from the heteronormative perspective of Richardson’s text) realization of the pervasive masculine anxiety that men may be stripped of their masculinity, of their manhood. The homosocial desire that animates the scene twice violates the heteronormative values of the text: sexual desire is channelled between two men; and a male body is stripped of its masculinity, confusing the categories male/female, masculine/feminine. In contrast, to the extent that the sexual objectification of Wacousta is predicated on his capacity for action, the desiring gaze of

the daughter of the proprietor of the Fleur de lis confirms and intensifies, rather than undermines or dilutes, his essential masculinity. This scene of observation can even be seen as answering the preceding one by demonstrating that the objectification of the masculine body need not be synonymous with its effeminization, and, moreover, that the sexually objectifying gaze can work in concert with as well as against heteronormative desire. From this perspective, the first scene questions and troubles the values of the text, whereas the second scene confirms and affirms them. However, the confirmation and affirmation of the heteronormative values of Richardson's novel is not the only or even the most significant work this scene does.

II

Just a Body, but What a Body!: Reading Wacousta's Body as an Object of Readerly Pleasure

Over and above providing a contrast to the earlier instance of homosocial desire, the scene in the village is the reader's introduction to Wacousta as both a character and, quite specifically, as a male body that is the object of readerly pleasure. At this point in the novel, the reader does not yet know Wacousta either by that name or by his original name, Reginald Morton. The reader only knows him as the mysterious figure who entered the chamber of Governor De Haldimar, and as the "man of gigantic stature, and of apparently great strength" (Richardson 89) who attempted to kill Captain Frederick De Haldimar at the battle of the Plains of Abraham. At this point, Wacousta is, in fact, decidedly insubstantial. The reader knows of him only through the reports of other characters, the Governor and Frank Halloway, and will have to wait for Wacousta's own account of his life in the closing chapters of the novel to learn that the nocturnal intruder and the gigantic French officer are one and the same man. The moment that Richardson introduces the reader to the "three persons" on the bench in front of the Fleur de lis is the exact moment when Wacousta ceases to be an apparition, a rumour, or a report and becomes an immediate physical presence in the text, the exact moment when the reader begins to have

access to his body and to him as a body. It is Wacousta's body on which Richardson immediately and consistently focuses in this scene. His description of Wacousta begins:

His [the proprietor of the Fleur de lis'] companion was habited in a still more extraordinary manner. His *lower limbs* were cased, up to the *middle thigh*, in leathern leggings . . . a garter of leather, curiously wrought, with the stained quills of the porcupine, encircled *each leg*, immediately under *the knee*, where it was tied in a bow, and then suffered to hang pendant half way down *the limb* . . . Upon his *large feet* he wore mocassins . . . a sort of flap, fringed like the leggings, was folded back from *the ankle*, upon *the sides of the foot*, was then tightly drawn several times around *the ankle* . . . a strong girdle encircled *the loins* . . . Outside this hunting-coat, and across *the right shoulder*, was flung an ornamental belt, to which were appended, on the left side, and in line with *the elbow*, a shot-pouch. (135-37, emphasis added)

Richardson initially describes Wacousta's clothing in meticulous detail: the description runs to more than a page and a half in length. However, the passage is so consistently shot through with references to the villain's body and so consistently orients its description of Wacousta's attire according to his body that it gives the impression that, no matter how striking his clothing may be, it is secondary to the body it clothes. It is as if his entire outfit functions like the leggings that cover his legs but leave his upper thighs bare – covering Wacousta and, as it covers him, drawing attention to the naked body it covers.

Richardson's description of Wacousta's clothing works as a sort of textual strip tease, whetting the reader's appetite for the full reveal of a description of his body:

The form and face of this individual were in perfect keeping with the style of his costume, and the formidable character of his equipment. His stature was considerably beyond that of the ordinary race of men, and his athletic and muscular limbs united the extremes of strength and activity in a singular degree. At the first glance he might have been taken for one of the swarthy natives of the soil; but though time and constant exposure to scorching suns had given to his complexion a dusky hue, still there were wanting the quick, black, penetrating eye; the high cheek-bone; the straight, coarse, shining, black hair; the small bony hand and foot; and the placidly proud and serious air, by which the former is distinguished. His own eye was of a deep bluish gray; his hair short, dark and wavy; his hands large and muscular; and so far from exhibiting any of self-command of the Indian, the constant play of his features betrayed each passing thought with the same rapidity with which it was conceived. But if any doubt

could have existed in the mind of him who beheld this strangely accoutred figure, it would have been instantly dispelled by a glance at his lower limbs. We have already stated the upper part of his leggings terminated about mid-thigh; from this to the hip, that portion of the limb was completely bare, and disclosed, at each movement of the garment that was suffered to fall loosely over it, not the swarthy and copper-coloured flesh of the Indian, but the pale though sun-burnt skin of one of a more temperate clime. (137-38)

As Wacousta's body is "in perfect keeping with the style of his costume, and the formidable character of his equipment," the description of it serves as both a verification and a fulfillment of the description of his clothing. The description of Wacousta's body is, consequently, positioned as the main event for which the description of his clothing provides a prefaced or preamble.

The importance of Wacousta's body is confirmed by its ability to settle the issue of his racial identity. If Wacousta's hybrid melange of clothes raises his racial identity as a question, his body answers decisively that he is a white man. Interestingly, the revelation of this crucial detail of Wacousta's identity is linked both to his body and to a process of teasing, delayed disclosure that is drawn out over two very, very lengthy paragraphs, a process in which the suggestive "movement of [Wacousta's] garments" plays a significant role and for which the "movement of [Wacousta's] garments" is a near perfect analogue. The withholding of important information to the last possible moment (in the case of much of what the reader will eventually learn about Wacousta, to the very last chapters of the novel) is characteristic of the gothic, and defines Richardson's general approach to Wacousta's identity and origins. In effect, in this passage, Wacousta's body not only reveals a crucial detail of Wacousta's identity, but also, and no less important, introduces the reader to the textual strategy that will define Richardson's treatment of this character; Wacousta's body introduces the reader to the mechanism by which Wacousta's identity will be divulged.

This alone would make the case for the importance of Wacousta's body to him as a character and to the text as a whole, but there are several other aspects of the passage that confirm the point. The extraordinary proportion of his stature singles him out as a legitimate focus of readerly interest and suggests that he is more than capable, or at least

more capable than an ordinary man, of rewarding that interest. The union in “his athletic and muscular limbs” of “strength and activity in a singular degree” promises that his extraordinary stature is matched by an equally, if not a more, extraordinary capacity for physical action. Finally, this description of Wacousta’s body recalls the French officer “of gigantic stature, and of apparently great strength” (Richardson 89) who is the only other character who shares Wacousta’s extraordinary body type, thus hinting at the extent of Wacousta’s involvement with the De Haldimars, intimating the full breadth of Wacousta’s identity, and anticipating Wacousta’s account of his own history. At this juncture in the novel, Richardson does not simply introduce Wacousta as a body. Instead, by referencing Wacousta’s body but delaying its description and, then, when he does describe it, layering it with meaning, Richardson focuses the reader on that body, preparing him/her for its subjection to the proprietor of the Fleur de lis’ daughter’s sexually objectifying gaze. Most significantly, Richardson’s direction of the reader’s attention towards Wacousta’s body over the course of some two and a half pages of description establishes a parallel between the reader and the woman who frankly admires Wacousta’s “active and athletic limbs” (138).

Although the mind’s eye of the reader follows that of the proprietor of the Fleur de lis’ daughter’s, the two acts of observation have more in common than coincident trajectories terminating in the same object. Both are profoundly involved with pleasure. In one instance with sexual pleasure, and in the other instance with readerly pleasure that includes but is not limited to sexual pleasure. Both are expressions of desire. In one instance of fairly straightforward sexual desire and in the other instance of a range of desires spanning the sexual and the non-sexual or, at least, the less overtly sexual. The woman’s gaze expresses a sexual desire so all consuming that Wacousta’s body “engross[es] her whole admiration and interest, without reference to the cause that had produced this abrupt and hostile change in his [Wacousta’s] movements” (Richardson 138). Moreover, as has already been pointed out, her desire is provoked by the action of Wacousta leaping to the ready and preparing to fire. It is certainly appropriate to presume a similar response in the reader. Wacousta is a complex figure, but, among many other

things, he is definitely a sex symbol. More important, with their explicit exoticism, their delayed reveal of Wacousta's body and their lengthy description of his "not unhandsome countenance" (Richardson 137), these passages explicitly frame Wacousta as a sexual object, provoking and legitimizing the reader's desiring gaze.

But this is not the only possible response to Wacousta's body, nor the only response solicited by the text. If the woman's gaze is explicitly sexual and thus mirrors the reader's response to Wacousta as a sexual object, her fixation on his body in the midst of taking aggressive masculine action suggests an alternative, non- or less-sexual readerly response. Contemporary reviews of *Wacousta* tended to view it as a "military novel" (qtd. in Balstadt 40) and focus on the masculine exploits it recounted. A reviewer in the *Athenaeum* lamented that "[h]istory passes over in silence the many exertions, both of valour and prudence, by which the Canadas were secured to England; and this is, we believe, the first instance in which the subject has been made the theme of historical fiction" and then declared that "[i]t is pleasing to find a soldier of the present day anxious to rescue from oblivion the exploits of military men which had sunk into unmerited obscurity; and to see an honourable anxiety in a brave man to record deeds of bravery that have not yet received their fair meed of fame" (qtd. in Balstadt 36-37). A reviewer in the *Satirist* echoed him, observing that "[i]t will require but slender thought to perceive, by the enthusiastic ardor of the pen, that the author has been bred to a military life, and that he is a man of very superior acquirements, and possessed of intellect and taste that must render him an ornament in the tented field, as well as the field of literature" (qtd. in Balstadt 39). A reviewer in the *Morning Post* provided a summary of the novel's contents that, for all that it is somewhat diffuse, emphasizes action and violence: "[i]ts pictures of American scenery and Indian warfare: of the vengeful spirit of the Red Skin and the iniquity of the White Skin; of the desperate ferocity of the outlaw, and the enduring tenderness of woman, are worthy of our best writers of Historical Romance" (qtd. in Balstadt 38). In short, initial responses to the novel placed a premium on its descriptions of military action and masculine violence, on, in effect, its descriptions of the male body in action, and on the pleasure derived from reading these descriptions. The introduction

of Wacousta frames him as a character uniquely suited to satisfy a reader's desire for action. His "athletic and muscular limbs" (Richardson 137) speak to exceptional physical gifts and Wacousta's attack on the detachment promises that these gifts will be employed in the ensuing pages in acts of masculine violence. This is a promise Richardson keeps, for many of the novel's more dramatic scenes involve Wacousta performing exceptional and often violent feats of athleticism.

In fact, this promise is almost immediately fulfilled, and fulfilled in a manner that directly recalls the scene in which Wacousta is introduced to the reader. In the following chapter, Wacousta pursues Frederick De Halimar as he attempts to gain the bridge where the detachment has stopped and, in so doing, escape the Indians and stay the execution of Frank Halloway:

Foremost of the latter [the group of native warriors pursuing Frederick], and distinguished by his violent exertions and fiendish cries, was the tall and wildly attired warrior of the Fleur de lis. At every bound he took he increased the space that divided him from his companions, and lessened that which kept him from his panting and nearly exhausted victim. Already were they descending the nearest of the undulating hills, and both now became conspicuous to all around; but principally the pursuer, whose gigantic frame and extraordinary speed rivetted every eye, even while the interest of all was excited for the wretched fugitive alone. (Richardson 154)

Just as the first time the reader sees him, Wacousta is engaged in a violent action that highlights his impressive physique. Interestingly, his pursuit of Frederick resembles nothing less than a deadly footrace, a sporting or athletic event with potentially murderous consequences. After calling it a "pursuit" and a "chase" and, thereby, drawing a parallel between it and the sport of hunting, Richardson describes the Native warriors who have now given up "watching eagerly . . . *the result of a race* on which so much apparently depended" (153, emphasis added). In this way, Richardson conflates violence and sport by describing Wacousta's pursuit of Frederick as an athletic competition complete with a "result" and spectators. These spectators point to the most substantial and meaningful parallel between this scene and Wacousta's introduction to the reader: Wacousta's active body is the object of an enthralled gaze. As well as being observed by the Native warriors

once they give up the race, Wacousta is watched avidly by the members of the detachment on the bridge. “Every eye” is “rivetted” by his “gigantic frame and extraordinary speed.” What is more, the soldiers watch him to the exclusion of the more appropriate object of observation. The paragraph’s closing qualifying phrase “even while the interest of all was excited for the wretched fugitive alone” calls into question their concern for Frederick and, more important, drives home the power of Wacousta’s body to compel the attention of those around him no matter where their allegiances lie. This directly echoes the proprietor of the Fleur de lis’s daughter, who gazes on Wacousta “without any reference to the cause that has produced th[e] abrupt and hostile change in his movements” (Richardson 138-39).

The earlier scene models the pleasurable observation of Wacousta’s body as a sexual object for the reader (one might even go so far as to say, incites the reader to view Wacousta’s body as a sexual object) by including an analogue for the reader in the text. This scene does similar work by similar means. The detachment of soldiers serves as a textual analogue for the reader,⁷⁵ modelling an all-consuming or nearly all-consuming interest in Wacousta’s body as an active, definitively masculine object. The crucial difference between the two scenes is that this act of observation has no overt sexual dimension. Most obviously, the gaze here is from male to male and there is no suggestion, as there was when Valletort looked at Charles, that the gaze is charged with displaced heterosexual desire, repressed homosexual desire, or overt homosexual desire. In fact, to the extent that the observers recognize Wacousta as an enemy, their gaze cannot even be said to be implicated in a homosocial dynamic. As was seen earlier, the scene contrasts the mutual affiliation between Frederick and his fellow soldiers with their fascination with Wacousta in such a way as to highlight the essential antipathy between

75

Although the native warriors also observe Wacousta once they have stopped pursuing Frederick and do so with the same fascination as the soldiers, watching “though within musket shot of the detachment” (Richardson 153), it is arguable that their racial difference and their status as enemy combatants precludes them from serving as an analogue for the probably white, certainly English-speaking, British or Canadian, although possibly American, reader.

the warrior of the Fleur de lis and the members of the garrison. Moreover, this is a collective gaze emanating from a group rather than from an individual. In concert with the soldier's allegiance with Frederick, this effectively neutralizes any potential sexual over- or undertones, placing the soldiers' gaze in the context of non-sexual collective interaction rather than in that of intimate, sexual communion. Essentially, this scene consists of a heady compound of masculine athleticism and masculine violence, a compound that is localized in Wacousta's body and that is aptly described by the phrase "violent exertions." It is just such "violent exertions" that are at the heart of adventure/military novels like *Wacousta*, that are one of their chief appeals and that are, as such, the object of substantial readerly pleasure. This scene frames Wacousta's body as the object of a non-sexual, but nevertheless rapt, readerly gaze and, in combination with the proprietor of the Fleur de lis' daughter's explicitly sexual gaze, places Wacousta's body at the focal point of an impressively broad range of pleasurable readerly responses.

Richardson introduces Wacousta as a body and as a body specifically designed to draw the reader's gaze and reward his/her fascinated observation with pleasure of one form or another. Significantly, Richardson maintains Wacousta as exclusively or, at least, as primarily a body, as an active object without an accessible subjectivity, for as long as the text and the narrative imperative to reveal the origin of the conflict that animates the book allow. As already observed, it is not until the closing chapters of the novel that Wacousta recounts his history. In relating his narrative, he provides himself with a back-story and gives the reader an explanation for his behaviour. His account is an instance of self-exposition (it might be added, self-justification) that, with its combination of powerful feeling and self-awareness, bespeaks a deep and complex interiority. Wacousta's account of his past demonstrates that he possesses a history to match his exceptional body and a subjectivity equal to both. However, this transformation of Wacousta from an aggressive, active body to a thinking, feeling subject comes late and is not sustained. In fact, setting aside this single instance of interiority, Wacousta appears almost exclusively as a body, as an object rather than a subject. It is not until well into the

novel that Richardson provides the reader with either of Wacousta's names, and, even after he has given him the name Wacousta, he continues occasionally to refer to him with the label "the warrior of the Fleur de lis," driving home each time that he does this Wacousta's status as an object, as a mere body, rather than as a fully rounded human being. Wacousta appears first as a body and then continues to do so even after he acquires a name that ought to endow him with an identity that exceeds his corporeal being, no matter how impressive it may be. In fact, even after he acquires a back-story and demonstrates impressive depths of interiority, he continues to appear primarily as a body.

The most obvious instance of this is the scene in which Wacousta dies. Richardson narrates the scene, which takes place on the bridge, from the perspective of the soldiers in the fort. This perspective restricts the reader from having access to the speech of the characters involved, to their expressions, and to even the barest hints of their interiority. Seen from such a distance the actors in the last act of the tragedy are nothing but bodies. Indeed, the distance is so great that only Wacousta is identifiable because of his extreme size:

After the lapse of a minute, the tall figure of a warrior was seen to advance, holding a female in his arms. No one could mistake, even at that distance, the gigantic proportions of Wacousta, as he stood in the extreme centre of the bridge, in imposing relief against the flood that glittered like a sea of glass beyond.
(Richardson 524)

Although the watching soldiers and the reader can pick out Wacousta, the distance prevents either from ascertaining his thoughts or feelings, and the villain's final moments register none of the interiority of Wacousta's account of his history: "[a]t that moment the arm of the second warrior was raised, and a blade was seen to glitter in the sunshine. His arm descended, and Wacousta was observed to stagger forward and fall heavily into the abyss into which his victim had the instance before been precipitated" (Richardson 524). Richardson's use of the passive voice in this passage in phrases such as "was seen to glitter" and "was observed to stagger" further distances the reader from the events taking place on the bridge. By describing the events for the reader as seen by the observers in

the fort, Richardson places the reader in the second tier of observers, compounding his/her removal from the events, and short circuiting any impulse to identify with the characters on the bridge or to attribute interiority to them by diverting the reader's gaze through another, distinct group of characters.

In effect, Wacousta is the same when he exits the novel as when Richardson introduces him into it: an aggressive masculine body whose subjectivity is fundamentally inaccessible to the reader, or a pure body. Returning to the novel after almost twenty years, in 1851, an anonymous reviewer wrote:

If the proposition that books are like wine, inasmuch as it is improved and tested by age, then will the author of "Wacousta" be of undying fame . . . the simple but manly hero of that series [James Fenimore Cooper's Leather-Stocking Novels] is not more strongly individualized, and does not excite more interest than the cunning, *vast strength, hair-breadth escapes*, and unquenchable hatred of the fierce Wacousta. (qtd. in Balstadt 41, emphasis added)

This glowing assessment of Richardson's work speaks to the enduring power of his novel's villain to fascinate readers and the reviewer's emphasis on Wacousta's physicality, on his strength and his capacity for action, points to the essential role Wacousta's body plays in producing this response. The review registers the effect of Richardson initially directing the reader to see Wacousta as a masculine body designed to provide him/her with pleasure, and then carefully and consistently maintaining Wacousta as a pleasure producing body throughout the majority of the text. If Wacousta consists primarily of an aggressive masculine body assimilated to (it could be said, proffered or offered to) readerly pleasure, the significance of this assimilation turns on Wacousta's identity as a man, on the nature of his aggression and on the object of the violence he perpetrates.

III

"Enemy of Man": Wacousta's Body, Readerly Pleasure, and Readerly Antipathy

Although Richardson directs the reader's interest towards Wacousta's body and that

interest is amply rewarded when he performs feats such as almost running down the escaping Frederick and scaling the fort's flag pole, the novelist does not present Wacousta as a potential object of sympathy, affiliation, or identification. Wacousta's humanizing account of his own history comes too late in the text and is accompanied by a too monstrous transformation of his features to allow for him to be anything but fascinating and horrifying or, rather, fascinating because he is horrifying. Consider this example of Richardson's handling of Wacousta: midway through his monologue, immediately before "prov[ing] to [his captive listeners] how deeply [he] h[as] been injured" (478), Wacousta is overcome with emotion, buries his face in his hands and, when he raises his head, "disclose[s] a brow, not clouded as before, by grief, but *animated with the fiercest and most appalling passions*" (477, emphasis added). Here, as in the two scenes discussed earlier, Richardson anticipates and shapes his reader's response. The phrase "most appalling passions" functions as an instruction, directing the reader to respond to Wacousta with shock and horror, to be, in short, appalled.

The changes in Wacousta's affect, especially considered in the light of the narrative that he relates, support this direction, making it easy, if not de rigeur, for the reader to recoil from Wacousta at the moment when he is most vulnerable, most human. Wacousta buries his head in his hands immediately before he reveals how he was betrayed by Governor de Haldimar. When he explains how Governor de Haldimar married Clara Beverly (Wacousta's intended) and exploited her disguise as Wacousta's cousin to justify the betrayal, instead of expressing grief or another emotion that would make him sympathetic, "his wounded feeling and mortified pride [are] chaf[ed], by the bitter recollection, into increasing fury" (Richardson 478). He has both Valletort and Clara de Haldimar at his mercy, and his rage inevitably raises the spectre of his capacity for violence and the "most appalling" possibility that he will vent it on his innocent prisoners. In effect, Richardson juxtaposes the blow dealt the undeserving Wacousta by Governor de Haldimar with the spectre of Wacousta harming two equally (if not more) undeserving victims, and, in so doing, vitiates the possibility that Wacousta's history will justify his actions or transform him into a sympathetic character. When Wacousta's fury does give

way to grief, the effect of the change on his features is so monstrous as to maintain, if not increase, his alienation from the reader:

Here the agitation of Wacousta became terrific. The labouring of his chest was like that of one convulsed with some racking agony; and the swollen veins and arteries of his head seemed to threaten the extinction of life in some fearful paroxysm. At length he burst into a violent fit of tears, more appalling, in one of his iron nature, than the fury which had preceded it, – and it was many minutes before he could so far compose himself as to resume. (Richardson 479)

The apparent threat to Wacousta's life posed by his grief points obliquely (if not, given the tension of the situation, more directly) to the threat that he poses to the lives and well being of Clara de Haldimar and Valletort, short-circuiting at the very moment of its expression the capacity for Wacousta's grief to exculpate him. The phrase "more appalling" recalls through the repetition of the key word "appalling" and the sonic echo of "most" by "more" the earlier phrase "most appalling," and, just like the earlier phrase, steers the reader towards an unsympathetic, judgmental response. Moreover, Richardson presents Wacousta's weeping as a violation "of his iron nature," which frames Wacousta's grief as a deviation that, rather than undermining his implacable villainy, affirms it as the essence of his being.

This rare and crucially significant description of Wacousta's emotions focuses exclusively on the exterior expression of these emotions, on Wacousta's body. The "agitation[s] [which] bec[o]me terrific" are bodily agitations. Richardson points to the "labouring of [Wacousta's] chest," and to "the swollen veins and arteries of [Wacousta's] head." Even Wacousta's grief is expressed physiologically through his tears. In fact, Richardson does not even name or specify Wacousta's feeling with a word such as "grief," "sadness," "despair" or "desolation," thus leaving the reader to infer one or more of these emotions from the tears Wacousta sheds.⁷⁶ This is in stark contrast with

⁷⁶

At the end of the chapter immediately preceding Wacousta's revelation Richardson names his emotion, writing: "[a]t length he [Wacousta] made an effort to arouse himself; and again exhibiting his swarthy features, disclosed a brow, not clouded, as before, by grief, but animated with the fiercest and most appalling passions" (477). However, here, Richardson does not name Wacousta's emotion as he experiences it. Wacousta's grief is

Richardson's treatment of the novel's "good" characters, whose emotions he consistently gives the reader direct access to. Consider, as one of just many examples, the description of Valletort and Clara's escape shortly after Wacousta concludes his monologue: Richardson refers to Valletort's "breathless and intense anxiety," to his "desperation," and to the "fear [that] now oppressed [his] heart . . . even to agony" (490, 491). Before she falls senseless, the reader is well aware of Clara de Haldimar's "despair" (Richardson 490). At the very moment when Wacousta should be most sympathetic, Richardson denies the reader immediate access to the emotions that would humanize him and legitimize the reader's sympathies. Instead, the novelist directs the mind's eye of the reader towards the monstrous, appalling intermediary of Wacousta's body, effectively placing the reader at a remove from the stricken villain, and working to confirm the antipathy fostered by Wacousta's attacks on the de Haldimars and the men of the garrison. Paradoxically, Wacousta is never more distant from the reader and never more villainous than when he is most revealed and most vulnerable. The reader's alienation from Wacousta is further exacerbated and Wacousta is made less sympathetic, more monstrous and more villainous by his account of his response to Governor de Haldimar's betrayal.

Wacousta's exploits after his dishonourable dismissal from the British army confirm the depth and breadth of his desire for vengeance. They also configure him as an agent of socially corrosive violence, as a dissident, or rebel opposed to the very structures of civil society as well as to the people and institutions that injured him. Wacousta explains:

named in a negative statement or, in effect, it is named at the moment when Wacousta has ceased to feel it. If this "grief" comes after the fact of Wacousta experiencing it, it can also be seen to come before the fact. Specifically, this passage appears immediately before Wacousta reveals the cause of his grief and is separated from his revelation of this cause by a chapter break. In other words, in this rare instance of Richardson naming one of Wacosuta's emotions, the naming comes at a temporal and textual remove from, respectively, Wacousta's experience of the emotion and his revelation of its cause. Thus the reader is not left to infer Wacousta's feelings from his expressions and bodily contortions, but the reader is nevertheless prevented from having direct, immediate access to Wacousta's interiority, and is forced by Richardson to confront his/her essential alienation from the novel's villain.

The rebellion of forty-five saw me in arms in the Scottish ranks; and, in one instance, opposed to the regiment from which I had been so ignominiously expelled. Never did revenge glow like a living fire in the heart of a man as it did in mine; for the effect of my long brooding in solitude had been to inspire me with a detestation, not merely for those who had been most rancourous in their enmity, but for every thing that wore the uniform, from the commanding officer down to the meanest private. (Richardson 484)

Wacousta's enmity widens from Governor De Haldimar to take in the whole of the British military and, in directly opposing Britain on the field of battle, he makes himself the enemy of British society in general. "I had been recognised in the action by numbers of the regiment," he says of his actions in the rebellion and their consequences,

and, indeed, more than once I had, in the intoxication of my rage, accompanied the blow that slew or maimed one of my former associates with a declaration of the name of him who inflicted it. The consequence was, I was denounced as a rebel and an outlaw, and a price was put upon my head. (Richardson 485)

Wacousta's denunciation as a "a rebel and an outlaw" is particularly telling. In the context of the Scottish rebellion of forty-five, Wacousta's designation as "a rebel" aligns him with a particular group of dissidents from the authority of the British crown with a particular set of grievances and goals. The fact that he is also "an outlaw" – a designation that, incidently, Wacousta seems to relish – expands the scope of his dissidence, making him the enemy not only of the British crown, but of civil society in general. This shift from rebel to outlaw, from more contained to more general dissidence replicates Wacousta's movement from a full participant in civil society to progressively more extreme levels of alienation.

In short order, Wacousta's hatred for Governor de Haldimar and the British military develops into a hatred of humanity in general as he becomes a solitary misanthrope with "a price [on his] head:"

Accustomed, however, as I had ever been, to rocks and fastnesses, I had no difficulty in eluding the vigilance of those who were sent in pursuit of me; and thus compelled to live wholly apart from my species, I at length learned to hate them, and to know that man is the only enemy of man upon earth. (Richardson 485)

Like his discovery of his love in her father's secluded mountain home, Wacousta's escape from his pursuers foregrounds the Herculean body that allows him to navigate the "fastnesses of Scotland and Canada with ease." Thus, as well as confirming Wacousta's misanthropy, presenting him as the enemy of humanity in general, and highlighting his physical separation from the society of which he is now an enemy, this passage conjoins the extremity of vengeful hatred (misanthropy) with the extremity of masculine physicality in an image of the male body as an agent of social corrosion, in a picture of prodigious masculine physicality turned violently and absolutely against civil society in all of its forms.

What is more, the passage suggests that Wacousta's progression towards misanthropy is a descent, a backwards developmental movement into barbarism. Wacousta's flight from civil society is also and no less a flight to Nature, and, given the intense communion with the natural world that characterized Wacousta's youth, it may also be read as a return to Nature. Moreover, the truth that Wacousta learns in the wilderness – "that man is the only enemy of man upon earth" – is an insight strongly reminiscent of a primal scene of violence and just as strongly redolent of the belief that men are mere beasts locked in continual and inevitable struggle the one against the other. As well as positioning Wacousta as the antagonist of civil society, his history presents him as a representative example of the ease with which civilization and civilized man can fall suddenly and irrevocably backwards into barbarity, making him the antagonist of civil society *and* of civilization more generally. To Wacousta's account of his own history must be added two more instances of his retrogressive misanthropy: the allegiance he has made with the Natives for the purpose of achieving his personal vengeance and destroying that symbol of civilization in the wilderness, the British forts; and the perversion of the foundational social institution of marriage he hopes to accomplish by making Clara his bride. Given all of this, it is difficult to imagine a conjunction of physical prowess, masculine violence, and socially destructive intent more extreme, more dangerous, and more terrifying than that with which Wacousta presents the reader. Consider: the extremity of socially corrosive masculine violence in *Abram's Plains* is the warriors

trapped in the trees “[w]ho in cold blood, butcher’d a valiant foe” (Cary 149), but, in his desire to obliterate or debase every shred of civilized, white, English society in the novel, Wacousta far exceeds even these memorable examples of barbarous brutality.

Richardson’s complex (although, arguably, not very well nuanced) portrayal of Wacousta is characterized by three distinguishing features. First, Richardson constructs Wacousta as primarily a body, explicitly directing the reader’s gaze towards the villain’s body, shaping the reader’s response to his body, and pushing that response in the direction of (sexual or non-sexual) pleasure. Second, at the same time that Richardson constructs Wacousta as a body and just as consistently, he subverts the possibility of the reader forming a sympathetic or empathetic bond with Wacousta, presenting him as a monstrous body and forbidding the reader access to his subjective interiority. Third, Richardson frames Wacousta as a limit case of the antagonist, as a villain opposed not only to a set of specific enemies or a specific social institution but to humanity, civil society and civilization in general. All three of these features of Wacousta meet at the locus of his body. It draws and rewards the reader’s gaze. It interposes itself between the reader and Wacousta’s interiority. Although his body is not the direct cause of Wacousta’s violent misanthropy, it allows him to escape into the isolation instrumental to that misanthropy’s development, and, once he has completed his evolution as an antagonist, its extraordinary capabilities maximize the threat that he poses. Thus Wacousta’s body has a double valency: it is offered by Richardson as an object of readerly pleasure and no less as an object of readerly antipathy, often provoking or soliciting both responses at the very same time. Wacousta is, in short, a character to whom the reader is encouraged to respond with a frisson of arousal (a frankly sexual arousal or a non-sexual arousal of admiration for his physical gifts) and a simultaneous shiver of terror. This response is framed by, made possible by, shaped by the stark distinction that Richardson draws between the reader and Wacousta, and the positioning of the reader that this distinction entails is central to the novel’s management of Wacousta’s aggressive masculine body.

Genteel Readers and Genteel Giants: Managing the Aggressive Masculine Body, and
Imagining a Just and Active Man

Richardson begins *Wacousta* with an Introductory in which he envisions his readership as English and genteel: his overview of the history and geography of the Canadas is addressed to “the European [who] is little familiarised” (11) with that region, and more specifically, to “Englishmen” (11). He goes on to align the reader’s, his own, and English interests, referring to English victories and defeats in the first person plural,⁷⁷ and favourably contrasting the “mild influence” and even-handed fairness of English rule with the “hostility and treachery” (Richardson 19, 18) of the allied French Canadians and Natives. Richardson continues this pattern in the body of the novel. In the process of stimulating and shaping the reader’s visceral responses (arousal, admiration, terror), the novelist directs the reader towards a specific social position, inserting him/her into allegiances and value structures that are decidedly genteel. By consistently implicating the reader and *Wacousta* in an observer/observed, subject/object relationship, Richardson draws a clear line between the two, distinguishing the reader from the villain in such a way as to affirm the reader’s superiority. However capable, active, and terrifying *Wacousta* may be, he is always and in most cases explicitly positioned as an object of readerly pleasure, as subject to the reader’s desire and thus subject to the reader. The reader’s alienation from *Wacousta* occurs within the context of a power dynamic constructed by Richardson that favours the reader. The alienation of the reader from *Wacousta* and his/her superiority over him is confirmed by the particular kind of antagonist *Wacousta* is. As earlier observed, rather than being merely the vengeful opponent of de Halidmar and the institution that directly harmed him, *Wacousta* himself

⁷⁷

Richardson observes that lake “Erie [was the site of] a signal defeat of *our* flotilla during the late contest with the Americans” (13, emphasis added), explains that “the Canadas were ceded to *us* by France” (17, emphasis added), and notes that fort “Michillimackinac [was] one of the first posts of the Americans that fell into *our* hands” (22, emphasis added).

makes it clear that he is the opponent of humanity in general, of civil society and, beyond that, of civilization. This makes Wacousta maximally terrifying by emphatically establishing him as a socially corrosive agent of chaos, as an antagonist whose antagonism has been detached from its proper object and is now turned against all possible objects. It almost goes without saying that the reader necessarily falls within the purview of such a general antagonism: Wacousta is as much the antagonist of the reader, who has done nothing but pick up the book, as he is of the de Haldimar children, who have done nothing but have the bad luck to be born to their father.

Positioning Wacousta as the reader's antagonist has a variety of effects. As the reader is obviously undeserving of Wacousta's antagonism, this adds a layer of moral superiority to the superiority built into the observer/observed dynamic that characterizes the reader's relationship to Wacousta. What is more, the reader is grouped with Wacousta's enemies, with the novel's collective protagonist, the de Haldimar family and their allies. In particular, this aligns the reader with the essentially innocent children of the Governor, and forms a bond of similitude between the reader and the most representatively genteel characters in the novel. That bond is reinforced by Richardson's management of the novel's narrative perspective on its villain. *Wacousta* is written from the third person omniscient point of view, moving fluidly between a large cast of characters whose thoughts and emotions the narrative regularly accesses. The one consistent exception to this are the scenes in which Wacousta is present. In these scenes, Richardson shifts from the third person omniscient point of view to the third person limited point of view. Specifically, the point of view is limited to the characters other than Wacousta in the scene, with a few notable exceptions, to the white, British characters. For example, consider the scenes that have already been discussed: When the reader first encounters Wacousta, he/she sees Wacousta take aim and fire from the perspective of the daughter of the proprietor of the Fleur de lis, a perspective from which Wacousta is only a body and which offers no explanation for his actions or access to his interiority. When Wacousta pursues the fleeing Frederick, the reader watches the race from the perspective of the detachment on the bridge, a perspective that is no more

illuminating than that of the daughter of the proprietor of the Fleur de lis. When Wacousta recounts his own history, he does so to a horrified audience made up of Valletort and Clara, and, just as in the aforementioned scenes, the reader has no more access to Wacousta's thoughts and emotions than do they. Finally, when Wacousta dies, the reader observes the scene from the perspective of the soldiers in the fort, a perspective so distant and limited that the only figure who is readily identifiable is the Herculean villain and the reader can only speculate about the words and expressions, let alone the thoughts and emotions, of the characters involved.

Richardson reinforces the reader's affiliation with the novel's genteel characters by aligning his/her interests with theirs and reinforcing this alignment by conflating their and the reader's perspective on Wacousta through a shift in narrative perspective that is exclusive to those scenes involving the villain. The reader and the genteel character's viewpoints, perspectives, outlooks (all words that denote an observational position and, at the same time, suggest an ideological/social/moral/political position) are figuratively *and* literally the same. To Richardson's alignment of the reader with the novel's most genteel characters could be added the pervasive tendency in early Canada to present the socially corrosive, aggressive masculine body as the conventional antagonist of the gentility, as the greatest and most immediate threat to the identities and status of genteel men and women. This dynamic is implicit in *Abram's Plains* and is expressed fully and explicitly in the work of Susanna Moodie,⁷⁸ but it also informs *Wacousta* and, in particular, the novel's positioning of the reader. Richardson's *Wacousta* plays on this conventional opposition and, in establishing the villain as the reader's antagonist, the novelist implicitly endows the reader with a genteel identity. If one were to place the reader in the novel, it would be in the fort, next to the genteel de Haldimars, sharing in their identity, participating in the social structures that enable that identity, and looking outward with them, in fear and fascination, at the novel's alien, violent and threatening titular

78

See the discussion of *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Flora Lindsay* in the following two chapters.

character.⁷⁹

But, however alien and violent he may be, Wacousta's subjection as an object of genteel readerly pleasure neutralizes whatever threat he may pose. By carefully and systematically configuring Wacousta's body as an object of readerly pleasure and employing Wacousta's socially corrosive masculinity to endow the reader with a genteel identity, Richardson embeds Wacousta's aggressive masculine body within a textual structure that causes it to confirm and reinforce, rather than to corrode, the very values that it threatens. This objectification is a pacification, but not a pacification that turns on diminishing Wacousta's capacity for action; rather, the text specifically ties Wacousta's ability to provide the reader pleasure to his construction as an active rather than a passive object, and, no less so, to the association of his active body with socially corrosive aggression and rebelliousness. In effect, Richardson's novel neutralizes Wacousta's aggressive masculine body while at the same time preserving its capacity for action, sublimating the brute physicality of rebellious, socially corrosive masculinity and redirecting it towards the end of genteel readerly pleasure.

This echoes the management of the aggressive masculine body in *Abram's Plains* and, in particular, the sublimation of this body that at once preserves it and redirects its energy towards productive ends. Cary's poem operates according to the circular logic of masculine writing, and so too does *Wacousta*. The objectification of Wacousta's body constitutes a passage through the other that, as this object becomes the subject of readerly pleasure, makes a return to its point of departure. The reader's gaze travels outwards towards Wacousta and then returns as the body that has provoked the gaze is appropriated

79

This is not to say that all of *Wacousta's* readers are genteel. It goes without saying that Richardson's novel had, has and will continue to have readers who neither view themselves a genteel nor entertain allegiances or affinities with the nineteenth-century English gentility as exemplified by the de Haldimars. The point is not that *Wacousta's* readers are genteel, but that the text positions them as such, managing their responses and affiliations in order to endow them for the duration of their reading with what is effectively a genteel identity, that is to say, with desires, anxieties and responses that are characteristically genteel.

to readerly pleasure. As in *Abram's Plains*, this return is a profitable one. Most obviously, this circular structure provides the reader with pleasure. Less obviously, it confirms and reinforces the genteel identity of the reader, and, specifically, reassures an anxious genteel reader of the capacity of gentility to manage through sublimation antagonistic masculine identities. Where *Abram's Plains* demonstrates to the British mercantile class of the Canadas their ability to sublimate the atavistic, socially corrosive masculinities of the colony into a peaceable and prosperous society, *Wacousta* testifies to the capacity of the gentility to profitably manage the aggressive masculine body. Finally, to the extent that the circular structure joining *Wacousta* and the reader is designed to provide the reader pleasure, it serves to profit the novel's writer, Major John Richardson. To reiterate a point made at the beginning of the discussion of *Wacousta*, Richardson is "Canada's First [professional] Novelist," the first Canadian who sought to earn a living exclusively by writing. It is easy and, indeed, appropriate to see Richardson's solicitation and manipulation of the reader's response to *Wacousta* as the calculated stratagem of a professional writer looking to sell as many copies as possible. What is more, as the only of Richardson's books to be "republished many times since [its initial publication in England] in both the United States and Canada" (Cronk xvii),⁸⁰ it is fair to say that this strategy met with not inconsiderable success. *Wacousta* is, among many other things, a fairly direct and accomplished attempt on Richardson's part to ratify his own social position, an aspect of it that marks an additional similarity between it and *Abram's Plains*, a poem whose comprehensive overview of the colony ratifies Cary's position as a clerk in the administration of the colony and testifies to his ongoing usefulness to that administration. Thus the circular dynamic that Richardson establishes between the reader and *Wacousta* is multiply productive, multiply profitable, yielding returns to both the novel's reader and to its writer.

In *Abram's Plains*, the individual identity of the speaker and the collective identity

80

See the appendix "Other Published Versions of the Text" in Douglas Cronk's Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts edition of *Wacousta* for a complete publication history of the novel up to and including the fifth Canadian edition of 1967.

of the colonial society that he both represents and describes overlap. In the poem, the two levels of identity are formally congruent, and much the same can be said of Richardson's novel. Although *Wacousta* trades primarily in individual identities (that of Wacousta, the reader and Richardson are the most immediately relevant examples) and the preceding discussion has accordingly emphasized individual rather than collective identity, at times, the novel moves towards conflating the two by constituting individual identities within the informing context of corporate identities. The novel's endowment of the reader with a genteel identity constitutes just such a conflation. One aspect of Richardson's management of the relationship he constructs between Wacousta and the reader is his situation of that relationship (a relationship between two individuals) within the informing, if not determining, context of affiliations with and allegiances to the corporate identity shared by the de Haldimars and the other genteel characters in the novel.

It is no accident that when the reader observes Wacousta he/she often shares his/her perspective with a group, following the gaze of many characters, rather than one character, to the villain's body. Of the four scenes including Wacousta that have been discussed in this chapter, only one finds the reader's gaze mirrored by a single character. With the exception of the daughter of the Fleur de lis, the textual analogues for the reader consist of at least two characters, if not of a crowd of characters. When Wacousta pursues the fleeing Frederick towards the bridge, the reader's gaze is aligned with the collective gaze of the detachment on the bridge. When Wacousta dies, the reader shares the perspective of the soldiers on the wall of the fort. When Wacousta recounts his history, the reader observes him from a perspective that is essentially equivalent to that of his prisoners, Valletort and Clara. It is also, no accident that in two of these scenes the reader is aligned with a group composed primarily of nameless secondary characters (respectively, the detachment on the bridge and the soldiers in the fort), which is to say, with a group with a collective identity that, within the confines of the text, cannot be or can only partially be decomposed into constituent individual identities. Part of Richardson's positioning of the reader as genteel involves him subsuming the reader's identity in that of the corporate body in the novel specifically charged with defending

British colonial society in general and the gentility at the head of that society in particular. The background of the complex dynamic established by Richardson between his novel's reader and its villain is made up in part of the insertion of the reader into a corporate identity and the concurrent confirmation and reinforcement of that identity. If *Abram's Plains* says to its audience emphatically, "we are civilized and developed here – literate, polite and learned," *Wacousta* sends a similar message to its readers, saying, less vociferously than *Abram's Plains* but no less emphatically, "you (both individually and as part of a collective) are genteel."

At the same time that *Wacousta* constructs a genteel readership by managing readers' perceptions of and responses to Wacousta's body, it gestures towards an idealized model of masculinity that harmoniously integrates Wacousta's Herculean physique with the text's genteel values. As has been often observed, Richardson's work is replete with doubles. Of all of the novel's manifold doublings and juxtapositions, the pairing of Wacousta with Frederick is most relevant to the present discussion of the novel's treatment of masculinity, for it is through the juxtaposition of these two men that the text points towards the emergence of a new model of manhood, and, beyond that, towards the distant figure of the totally competent man. The link between them is immediately established when they are introduced. Frederick "enters" the novel when his disappearance from the fort is discovered, and Wacousta's first appearance is as the figure who enters the chambers of Governor de Haldimar. Both men are initially less than substantial (one is absent, the other is taken for a ghost), and, tellingly, their entries into the text happen at more or less the same time: Frederick's disappearance or, at least, the discovery of his disappearance coincides with Wacousta's appearance in the chambers of Governor de Haldimar. Frederick has left the fort for the specific purpose of infiltrating the Native camp in order to overhear their plans for taking the two British forts. Thus both men follow identical but opposite trajectories, leaving their camps, travelling towards, and penetrating their enemy's camps. What is more, the men follow opposite trajectories in pursuit of opposite objectives: Wacousta is on a mission of murderous vengeance, and Frederick's aim is to save the lives of the British soldiers in Upper

Canada. If their introduction makes it clear that Wacousta and Frederick form one of the novel's many pairs, it also makes it abundantly clear that theirs is a pairing of stark opposites.

Their antagonism is born out by the revelation that Wacousta is the gigantic French officer who nearly succeeded in killing Frederick at the battle of Abraham's Plains, and, over the course of the novel, the two men come to embody the two sets of opposed values that animate the conflict at the heart of *Wacousta*. Whereas Wacousta is a misanthropic, barbaric, selfish, intemperate, perverse and vengeful man who takes wilful joy in allying himself with the enemies of Britain, Frederick is an ideal of gentility, nobility, self-control, and selflessness who is loyally British and unfailingly honorable, an ideal, in short, of masculine virtue. Indeed, if someone were to be selected from the members of the de Haldimar family to stand as a protagonist to *Wacousta*'s titular antagonist it would be Frederick, not least of all because Frederick is the only male member of the family to survive the novel's concluding blood bath. However, if Frederick and Wacousta are protagonist and antagonist, they are by no means evenly matched. This is clear from the relative success of their initial missions. Wacousta is able to surprise Governor de Haldimar in his chambers and then escape with no more than a superficial shoulder wound. Frederick, on the other hand, is overheard while leaving the Native camp. He runs and then hides, but is found by Wacousta and lifted by him from his hiding place in the underbrush "with as much facility as if [Frederick] had been a child" (Richardson 263). Frederick's capture highlights the signal difference between the Captain and Wacousta. Although Frederick is an exemplary soldier who has "none of the natural weakness and timidity of character [of the younger,] gentler and more sensitive Charles" (Richardson 253), Wacousta is in every way (in speed, agility, strength, fortitude, etc) Frederick's physical superior, and his physical superiority makes Wacousta more fundamentally capable than Frederick. For all that Frederick is an ideal of masculine virtue, he is by no means the equal of his Herculean opposite. The contrasting values and capabilities of these two men are confirmed when they appear together for the first time.

Frederick makes his first physical appearance in the novel when he is in the midst of his second, successful escape attempt from the Native camp, “flying down the height [towards the detachment on the bridge] with a rapidity proportioned to [his] extreme peril” (Richardson 152) with the Native warriors and Wacousta in hot pursuit. The denouement of the race drives home Wacousta’s physical superiority: “[a]t every bound [Wacousta] took he increased the space that divided him from his companions, and lessened that which kept him from his panting and nearly exhausted victim” (Richardson 152). Frederick only escapes his much faster and much more powerful pursuer because Wacousta is trying to capture, not kill, him and, in reaching out to grab Frederick, he loses his balance and falls. The contrasting values of the two men are highlighted by what are, at least until Halloway is shot, the possible outcomes of the race. If Frederick is able to reach the bridge in time, he will save himself, and stave off the execution of Halloway. As Halloway himself says with his final breath, “Oh stop – for God’s sake stop! Another moment and he will be here, and I – ” (Richardson 153), and the sentence be reasonably concluded, “will be spared” or “will be saved.” That Halloway is executed before Frederick can reach the bridge does not change the fact that Frederick is, at least when he very first appears, racing to save both himself and Halloway from their “impending doom” (Richardson 153). Moreover, if he reaches the bridge, Frederick will be able to reveal the Natives’ plan and save the occupants of the British forts. Wacousta, on the other hand, is trying to capture Frederick to, most certainly, torture and eventually kill him. Whereas Wacousta’s actions are defined by the selfishness of a perverse and personal vendetta, Frederick’s actions merge a perfectly understandable desire for self-preservation with the virtuous (it might even be said, noble) attempt to save first Halloway and then the occupants of the British forts. The first man is racing to take a life, the second is racing to save lives.

The juxtaposition of Frederick and Wacousta has the effect of suggesting a figure who combines their best features, uniting Frederick’s unwavering moral compass with Wacousta’s unmatched physicality. As well as being stark, the contrast between the two men is strikingly symmetrical: one’s weakness is the other’s strength, and vice versa.

Wacousta's failings are moral, and Frederick is a paragon of morality. If Frederick possessed Wacousta's exceptional physical gifts, he would be more capable, more effective, and more able to prevent events from spiraling towards the novel's concluding blood bath. To the extent that one possesses what the other lacks, their juxtaposition raises the possibility of an ideal man without weaknesses, a man who lacks nothing because he combines the best of both Wacousta and Frederick. Central to this combination would be the submission of the aggressive masculine body to the regulation of a system of genteel values, and it is just such a relationship between gentility and physicality that is one of the defining features of the totally competent man. The bodies of men such as Ranald Macdonald and Richard Stahlberg are easily the equal of Wacousta's Herculean physique, and, like Wacousta's, their bodies are, at least initially, associated with primitivism, barbarism, and anti-sociability. These men's development into totally competent men consists in no small part of learning to regulate their bodies by bringing their actions in line with a genteel code of behavior. If Ranald and Richard begin as Wacoustas, in the process of becoming totally competent men, they grow into Fredericks with the bodies of Wacoustas.

This link between *Wacousta* and the fully formed totally competent men of late nineteenth-century Canada is a tenuous one at best; however, there is one suggestive similarity between Wascouta, and Ranald and Richard that does strengthen it. Wacousta's defining moral failing is his implacable and disproportionate desire to avenge himself on the de Haldimar family as a whole. Learning to control their desires for vengeance is a key feature of the development of Ranald and Richard, and, in both cases, their renunciation of vengeance serves as a marker of their successful adoption of genteel values. Ranald's development from a savage adolescent into a mature and moral man turns on him giving up his desire to avenge the death of his father, and his reconciliation with LeNoir (the man whose beating killed Ranald's father) demonstrates that he has fully internalized the system of values taught to him by Mrs. Murray. In the climactic scene of *The Story of an Affinity*, Richard lifts his romantic rival, Vantassel, in the air and pins him to the earth, but then lets the lawyer up without harming him, refusing to avenge himself

on the man who he thinks has stolen Margaret from him.⁸¹ In “dr[awing] / his hands away” (Lampman, *SA* 3:653-54) and telling Vantassel “[t]he story of his labour and his love” (Lampman, *SA* 3:658), Richard demonstrates that in mastering a genteel moral code he has mastered “[t]he old Berserker passion of his youth” (Lampman, *SA* 3:646).

Although it is impossible to trace a direct line of influence from *Wacousta* to *The Man from Glengarry* and *The Story of an Affinity*, or any of the other texts in which totally competent men appear for that matter, the juxtaposition of *Wacousta* and Frederick usefully highlights the extent to which the management of the aggressive masculine body at the heart of the totally competent man consistently takes the form of the management of vengeful violence.⁸² As limit cases of socially corrosive violence and genteel morality,

81

The love triangle in *The Story of an Affinity* bears some resemblance to the love triangle at the heart of *Wacousta*, and, in the moment when he pins Vantassel down, Richard is strikingly reminiscent of the Herculean and vengeful *Wacousta*.

82

The question of why vengeful violence appears with regularity in narratives that feature totally competent men, and, moreover, why totally competent men are regularly framed as the potential perpetrators of such violence is a complex one. The answer may in part lie in these text’s juxtaposition of vengeful violence and romantic love. In both *The Man from Glengarry* and *The Story of an Affinity*, the desire for vengeance (in Ranald’s case) or the potential to be vengeful (in Richard’s case) marks the starting point of a narrative that culminates in both cases in the affirmation of a romantic union. The texts are thus bookended, on the one hand, by an extreme of socially corrosive anti-sociality and, on the other, by an idealized example of the basic social unit of the family and the promise that follows from it of the perpetuation of the community. This highlights the extraordinary distance that these men cover in their development, and frames them as paragons of development, as heroes of development. It is, indeed, the amount of development that these men accomplish as much as the speed with which they do so from which these texts derive much of their narrative energy. This juxtaposition is also linked to the totally competent man’s comprehension of the breadth of the nation’s historical development. Whereas romantic love, or, at least, romantic love as experienced by totally competent men is genteel, civil and decidedly civilized, vengeful violence stands as an extreme of primitive behaviour. Just as the speaker of *Abram’s Plains* comprehends the entirety of the colony’s history by incorporating the extremes of British civility and the socially corrosive violence of the Native warriors “[w]ho in cold blood, butcher’d a valiant foe” (Cary 150), so does the totally competent man comprehend the historical sweep of the nation by developing from a potential perpetrator of vengeful violence into a

Wacousta and Frederick respectively mark the beginning and the end of the process of development through which totally competent men are constituted. They map out the extremes of manhood with which the writers who produced the totally competent man were confronted, and chart two of the defining features of the cultural field within which this new model of manhood took shape.

The ideal man suggested by the juxtaposition of Wacousta and Frederick is just that, a suggestion, a possibility offered by the text rather than a concrete reality in it. The novel's closing paragraph, however, points to this possibility becoming a reality in the succeeding generations of the de Haldimar family. Richardson briefly describes the education of Frederick's children:

in the course of years, Oucanasta might be seen associating with and bearing curious presents, the fruits of Indian ingenuity, to the daughters of De Haldimar, now become the colonel of the ----- regiment; while her brother, the chief, instructed his sons in the athletic and active exercises peculiar to his race. (531)

Oucanasta and her brother teaching Frederick's children recalls the access to a reservoir of Native knowledge that distinguished colonial masculinity from British masculinity in *Abram's Plains*, and defined the poem's model of colonial manhood as proto-Canadian. More important, this description looks back to the mixing of Native and British culture that distinguishes Wacousta from the other British men in the novel. Even more important, the description of the "exercises" that Oucanasta's brother teaches Frederick's sons implies that they are acquiring, along with the exemplary morality their father will most certainly impart to them, something of Wacousta's dominant and dominating physicality. The pair of adjectives – "athletic and active" (Richardson 531) – used to describe the exercises that the boys learn is an exact inversion of the pair of adjectives – "active and athletic" (Richardson 138) – used to describe Wacousta's limbs when he is first introduced. The novel's conclusion thus intimates that Frederick's sons will be defined by a breadth of influence, combining in their masculine identities the best of British and Native culture, and the best qualities of their father and his antagonist.

genteel lover.

Moreover, the reversal of the order of the adjectives implies that the combination of Frederick's genteel civility with Wacousta's brute physicality will be a process not just of addition but of transformation, a process that at once preserves and revalues the aggressive masculine body. Under the regulating influence of a genteel morality, the value of Wacousta's "active and athletic" (Richardson 138) body will be reversed or inverted: the transformation of Wacousta's body into the "athletic and active" bodies of Frederick's sons will entail the sublimation of his socially corrosive violence into a new model of socially constructive colonial masculinity. If Wacousta's body is implicated in the construction of the novel's readership as genteel and thus in the production of a genteel collectivity, it is also central to the development within the novel of a new generation of genteel colonial men. *Wacousta* closes with a concrete gesture towards an emerging model of masculinity whose combination of genteel morality and brute physicality in the context of a distinctively Canadian mixture of British and Native culture suggestively anticipates the emergence of the totally competent man.

The transformation of the aggressive masculine body in Frederick's sons is characteristic of the novel's treatment of that body. From the closing gesture towards an emerging colonial masculinity, to the novel's appropriation of Wacousta's body to readerly pleasure, and its use of that same body in the construction of a genteel readership, *Wacousta* consistently revalues the aggressive masculine body in the process of preserving it, turning it from destructive to productive ends, and causing it to conform to and reinforce the values and institutions it most threatens. This transformation of the aggressive masculine body is central to the production of the totally competent man, not to mention the development of individual totally competent men like Macdonald and Stahlberg, and it is just such a productive revaluation that defines Moodie's response to the aggressive, threatening bodies of lower class emigrants in *Roughing it In the Bush*.

Chapter 4:

A Man of Fearful Proportions and Comforting Productivity: *Roughing It in the Bush* and Moodie's Management of Lower Class Masculinity

The first chapter of Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush*, "A Visit to Grosse Isle," closes with a striking image that foreshadows the numerous challenges to her genteel status that await Moodie in the colony. After being "stunned by the strife of tongues" among the steerage passengers quarantined on the island, Moodie and her party return to their launch where they "encounter . . . a boat, just landing a fresh cargo of lively savages from the Emerald Isles" (*RB* 20, 21-22). Among the Irish emigrants is an Herculean figure whose imposing physique and exuberant disregard for the social hierarchies of the old world exemplify the lower class rejection of the authority of the gentility at its most immediate, most aggressive and most threatening:

One fellow of gigantic proportions, whose long tattered great-coat just reached below the middle of his bare red legs, and, like charity, hid the defects of his other garments, or perhaps concealed his want of them, leaped upon the rocks, and flourishing aloft his shilelagh, bounded and capered like a wild goat from his native mountains. 'Whurrah! My boys' he cried, 'Shure we'll all be jontlemen!' (Moodie, *RB* 22)

With the exception of his "gigantic proportions" and his vital physicality, the exuberant Irishman is no different than the emigrants already on Grosse Isle. They "shout . . . and yell . . . in [their] uncouth dialect[s]" and the Irishman's "Whurrah! My boys' . . . Shure we'll all be jontlemen!" (Moodie, *RB* 20, 22) is unmistakably the utterance of a vernacular speaker. They "accompany . . . their vociferations with violent and extraordinary gestures" and he "bound[s] and caper[s] like a wild goat" (Moodie, *RB* 20, 22). They are at worst "almost naked" and at best "but partially clothed" (20) and Moodie speculates that he wants for clothes under his "tattered great-coat" (*RB* 20, 22). But, most important, this Herculean figure condenses and intensifies the insubordinate spirit of the emigrants that discomforts Moodie and causes "feelings almost akin to fear" (*RB* 20) into a shocking and legitimately terrifying expression of rebellious sentiment. In so forcefully

embodying the lower class challenge to Moodie's genteel identity, the Irishman provides Moodie with the opportunity to respond to that challenge, and, in particular, to respond to that challenge by managing the aggressive masculine body that exemplifies it. Like the authors examined in the preceding two chapters, Moodie accomplishes this management, first, by appropriating the Irishman's body to genteel readerly pleasure, and, second, by inserting that same body into a narrative of national development that valorizes her, rather than his, identity. The Irishman's challenge to Moodie's identity affords an occasion for her to confirm her own genteel identity in particular and assert the social value of gentility in general through the discursive management of his body.

I

A Disconcerting/Ridiculous Jontleman: Defining and Disabling the "Fellow of Gigantic Proportions"

As might be expected from a genteel author whose identity is deeply embedded in upper middle-class norms of behaviour and standards of decorum, Moodie presents the insubordination of the emigrants and the rebelliousness of the Irishman as forms of savagery and thus as posing a general threat to the civility that defines civilization as well as a specific one to genteel authority and her own social position. Despite being engaged in the civilized activity of washing their clothes, the emigrants are cast as worse than savages, and Moodie is at pains to point out that the towering Irishman is part of a "cargo of lively savages" (*RB* 21). Moodie distinguishes the savagery of lower class European emigrants from that of Native Peoples, invoking the convention of the noble savage:

I had heard and read much of savages, and had since seen, during my long residence in the bush, somewhat of uncivilised life; but the Indian is one of nature's gentlemen – he never says or does a rude or vulgar thing. The vicious, uneducated barbarians who form the surplus of over-populous European countries, are far behind the wild man in delicacy of feeling or natural courtesy. (*RB* 20)

Moodie's separation of Native from European savagery on the basis of Native Peoples' possession of a natural gentility disposes with the conventional assumption that the

opposite of the civilized man in the form of the gentleman is the savagery of his racialized other and positions the emigrants on Grosse Isle as the absolute and exclusive antitheses of gentility in general and of Moodie in particular.⁸³ The savagery of the emigrants is inextricably bound up with their rejection of the constraints of European propriety and, most important, of the limitations placed on them by the European class structure. Much to her dismay, Moodie observes that the well behaved steerage passengers of her ship “no sooner set foot upon the island than they bec[o]me infected by the same spirit of

83

Carole Gerson makes a similar point in her article “Nobler Savages: Representations of Native Women in the Writings of Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill.” “To a gentlewoman like Moodie, Indians, as ‘Nature’s gentlemen,’ can be perceived as less Other than the lower classes of Great Britain (especially the Irish). Introducing Native peoples as gentlefolk – who, unlike servants, are invited to eat at the Moodie’s table – helps validate their individuality as human beings” (526). Gerson observes rightly that Moodie’s attribution of individuality to the Native Peoples she describes differs sharply from her description of the emigrants on Grosse Isle as a largely unvariegated crowd, and reveals the writer’s contrasting attitudes towards the two groups. In the case of Native Peoples, their individuation incorporates their otherness into a familiar structure of meaning. In the case of lower-class emigrants, Moodie resists their individuation in order to maintain the structures of social value which make her identity meaningful. This contrast is most explicit when the Irishman leaps ashore: his individuation makes him more threatening whereas that of the Native Peoples makes them more human and more familiar. The present reading of this passage is distinguished from Gerson’s by the implicit recognition of the instrumentality of the Natives. Gerson sees in Moodie’s identification of Natives as “Nature’s gentlemen” a strategy for piercing the ideological veil that separates the gentlewoman from the Natives, a strategy which allows Moodie to see, acknowledge and validate Native Peoples essential “individuality as human beings” (527). As well as showing a marked naivete with regards to the ideological construction of the individuality of human beings, this disregards the fact that Moodie’s identification occurs in the context of an antagonistic (at least from her perspective) encounter between the genteel and the lower classes. Moodie’s identification makes the Natives less other, but it also and more importantly makes the lower classes more other and affirms the foundational values (propriety, politeness, etc.) of Moodie’s genteel identity. Thus Moodie attributes individuality and humanity to the Natives for the purpose of shoring up the crumbling foundation of her class identity, paradoxically making them more superficially human in order to strip them of their humanity by reducing them to an instrumental function. Simply put, this passage does not “validate [Native Peoples’] individuality as human beings” (Gerson 526); it validates them only in so far as they serve to validate Moodie’s gentility.

insubordination and misrule, and [are] just as insolent and noisy as the rest” (*RB* 20). Moodie’s prior association of the emigrants with Babel gives their refusal of European structures of authority and norms of behaviour a disconcerting cast by hinting that this is a permanent transformation, rather than a problematic but momentary outburst. The arrival in the colony is a new beginning, but it is also a fracturing and a dispersal – that is, an event that is particularly threatening to someone like Moodie whose genteel identity is based on an understanding of society as structured, coherent, and, most important, united. The powerful and fraught ambiguity of Moodie’s representation of the emigrants reveals the self-contradictory doubling of her response to them: she denies the power of the lower classes at the same time that she implicitly recognizes the threat they pose to her identity and works to contain, manage, and minimize that threat. This complex positioning of the emigrants is condensed and intensified (and it is all the more threatening for being more dense and more intense) in the giant Irishman’s exuberant declaration and wild display.

The key difference between the Irishman and the mob of emigrants already on Grosse Isle is his brutish, vital physicality, a physicality which makes him immediately disconcerting, and positions him as a long-term danger to the Moodie’s class identity and social authority. The Irishman’s declaration that “we’ll all be jontlemen” (Moodie, *RB* 20, emphasis added) is an explicit and forceful expression of the class resentment and rebellious sentiment that animate the emigrants on the island. The giant is, in effect, declaring the end to the class system that the crowd washing their clothes on the beach gestures towards with their outburst of anarchic behaviour. The crowd on Grosse Isle “stun . . . [Moodie] by the strife of [their] tongues” and “elbow rudely past” her, but they are only capable of producing “feelings *almost akin* to fear” (Moodie, *RB* 20, emphasis added) in the disgusted genteel viewer, not real physical injury nor the actual fear that follows from the recognition that injury is a real possibility. In contrast with the sickly, noisy but less than terrifying clothes washers, the Irishman’s “gigantic proportions” (Moodie, *RB* 22) provide ample evidence that he is capable of doing much more than simply jostling Moodie and her companions. The shilelagh that he “flourish[es] aloft” (Moodie, *RB* 22) – an instrument which is unmistakably and exclusively a weapon –

confirms the Irishman's capacity for physical violence. In addition to being a weapon, the shilelagh is a traditional Irish weapon that, in combination with the man's anti-authoritarian exclamation, invokes the often violent Irish resistance to English rule. If the clothes-washing crowd is animated by the spirit of insubordination, this gigantic Irishman inescapably recalls the actual rebellion of 1798 and the ongoing agitation for independence from Britain. In other words, his exclamation can be read as a rejection of the English class structure, of the social authority of the English gentility, of British Imperialism, of the rule of British law, of English racial superiority, of, in short, the nearly sum total of Moodie's Englishness. But, if the Irishman's obvious capacity for violence and his equally obvious association with the Irish resistance to English rule make him immediately threatening, it is his vitality, his endurance of hardship and the aptitude for manual labour implied by his "gigantic proportions" that make him a long-term threat to the social position of the Moodies and, more generally, to the maintenance of the social authority of the genteel class in the colony.

In her Introduction, Moodie distinguishes between two types of emigrants: the "ever-to-be-honoured sons of honest poverty" or the members of the lower classes, and "the refined and accomplished gentlem[e]n" or the members of the gentility (*RB* 11). She warns members of her own class, "a class perfectly unfitted by their previous habits and education for contending with the stern realities of emigrant life" (*RB* 11), that they will find nothing but failure and heartbreak in the bush. But she has a far more positive view of the possibilities that pioneering offers lower class emigrants:

The Great Father of the souls and bodies of men knows the arm which wholesome labour from infancy has made strong, the nerves which have become iron by patient endurance, by exposure to weather, coarse fare, and rude shelter; and he chooses such, to send forth into the forest to hew out the rough paths for the advance of civilisation. These men become wealthy and prosperous, and form the bones and sinews of a great and rising country. Their labour is wealth, not exhaustion; it produces independence and content, not home-sickness and despair. (*RB* 11)

From the perspective of the book's Introduction, the enormous Irishman's survival of the passage across the Atlantic – presumably, in steerage – without contracting cholera or

another condition, his apparent indifference to adversity, and the suitability of his “gigantic” body to manual labour all suggest that the trajectory of his life in the colony will be a swift rise from his present state of nearly naked poverty to wealth, prosperity, and power. From the point of view established by Moodie herself, his fate will be the diametrical opposite of that of the Moodies’: where they can only fail, he can only succeed.

The stark contrast between the relative chances of success in the colony of the Moodies and the Irishman is reinforced by the juxtaposition of his arrival on the island (the point of arrival for most colonists and their first chance to set foot on colonial soil⁸⁴) with the Moodies’ departure from it. Immediately following the Irishman’s exclamation, the captain of the Moodies’s ship orders the men manning the oars of their boat to “[p]ull away” (Moodie, *RB* 22) from the island. Obviously, this is a coincidence: there is no direct causal relationship between the Irishman’s arrival on Grosse Isle and the Moodies’s departure from it, and the Irishman is not driving or frightening the Moodies’s off the island. That said, the juxtaposition of his arrival with their departure does suggest this possibility, and reinforces his strength and energy by placing it next to the Moodies’s withdrawal. Moreover, the arrival of the Irishman on Grosse Isle recalls the archetypal image of the explorer making landfall, and gives the impression of being an act of appropriation, a statement of ownership not unlike that made by the explorer when he claims new territory in the name of the nation he represents. It is important to note that the Irishman is not claiming the colony in the name of Ireland or for any nation for that matter; rather, with his declaration, he is effectively laying claim to the colony in the name of the impoverished masses of the British Isles. His claim is implicitly validated by Moodie’s earlier positive portrayal of the prospects of the lower classes in the colony. His adamant arrival contrasts with what is for Moodie a sightseeing trip whose stated purpose is to allow her to view “the lovely island” (Moodie, *RB* 19): he lays claim to the land, she

84

Moodie describes landing on Grosse Isle as “put[ting] my foot upon the soil of the new world for the first time” (19).

merely visits it. The juxtaposition of his arrival with her departure deepens this difference, reinforcing the impression that the colony is not, as Moodie writes in the chapter's concluding sentence, "the land of all [the Moodies'] hopes" (*RB* 22), but of the hopes of the Irishman and men like him. This foreshadows the marginalization the Moodies will experience in the bush, a marginalization that will be in no small part due to their inability to compete with the lower class settlers around them. The image of the Moodies pulling away from Grosse Isle as the Irishman enthusiastically celebrates his arrival confirms his immediate dominance of the scene and his future dominance of the development of the colony, and positions him as both a short-term and a long-term threat to the Moodies in particular and the gentility in general.

However "gigantic," however rebellious, however potentially productive and however threatening the Irishman may be, he is nevertheless appropriated to conceptual and narrative structures that profit Moodie instead of him. Rather than allowing the Herculean figure to interrupt the scene, and to dominate it and the future of the colony, Moodie mitigates his effect and undermines his power by appropriating him to regimes of genteel textual pleasure: the very same characteristics that make the Irishman disconcerting make him ridiculous, and Moodie manages the threat he poses by transforming him into the object of genteel ridicule. As with any confident and enthusiastic statement, the Irishman's declaration may be either forceful or ridiculous, and Moodie works to push it towards the latter. In fact, immediately upon introducing him, she begins to undermine the Irishman and turn him into a rather nasty joke about the overweening aspirations of the poor and dispossessed. The joke turns on the disjunction between the role to which the man lays claim and his ability to live up to the genteel ideal of the gentleman. She draws attention to the ragged attire that leaves him nearly naked. She compares his celebratory "bound[ing] and caper[ing]" to that of a "wild goat" (Moodie, *RB* 22), and she emphasizes the thickness of his dialect. In particular, she has him garble the word gentleman, pronouncing it "jontlemen" (Moodie, *RB* 22). This is the most important word in his declaration, the last word he utters and the conclusion to his appearance in the text, and it leaves the impression that he is both powerful and laughable

or, rather, laughable because his power is so thoroughly undermined by his lack of polish. It is possible to imagine that the Irishman will become a “jontleman,” but the idea that any man who says “jontleman” will ever be a gentleman is, from Moodie’s perspective and that of any reader who shared her class affiliation, ridiculous.

The disjunction between what the Irishman wants to be and what he can be is further deepened by Moodie’s construction of him as a racial caricature. By drawing attention to the man’s Irishness, Moodie identifies him as one of the bugbears of the English middle class: the impoverished Irish labourer who was both flocking to the colonies and flooding England labour markets, supplanting English workers and threatening to unravel the fabric of English society. The identification of the gigantic Irishman with this racialized type increases the distance between his social position and that of the gentleman, making his claim to that identity all the more ridiculous. If the idea of a poor Englishman becoming a gentleman is laughable, then the thought of an impoverished Irishman managing a similar improvement in his social position is doubly so.

This is one of the many moments in *Roughing It* when Moodie clearly and rather strictly delineates the type of reader she has in mind for her text. The ideal reader of the passage describing the Irishman, the reader who is capable of responding most sensitively and comprehensively to the passage’s complex mixture of fearfulness and humour, is a reader not unlike Moodie herself – that is, a “person . . . of respectable connections, or of any station or position in the world,” an “educated person . . . accustomed to the refinements and luxuries of European society” (Moodie, *RB* 9) who identifies him or herself with the English gentility and shares Moodie’s prejudices against the working-classes and the Irish. For such a reader, the passage begins with shock and fear when the Irishman leaps ashore and then dispels these emotions by transforming the initially disconcerting giant into a comic figure. In a scant handful of sentences, the passage evokes two pleasurable extremities of response: fear, which is pleasurable because its object is contained, circumscribed and constrained by the text itself, and laughter (or, at least, humour) that follows the fear and dispenses with it in a cathartic release. To the

extent that this passage evokes both or either of these responses, it affiliates the reader with Moodie and, more generally, with the genteel values that inform the description of the Irishman. Moodie thus reduces him to the object of the reader's pleasure, and, by turning him to these purposes, she recuperates the threatening giant to regimes of genteel textual pleasure that benefit her as a writer. She transforms his manifest and serious challenge to her and to the gentility into the core of one of the book's many engaging sketches, smoothly integrating the potentially disruptive Irishman into the material of a narrative meant to instruct and, as she says in the closing sentences of her introduction,⁸⁵ to amuse its presumably genteel readers.

II

Jontlemen Making a Nation of Gentlemen: Imagining the Development of a Genteel Country

In addition to mitigating the threat posed by the Irishman by positioning him as a productive element of *Roughing It*, an element that works to affirm, rather than undermine, the reader's affiliation with the gentility, Moodie incorporates him into a narrative of national development that benefits her as much or more than it does him, and, most important, confirms the social value of the genteel values around which her identity is constituted. Moodie puts the structure that accomplishes this incorporation into place in her Introduction, well before the Irishman makes his appearance. As seen earlier, she notes the success of lower-class pioneers and the essential contribution they make to the development of "a great and rising country" (Moodie, *RB* 11). These comments amount to an explicit, if regretful and slightly bitter, acknowledgement that the development in

85

After stating the goal of her "simple sketches" is to "endeavour to portray . . . [w]hat the Backwoods of Canada are to the industrious and ever-to-be-honoured sons of poverty, and what they are to the refined and accomplished gentleman," she expresses her desire to make *Roughing It* "as amusing as possible" (Moodie, *RB* 11). Clearly, she wanted the book to be both illustrative and pleasurable.

Canada of a society comparable to that of England will be effected primarily by the labour of able-bodied lower-class men rather than by the work of genteel emigrants. When Moodie makes this acknowledgement, she both defines the labour of lower-class men as the engine driving the development of the nation, and merges their productive bodies with the body of the emerging country. In a clever adaptation of the conventional anthropomorphization of the state, Moodie asserts that the bodies of men whose “arm[s] . . . wholesome labour from infancy has made strong . . . form the bones and sinews of [the] great and rising country” (*RB* 11). The potentially threatening productivity of the bodies of lower-class men becomes the condition for their objectification as they are transformed into the constituent parts out of which the body of the new nation is built. Moodie’s choice of body parts is instructive. The lower-class men make up the “bones” and “sinews,” but not the brain or the heart – that is, Moodie’s figure constructs them as essential parts of the social body, but not the governing parts of that body. The labour of the lower-classes becomes the condition of their objectification *and* the agent of the production of a society in which they are subordinated to an authority other than their own, a society in which they are not the rulers. The remainder of the Introduction (including the poem at its end) expands on this pattern, neatly anticipating the appearance of the gigantic Irishman and, specifically, working to neutralize his impressive and threatening physicality by integrating it into a narrative of societal development.

The passage in which Moodie acknowledges the value of the labour of lower-class men also suggests that the triumphant national future she envisions will be one defined by genteel values. The lower-classes are “advanc[ing] civilization,” indicating that the “great and rising country” whose rise they effect with their labour will be the antithesis of the savagery and barbarism that characterizes the crowd on Grosse Isle, and, at least in Moodie’s eyes, the lower-classes in general. What is more, to the extent that throughout *Roughing It* Moodie persistently and stubbornly identifies civility and civilization with the gentility and the values that define that class, her use of the conventional image of the pioneer advancing civilization constructs the emerging nation as a society that is commensurate with her own values, with values that affirm the importance and social

significance of her identity. Thus Moodie responds to the disturbing fact that it is the lower-classes rather than the gentility who prosper in the colony by recuperating their success and subsequent prosperity to a narrative of national development that reaffirms genteel values.

Moodie's predictions in her Introduction to the first edition of the book had begun to fulfill themselves by the time of the 1871 edition, for which Moodie wrote a new Introduction in which she confirms that the emerging nation is defined by genteel values. She observes that "[a] young Canadian gentleman is as well educated as any of his compeers across the big water, and contrasts very favourably with them," that Canadian women are beautiful and well mannered, and that great "advance[s] in the arts and sciences, and in the literature of the country have been made during the last few years" (Moodie, 1871 Introduction 349, 350). The labour of lower-class emigrants has produced a society defined by the manners, decorum, education and aesthetic sensibility characteristic of the gentility. For Moodie, post-Confederation Canada may be built on the labour of men like the Irishman, but it is most definitely a society of gentlemen, not of "jontlemen." Whether Moodie's 1871 assessment of Canadian society is accurate (her judgements tend to be coloured by obvious biases, and her rosy portrait of the new nation is certainly debatable) is secondary, in the context of this argument, to the fact that nearly twenty years after the first edition of *Roughing It* and almost forty years after her arrival in the colony, she confirms the denouement of a narrative of national development that compensates for her initial marginalization by making her values the values of a nation whose "progress . . . is unprecedented in the history of older nations" and whose people "must, before the close of the century, become a great and prosperous people, bearing their own flag, and enjoying their own nationality" (Moodie, 1871 Introduction 350, 350-1).

The handful of sentences in the Introduction to the first edition of *Roughing It* that link the productivity of lower-class labour to the emergence of a nation defined by genteel values amount to a rationalization or ordering of the social disorder that Moodie encounters in the colony. This ordering has an aesthetic dimension. The restoration of

genteel values and an ordered society is paralleled by Moodie's deployment of conventional literary figures. The passage begins by invoking a providential view of a world governed by the will of "[t]he Great Father of . . . souls [who] knows" (11), but this is a disordered providence for it rewards the lower-classes rather than the gentility. The tension, here, between providential order and the breakdown of the social structures that dictate that the accomplishments of the gentility should exceed those of their social inferiors reflects the tension which animates *Roughing It*, namely the tension between Moodie's expectations and the environments (both social and natural) in which she finds herself. This invocation of the providential nature of lower-class productivity is an example of masculine writing's passage through the other in order to articulate a profitable return to the centre of authority. Moodie recognizes the a priori, God-given value of the most threatening aspect of the lower-class other (an other, as already shown, which she sees as more other to her than Native Peoples), but she does so in order to appropriate this other to a system which affirms the superiority of genteel values, which affirms what is for Moodie the centre of cultural authority. Her identification of the productivity of lower-class labour with God's will begins the recuperation of this, from her perspective, socially disruptive productivity to an ordered system, even if it is one that excludes her and her class. The passage moves from this tension to its resolution in a vision of an emerging ordered society produced by lower-class labour. This society and its emergence are represented by the shopworn, slightly modified, but still readily recognizable images of the body of the rising nation and the forward movement of the frontier clearing the way for civilization. Thus the restoration of an ordered society is paralleled by deeply and recognizably conventional language: Moodie implicitly equates aesthetic and social conventions. This suggests that there is a role for aesthetics to play in the management of the recalcitrant bodies of lower-class men. To the extent that the familiarity of the language Moodie uses colours the assessment of the "great and rising country" (*RB* 11), this passage enacts an aesthetic recuperation of the socially disruptive lower-classes to regimes of genteel value.

The pattern of recognizing the value of lower-class labour in order to insert it into

the narrative of the production of a society defined by genteel values is repeated in the poem that concludes Moodie's Introduction. In "Canada," Moodie shifts from mourning the sufferings of genteel emigrants to enthusiastically and unreservedly celebrating the "future glory" of the emerging nation and praising the invaluable contribution of "Brave [lower-class] peasants" (*RB* 12, 13) to this future. Moodie celebrates the labour of the lower-classes in the understanding that it effects the production of a virtuous society defined by its "British mother's spirit" (*RB* 12) – that is, by laws, justice, civility and genteel values. Moodie ventriloquizes Canada as she (Moodie genders the nation female) welcomes impoverished emigrants to her shores:

Joy, to the sons of want, who groan
 In lands that cannot feed their own;
 And seek, in stern, determined mood,
 Homes in the land of lake and wood,
 And leave their hearts' young hopes behind,
 Friends in this distant world to find;
 Led by that God, who from his throne
 Regards the poor man's stifled moan.
 Like one awaken'd from the dead,
 The peasant lifts his drooping head,
 Nerves his strong heart and sun-burnt hand,
 To win a portion of the land,
 That glooms before him far and wide
 In frowning woods and surging tide
 No more oppress'd, no more a slave,
 Here freedom dwells beyond the wave. (*RB* 13)

The apostrophe "Joy" (the fourth repetition of this apostrophe in "Canada") that opens this verse paragraph is both celebratory and, in the light of the Introduction that the poem closes, poignant. The colony offers joy to the lower-classes, but Moodie has made it emphatically clear that to the gentility it offers only misery. However, by including this repeated apostrophe in one of her own poems, she disrupts the strict distinction between lower-class success and genteel tragedy that structures her initial assessment of the prospects of the varying classes of colonists. The voice that apostrophizes the impoverished colonist is that of Canada, but Canada as ventriloquized by Moodie. Thus Moodie positions herself as the mediator between the productive lower-classes and the

colony: in her role as poet, she articulates the voice of the rising country as it speaks to the “sons of want” (Moodie, *RB* 13) and charts its future course. She inhabits and speaks for the entity whose denial of her value and significance she laments at length in the prose section of her Introduction. Whereas the first part of the Introduction emphasizes the exclusion of Moodie and the other members of the gentility from the “great and rising country” (Moodie, *RB* 11), “Canada” reinserts her into the social structures of the country as a sort of literary executor of the nation’s⁸⁶ emerging corporate identity who, by dint of the education and aesthetic sensibility which are part of her genteel identity,⁸⁷ speaks for the nation, celebrates the nation and outlines the nation’s future.

In this capacity, repeating a gesture she made in the prose section of her Introduction, she again associates the production of the new country by lower-class labour with providence, observing that these emigrants are “Led by that God, who from His throne / Regards the poor man’s stifled moan” (Moodie, *RB* 13). She draws attention to the hardy bodies of these lower-class men, pointing out that these “peasant[s]” “[n]erve . . . [their]strong heart[s] and sun-burnt hand[s] / To win a portion of the land” (Moodie, *RB* 13). Here, because of the Introduction’s persistent emphasis on the physicality of lower-class men, “strong heart” refers both to the affective and the bodily strength of the emigrants, conjoining the two in a compact phrase that expresses the connection between physical hardiness and hopefulness that was a fact of life for both lower-class and genteel emigrants, and that is so forcefully embodied by the gigantic Irishman with aspirations to match his physique. This connection is further highlighted by Moodie’s use of “to nerve,”

86

In Moodie’s Introduction and throughout *Roughing It*, she uses “nation” and “country” interchangeably and I have followed her in treating the two as synonyms when discussing her work.

87

This is not to say that all genteel settlers were writers. Clearly, they were not; however, the gentility was a writing class. Moreover, a basic level of literacy and a capacity for aesthetic judgement and appreciation, if not for aesthetic production, were key elements of the genteel identity, elements which were all the more significant in the colony where they served to distinguish the gentility from the lower-classes.

a word which refers as a verb to an affective action and as a noun to a part of the body. In the following line she casts the action of pioneering as “win[ning] a portion of the land” (Moodie, *RB* 13), confirming the importance of physicality and hardiness by presenting settlement as a contest. The lower-class emigrants win their livelihood (a livelihood they could not win in Europe) and, with their livelihood, their freedom. “No more oppress’d,” Moodie exclaims, “no more a slave, / Here freedom dwells beyond the wave” (*RB* 13). Indeed, in contrast to the prose section of the Introduction’s emphatic and lengthy assertion that the bush is for genteel emigrants what Moodie will later call a “prison-house,” “Canada” is an exuberant celebration of the “Joy” (*RB* 330, 13) and the liberty to be found by lower-class emigrants in the colony.

Moodie’s refusal in “Canada” to undermine this liberation of the lower-classes by associating it with American republicanism deepens the contrast between the two sections of the Introduction. In the Introduction proper, Moodie includes the uppity servants among her long list of obstacles to the success of genteel emigrants in the colony: “Nor will such persons [members of, in Moodie’s words, the “higher class”] submit cheerfully to the saucy familiarity of servants, who, republicans in spirit, think themselves as good as their employers” (*RB* 11). Here, the tendency towards disobedience and misbehaviour of servants in the colony is cast not as an irritant that is all the more irritating for marking a clear difference between the colony and the homeland,⁸⁸ but as the most dire threat

88

What Moodie calls “saucy familiarity” (*RB* 11) and casts in a negative light throughout *Roughing it in the Bush* was, probably, in most cases, far from the extremities of disrespect and disobedience that she describes. Rather, her negative characterization reflects, at least in part, of her own negative response to the increased sense of self-worth and bargaining power of help in the colony. The English labour market was glutted with cheap labour which meant that employers could underpay servants, treat them with little or no respect, and exploit a loyalty that often had more to do with fear than dedication. In the Canadas, however, labour was consistently the scarcest commodity and the balance of power between employer and employee was tilted in favour of the employee: servants could demand premium wages and other concessions, confident in the fact that it was easier to meet their demands than replace them. In other words, what Moodie so strenuously and consistently disapproves of is the so-called poor behaviour of her helps that is an effect of a shift in market economics which disadvantages her and allows those

imaginable to British society. More specifically, this sentence associates lower-class aspiration (in this case, the desire not so much to better oneself as to be treated with dignity and respect regardless of one's class affiliation or present position) with the violent disruption of the class stratification that is, in Moodie's view, an essential element of Britishness, and the foundation of Moodie's own genteel identity. Whereas the Introduction casts the liberation of the lower-classes as a dire threat to British sovereignty and the continued existence of British colonies in the New World, "Canada" celebrates this liberation as an unequivocal good. In the poem, Moodie wholeheartedly and unreservedly praises the ability of the poor peasants of Europe not just to lift themselves out of poverty but to make their fortunes and to transform themselves into "Lords of the rich, abundant soil" (*RB* 13) in the colony:

Like one awaken'd from the dead,
The peasant lifts his drooping head,
Nerves his strong heart and sun-burnt hand,
To win a portion of the land,
...
No more oppress'd, no more a slave,
Here freedom dwells beyond the wave. (*RB* 13)

These lines invert the opposition established by Moodie's discussion of Canadian servants in her Introduction, where the colony is a site of defeat for the gentility, a brutalizing prison to which they are consigned by circumstances and the false promises of pamphleteers, and the increased freedom of servants (freedom to demand higher wages and better treatment, and to choose their employers) is presented as a fundamental threat to British society. In "Canada," Europe is the site of imprisonment and the poem celebrates the rise of the lower-classes. Moodie generously recognizes the plight of the European working-classes, acknowledging their oppression and likening it to slavery.⁸⁹ In

beneath her to more legitimately view themselves as human beings rather than as objects.

⁸⁹

Moodie's ambivalent attitude towards the lower-classes, her conflicting tendencies towards genuine pity and sympathy on the one hand, and towards self-protective fear and peremptory condemnation on the other are characteristic of a conservatism which

the light of this acknowledgement, the colony becomes a site of genuine, just and deserved liberation, rather than of republican rebellion. This more or less exact inversion of value has two causes.

First, the shift in perspective between the Introduction and the poem drastically effects their tone and their assessment of the lower-classes. In the Introduction, Moodie writes from her own perspective – that is, from the perspective of a member of a class of disappointed and largely unsuccessful settlers. “Canada” is, first and foremost, a nationalist encomium or a poem in praise of the nation.⁹⁰ This is a highly conventional poem, and it is not surprising that Moodie would include one in *Roughing It*, giving it pride of place as the first poem in the volume: Moodie’s pessimistic view of the prospects of the gentility in the colony could not cancel out her deeply ingrained and powerfully felt patriotism, a patriotism whose effects would include prodding her to praise the colony at least in so far as it forms a part of the British Empire and reflects the values of England.⁹¹ Significantly, the position that Moodie must assume as the speaker of “Canada” is similar to that of the enthusiastic lower-class emigrant and the poem is written in a voice that is more articulate than that of the gigantic Irishman but shares his hopefulness and aspiration. This adds an additional layer to Moodie’s role as a mediator. She speaks, as already observed, for the country itself and, in addition, for the lower-classes who will find success there. However, she does so within a generic context that mitigates the threat posed to the gentility by an inhospitable land and the inappropriate success of lower-class settlers by placing the colony and its most successful settlers in the service of the genteel

emphasized the value both of maintaining the traditional social order *and* of ameliorating the lot of the least privileged. Moodie shared this conservatism with popular intellectuals like Thomas Carlyle.

⁹⁰

“Canada” begins with Moodie apostrophizing the nation – “Canada, the blest – the free!” (*RB* 13) – and it is not until the fourth stanza that she adopts the voice of the nation’s guardian angel, the voice she will speak in for the rest of the poem.

⁹¹

In fact, Moodie explicitly bases her praise for Canada and her vision of its “future glory” (*RB* 13) on the colony’s inheritance of its “British mother’s spirit” (*RB* 13).

ideal of nationalism and a characteristically genteel belief in the goodness and superiority of the British Empire. In a sophisticated strategic manoeuvre that, after asserting her marginalization in the Introduction, re-situates Moodie in a position of mastery, of discursive dominance and textual authority, what are otherwise threats to British society in the New World become the basis for an effusive expression of nationalism and British imperialism. The negative aspects of the colony that Moodie initially bemoans become a means for affirming her importance, for supporting genteel values, and, most significantly, for stimulating the patriotic sentiments of her genteel readers. Thus, much as she does with the gigantic Irishman, in “Canada,” Moodie recuperates the threatening success of lower-class settlers to genteel pleasure.

Second, if “Canada” appropriates lower-class success to the excitement of the patriotic sentiments of Moodie’s genteel readership, it does so by envisioning the development of the colony as a process culminating in the establishment of a country defined by genteel, British values – that is, in a genteel nation produced, paradoxically, by the labour of lower-class emigrants. As already observed, Moodie begins her encomium by emphasizing Canada’s *future* glory:

Canada, the blest – the free!
 With prophetic glance, I see
 Visions of thy future glory,
 Giving to the world’s great story
 A page with mighty meaning fraught,
 That asks a wider range of thought.
 Bourne onwards on the wings of Time,
 I trace thy future course sublime;
 And feel my anxious lot grow bright,
 While musing on thy glorious sight,–
 Yea, my heart leaps up with glee
 To hail thy noble destiny!

Even now thy sons inherit
 All thy British mother’s spirit. (RB 12)

Significantly, the emphasis here is on the colony’s future rather than its present greatness. Moodie sees “[w]ith *prophetic* glance . . . [v]isions of [Canada’s] *future* glory” (Moodie,

RB 13, emphasis added). She observes the burgeoning country “[b]ourne *onward* on the wings of Time” and “trace[s] [its] *future* course sublime” (Moodie, *RB* 12, emphasis added). It is the emphasis on the anticipated but as of yet unachieved sublimity of the colony that in part accounts for the difference in tone between “Canada” and the prose section of the Introduction. Whereas the prose passage that precedes “Canada” is firmly rooted in the immediate circumstances of its writing and reflects the bitterness and frustration of a genteel woman who has escaped the bush but who has yet to be fully accepted into the society of Upper Canada or to find economic success that is commensurate with her class affiliation, the poem looks towards a future moment when the country will finally be hospitable to Moodie, a moment whose contemplation lifts her spirits, dispels her bitterness, and causes her present “anxious lot [to] grow bright” (Moodie, *RB* 12). If, as the prose section of the Introduction makes abundantly clear, Moodie is not yet finding comfort or fulfilment in Canada, the positive tone of “Canada” is based on her anticipation of a time when the presently alien and threatening colony will finally become her home.

Crucially, Moodie’s positive forecast of the colony’s future is directly linked to the development of Canada in the image of Britain. After a first stanza that emphasizes the “glory,” “sublim[ity]” (Moodie, *RB* 12) and nobility of the future nation, Moodie immediately links her hopeful projection to a present connection between Canada and England: “Even now thy sons inherit / All thy British mother’s spirit” (*RB* 12). This couplet’s opening subordinate clause – “Even now” – at once acknowledges the sad state of the colony at the moment and re-conceives the imperfections on which Moodie dwells in the prose section of the Introduction as the foundation of Canada’s future preeminence. In fact, this acknowledgement of the flawed present has the effect of casting the development of Canada in the image of Britain as an inevitability: if, “even now,” when the country’s servants are “republican in spirit,” Canada’s “sons inherit / All [their] British mother’s spirit” (Moodie, *RB* 12, 11, 12), how can the new nation not develop in the image of its European antecedent? This is reinforced by the fact that, unlike many of the other couplets in the poem, the two lines of this couplet are of exactly the same

length⁹² and exactly the same rhythm, and form a complete end-stopped sentence. The couplet makes up a complete unit whose two halves are exact mirrors of each other. Moreover, the content of the couplet is neatly divided between the two lines: the first line deals with Canada and the second with Britain. Thus the couplet functions as a stylistic analogue for the relationship between Britain and Canada, and reinforces the inevitability of Canada developing in the image of Britain. It is the inevitability of Canada's inheritance of its defining qualities from Britain that allows Moodie to take a positive view of the colony, that stimulates the patriotic sentiments of the book's genteel English readership, that structures "Canada" itself, and that revalues the success of lower-class settlers by defining their triumphs as a productive contribution to the development in Canada of a culture defined by genteel values.

If "Canada" begins with a quick, "prophetic glance" (Moodie, *RB* 12) towards the colony's glorious future and the association of that future with what is at present being inherited by the Canadian populous, the poem concludes with a longer, more detailed look at the future towards which Moodie initially glanced, and a confirmation of the bond between Canada and Britain:

"Joy, to thy unborn sons, for they
 Shall hail a brighter, purer day;
 When peace and Christian brotherhood
 Shall form a stronger tie than blood –
 And commerce, freed from tax and chain,
 Shall build a bridge o'er earth and main;
 And man shall prize the wealth of mind,
 The greatest blessing to mankind;
 True Christians, both in word and deed,
 Ready in virtue's cause to bleed,
 Against a world combined to stand,
 And guard the honour of the land. (Moodie, *RB* 14)

The Canada of the future will be characterized by "peace and Christian brotherhood" that will form bonds that are "stronger . . . than blood" or stronger than the sectarian, political,

⁹²

Although the majority of the lines in the poem are eight syllables in length, there are a number of seven and nine syllable lines.

ethnic and racial identities that were the source of much of the conflict in early Canada.⁹³ This connection of an achieved national community with the elimination of sectarian divisions anticipates G. Mercer Adam's valorization of Sir John A. Macdonald's capacity to overcome the partisanship plaguing Canadian politics.⁹⁴ Moodie, however, goes far beyond envisioning a peaceable and united national community.

She associates the "peace and Christian brotherhood" (Moodie, *RB* 14) that characterize her idealized Canada of the future with a firm link between the colony and Britain. The last stanza of "Canada" consists of two sentences. The second sentence is a two line couplet that joyfully anticipates the realization of what Moodie has glimpsed with her "prophetic glance" (Moodie, *RB* 12). This first sentence, which is quoted in full above, is twelve lines long and is divided by semicolons into four separate grammatical units. The couplet under discussion is the first half of the second grammatical unit of the sentence and is linked by a dash to the lines "And commerce, freed from tax and chain, / Shall build a bridge o'er earth and main" (Moodie, *RB* 14). This dash does several things. First, it divides the two couplets, allowing one to read "When peace and Christian brotherhood / Shall form a stronger tie than blood" (Moodie, *RB* 14), as done above, as a description of a peaceable Canadian community. It is possible to read the "tie" of the first couplet as a version of the "bridge" of the second couplet and thus view both couplets as referring to the strengthening of bonds between Canada and Britain. However, the placement of the dash between the couplets, rather than a comma, introduces a substantial

93

Moodie had, at least, two notable experiences of the fragmentation and often violent divisiveness of Canadian culture. Although she was deep in the bush and, consequently, removed from the immediate action, she was, nevertheless, a keen and engaged observer of the Upper Canada rebellion and wrote a number of patriotic poems in support of the government. Additionally, as the Sheriff of Belleville, Moodie's husband was in the unenviable position of being caught between warring Liberal and Conservative factions, a circumstance that made the job exceedingly frustrating and the post far less attractive than it otherwise would have been.

94

See the discussion of Adam's Edition of Joseph Edmund Collins's *Canada's Patriot Statesman* in the first chapter.

degree of uncertainty into what, exactly, the “tie” of the first couplet binds, and allows it to be seen as referring to the resolution of the deep and anxiety-inducing class conflicts that Moodie dwells on in the prose section of the introduction. “[P]eace and Christian brotherhood” (Moodie, *RB* 14) are, after all, the most obvious and most obviously utopian alternative to the divisive, atomizing and dangerous republicanism that she emphasized in the first part of the Introduction. Second, at one and the same time that the dash divides the couplets, it connects them, maintaining a closer relationship between them than would a semicolon. The dash associates “peace and Christian brotherhood” with an economic conduit connecting Canada and England or with a “bridge [of commerce] o’er earth and main” (14), making it abundantly clear that Moodie understands that Canada’s future prosperity will be built on the foundation of a strong and mutually beneficial economic bond with England. Taken together, this economic bond and the “peace and Christian brotherhood” (Moodie, *RB* 14) of the preceding couplet combine peace, prosperity and good government into a utopian social vision of a united and prosperous British Empire. In other words, Moodie does not merely see the Canada of the future as deeply connected to Britain, she sees it as embedded in and embodying distinctly British social, economic and cultural principles. Her Canada will be firmly linked to England because it will have developed in the image of its mother country within an imperial system that is British in origin and form. Canada will, in short, have “inherit[ed] / All [its] British mother’s spirit” (Moodie, *RB* 12).

As well as imagining Canada as a nation defined by British values and social structures, Moodie highlights the essentially genteel character of these values. Immediately after associating the future nation with peace and prosperity, Moodie declares that the coming generations of Canadians will place tremendous value on intellectual accomplishments or, as Moodie puts it, that they will “prize the wealth of mind, / The greatest blessing to mankind” (Moodie, *RB* 14). This is perhaps the most blatant, hopeful but misguided, instance of compensatory wish fulfilment in all of *Roughing It*. Moodie is, in effect, saying that the country will come to prize the very attributes that distinguish her and her fellow genteel emigrants from the lower-class

settlers who are, at the moment, eclipsing them. For Moodie, “[W]ealth of mind” is distinctly characteristic of upper- and middle-class emigrants who were a reading and writing class. Throughout *Roughing It*, Moodie consistently separates genteel emigrants from lower-class emigrants along educational and intellectual lines. In her eyes, the gentility are intelligent, literate, educated and rational, and the lower-class emigrants are uncouth, illiterate and uneducated: the genteel emigrants are bodies with minds; the lower-class emigrants are merely bodies. She links class to intellectual and linguistic competence so consistently and insistently as to make it impossible to read the closing stanza of “Canada” as pointing to anything less than a utopian national future defined by genteel values. The Canada to come will be a British nation *and* a genteel one. What is more, in Moodie’s hopeful but unrealistic version of the future, it will be a nation particularly predisposed to prize the labours of writers such as herself.

As well as duplicating the Introduction’s representation of the emerging nation as both firmly British and even more firmly genteel, “Canada” echoes the Introduction’s suggestion that the emergence of the new nation has an aesthetic dimension. In the Introduction, Moodie uses the commonplace tropes of advancing civilization and the body of the nation to describe the emergence of the new nation, associating the forthcoming polity with a set of easily recognizable aesthetic conventions. The emphasis the final stanza of “Canada” places on “the wealth of mind” (Moodie, *RB* 14) or intellectual and aesthetic accomplishment suggests that the poem follows the Introduction in seeing the emergence of the nation as an aesthetic as well as a communal/political apotheosis. This suggestion is confirmed by “Canada’s” structure or, rather, by its imminent structure.

On initial inspection, the structure of the poem may seem somewhat loose, even haphazard. “Canada” consists of seven stanzas of varying lengths. Although it is written in rhyming couplets, the lines vary in length from seven to ten syllables and shift between iambic and trochaic rhythms without any immediately apparent rationale. The poem’s couplets resemble nothing less than incomplete or imperfect heroic couplets. Indeed, to the extent that the poem is a nationalist encomium dedicated to celebrating the nation’s positive aspects and describing its future apotheosis, it is difficult to read Moodie’s

couplets without thinking of the form which they so closely, if imperfectly/incompletely, resemble and which was conventionally associated with exactly the sort of epic content that makes up “Canada’s” subject matter. This connection between “Canada” and the heroic couplet is further substantiated by two separate elements of the poem. First, the final stanza’s invocation of peace and prosperity places “Canada” in a tradition of poems, including Thomas Cary’s *Abram’s Plains*, that, as has been seen, link the couplet (primarily the heroic couplet) with an achieved, peaceable and prosperous society. Second, the poem’s only ten syllable line is a command spoken by the nation’s “guardian angel” (Moodie, *RB* 13) for the earth to celebrate the nation’s emergence. The angel decrees: “Let her [the earth] joy in a mighty nation’s birth” (Moodie, *RB* 13). Thus “Canada” most closely approaches the heroic couplet at the moment when its content most closely approaches that of the heroic couplet in general and, more specifically, the heroic couplet as it had been used in “Canada.” At least in its structure, “Canada” gives the impression of being unfinished. It is poised between closed and open form, leaning sharply towards, but not finally manifesting a consistent closed form. The poem’s unfinished quality establishes an homology between its structure and its content. “Canada” is situated in *medias res*: it locates itself in the midst of the nation’s development, standing neither with “those hardy sires who bore / The day’s first heat” at the foundation of the nation nor with the “Christian brotherhood” (Moodie, *RB* 13, 14) that will emerge when the nation reaches its full maturity. “Canada” and Moodie, as its narrator, stand at a midway point between the nation’s foundation and its apotheosis, meditating on its origins and anticipating its full emergence, and the incomplete form of the poem reflects this position: both “Canada” and Canada are on their way to but have not yet arrived at their fruition.

As well as mirroring Canada’s incompleteness, “Canada” formally replicates the movement of the nation towards its completion. Across its full length, the poem consistently moves from formal confusion and irregularity to a formal regularity that

comes closer and close to, but does not arrive at, the heroic couplet.⁹⁵ Although the poem's rhythm shifts back and forth from trochaic to iambic, it does so consistently. When the lines are not roughly iambic, they tend to begin with a trochee or a spondee and end with one or more iambs, and, over the course of many of its lines, the poem shifts from a trochaic to an iambic rhythm. Consider, for instance, the lines immediately following "Canada's" only ten syllable line:

/ / x / x / x / (1 spondee; 3 iambs)
Night from the land has passed away,

x / x / x / x / (4 iambs)
The desert basks in noon of day.

/ x x / x / x / (1 trochee; 3 iambs)
Joy, to the sullen wilderness,

/ / x / x / x / (1 spondee; 3 iambs)
I come, her gloomy shades to bless,

x / x / x / x / (4 iambs)
To bid the bear and wild-cat yield

x / x / x / x / (4 iambs)
Their savage haunts to town and field.

/ x / / x / x / (1 trochee; 1 spondee; 2 iambs)
Joy, to stout hearts and willing hands,

/ x x / x / / / (1 trochee, 2 iambs; 1 spondee)

95

The one exception to this is the single ten syllable line in the poem which it is possible to read as half an heroic couplet. As the moment when the nation's guardian angel calls the earth to celebrate "a mighty nation's birth" (Moodie, *RB* 13), this line is also the moment in "Canada" when the completed nation is most fully manifest. The fact that the nation is "mighty" suggests its maturity and works, together with the length of this line, to give the impression that the achieved nation has emerged in the poem's present. It is, however, a fleeting impression, a momentary glimpse of the triumphant future that cannot be maintained in the context of the poem's consistent characterization of the nation as not yet fully realized.

That win a right to these broad lands,

x / x / x / x / (4 iambs)
And reap the fruit of honest toil,

/ x x / x / x / (1 trochee; 3 iambs)
Lords of the rich abundant soil.

These ten lines are typical of the poem. Of them, four (the second, fifth, sixth, and ninth) are four foot iambic lines and the rest are less regular. The eighth line consists of one trochee and two iambs followed by a spondee. The seventh line is made up of one trochee, a spondee and then two iambs. And four of the ten lines (the first, third, fourth and tenth) begin with either a trochee or a spondee that is then followed by three iambic feet. Thus the prevailing rhythm of the passage is iambic, but the poem consistently deviates from this rhythm, and, when it does deviate, it tends to do so in lines that begin with a deviation (a trochee or a spondee) and then resolve themselves into an iambic pattern. In other words, “Canada’s” metre is iambic, its rhythm deviates from and returns to this metre, and this deviation and return is consistently enacted across the length of a line. As the variation from this pattern in this passage shows, this is not the case for all of the lines, but, despite occasional variations, it is the prevailing rhythmic pattern of the poem.

The movement that can be seen in individual lines towards a formal regularity that recalls the heroic couplet also occurs across the poem as a whole. Just as the rhythm of “Canada” varies consistently, so, too, does the line length change according to a rough pattern. The lines vary from seven to ten syllables in length, although the majority of them are seven or eight syllables. All of the short or seven syllable lines come in the first four stanzas of the poem. In fact, the variation in line length is, with the exception of one nine syllable line in the second last stanza, confined to the first four stanzas of the poem. These stanzas contain all of “Canada’s” seven syllable lines, all but one of its nine syllable lines and its sole ten syllable line. In effect, the line length becomes consistently more regular and longer in the last three stanzas of the poem. In both individual lines and over the poem as a whole, “Canada” consistently enacts a movement from deviation and disorder to order and conformity, rhythmically replicating the development of the nation

from its rude, chaotic beginnings to an achieved, genteel maturity, from “the strife of tongues” (Moodie, *RB* 20) on Grosse Isle to the measured, rational prose of men and women like Moodie, and giving the reader a subtle sense of progressing, just as Moodie sees the nation progressing, towards greater expansiveness and orderliness.

Significantly, the shift towards regularity of the line length in “Canada” occurs immediately after the poem’s only ten syllable line. From this point on, there is only one deviation from the eight syllable, four foot line, and that is a nine syllable line in the poem’s second last stanza – a negligible variation in the context of iambic tetrameter. As previously noted, the poem’s first and only ten syllable line is a triumphal announcement of the Canadian nation’s birth. It is also the second line in a couplet that begins the enthusiastic apostrophication of the nation by this angel that makes up the remainder of the poem: “‘Joy,’ she cried [the nation’s guardian angel], ‘to th’ untill’d earth, / Let her joy in a mighty nation’s birth,—” (Moodie, *RB* 13). The growth and regulation of the individual lines of the poem that gives the reader a sense of progressing towards greater expansiveness and orderliness thus appears as a response to the announcement of the Canadian nation’s birth and as reflection of the nation’s guardian angel’s vision of the apotheosis of the nation. In establishing this connection between the apotheosis of the nation and the formal apotheosis of the poem, Moodie makes it clear that the achieved nation has an essential aesthetic dimension, and that the process of its achievement is, at least in part, one of aesthetic perfection. Crucially, this process of perfection is one that both includes and erases lower-class men like the gigantic Irishman.

In “Canada,” the process of national development consists of the more general perfection of the national community and the more specific perfection of national manhood. Moodie celebrates the ability of lower-class emigrants to throw off the constraints of English society and markedly improve their lot in the colony. However, in embracing what the colony has to offer they are implicated in a narrative of national development that defines them, exploits them, transforms them, and, finally, relegates them to a marginal position within the achieved national community. The second last stanza begins with a celebration of the lower-class labourers who made important and

necessary contributions to the early stages of the nation's development:

“Joy, to those hardy sires who bore
 The day's first heat – their toils are o'er;
 Rude fathers of this rising land,
 Theirs was a mission truly grand. (Moodie, *RB* 13)

Moodie's characterization of these men as “Rude fathers” neatly conjoins their two defining characteristics: their primitiveness, or lack of genteel polish exemplified by the adjective “Rude;” and, their status as the invaluable originators or “fathers” of the nation. They are thus positioned as both essential to the nation's development and posterior to its apotheosis. They are relegated to the nation's past, to, in a phrase, “The day's first heat;” which is to say, they are excluded from the nation's future perfection. This is confirmed by Moodie's direct statement that their work is done or that “their toils are o'er,” and her use of the past tense in the final line of the preceding citation. What is more, Moodie specifically focuses on the descendants of these men, rather than on the “Rude fathers” themselves, as the beneficiaries of the labour of the first “Brave peasants . . . [who] reclaim[ed] the stubborn sod” (*RB* 13). “Well they perform'd their task,” Moodie writes, “and won / Altar and hearth for the *woodman's son*” (*RB* 13, emphasis added). The remainder of the stanza consists of an anticipation of the apotheosis of the nation for which the nation's “Rude fathers” have laid the foundation, but from which they are excluded:

Joy, to Canada's unborn heirs,
 A deathless heritage is theirs;
 For, sway'd by wise and holy laws,
 Its voice shall aid the world's great cause,
 Shall plead the rights of man, and claim
 For humble worth an honest name;
 Shall show the peasant-born can be,
 When call'd to action, great and free.
 Like fire, within the flint conceal'd,
 By stern necessity reveal'd,
 Kindles to life the stupid sod,
 Images of perfect man and God. (Moodie, *RB* 13-14)

The relegation of Canada's “Rude fathers” to the nation's earliest developmental stages is

reinforced by a change in the object of the nation's guardian angel's apostrophe from the "hardy sires" (Moodie, *RB* 13) of early settlement to "Canada's unborn heirs" (Moodie, *RB* 13). As well as shifting from the nation's past to its future, and firmly dividing the former from the latter, these lines imagine the apotheosis of the nation as, in part, the perfection of national manhood, as the perfection of "Canada's unborn heirs." This perfection is significant for two reasons. First, it occurs as a result of Canadian men being "sway'd by wise and holy laws" – that is, national manhood is perfected through its submission to a regulatory authority that allows the nation to "claim / For humble worth an honest name." Moodie's characterization of this authority as "wise and holy" aligns it with the genteel future she envisions in the following stanza, where she hopefully declares that the achieved national community "shall prize the wealth of mind / The greatest blessing to mankind" (Moodie, *RB* 14). Moreover, this concatenation of intellectual achievement and divine sanction is more or less directly anticipated by the "wise and holy laws" that she sees guiding the development of national manhood. Thus Canadian national manhood will be perfected through its submission to a genteel regulatory authority. Second, the perfection of national manhood consists of a developmental movement away from the nation's and national manhood's lower-class origins. Notably, both of her direct references to this developmental movement emphasize the transition from a lower-class origin to a superior, implicitly higher class/form of manhood. Those of "humble worth" achieve "an honest name." The adjective "honest" reads as an oblique reference to what Moodie sees as the dishonesty of many of the lower-class settlers she encounters, and, when viewed from the perspective of the book that follows, suggests a small but not inconsiderable improvement in Canadian society. As well as achieving "an honest name," "the peasant-born" will become "great and free." Here again is Moodie's generous (particularly generous given how restrictive and disabling pioneering was for her) recognition of the liberation that poor settlers find in the colony. What is more, this recognition is paired with the even more generous prognostication that lower-class settlers will not merely be "honest," not merely achieve a legitimate place in polite, respectable society, but they will be "great." In both cases, this transition involves transcending the

original state of the nation's manhood, ceasing, in effect, to be "humble" "peasant[s]." Consequently, the men who contribute to the nation's development are transformed by that development, alienated from prior selves that are excluded from the achieved nation.

Most important, the end result of this developmental movement is an aesthetic as well as a national apotheosis. The striking image that makes up the final four lines of the stanza presents this development as igniting fire with flint or, in effect, drawing light from darkness. This constitutes an intensification of the strict division between the men of the nation's origins and the men of its future apotheosis, but, at the very same time, it maintains a productive relationship between the two. The image effectively and cleverly insulates the achieved nation from its origins without violating or disrupting the narrative of its development. This incendiary developmental process "[k]indles to life the stupid sod" or ignites the "humble" "peasant[s]" of the nation's origins, and culminates in "[i]mages of perfect man and God" (Moodie, *RB* 14). The utopian phrase "perfect man" makes it explicitly clear that the development Moodie imagines is not just a transformation, not just an improvement, but it is a process of perfection whereby the imperfect early settlers will be made "perfect." What is more, the perfection of the national manhood culminates in "Images," casting this process as an aesthetic one or, at the very least, as a process whose conclusion is aesthetic. The men of Canada do not merely develop from "humble" origins to "great[ness]," but, as they do so, they also progress from "flint[y]" ugliness to "Images" of fiery beauty. Thus the aesthetic dimension of Moodie's vision of national development suggested by the implicit connection established between the apotheosis of the nation and the formal apotheosis of the poem is made explicit in the second last stanza of the poem. In effect, Moodie proffers the following equation between the nation, manhood and beauty: the development of the nation is equivalent to the development of the national manhood and both are processes of beautification. It hardly needs saying, this complex of developmental connections includes lower-class men at the early stages of development but excludes them from the later. One need only look to the gigantic Irishman to confirm this. As well as being gigantic, threatening, rebellious, hardy, and productive, he is

distinctly ugly. He has a “tattered great-coat” (Moodie, *RB* 22). His legs are “red,” and, most telling, he is likened to a “wild goat” (Moodie, *RB* 22). This comparison highlights his primitiveness – moreover, his brutishness – but it also stands as an example of the convention of comparing ugly men to goats. The Irishman will make important, even essential, contributions to building the nation, but it is patently obvious that, with his goat-like capering and inelegant ejaculations, he will never be the “[i]mage. . . of perfect man” (Moodie, *RB* 14). He will contribute to the achievement of Moodie’s aesthetic, nationalist vision, but he will be excluded from its apotheosis.

Even before he appears, Moodie has put in place the discursive structures necessary to manage the threat posed by the Irishman’s body, to manage his fearful proportions and redirect them towards a comforting productivity. The Irishman’s productivity becomes comforting because it is appropriated to a vision of national development that is fundamentally informed by Moodie’s genteel values, and the Irishman’s challenge to Moodie’s identity is transformed into a confirmation of that identity, specifically, of the continuing social and national value of that identity. Moreover, Moodie’s management of the Irishman’s aggressive masculine body highlights the significant aesthetic dimension of the management of the aggressive masculine body in early Canadian literature. In particular, *Roughing It* foregrounds the important role writing plays in this management. Moodie’s conclusion to her emigrant trilogy, *Flora Lyndsay*, picks up on this aspect of *Roughing It*, and adds additional layers of complexity to it.

Chapter 5:

“What [She Did] to While Away the Lagging Hours”: Managing the Aggressive
 Masculine Body in Susanna Moodie’s *Flora Lyndsay*

Published in 1854, two years after *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852), and a year after *Life in the Clearings Versus the Bush* (1853), *Flora Lyndsay: or, Passages in an Eventful Life* is the third and final book in Susanna Moodie’s emigrant trilogy. Although *Flora Lyndsay*’s position as the third of three books that together chart Moodie’s emigration to Canada, and her lengthy, difficult, and only partially complete reconciliation to colonial society may seem unproblematic, its relationship to the two books that precede it is anything but uncomplicated. Most obviously, *Flora Lyndsay* deviates from *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings* by being fiction, albeit fiction grounded in fact, rather than non-fiction: the first two books in the trilogy are autobiography whereas the third is an autobiographical novel. The most important, although by no means the only, effect of this shift from non-fiction to fiction is the division of Moodie, the narrator/protagonist of *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings*, into Moodie, the narrator of *Flora Lyndsay*, and Flora Lyndsay, the novel’s fictional protagonist and eponymous character. This division affords Moodie a unique opportunity to objectify her own writing process, and to position the novel as a commentary on the production of the preceding two books in particular, and as a commentary on Moodie as a writer in general. However, this is not the only additional level of complexity *Flora Lyndsay* adds to the trilogy. The content of *Flora Lyndsay* is such that it effectively brackets the other two books, serving double duty as both the trilogy’s opening and its closing book. *Flora Lyndsay* consists of a thinly veiled fictional account of Moodie’s own experiences from the moment she and her husband decide to emigrate up until right before the family lands in Lower Canada. The novel’s material thus precedes that of the other two books and *Flora Lyndsay* serves as a sort of extended preview of or prequel to *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings*; however, the novel also reflects the fact that it was published after those two books. By focussing and intensifying the themes of the non-fiction works that precede it

within a literary framework that allows Moodie to comment quite directly on the production of those works, *Flora Lyndsay* provides a thematic summation of and meditation on the first two books typical of the third and final work in a trilogy. Moodie's novel is effectively two books in one: it is both the introduction and the conclusion, both the beginning and the ending of her emigrant trilogy.

Given the complex and important position the novel occupies, it is hardly surprising that *Flora Lyndsay*'s episodic, digressive and superficially fragmentary structure is unified by a set of related and readily identifiable interests: Moodie's own deep anxieties about her social position and the fate of her gentility, anxieties that are mirrored more or less exactly by Flora Lyndsay and that colour the depiction of nearly every secondary character in the novel; the recognition that gentility itself is threatened by a combination of the failures of members of the upper and middle classes to live up to the values that define their social position, and the inappropriate aspirations of members of the lower-classes, in particular physically imposing, lower-class men; and, finally, the attempt to salve these anxieties and respond to this recognition through managing the aggressive, lower-class masculine body by inserting it into textual structures designed for the production of genteel, readerly pleasure.

These interests find their clearest, most comprehensive and most suggestive expression in a narrative within the narrative. Two thirds of the way through the novel, after Flora and her husband have said their goodbyes, travelled to Scotland and from there taken ship to Lower Canada, when their vessel is becalmed off Newfoundland, Flora staves off boredom by writing a gothic tale titled "Noah Cotton," which Moodie "give[s] to [her] readers, as a literary curiosity" (*FL* 215) in its entirety so that it makes up the better part of the final third of the novel. Although "Noah Cotton" is an unexpected and an unexpectedly lengthy digression, it is not at odds with the novel in which it is embedded. Flora's story serves as a thematic coda for the book, condensing the class anxieties that permeate her life (not to mention the novel to which she gives her name) into a tale of aspiration, murder and contrition in which the aggressive, lower-class and powerful masculine body of the story's protagonist is appropriated for the amusement of

the story's emphatically genteel writer. More than providing light amusement to the becalmed writer, "Noah Cotton" is the literary mechanism by which Flora stabilizes her own, genteel identity by confirming her capacity to manage the aggressive, lower-class masculine bodies that are the most obvious and immediate threat to that identity. The story is the means by which Flora assuages the anxieties inflamed by her own inability to maintain her social position in England, and the uncertain future she faces in the colony. Flora's story also looks towards the beginning of *Roughing It in the Bush* and Moodie's own arrival in the colony, albeit from two different directions. In the context of *Flora Lyndsay's* position in the emigrant trilogy, "Noah Cotton" looks back to Moodie's management of the aggressive masculine body in the early chapters of *Roughing It in the Bush*. In the context of its position in the narrative of Moodie's emigration, it looks forward to her landing at Grosse Isle, anticipating the Herculean Irishman discussed at length in the preceding chapter and erecting a sort of preemptive, aesthetic defense against the threat he poses to her identity. If, in Moodie's duplicitously breezy phrase, "Noah Cotton" is "What [Flora] d[oes] to while away the lagging hours" (*FL* 215), it is also and no less "What [she] d[oes] to [secure her self]."

I

Too Genteel for Trade, Too Mercenary to be Genteel: Flora and John Lyndsay's Vulgar Doubles

With the book's opening sentences, Moodie makes it abundantly clear that *Flora Lyndsay's* subject is class anxiety and, in particular, the anxiety that results from the precarious economic (and social)⁹⁶ position of genteel men and women like Flora and her

⁹⁶

As the opening conversation of *Flora Lyndsay* indicates, in the context of the novel, economic prosperity (or lack thereof) and social position are effectively interchangeable: the Lyndsay's poverty threatens their genteel status, and their failure to make a living adequate to their social position calls into question the value and sustainability of the class identity to which they subscribe.

husband:

“Flora, have you forgotten the talk we had about emigration, the morning before our marriage?” was a question rather suddenly put to his young wife by Lieutenant Lyndsay, as he paused in his walk to and fro in the room. The fact is, that he had been pondering over that conversation for the last hour.

It had long been forgotten by his wife; who, seated upon the sofa with a young infant of three years old in her lap, was calmly watching its sleeping face with inexpressible delight. She now left of her maternal studies; and looked up at her husband, with an inquiring glance –

“Why do you ask, dear John?”

“Are you turned Quaker, Flora, that you cannot give a *direct* answer?”

“I have not forgotten it. But we have been so happy ever since, that I have never given it a second thought. What put it into your head just now?”

“That child – and thinking how I could provide for her in any other way.”

(*FL* 5)

The book thus begins with a coming to consciousness, specifically with Flora coming, under the effect of her husband’s pointed reminder, to the consciousness of her and her family’s untenable economic position. Two aspects of the beginning of what is a chapter long conversation between her and her husband are of particular significance. First, John frames their situation in the direst terms by casting doubt on his ability to provide the basic necessities of life for his expanding family. He answers Flora’s objections that their daughter “cannot add much to [their] expenses” by pointing out that “the little pet will in time grow into a tall girl; and other little pets may be treading upon her footsteps; and they must all be clothed, and fed, and educated” (Moodie, *FL* 5). The third term in this list of requirements is not a basic necessity of life but a basic necessity of genteel life, implying that the issue is not their survival in England but their survival as members of genteel, which is to say, of polite, “educated”⁹⁷ society. Second, this coming to consciousness takes the form of a sudden transition from the blissful fulfilment of domestic ignorance to the immediate, anxious confrontation of want. In effect, John’s question forces what can legitimately be called an apocalyptic revelation on Flora, a

97

John’s addition of education to food and clothing may reflect Moodie’s own experiences. Her father’s fortune had failed by the time she was of school age and her educational opportunities were narrowly constrained by her family’s relative poverty.

revelation that signals the end of one order of life and the beginning of another, a revelation that is as traumatic as it is abrupt. The position of this scene at the beginning of the novel suggests its importance for what follows, and, indeed, this traumatic coming to consciousness reverberates across the entire narrative, charging nearly every scene, nearly every interaction, nearly every character with the discomfiting energy of Flora's class anxiety.

Consider, for example, the two characters who appear immediately after John reminds her that emigration is an unavoidable necessity. Flora's visitors, Captain Kitson and Mrs. Ready, respectively embody the two focal points of Flora's anxiety: the failure of members of the middle and upper classes to behave according to the dictates of their social positions, and the inappropriate aspirations of members of the lower-classes to class identities to which they are neither suited by background or character, nor entitled. Both successful social climbers who have achieved their successes through means that are incommensurate with the Lyndsay's genteel mores, Kitson and Ready highlight the Lyndsay's inability to maintain a socio-economic standing commensurate with their gentility, and drive home the necessity of their emigration by suggesting that the Lyndsays can only maintain their social position in England by compromising their genteel values. The pair confirm the substance of Flora's apocalyptic revelation. What is more, Kitson and Ready respectively double John and Flora. As negative reflections of the Lyndsays, the Captain and the socialite underscore the couple's individual failings, and emerge as two of the most galling, most immediate, and most revealing objects of the class anxiety that permeates the narrative.

Kitson is the Lyndsay's landlord and neighbour. Moodie describes him as "a brave uneducated man, who, during the war, had risen from before the mast to the rank of Post Captain" (*FL* 16). His military career allows him the opportunity of taking up a social position relatively equal to that of the Lyndsay's, but the Captain's behaviour has barred him from joining the ranks of polite society. "At the advanced age of eighty," Moodie writes, "he retained all his original ignorance and vulgarity; and was never admitted into the society which his rank in the service entitled him to claim" (*FL* 16).

Kitson's failure to adopt genteel standards of behaviour is particularly notable because it occurs in the context of the contrast between John's inability to maintain his family's socio-economic position, and Kitson's own economic and social success. The fact that the Lieutenant is a renter whereas the Captain is a property owner speaks to their relative prosperity. Indeed, despite his "uneducated" beginnings and his "ignorance and vulgarity" (Moodie, *FL* 16), Kitson is comfortably well off, and, most important, has been able to provide for his expansive, multi-generational family.

Moodie explains the secret to Kitson's financial success:

The restless activity which in the vigour of manhood had rendered him a useful and enterprising seaman, was now displayed in the most ridiculous interference in his own domestic affairs, and those of his neighbours . . . while his habits were so penurious, that he would stoop to any meanness to gain a trifling pecuniary advantage for himself or his family.

He speculated largely in old ropes, condemned boats and sea tackle of all descriptions, whilst as consul for the port, he had many opportunities of purchasing wrecks of the sea, and the damaged cargoes of foreign vessels, at a cheap rate; and not a stone was left unturned by old Kitson, if by the turning a copper could be secured. (*FL* 16-17)

Kitson has achieved prosperity through an assiduous (one might just as easily say, obsessive), cupidinous materialism that is fundamentally at odds with the Lyndsay's genteel values. The sole preoccupation of Kitson's life is "turning a copper." He is "in trade," and this disqualifies him from the ranks of genteel society – a fact made all the more obvious by the contrast between his acquisitiveness, and the genteel disregard for money and profit demonstrated by Flora's happy submersion in maternal ignorance and her husband's refusal to disrupt that ignorance for three years. Not only is Kitson "in trade," but he happily "stoop[s] to" the lowliest, most humiliating means to "turn . . . a copper": he has made himself a prosperous man by playing the part of the beggar or the lowliest rag merchant, trading happily in the trash and castoffs of his social inferiors. To drive home the unsuitability of Kitson's actions to his social position, Moodie ties them to his low class origins and his professional life as a seaman, and then, to make the point painfully clear, explains how he profits from funerals: "Not a funeral could take place in the town, without Kitson calling upon the bereaved family, and offering his services on

the mournful occasion, securing to himself by this simple manoever, an abundant supply of black silk cravats and kid gloves” (FL 17). Although Kitson is happy to exploit members of the community on a day-to-day basis as well as in their times of tragedy, he is not an evil or a selfish man, for his object is always “to gain a trifling pecuniary advantage for *himself* or *his family*” (FL 16, emphasis added). He is motivated by the same paternal love that lies behind John’s worries about clothing, feeding, and educating his children. In short, the two men desire the same ends, but differ sharply on what they consider acceptable means.

This difference determines the relative ability of Kitson and John to achieve their ends. Although his behaviour violates the strictures of polite society, it has allowed Kitson to insert his children into the institutions characteristic of a genteel upbringing, effectively raising up his descendants as he raised himself up:

“Never lose anything, my dear, for the want of *asking*,” he would say. “A refusal breaks no bones, and there is always a chance of getting what you ask.”

Acting upon this principle, he had begged favours of all the great men in power; and had solicited the interest of every influential person who had visited the town, during the bathing season, for the last twenty years, on his behalf. His favorite maxim, practically carried out, had been very successful. He had obtained, for the mere trouble of asking, commissions in the army and navy for all his sons, and got all his grandsons comfortably placed in the Greenwich or Christ Church schools. (Moodie, FL 17)

At the same time that it expands the scope of Kitson’s accomplishments, this passage intensifies and deepens the impropriety that accompanies them. Specifically, Moodie makes it clear that Kitson has achieved his ends at the expense of genteel norms of behaviour. Kitson’s “favorite maxim” shows that he is either unacquainted with the genteel emotions of shame and embarrassment (emotions that, incidently, feature significantly in Flora’s affective repertoire) or callously refuses to allow these feelings to modulate his behaviour. Moreover, Kitson’s willingness to approach strangers on vacation to ask them favours in combination with his tendency to barge in on Flora and ask her inappropriately personal questions demonstrates that he has little or no respect for those cardinal values of polite society, privacy and decorum. In fact, this aspect of

Kitson's behaviour looks forwards or backwards (referencing or anticipating, depending on where one places the novel) to the aggressive violation of Moodie's privacy by many of the lower-class settlers she encounters in the colony. What is more, as the worst offenders in *Roughing It in the Bush* are identified as Americans, usually want to "borrow" something from Moodie, and pair their intrusions with criticisms of her pretensions or assertions of their own equality, Kitson's requests are in line with a characteristically republican and particularly aggressive disdain for the English class system. Finally, Moodie's phrase "he had *begged* favours" (*FL* 17, emphasis added) frames Kitson, at least behaviourally, as a beggar, a position that is at once at odds with the Captain's prosperity and the social rank his naval service has earned him.

If the passage just quoted provides the greatest contrast between Kitson and the Lyndsay's behaviour, it also sets the Captain up as the inverse or dark reflection of Flora's husband. Both men are defined by their military service, and both share the desire to provide for their family, but their respective abilities to realize this desire are markedly different. On the one hand, John recognizes the impossibility of adequately educating his children in England. On the other, Kitson has quite handily managed to have "all his grandsons comfortably placed in the Greenwich or Christ Church schools" (Moodie, *FL* 17), two respectable and emphatically genteel educational institutions in which the Lyndsays would be presumably pleased to place their own children. The fact that Kitson has achieved this feat through behaviour that is deeply antithetical to the character of the genteel lieutenant points to the socio-economic catch-22 in which the Lyndsays are trapped and from which they can only escape through emigration: in order to maintain their genteel identity in England, the Lyndsays would have to engage in behaviour that would be utterly antithetical to that identity, that would cancel out the very identity they sought to maintain, and that would effectively empty "gentility" of meaning for them. If the Lyndsays are to remain in their homeland, John must become a version of Kitson – a transformation to which neither of the Lyndsays can reconcile themselves. Kitson is thus both a diverting bit of comic relief, and a character whose portrayal is carefully calculated to substantiate and multiply the class anxiety that afflicts Flora and pervades the novel.

Mrs. Ready plays a similar role in the text, although in her case the emphasis is on inappropriate aspirations rather than on a disjunction between behaviour and social status.

Ready is a wealthy woman who, despite being from the lower-classes, is determined to establish herself as one of the leading ladies of the village. Her treatment of her acquaintance with Flora as a step towards achieving these aspirations is representative of the tendency of lower-class aspiration to strip members of the upper classes of their dignity, transforming them into the means for satisfying lower-class desires, into mere instruments of aspiration, into mere objects. “Mrs. Ready [was] the wife of a wealthy merchant,” Moodie explains, “who was apt to consider herself the great lady of the place” (*FL* 19). However, “Mrs. Ready was a low-born woman,” Moodie continues,

and Flora belonged to a very old and respectable family.⁹⁸ Mrs. Ready wished to rise a step higher in the social scale, and, thinking Flora might aid her ambitious views, she had, after the first calls of ceremony had been exchanged, clung to her with a pertinacity which all Mrs. Lyndsay’s efforts to free herself had been unable to shake off. (*FL* 19-20)

Attaching herself quite ferociously to Flora is only the latest, and, arguably, not even the most objectionable of Ready’s stratagems for advancing up the social order. Her marriage is one entirely of convenience, made specifically for the purposes of acquiring wealth and social standing:

Though living in the same house with her husband, whose third wife she was, they had long been separated, only meeting at their joyless meals. Mrs. Ready considered her husband a very stupid animal, and did not fail to make both him

⁹⁸

This sentence contains a particularly duplicitous bit of wish-fulfilment. As a fictional stand in for Moodie, the details of Flora’s life should match those of Moodie’s. However, Moodie did not come from “a very old and respectable family.” Although she grew up in a manor house befitting such a family, it was a house purchased by her father with the money he made working as a harbour manager, not their ancestral home. In other words, although Moodie’s character differs markedly from Ready’s, their backgrounds are much more similar than Moodie’s and Flora’s. In effect, what we see in this passage is Moodie endowing her fictional self with an equally fictional background that protects both Moodie and Flora against (in some regards, legitimate) accusations of having pretensions of their own.

and her friends acquainted with her opinion.

“There is a fate in these things,” she observed, “or you would never see a person of *my* superior intellects united to a creature like *that*.”

The world recognised a less important agency in the ill-starred union. Mrs. Ready was poor, and had already numbered thirty years, when she accepted the hand of her wealthy and despised partner. (Moodie, *FL* 20)

In other words, Ready’s relationship with Flora is part of a larger pattern of reducing others to the means to improve her own social position.

If Moodie sets up Kitson as a negative reflection of John, she establishes a similar dynamic between Flora and Ready. Immediately following the above passage, Moodie’s observation that Flora “almost adored her husband, and was a woman of simple habits and pretensions” (*FL* 20) directly contrasts Flora with Ready; however, the differences between the two extend beyond the happiness of their marriages and the extent of their pretensions. Their life trajectories are almost perfectly inverse, the one appearing as a nearly exact negative reflection of the other. As John and Flora’s opening exchange makes clear, Flora has married for love in the full knowledge that doing so is contrary to her economic interests and will eventually necessitate emigration. In contrast, Ready has made a calculated and mercenary decision to pursue wealth at the expense of love, and her marriage has allowed her not only to avoid an expedient like emigration, but also to take on a role of some importance in the community. The difference in the trajectory of their lives can, of course, be traced to their attitude towards their husbands. Flora sees John as a love object; Mrs. Ready sees Mr. Ready as a mere object. Flora sees John as an end in himself; Mrs. Ready sees Mr. Ready as an unpleasant means to a desirable end. John is indispensable to Flora, and Moodie implies that Mrs. Ready would happily dispense with Mr. Ready (although not his wealth) if she could. This contrast between Flora and Mrs. Ready is particularly disconcerting because of the affective context of Ready’s aspirational objectification of her social superiors. If Ready’s treatment of Flora as a means to an end is annoying to the extent that it produces in Flora “a decided aversion to the other, which . . . almost merges into hate” (Moodie, *FL* 19), her deep antipathy for her own husband marks the disturbing extent of Ready’s willingness to objectify those who

can improve her lot. Ready's marriage places this aspirational reduction of people to means at odds not only with the affective bonds of friendship but also with the bonds of marital love, with one of the pivotal genteel values, and thus with gentility itself.

Although Ready has laid claim to a genteel identity, her related claims to possess the attributes of that identity are a sham. In effect, Ready occupies the social position associated with a genteel identity, but has none of the values, talents, knowledge, social graces, or taste that make that identity meaningful, and socially valuable. Moodie judges Ready quite harshly, but the author is also careful to show that Ready's stratagems have met with considerable success. "Mrs. Ready," Moodie writes, "was a woman of great pretensions, and had acquired an influence among her own set by assuming a superiority to which, in reality, she had not the slightest claim" (*FL* 20). Ready has managed to elevate her social standing, at least among the limited circle of the village. Significantly, this elevation is exclusively a change in Ready's social standing and is not – Moodie is quite emphatic about this – accompanied by any change in the woman herself. In her self-appointed role as a "great lady," Ready is an imposter, a poor mimic who does not live up to any of her own "great pretensions":

She [Ready] considered herself a beauty – a wit – a person of extraordinary genius, and possessed of great literary taste. The knowledge of a few botanical names and scientific terms, which she sported on all occasions, had conferred upon her the title of a learned woman; while she talked with the greatest confidence of her acquirements. *Her* paintings – *her* music – *her* poetry, were words constantly in her mouth. A few wretched daubs, some miserable attempts at composition, and various pieces of music played without taste, and in shocking bad time, constituted all her claims to literary distinction. Her confident boasting had so imposed upon the good, credulous people among whom she moved, that they really believed her to be the talented being she pretended. (*FL* 20)

Here, the contrast between Ready's origins and her aspirations finds expression in a laughable discrepancy between what she claims to be capable of and her actual abilities. In this respect, Ready echoes the contrast between Kitson's social position and his behaviour. Her case, however, is the reverse of his: she pretends to a class to which she does not belong, whereas he behaves like a beggar when he could rightfully claim a position in genteel society. Among the many similarities between Ready and Kitson,

there is another deeply significant difference.

Although Kitson's behaviour is distinctly vulgar, to the extent that it has made him prosperous, and secured the futures of his children, not to mention his grandchildren, it is unarguably substantial, having real, meaningful, measurable, and lasting effects. In contrast, Ready does nothing more than sway the opinions of the "credulous people among whom she move[s]" (Moodie, *FL* 20), an effect that is momentary, passing and fundamentally insubstantial. It hardly needs to be said that, if Ready's loveless marriage has produced any children (Moodie never provides this information), her "great pretensions" (Moodie, *FL* 20) will leave them no legacy. However tenuous and fundamentally impermanent Ready's position as a "talented being" (Moodie, *FL* 20) may be, the method by which she establishes and secures her reputation is instructive. Ready has "claims to literary distinction" that she substantiates with examples of her supposed talents: "[a] few wretched daubs, some miserable attempts at composition, and various pieces of music" (Moodie, *FL* 20). Moodie's emphasis is on the poor quality of Ready's performances, but, also and just as importantly, on their limited number. Indeed, the discrepancy between the tangible examples Moodie lists and the "acquirements" Ready claims features as significantly in this passage as the discrepancy between Ready's "great pretensions" (Moodie, *FL* 20) and her capabilities. Although she claims to be a "learned woman," Ready possesses only "[t]he knowledge of a few botanical names and scientific terms," names and terms which she repeats incessantly, "sport[ing] [them] on all occasions" (Moodie, *FL* 20). Simply put, Ready constantly makes claims about her capabilities that she supports with the most minimal evidence. In fact, the passage highlights how in her case claiming a capability or acquirement has not so much eclipsed as almost entirely replaced demonstrating one: she "assum[es] a superiority," "she talk[s] with the greatest confidence of her acquirements," "[h]er paintings – her music – her poetry [are] words constantly in her mouth," and she is just as constantly "confident[ly] boasting" (Moodie, *FL* 20). That this is a successful strategy for social advancement and many "believe [Ready] to be the talented being she pretend[s]" (Moodie, *FL* 20) provides shocking (at least to the genuinely genteel Flora and Moodie) proof that, within the

context of social relations, talk and words have taken the place of substance. Moreover, Ready's social success makes the unpleasant point that, if Flora wants her gentility to be generally recognized and acknowledged, she must assert it through emphatic self-promotion, such as confident boasting, that is antithetical to the decorum and restraint that are central genteel values. Just as Kitson demonstrates that if John wants to maintain his socio-economic status he must compromise his genteel values, so does Ready show that if Flora wants to maintain her standing in the community she must violate genteel standards of behaviour. Together, John and Flora's vulgar doubles provide ample and galling evidence of exactly how unsuited the Lyndsay's genteel values are to maintaining an appropriate socio-economic status, and confirm the necessity of their emigration.

Ready's behaviour also establishes an important connection between language, social authority, and class identity. Ready is a creature of talk and words who controls her own social identity with "confident boasting," but this control extends to more than her own identity: "[a] person of very moderate abilities can be spiteful; and Mrs. Ready was so censorious, and said, when offended, such bitter things, that her neighbours tolerated her impertinence out of a weak fear, lest they might become the victims of her slanderous tongue" (Moodie, *FL* 20). Two aspects of this passage are particularly significant. First, Moodie links Ready's inappropriate aspiration to a higher class status to her willingness to engage in the social violence of censure and slander, making it absolutely clear that Ready is as dangerous as she is laughable. Second, Moodie emphasizes the importance of language in determining social relations, and specifically draws attention to the managerial capacity of language. Ready has not merely effectively claimed a genteel identity by saying loudly, repeatedly and in multiple ways that she is genteel, she has also used language to place herself in a position of significant social authority. It is thus not surprising that Flora's management of her own class anxieties – a management that amounts to an assertion of authority over her own identity and the social relations by which it is informed – takes the form of a linguistic expression.

(W)Righting Her World: Flora Lyndsay, Susanna Moodie, Class Anxiety, and the Aggressive Masculine Body

Together, the Lyndsay's opening conversation, Kitson, and Ready establish Flora's (and, one might justifiably add, Moodie's) class anxiety as the dominant theme of the novel and elaborate the particular form of her anxiety, outlining its origins and illustrating its salient features: the traumatic recognition that the Lyndsays do not have the economic means to preserve their social status in England; the failure of potential (if not actual) members of the gentility to behave according to the dictates of their social position, and the rewarding of their improper behaviour by the very systems that should condemn it and marginalize them; the corrosion of gentility by aspirational, aggressive and violent (if only socially violent) members of the lower-classes, a corrosion that is validated, rather than resisted, by society at large; and the reduction of members of the gentility to means, to instrumental objects by aspiring members of the lower-classes. All of these aspects of Flora's anxiety echo across the text, appearing in new and different social situations, and attaching themselves to new characters, but they find their most comprehensive, complex, and important articulation in the story Flora writes while becalmed off of Newfoundland.

Moodie's preemptive, slightly rueful and apologetic, description of "the character of the story [as] rather vapory" (*FL* 215) certainly applies to the gothic conventions on which "Noah Cotton" leans rather heavily (it might be said, too heavily, given the staggering number of improbable twists and turns packed into what is actually a fairly brief narrative), but is at odds with the story's reflection of the themes that resonate throughout the rest of the novel. Despite the shift in mode from realism to the gothic, "Noah Cotton" effectively presents the reader with a compacted and intensified – a condensed – representation of Flora's class anxieties that reflects the content of the rest of the novel in numerous ways. In this respect, at least, the story is anything but "vapory."

The lives of the widow Grimshaw, Noah's mother and the daughter of the Squire's niece speak to the inability of good, if not all genteel, people to preserve their socio-economic status in England. The Squire's condescension to both Noah and his mother,

condescension that in both cases has terrible consequences, echoes the failure of multiple characters in the novel to live up to the behavioural norms of their class identities. One could go so far as to establish a direct connection between Kitson's failure to live up to the class identity which he has a right to claim, and Carlos' compromising of his own genteel identity through lechery and drunkenness, sins that Moodie persistently aligns with the lower-classes in *Flora Lyndsay*.⁹⁹ If Kitson compromises himself by behaving like a beggar, like a member of the lowest class, Carlos does much the same, although with far less positive results. Sophy Grimshawe's unapologetic desire to marry for money rather than love, and her success in doing so, directly reproduces the key features of Ready's life story. One can also see something of Ready's aspiration in Noah's mother's infatuation with Carlos. However, by far the most problematically aspirational character in "Noah Cotton" is the story's eponymous character. His desire to marry the Squire's niece echoes the other inappropriate matches in both the novel and the story, and presents Noah's aspiration not as a matter of escaping from poverty, but as a basic and perverse unwillingness to accept his station in life. His murder of Carlos for the explicit purpose of improving his social position is a straightforward example of the social corrosiveness of lower-class aspiration. Functioning as a sort of limit case, it takes Ready's social violence and her practice of objectifying her social superiors to a terrifying extreme. These are only several of the most obvious reflections of the content of the novel in "Noah Cotton." The story may be "vapory," but its relationship to the rest of the book is impressively complex and rich with associations. "Noah Cotton," however, is much more than a mirror in which the rest of *Flora Lyndsay* is reflected.

Rather than merely reproducing the content of the novel in a condensed form, "Noah Cotton" filters it through Flora's class anxiety. If Flora's values are at odds with the events of her life and the lives of the people who surround her, in the story she writes

99

Moodie associates lechery and drunkenness with the disreputable and low class tavern in the same building as the widow Grimshawe's home. Thus Carlos' bad behaviour is implicitly likened to, anticipated and framed by the characteristically bad behaviour of low class ruffians.

she resolves this conflict by incorporating the objects of her anxiety into a narrative structure that reflects, enforces, and reinforces her values. If in *Flora Lyndsay* Flora is confronted by a world that is from her perspective disordered, in “Noah Cotton” she puts it back in order. The influence that Flora exerts on “Noah Cotton” as the story’s writer and narrator is reflected in the most obvious difference between the rest of the book and the story: in Flora’s life, the inappropriate behaviour of men and women like Kitson and Ready results in social and economic success; in Flora’s story, inappropriate behaviour inevitably and invariably produces tragic consequences. In the more extreme cases, the result of inappropriate behaviour is death. Carlos’ romantic condescension to Noah’s mother and his inappropriate encouragement of Noah directly contribute to his own demise. Noah’s attempt at social climbing leads to a crime that afflicts him with guilt that produces a nervous condition that causes his sudden and early death. Even in less extreme cases, characters are rewarded with misery. Sophy Grimshawe, for instance, very understandably wishes to escape poverty, and does so by marrying up, but her prosperity brings her only lasting misery and unhappiness:

Left in comfortable and even affluent circumstances (for the lawyer employed to wind up Noah Cotton’s affairs found that he had large sums invested in several banks, and all his property was willed to his wife), Sophy was no longer haunted by the dread of poverty, but she often was heard to say, with a sigh, that poverty, though a great evil, was not the greatest she had had to contend with; that much as she had in former days murmured over her humble lot while working for daily bread, she was far happier than in the possession of wealth that had been acquired by dishonest means, and which might emphatically be called *the wages of sin!* (Moodie, *FL* 314)

Exchanging an economic burden for a permanent emotional one is harsh punishment indeed for the crime of marrying a man she did not love, but whom she quickly came to love. To complete Moodie’s phrase, the characters in “Noah Cotton” are submitted to a value system that insists that “the wages of sin” are death or, at the very least, misery. But this is not the only way that Flora “orders” the world in “Noah Cotton.”

Although they are not the focus of the story, “Noah Cotton” contains several characters whose exemplary behaviour leads to positive outcomes. Most notably, the

daughter of Carlos' niece receives the 500 pounds stolen from Carlos by Noah. She is a genteel widow who has slipped from her socio-economic position, and the unexpected windfall allows her to travel to Lower Canada and achieve, in the colony, a social position commensurate with her origins and comportment. This tale of successful genteel emigration is quite obviously an instance of wish fulfilment on the part of Flora, and can even be read as a self-indulgent rewriting of her autobiography on the part of Moodie. In this brief subplot, Moodie can be glimpsed imagining what her own life might have been like had it taken a slightly different turn. Closing "Noah Cotton," the life-story of the most marginal of characters makes the important point that the logic of Flora's narrative is not exclusively punitive, rather the genteel writer is ready to reward good, genteel characters with fortune, and, most importantly, the preservation of their genteel identity. Moodie (via Flora) explains the fate of Carlos' niece's daughter's children in what is the last paragraph of Noah Cotton, and a fitting end to a story so thoroughly conditioned by the class anxiety of a genteel woman who is emigrating because of the inability of her and her husband to provide for their children: "[h]er eldest son is now a surgeon in good practice; her youngest a pious minister; her daughter the wife of a respectable merchant. In the hour of adversity, let us cling close to the Great Father, and he will not leave us without daily bread" (*FL* 316). This direct invocation of the belief that God will provide for the righteous comes at the end of a chapter titled "Trust in God." It compliments Flora's use of the biblical phrase "the wages of sin" (Moodie, *FL* 314) and effectively demonstrates that in "Noah Cotton" Flora is instituting a complete, alternative, divinely sanctioned value structure, rather than simply exacting a fictional vengeance on those who threaten her genteel identity.

The primary focus of Flora's "ordering" of the world in "Noah Cotton" is the aggressive masculine body, specifically, Noah's aggressive masculine body. As well as having a unique lineage, Noah has a remarkable physique; indeed, it is his body that facilitates his murder of Carlos, and it is on his body that the punishment for his crime is enacted. Noah is initially favoured by Carlos because, in addition to being the Squire's illegitimate son, he was in his youth "a pretty curly headed boy" (Moodie, *FL* 264). In

fact, Noah's appearance occasions comments from Carlos' friends. Noah describes a representative incident in his account of his life and crimes:

I remember one afternoon, when opening the gate for a large party of gentlemen, with the Squire at their head, that one of them tapped my cheek with his riding whip and exclaimed –

“By Jove! Carlos, that's a handsome boy.”

“Oh, yes,” said another; “the very picture of his father.”

And the Squire laughed, and they all laughed; and when I went back to the lodge, I showed my mother a handful of silver I had received. (Moodie, *FL* 264)

This scene establishes Noah's body as the locus of his preferment by members of the upper classes, of his sense of entitlement, and of his fixation on wealth as a means of raising his social status.¹⁰⁰ An argument could be made that the scene turns on Noah's resemblance to his father, but it also and no less suggests that this resemblance is significant because it goes hand in hand with Noah being “a handsome boy.” Noah's relationship with Carlos' niece confirms this suggestion and establishes the importance of Noah's body to his eventual transgression. “I had just completed my fourteenth year[,]” Noah writes, “and was tall and stout for my age. Whenever these young people [Carlos' niece and nephew] were at the Hall, I was dressed in my best clothes, and sent up every day to wait upon them” (Moodie, *FL* 266). This implies that it is Noah's appearance that makes him a suitable companion for his social superiors and lays the foundation for his infatuation with Carlos' niece. When remembering Noah's youthful declaration of love, the niece herself makes this connection between his appearance, Carlos' treatment of him, and his aspiration. Noah overhears her say to her younger brother:

¹⁰⁰

Noah himself makes this clear, explaining:

the alacrity which I displayed in waiting upon the Squire and his guests, never failed in securing a harvest of small coin, which gave me no small importance in the eyes of the lads in the village, who waited upon me with the same diligence that I did upon the Squire, in order, no doubt, to come in for a share of the spoil. Thus a love of acquiring without labor, and of obtaining admirers without any merit of my own, was early fostered in my heart, which led to a taste for fine dress and a boastful display of superiority, by no means consistent with my low birth and humble means” (Moodie, *FL* 264-65).

Oh, George, you know Uncle is not over-particular. An aristocrat with regard to his game, and any infringement on his rights on that score; but a perfect democrat in his familiarity with his domestics and tenants. He used to send Noah to play with us during the holidays. He was a beautiful, curly-headed lad; and we treated him with too much condescension, but it was Uncle's fault; he should have known that the boy was no companion for young people in our rank. This saucy, spoilt boy, had not only the impudence to fall in love with me, but to tell me so to my face. (Moodie, *FL* 272)

Thus the Squire's inappropriate condescension and Noah's equally inappropriate aspiration are conjoined by Noah's handsome appearance – that is, by his exceptional body.

As well as being remarkably good looking, Noah is “tall and stout” (Moodie, *FL* 266), which is to say physically imposing and powerful to boot. Moreover, he has a marked propensity for using his body to resolve conflicts with physical violence. In an early confrontation with Bill Martin, Martin insults Noah, accusing him of “pride and self-conceit” and declaring: “[m]y comrades are poor, but they aren't base-born sneaks like you” (Moodie, *FL* 268). Noah responds with violence: “[w]ith one blow I levelled him to the ground” (Moodie, *FL* 268). This establishes Noah's physical superiority and anticipates Martin's death as a result of Noah's actions. Most important, the scene links a propensity for physical violence to Noah's inaccurate sense of his own social status, connecting Noah's desire to be generally acknowledged as genteel to a willingness to respond to threats to that desire with violence that is as swift as it is inappropriate. And Noah's response *is* inappropriate. For, although he is being insulting, Martin's accusations are largely true. Noah is base-born, he is prideful, he is self-conceited and the murder of the Squire will soon prove how duplicitous he can be. In other words, Noah's body is implicated in both his inappropriate aspirations and the aggression that makes those aspirations so dangerous, so fundamentally socially corrosive.

Noah's preparations for the murder draw specific, repeated attention to his exceptional physical abilities. In order to establish an alibi for the crime and lure Martin to the scene of the murder so that Noah can frame him, Noah explains to several people in the village that he will have to miss an important cricket match in order to meet the Squire

and escort him safely home. The first of these exchanges, Noah's conversation with Martin's partner in crime, Adam Haws, is representative:

“Are you going to the cricket match tomorrow? [Haws asks Noah] The fellows of S— have challenged our fellows to a grand set-to on the common – ‘tis famous ground. The men of S— play well – but our bullies can beat them. I am told that you are the flash man of the F— club?”

“I love the sport – it is a fine, manly, old English game; I should like to go very well, and they expect me; but I have an engagement elsewhere.”

“You’ll have to put it off.”

“Impossible”

“But the honour of the club.”

“Must yield to duty. I promised to meet Mr. Carlos at the second avenue gate to-morrow night, at eleven o’clock.” (Moodie, *FL* 280)

Thus the scenes that lead up to the murder establish conclusively that Noah is a talented athlete, in Haws words “the flash man of the . . . club” or the star player on whom the club’s success depends. Although the reader never sees Noah play, the murder itself provides ample proof of his impressive physical abilities. After killing the Squire, Noah leaves the scene of the crime only to return immediately in order to catch Martin and his compatriots at the spot and frame them. Noah lays hold of Martin to prevent him from fleeing and the ensuing wrestling match demonstrates exactly how physically imposing Noah is: “Bill Martin struggled desperately in my grasp, but I held him fast. I was a strong, powerful man, and he was enfeebled by constant drunkenness and debauchery. I held him like fate” (Moodie, *FL* 287).

As well as demonstrating Noah’s strength and power, the contrast between him and Martin presents Noah as a particularly dangerous threat to the class structure, and the social order. Martin is a low class layabout, a republican recently returned from America and a petty criminal. As such, he is a blight on society and potentially a direct threat to it. However, the weakness his chosen life produces effectively negates his ability to threaten the social order. He is a sad and lamentable case, but not a particularly dangerous or fundamentally disruptive man. On the other hand, Noah’s physical strength is, in that very moment, allowing him to strike a serious blow – a blow of the sort it is doubtful Martin could conceive, and certain he could not carry out – against the social order and

evade suspicion, let alone punishment. There is, however, an even more troubling dimension to the scene. The ease with which the “powerful” Noah controls the “enfeebled” Martin, holding him until he can turn the weaker man over to the authorities, recalls countless similar scenes in Victorian literature in which an athletic gentleman physically dominates a weaker, debauched, lower-class man. The scene at once presents Noah’s strength as intensifying the threat he poses to the social order, and alludes to his inappropriate aspirations by showing him taking up a physical position typical of the nineteenth-century gentleman. Noah’s body is bound up with the origins of his crime, with the desires and aspirations that motivate it, and even more tightly bound up with the crime itself. Indeed, “Noah Cotton” could be characterized as a study in the youthful development and mature deployment of the aggressive masculine body.

Not surprisingly, there are substantial similarities between Noah, Wacousta and the Herculean Irishman from the beginning of *Roughing It in the Bush*. All three of their bodies draw the attention of those around them. Like Wacousta, Noah is physically attractive and occasionally appears as a sexual object. There is, for instance, more than a suggestion that Noah is being sexually objectified when Carlos’ niece, now grown up, sees him and remarks: “[i]t is a pity . . . that he is not a gentleman; he is a handsome, noble-looking peasant” (Moodie, *FL* 272). Additionally and most important, all three of them are physically powerful. Certainly, holding Martin is not as extraordinary a feat as scaling the flag pole of fort Detroit, nor does it match the feats of strength the Irishman is obviously capable of, but it is the most impressive feat of strength in “Noah Cotton,” and clearly establishes Noah as the most physically dominant figure in the story. There are, however, several signal differences between Wacousta and the Irishman, and Noah. The reader does not have access to the subjectivity of either Wacousta or the Irishman, but, through his manuscript, Moodie provides the reader with direct access to Noah’s interiority: Wacousta and the Irishman are pure or mere bodies, whereas Noah is a body with a heart and mind. Wacousta and the Irishman are objects, whereas Noah is a complete human being. Consequently, “Noah Cotton” may be characterized as a study in the psychology of the aggressive masculine body. This shift from pure body to complete

human being has the effect of humanizing Noah or making his aggressive masculine body less alien and less threatening. Moreover, the endowment of Noah with intellectual and affective complexity allows for the disciplinary management of his body, a management that, paradoxically, consists of his submission to a regulatory complex of rationality and affective response that is particularly genteel. Whereas Wacousta and the Irishman's lack of accessible interiority causes them to remain threatening, masculine bodies, Noah's endowment with an interiority that he unveils at length for the reader allows him to successfully assume a genteel identity. Noah's successful entry into the gentility results in Noah destroying himself through a process of self-recrimination that harrows his body, transforming it from an aggressive masculine body to a stricken, and, finally, a dead body.

Even before he commits the murder, Noah begins to suffer from "torturing thoughts" (Moodie, *FL* 283) and, under the influence of his mother's revelation that the Squire was his father, his mental distress only continues to grow. Noah's ceaseless "consciousness of [his] terrible guilt" (Moodie, *FL* 294) has numerous effects. It denies him any happiness he might get from successfully making the transition from low class man to gentleman, and prevents him from enjoying his prosperity. When Sophy meets him, Noah looks "unhappy" and his "dress [is] of the coarse manufacture generally adopted by the small yeoman or farmer, [although] his linen was fine and scrupulously clean" (Moodie, *FL* 43). Noah subscribes to the genteel ideal of cleanliness, but does not allow himself to dress the part of the prosperous gentleman that he in fact is; his guilt forces him to isolate himself from the very social circles that he aspired to join. After the murder, Noah immediately gives up his dream of marrying the Squire's niece, recognizing that he has "forfeited [his] own soul to obtain the smiles of one who would never be [his]" (Moodie, *FL* 298), relinquishes his position as the gamekeeper of the estate, and lives a quiet, retiring life. Two of the effects of Noah's guilt are particularly significant: it specifically distinguishes him from the other problematic characters in *Flora Lyndsay*, and it produces a nervous condition that withers his body and eventually kills him. Noah explains his affective response to his crime: "I became a prey to constant regret" (Moodie, *FL* 300). Noah assumes a self-critical and self-conscious attitude towards himself and his

actions; he judges and condemns himself. This is notable because his “constant regret” suggests that he has internalized the genteel values with which it is in line, and, moreover, because it is an affective response that neither the misbehaving genteel characters nor the inappropriately aspirational lower-class characters in the book ever show any signs of experiencing.

Consider, for example, Kitson and Ready. Although both engage in publicly objectionable behaviour, neither shows any sign that they have internalized the disapproval of those around them, and feel anything at all like shame, embarrassment or regret. It is, in fact, their apparent lack of self-criticism, self-doubt or any other self-regulatory response – their confident, undivided singularity of purpose – that distinguishes them from Flora, and that is the focus of much of her (and Moodie’s) disapproval. In this regard, Kitson and Ready’s responses to criticism are instructive. When Kitson attacks the value of the lecture on emigration that John has gone to attend, Flora responds by defending her husband and pointedly condemning the Captain’s meddling: “[m]y husband can judge for himself, Captain Kitson. He does not need the advice, or the interference of a third person,” said Flora, coloring again. And this time she felt really angry” (Moodie, *FL* 15). Kitson does not respond either to Flora’s explicitly critical words or to the flush that provides visible evidence of her anger and of the inappropriateness of his behaviour: “[t]o be sure – to be sure,” said her tormentor, without taking the smallest notice of her displeasure” (Moodie, *FL* 15). Kitson is so incapable of self-critical responses that he cannot or will not recognize the criticisms of others. What is more, in emphasizing Kitson’s emphatic unwillingness to give up his line of commentary, and characterizing him as Flora’s “tormentor,” Moodie frames his inability to be self-critical or self-regulatory as fundamentally aggressive and anti-social.

Flora’s confrontation with Ready follows a similar pattern. Like Kitson, Ready visits Flora to criticize her decision to emigrate, and, also like Kitson, she peppers the hapless protagonist with aggressive questions. Moodie describes Flora’s response: “[n]ow Flora was answering all these objections [objections that Ready is raising to Flora’s emigration] in her own mind; and, quite forgetful of Mrs. Ready’s presence, she

unconsciously uttered her thoughts aloud – ‘These may be evils, but we shall at least be spared the annoyance of disagreeable visitors’” (*FL* 24). Despite having “accidentally heard the truth” (Moodie, *FL* 24), Ready storms off, demonstrating an inability to recognize genuinely appropriate, if unlooked for and unexpected, criticism. What is more, the situation leaves Flora “astonished at her want of caution,” suggesting quite clearly that Ready will respond to the perceived offense with “her slanderous tongue” (Moodie, *FL* 24, 20) – which is to say, with social violence. Ready’s response bespeaks a refusal of self-regulation so adamant that self-regulation is inverted, turned outward towards the world, rather than inward towards the self, and takes the form of the regulatory policing of the behaviour of others in order to force that behaviour to accord with Ready’s own image of herself. Just as with Kitson, Ready’s refusal to accept criticism or to regulate herself is given a profoundly aggressive and anti-social cast. Misbehaving genteel characters and inappropriately aspirational lower-class characters are thus defined by their refusal to engage in either self-criticism or self-regulation, a refusal that is presented as fundamentally anti-social and specifically antithetical to genteel values. In contrast, the “constant regret” that plagues Noah suggests that he has accepted the value structure that defines gentility (something that, quite clearly, neither Kitson nor Ready have done or will do) and, moreover, actively applies those values to himself via an affective process of self-critical self-regulation.

As already stated, this process has its greatest or, at least, its most visible effect on Noah’s body. Noah’s guilt makes him prey to “dreadful epileptic fits” (Moodie, *FL* 299). When Noah enters the story, he does so in the full throes of one of these episodes, “writhing in convulsions and perfectly unconscious of his own identity, or of that of any person around him” (Moodie, *FL* 37). It is noteworthy that, given Noah’s crime was motivated by an exaggerated sense of self, the total loss of self-knowledge brought about by his fits is a strikingly appropriate punishment. The tailor in the tavern to which Noah has been brought sums up the physical transformation that his condition has produced: “[h]e was a very handsome young fellow in those days [the days of Noah’s youth] – tall, straight, and exceedingly well made; as elastic and supple as an eel, and was the best

cricket-player in the county. I don't know what can have come across Noah, that he looks so gaunt and thin, and is such an old man before his time" (Moodie, *FL* 241). This transformation takes the effect of the removal of all of the physical characteristics that influenced Noah's crime: his attractive appearance, his size and strength, and his athletic ability. Noah's loss of his youthful attributes is reinforced when Sophy inspects his appearance: "[h]is age exceeded forty. His raven hair, that curled in close masses round his high temples, was thickly sprinkled with grey; his sallow brow deeply furrowed, but the lines were not those produced by sorrow, but care. He looked ill and unhappy" (Moodie, *FL* 243). Needless to say, this sallow-browed, ill Noah is a far cry from the "very handsome" "flash man" (Moodie, *FL* 272, 280) who murdered the Squire. This self-regulatory harrowing of his body culminates in Noah's death.

After confessing his guilt, and telling Sophy where to find the 500 pounds he had stolen from the Squire and the manuscript detailing his life and his crime, Noah suffers the fit that kills him:

"I feel ill," he said in a faint voice; "these recollections make me so. There is a strange fluttering at my heart, as if a bird beat its wings within my breast. Sophy, my wife – my blessed wife! can this be death?"

Sophy screamed with terror, as he reeled suddenly forward, and fell to the ground at her feet. Her cries brought the jailer to her assistance. They raised the felon, and laid him on his bed; but life was extinct. The agitation of his mind had been too great for his exhausted frame. The criminal had died self-condemned under the arrows of remorse. (Moodie, *FL* 262-63)

The distinction between Noah's "mind" and his "frame" highlights the difference between Noah and other aggressive masculine bodies discussed in the preceding chapters, and makes absolutely clear the effect of his endowment with intellectual and affective complexity. The passage also clearly presents Noah's death as the result of guilt and self-regulation: Noah suffers from "remorse" and dies "self-condemned" by that "remorse."

It hardly needs to be said that Noah's death from "remorse" marks the climax or completion of Flora's ordering of the world in "Noah Cotton." It stands as an example of the discursive management of the most dangerous threat to Flora's (and Moodie's) genteel identity: the aggressive, lower-class masculine body. Although this process concludes

with the definitive and complete erasure of Noah's body, it arrives at this conclusion via Noah's incorporation into the gentility. As well as experiencing genteel affective responses, and having the property and wealth characteristic of that class, in his later, post-murder incarnation, Noah is so completely and ideally genteel that those "who call themselves gentlemen, might take pattern by him" (Moodie, *FL* 241). However, as the preceding discussion shows, it is Noah's achievement of this identity (it could be said, his perfection of this identity) that is the final undoing of both himself and the aggressive masculine body that allowed him to make the transition from low-class servant to gentleman in the first place. This paradox constitutes a compensatory or defensive re-imagining of gentility by Flora – a re-imagining that seems to directly answer the manifold challenges to her class identity presented by men like Kitson and women like Ready. Noah's life story makes the case that to realize the lower-class aspiration to become genteel is to enter an identity defined by the necessity for self-criticism and self-regulation, and the aspirational entrant into gentility is consequently immediately implicated in an agonistic process of self-destruction. Aspiration of the kind that Flora finds most threatening is thus self-abnegating; in Flora's account of violent attacks on genteel people and genteel values, the violence curves backwards on itself, terminating in self-annihilation. Within the confines of Flora's value structure and the logic of her story, this "ordering" of the disorder that confronts Flora in her life appears as a rational description of gentility; however, within the larger context of her experience, it constitutes a hopeful, but substance-less, fantasy. Neither Kitson nor Ready would behave as they do in Flora's fictional world, or not without incurring some fairly serious consequences, but they are in *Flora Lyndsay*, not "Noah Cotton."

Flora's treatment of class relations closely resembles that of Moodie in the opening chapters of *Roughing It in the Bush*. Just as Noah's entrance into the gentility results in the erasure of his aggressive masculine body, so does the Herculean Irishman's labour contribute to the construction of a society whose genteel values exclude him. In both books, Moodie constructs gentility as an instance of narcissistic mimesis whose circular self-reproduction purges it of impurities and differences. In its management of

class anxiety through the narrative of the life of a representative individual, “Noah Cotton” suggests that gentility is a collective ideal maintained and perpetuated at the level of the individual, and Flora’s story implicitly aligns the constitution of collective and individual identities such that her re-imagining of gentility speaks to her own specific situation as well as to the more general social value of gentility. This is but one of many important ways in which “Noah Cotton” would reassure someone in Flora’s tenuous position, caught between the old world and the new, between a life she can no longer live and one she has yet to live, clinging to an identity she lacks the economic means to properly claim whose social value is being visibly eroded. But the story does somewhat more than merely palliate Flora’s class anxiety before it is raised to even higher levels by the less respectful, more aggressive lower-class men and women she will meet in the colony.

As well as framing “Noah Cotton” as an expression of, and anodyne for Flora’s class anxiety, Moodie presents Flora’s construction of gentility as a self-preserving identity that is fundamentally immune to all threats or challenges and her related management of the aggressive masculine body as both pleasurable and economically productive. Moodie introduces the story: “[w]hat could [Flora] do to while away the lagging hours? She thought and rethought. At length she determined to weave some strange incidents, that chance had thrown into her way, into a story, which might amuse her mind from dwelling too much upon the future, and interest her husband” (*FL* 215). If England produced Flora’s anxiety, the colony in which she hopes to salvage her class identity is its most immediate object. Her future home is the locus of her worries. The somewhat awkward phrase “amuse her mind from dwelling too much upon the future” conjoins the two purposes of “Noah Cotton”: amusement and reassurance. The awkwardness of this phrase reads as a syntactic expression of the difficult fit between what are two different types of art operating in two very different emotional registers to two very different ends: light literature meant to “amuse” and “interest,” to alleviate boredom, but not to be taken seriously; and, a complex ideological mediation of experience that puts the writer’s very identity at stake, what is characterized at the

beginning of this section as “[w]hat [Flora] d[oes] to [secure her self].”

However, as well as making it explicitly clear that “Noah Cotton” provides Flora with amusement and reassurance, Moodie hints that the story is economically productive, explaining what Flora does with the manuscript after completing it:

Flora finished her story, but she wanted courage to read it to her husband, who was very fastidious about his wife’s literary performances. And many long years passed away, and they had known great sorrows and trials in the Canadian wilderness before she again brought the time-worn manuscript to light, and submitted it to his critical eye. And because it pleased him, she, with the vanity natural to her sex, to say nothing of the vanity so common to the author, thought that it might find favour with the public. (*FL* 316)

Moodie stops at that, leaving a number of questions unanswered. To whom does Flora send the story? Is it accepted? Does it “find favour with the public?” And, how much, if anything, is she paid for it? Moodie’s own biography, and, in particular, her publishing history suggest several possible, if not definite, answers to these questions. The “great sorrows and trials in the Canadian wilderness” that Flora suffers mirror Moodie’s own experiences in the bush and, most notably, recall the extreme poverty she details in *Roughing It in the Bush*. Moreover, the similarity between the fictional and the actual writer suggests that Flora’s decision to publish “Noah Cotton” is less a question of “the vanity natural to her sex” or “the vanity so common to the author” than of economic necessity. Indeed, given the already straightened circumstances of the Lyndsays’ when they decide to emigrate, circumstances that could only be further straitened by “many long years . . . in the Canadian wilderness,” it is difficult, if not impossible, not to see in Flora’s “vanity” a genteel pretense concealing an economic motive.

There is a further resemblance between Moodie and Flora that casts the publication of “Noah Cotton” as a money-making scheme, rather than as a vanity project. Flora’s return to the story after “many long years” duplicates Moodie’s own well documented tendency to recycle work, often publishing or republishing it years or decades after it was first written. Moodie’s habit of republishing or recycling works was, at least in part, an effect of poverty, and an expression of the necessity of getting the maximum amount of possible profit from any given piece of writing. The resemblances between

Flora and Moodie as both emigrants and writers align Flora's decision to publish "Noah Cotton" with Moodie's own attempts to realize the income necessary to maintain her genteel status by selling her writing. Thus Moodie (at least implicitly) configures Flora's story as a mechanism for providing its author with multiple dividends: the immediate alleviation of the boredom of being becalmed off the Gand Banks – not a negligible benefit given the oppressive quality of the tedium that afflicted many genteel emigrants during the voyage; the palliating of Flora's own class anxieties through a narrative demonstration of gentility's fundamental immunity to the threat posed to it by the figure of the aggressive, low-class masculine body; and the small, but important monetary payment for a published story coming in what one must suspect is a time of need.

It is worth observing that, in regard to the forms of profit it produces, "Noah Cotton" is strikingly similar to *Wacousta*. Both the story and the novel base their claims to readerly pleasure on the aggressive masculine body. In appropriating that body to readerly pleasure, both reinforce the reader's genteel identity. There is, however, a notable difference here. *Wacousta* endows the reader with a genteel identity by controlling the reader's perspective and his/her allegiances, whereas "Noah Cotton" more or less presumes the gentility of the reader (who is, at least until "many long years" have passed, one and the same as the writer) and reinforces that identity by discursively demonstrating its resiliency. Finally and most significantly, both Flora and Richardson stake the appeal of their works, and thus their economic success on their close association of readerly pleasure with the management of the aggressive masculine body; both writers use their narrative appropriation and management of the aggressive masculine body as a means to establish/reestablish their own class identities. For both Flora and Richardson (not to mention Moodie) their writing is a means of staying/becoming genteel.

If the similarities between Richardson and Flora are worth observing, the resemblances between Flora and Moodie are pivotally revealing. As already seen, both Flora's life story and her writing practices mirror Moodie's. Flora functions as a fictional double of Moodie, allowing Moodie to comment from a remove on both her own life and her own writing: Flora represents Moodie as a writer and "Noah Cotton" represents

Moodie's work. Two factors bear most importantly on the ramifications of Moodie's alignment of her fictional and actual selves.

First, the weight of this dimension of *Flora Lyndsay* is increased exponentially by the book's complex position in relation to the other two most important examples of Moodie's autobiographical writing. As observed at the beginning of this chapter, the content and the publication date of *Flora Lyndsay* cause it to bracket the other two books in Moodie's emigrant trilogy. The novel functions at one and the same time as the introduction to *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings* and as their conclusion. "Noah Cotton" thus serves not merely as a coda for *Flora Lyndsay* but as a coda for Moodie's complete emigrant trilogy, as a summation of and commentary on all three books. Furthermore, as the emigrant trilogy constitutes Moodie's longest, her most complex and her most substantial literary accomplishment, Flora's story occupies a position of unprecedented importance in relation to what is most certainly Moodie's definitive literary achievement.¹⁰¹

Second, as the earlier discussion of the novel and the story it contains also showed, *Flora Lyndsay* and "Noah Cotton" provide a complex and highly specific interpretation of the other two books as well as of the motivations, desires and purposes that informed Moodie's writing of them. Moodie's interpretation of her earlier work is most effectively viewed through the lens of masculine writing. Like the works discussed in the preceding three chapters, Flora's appropriative management of the aggressive masculine body is a fairly straightforward example of profitable masculine writing. In taking Noah as her subject, Flora moves outwards, away from the core or centre of her

¹⁰¹

It is worth pointing out that, thus far, critics have failed to recognize the important position *Flora Lyndsay* and "Noah Cotton" occupy in Moodie's emigrant trilogy. This is no doubt due to the fact that the majority of critical attention has been focussed on *Roughing It in the Bush*. Moodie scholars rarely deal with *Flora Lyndsay* and, when they mention it, they largely confine themselves to mining it for the details of Moodie's life. This is by no means an inappropriate approach to what is very clearly an autobiographical novel, but it has the unfortunate effect of suppressing the structural complexities of the text, complexities that make *Flora Lyndsay* the rewarding book it is and allow it to so significantly inform the reading of the other two books in the trilogy.

identity, away from her self towards an alien and antagonistic other. Her re-appropriation of Noah's body to genteel values constitutes the culmination of a circular return to the self after a passage through the other. In keeping with Cixous' essay, this circular return is affectively, ideologically and economically profitable. Also in keeping with "Sorties," Flora is at one and the same time engaged in affirming/re-affirming her own individual identity and doing the same for the corporate identity of gentility. She is, effectively, affirming/re-affirming the Empire of the Selfsame. What is more, the position of *Flora Lyndsay* and of "Noah Cotton" in *Flora Lyndsay* establish the model of masculine writing outlined by Flora's writing of "Noah Cotton" as an explanatory template for *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings*. As an explanatory template, it is of particular importance (one might even say it occupies an exclusive position) for it constitutes Moodie's own retrospective interpretation of her own work. Through Flora's story, Moodie frames her own autobiographical writing as masculine writing.¹⁰²

Although the implications of this framing are many, varied and complex, several of the points it makes about *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings* are particularly salient: a primary subject or theme of the two books is class, specifically the class anxiety that Moodie feels as a result of the recognition that her identity as a genteel woman is under threat, and that the social value of gentility is being substantially eroded; the primary goal of the two books is to reinforce Moodie's own identity and the more general value of gentility; this reactionary reinforcement is accomplished through the submission of threatening, antagonistic individuals (usually, but not exclusively, lower-class individuals who want to claim a genteel identity) to the disciplinary system of genteel values; and, this process results in multiple dividends, both economic and otherwise, for the writer who accomplishes it, for Moodie herself. Although writers' assessments of their own works are not always accurate, and never absolutely authoritative, this

102

It is important to remember that Cixous specifically uses the terms "masculine" and "feminine" to detach her categories from simplistic sexual determinism. Within Cixous' theoretical framework, it is just as possible for a woman to produce masculine writing as a man.

interpretation speaks cogently to both *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings*. It describes the management of the aggressive masculine body in the opening chapters of *Roughing It in the Bush* outlined in the preceding chapter. It reflects the pattern that runs through both *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Life in the Clearings* of Moodie mixing her description of an individual, an event, or a custom with her own assessment of it, with her determination of whether it accords with her own genteel values followed by a judgement that either applauds what she is judging for reflecting her values or condemns it for deviating from them. It also explains the narrow-minded, ungenerous superciliousness (largely in regards to members of the lower-classes, in particular, lower-class women) that characterizes many of the passages in the two books as an ideological defense mechanism, as the expression of the discursive operation by which Moodie is seeking to re-affirm her identity and re-inject value into the class with which she identifies. If Moodie presents “Noah Cotton” as “[w]hat [Flora] d[oes] to [secure her self],” *Flora Lyndsay* presents the emigrant trilogy as “[w]hat [Moodie] d[id] to [secure her self].”

III

Managing Hercules' Labour

In his chapter “Large Stature and Larger Soul: The Herculean Hero and Narrative in Canada” in *The Gay]Grey Moose: Essays on the Ecologies and Mythologies of Canadian Poetry, 1690-1990*, Bentley perceptively observes: “[t]here is another classical hero [other than Ulysses] . . . who might shed light on mythical patterns in Canadian literature: Hercules (Herakles, Alcides), ‘the most famous of Greek heroes,’ who is noted above all for his great strength, passion, endurance, courage, and compassion, as well as for his twelve famous labours and – particularly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries – for ‘The Choice of Hercules’” (218). Bentley then details the Herculean dimensions of men in texts ranging from Isabella Vallancy Crawford’s *Malcolm’s Katie* (1884) to Archibald Lampman’s *The Story of an Affinity* (1900) to Frederick Philip Grove’s *Settlers of the Marsh* (1925) and beyond. He includes the Irishman from the beginning of *Roughing It in*

the Bush in his catalogue of Herculean figures, and gestures towards Moodie's complex, resentful response discussed in the preceding chapter: "[p]erhaps needless to say, the Irishman of 'gigantic proportions' who 'flourish[es] aloft his shilelagh' and cries 'Whurrah! my boys ... Shure we'll all be jontlemen' towards the close of Moodie's opening sketch typifies her bitter recognition of who will be the Herculean heroes in the 'rising country' of Canada" (Bentley, *Gay]Grey Moose* 222-23). Indeed, as already seen, and as Bentley clearly recognizes, Moodie's Irishman is a powerful concatenation of some of the key issues confronting early Canadian writers. This gigantic man combines, in the form of a pressing social problem, the social and economic value of labour – particularly in regards to the development of the country, the need to discipline or manage disruptive male behaviour, and, looming above both of these issues, the importance of founding and maintaining a social order in a time of great transition and upheaval. Bentley argues that "the Herculean heroes in Canadian literature," men such as Max of *Malcolm's Katie* and Richard Stahlberg of *The Story of an Affinity*, "[s]tand . . . for the creation of order and the exercise of government in the external and internal worlds" (*Gay]Grey Moose* 231). The Herculean heroes that he discusses are representative of a double process of social and personal ("external and internal") management whose end is the direction of male strength to "an ethical and constructive purpose" (Bentley, *Gay]Grey Moose* 227).

Bentley's insights into the importance of Hercules in early Canadian literature are of obvious relevance to the management of the aggressive masculine body outlined in this chapter, and the three chapters before it. Hercules is, after all, the most famous aggressive masculine body of Western literature, and, as he murders his family in a fit of uncontrollable rage, he is one of its most famous angry men. What is more, in "the development of [the] Herculean hero towards moral and spiritual maturity" (Bentley, *Gay]Grey Moose* 224), one may see in the process of *Bildung* this entails, in the education of these heroes the internalization of the management of the aggressive masculine body, the transformation of it into a personal project to be carried out by the possessor of the body that must be managed. The development of Max and Richard speaks directly to the internalization of a regulatory core of genteel values that is

suggested by Noah's self-condemnation and that is a significant feature of the totally competent man. This is a subject taken up at greater length in the concluding chapter on the totally competent man, and, in particular, in the discussion of Richard's development in that chapter. As perceptive and wide-ranging as Bentley's analysis is, there is one aspect of the Hercules narrative which he neglects that is of particular relevance to the management of the aggressive masculine body in early Canadian literature.

Hercules's labours constitute a mythical example of the management of the socially corrosive, aggressive masculine body through its insertion into a regulatory narrative that rehabilitates the social value of Hercules' body by directing his labour towards socially useful ends. Under the direction of King Eurystheus, Hercules performs twelve labours that serve as penance for the murder of his wife Megara and their three children. These labours are also the mechanism by which he is reintegrated into society after his self-imposed isolation in the wilderness. With its combination of a striking example of masculine violence (violence that is a limit case of anti-sociability), a powerful and recalcitrant male body, an imposition of the regulatory authority of a social superior, an enactment of the capacity of narrative to order society and regulate individuals, and an emphasis on the importance of the social productivity of male labour, the narrative of the twelve labours of Hercules stands as a compact representation of the key features of the management of the aggressive masculine body in early Canadian literature. Most important, viewing *Abram's Plains*, *Wacousta*, *Roughing it in the Bush*, and *Flora Lyndsay* through the lens of the twelve labours of Hercules highlights the importance of the adoption of a managerial role for Cary, Richardson and Moodie. In this respect, the Herculean echoes of the four works unite the two dimensions of the constitution of the totally competent man: the integrative appropriation of the aggressive masculine body to gentility, and the recursive self-affirmation of a core of genteel values. This perspective on these works points towards the subject of the following chapter: the resuscitation of the gentleman (and of the genteel values that define him) through his reconciliation with lower-class, aspirational models of manhood – that is, broadly speaking, through the reconciliation of gentility and trade.

Chapter 6:

Making One Man Out of Two: Doubling the Merchant with the Gentleman and Vice
Versa in Galt's *Lawrie Todd* and *Bogle Corbet*

There are good contextual and textual reasons for reading John Galt's *Lawrie Todd; or, the Settlers in the Woods* (1830) and *Bogle Corbet; or, the Emigrants* (1831) together. Most obviously, they were seen as related by their author: Galt produced *Bogle Corbet* as a sequel to the best-selling *Lawrie Todd*. Both were written quickly, one after the other in 1830 and 1831, and they are the first of Galt's books to bear "his name on the title-page[s]"¹⁰³ (Gordon 93). Both were produced immediately following the failure of Galt's commercial enterprises in Canada when he was "confined, but not incarcerated . . . [in] [t]he King's Bench [debtor's] prison" (Gordon 92), and both reflect, albeit in quite different ways, his disappointment and the anxieties of his predicament. And both borrow heavily from Galt's own experiences for their material: *Lawrie Todd* draws on Galt's founding of Guelph while working for the Canada company, on a visit he made to Rochester,¹⁰⁴ and, more generally, on the sum of Galt's experience with pioneering;¹⁰⁵ and *Bogle Corbet*, a tale of an emigrant "of Galt's own class" is "constructed from barely disguised [autobiographical material about his experiences in North America that Galt]

¹⁰³

Ian A. Gordon observes this fact, but provides no explanation, noting that Galt did so "for his own reasons" (93). It is probable that among these reasons were the extent to which the books draw on Galt's own life, and, moreover, cast a critical, analytic eye on the experiences that led him to debtor's prison.

¹⁰⁴

In the Preface to *Lawrie Todd*, Galt explains that "in Judiville [one may find] a shadowy and subdued outline of the history and localities of Rochester" (1: iv).

¹⁰⁵

Galt explains in his Preface that, because
 [t]he author [has] recently superintended a Colonial experiment of great magnitude, it may be imagined that in Judiville he has described his own undertaking. This is not the case; for the narrative embraces the substance of his knowledge, whether obtained by inquiry, observation, or experience. (*LT* 1: iv)

had already published in *Fraser's Magazine* and elsewhere” (Gordon 100). Despite the manifest difference between the main characters (more on which later), there are substantial similarities between the narratives of both novels: Lawrie Todd and Bogle Corbet both emigrate, found settlements, and superintend their development. The relative¹⁰⁶ disparity between the success of Todd and the failure of Corbet highlights these similarities, throws the protagonists into contrast, and invites comparison of the novels. Both are first person autobiographical narratives, and both use doubles to illustrate the flaws of their protagonists. Moreover, Galt establishes Corbet and Todd as mirror opposites, extending the pattern of doubling across the two novels, and drawing both the books and their protagonists together to form a single aesthetic/conceptual unit. Most important for this study, when read together, in the light of the many contextual and textual links between them, *Lawrie Todd* and *Bogle Corbet* constitute a complex meditation on early nineteenth-century masculinity – specifically, on the value, the importance, and the future of gentility.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶

“Relative” because, although Todd is much more financially successful than Corbet, both men are, in the end, alienated from the communities that they help to create: Corbet is condemned to an existence on the margins of a community to whom he has become effectively irrelevant, and Todd, who is neither at home in Judville nor in his birthplace of Scotland, embarks on a life of perpetual travel. In the context of a set of novels whose highest ideal is community, and life in community, a persuasive case could be made for both men being failures.

¹⁰⁷

Despite the many very good reasons for reading *Lawrie Todd* and *Bogle Corbet* together, critics have rarely done so. Elizabeth Waterston, the editor of the New Canadian Library edition of *Bogle Corbet*, divides the two books along national lines, seeing *Lawrie Todd* as a triumphalist, typically American narrative, and *Bogle Corbet* as “a story of acceptance and adjustment [that] is a very real and a very Canadian story” (7). On this basis, in her Introduction to *Bogle Corbet*, in her Preface to the collection of essays *John Galt: Reappraisals*, and in *Rapt in Plaid: Canadian Literature and Scottish Tradition*, she treats *Bogle Corbet* as a stand alone novel in exclusion from its pair. Most recently, in his discussion of *Bogle Corbet* in *White Civility*, Daniel Coleman notes that it was written in the same circumstances as *Lawrie Todd* (93), but then focuses his attention solely and exclusively on *Bogle Corbet*. Of the handful of critics who have written on Galt’s New World or emigrant novels, Bentley is the only one to compare the two at any

The novels' treatment of gentility turns on the contrast between their respective protagonists. The essential difference between Todd and Corbet, the difference from which all of their other differences arise, is one of class. Corbet is "a person of ordinarily genteel habits" (Galt, *BC* 1: iii) or a gentleman, and Todd is a lower-class, "humbly-educated" man (Galt, *LT* 1: iii) trained as a nail maker by his father, or, in essence, a labourer. Their life trajectories are as dissimilar as their class identities. Todd is defined by the conventional lower-class aspiration to better his station in life, and his "brisk and courageous spirit [and] lively desire to excel" (Galt, *LT* 1: 17) allow him to do just that: he moves with predictable regularity from one business success to the next, beginning his career as a nail maker in New York, and becoming a shopkeeper in New York, in Bablemandle, and, finally, in Judiville, a land speculator and one of the founders of the town of Judiville, the owner of a Bank and a saltworks, and, by the end of the book, rich enough to retire to a life of leisure spent traveling Europe. Corbet, on the other hand, is poorly prepared by his genteel upbringing to make his way in the world, and, by his own admission, "le[ads] but a rigamarole life" (Galt, *BC* 1: 1) that moves, just as predictably as Todd's life goes from success to success, from one business failure to another, and ends with Corbet living an unrewarding life in the backwoods of Upper Canada with no hope of anything better.

In his Preface to *Bogle Corbet*, Galt explains that the novel "give[s] expression to the probable feelings of a character [a genteel man] upon whom the commercial circumstances of the age have had their natural effect" (1: iii), positioning Corbet not just as a genteel man, but as a typically and representatively genteel man.¹⁰⁸ Far from being

length. In *Canadian Architexts: Essays on Literature and Architecture in Canada 1759-2005*, he discusses the founding and development of *Lawrie Todd's* Judiville and *Bogle Corbet's* Stockwell. Bentley's focus, however, is on "Rising and Spreading Villages" in early Canada, and, quite understandably, he does not move beyond a comparison of the two towns to a more general comparison of the novels and their main characters.

¹⁰⁸

Galt's approach merits a brief explanation. In his Preface, he characterizes *Bogle Corbet* as "a theoretic biography" (1: iv), and this characterization is equally relevant to *Lawrie Todd*. The term recalls Galt's own description of his earlier works, such as *Annals of the*

the narratives of purely individual, idiosyncratic men, *Bogle Corbet* and its companion, *Lawrie Todd*, stand as Galt's assessment of the relative value of genteel and lower-class models of masculinity as represented by their title characters in the context of the "commercial circumstances" of the early nineteenth century. Galt's novels are thus charged with the same anxieties about the speedy ascent of the lower-classes to positions of social and economic prominence, and the parallel descent of genteel men and women into poverty and social irrelevance that are one of Moodie's central preoccupations in both *Roughing it In the Bush* and *Flora Lindsay*. This is perhaps not surprising given that both Galt and Moodie had witnessed the success of many lower-class settlers first hand, and had experienced galling failures and setbacks of their own by the time they came to write their books. Although Galt shares Moodie's anxieties, his understanding of ascending lower-class men and failing genteel men differs from hers,¹⁰⁹ and so too does

Parish, as "theoretical histories" (qtd. in Whatley 51), or as works that aimed to trace broad social and historical transformations through their description of individual lives. His use of the term "theoretic biography" indicates that Galt saw Corbet and Todd not just as individual characters, but as representative types. In *John Galt: Social Historian*, W. M. Brownlie makes the persuasive argument that Galt's Scottish novels should be read as early examples of social history, and it is just as appropriate to read his emigrant novels as early examples of social realism.

109

The most glaring difference between Galt and Moodie is in the actual size of the lower-class men they describe. At a measly "four feet and a half," weighing in at no "more than ninety-eight pounds, three ounces and a half" (Galt, *LT* 1: 6), Todd is a far cry from the Herculean Irish emigrant who leaps ashore at Grosse Isle in *Roughing It in the Bush* or the athletic and physically imposing young Noah Cotton. It hardly needs to be said that Todd is successful because of his mind, not because of his body. Interestingly, Galt's is, on the whole, a more realistic and less prejudicial representation of aspiring lower-class emigrants than Moodie's, not least of all because his lower-class man is, in the end, more threatening. Simply put, Todd's small stature and mental gifts make him less immediately dangerous than Moodie's lower-class men, but less tractable over the long term. Intelligent lower-class men are less easy to reconcile with a genteel system of values than lower-class men who derive their power primarily from their Herculean bodies. This realistic (if, given Galt's own gentility, somewhat pessimistic) recognition of the genuine gifts lower-class emigrants often brought to the colonies is certainly behind Galt's treatment of lower-class and genteel masculinities as different, but equally valuable, and equally valid models of manhood.

the means by which he resolves his anxieties.

Galt ties the class difference between Todd and Corbet to their differing attitudes towards relationships. Todd approaches relationships instrumentally, sometimes framing them in the mercantile terms of profit and loss, and consistently treating people as means to his own self-gratification rather than as ends in themselves. Corbet takes the inverse approach, viewing both personal *and* business relationships as primarily affective affiliations, as emotional bonds that exist independently of the marketplace.¹¹⁰ This amounts to an exaggerated version of the conventional nineteenth-century distinction (a distinction conventionally applied to genteel and lower-class men) between gentility and trade: Todd acts as a merchant in all things, even, to his occasional embarrassment, his personal relationships; Corbet acts as a gentleman in all things, even, to his constant detriment, his business dealings. The differences between Todd and Corbet play out in their marriages, inform their interactions with the communities they found, and are thrown into relief by their respective doubles. Most important, these differences determine their relationship as doubles of one another, positioning them as opposites whose respective strengths map exactly onto their respective weaknesses. If, as Galt explains, *Bogle Corbet* is “medicine . . . to lighten the anxieties of those whom taste or fortune prompts them to quit their native land, and to seek in the wilderness new objects of industry, enterprise and care” (Galt, *BC* 1: iv), then Corbet is the cure for Todd and Todd the cure for Corbet. Moreover, to the extent that this relationship is predicated on and pointedly reinforces the continuing importance of genteel values, the two books taken together serve as a treatment for Galt’s own anxieties about the utility of those values.

110

This distinction between Todd and Corbet is not an absolute one. Instead, it reflects the general tendencies of the two characters. Although he consistently focuses on the affective dimensions of relationships, Corbet is also capable of seeing and understanding the economic implications of decisions like his refusal to press the matter of his inheritance from Sir Neil, the father of Corbet’s first wife. Likewise, although Todd consistently acts to further his own interests with little regard for the feelings or fortunes of others, he is also capable of forming profound affective bonds, such as the deeply loving and caring relationships he has with his children.

Corbet possesses the sociability, the capacity for graceful, caring social interaction that Todd sorely needs; Todd possesses the financial acumen, the gift for business that Corbet needs just as sorely as Todd needs Corbet's genteel graces. If combined, the two men would form a complete model of manhood that is ideal because it is complete, a model of manhood that would unite the lower-class aptitude for trade with the behavioural norms of genteel sociability, manifest a breadth of competence spanning the social and the economic spheres of masculine activity, and make a powerful argument for the enduring value of the defining attributes of Galt's own social class as an essential ingredient in this ideal model of manhood.

I

For Love or Money, but Not Both: Todd and Corbet's Many Marriages

As an institution that consists, on the one hand, of the formalization of romantic love, and, on the other hand, of a legal mechanism that determines the distribution of wealth through doweries and inheritances, marriage exists at the intersection of affective and economic interests, and is uniquely suited to illustrating the contrast between Todd and Corbet's approaches to relationships. Corbet marries twice, in both cases, for purely emotional reasons, and makes no effort to investigate or take advantage of any of the economic opportunities his relationships afford him. Todd, on the other hand, emphasizes the economic and other (chiefly, but not exclusively, domestic) advantages to be gained in marriage. The juxtaposition of Todd and Corbet's opposed and equally extreme approaches to romance suggests the possibility of their reconciliation through their incorporation into an ideal example of romantic manhood – an ideal lover and husband, whose instrumentality would be tempered by affective sensitivity and vice versa. The contrast between Todd and Corbet's marriages serves to outline a masculine ideal that is ideal because of its mastery of both the fiscal and the emotional dimensions of marriage, because, in short, of its breadth of competence.

Corbet meets his first wife, Anella, in London via his connection with Sir Neil, a

rich man who made his fortune in India. When he marries her, Corbet thinks that she is the daughter of a dead comrade of Sir Neil who has no fortune of her own and is “entirely dependant on him [Sir Neil], as her father’s friend” (Galt *BC* 1: 180). Corbet, however, is relatively unconcerned with sorting out his intended’s somewhat mysterious background. Nor does he have any interest whatsoever in discovering what sort of dowry, inheritance or income she will bring to their union. It is Sir Neil who broaches these questions without prompting from Corbet, and Corbet’s response to the other man’s revelations is revealing:

Sir Neil, indeed, superseded all inquiry respecting her family and connections, by early informing me, that her relations were very remote

“The regard,” said [Sir Neil], “that I must ever cherish for the memory of her beautiful mother gives her, besides the rights founded on her own merit, a strong claim upon me; I intend that her children shall inherit the best half of my fortune.”

“I thought her father had also been your particular friend: was it not he that persuaded you to remain in India?” (Galt, *BC* 1: 180)

Sir Neil moves quickly from the loyalties and affections that link him to Anella to the practical and purely financial question of the amount of money he intends to settle on her children. Corbet responds by completely disregarding the economic implications of Sir Neil’s statement (if Corbet marries Anella, Sir Neil will make their children very rich indeed), and, instead, focuses on sorting out Sir Neil’s relationship to Anella’s parents. Moreover, because it is made “in the innocence of a lover’s simplicity” (Galt, *BC* 1: 180), Corbet’s query is an idle one. Even when he sees a “shadow pass . . . over [Sir Neil’s] face” (Galt, *BC* 1: 180), Corbet refuses to press the issue, and thus avoids learning that Anella is in fact Sir Neil’s daughter. Indeed, Corbet appears to be almost entirely detached from, almost completely uninterested in, the conversation. His primary interest is in his affective bond with Anella, and anything – her past, her family’s past, or the extent of her claim on Sir Neil’s fortune – that does not bear immediately on his love for her is of negligible importance to him.

The remainder of the description of the marriage confirms that Corbet enters into it with a complete disregard for the financial implications of the union. He does not

record his response to Sir Neil's repetition of his promise that "Anella's children shall come to a good fortune," nor to Sir Neil's additional promise that "you and she [shall not] be forgotten" (Galt, *BC* 1: 181), marking his lack of interest with his autobiographical silence. Instead of recording his response, Corbet remarks on the limited extent of the financial discussions leading up to his marriage, and focuses on his purely emotional motivations:

I believe this is all that ever passed between us [Corbet and Sir Neil] concerning my bride. I was too happy on any terms to receive the hand of Anella, and although the extent of my commercial transactions were, as I have already described, often the cause of much annoyance, still my income was liberal, and not a shade of blemish or imprudence could be imputed to the marriage. (Galt, *BC* 1: 181)

Although Corbet does raise the question of his increasingly precarious financial situation, he does not do so in the practical context of assessing his ability to support a wife and family; rather, he is concerned with his finances only insofar as they will affect the perception of his marriage, and interested in economic matters only insofar as they are an extension of social relations. Corbet's account of his first marriage makes it abundantly clear that he is a social rather than an economic animal, a man acutely attuned to the manifold complex minutiae of personal relationships, and utterly deaf to the practical business of getting and safeguarding wealth.

Corbet's declaration that he "was too happy on *any terms* to receive the hand of Anella" (Galt, *BC* 1: 181, emphasis added) may seem too good, too purely, idealistically romantic to be true, but Corbet's indifference to the economic suitability of his mate is quickly confirmed by his response to Sir Neil's gift to his new wife. Immediately after the marriage ceremony, Sir Neil gives Anella "a casket of jewels that would have gratified a duchess" (Galt, *BC* 1: 181). Although Corbet could most certainly make use of the gift, he does not respond to it as a much needed contribution to his and his wife's prosperity. Instead, he remarks on the inappropriateness of the gift: "They were indeed too splendid for a merchant's wife of my station" (Galt, *BC* 1: 181). Just as he assesses his own financial situation in terms of its influence on the general perception of his marriage, so also does he assess and respond to the gift's monetary value in terms of its suitability to

his and his wife's station in life, or, in other words, in terms of its social appropriateness. The fact that Corbet sees the jewels as too generous a gift *and* that "[he] sa[ys] so to [Sir Neil]" (Galt, *BC* 1: 181) implies that, if Corbet had his way, Sir Neil would take back the casket. Corbet, however, lets Sir Neil gainsay him, and allows Anella to accept the gift:

[Sir Neil] repressed my [Corbet's] remarks [about the inappropriateness of the jewels], by saying it was the only occasion on which he had ever indulged his fancy in things of that kind. "I bought them," he added, "in India, and they were intended for her mother. Let her wear them as an earnest of what shall be done hereafter." (Galt, *BC* 1: 181-82)

In effect, Corbet allows his understanding of the unique emotional context of the gift to trump his doubts about its appropriateness, and accepts the promise of financial support from Sir Neil that he has resisted up to this point. Corbet enters into an economic and thus instrumental relationship with Sir Neil on the sole basis of that economic relationship emerging as a secondary effect of his affective relationship with the man. Corbet's account of his first marriage thus demonstrates that, for him, relationships (both romantic and amicable) are first and foremost affective bonds, bonds that acquire an instrumental or economic dimension only when that dimension is a direct extension of their affective content, and when it originates with someone other than Corbet.

Although *Bogle Corbet* is a satirical novel that aims much of its humor squarely at its protagonist, Corbet's unwillingness to mix romantic relationships with financial ones is not the butt of one of Galt's many jokes. Instead of making fun of it, Galt frames this as one of the more positive, if somewhat naively idealistic, aspects of Corbet's character. Corbet's marriage to Anella is immediately preceded by Sir Neil's description of his relationship to Leezy Eglesham, the aging spinster who provided Corbet with his letter of introduction to Sir Neil. Sir Neil explains that he and Leezy grew up together, and, "[i]n the sincerity of inexperienced youth, [they] pledged [themselves] to each other" (Galt, *BC* 1: 162). However, before marrying Leezy, Sir Neil left to make his fortune in India. There, he acquired the great wealth that he possesses when Corbet meets him, and irrevocably transformed himself: "I was becoming another man; increase of fortune, and the society into which I was thrown, led to the acquisition of ideas beyond the frugal

fancies of my youth, and an accident completed the moral metamorphosis” (Galt, *BC* 1: 162). The accident to which Sir Neil alludes – the full extent of which he does not reveal to Corbet until after the death of Anella – is an affair with the widow of a friend that amounts to a straightforward betrayal of his pledge to Leezy. Although Leezy never learns of Sir Neil’s betrayal, he himself is so changed by it and by the wealth he has acquired that he is, in his own words, “no longer the same youth to whom her [Leezy’s] affections had been pledged” (Galt, *BC* 1: 166). When he returns to Scotland, Sir Neil recoils from the sight of Leezy and she runs off in tears. First Leezy and then Sir Neil realize that his transformation makes their union impossible, and they spend the rest of their lives “faithfully keep[ing their vow]” (Galt, *BC* 1: 162) to each other, but in isolation from each other.

Galt blames Sir Neil’s new wealth and not his affair for his response to Leezy. Sir Neil’s explanation of his response reveals the extent and the nature of the changes he has undergone:

I was not greatly to blame; for, instead of being dressed with her former neatness, the drudgery of the washing-day had dishevelled her appearance, and in the hurry of her joy she had flown towards me in the ungarnished garments of the bed-chamber. Her hair, which I remembered so affluent and so neatly braided, was covered with a coarse and common bed-cap. She wore a calico short gown, and her petticoat, of scanty longitude, showed her limbs with stockings, it is true, but her slippers, according to the economy of her father’s narrow income, were made of cast-off shoes. She was in all things scarcely one degree more respectable in her appearance than a common maid-of-all work. It was this sight that occasioned my involuntary revolt as she entered. (Galt, *BC* 1: 167-66)

Above and beyond causing him to betray his vow to Leezy, Sir Neil’s riches have worked a “moral metamorphosis” (Galt, *BC* 1: 162), a transformation of him into the sort of crass, self- and class-conscious materialist who responds to people, even the love of his life, on the basis of their attire. This transformation is driven powerfully home by his use of positive adjectives – “neatness,” “affluent,” and “neat” – that connote wealth and gentility, and of negative adjectives – “ungarnished,” “coarse,” “common,” “scanty,” and “narrow” – that evoke poverty and lower-class coarseness. The returned Sir Neil instinctively conflates wealth with goodness and desirability, and views poverty, even the

honest poverty of Leezy, as abhorrent. In the context of Sir Neil's description of the cause of his break with Leezy, Corbet's active disregard for the financial dimensions of his own marriage appears as the willful ignorance of an idealistic romantic, but also, and just as important, as a laudable attempt to protect his love for Anella from the corrosive effects of wealth, and to prevent himself from taking the first steps towards a lamentable and irreversible "moral metamorphosis" like Sir Neil's. As well as casting Corbet's lack of concern for his new family's finances in a positive light, Sir Neil's revelation foreshadows the dissolution of his and Corbet's friendship.

On a trip to Scotland, Corbet learns in quick succession that Anella has died, and that his business is a failure and he is "a Bankrupt" (Galt, *BC* 1: 234). He returns to London an economically and emotionally broken man desperately in need of understanding and assistance only to discover that his once kind and generous friend, Sir Neil, is now neither kind, nor generous, nor friendly. At their first meeting after Anella's death, and the last one they will have, Sir Neil begins by questioning Corbet about his business dealings in a "more than usually . . . dry yet disinterested manner" (Galt, *BC* 1: 243) that is at odds with his previously warm treatment of Corbet, and that seems gratuitously cruel, given Corbet's present situation. However, although certainly cruel, Sir Neil's pointed questioning is far from gratuitous. Sir Neil has wrongly assumed that Corbet knows that Anella was his daughter, and that the younger man has come to lay claim to a portion of his fortune. As the misunderstanding plays out, it reveals the sharp contrast between Sir Neil's and Corbet's values, and provides a powerful example of Corbet's affective, rather than instrumental, approach to relationships. Sir Neil asks Corbet, "Did you then, in your marriage – excuse the plainness of my question – count on acquiring some claim on me?" (Galt, *BC* 1: 244), and Corbet's answer reflects the difference and the growing divide between the two men:

"None," said I, perhaps with a sentiment verging towards indignation; "my affection for my wife was sincere: what claim could I have on you? So entire was my esteem for her, that to this hour I remain as ignorant of her family, as when you first made me known to herself. But let us talk no farther at present on this subject; my wound is still green, and a slight touch offends it painfully." (Galt, *BC* 1: 244-45)

Corbet's answer follows the same pattern as his description of his response to Sir Neil's promise that Anella's "children shall inherit the best half of my fortune" (Galt, *BC* 1:180): Corbet dismisses the financial aspect of the question, shifting the topic of conversation from the distribution of Sir Neil's fortune to the subject of his late wife's family history. Corbet's insistence that he "remain[s] as ignorant of her family, as when [Sir Neil] first made me known to herself" indicates that Corbet has not even taken the first step towards exploiting any potential inheritance that his wife might have had, and confirms that Corbet understood and continues to understand his marriage as a purely affective union without any economic dimension whatsoever. Corbet's response shows that he did indeed marry purely and exclusively for love, forcefully proving his earlier assertion that he "was too happy on any terms to receive the hand of Anella" (Galt, *BC* 1: 180). Corbet's closing injunction to "talk no farther at present on this subject" because his "wound is still green" completes his movement away from the financial subject matter of Sir Neil's question by, on the one hand, re-framing the consequences of Anella's death in purely affective terms, and, on the other hand, appealing to Sir Neil's own emotions and attempting to shift their interaction from an economic/instrumental to an affective register. Whereas Sir Neil is exclusively focused on the potential economic implications of Anella's death and Corbet's visit, Corbet sees only the affective dimensions of the tragedy, and actively resists polluting his feelings for his dead wife by discussing the question of her inheritance.

Despite his supposed friendship with Corbet, Sir Neil ignores Corbet's injunction, and presses the issue, asking repeatedly what Corbet knows about his wife's family and what he wants from Sir Neil, and becoming more insistent as Corbet becomes, understandably, angrier and more resentful. At the climax of the scene and the conclusion of the chapter, a frustrated Sir Neil reveals the secret of Anella's parentage:

"We have both been mistaken, Mr Corbet: I thought you had known all, from the confidence you seemed to repose in me; nor was I displeased in thinking so; nor, had she lived, would you have had cause to repent that confidence. Your wife was my daughter[,] [says Sir Neil.]

"Yours!" crie[s] [Corbet], in astonishment.

"Yes, mine; and had she lived, her offspring should have inherited my

fortune. That hope has expired; we are now as strangers, but still I shall be always happy to consider you as a friend.” (Galt, *BC* 1: 245)

Sir Neil has not only “been mistaken” about what Corbet knew about Anella, he has misunderstood the basis of Corbet’s relationship with him. In attributing Corbet’s confidence in him to Corbet’s knowledge that Anella was his daughter, Sir Neil has presumed that his relationship with Corbet, and the “confidence [Corbet] . . . repose[d]” in him were based on a calculated assessment on Corbet’s part of Sir Neil’s willingness to pass his fortune on to his daughter’s children. Sir Neil has presumed that theirs was a friendship of economic convenience, an instrumental friendship, when, at least on Corbet’s side, it has always and only been a genuine friendship, an affective affiliation formed without thought to questions of inheritance, personal gain or profit. Sir Neil’s closing description of the state of their relationship after the death of Anella recalls his own break with Leezy and drives home the essential difference between the two men. As the last statement Sir Neil will make in the novel,¹¹¹ it also stands as a conclusive and ringing indictment of his instrumentality, and as an implicit endorsement of Corbet’s less practical, less realistic, but far more caring approach to relationships. The contradictory and patently absurd declaration “we are now as strangers, but still I shall be always happy to consider you as a friend” casts Sir Neil as a calculating hypocrite who is “always happy” to separate affective affiliation from association when it suits his own selfish ends. It also completes his transformation from a friend into a villain, if not into an actual enemy.

To the extent that Sir Neil’s approach to relationships results in him permanently severing his ties to those closest to him (Leezy and Corbet) and effectively withdrawing into a self-imposed isolation, his final speech is also one of several moments in the

111

After Sir Neil’s declaration, Corbet is “[f]or some minutes . . . unable to speak. “[A]n unaccountable [to Corbet, but presumably not to the reader] resentment [then] t[akes] possession of [his] bosom” and Corbet “abruptly le[aves] the room” (Galt, *BC* 1: 248). He does not see, speak to or hear from Sir Neil again.

novel¹¹² when Galt unambiguously denounces an economic minded instrumentality as profoundly antisocial, perversely inhuman and fundamentally unfulfilling. This denunciation is reinforced by ensuing events. Immediately after his final interview with Sir Neil, Corbet sets out for Jamaica, meeting the woman who will become his second wife and an old friend on his way, and finding a warm welcome in the houses of his distant Jamaican relations and their associates.¹¹³ This interlude of fulfilling sociability in Corbet's life is facilitated by his decision to wrap up his business affairs, to get what money he can for his creditors, and not to pursue whatever inheritance from Sir Neil he might have a right to – that is, by his decision not to act selfishly, greedily and instrumentally, despite having an obvious legal claim, despite being in desperate need of money, and despite being provided with ample justification for making such a claim by Sir Neil's poor treatment of him. Galt thus favourably contrasts Corbet's poverty-stricken, but sociable and genuine happiness with Sir Neil's grasping, bitter, and isolating instrumentality, and casts Corbet's as by far the better – more caring, more sociable, and more fulfilling – of the two modes of interaction. Corbet's second marriage follows the pattern set by the first, complete with a father's mistaken presumption that Corbet is inappropriately interested in his wealth.

Jaded by the loss of Anella, and by the failure of his partnership with Mr. Possy, Corbet's courtship of his second wife, Urseline Ascomy, proceeds in a rational, pragmatic, and, for Corbet, strikingly unemotional manner:

the romance of life was then becoming a little flat and stale with me, and . . . increasing years, and decreasing means, were prompting to economical expedients . . . and accordingly, I honestly told [Urseline], when I solicited the favour of paying my addresses, that we had both too many nicks in our horns to be pastoral

¹¹²

Of the other examples of Galt making this point, the most significant is Corbet's debate with Mr. Beans, a Jamaican plantation owner, about the nature and validity of the slave system. This episode is discussed in detail in the following section.

¹¹³

The invitations he gets and the warmth with which he is received in Jamaica are thrown into relief by one of Corbet's final remarks about Sir Neil: "He never afterwards invited me to his house" (Galt, *BC* 1: 250).

in our love, without running the risk of being foolish. She quite as frankly assured me that she thought so too. (Galt, *BC 2*: 64-65)

Despite the fact that their courtship is more of a business negotiation than a romance, it nevertheless highlights Corbet's discomfort with and disregard for the financial dimensions of the union. For example, it is Urseline, not Corbet, who raises the question of "the settlements" (Galt, *BC 2*: 66) that her father will make on her and her sister. Corbet's response to her, and her explanation of herself provide a telling example of and one the novel's most succinct and accurate descriptions of Corbet's anti- or a-instrumental nature. He "st[ands] aghast" as she says,

Nay, I know it is not the custom for young ladies to do so, but we are speaking of a life and death matter [the division of her father's wealth between her and her sister, and, in the course of that division, the safeguarding of her relationship with her sister], to which the settlements are but secondary; and as you are not a man of a mercenary disposition, and papa's head is as full of crotchets as a fig is of seeds, leave the business to me. (Galt, *BC 2*: 66).

The exchange shows what a suitable partner Urseline is for Corbet, demonstrating how perfectly she compliments his aggressive disregard for financial matters with a practical, forthright attention to them that, rather than being driven by a selfishness like Sir Neil's, is motivated by genuine ethical concerns like her anxieties about "injuring [her] sister" (Galt, *BC 2*: 66). Moreover, her pointed description of him "as . . . not a man of mercenary disposition" suggests that she knows Corbet better than he knows himself, and stands as one of the more direct articulations of Corbet's defining feature,¹¹⁴ of the signal difference between him and Sir Neil, and, indeed, between him and Urseline. Even when Corbet is making a pragmatic marriage for companionship, rather than love, he is thinking only of the affective content of the union, and never at any moment or in any of his

114

It is tempting to describe Corbet's inability to act instrumentally as his defining failing, as his fatal flaw, as it is the cause of his financial failures and of much of his suffering. However, the juxtaposition of Corbet with Sir Neil makes it clear that, although largely negative, this aspect of Corbet's character is not without its positive aspects, and is sometimes even laudable.

actions demonstrating “a mercenary [or instrumentalist] disposition.” As with his first marriage, Corbet’s exclusively affective approach to relationships is misunderstood by his soon-to-be father-in-law and leads to a confrontation.

When Mr. Ascomy meets with Corbet to discuss the amount of the settlement he will make on Urseline, he demands that Corbet “accept and sign [a] deed” (Galt, *BC* 2: 72) without knowing what it says or how much money it is for. This is obviously a test, and one that Corbet fails, although not in a fashion that Mr. Ascomy expects. Corbet “consent[s] to the settlement” with “apparent indifference” (Galt, *BC* 2: 74), prompting Mr. Ascomy to “conclude . . . upon two most uncomfortable inferences to himself; the first was, that whatever he gave with his daughter, was much more important to me [Corbet] than he or she had imagined; and second, that I was greedy to get it, and that it was the sole object I looked to in the match” (Galt, *BC* 2:75). Mr. Ascomy’s misinterpretation of Corbet’s motives echoes Sir Neil’s misreading of him, and drives home the point that Corbet’s non-instrumental approach to relationships is both unsuited to success in and, even more important, fundamentally at odds with the world in which Corbet lives. Indeed, Mr. Ascomy correctly predicts Corbet’s descent into relative poverty and social marginalization, declaring, “[i]f Bogle Corbet be not mercenary and mean, he must be a prodigal fool, and my ill-fated daughter will be reduced to beggary by his Timon-like profusion” (Galt, *BC* 2: 76).

Mr. Ascomy’s comparison of Corbet to Timon – the violently misanthropic and socially isolated protagonist of Shakespeare’s *Timon of Athens* – adds a further level of complexity to the relationship the novel articulates between instrumental and affective extremes, and sociability.¹¹⁵ If Sir Neil’s adamant instrumentality leads to his embittered isolation, Mr. Ascomy’s prediction suggests that Corbet’s equally adamant anti-instrumentality will lead to a commensurable misanthropy and a commensurable isolation. Mr Ascomy’s declaration intimates that neither of the two extremes

115

Timon of Athens is one of Shakespeare’s least known plays, and the obscurity of Mr. Ascomy’s allusion to its protagonist is in keeping with the habit of the retired scholar to be consistently abstruse and obscure.

exemplified by Corbet and Sir Neil are fulfilling, functional modes of behavior that are suitable for the foundation and maintenance of healthy social relations, and, by extension, of healthy, enduring communities. Certainly, Corbet never reaches the overt, violent misanthropy of the epitaph that Timon chose for himself, “Here lie I, Timon, who alive, all living men did hate, / Pass by, and curse thy fill, but pass and stay not here thy gait” (5.4.86-87), but Corbet does by the end of the novel find himself dissatisfied with life and his fellow human beings, and, in his propensity for “giv[ing] way to peevish complaints” and “sliding into a querulous humour” (Galt, *BC* 3: 301), there is a hint of his own milder, more apologetic version of Timon’s scathing misanthropy.¹¹⁶ If Corbet’s first marriage casts his lack of “mercenary disposition” in a positive light, his second marriage reveals the substantial problems with it, and, taken together, his two marriages neatly articulate the novel’s complexly ambivalent assessment of this feature of Corbet’s character. One more aspect of Corbet’s marriage to Urseline merits consideration.

As already observed, Urseline supplements Corbet’s persistent disregard for practical financial matters with a pragmatic instrumentality that is always ethical, never selfish or crassly materialist. Moreover, she has a genuine talent for economizing, and consistently makes what little money they usually have go farther and buy them a higher

116

It is important not to push the comparison of Corbet to Timon too far. Although Corbet does echo Timon’s disregard for wealth and for his own financial well-being, Corbet never responds to the failure of any of his ventures (his partnership with Possy, his subsequent partnership with a group of Jamaican plantation owners, and his attempt to become the leader of a new settlement) by isolating himself or ever contemplating anything approximating the sort of vengeance Timon wreaks on Athens. In fact, both of Corbet’s first two failures are followed by an attempt on his part to actively engage with society and gather a new community of friends and associates around him, in the first case, by seeking out his Jamaican roots, and, in the second case, by gathering together the group of emigrants who follow him to Upper Canada. At the end of the novel, Corbet is no longer engaged in any substantial way with the community that he helped to found, but has also not become a fervent misanthrope who has wilfully withdrawn from society. Even in the backwoods, Corbet is surrounded by a close-knit group of friends, relations and associates, by a small, but supportive, community. Moreover, unlike Timon’s, Corbet’s “separati[on] . . . from urbane society” (Galt, *BC* 3: 298) is anything but voluntary.

standard of living than Corbet expects it to. Urseline is, in fact, the perfect wife for a financial ingenue like Corbet who would otherwise be fated, as Mr. Ascomy observes, to “be reduce[d] to beggary” (Galt, *BC* 2: 76) or near beggary. Corbet acknowledges her suitability for him on these grounds, but he does so grudgingly, and cannot bring himself to unambiguously praise her domestic instrumentality, no matter how much he has benefitted from it. For example, immediately before describing the events surrounding his marriage to Urseline, he remarks:

But I must be cognisant of the existing powers [his second wife]; Mrs. Corbet is still alive, and nothing, if not critical, and to keep peace in the house, must say that I did think a woman who would look twice at the two sides of a shilling before she parted with it, was very much the right sort of wife to make a bright hearth with a narrow income, to which the aspect of the times are not auspicious. (Galt, *BC* 2: 63)

The generally cantankerous tone of this passage and the straightforwardly mean observation that “Mrs. Corbet is still alive” (as if Corbet would prefer it if she were not) are conspicuous in a man who is normally sensitive, indulgent, and delicate to a fault, but they are characteristic of Corbet’s attitude towards his second wife.

In part, this attitude reflects Corbet’s frustration with Urseline’s tendency to confront him with the exigencies of their reality, puncturing his inflated dreams, interrupting his flights of fancy, and bringing him forcibly back to earth. For instance, when Corbet finally discovers that Jocelyn is the long lost love of the daughter of an English Baronet who is also, by a coincidence of birth, the rightful heir to her father’s lands and title, and, thus, discovers the means to the happy resolution of the man’s unrequited love, Urseline reminds Corbet, in none too graceful terms, of the importance of finishing his book so Jocelyn, who has committed to taking the manuscript to England, can embark on the journey that will reunite him with his love sooner rather than later:

If I did not know . . . that sometimes there is a likelihood of a want about you, I would not urge you, but every hour the poor man is detained here defrauds true love – though, between ourselves, I wonder, when he was a gallanting young recruiting officer, he did not gallop away to Gretna Green with the young lady, instead of parleyvooving with her father. (Galt, *BC* 3: 296)

The mixture of unrefined language such as “parleyvooving” with her blunt diagnosis of

actions that Corbet considers to be affectingly romantic as impractical and irrational is perfectly calculated to offend Corbet's sensibilities. Combined, as they usually are, with a gallingly accurate assessment of Corbet's failings, it is not surprising that Urseline's comments, no matter how accurate, appropriate, or useful¹¹⁷ they might be, consistently provoke Corbet's disapprobation. Comments similar to those just quoted, with their earthy good sense and pointed criticism of Corbet, make up the vast majority of what Urseline says in the novel, and, in making them, she serves as a constant reminder of Corbet's inadequacy. If Urseline is Corbet's perfect complement, she is also his foil; by sharp and annoying contrast, she throws his defining features into relief, and consistently reminds him and the reader of the distinctive flaws in his character. She is Corbet's helpmate, and a constant, vocal reminder of why he requires a helpmate, and their often antagonistic partnership encapsulates the conflicts between affective and instrumental, and genteel and lower-class modes of behavior that are the novel's central preoccupation.

The ambivalent nature of Urseline's relationship (as invaluable helpmate, and

117

Although Urseline's comments are usually blunt and sometimes critical, they are consistently accurate and useful. She is right that Corbet has a tendency to drag his heels, and also right that, in delaying the completion of his manuscript, he will delay Jocelyn's departure and his happy reunion. Moreover, although Corbet seems to delight in playing the henpecked husband, his reactions to Urseline's comments are not always negative. For example, in the concluding chapter, when she sees him "assorting a collection of flowers," she makes the very practical suggestion, "[w]ere I you . . . I would have nothing to do with the this and the that of herbs, which nobody knows the Christian names of. I would see what they are good for, and assort them rather by their qualities" (Galt, *BC* 3: 300). Corbet welcomes the suggestion and embarks on a series of ongoing botanical experiments. At the time of the manuscripts completion, "no discovery has rewarded the pursuit," but "the pastime[,] having an object, has tended to diminish the tediousness" of life in the bush, and its "charm [has] counteract[ed] the ennui of idleness" (Galt, *BC* 2: 300-01). Urseline's suggestion has provided her husband with a goal to which he can dedicate his life that makes it, if not pleasant, at least tolerable. In short, her suggestion has given Corbet's life meaning and purpose. Indeed, Corbet goes so far as to offer advice to the reader that owes a clear debt to his wife's suggestion: "Let no one, therefore, enter the wilderness, with the intention of abiding there for life, who does not bring with him a habit of study with some object, or that may be interminable, and yet not of such fascination as to seduce him from his serious business" (Galt, *BC* 3: 301).

hated faultfinder) to Corbet in the context of what appears to be, despite Urseline's criticisms and Corbet's bad temper, a functional, if not entirely fulfilling, marriage suggests the possible reconciliation of the opposites the couple incarnates. If the contrast between Corbet and Sir Neil stresses the irreconcilability of affective and instrumental extremes, the contrast between Corbet and Urseline frames his genteel, affective approach to life and her coarse, ethical instrumentality as complementary and mutually completing, and sets a precedent for the complementary pairing of Corbet and Todd through which Galt articulates his ideal model of manhood. Corbet's marriages thus highlight his exclusively affective approach to relationships, position it as the antithesis of selfish antisocial instrumentality, and suggest the possibility of its productive reconciliation with an ethical instrumentality. Todd takes an opposite, but equally exclusive, approach to his relationships with his three wives.

On the occasions of both his second and his third marriages, Todd explains that his marriage to his first wife, Rebecca, was for love. When discussing his second marriage, he declares, "[i]f a man marry once for love, he is a fool to expect he may do so twice" (Galt, *LT* 1: 87), and, on the verge of making his third proposal, he echoes this declaration: "after the death of Rebecca, it was not in the power of my nature to love again" (Galt, *LT* 3: 100). However, Todd's description of his courtship of Rebecca puts the lie to his repeated claim about his motivations for marrying her. Todd decides that he wants to marry Rebecca soon after he adds a store to his already thriving nail-making business, and his business ventures – specifically, the effort involved in running both of them – are an important factor in his decision:

We were beginning to make a bawbee [a large profit] by the store, and I did not like to give it up; neither did I like to give up the nail-making, for that was sure; so I resolved to push my courtship, calculating that if I got married, I would have a storekeeper of my own, but if not, to sell all off, and leave the city; for by this time I could not endure the thought of seeing Rebecca the wife of another. (Galt, *LT* 1: 60-61)

Todd's "so I resolved" frames his marital decision as the logical response to the business decisions that he has already taken, and makes it painfully clear that his approach to his

first romantic relationship is instrumental, in his word, “calculating,” rather than affective. Moreover, his observation, “if I got married, I would *have* a storekeeper of *my* own” (emphasis added), suggests that he sees Rebecca as a possession to be acquired, as an object whose primary function is to satisfy his own desires. Todd’s declaration that he “could not endure the thought of seeing Rebecca the wife of another” does little to mitigate the bald, mercantile-minded, emotionless instrumentality of the statements that precede it. Rebecca is introduced to the novel only three pages before Todd decides to marry her. The reader knows next to nothing about her, and Todd has said absolutely nothing about his growing love for her. The revelation of that love, and of its depth and maturity thus comes as a surprise, and reads like an afterthought, like a belated attempt by Todd to recast and, by recasting, justify and legitimize his instrumental approach to romance.

The ensuing description of Todd’s courtship reinforces the impression he gives of his motivations for marrying Rebecca. Between his nail-making and his store, Todd is too busy to woo his prospective wife. Rather than sacrifice his business dealings for romance, he arranges things so that he can do both at once: “after I came from the store in the evening, she used to come like a dove to the window [of Todd’s nail-shop]: I helped her in, where she stayed, sewing or knitting, till midnight – I working and courting, – killing two birds with one stone” (Galt, *LT* 1: 61). Although the phrase “working and courting” suggests a balance between business and romance, the lengths (having Rebecca climb through his window) that Todd goes to accommodate his romance to his business makes it clear which he is more genuinely invested in. Moreover, in “killing two birds with one stone” Todd is privileging efficiency, an instrumental value that is fundamentally at odds with any conventional (one might also say, given the idiosyncrasy of Todd’s arrangement, “normal”) conception of love, romance and courtship. The predominating instrumentality of Todd’s courtship is reinforced by the bathos of Rebecca taking the characteristically romantic action – an action which would normally be performed by the male – of climbing through her lover’s window only to sit unromantically “sewing or knitting” while he engages in the even less romantic work of

making nails.

The denouement of Todd's courtship at once confirms his instrumental approach to romance, and gestures towards the terms of a complex reconciliation of instrumental and affective attitudes. Todd's competition for Rebecca's hand is a young man "to whom she was all but engaged" (Galt, *LT* 1: 65), and who is rich as well: "[h]e was, indeed, so far above [Rebecca] in fortune, that a match between them was a thing that I could never have imagined. He kept a rich jewellery store, had houses in Broadway, and was computed to be worth at least fifty thousand dollars" (Galt, *LT* 1: 65). From Todd's instrumental perspective, he is utterly outmatched by his rival: "how hopeless for me to contend with a man of such substance! I a stranger, a humble nailer, without aught to win favour in woman's eye, and who with hard working could scarcely earn seventy-five cents a day" (Galt, *LT* 1: 65-66). Rebecca makes her choice between Todd and his rival on an affective basis, but is able to do so because of her own ability to be economically productive: "[b]ut the industrious [like the "sewing or knitting" Rebecca] are near of kin to the independent, and his wealth weighed as nothing in the eyes of Rebecca compared with the estimate of his worth, for her needle was earnest and her mind was willing" (Galt, *LT* 1: 66). This establishes a complementary relationship between instrumental and affective modes of behaviour on the basis of a prioritization of the two. To the extent that Rebecca's ability to make an affective choice is facilitated by an instrumental work ethic that frees her from the exigencies of economic want, this passage frames affective considerations as a desirable luxury that can be legitimately attained only after instrumental considerations (the essential question of how one will support oneself) have been dealt with. This is, in many ways, a succinct articulation of the pattern that dominates the novel as a whole and Todd's behaviour in particular: the affective dimension of relationships is important, but it is a luxury, a secondary consideration that should be addressed only after the instrumental questions bearing on a relationship have been resolved.¹¹⁸ If, for Todd, affective considerations are a luxury, they are not one in

118

The same pattern defines Todd's understanding of genteel social graces: he recognizes

which he indulges in his second marriage.

As has already been observed, Todd begins his account of his second marriage by stating that, “[i]f a man marry once for love, he is a fool to expect he may do so twice,” adding, “it cannot be: therefore, I say, in the choice of a second wife, one scruple of prudence is worth a pound of passion” (Galt, *LT* 1: 87). True to his word, Todd’s choice of a mate is driven by practical concerns, rather than by anything approaching romantic feeling:

I did not choose my second wife from the instincts of fondness, nor for her parentage, nor for her fortune; neither was I deluded by fair looks. I had, as I have said, my first-born needing tendance; and my means were small, while my cares were great. I accordingly looked about for a sagacious woman – one that not only knew the use of needles and shears, but that the skirt of an old green coat might, for lack of other stuff, be a clout [patch] to the knees of blue trowsers. (Galt, *LT* 1: 88)

Todd’s rejection of the criteria of “fondness,” “parentage,” “fortune,” and “fair looks” in favour of a combination of thriftiness and domestic accomplishment drives home the single-mindedness of his instrumental approach to his second marriage. The qualities Todd wants in his second wife invite a comparison between Todd and Corbet’s second marriages. As “very much the right sort of wife to make a bright hearth with a narrow income” (Galt, *BC* 2: 63), Urseline would certainly know “that the skirt of an old green coat might . . . be a clout to the knees of blue trowsers” (Galt, *LT* 1: 88), and would just as certainly meet, if not exceed, Todd’s criteria. Corbet’s regular annoyance with the very qualities in Urseline that Todd is looking for in his second wife make the two men’s second marriages one of the points in the novels when the protagonists are directly juxtaposed and the differences between their value systems are thrown into stark relief. In looking for a “sagacious [hard-working] woman,” Todd is effectively looking for a female version of his own “sagacious,” hard-working self, a partner in his tireless pursuit of wealth. Ultimately, he finds such a partner in Judith Hoskins, a woman who can, in her

their value, but only as a desirable luxury that one should seek to acquire after one has made one’s fortune, not in the process of making one’s fortune, and certainly never before.

uncle's words, "liver the milk of our thirteen cows afore eight in the morning, and then fetch Crumple and her calf from the Bush" (Galt, *LT* 1: 91).

In keeping with Todd's more exclusively instrumental approach to his second marriage, the arrangement is even closer to a business deal than his first marriage. When introducing the topic of his second marriage, Todd explains what he thinks of doweries:

I do not assert that he [a man looking for a second wife] should have an eye to dowry; for unless it is a great sum, such as will keep all the family in gentility, I think a small fortune one of the greatest faults a young woman can have; not that I object to the money on its own account, but only to its effects in the airs and vanities it begets in the silly maiden, especially if her husband profits from it. (Galt, *LT* 1: 87-88)

The exception Todd makes for "great sum[s]" and his clarification that his "object[ion] [is not] to the money on its own account" suggest that he is less than committed to his position on doweries, and this suggestion is confirmed by the dealings surrounding his marriage to Judith. Todd states:

I made a proposal for Miss Judith, and soon after a paction [an agreement] was settled between me and her, that when the Fair American arrived from Palermo, we should be married; for she had a share in the codfish venture by that bark, and we counted that the profit might prove a nest-egg; and it did so, to the blithesome tune of four hundred and thirty-three dollars, which the old gentleman [Judith's uncle] counted out to me in the hard on the wedding day. (Galt, *LT* 1: 92-93)

This sentence closes both Todd's discussion of the marriage, and the chapter in which it occurs. Thus the last the reader hears of the marriage is of the money that changes hands on the occasion. What is more, the date of the wedding is determined by the successful completion of a business venture. Indeed, the marriage is so thoroughly bound up with financial and business matters, and so thoroughly devoid of sentiment of any kind that it is difficult to see it as anything other than a straightforward business transaction.

As with Todd's first marriage, the concatenation of business dealings and personal relationships in his second marriage results in the objectification of Todd's bride, indeed, in her effective reduction to a body to be possessed, a commodity to be exchanged. Todd approaches Judith's uncle to discuss the marriage before proposing to her, and Mr. Hoskins responds to Todd's inquiries by describing one of Judith's past suitors:

I can tell the Squire [Mr. Hoskins' nickname for Todd] as how Benjamin S. Thuds – what is blacksmith in our village – offered me two hundred and fifty dollars . . . in my hand right away; but you see, as how he was an almighty boozier, though for blacksmithing a prime hammer, – I said no, no, and there she is still to be had. (Galt, *LT* 1: 92)

Despite the fact that this is preceded by Mr. Hoskins' declaration that he “shan't ask no nothing for her [Judith]” (Galt, *LT* 1: 92), the passage has the inevitable effect of framing Todd's suit for Judith as a business negotiation – an effect magnified by Todd's explicit disavowal of any affective motivations. In fact, Todd arrives at his proposal to Judith by first “enter[ing] more into the marrow of the business” (Galt, *LT* 1: 92) with Mr. Hoskins. What is more, Todd makes his “proposal *for* Miss Judith” (Galt *LT* 1: 92, emphasis added), rather than *to* Miss Judith, suggesting that he may have finalized the marriage with Mr. Hoskins instead of with her. Although Todd does “make a paction” (Galt, *LT* 1: 92) with Judith, their agreement is about the date of the wedding, rather than about the conditions of the marriage. Indeed, it is only the detail that the “four hundred and thirty-three dollars” (Galt, *LT* 1: 93) passes from Mr. Hoskins to Todd, and not in the other direction, that prevents the reader from being justified in thinking that Todd is buying a wife from Mr. Hoskins. Although Judith has neither been bought or sold, she is nevertheless assigned such a marginal role in the proceedings that she is reduced to an object, to something over which men barter, to a commodity that they exchange. If Todd does not buy his second wife, he does effectively buy his third wife.

Todd begins his account of his marriage to Mrs. Greenknowe by looking back over his first two marriages: he inaccurately presents his marriage to Rebecca as a love match made in “def[iance] [of] poverty” (Galt, *LT* 3: 100) and of common sense, confirms that his marriage to Judith “was founded more on convenience than on impassioned love” (Galt, *LT* 3: 100), and makes the correct but callous observation that, at least in his case, “the gathering of gear [possessions] makes the heart sordid” (Galt, *LT* 3: 100).¹¹⁹ Todd is

119

The declaration could easily stand as the moral of Sir Neil's failed romance with Leezy. This link between Sir Neil and Todd suggests that what is at stake in the last volume of

now a rich man, a man with a great deal of “gear.” In keeping with his observation, his courtship of Mrs. Greenknowe is a sordid (in the sense of “mercenary”) one, and his third marriage takes the form of a more or less straightforward business deal that is recognized as such by both parties involved. Todd begins his proposal by explaining what he requires in a wife and he concludes it by itemizing what he offers in return:

I want a friend and companion, – one who, content within herself, feels no trouble in promoting the satisfaction of others, and who is likely to know that the first duty of a wedded wife consists in smoothing the pillow of her husband . . . and though I cannot offer you a beau versed in the rites and ceremonies of what your aunt calls ‘good society,’ I can pledge you a faithful hand and honest heart, and will settle upon you a competency of God’s blessings. (Galt, *LT* 3: 102)

The barely veiled implications of “smoothing the pillow of her husband” (providing sexual favors) and “settle upon you a competency of God’s blessings” (give you a substantial inheritance) make Todd sound more like he is bargaining with a potential mistress than proposing to a prospective mate. This reading is only reinforced by his subsequent recognition that his is “rather a bargain-like declaration” (Galt, *LT* 3: 102). Todd’s proposal suggests that in his third marriage he has arrived at the negative limit of instrumentality hinted at by the negotiations surrounding his second marriage; it suggests, in effect, that he sees Mrs. Greenknowe as a commodity that can be bought, as a means to his own ends, rather than as an end in her own right. This, however, is not the case.

Although Todd’s proposal is unconventionally direct, certainly “bargain-” or business-like, and indisputably instrumental in character, it is not evidence that his instrumentality has reached a profoundly unethical extreme; rather, his proposal is unconventional, but, because it is unconventional, uniquely appropriate to his and Mrs. Greenknowe’s respective characters and situations. Todd explains that “Mrs. Greenknowe was not one to be warmed by metaphorical flowers, or pierced with figurative darts” (Galt, *LT* 3: 102-03), and the considered “discretion” (Galt, *LT* 3: 103) with which she replies not only confirms the accuracy of Todd’s characterization, but also

the novel is Todd’s moral character – that is, whether he will show himself to be ethically instrumental, or narrowly, and selfishly so.

suggests that she shares his business-like approach to matrimony. In fact, Mrs. Greenknowe is almost a mirror image of Todd. As she explains to him, her late husband was the love of her life, and, although she is willing to remarry, she cannot “give an entire heart” (Galt, *LT* 3: 103); like Todd, her personal losses cause her to see marriage in primarily instrumental, rather than affective, terms, and she is perfectly comfortable settling their union like a business deal. Moreover, instead of reducing Mrs. Greenknowe to the status of a commodity, the bluntness, honesty and directness of Todd’s proposal affirms her agency by allowing her (rather than a third party, like a father, brother, or other male relative) to act as an agent on her own behalf, and to negotiate terms and conditions of which she approves. Unlike Todd’s second marriage, there is never any suggestion that anyone other than the very capable, clear thinking, and self-possessed Mrs. Greenknowe decides her fate.

Because of Mrs. Greenknowe’s character and situation, and, in particular, her unique willingness to accept Todd’s brutally insensitive and business-like honesty, his normally socially inappropriate instrumentality is not just a reasonable means of navigating the situation, but the best, the most socially and affectively appropriate means. In Todd’s third marriage lie both the apotheosis of his instrumental approach to matrimony, and a demonstration of the fact that his approach is extremely idiosyncratic, but not unethical: it is highly unorthodox, but not manipulatively exploitative; and similar to, but never the same as, Sir Neil’s approach to relationships. This episode does the important work – especially important after Todd’s extremely questionable marriage to his second wife – of firmly casting Todd’s instrumentality as an ethical instrumentality, but does so within the limited context of Mrs. Greenknowe’s willingness to tolerate his socially unacceptable behavior. It thus shows his instrumentality to be a legitimate and functional, but fundamentally inadequate, means of approaching amorous relationships.

If Corbet’s marriage to Urseline suggests the possibility of a productive reconciliation between an ethical instrumentality and Corbet’s own, exclusively affective approach to relationships, Todd’s marriage to Mrs. Greenknowe stresses the necessity of his instrumentality being tempered by the affective sensitivity that both he and Mrs.

Greenknowe lack.¹²⁰ In this way, Todd and Corbet's marriages illustrate their respective approaches to relationships, highlight the inadequacies of those approaches, and quite directly suggest that their inadequacies can be remedied by an amalgamation of the defining qualities of the two men: both Corbet and Todd are less than ideal suitors, but a man with Todd's instrumental sensibility and Corbet's affective sensitivity would be, if not perfect, then much closer to perfect than either Corbet or Todd.

II

Poorer Together, Happier Apart: Corbet, Todd, and Community

In addition to being expressed in the microcosm of their marriages, Corbet's and Todd's affective and instrumental approaches to relationships also and just as importantly determine their conceptions of, engagements with, and commitments to the macrocosm of the communities in which they find themselves. For Corbet, a community is an affective union, a group of people joined by deeply felt affective bonds whose commitment to each other's emotional well being stands as a safeguard against the atomizing effects of the marketplace, and the objectifying pressures of an individualistic and utilitarian age. Predictably, Todd's conception of community is the mirror opposite of Corbet's. For Todd, a community is nothing more or less than a convenient business arrangement entered into for the purposes of mutual profit that has no more ability to inspire affective commitment than the paper on which a deed of ownership is written. Like their approaches to romantic relationships, their respective understandings of community are shown to be equally narrow and inadequate, and result in both men being differently but equally alienated from their respective communities.

In Canadian Architexts: Essays on Literature and Architecture in Canada, 1759-

¹²⁰

The inadequacy of Todd's instrumentality and the importance of it being mediated by affective sensitivity is driven home by the juxtaposition of his embarrassment of Miss Beenie with his proposal to Mrs. Greenknowe. I discuss the Miss Beenie episode in greater detail in a subsequent section.

2005, Bentley points out that two references to Todd in *Bogle Corbet* “suggest that . . . Corbet will be applying Todd’s lessons and strategies to the creation of a settlement in Upper Canada” and then distinguishes Corbet’s settlement from Todd’s:

unlike Todd’s Judiville, Corbet’s Stockwell is the result of communal effort rather than individual entrepreneurship. Indeed, it is the materialization of what is arguably a distinctively (Upper) Canadian society, one that seeks to harness Yankee ingenuity to “the co-operative spirit” or the desire to “live in community.” (“Chapter 4: Rising and Spreading Villages: the Architexts of New Settlements” III)

Bentley then observes Corbet’s use of Aesop’s fable of “The Bundle of Sticks” to re-unite the group of emigrants when they are considering striking out on their own, and argues that this shows that “the principle upon which the settlement is founded is ‘the common good’” (“Chapter 4: Rising and Spreading Villages: the Architexts of New Settlements” III). Bentley is not wrong, but he is, also, not entirely right. At least as Corbet envisions it, Stockwell *is* founded on the principle of the common good, but on that principle as uniquely and idiosyncratically understood by Corbet.

The passage that Bentley cites from Corbet’s speech to the gathered emigrants¹²¹ emphasizes the utility of a community’s “united strength,” a strength that can and “will effect far more with less effort than your utmost separate endeavors” (*BC* 3: 33). The passage, however, is taken from the very beginning of Corbet’s speech, and, as he goes on, Corbet shifts his emphasis away from a utilitarian understanding of community towards a view of the benefits of a united community that is much more characteristically his own:

In sickness, and in accident, you will have friends and helpmates at hand. You will be spared, while you continue together, from that sense of forlornness to which the solitary tenant of the forest is necessarily exposed, and which, as you must all have heard, is so dismal. Besides, by beginning with a town, you follow the course of Nature, but in scattering yourselves abroad in the forest, you become,

¹²¹

Bentley quotes the following sentence: “If you separate in the wilderness, you will soon find yourselves as weak as each of the several sticks when the bundle was loosened – but if you adhere to each other, your united strength will effect more with less effort than your utmost separate endeavours” (Galt, *BC* 3: 33).

as it were, banished men. You will take upon yourselves a penalty and suffering, such as only rejected culprits should endure. I beseech you to think well of this – a single family, the most numerous and strongest among you, will be several days in constructing a permanent habitation. If the ague fall among you, what is to be done to provide the needful shelter for the sick? whereas, if you continue together, your united exertions will serve in a short time for the construction of an asylum for all, and your toil will be enlivened by society. (Galt, *BC* 3: 33-34)

With its references to “friends,” “forlornness” and the pleasures of company, the concluding and better part of Corbet’s speech re-frames the emigrants’ decision as a choice between affective fulfillment and emotional disenfranchisement. It also turns on an appeal to an understanding of the projected town of Stockwell as a community united by powerful affective bonds, and thus committed to nurturing the bodies *and* the hearts of its inhabitants. Corbet recasts his initial comparison of the productivity of the “Yankee” individualism of “every man work[ing] for himself on his own farm” (Galt, *BC* 3: 32) and “the co-operative spirit” (Galt, *BC* 3: 250) as a contrast between the “Natur[al]” life of men in society and the degraded existence of a “banished m[a]n,” a prodigal, an exile. Corbet explains that to chose anti-sociability is to “take upon yourselves a penalty” and become “culprits,” aligning anti-sociability with the extremes of criminality and unnaturalness. The choice between sociability and anti-sociability thus has far more obviously dire consequences than that between greater and lesser productivity, and stands over and above the issue of productivity as the central question the emigrants must answer. Corbet is certainly asking them, do you want to stay together and be more productive? But he is even more loudly, more pointedly, and more pressingly asking them, do you want to be together and happy, or alone, lonely and degraded? Indeed, with its repeated references to illness, references that allude to the vulnerability of the sick, their reliance on the goodwill of the healthy, and their need for both physical *and* emotional comfort, and with its climactic invocation of the joys of shared labour, all of Corbet’s speech following “The Bundle of Sticks” fable works to minimize the significance of the increased productivity of communal labour in favour of foregrounding the crucial importance of the affective benefits of community. To adapt Corbet’s words, his message is that “united strength will effect far more with less effort” (Galt, *BC* 3: 33),

but, also and far, far more important, that “united exertions . . . will be enlivened by society.”

Corbet’s appeal to a primarily, if not essentially, affective conception of community and of the common good is initially successful. He is, for the moment, able to hold off the atomizing and objectifying forces of acquisitive individualism. Andrew Gimlet, the man who initially suggested that the emigrants all fend for themselves, is convinced, and the emigrants’ wives, who are concerned about the well being of their children, soon prevail over their husbands, who “have [been thinking] only of making property” (Galt, *BC* 3: 36). However, although the wisdom of Corbet’s argument is confirmed by a violent thunderstorm that reminds the emigrants “of the helplessness of an individual when left to his own exertions” (Galt, *BC* 3: 33), he is, over the long term, incapable of imposing his vision of community on Stockwell. As Bentley observes, “[w]hile the emigrants are living in the ‘house of general shelter’ (and being encouraged in their exertions by ‘the irksomeness of living in community’ (Galt was by no means a utopian socialist)), ‘roads’ are opened, the ‘townplot . . . [is] divided into half acres,’ and ‘separate houses’ are constructed” (“Chapter 4: Rising and Spreading Villages: the Architexts of New Settlements” III). But once the settlers move into their own houses they drift away from Corbet’s affective communitarianism, becoming more individualistic, and adopting a more obviously utilitarian/instrumental approach to community. The building of the grist-mill illustrates the growing divide between Corbet and the citizens of Stockwell.

The construction of the grist-mill is an indisputably communal project, but its organization is at odds with Corbet’s values, and its realization shows how irrelevant he has become to the well-being of the settlement.¹²² When he recognizes the need for a mill, Corbet decides that he will build a “simple and small [one] such as the existing

122

However irrelevant Corbet becomes to Stockwell, his ability to rally the emigrants together during the early stages of settlement *is* essential to the success of the town. Although the town outgrows him and his ability to make meaningful contributions to its continuing development, Corbet does play an indisputably crucial role in its foundation.

population only required” (Galt, *BC* 3: 249) at his own expense, but he quickly comes into conflict with the more forward-thinking, entrepreneurial members of the community. Led by the American, Zebede L. Bacon, the settlers decide “that a mill on a [much] larger scale should be built and become the property of the subscribers” (Galt, *BC* 3: 250). A mill of this size would both serve the needs of the larger community of the future, and allow the subscribers to turn a tidy profit on their labour. The settlers need Corbet to provide the initial funds for the project, but he is unwilling to do so until he hears Bacon’s solution to the problem of the settlers having no money of their own with which to match Corbet’s investment:

he [Bacon] suggested with, what I [Corbet] deemed, considerable ingenuity, that the subscribers should give me each what is called a bon [a signed contract stipulating that the signatory agrees to work a set number of days for the person who holds the contract] for the respective number of days’ labour they were willing to contribute to the erection of the mill, and that purchasers would be found for these bons among those who had work to do. (Galt, *BC* 3: 255)

Although this plan, and the “new species of paper currency” it entails “please . . . [Corbet] excessively, and [he] consent[s] at once to suspend [his] own work, and to commence a mill on a larger scale” (Galt, *BC* 3: 255-56), there are two clear problems with it: Corbet plays a marginal, and only provisionally necessary role in the enterprise; and, in accepting his role in the undertaking, he endorses the instrumental objectification of the settlers, and compromises his values.

The planning and construction of the mill sees Corbet move into a secondary role in the community as he loses his positions as planner, organizer, motivator, and, crucially, leader. The plan itself originates with Bacon, and it is Bacon, rather than Corbet, who oversees the project. “The construction of a mill-dam, in Canada during the winter,” Corbet explains, “had never occurred to me as practicable” (Galt, *BC* 3: 256), but Bacon knows it can be done, and work starts under his direction. Corbet’s description of the building of the dam foregrounds Bacon’s contribution, and casts him, rather than Corbet, as the driving force behind the project:

he [Bacon] selected in the forest the fittest trees for *his* purpose, the trunks of which . . . *he* easily drew to the spot. Across the river Slant *he* laid a row for *his*

first layers, and upon these *he* placed a range of short pieces . . . On these again *he* placed two parallel lines of others across the stream . . . When thus . . . *he* had built the embankment of the dam, *he* laid planks upon it, and made it tight and serviceable. (Galt, *BC* 3: 256-57, emphasis added)

A reader who did not know better would think that Bacon was building the dam on his own. He is, however, being helped by the other subscribers, and, as Corbet has done several times before, Bacon takes it on himself to lift the morale of the settlers, “encouraging by his example the others to persevere” (Galt, *BC* 3: 257). Corbet remarks that “it was impossible to contemplate the proceedings without pleasure” (Galt, *BC* 3: 257), and “contemplating” seems to be all that he does. Indeed, Corbet’s passive observation from a position outside of the group of settlers is suggestive of his marginalization with respect to both the project and the community that undertakes it. Unlike Bacon, Corbet brings neither ingenuity, expertise, nor the ability to motivate the subscribers to the project. In fact, Corbet’s sole roles in the project are as its financial backer, and as the manager of the “bons,” a task effectively assigned to him because of the hard currency he has contributed. This suggests that Corbet is only necessary to the community so long as they have limited financial resources of their own – that is, that his function is that of a provisional expedient rather than that of a permanent and valued member of the community.¹²³

This suggestion is confirmed by Corbet’s diminished role in the next project that the settlers undertake. “[T]he lesson [of] the subscription,” Corbet explains, “was not lost after the mill was finished” (Galt, *BC* 3: 258), and the settlers resort to the same method to build a church. This time, however, they do not need Corbet to fund the project, and his only involvement is “check[ing] their [the settlers’] readiness to issue bons for labour” to prevent them “grant[ing] orders for more than they could pay or reform” (Galt, *BC* 3: 258). In the space of one project, Corbet goes from key financial backer to detached

123

As a provisional expedient, Corbet becomes a means to an end for the settlers, and there is no sense of communal spirit or gratitude on their part to suggest otherwise. In effect, the building of the mill implicates Corbet in exactly the sort of instrumental relationships that he otherwise finds abhorrent.

regulator. Moreover, the settlers will likely learn Corbet's lesson just as quickly as they learned Bacon's, and no longer need Corbet at all in the future. In fact, immediately after describing his minimal involvement in the building of the church, Corbet shifts his focus to the religious life of the community and keeps it there for the remainder of the chapter, never returning to the topic of building projects, and implying by his silence that he no longer has a part in this important aspect of the life and development of Stockwell. Thus, far from marking a high point in Corbet's engagement with the community of Stockwell, the building of the mill and of the church demonstrate the divide that separates him from the settlers, charting his progressive alienation from the community that he has helped to found, and registering his growing irrelevance to the town that he had hoped to lead.

Despite Corbet's manifest desire to be fully integrated into the community of settlers, his alienation from them is by no means the most problematic aspect of the building of the mill. When read in the light of Corbet's previous statements about community, the episode takes on a troubling dimension, insinuating that, in accepting his role in the project, Corbet compromises his most basic values by abetting the emergence of a communal structure that is the antithesis of the affective union he has imagined for Stockwell. The first volume of the novel closes with a discussion between Corbet and the Jamaican plantation owner Mr. Beans in which Beans displays "the coarse morality of [his] country" (Galt, *BC* 1: 306) by defending the institution of slavery on the basis that it is merely an inevitable and rational expression of the structures of English society. Beans argues that "Natural rights," such as freedom, no longer exist for "[w]hen society was formed, . . . they [were] cancelled, and social privileges substituted" (Galt, *BC* 1: 310). "The natural [and unequal] endowments of individuals," he explains, "constitute the means by which they are enabled to acquire property" (Galt, *BC* 1: 310), and, he adds, "society permits the individual to enjoy the exercise of his faculties, and whatever results to him from that exercise, it acknowledges to be his own; to deprive him of it in any way, is a violation of the social compact" (Galt, *BC* 1: 310). It is on the foundation of this vision of society as a conglomeration of competing individuals, and of the social compact as an agreement to protect the right of individuals to compete with one another that Beans

builds his defense/justification of slavery:

our [the Jamaican plantation owners'] very existence depends on a right understanding of [these principles]: for our property consists of slaves; and if there be one thing more than another which can be described as a natural right, it is surely liberty; and yet nothing is more certain than that it is the very first thing of which society strips man when he becomes a social being. The moment that property is recognised, in the same instant the claim of man over man is acknowledged. In a general view, the labourer for his necessaries confesses his submission to masterdom; but in a stricter sense, what security can the man who has no property give the other from whom he buys it, but a right over his person – all law assents to this – and the man in debt is a slave. (Galt, *BC* 1: 311-2)

Beans exculpates himself and his fellow slave owners by conflating slavery and indebtedness, and equating the slave master with the man who controls the “security” of another. From Beans’ perspective, this makes slavery a perfectly normal extension of the less obviously objectionable economic relations of free men, but, from Corbet’s perspective (that of a man who cannot endorse “the coarse morality” of the plantation owners¹²⁴), Beans’ argument stands as a powerful condemnation of the objectification of men by competitive economic systems. Corbet proposes the alternative of “the Moravian system of living in community – the co-operative system” (Galt, *BC* 1: 310) to Beans’

124

Corbet’s attitude towards the institution of slavery is disapproving, but ambivalently so. He categorically refuses to entertain any suggestions of the racial inferiority of slaves, explaining to a perplexed plantation owner: “I only think that they are black and we are white. I never said any thing of their inferiority” (Galt, *BC* 2: 30). He accepts that “abstractly, all philanthropists are agreed as to the political rights which ought to belong to negroes,” but he also observes that “the condition they [the “negroes”] so happily enjoy, ‘must ever give me pause,’ and it makes, undoubtedly, ‘their calamity of so long life,’ if calamity it be, compared with the condition of other labourers elsewhere” (Galt, *BC* 2: 31). Thus Corbet favours emancipation, but, because of his inaccurately rosy view of the lives of Jamaican slaves, he is not willing to broadly condemn a system within which slaves are apparently treated better than English labourers. However ambivalent Corbet may be about the slave system in Jamaica, he is still opposed to slavery as an institution, and, from his perspective, Beans’ argument is indisputably a condemnation of competitive economic systems that objectify/instrumentalize workers. “I found myself no match for Mr. Beans” (Galt, *BC* 1: 312), Corbet explains after Beans makes his case, implying that it is Corbet’s lack of ability, not his lack of desire, that prevents him from mounting a counter argument.

individualistic, competitive, and profoundly pessimistic view of social and economic relations. The concluding chapter of the first volume thus juxtaposes the communitarian spirit of cooperation with a pessimistic and exploitative instrumentalism with Corbet firmly on the side of the former.

Although Corbet explains that the proposal for building the mill has taught him “that there is much more of the co-operative spirit abroad on this continent” (Galt, *BC* 3: 250) than he had thought and frames the project as an expression of “the co-operative system” that he favours, the system of building by subscription actually bears a much closer resemblance to Beans’ vision of society than to Corbet’s. The “bons” that the settlers offer Corbet in the place of money are promissory notes for set numbers of days of labour that they are willing to do, or, in Beans’ terms, notes that give the holder “a right over [each settler’s] person” (Galt, *BC* 1: 312). Moreover, the settlers resort to these notes because, again in Beans’ terms, this is the only “security” they can give because they “ha[ve] no [other] property” (Galt, *BC* 1: 312). It is Corbet’s job to find buyers for the notes – that is, to trade in the persons of the settlers, to sell the objectified labour of the citizens of Stockwell. The project thus places Corbet in a position that is analogous to that of the affable but perverse slave owner Beans. Far from being an instance of powerful affective bonds uniting Stockwell in a cooperative communal project, the building of the mill is an assertion of the desire for personal profit organized along the pattern of the novel’s most extreme example of the antithesis of Corbet’s affective communitarianism. Far from marking the achievement of Corbet’s hopes for Stockwell and for his own role in the community, the project is an expression of the a-affective instrumentalism that he finds abhorrent, and his involvement in it drives home the fact that he can only participate in the community on terms that vitiate that participation and violate his core principles. If an instrumentalist, individualistic project like the mill is antithetical to Corbet’s conception of community, it is perfectly in line with Todd’s.

Todd sees a community as a group of individuals united by their desire for personal profit, rather than by any affective commitment to each other or any ideological commitment to the common good. Instead of attempting to nurture a communal spirit,

Todd takes an almost exclusively instrumental approach to the settlement that he helps to found, deliberately, consistently, and consciously placing his own desires ahead of the good of the community.¹²⁵ Judiville is named for Todd's second wife, and the founding of the settlement is marked with the felling of the first tree "with a sound like thunder, banishing the *loneliness* and silence of the woods for ever" (Galt, *LT* 2: 59, emphasis added). The name and the moment appear to be rich with affective associations, and seem to imply that Todd has much the same vision for Judiville that Corbet has for Stockwell, but nothing could be further from the case. As has been seen, Todd's marriage to Judith is much closer to a business deal than a love match, and his use of her name suggests that he sees the town primarily as a business venture. This suggestion is confirmed by Hoskins' toast to the settlement, "Prosperity to Judiville" (Galt, *LT* 2: 59), which is as good as saying, "Prosperity to Judiville's two investors" or to Hoskins and Todd. Chosen by the settlers themselves because it reminds them of home,¹²⁶ Stockwell is actually a far more personal, a far more emotionally charged, and a far more communally minded name than Judiville.¹²⁷ "[B]anishing the loneliness . . . of the woods" signals the introduction of community into the wilderness, but, from the perspective of Todd, who is a shop keeper, it also signals the opportunity for profit. Despite the superficial emotional content of the name of the settlement, and the equally superficial pomp and ceremony of its foundation, the establishment of Judiville is a business venture motivated by the straightforward

¹²⁵

This does not mean that Todd actively attempts to undermine Judiville or retard its development. Todd works (often tirelessly) to help Judiville grow, but he does so primarily because the development of the settlement allows him to make a great deal of money and become a very rich man.

¹²⁶

Galt writes: "[i]n Glasgow there is an old well-known street called 'The Stockwell'" (*BC* 3: 38).

¹²⁷

In so far as Todd feels anything for his second wife, Judiville is an expression of a personal sentiment, and his choice of the name is an exercise of personal authority. Stockwell, on the other hand, is an expression of a communal feeling, a name chosen through consensus by a community united by their shared nostalgia for a common origin.

desire for profit rather than by any high-minded communitarian or cooperative ideals.

Todd's management of Judiville reflects the conception of community expressed in the foundation of the settlement. Unlike Corbet, who strengthens the communal spirit of the settlers by arranging for them to initially live together in a "house of general shelter" (Galt, *BC* 3:39), when Todd recognizes that Judiville is becoming a popular settlement, he carefully arranges the distribution of his lots to maximize his profit at the expense of the emerging community:

Seeing the increasing demand for land, I laid out my twenty thousand acres in a way which was greatly approved. First, around Mr. Hoskins' five hundred acres, I made an extensive reservation, immediately contiguous to Judiville Second, I divided the remainder of my block into parallel lots . . . but I did not allow the settlers to pick and choose. At first, I only allowed every third lot to be sold, then every second, and finally, those which then remained vacant; making a considerable advantage in the price, when the first class was sold off, and so with the third, when the second was disposed of. In this way . . . I obtained, as the settlement proceeded, prices far above my expectation for the lots, without touching the reservation round Judiville, which I kept back until the main part of my pre-emption should be sold. (Galt, *LT* 2: 99-100)

For the specific purpose of increasing the value of his land, Todd keeps the settlers as far apart from each other as possible, actively interposing the physical barrier of the uncleared bush between them and the formation of a thriving, tightly-knit community, and subjecting them to "that forlornness to which the solitary tenant of the forest is necessarily exposed" (Galt, *BC* 3: 33). Todd also holds back the lots around the town itself, preventing the geographical, and, it might be justifiably added, the symbolic heart of the community from developing. His management of the land demonstrates that, in stark contrast to Corbet, Todd has no investment whatsoever in the feelings of individual settlers or the emotional life of the emerging settlement. Todd does not even move to Judiville himself until it begins to surpass Bablemandel, at which point he sees that he can do brisker business at a new establishment in Judiville than at his existing store in Bablemandel. The acquisitive, a-affective entrepreneuralism that governs Todd's distribution of the land around Judiville is typical of an instrumental attitude towards community that he himself articulates: "I have always considered the establishment of the

Bank as the making of the town: other causes, no doubt, contribute also, and the mills essentially . . . but no sooner did Mr. Herbert open his doors, than a new life issued from them, quickening and stirring up the energies of all trades” (Galt, *LT 2*: 293-94).

Todd’s lack of meaningful affective investment in Judiville is driven home by his refusal to represent the community in the State Legislature as well as by his subsequent departure from the town. Todd explains his decision to decline the appointment to the gathered townfolk:

It may seem to some of you that the land which contains a man’s business, property and family, is his country – and I know that this is a sentiment encouraged here – but I have been educated in other opinions, and where the love of country is blended with the love of parents – a love which hath no relations to condition, but is absolute and immutable – poor or rich, the parent can neither be more nor less to the child than always his parent, – and I feel myself bound to my native land by recollections grown into feeling of the same kind as those remembrances of parental love which constitute the indissoluble cement of filial attachment. (Galt, *LT 3*: 210)

In contravention of the principles that inform both the foundation of Judiville and the more general project of settlement, for Todd, the work of settlement, of acquiring land, of building a home and a business, and of raising a family does not foster an emotional attachment either to the place or the society in which one does it. This is as close as Todd gets in the novel to directly saying that he has an exclusively instrumental relationship to the community of Judiville – that, in short, he views community as a means to the fulfillment of his own ends, rather than as an end in itself. In the light of his recent return trip to Scotland, his excuse that he feels nothing for Judiville because of a “love of [his home] country” that is strengthened by “the love of his parents” rings false. Todd may say that he loves Scotland when he is rejecting Judiville, but his sentiments are far less positive when he “bid[s] [his] native land adieu . . . – perhaps for ever – . . . because it seem[s] to offer [him] no resting place” (Galt, *LT 3*: 117): he observes that he is “not in harmony with the new generation,” and remarks tellingly that, “[o]f all the passages of [his] life, this visit to Scotland was the most unsatisfactory” (Galt, *LT 3*: 117). Todd’s use of his dubious, and probably non-existent affective commitment to Scotland as an excuse

for having no emotional investment in Judiville draws attention to his lack of substantial feeling for any existing community – any community, that is, in which he could actively participate, and the incident stands as one of the novel’s clearest demonstrations of Todd’s persistent individualism and of his equally persistent instrumental attitude towards community. He explains:

I cannot in honesty accept the honour you propose for me . . . I cannot serve your national interests with all my heart . . . all I can give, honour, esteem, the love of mind, you already possess, but the heart’s love – that love which was bred and twined within my bosom before we ever met, cannot be given, for it belongs to one that is far away. (Galt, *LT* 3: 211-12)

However, Todd’s self-description would be more accurate if he said, “I cannot serve [any communal interest] with . . . my heart[:] [my] heart’s love . . . cannot be given” (Galt, *LT* 3: 211-12), for his refusal makes it abundantly clear that Todd is incapable of anything but an instrumental (and a- or anti-affective) engagement with community.

Todd confirms his total lack of affective investment in community with his decision to leave Judiville, and, even more significantly, with the life he chooses after he leaves. As he puts it, “I . . . had some anxiety concerning where to fix our place of rest; but, after due consultations, both my wife and I agreed that we ought to make our first domicile in London, where we could enjoy ourselves in our own way more unheeded than in the country” (Galt, *LT* 3: 282-83). In choosing London because he and his wife will be more “unheeded” there, Todd chooses the anonymity of the metropolis over the affiliation of the small town, and asserts a preference for being out of, rather than in, community. Moreover, his designation of London as the location of their “*first* domicile” (emphasis added) puts the lie to the idea that he is going “to fix [their] place of rest” permanently by intimating that he will, in time, move on to another city, to another domicile in another place where he can be “unheeded,” and to another after that, in a process of perpetual relocation that will prevent him from ever becoming a member of a community again. Nothing in the novel attests to Todd’s indifference to, if not outright dislike for, community more forcefully than his choice of the life of a well-heeled, and willfully disconnected social nomad.

At the same time that it reflects his view of community, Todd's refusal to represent Judiville demonstrates that, just as with their approach to relationships, Corbet's and Todd's attitudes towards and engagements with community are symmetrical opposites. Todd is asked to accept an official leadership position, but refuses it because of his lack of emotional commitment to Judiville; Corbet has the requisite emotional investment in Stockwell, and would certainly leap at the opportunity to represent the community, but, because he lacks Todd's shrewd business sense and proven ability to manage people and projects, he will never receive an offer from the citizens of Stockwell like the one Todd gets from the people of Judiville. One desires, the other is indifferent. One has a superabundance of feeling, the other an absence of feeling. One has an excess of ability, the other a deficit. And, again just as with their approach to relationships, Todd's and Corbet's symmetry – their establishment as mirror opposites of one another, opposites whose strengths and weaknesses are perfectly counterbalanced – suggests an ideal figure who would combine the best of both men. Such an ideal communal leader would unite Corbet's affective commitment to the common good with Todd's practical ability to achieve that good: he would be ideal because of his productive integration of the opposites incarnated by the two men, because, in a word, of his breadth.

III

Their Better and Worse Selves: Todd and Corbet's Doubles

Both Todd and Corbet are doubled by secondary characters who throw into relief the more significant features of the protagonists' characters, specifically, their flaws: the contrast between Corbet's gentility and his repeated failures in business, and Eric Pulicate's ascent from low-class mechanic to captain of industry drives home how poorly suited Corbet is to the "commercial circumstances of the age" (Galt, *BC* 1: iv); Bailey Waft's exaggerated rudeness and his penchant for imitating everything Todd does highlight Todd's own problematic lack of social graces and the crucial role mimicry plays in his success. Needless to say, both Todd and Corbet hate their doubles. Corbet

repeatedly insists that Pulicate is “without question an honest man” (Galt, *BC* 1:91) and praises his business sense. Corbet also happily accepts help from Pulicate that ranges from “enlarg[ing] Corbet’s understanding” (Galt, *BC* 1: 51) by inviting him to join the Jacobin club at Mr. Thrums to advising Corbet on his decision to emigrate. Nevertheless, Corbet’s double “inspire[s] [in him] something like the antipathy for Doctor Fell” (Galt, *BC* 1:45) – that is, an irrational dislike that is childish and unmerited, but no less staunch for being so. Similarly, Todd willingly acknowledges Waft as “a well-disposed, industrious creature” and “an honest well-meaning bodie [person]” (Galt, *LT* 1: 264, 265), but dismisses him as “a perfect pest” who is always “breaking in upon [his] time” (Galt, *LT* 1: 264, 265). Todd may confess that he “h[as] a strong regard for the bodie” (Galt, *LT* 3: 284), but he rarely discusses Waft without using a derogatory epithet like “meddling bodie” (Galt, *LT* 2: 29). Pulicate and Waft are, however, much more than irritating foils. By illuminating Todd and Corbet’s flaws, they not only suggest the remedy for them, but establish a pattern of doubling that extends across the two novels, and sees Todd make a brief appearance in *Bogle Corbet*. This pattern draws Todd and Corbet together, and articulates a structure within which the extremes of lower-class instrumentality and affective gentility they incarnate can be productively reconciled.

The elements of Todd’s character that Waft brings into focus are the same highlighted by the signal event of Todd’s youth. Disappointed at not being able to see the fireworks with which the son of a nearby Duke is celebrating his birthday, the young Todd scales the wall of the estate, sneaks into the party, and blends successfully in with the guests. When it is time to leave, he finds his way blocked by a porter who is whipping the lower-class boys as they walk through the gate for “keeping him so long waiting” (Galt, *LT* 1: 20). Todd uses the sons of a gentleman who are also leaving to slip past the porter unharmed: “thereupon I attached myself to one of the boys and began to converse with him concerning the splendour we had been witnessing. As we approached towards the rampant horsemagog, I took the boy’s hand as if he had been my equal, and so slipped through the gate unmolested” (Galt, *LT* 1: 20). Immediately after describing the incident, Todd identifies it as a defining moment: “Many times have I since meditated on this

device, and on the providence of that night, when reckless of consequences, I have mounted the wall-top of some difficult enterprise” (Galt *LT* 1: 20-21). The incident’s importance is driven home by Todd’s habit of framing the challenges that he confronts in terms of it. For instance, when his ship drops anchor off of New York City, he explains, “I felt I was on the wall-top of my fortune, and that to return was as dangerous as to leap the unknown side – moreover, there was in my imagination a glimmering of bright and beautiful things” (Galt, *LT* 1: 38).

From the perspective of his retirement, Todd correctly identifies the incident as representative of the characteristics that have allowed him to overcome many of the challenges he has met in his life and realize his many successes: a propensity to aspire beyond his station, a willingness to blithely confront challenges regardless of the risks, and a “zeal [for] emulation [for mimicry] [that] animate[s] [him] in every undertaking” (Galt, *LT* 1: 17). Todd, however, has nothing to say about the weaknesses that are the counterpart of these strengths, and that are likewise highlighted by the episode. Todd’s willingness to insert himself where he does not belong, to entertain problematic, if not wholly inappropriate or anti-social, aspirations and to act on them, and his recourse to mimicry make him vulnerable to exposure, castigation, humiliation, and proscription. As with any successful social climber, the motivations that drive Todd’s ascent and the methods by which he effects it subject him to the danger of being unmasked, ridiculed, and either figuratively or literally expelled. Between imitating Todd, making fun of him, and “breaking in upon” him (Galt, *LT* 1: 264), Waft’s behaviour underscores this danger, and implies that, rather than decreasing, Todd’s vulnerability actually grows in proportion to his wealth and social standing – that is, in proportion to, the height of “the wall-top of [his] fortune” (Galt, *LT* 1: 38).

Waft’s imitation of Todd is largely restricted to his business dealings, and the most notable example of it is Waft’s proposal to open a store. Soon after Todd buys the store in Bablemandel, Waft approaches him with the idea of himself opening “a wee bit shoppie” (Galt, *LT* 1: 268). Todd initially supports the venture, but he changes his attitude towards it and Waft when he discovers that the other man plans to sell “the very

articles [Todd] had bought from Mr. Nackets [the store's original owner], and upon which [he] considered the penny was likeliest to be soonest and easiest turned" (Galt, *LT* 1: 269). Waft's plan is modelled on Todd's own favourite business strategy: it looks back to Todd's purchase of the Bablemandel store and forward to Todd's greatest business coup, the purchase of the plots of land in and around Judiville on "spec" (that is, to defer payment for the land until he himself has sold it) (Galt, *LT* 2: 37).

Todd buys the store from Nackets after recognizing that he can "make a good operation" by following the store owner's example. During a night spent at Nackets' tavern, Todd overhears two other guests talking about how Nackets is "straightened . . . for ready money, and . . . likely to sell his store-goods cheap" (Galt, *LT* 1: 255). He uses this information to get the "store-goods" for a price so low that Hoskins deems it "something extraordinary and beyond his expectations" (Galt, *LT* 1: 257). Waft's questions for Todd are a strikingly analogous attempt to gain a business advantage over someone whom he wishes to imitate by dishonestly or, at least, duplicitously acquiring insider information. Todd's purchase of the land in and around Judiville involves a similar mixture of mimicry and morally questionable manipulation.

After watching Hoskins buy his plots from a land agent, Todd hatches and carries through a plan to buy twenty thousand acres of land at a set price that is payable when he has himself sold the land to prospective settlers. This improved version of Hoskins' deal with the agent is the apotheosis of Todd's mimicry, the making of Todd's fortune, and borderline unethical, if not outright unscrupulous. The settlement and development of Hoskins' land will raise the value of Todd's and allow him to make a profit on his own plots. In effect, Todd's plan exploits Hoskins' commitment to developing the land he has purchased without giving Hoskins, Todd's friend, father-in-law, and mentor, a share of the profits. Although he helps Todd carry out the plan, Hoskins' initial response reveals his displeasure: "'Hem! – hem! – hoo!' [he] crie[s] . . . , 'I spy a deer – I smell a rat'" (Galt, *LT* 2: 37). As well as profiting at Hoskin's expense, Todd uses trickery to seal the deal by arranging for Hoskins to "jeer . . . [him] for being so faint-hearted" (Galt, *LT* 2: 38) in order to convince the land agent to give Todd twenty- rather than ten-thousand

acres. Waft's plan to open a store thus reproduces Todd's preferred and most successful business method, but with one crucial difference: Waft is not going to follow through on his plan. As he explains, "I have no intention of setting up an opposition store; I just proposed the project that I might expiseate some kind of satisfaction to my curiosity [about what items Todd bought from Nackets]" (Galt, *LT 1*: 270). Waft, however, is doing far more than meddling and "making a fool of [Todd]" (Galt, *LT 2*: 270). In proposing a store of his own, Waft holds a mirror up to Todd's methods, revealing just how manipulative and dishonest Todd can be, and, by provoking Todd's fury, demonstrating his hypocrisy. Waft's eventual purchase of the Bablemandel store casts Todd in a similarly unflattering light.

When Todd is preparing to move to Judiville, Waft offers to buy Todd's store in Bablemandle. Remembering how Waft "had vexed [him] in the affair of the proposed 'shoppie,'" Todd "resolve[s] to play [Waft] as good a prank as he then played [Todd]" (Galt, *LT 2*: 140). Todd leads Waft on, initially proposing the outrageous sum of 500 dollars, and eventually making a smaller, but still outrageous, final offer of 250 dollars. Much to Todd's surprise, Waft pays in cash on the spot. The contrast between Waft's fair dealing during the negotiations and Todd's flippant dishonesty (he never actually intends to sell the store to Waft) is a striking one that does not favour Todd. The incident demonstrates the marked discrepancy between Waft's and Todd's respective grasps of socially appropriate behavior. It shows that Waft understands the distinction between appropriate trickery – trickery used to reveal the hypocrisy of a manipulative businessman like Todd – and inappropriate trickery – trickery used to manipulate someone making a fair business proposal like Waft – and Todd manifestly does not. Waft's imitation of Todd thus demonstrates Todd's inability to accord with the norms and values of polite, respectful, caring, and moral society. By drawing attention to Todd's failure to blend in, Waft's mimicry criticizes Todd's, revealing the anti-sociability that goes hand in hand with his mimicry, and is exemplified by the pride that he takes in having broken in to the

Duke's estate and crashed his son's party.¹²⁸ Waft's use of humour serves a similar critical function.

When Waft plays at "his hooky-crookies [pranks]" (Galt, *LT* 3: 141), meddles, or straightforwardly makes fun of Todd, he invariably punctures Todd's pretensions, sheds an uncomfortably revealing light on the flaws in his character, and uses his wit to chastise him. For example, consider the fun Waft has at Todd's choice of a name for Judiville, and Waft's preemption of a potential marriage between Todd and Mrs. Cockspur. Soon after Todd and Hoskins buy their land, Waft tells them that he wants "to know the name [they] intend to bestow on [the] capital city" (Galt, *LT* 2: 43) they are going to found, and explains, "I have been thinking that Hoskinsville would be pretty and poetical; but . . . don't you think Todopolis would be prime?" (Galt, *LT* 2: 43). This simplistic ridicule infuriates both Hoskins and Todd; however, whereas Hoskin's bites his lip, Todd makes the mistake of attempting to condescendingly dismiss Waft. In the process, Todd reveals that he thinks that he alone has the final say over the name of his *and* Hoskins' settlement, causing Hoskins to join Waft in ribbing Todd. A frustrated Todd finally declares that he will name the town "Any thing" (Galt, *LT* 2: 45), inadvertently demonstrating the extent of the authority the presumptive founder has privately arrogated to himself. Waft's response is a richly warranted and perfectly calculated blow to Todd's pretensions: "*Any-thing* would be a most extraordinary name for a town; and a town too, that ye no doubt intend shall be a metripolitan [sic]" (Galt, *LT* 2: 45). Waft's treatment of the relationship

128

Todd's purchase of the store from Nackets, his discussion of Waft's "shoppie," and his sale of the store to Waft all turn on Todd's affective deficit, on his lack of empathy and of emotional intelligence. He shamelessly exploits Nackets' straightened circumstances without feeling any sympathy for the man or the smallest bit of guilt. Although Waft approaches Todd "in a jocose, familiar way" (Galt, *LT* 1: 266), "patting [Todd] gently on the arm" (Galt, *LT* 1: 266) in an exaggerated gesture of friendliness and respect, Todd doesn't come close to realizing that Waft is joking about the shoppie until he tells him. Although Waft makes his proposal "in a sedate, rational manner" (Galt, *LT* 2: 141) that is not typical of him, Todd cannot believe that Waft is serious about buying the store until he refuses to "take a liberal solacium [payment] to" (Galt, *LT* 2: 143) cancel the agreement.

between Todd and Mrs. Cockspur has the same object, and much the same result.

Since Mrs. Cockspur is a widow “of a genteeler class than emigrants commonly consist of” (Galt, *LT 2*: 116), Todd encourages her and her equally accomplished and genteel children to settle at Judiville to raise the quality of the settlement. He also quickly recognizes that, as well as benefitting Judiville, he and his own family can personally profit from associating with her:

I had not seen [Mrs. Cockspur] but twice, when I began to think it would be an advantageous thing for my daughters to become acquainted with her, for as they were beginning to have the prospect of a something, I often wished we might chance to fall in with a more ornamental matron than aunty Hoskins, who . . . had seen nothing of gentility, and fashed [scoffed] at courtesies. (Galt, *LT 2*: 118).

Todd sees Mrs. Cockspur as a means of realizing his financial ends as well as of achieving the social aspirations he holds for himself and his family. Todd’s obvious admiration for her gentility and his investment in her gives Hoskins, Waft, and the rest of the community the impression that he is romantically interested in her. Mrs. Cockspur is, however, fifteen years Todd’s senior, and, although certainly advantageous to Todd, the marriage would violate the norms of the community. Waft takes the opportunity to poke fun at Todd, “inquir[ing] for the health of Mrs. Cockspur in a singular manner, which [Todd finds] exceedingly provoking” (Galt, *LT 2*: 122). He also organizes a charivari-style public shaming of Todd¹²⁹ after he sees Todd talking with the minister and comes to the mistaken conclusion that Todd is finalizing the arrangements for the wedding.

Waft not only preempts the inappropriate marriage (which is, despite Todd’s denials, a possibility, if not a probability), but also, in the process, punctures Todd’s pretensions to gentility, and reveals the socially inappropriate instrumentality that underlies Todd’s aspirations. Waft’s joking forces Todd to deny any romantic intentions, and betrays the callous, calculating objectification that motivates his involvement with

¹²⁹

Waft surprises Todd while he is closeted with the minister: “[a]t the same moment, the door was burst open, and John Waft entered, followed by a crowd of unmannerly young fellows and children, with post, and pans, and marrow-bones, yelling and shouting” (Galt, *LT 2*: 132).

Mrs. Cockspur:

I had not thought whatever of Mrs. Cockspur. I acknowledge, that I regarded her with respect and esteem, but she was a cut far above my circumstances at that time, and she was older than me by at least fifteen years, moreover, I was not in such necessity as to think of marrying an old woman had the temptation been even double the sum at her disposal. (Galt, *LT 2*: 121)

Todd's description of her as "an old woman" followed immediately by his declaration that he would not marry her for "even double the sum" contradicts his assertion that he "regard[s] her with respect and esteem," and demonstrates that he sees her as an object whose chief value lies in the fact that she is "a cut far above [his] circumstances." This instrumental assessment of a potential romantic relationship is typical of Todd, but the vituperation of the closing clauses of his dismissal of her as a potential mate is particularly vicious, unmerited and revealing. Todd's spite expresses the outrage of an aspiring social climber. In his mind, he has been equated with someone who is above him, but of no lasting use to him, and whom he expects to surpass in the future – he makes the point of adding the qualifier "at that time" when he explains that Mrs. Cockspur is "a cut above" him – and thus considers himself superior to. For Todd, Mrs. Cockspur is an object with a specific and limited value, and the equation of her and Todd (as equals in romance, if not in age or social standing) is an insulting underestimation of what Todd sees as his own very high potential value. Waft's joking uncovers damning evidence of the petty, anti-social vindictiveness that is one of the most negative results of the combination of Todd's instrumentality and his otherwise laudable desire to better himself. The comment from Waft that closes the incident makes clear what Waft sees in Todd and what his "hooky-crookies" have shown to the reader: "it's fine talking about politess in the woods, and jointures and tochers, and a' the other priijinkities of marriage-articles. 'Deed, Mr. Todd, we're here in a state of Nature, and ought not to be too strict anent things of that kind, nor, indeed, about any sort of bargaining" (Galt, *LT 2*: 139). These words are offered by Waft as an apology, but, with their overt recognition that Todd treats personal relationships like business relationships, they are ultimately more disparaging than apologetic.

Waft's mimicry and joking is made all the more annoying by his habit of, as Todd puts it, "breaking in upon" Todd (Galt, *LT* 1: 265). In fact, Todd applies this phrase or a version of it to Waft as often as he describes himself as being poised on the "the wall-top of [his] fortune" (Galt, *LT* 1: 38). Even when Todd does not use the phrase, Waft's actions recall it. When Waft leads the crowd intent on ridiculing Todd for planning to marry Mrs. Cockspur, he "burst[s] [the door] open" (Galt, *LT* 2: 132), and he is continually arriving unexpectedly or coming in unannounced. In this, he evince's a total lack of respect for Todd's privacy that is both an irritant, and a clear marker of his lower-class origins.¹³⁰ Waft's defining mode of behaviour and, for lack of a better term, his catch phrase are strikingly similar to the signal event of Todd's life and the descriptive phrase that derives from it. What is Todd doing when he is on "the wall-top" of the Duke's estate if not "breaking in?" What do the young Todd's actions display if not a total lack of respect for private property and private space? What does the incident highlight if not, among other things, the extent to which Todd, his aspirations, and the means that he uses to fulfill them are fundamentally shaped by his lower-class origins? There are several other significant points of similarity between Waft and Todd. Waft speaks a Scottish vernacular riddled with errors in grammar and word usage that resembles nothing less than an exaggerated version of Todd's own colorful and none-too-correct English. Most significant, Waft replicates many of Todd's accomplishments, and the trajectory of his life follows that of Todd's more or less exactly. He buys Todd's first

130

Perhaps the best example in early Canadian literature of the differing attitudes of the gentility and the lower-classes to personal space and privacy is Susanna Moodie's description of her neighbors in "Our First Settlement and the Borrowing System" in *Roughing it in the Bush*. Like Waft, Moodie's neighbors constantly burst in on her, entering her house without asking permission or announcing themselves. For example, on the day of her arrival, when Moodie is in the process of unpacking, "the door [is] suddenly pushed open, and the apparition of a woman squeeze[s] itself into the crowded room" (62). As annoying as Moodie finds her unexpected visitors, Waft is doubly so for Todd, as his appearance is both an intrusion into Todd's privacy, and a pointed reminder of Todd's own lower-class origins, of the very social norms and standards of behavior that he is trying to distance himself from.

store, takes a share in the salt works, and eventually becomes “so rich” that he can send a remittance “amount[ing] to upwards of two thousand pounds” with Todd to his relatives in Scotland (Galt, *LT* 3: 288). Waft even relocates from Bablemandle to Judiville, literally as well as figuratively following in Todd’s footsteps. Waft is, in short, a lesser version of Todd, a pale shadow of the self-made man whose pronounced lower-class mannerisms serve as a constant, grating reminder of Todd’s humble origins and his inability to either completely conceal or effectively transcend them. Waft is all the more irritating because, although he is more coarse than Todd, he is also far more ethical. Thus Waft confronts Todd with a trenchant combination of his better and worse selves, with the overlapping images of the man he was, the man he is, and the man he is unable to be.

Corbet’s double serves a similar critical function, although the relationship between Pulicate and Corbet is substantially less complex than that between Todd and Waft. Whereas Waft plays the multiple roles of tormentor, double, antagonist, and chastening example, Pulicate is obviously, straightforwardly and with remarkable consistency Corbet’s opposite. Corbet is “a person of ordinary genteel habits;” Pulicate is a labourer “of very humble origin” (Galt, *BC* 1: iii, 1: 44). Corbet’s education at the hands of his “curators” (Galt, *BC* 1: 9), Mr. Macinndoe, Mr. Rhomboid, and Dr. Leach, is idiosyncratic, anything but systematic, and effectively worthless; Pulicate has an “education [that is] much above his station,” having benefitted from the charity of “a grammar-school, in which all the ordinary branches of instruction were taught, with mathematics and geography” (Galt, *BC* 1: 44). For every bad business decision that Corbet makes, Pulicate makes a good one. Corbet’s financial failures are so regularly matched by Pulicate’s successes that, by the end of the second volume, they have effectively exchanged positions: whereas Pulicate has become a wealthy gentleman, a pillar of his community with the prospect of climbing further up the social ladder, the socially marginalized and impoverished Corbet’s only prospect lies in emigration. Moreover, whenever Corbet finds himself in need of advice, Pulicate has the information, and, often, the assistance he requires. This last contrast is, from Corbet’s perspective, the most galling, for it forms the basis of Corbet’s dependence on the other man.

Although Mr. Macindoe consciously takes on the role of Corbet's surrogate father, directing his education and placing him in business, it is Pulicate who has the more substantial impact on his education and career, and the more substantial claim to the title. Corbet himself grudgingly admits that "Pulicate [is] a man of far superior natural endowment to [his] curator [teacher]," Mr. Macindoe (Galt, *BC* 1: 77). Pulicate is at least a decade older than Corbet, and has "a gravity of demeanor [that makes] him look older" (Galt, *BC* 1:44). In addition to having the self-possessed, authoritative appearance of a father-figure, he acts like one. Pulicate takes the young and inexperienced Corbet under his wing, and facilitates his smooth integration into the community of weavers. More important, he introduces Corbet to the shop's Jacobin club (essentially, a republican-minded study group), and is thus instrumental in giving him the only worthwhile instruction he will receive in his life.¹³¹ Pulicate advises Corbet on his decision to change shops, and it is to Pulicate that Corbet turns when he starts his own business with Mr. Possy. Indeed, the initial success of the partnership is in no small part due to Pulicate's managerial acumen: when Corbet and Possy's partnership fails, after Mr. Macindoe flatly refuses to help Corbet wrap up the business and settle his affairs, and Sir Neil makes it clear that Corbet will get none of his fortune, it is Pulicate who helps Corbet through the bankruptcy.¹³² And it is Pulicate to whom Corbet resorts when he needs assistance emigrating to Canada. In short, not only does Pulicate substantially direct Corbet's

131

Corbet explains that, "[w]ithout doubt[,] the deliberations of the club assisted to enlarge [his] understanding" (Galt, *BC* 1: 51). With the club, he studies "general philosophy, religion, morality, and metaphysics" (Galt, *BC* 1: 51). Although these subjects are relatively abstract, the instruction he receives in them is both far superior to and far more practical than the lessons taught to him by his curators.

132

Corbet explains his approach to handling the bankruptcy: "I consulted several gentlemen in whose judgement I had great confidence, and among others, Mr. Pulicate, whom I was desirous to engage in superintending the settlement of our business" (Galt, *BC* 1: 205-06). From this, it is abundantly clear that, however much respect Corbet has for Macindoe, and however much praise he has for his curator's sincere interest in his affairs, it is in Pulicate that Corbet places the balance of his trust.

education, and his introduction into business, but he has a hand in Corbet's most significant success, is willing to render Corbet assistance when he fails, and consistently plays the role of the older, wiser mentor/adviser. Pulicate is obviously more often the dominant member of the pair, but their relationship is not exclusively one-sided.

Although certainly characterized by charitable motivations – especially later in the novel, when Pulicate's social and economic success has made whatever assistance Corbet could render him irrelevant – Pulicate's involvement with Corbet is not entirely disinterested. At least initially, his connection with Corbet provides Pulicate with access to economic opportunities he would not otherwise have, and Corbet possesses a knowledge of manners, social mores and polite behaviour that is essential to Pulicate's ascent of the social ladder. It is Pulicate's attachment to Corbet that prompts Corbet to hire him to oversee his and Possy's warehouse, and it is thus through Corbet that Pulicate gets his first managerial position – a position that comes with a salary that allows him to save up enough money to strike out on his own. In fact, it could well be argued that Corbet is instrumental in Pulicate's success because he gives him the break that makes, or, at least, launches Pulicate's career.

Pulicate has all the talents necessary to outstrip Corbet in the realm of business, but he lacks Corbet's ability to successfully navigate the many social situations that fall outside of the experience of his "very humble origin[s]" (Galt, *BC* 1: 44). Unlike the socially limited Pulicate, Corbet is able to move with ease through the various strata of London society, and effortlessly ingratiate himself with the Jamaican plantation owners. Pulicate recognizes both his deficit, and Corbet's ability to remedy it. When Pulicate becomes a member of the Glasgow town council and propriety demands that he host a dinner for the Earl of Moorheather, one of Glasgow's leading magistrates and the commander of the regiment quartered in the city, he turns to Corbet for assistance. As the worried Mrs. Pulicate reminds Corbet, his role is to coach Mr. Pulicate in proper dining etiquette and the behaviour appropriate to "an ordinary genteel affair" (Galt, *BC* 1:

194)¹³³: “ye’ll sit next to him at dinner, for he’ll need the help and council of a friend” (Galt, *BC* 1: 196). Pulicate’s response to his first taste of champagne (a luxury he is both serving, and tasting for the first time) demonstrates the extent of his ignorance, and the degree to which he is in need of Corbet’s assistance: “It’s surely a fine wine for a flam; but, in my opinion, port’s a better liquor – as a liquor” (Galt, *BC* 1: 199). Pulicate is not simply in the position of making a minor error in manners such as confusing salad and dessert forks or serving white wine with red meat; instead, his ignorance of genteel life is so total and so profound that he runs the very real risk of committing the sort of faux pas that will place him permanently outside of the social circles to which he needs access if he wishes to advance both his business and his political interests: as Mrs. Pulicate’s worry shows, the knowledge of genteel social conduct that Corbet possesses and can impart to Pulicate has become *essential* to Pulicate realizing his ambitions.

At the dinner, the normal dynamic of the two men’s relationship is reversed: Corbet becomes the competent, confident advisor, and Pulicate becomes the jejune ingenu in need of guidance. This reversal re-frames their relationship as one of mutual dependence, and suggests a possible reconciliation of the extremes of gentility and trade incarnated by the pair. This implied reconciliation takes the form of a mutual mentorship through which the best qualities of both men are exchanged, and their worst flaws are canceled out, producing a model of manhood that is at once economically and socially successful – that is, in equal measures instrumentally minded and affectively disposed. Corbet’s profound antipathy to Pulicate, however, makes such a reconciliation of the two men impossible. Although the novel prohibits the specific reconciliation of Corbet and Pulicate, it does not preclude the productive reconciliation of the extremes of gentility/affectivity and trade/instrumentality that the two men embody. Late in the second volume, Galt introduces a character who is the mirror image of Pulicate, and who has the same potential for a relationship of mutual mentorship with Corbet, but who does

133

The language, which directly echoes Galt’s description of Corbet as “a person of ordinary of genteel habits” (Galt, *BC* 1: iii), suggests that Corbet is uniquely and specifically suited to instruct Pulicate.

not provoke the same negative response from Corbet that Pulicate does.

Bogle Corbet was written almost immediately after *Lawrie Todd*, and Galt's introduction of Todd into the later novel is the basis of the pattern of doubling that draws the novels together into a single aesthetic/conceptual unit, and points towards the resolution of the conflict between lower-class instrumentality and genteel mores highlighted by Todd's interactions with Waft. When Todd appears, he does so in the form of an advisor to Corbet, playing a role in Corbet's life that is analogous to Pulicate's. With the exception of Todd's emigration, Todd and Pulicate are, in fact, remarkably similar: both are lower-class Scotsmen whose lack of genteel polish has not prevented them from becoming remarkably successful and exceptionally wealthy businessmen who possess skill sets and experiences that make them uniquely suited to guiding Corbet. Indeed, Todd's career could easily have followed that of Pulicate's had he not been forced to emigrate, and, had Pulicate been in Todd's position, he has all the talent, skill and ambition to match the other's accomplishments. Most significant, Todd and Pulicate play relatively equal roles in shaping Corbet's plans for emigration. From Todd, Corbet gains a wealth of information about settlement that he credits with "lessen[ing] many of [his] difficulties, and [teaching] [him] to avoid hardships which the stranger in the forest should well be prepared to encounter" (Galt, *BC* 2: 181). Furthermore, Corbet explains that the tree felling ceremony that marks the foundation of the town of Stockwell "proceeded pretty much according to the plan in which Mr. Todd and his friend Mr. Hoskins did for Judiville" (Galt, *BC* 3: 37). Bentley dismisses this instance of Corbet's indebtedness to Todd as an exception, arguing that the development of the two towns is the expression of two very different ideals, that, "unlike Todd's Judiville, Corbet's Stockwell is the result of communal rather than individual entrepreneurship" (*Canadian Architexts*, "Chapter 4: Rising and Spreading Villages: the Architexts of New Settlements" III). However, as argued earlier, Bentley's characterization of Judiville as the product of American individualism, and of Stockwell as the product of a belief in the common good "that seeks to harness Yankee ingenuity to 'the co-operative spirit' or the desire to 'live in community'" (*Canadian Architexts*, "Chapter 4: Rising and Spreading

Villages: the Architexts of New Settlements” III) overlooks the complex, and often troubling negotiations and compromises on which the community of Stockwell is built. Certainly, Judiville and Stockwell are different, but they are not as diametrically opposed as Bentley maintains. Nor is their difference sufficiently pronounced to override Corbet’s claims and preclude Todd’s influence on the latter.¹³⁴ If Todd provides Corbet with much needed information, and exerts a detectable, if not a definitive, influence on Corbet’s management of Stockwell, Pulicate makes an equally important contribution to Corbet’s enterprise.

Pulicate connects Corbet with the “[f]ive decent . . . families” who, under Corbet’s leadership, establish the town of Stockwell (Galt, *BC* 2: 209), and form the core of the growing community. Thus, where Todd provides Corbet with the model and the method, Pulicate provides him with the requisite manpower, and, most important, the means to establish himself in the colony in a manner befitting his genteel social status. Moreover, Pulicate mediates Todd’s advice, pointing out the essential disparity between Todd and Corbet, and modifying Todd’s instructions accordingly. “[Y]e’ll excuse an auld frien’,” Pulicate says to Corbet,

for counselling you no’ to be overly particular in following his [Todd’s] footsteps, for he was naturally of a lower degree in the means of education than you; even by what you have been telling, he does not yet seem, in a certain sense, to have grown familiar with gentility, which, without a brag, takes pains and opportunities to learn. (Galt, *BC* 2: 194-95)

In showing a crucial insight into the difference that divides the two men, Pulicate demonstrates the hard won mastery of gentility to which he alludes. He also frames the acquisition of gentility as a positive, even necessary, step in the development of men like him and Todd, and, as he does so, gestures towards the terms of a productive reconciliation of the extremes incarnated by the returned and the prospective emigrant. In

134

Nothing more forcefully attests to the similarity of the two communities than the paralleling of Corbet’s progressive alienation from Stockwell with the townsfolk’s adoption and mastery of the subscription system, the very same system employed by the citizen’s of Judiville to build many of the same structures.

immediate contrast with Pulicate's own progress, his observation that Todd "does not yet seem . . . to have grown familiar with gentility" drives home the importance of acquiring this knowledge by castigating Todd. Pulicate's criticism reflects an understanding of social mobility as a linear ascent from poor labourer to rich gentleman that preserves the value of gentility by conceiving its acquisition as a crowning achievement that serves as a conclusive confirmation of the transformation of self-made men such as himself and Todd. The positioning of gentility and its representatives towards the end of a linear developmental process is echoed by Pulicate's advice to Corbet. Pulicate goes on: "ye're one of a different order [than Todd], and I'm thinking that the town of Judiville, or sic like as he left it, would be more to the purpose for a gentleman o' moderate means, than the awesome solitude of the wild woods, and the neighbourhood of bears and trees" (Galt, *BC* 2: 195). In advising Corbet to pick up exactly where Todd has left off, Pulicate implies that, to adapt his words, Todd and Corbet are literally "of a different order" – that is, they belong to different steps in the establishment and growth of a town. The net effect of Pulicate's commentary on Todd and his advice is to transform the relationship between Todd and Corbet by showing that they occupy different stages in the same process, that they are, in short, complementary, rather than conflicting. In this way, Pulicate gestures towards the possibility of the reconciliation of both the two men, and of the lower-class/instrumental and genteel/affective extremes they embody by framing them as contributors to a common project.

Beyond establishing the terms of this reconciliation, Pulicate's assessment of the two men draws together individual and communal development, and highlights a pattern of connection implied by the consistency with which Todd and Corbet's defining characteristics play out equally and simultaneously in both the microcosm of their personal relationships and the macrocosm of their communal involvements. Pulicate conflates individual development and communal development by paralleling Todd's failure to acquire genteel polish with Corbet's suitability for a more developed settlement. This reinforces at a key moment the fact that Todd and Corbet's contrasting orientations to social relations bear on the full spectrum of those relations. At the most individual and

specific level, the implication of Pulicate's comments is that the reconciliation of the two would entail the production of a new model of masculinity. At the most general level, it implies that the result would be a new ethic of community engagement, and, with it, a new model of community. In other words, Corbet's genteel affectivity, Todd's lower-class instrumentalism, *and* their reconciliation are comprehensive in the broadest, most inclusive sense. At stake for both Todd and Corbet are fulfilling romantic relationships, economic prosperity, full participation in the communities to which they belong, the ability to avoid humiliation by behaving in a manner appropriate to their social position, and so on. Thus Pulicate's assessment drives home the necessity of reconciling the two extremes by stressing exactly how much both men have to gain through this reconciliation, and how very much both men have to lose.¹³⁵

The importance of the reconciliation of the extremes the two men embody is further reinforced by the point in their respective lives and in the novels' respective narratives where Galt introduces Todd into *Bogle Corbet* and to Corbet. The two men meet at the very moment when they are most in need of each other. Although Corbet could unquestionably benefit from Todd's business acumen from the very moment he embarks on his career, he meets Todd at the specific point in his life when he most needs his self-interested instrumentalism, his ingenious aptitude for trade, and, most specifically and obviously, the advice that he can give him about founding and developing a settlement. Todd's need for Corbet's mastery of genteel habits and standards of behavior is less obvious, but is no less acute. In returning to Britain, and choosing to settle specifically in London, Todd has introduced himself into genteel social circles that he is manifestly ill equipped to navigate. He is at as great (if not, arguably, a greater) disadvantage in social situations as Corbet is in business ones – a reality pointedly attested to by the spectacular inappropriateness of his behavior the first time he returns to

135

Corbet's failures in Canada paint a comprehensive and depressing picture of just how much he loses because of his lack of Todd's instrumental acumen. Because of the symmetrical treatment of the two men, one must conclude that, with his return to Britain, Todd faces the possibility of similarly galling, although very different, losses.

Britain.

After his father's death, Todd decides to stay in Scotland, and rents a house from Miss Beeny Needles in the town of Chucky Starnes. Miss Needles, the sister of Mr. Greenknowe, Todd's third wife, not only serves as his landlord, but also introduces him to the genteel social circles that form the community's upper crust. The discrepancy between Todd's backwoods mannerisms, and the (*very* limited) refinements of Chucky Starnes is instructive. He himself observes that, even "in the [very] narrow society of Chucky Starnes," "I was a fish out of the water in attempting to play the part of a gentleman" (Galt, *LT* 3: 43). He then goes on to acknowledge that, although he is driven by "[t]he compulsion of [his] improved means" to aspire to the highest levels of society, he is singularly ill equipped to realize his aspirations:

up to the period of my visit to Scotland, I had but few opportunities of learning the etiquettes that make life genteel. [The reader] need not, therefore, be surprised to hear, that I felt myself often in an ill-fitted coat among the society to whom I had the honour of being introduced at Chucky Starnes by Miss Beeny Needles. In sooth to say, I was not fashioned, nor educated, nor connected for associating with fine folk. (Galt, *LT* 3: 43, 45)

That Todd feels himself so acutely at a disadvantage in a place as small, marginal, and unsophisticated as Chucky Starnes speaks to the extremity of his deficiency. It also suggests how enormously out his depth he will be in a cosmopolitan metropolis like London and emphasizes how very much he needs the assistance of a man like Corbet. Todd's ungentlemanly treatment of Miss Needles demonstrates the accuracy of his self-assessment and provides conclusive and damning evidence that he is, indeed, "not fashioned, nor educated, nor connected for associating with fine folk."

Motivated by an inappropriate romantic interest in Todd, the attention Miss Needles pays him by introducing of him to the community, and attempting to manage his social life is essentially benevolent, occasionally helpful, and certainly harmless, if sometimes annoying. Todd repays her attention – and her not insignificant assistance – by needlessly and gratuitously humiliating her. After discovering Miss Needles' interest in him, he invites her to his house, and, while pretending to pay court to her, pins her wig to

the sofa, and then tickles her knee. She starts violently up, leaving her wig behind, and revealing “her naked head appearing as if it had been covered with a bladder” (Galt, *LT* 3: 66). To add insult to insult, when Miss Needles demands that Todd remedy the offense by marrying her he dashes her hopes and ridicules her for ever entertaining them in one sentence: “Oh, Miss Beeny, did ye think I was in earnest?” (Galt, *LT* 3: 66). The incident compounds Todd’s worst characteristics – his affective insensitivity, his habit of treating people as objects of personal gain and, in this instance, amusement, and his willingness to wilfully flout social mores even when they are just and justifiable – in a display of boorish behavior that registers his total lack of gentility. The incident also recalls Waft’s teasing of Todd, which occasionally involves “kittling” or tickling Todd, a resemblance to the emphatically coarse Waft that highlights exactly how poorly equipped Todd is for living up to the standards of gentlemanly behavior.

Miss Needles is old, ugly, and bald, she is manifestly unsuitable for Todd, and she and her presumptions are ripe for ridicule.¹³⁶ But she is an essentially harmless irritant, and nothing she does comes remotely close to justifying a prank as hurtful as Todd’s. The response of the community to the incident reflects both the deserving nature of Todd’s target, and the extremity of his transgression. The Reverend and the Provost make a joke out of listening to Miss Needles’ accusations against Todd, but, after they have had a laugh at her expense, the Provost takes a more serious tone with Todd: “Both by duty and feeling, I am as little disposed as any man to overlook violations of propriety,” he

136

However much Miss Needles deserves her comeuppance, Todd’s humiliation of her far exceeds what would be an acceptable and appropriate chastisement. Not only does Todd belittle her romantic presumptions, but he does so in front of an audience of servants (a further humiliation that reflects Todd’s failure to grasp the importance of class and social status), and, in the process of excusing his actions, makes light of Miss Needles’ advanced age, exclaiming, “Oh, Miss Beeny, Miss Beeny . . . ye’re no a pin the worse of all the bit touzle [tousle]. I’m sure, to a woman of your time of life, ye should take it as a Godsend” (Galt, *LT* 3: 65). Miss Needles’ affections are laughable, and she is annoying, but she does not deserve to be the butt of a joke that so systematically exploits her greatest vulnerabilities to cause the greatest possible humiliation, the greatest possible harm.

explains, and continues:

The first report of this business was very bad; but knowing the character of poor Miss Beeny, I did not put much faith in it. Still, with reference to the station she occupies, it must be considered, that you took a most unusual liberty. Unless, therefore, some means can be devised to produce a proper extenuation, I doubt it will affect your intercourse with the good society of the town, among whom delicacy of manners is particularly observed and cultivated. (Galt, *LT* 3: 89)

The Provost responds to Todd's plan to buy his way out of the debacle by making "a gift to the poor, and a mortification to the parish" by rejecting the idea, and making it pointedly clear that "out of regard to [his] own character, [Todd] ought to do something" (Galt, *LT* 3: 90) – that is, Todd must do something other than offer money to repair the tear in the social fabric caused by his prank. Because of the potential for the incident to leave a permanent "stain upon [Todd's] character" (Galt, *LT* 3: 90), the only acceptable reparation is marriage – a social institution that perpetuates the community, and that is, thus, in stark contrast with Todd's antisocial humiliation of Miss Needles. Todd resolves the issue by marrying Mrs. Greenknowe and involving the entire upper crust of Chucky Starnes, including Miss Needles, in the celebration.

The episode serves two functions. On the one hand, it is a negligible and forced bit of comic relief. On the other, it is a pointed reminder of Todd's substantial social deficits. Moreover, it quite directly suggests that, in a larger more sophisticated community than Chucky Starnes, with a victim less obviously deserving than Miss Needles, and among a group of people less willing to see the humour in Todd's transgression, Todd is more likely than not to commit a social faux-pas that cannot be remedied, corrected, or recompensed. As Todd himself acknowledges, "I was too long accustomed to a life of business and care to play the part of gentleman at large with ease" (Galt, *LT* 3: 92). However, at the conclusion of the novel, by wrapping up his interests in Judville and embarking on a life of travel, Todd specifically rejects "a life of business" in favour of that of "a gentleman at large," choosing the lifestyle for which he is least suited and which puts him at the greatest risk of committing a social transgression. Simply stated, Todd's choice of retirement means that he needs Corbet's genteel mastery of social

mores as badly and as pressingly as Corbet needs his instrumental aptitude for business. If the financially successful but unpolished Pulicate needs Corbet to “sit next to him at dinner” and give him “the help and council of a friend” (Galt, *BC* 1: 196), the similarly successful and even less polished Todd needs Corbet or a comparably genteel man next to him not just at dinners, but at every social situation he encounters in London and beyond.

The juxtaposition of Todd and Corbet at the very moment when each is most in need of the talents, abilities and defining characteristics of the other confirms them as doubles who are exact, symmetrical opposites of each other. Nevertheless, unlike Corbet and Pulicate, the novels’ other pair of symmetrical opposites, when the two protagonists meet, they quickly become friends. Todd willingly shares his knowledge of pioneering with Corbet, and Corbet talks about Todd with an unqualified enthusiasm that is unprecedented for a man whose judgements of others are consistently positive, but who is just as quick to acknowledge their flaws. The timing and amicable tenor of their meeting raises the realistic and realizable possibility of a mutually beneficial relationship between the two men. Just like the potential relationship between Corbet and Pulicate that is precluded by Corbet’s hatred of Pulicate, Todd and Corbet’s relationship would take the form of a mutual mentorship. The end result of the exchange that this mentorship would entail would be a combination of Todd’s and Corbet’s defining attributes that would mitigate their weaknesses and allow them to derive the maximum benefit from their strengths. Thus the juxtaposition of the two men advances the possibility of the incorporation of the extremes they embody into a new masculine identity, framing an ideal of super competent manhood that serves as the yardstick against which Todd and Corbet are measured, and, beyond this, speaks to Galt’s own anxieties about the present and future value of gentility. The ideal man projected by the text would possess the complete spectrum of strengths outlined by Todd and Corbet: he would have both the affective sensitivity necessary to form loving romantic bonds, and the economic savvy to appropriately manage the financial dimensions of marriage. He would be equally successful in both his business affairs and his social life. His instrumentalism would be tempered by his affective sensitivity, and would, thus, always be put to socially

constructive, never socially destructive, ends. He would be just as capable of behaving appropriately and gaining social acceptance in the backwoods of North America as in London high-society, or, for that matter, in the plantations of Jamaica. He would possess all the skills necessary to found a settlement and to superintend its development into a town. Even more important, he would possess the deeply felt commitment to the common good necessary to want to lead that community. He would, in short, be a model lover, businessman, pioneer, and community leader, and be ideal because of his comprehensive mastery of all the spheres of masculine endeavor and action, because, in a phrase, of his breadth of competence.

The combination of the extremes embodied by Todd and Corbet follows the logic that Hélène Cixous attributes to masculine writing. As observed in the Introduction, masculine writing is structured by the parallel (one might just as appropriately say, “complementary” or “confederated”) desires to appropriate the non-identical (the “not-selfsame”) to itself and to control it, and to affirm its identity (the “selfsame”) and its power – that is, its dual object is the affirmation of identity, and the appropriation of the non-identical. In the satisfaction of these desires, masculine writing follows a circular pattern, passing through the other, the non-identical or the “not-selfsame” in order to return to and reaffirm the point of departure, the “selfsame” or the original core of its identity. This passage through the other is an anxious one motivated by fear of the loss of power, primacy and the phallus – by, in short, the fear of the loss of the self. For both Todd and Corbet, their need for their double, for their other is, at base, a need to respond to substantive threats to their identities. In Todd’s case, he needs Corbet’s affective sensitivity and genteel social graces to avoid losing the social position that he has won through his instrumental acquisition of wealth. In Corbet’s case, he needs Todd’s instrumental acumen in order to hold onto his position as the leader of Stockwell and maintain the sense of social relevance that is central to his sense of self. In both cases, the exchange of attributes between the two men projected by the text serves to reaffirm their core identities, rather than erase or supplant them. Just as Pulicate’s acquisition of manners from Corbet makes him more successful and capable, Todd’s acquisition of

genteel polish would add to and refine his core instrumentalism, enabling him, but not effecting a wholesale renovation of his character. The abilities Corbet could acquire from Todd would allow him to more effectively enact desires that would continue to be determined by the genteel, affective core of his character. In short, the juxtaposition of Todd and Corbet implies that, rather than sublimating one into the other, the exchange between them would allow them each to become more wholly, more effectively, and more completely themselves. The consistency and vigorousness with which Galt affirms the substantial and enduring worth of *both* Corbet's genteel affectivity and Todd's lower-class instrumentalism in novels whose ironic tone makes them essentially critical in nature ratifies this implication. Moreover, the equal value Galt assigns to Todd and Corbet – the assiduity with which he balances each man's strengths against his weaknesses, and against the weaknesses of his double – marks a key difference between Cixous' conception of masculine writing, and Galt's conception of masculinity.

Cixous grounds her argument on the proposition that the basic structure of western thought is binary, and that the binary pairs that run in a “double braid throughout literature, philosophy, [and] criticism” (63) are organized according to a gendered hierarchy – one pair is privileged and dominant, the other is marginalized and subordinate. In the case of Galt's pair of opposites, however, the two poles of the opposition are equally balanced, and the interaction between them follows a slightly different pattern. Because both Todd and Corbet are privileged centres – privileged by the value Galt places on their defining attributes, and no less by their positions as narrators, and eponymous protagonists of their respective novels – neither man, nor the extreme that he embodies is appropriated to the other; rather, each man is a centre to the other's margin, and the development suggested by Galt is a passage by each man through his other that ends in a return to and a reconfirmation of his core identity. *Bogle Corbet* and *Lawrie Todd*, and their treatment of masculinity are organized around a non-hierarchical binary opposition whose effect is to redress the declining value of gentility (a decline that was both witnessed by writers like Galt and Moodie, and experienced directly through their personal failures), and to allow Galt to make a powerful argument for the enduring

importance of gentility as an essential ingredient in an emerging masculine ideal. Thus Galt's signal contribution to the development of the totally competent man is to specifically reconcile genteel norms of behaviour and lower-class entrepreneurialism, to adapt gentility to trade in the context of the development of colonial communities, and envision an ascendant, new-world model of masculinity that would be ascendant in no small part because of its incorporation of genteel values.

If this is Galt's most substantial contribution to the development of the totally competent man, his most prescient is his conflation of individual masculine identity, communal development, and the practical task of leadership.¹³⁷ By focusing much of his attention on Todd and Corbet's foundation and management of Judiville and Stockwell,¹³⁸ Galt forges a strong link between masculinity, the values that inform and shape communities, and the suitability of men who manifest his ideal model of masculinity for unofficial positions of authority and/or official leadership roles in their communities. Galt's novels suggest that the super competence of the ideal model of masculinity that he envisions extends to a unique and unmatched capacity for leadership – which is to say,

¹³⁷

The conflation of individual masculine identity and communal identity, of an emerging masculine identity and communal development is not original to Galt: it informs Thomas Cary's dual treatment of a proto-Canadian masculinity and the development of Upper and Lower Canada just as surely as it informs Susanna Moodie's management of lower-class masculinity in *Roughing It in the Bush* and *Flora Lyndsey*. Galt's original contribution is to add to this mixture the specific role individual men play as community leaders by foregrounding Todd and Corbet's founding and management of their respective settlements.

¹³⁸

Todd's engagement with Judiville takes up the bulk of the novel, but Corbet's engagement with Stockwell takes up little more than one half of the novel's third and final volume. This discrepancy is balanced out by the significance *Bogle Corbet* loads onto the foundation of Stockwell as Corbet's last ditch attempt to salvage his career, and forge a meaningful place for himself in society. The concurrence of Todd and Corbet's meeting with Corbet's plan to emigrate and found a settlement places additional importance on the leadership role he takes up as a qualitative measure of his abilities against Todd's, and, thus, as a key point of comparison in the binary structure that links the novels and their protagonists.

these super competent men are ideal men, and, because they are ideal men, they are ideal leaders. Galt thus anticipates the extent to which the emphasis on the unique capacity of individual men for leadership distinguishes works such as *The Story of an Affinity*, and *The Man from Glengarry* that contain fully realized totally competent men, defines those men, and bears significantly on the status of the figure of the totally competent man as a model of national manhood. In the following chapter, attention turns to the relationship between the fully formed totally competent man's complementary roles as community leader and national man.

Chapter 7:

Totally Competent/Totally Communal Men: Richard Stahlberg, Ranald Macdonald, and the National Community

Of the many robust and capable men to be found in late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Canadian literature, Richard Stahlberg from *The Story of an Affinity* (1894) and Ranald Macdonald from *The Man from Glengarry* (1901) stand out as the most obvious and the completest types of the totally competent man. Both unite Herculean physiques, unmatched breadths of competence, and unbending moral codes under the auspices of developmental narratives that see them move fluidly through geographical and social contexts that are as widely varied as the men's skill sets. Ranald is at home in the logging camps of the Ottawa River and British Columbia, on the farms of Glengarry county, and in the metropolitan centres of Quebec City, Toronto and Ottawa. His comfort in this diverse range of spaces is due in no small part to his ability to smoothly integrate himself into the social structures they support – that is, to the relative ease with which he mixes with brutish loggers and pacific farmers, with dissolute men such as Louis LeNoir and pious women such as Mrs. Murray, with the members of the most “exclusive club in the capital of upper Canada” (Connor 359) and the street urchins of The Institute, and with preeminent capitalists such as Eugene St. Clair and Colonel Thorp and politicians such as Sir John A. Macdonald. Traveling from the farmland of the Niagara peninsula to a thinly disguised version of Toronto and back again, Richard's movements are less expansive and country-spanning than Ranald's, but within this more narrow geographical range he still demonstrates his compatibility with a broad range of social classes and types of individuals. Richard works alongside farm labourers, spends time with morally questionable “country lads” (Lampman, *SA* 1:122) who frequent taverns, lodges with an urban workman and his family, is welcomed in “workshops and all haunts of skill / Where men [are] busy at their various crafts” (Lampman, *SA* 2:233-34), joins a social worker who is also an example of the new woman in ministering to the urban poor, is befriended by a poet, is accepted by the art-loving women of the upper

classes, and, finally, enters the ranks of the country's intellectual elite when he becomes "[a] lecturer in a famous college hall" (Lampman, *SA* 2:658). Comprehending Canada's full range of geographical spaces, and Canadian society's full spectrum of social classes in their development at the same time that they amalgamate abilities, sensibilities, and experiences drawn from the breadth of the populace, Ranald and Richard are best read as idealized depictions of the possibilities available to Canadian men. In as much as it derives from their geographically and socially expansive developments, their breath of competence stands as a symbol of the harmonious integration of the disparate and divided societies out of which they grow. Moreover, both works tie the achievement of Richard and Ranald's total competence to their development of social consciences, of deep investments in the unity and health of their societies, and of a willingness to actively work towards the good of their communities. *The Story of an Affinity* and *The Man from Glengarry* thus unite individual and social ideals, presenting their readers with protagonists who are simultaneously paragons of individual achievement and super competent agents of social cohesion. With their ability and willingness to secure, unite, and perpetuate their communities, Richard and Ranald make the forceful point that totally competent men are communally minded men, and they emerge from their respective narratives as trenchant examples of what Canadian men and, by extension, the Canadian nation might be.

I

From Self-Improver to Social Improver: The Socialization of Richard Stahlberg

Bentley observes that "*The Story of an Affinity* is an internalized Herculean narrative in which the mind is the sole frontier to be expanded and built" (*Mimic Fires* 294), and he points out that, "if it were in fact, a novel [as Lampman termed it], Lampman's poem would be classed as a *Bildungsroman*" (Introduction, *SA* xv). Bracketing the story of its protagonist's development from ignorant near-savage to accomplished intellectual with a conventional love story, the poem's emphasis seems to be squarely on the internal, the

personal, and the individual. However, “Lampman’s poem does accord with other Herculean narratives in associating the achievement by its Herculean hero of inner order and governance with the arrival of these same, centrally Canadian qualities in the external world” (Bentley, Introduction, *SA* xv). In Richard, *The Story of an Affinity* strikes a balance between self and community, independence and interdependence: Richard’s development takes the form of a process of socialization that ties the acquisition of his total competence to his social integration, and the poem stresses the mature Richard’s capacity to promote the good of society by conferring his values on those around them. Over the course of *The Story of an Affinity*, Richard is transformed from a self-improver to a social-improver, emerging from his development as a super-competent agent of social cohesion. The poem is not set in Canada, and Lampman never explicitly offers Richard as a model of national manhood; nevertheless, *The Story of an Affinity* speaks to the Canadian context out of which it emerged, and Richard embodies a general ideal of manhood that is of specific relevance to Canadian men.

The Richard Stahlberg of the opening section of *The Story of an Affinity* is a shadow of the paragon of achievement who, in the poem’s closing lines, has attained “[t]he portals of the perfect field of life,” and, hand in hand with Margaret, “half-dazzled by the glow, perceive[s] / The endless road before them, clear and free” (Lampman, *SA* 3:742-43). Richard begins the poem as a “fitful giant” (Lampman, *SA* 1:97), as a full grown, “[v]ast-shouldered” man who possesses a “wild vigor [in] his limbs” (Lampman, *SA* 1:69, 98), but whose intelligence, and moral, aesthetic, and affective sensibilities have failed to keep up with the growth of his impressive frame. A brutish man-child, he is as ignorant and recalcitrant as he is arrested: “with the full growth of years . . . his darkening mind took on / A sullen and impenetrable sloth” and “Year after year [his] child’s mind stood still, / Entangled in that strange infirmity” (Lampman, *SA* 1:60-62, 66-67). He can “labour . . . as no other three [can] labour” (Lampman, *SA* 1:99) and he is capable of “t[earing] [a tree] root, stem and branches, from the earth / And . . . hurl[ing] it, whirling, far apart / into the centre of the wind-waved field” (Lampman, *SA* 1:206-08). These physical feats are alternately productive and destructive, speaking to the “uncontrolled,

capricious, and amoral” (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 295) nature of his character, and intimating, as Bentley perceptively observes, that his “is [an] Herculean strength that must be directed by an ethical and constructive purpose if it is not to issue forth in acts of greater destruction and turpitude” (*Mimic Fires* 296).

Richard’s “ripe and rotten psychological state” (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 295) finds expression in comparably dysfunctional and anti-social behavior: he is as solipsistic as he is ignorant, and as erratically aloof as he is arrested. He disappoints his father’s hopes “[t]o find in him the scholar of his house / Reared in some grave profession or skilled art” (Lampman, *SA* 1:57-58), betraying his filial responsibilities not only by refusing to fulfill his father’s dreams, but also by doing so when, as Richard’s eventual ascent to the position of university lecturer aptly demonstrates, those dreams are exactly what is genuinely best and most appropriate for him. His work in the fields shows a similar disregard for others. His “lawless energy . . . yield[s] to no guidance” (Lampman, *SA* 1:81-82), not even to the ethical/social compulsion of cooperative labour:

. . . some times, when the toil was at its height,
 And every hand was straining to the end,
 He would cease suddenly, and straightening up,
 As if in wrath, with dark and ominous brow,
 And eyes all strange with that disordered fire,
 Hurl forth whatever thing was in his hand,
 And stride away. (Lampman, *SA* 1:102-08)

With its “ominous” overtones of anger, coming at just the moment when members of the community most need to be united in their collective effort, Richard’s rejection of work and his abandonment of his fellow farm labourers is less a capricious expression of selfishness than a violent refusal of the ethical imperative of the common good that suggests his capacity for even more extreme, even more violent anti-social acts.

Lampman highlights the alienating effect of Richard’s actions by noting the fear that he inspires in the men around him, who “neither [call], nor [dare] / To follow” (Lampman, *SA* 1:109-10), and the distress that he causes his father and brother, who “with a sorrowful glance exchanged / ben[d] them sadlier to their task” (Lampman, *SA* 1:115-16). When he is overcome in this way by the “blind and witless passion of his soul” (Lampman, *SA*

1:112), Richard “wander[s] from farm to farm, / From village to village” (Lampman, *SA* 1:118-19), vacillating between walking “sullen and uncompanionable” (Lampman, *SA* 1:120), and mixing with the clientele at taverns or with “the country lads with halted teams / Gathered at eve about a blacksmith’s forge” (Lampman, *SA* 1:122-23). He abandons deep familial and communal bonds for either a peripatetic solitude or a set of transitory relationships with, at best, idle, and, at worst, immoral men. The physical ability that previously served the interests of the community now allows him to reign “Supreme in his tremendous feats of strength” (Lampman, *SA* 1:125), and presumably affords him the momentary adulation of strangers, and the fleeting, narcissistic satisfaction that accompanies it. Nothing in the poem registers the extremity of his anti-social tendencies more clearly than this arbitrary rejection of a productive role as a member of a tightly knit community rooted firmly in place in favour of either a wilful withdrawal into an itinerant isolation, or an equally wilful embrace of the most superficial, least lasting, and least worthwhile social bonds. “[S]eem[ing] like one whose brain at moments strove / For life and light, but could not pierce beyond / The swathing of dim flesh that cloaked it round” (Lampman, *SA* 1:63-65), Richard is thoroughly locked up inside himself, unwilling or unable to respond to the desires of others, and incapable of engaging in productive, mutually fulfilling relationships.

The “motivating encounter with Margaret Hawthorne” (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 296) that instills in Richard the desire to seize and realize his potential, and prompts him to embark on the ten years of study that make up the second section of the poem also marks the beginning of a process of socialization that unfolds alongside and overlaps with his education. Richard is trapped inside the “dim” prison of himself by erratic mood swings, and a disabling recalcitrance; the sight of the sleeping Margaret “slid[es] beneath the cloud-bands of his soul” (Lampman, *SA* 1:337), effecting a transformation that is

like the lifting up,
 Snapping asunder and complete discharge
 Of some great cloudy weight whose hideous wings
 Were clasped like night about his struggling soul. (Lampman, *SA* 1:346-49)

The moment when he stops and stares at her is the first time in the poem that the mature

Richard has acknowledged, let alone responded to, another person. He has disregarded the other farm labourers, he has ignored both his father and his brother, and his unresponsive presence at his family's table has caused them to fall silent and "watch him with mute kindness in their eyes" (Lampman, *SA* 1:133), but "[o]ne wide swift look" at Margaret is like "a blow" (Lampman, *SA* 1:325, 326) that shatters his anti-social carapace. "[F]or the first time . . . He stood in the clear light, and felt, and saw" (Lampman, *SA* 1:341-42), writes Lampman, establishing the uniqueness of the event, and pinpointing Richard's new-found capacity for perception and affective response – the two elements conspicuously lacking from his prior engagements with people. Richard's rapturous observation of Margaret is accompanied by a flash of penetrating insight into himself. Rather than attaining self-knowledge through narcissistic or solipsistic self-inspection, he arrives at it via the poem's first, most powerful, and most significant instance of social connection, through his affinity for Margaret. It is his recognition that "all / His life had lacked of insight and of power" (Lampman, *SA* 1:356-57) that prompts his self-transformation, and Margaret's instrumental role in inciting both his insight and his transformation establishes the pattern of self-improvement following on social connection that plays out again and again over the course of *The Story of an Affinity*. As already observed, the poem "is an *internalized* Herculean narrative in which the mind is the sole frontier to be expanded and built up" (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 294, emphasis added), but it is important to note that Richard's internal development has an indispensable social dimension: *The Story of an Affinity* stakes his internal growth on the quality, profundity and influence of his external relationships.

Richard's emotional response to his insight also points to his newly developing sociability. Lampman likens him to Adam and Eve:

For as our primal father and fair Eve
 In that old story of the first of things
 When they had eat of the forbidden fruit
 Grew conscious of their nakedness, so he
 Now at a single stroke was made aware
 Of his own ignorance, and how last and least
 And wretchedest of all his kind he was. (*SA* 1:365-71)

The analogy captures both the extent to which his insight amounts to a fall from a primitive state of ignorance, and the shame that accompanies his self-knowledge. Depending on a consciousness of one's appearance to others, shame is a fundamentally social emotion, and these lines foreground this aspect of Richard's response. Not only does Lampman reference the fall, but he also refers specifically to Adam and Eve's "gr[owing] conscious[ness] of their nakedness," thus calling attention to Richard's own sense of the manifest visibility of his failings. What is more, Richard's "aware[ness] / Of his own ignorance" goes hand in hand with his recognition that he is "last and least / And wretchedest" – that is, his recognition of his failings is comparative, and thus social. Richard understands his failure to develop in relation to the accomplishments of others, and, moments later, explains his illiteracy with reference to Margaret: "you [Margaret] understand this print and thread / The mysteries of other tongues / While I . . . cannot even read my own beyond / The simplest words" (Lampman, *SA* 1:417-42). When Margaret wakes, she exclaims, "Ah, Richard, it is you; and you know me?" (Lampman, *SA* 1:399). He does, indeed, know her, and because of her he knows, and can evaluate himself. The scene establishes the importance of social relations for Richard's development, and demonstrates Richard's emerging awareness that he has a place in society, and that his value as a human being is in no small part mediated by (given the comparative nature of Richard's self-evaluation, one might even say, weighed against) the people around him.

If his encounter with Margaret marks the beginning of Richard's development as a social being, it also marks the beginning of his acquisition of the skills necessary to function as a social being. When Margaret addresses him, Richard first "look[s] in silence," then "murmur[s] inarticulately" (Lampman, *SA* 1:406, 408), and then finally speaks, moving progressively towards exchanging his sullen, threatening silence for a conversational voice that is chastened, humble, even diffident in tone. Not only does Richard demonstrate a newfound capacity to express himself appropriately, but he also shows that he can listen. Margaret tells him, "If you will to learn, / You may" (Lampman, *SA* 1:437-38), and he responds with the declaration that guides his development over the remainder of the poem: "I am resolved . . . to live my life anew / And follow manfully

where your steps have gone” (Lampman, *SA* 1:451-52). Richard’s response to Margaret is particularly notable because of his explicit resolution to model his behaviour on hers, a plan that turns on him rejecting an isolating narcissism in favour of following the example of another, and thus provides conclusive proof that the sight of Margaret has caused Richard to abandon the aggressive solipsism that went hand in hand with his silence. Brief as it is, the conversation between Richard and Margaret demonstrates Richard’s emerging capacity for appropriate social interaction, and his newly acquired willingness not just to judge himself according to others, but also to explicitly model himself on those whose accomplishments surpass his.

After Richard makes his life-altering resolution, Margaret invites him to dinner, and both his response to her invitation, and his behaviour at the meal attest to his nascent sociability. When she “pray[s] Richard to return / With her and join them at the midday meal” (Lampman, *SA* 1:489-90), his “brain [is] like a turbid sea” (Lampman, *SA* 1:491). His mental state recalls the stormy moods that in the past have driven him to wander the countryside, but, rather than being stricken by a “disordered fire” (Lampman, *SA* 1:106), his thoughts are now “illumined with a reckless joy” (Lampman, *SA* 1:493), and, rather than rejecting the offer of companionship, he now “[t]urn[s] gladly and [goes] with her” (Lampman, *SA* 1:494). At the meal, Richard sits without speaking, but he does not wholly refuse social interaction. The men at the table “each in turn” (Lampman, *SA* 1:540) good-naturedly tease him that he is in love. Although Richard says nothing in return, his silence is not sullen or oppressive, nor is he entirely uncommunicative. Like an uncomfortable and uncertain teenager, he “redden[s], and look[s] up / At each and all of them with a strange smile” (Lampman, *SA* 1:543-44). His embarrassment and his inability to come up with a rejoinder to their jokes speak to his relative lack of social experience, but a bashful Richard surrounded by “a thunderous round of jests” (Lampman, *SA* 1:542) is an infinitely more sociable, and more inviting figure than the sullen brute who earlier compels his own family’s attention but discourages their attempts to communicate, causing their dinner conversation to “flag” until they fall silent, “sit / And watch him with mute kindness in their eyes” (Lampman, *SA* 1:132-33). Although

Richard is far from being an adept social actor, his encounter with Margaret has transformed him from a menacing killjoy into a not unwilling focal point of social interaction – that is, into a man who is taking his first tentative steps towards learning to participate in well meaning intercourse.

In the second part of *The Story of an Affinity*, Richard's socialization continues concurrently with his mental development. His studies are paralleled, facilitated, and, in no small part, directed by a series of friendships, and this section of the poem is as much an affecting pean to the transformative power of friendship as it is an exhaustive and occasionally polemical description of his triumphal ascent of the "mount of knowledge" (Lampman, *SA* 2:158).¹³⁹ Richard initially finds himself lost in the impersonal and alienating crowds of the city. His commitment to his resolution wavers when he finds "no welcoming eye, no hand / Out-stretched to help him" (Lampman, *SA* 2:57-58). He begins to "despair" (Lampman, *SA* 2:58), but, at that very moment, he "s[ees] two *friendly* people, married folk, / [a] workman and his wife" (Lampman, *SA* 2:65-66, emphasis added) who call him over, listen to his story, and give him food, "sweet talk" (Lampman, *SA* 2:106), and an "attic chamber" (Lampman, *SA* 2:119) to live in. The incident may seem peripheral to Richard's education, but it is, in fact, essential to it. Without this instance of genuine social connection among the "cold-eyed and unknown populace" (Lampman, *SA* 2:62), without the care and comfort he receives from the husband and wife who stand out among the otherwise unwelcoming and unhelpful crowd, and without the security of the attic room they rent to him, it is doubtful if even Richard's "Titan courage" (Lampman, *SA* 2:39) would be sufficient to see him through his studies. Lampman's message is clear: the once self-sufficient, and socially isolated Richard now *requires*

139

In *Mimic Fires*, Bentley notes that "[i]n the course of his education Richard is assisted by a number of characters" (301), and goes on to discuss how they assist him, but not the significance of the fact that he is assisted. In the Introduction to his 1986 edition of the poem, he points out that friendship is "a theme evident . . . in Part II of *The Story of an Affinity* and elsewhere in Lampman's cannon" (xxii). These passing observations mark the extent of the critical discussion of the importance of friendship to Richard's development.

meaningful social connections to guarantee his emotional well-being, and enable him to pursue his course of self-improvement. As his meeting with Margaret predicted, the formation of social bonds precedes and permits his development.

Richard's encounter with the workman, and his family also marks an important shift in the language that Lampman uses to refer to his protagonist. Immediately after the workman sees Richard, the narrator calls Richard "our friend" (Lampman, *SA* 2:84), and he repeats the appellation intermittently throughout the remainder of the second section of the poem (Lampman, *SA* 2:108, 137, 451, 557, 570). The use of the first person plural possessive draws together the reader, the narrator, and Richard in a relationship of amicable familiarity, linking a key moment in Richard's socialization with an instance of community formation that is remarkable for extending beyond the bounds of the poem to include its audience. As well as stressing the significance of friendship for Richard's development, Richard's encounter with the workman and his family, the shift in the narrator's language that follows the encounter, and Richard's role as the locus of a newly formed social unit anticipate Richard's emergence, in the final section of the poem, as a protector of the social fabric, and a potential community leader.

As with the workman, and his family's contribution to Richard's development, the contributions of his most significant teachers, mentors, and guides to his growth are also inextricably tied to the bonds of friendship they form with him. Richard arrives in the city in the summer, and he can find only one teacher who is "Bound to the city though reluctantly" (Lampman, *SA* 2:142). "[T]he rough strength and sweetness of [Richard's] speech" (Lampman, *SA* 2:144) quickly win the man over, and "He t[akes] [Richard] to his heart, [and] bec[omes] *his friend*" (Lampman, *SA* 2:145, emphasis added). It is the fruit of this friendship, the "love and patient care" (Lampman, *SA* 2:147) with which the teacher prepares Richard for the coming term, and the willingness with which he "Nerve[s] and relieve[s] [his charge] with continual help" (Lampman, *SA* 2:149) that allow Richard to endure the humiliating, but necessary, experience of starting his formal education at the lowest grades, sitting "among small children . . . A humble giant at their petty tasks" (Lampman, *SA* 2:151-52).

When Richard begins to perceive the depravity of the modern world, and discovers his own urge to mitigate it, it is through friendship that he realizes this desire, and learns how to work towards “man’s advancement and the larger life” (Lampman, *SA* 2:371). Richard meets the social worker Charlotte Ambray when she emerges from one “of the tenements of the poor” (Lampman, *SA* 2:374), and asks for his help with a sick man. “[P]leased / To find some human service for his hands” (Lampman, *SA* 2:384-85), he accepts her offer to join her in her rounds, and they become fast friends: “They talked together for an eager hour, / And found themselves at one, and parted friends” (Lampman, *SA* 2:414-25). Charlotte provides Richard with an outlet for his altruism, and their friendship becomes an essential part of Richard’s education. Bentley explains,

Beautiful, charming, and emotionally complex, [Charlotte] is not the focus of romantic love (in fact, her marital status is never mentioned), but an educative “companion” whose “noble friendship” teaches Richard “more / Than all his contact with life’s outer forms” (2:423, 449-50). A “delicious presence” and “An inexhaustible source of changing lights,” she is linked even through her surname – a contraction of ambrosia and ray – with the [Arnoldian] “*sweetness and light*” towards which Richard is traveling. (*Mimic Fires* 302)

Although clearly not romantic, Richard’s friendship with Charlotte recalls a key feature of his relationship with Margaret: Richard adopts both his friend and his love interest as models to be followed and imitated. His declaration to Charlotte, “Lead you the way, and I will give the strength” (Lampman, *SA* 2:409), echoes the similarly emphatic declaration he makes to Margaret, “I am resolved . . . to . . . follow manfully where your steps have gone” (Lampman, *SA* 1:451-52). Richard’s willingness, even eagerness, to follow figuratively in the footsteps of others makes a striking contrast with his past propensity for arbitrarily abandoning his fellow farm labourers “And strid[ing] away” (Lampman, *SA* 1:108) alone, and speaks to the depth and extent of his transformation. The husband and wife’s friendship provides Richard succor in a time of need, and his friendship with Charlotte affords him the opportunity to pass on their kindness, to perpetuate their sociability by coming to the aide of strangers just as the couple did for him. The bond Richard forms with the social worker and the assistance he gives her also make it clear that a crucial part of the process of Richard’s socialization is the development of the

willingness and the ability to promote the well being of the community in which he lives.

Finally, it is friendship that leads him to “his reading of the masters of English poetry and his assimilation to refined society” (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 302). A poet who sees Richard walking in the countryside surrounding the city makes him an offer of friendship on the basis of their shared love of natural beauty. “If you be, as I surmise, a friend / To Beauty and the wisdom drawn from earth / I pray your friendship, and I long to hear / Your speech” (Lampman, *SA* 2:507-10), he says to Richard, and, just as with Charlotte, the “strong and sacred friendship” (Lampman, *SA* 2:559) that springs up between them makes an essential contribution to Richard’s education: “Richard’s mind / Gained from the touch of a creative soul / Guidance and clews to many paths” (Lampman, *SA* 2:559-61). The poet’s offer, in which one friendship (friendship with Nature) leads to another (friendship with the poet), suggests that one relationship begets another, and that friendship thus implicates one in an expanding network of social connection. This suggestion is swiftly confirmed when the poet introduces Richard to the three women whom Bentley appropriately identifies as “the poem’s equivalent of the three graces” (*Mimic Fires* 302). The trio completes Richard’s education by introducing him to the “thrills and dreams” of music, and the refinements of “sweet and serious” (Lampman, *SA* 2:647, 606) conversation, and the verse-paragraph following his encounter with them, the final verse paragraph in the poem’s second section, summarizes his formal education and details his acquisition of the position of “lecturer” (Lampman, *SA* 2:658), but adds nothing new to his development. The apotheosis of Richard’s education thus coincides with, and is intimately connected to an instance of sociability.

When introduced to the group, Richard at first “remain[s] quite silent” (Lampman, *SA* 2:609), but the three women quickly coax him to join the conversation: “They, drawing him as with the gentlest snares, / Unbarred his lips, and made him eloquent” (Lampman, *SA* 2:610-11). As his initial attempts are rewarded with the group’s attention, Richard grows in confidence and eloquence until “His tongue under the kindling influences / Of the fair moment and that richer air / Win[s] an accent of unwonted grace” (Lampman, *SA* 2:614-16), and he achieves a triumph of expression. His movement from

reticence to eloquence under the influence of his “three [personal] graces” recalls how the sight of Margaret and her book broke his silence, and caused him to utter his first words in the poem. The two scenes bookend Richard’s development, and invite comparison. The three women stand as the poem’s representatives of the intellectual accomplishment and refined aesthetic sensibility symbolized by Margaret’s “little book” (Lampman, *SA* 2:412), and, especially when juxtaposed with Richard’s inability to read the book’s “curious words and unknown type” (Lampman, *SA* 2:410), his ability to match, even exceed, “the smooth grace and glamour of [the three women’s] speech” (Lampman, *SA* 2:608) testifies to the enormity of his transformation. If the difference in Richard’s ability to express himself is the clearest marker of his educational development, the difference in the situations in which he speaks marks the extent of his social development. In the first scene, he is engaged in an intimate one-on-one conversation that is made all the more intimate by its romantic overtones; in the second scene, he is in conversation with a group – that is, engaged in an interaction that is more social than intimate, and more communal than personal. This difference between the scenes is reinforced by the difference between the highly personal self-disclosure that he makes to Margaret, and the abstract (Lampman never identifies the subjects of their conversations) nature of his “sweet and serious talk[s]” (Lampman, *SA* 2:606) with the three women. Richard achieves a triumph of self-expression to match his educational triumphs, and he also transitions from being minimally capable of one-on-one interaction – his conversation with Margaret depends almost entirely on her forbearance of his backwardness – to being a master of sophisticated conversation capable of shining amid the complex and demanding exchanges of what is, for all intents and purposes, a literary salon. Richard thus simultaneously confirms his completion of his education, his mastery of self-expression, and the culmination of his development as a social being, demonstrating with his “grace” (Lampman, *SA* 2:616) and volubility that the young man who sat in mute embarrassment at the Hawthorne’s table is now as knowledgeable, eloquent, and socially adept as he is physically imposing.

As illustrated by the multiple abilities simultaneously at play in Richard’s

demonstration of his proficiency at sophisticated conversation, Richard's education is characterized by its scope. Bentley identifies "a distinctly Arnoldian pattern to Richard's programme of studies" (*Mimic Fires* 299), in part on the basis of its comprehensiveness. Bentley observes that, for Arnold, "culture . . . teaches us to conceive 'human perfection' as 'a harmonious expansion of *all* the powers which make the beauty and worth of human nature' (5:94)" (*Mimic Fires* 299), and that

[a]s Richard concentrates successively on "enlarging studies" (2:136-372; "intellect and knowledge"), "merciful work" (2:373-450; "conduct"), the "Beauty" of nature and literature (2:452-563; "beauty") and, finally, the "smoothe grace and glamour ... of speech" (2:564-648; "social life and manners"), he engages in an Arnoldian "*study of perfection*" that takes him from the darkness and disorder of "a nature not finely tempered" towards the "*sweetness and light*" which famously characterize the fully cultured and well-balanced human being in *Culture and Anarchy*. (*Mimic Fires* 299-300)

Bentley adds, "[i]n its very breadth and diversity, Richard's education reflects the 'broadening of the curriculum' in Ontario's schools that took place in the last three decades of the nineteenth-century" (*Mimic Fires* 300). The common denominator shared by both influences is the breadth of their programmes, and it is a breadth that is reflected in the truly impressive variety of subjects, pursuits and challenges that Richard tackles. His "enlarging studies" run the gamut from the strictly academic to the purely practical, from subjects such as "Geometry" (Lampman, *SA* 2:249), history or "the story of the races of mankind" (Lampman, *SA* 2:251), and "the study of the old and learned tongues, / The Roman and the Greek" (Lampman, *SA* 2:255-56) to "fe[eding] his curious mind / With endless learning of the ways of trade" (Lampman, *SA* 2:236-37) when he sets aside his books to visit the workshops of the city. Accompanying Charlotte Ambray on her "merciful work," he makes a tour of the "haunt[s] of vice and agony, [of] The horrors of the lowest pits of life, / And the grim city's dreadful secrecies" (Lampman, *SA* 2:429-31) that is as comprehensive as his studies are exhaustive. Between his study of literature and his excursions to "salve. . . his spirit in the peaceful woods" (Lampman, *SA* 2:482), he experiences, and, more important, becomes "conscious" (Lampman, *SA* 2:493) of the full spectrum of natural and human-produced beauty. In moving through the educational

institutions, the workshops, the slums, and one of the great houses of the city, Richard acquaints himself with its inhabitants' various standards of behaviour, and the apparent ease with which he moves through these widely different social environments strongly suggests that, beyond being acquainted with them, he has fully mastered this impressively broad range of behavioural norms.

As observed earlier, Richard's progression through the stages of his education is made possible by the friendships that he forms with helpmeets (the workman and his family, who rent Richard his room), guides (Charlotte Ambray, who guides him through the slums of the city, and the poet, who takes Richard to the house of the "three graces"), and mentors (his first teacher, who begins his education, Charlotte Ambray, who teaches him how to help the suffering, the poet, who introduces him to English literature, and the "three graces," who refine his aesthetic sensibilities). Lampman's description of both friendship and education reflects and reinforces the connection made by the narrative. Richard's education is a process of enlightenment, and Lampman consistently represents Richard's progress as an increase in light and/or in his ability to see.¹⁴⁰ In his initial, stultifying ignorance, Richard "seem[s] like one whose brain at moments strove / For life and light, but could not pierce beyond / The swathing of dim flesh that cloaked it round" (Lampman, *SA* 1:63-65). When he sees Margaret sleeping with her book and achieves the insight that will drive his self-improvement, he is illuminated by a "light, so rapturous, so divine [it is] like the terror of revealing dawn" (Lampman, *SA* 1:361-62). When he begins his studies, he sees the heights of knowledge he aspires to, "Perceiving on the summits proudly bright / The gleam of his neglected heritage" (Lampman, *SA* 2:165-66). With its combination of "perception" and "brightness," this image neatly conjoins sight, light and education. When Richard begins to get the rewards of his studies, "at last / by

140

Images of light or sight are not the only images Lampman uses to describe Richard's educational development. For instance, he compares Richard's intellectual growth to the growth of "a river . . . Supported by increasing tributaries" (Lampman, *SA* 2:242-43). Images of light or sight, however, are the only images that Lampman repeats with enough regularity to establish a pattern of representation.

little and little the desired light / Dawn[s] and increase[s]” and his “lightening brain / Gr[ows] nimbler in its movement, more secure” (Lampman, *SA* 2:172-73, 175-76). As he develops further, Richard yearns “To pierce the surface of the [world’s] outer shows / And read as by the light of things untaught / The simple heart within” (Lampman, *SA* 2:309-11). This pattern reaches its climax in the closing lines of the poem when Richard and Margaret reach “the portals of the perfect fields of life, / And thence, half-dazzled by the glow, perceive / The endless road before them, clear and free” (Lampman, *SA* 3:741-43). In its concatenation of bedazzlement and vision, this description reflects the extent to which the moment is, among other things, the end result of Richard’s education, and the culmination of his enlightenment.

Sight and perception are similarly important to friendship in the poem: the majority of the friendships that contribute to Richard’s development are initiated by a visual connection that lays the groundwork for the affective commitment that follows it. It is the sight of Margaret that initiates Richard’s transformation, but Margaret does much more than passively receive Richard’s gaze. Her recognition of him when she first looks at him encourages him to speak, and she responds to his resolution “to live [his] life anew” by casting the “light [of her eyes] on Richard’s face” (Lampman, *SA* 1:451, 458), helping to cement the affinity that motivates Richard with her glance. Margaret’s looks establish the pattern for a series of looks that are similarly perceptive, beneficent, and encouraging, and that initiate the establishment of lasting bonds between him and the observer. Just as he does with Margaret, Richard sees the “two friendly people, married folk / The workman and his wife” (Lampman, *SA* 2:65-66), and the workman returns his look in kind: “the workman, lifting up his eyes / Saw Richard’s towering form without the gate, / And marked his earnest face and wistful gaze” (Lampman, *SA* 2:78-80). This instance of visual connection – of perception, recognition, and communion – prompts the workman to approach Richard. When the workman and his wife discuss what to do privately, their imminent decision to help him is suggested by their “Glancing at Richard, as with settled eyes” (Lampman, *SA* 2:91), and they finalize their decision when their “child whose clear and tranquil orbs / Had never moved from Richard’s face” (Lampman,

SA 2:94-95) reaches out to embrace him. Richard's meeting with Charlotte places a similar emphasis on the visual – specifically, on her eyes and on her observation of him. After being “tall,” her most distinctive feature is her “dark and eloquent eyes” or “dark and sybilline eyes” that are alternately “frank” or filled with “cloudy depths” (Lampman, *SA* 2:378, 407, 396, 406). When assessing Richard, she “Eye[s] [him] like a sculptor who has found at last / The fair and fitting model” (Lampman, *SA* 2:400-01). By looking at him, she reaches the conclusion that he can do “good service” (Lampman, *SA* 2:403), and establishes the basis for a friendship that evolves out of their shared desire to aide the “poor unfortunates” (Lampman, *SA* 2:404) of the city. Finally, the poet offers Richard his friendship on the sole basis of what he has concluded from watching Richard, saying,

Mine eyes have marked you often in these fields

. . .

And, if you be as I surmise, a friend
To Beauty and the wisdom drawn from earth,
I pray your friendship, and I long to hear
Your speech. (Lampman, *SA* 2:505-10)

The young Richard has a “fair clouded face” (Lampman, *SA* 1:136), and is at once compelling and inscrutable, but, as the world of knowledge becomes clearer and more visible to him, he becomes ever more transparent and accessible to those around him: Richard's increasing sociability facilitates his education, and his education makes him better suited for social interaction. The reciprocal relationship highlighted by the continuity of Lampman's descriptions situates friendship at the crucially important meeting point between Richard's education and his socialization, reinforcing its significance for Richard's development and for the poem as a whole.

There is, however, more to the role played by friendship, and, specifically, the looks Richard's friends direct at him in his development. The workman, Charlotte and the poet all see in Richard his emergent self: the workman sees an “earnest[ness]” and “wistful[ness]” (Lampman, *SA* 2:80) that Richard is experiencing for the first time, Charlotte sees in him the good that he “*might* do” (Lampman, *SA* 2:405, emphasis added), and the poet tells Richard, “I long to hear / Your speech” (Lampman, *SA* 2:509-10),

anticipating an eloquence that Richard is still very much in the process of developing. By seeing what is, in effect, Richard's potential, they provide him with the opportunity to achieve it; they see possible Richards, rather than the present Richard, and open up new vistas of development for him. By broaching new developmental possibilities for him, these characters' looks – looks that initiate their friendships with him and reveal Richard's potential – contribute to the breadth of his education, and point to the importance of friendship to his development as a totally competent man.

The combination of Richard's breadth of knowledge with his social conscience, his highly developed aesthetic sensibility, his sophisticated social skills, and his Herculean physique marks him out as a conventional example of the totally competent man. However, in Richard's case, rather than being one dimension of his total competence, Richard's social skills, the process of socialization that produces them, and the friendships that contribute to his socialization are the foundation of his total competence: as the basis of his education, and the means by which he discovers his potential, friendship is the constant that runs through Richard's development, drawing together its disparate elements and uniting the extraordinarily broad range of abilities he possesses by its end. He is not socially competent because he is totally competent; he is totally competent because he is socially competent. Thus Lampman places sociability at the heart of total competence, and makes friendship the basis of the ideal masculinity embodied by Richard.

This is doubtless a reflection of the high valuation of friendship, and particularly of masculine friendship, that Lampman expressed in essay form more than a decade before starting *The Story of an Affinity*.¹⁴¹ Lampman begins "Friendship" (1881) with a

¹⁴¹

Bentley explains that, although the poem was "[e]vidently copied out in fair in April, 1894, *The Story of an Affinity* was probably begun, as L. R. Early has argued, in late October or early November, 1892" (Introduction, *The Story of an Affinity* xi). Also according to Bentley, "Friendship" was most probably written in February of 1881 (Introduction, *The Essays and Reviews of Archibald Lampman* xxvii). Despite being separated by more than a decade, the views of contemporary society that Lampman takes in "Friendship" and *The Story of an Affinity* are remarkably similar. In "Friendship," he

quotation from Thomas Carlyle: “Friendship, in the old heroic sense of the term . . . no longer exists; it is in reality no longer expected or recognized as a virtue among men” (qtd. in Lampman, “Friendship” 10). The essay itself follows the opening quotation closely,¹⁴² alternating between lamenting the disappearance of genuine friendship from the modern world, and celebrating a vanished ideal of “true friendship” (Lampman, “Friendship” 10). In keeping with the Carlylean heroism that he invokes, Lampman’s ideal of friendship is distinctly martial and masculine. He explains that, in the past, “a man possessed that one very great source of happiness – confidence in the faithful attachment of his friends and a knowledge that in an hour of reverse a trusted arm would be uplifted to save him, something really risked out of true friendship for him” (“Friendship” 11). He holds up as an example of this “true friendship” the Italian Republics of the middle ages where, “when war and discord desolated the whole country

laments the “din of enterprise” (12) that predominates and the more general unwillingness of man to help his fellow man. “If one fails and sinks,” he writes, “with a cry for help upon his lips beneath a burden too heavy for him to bear, the rest content themselves with a few cold words of feigned pity, and leaving him to his fate, pass on with the ceaseless stream of human activity and remember him no more” (“Friendship” 11). In *The Story of an Affinity*, Lampman gives Richard a similar insight into the competitiveness, hypocrisy, and selfishness of the modern world:

He saw how fair and beautiful a thing
 The movement of the busy world might be,
 Were men but just and gentle, yet how hard,
 How full of doubt and pitiless life is,
 Seeing that ceaseless warfare is but man’s rule
 And all his laws and customs but thin lies
 To veil the pride and hatred of his heart. (Lampman, *SA* 2:320-26).

¹⁴²

Bentley observes that Carlyle lies behind much more than just the essay’s opening quotation: “the point of departure for “Friendship” is Thomas Carlyle’s vision of the alienation of individuals from one another in modern society, specifically his view that relationships of mutual obligation are impossible in an era dominated by mechanical and monetary systems. “Signs of the Times” (1829) and *Past and Present* (1843) are among the best-known expressions of this view, which is brought to bear on the Scottish poet Robert Burns in the early (1825) biographical essay that furnishes Lampman with his opening quotation” (*The Essays and Reviews of Archibald Lampman* 205-6).

from end to end, the people stood *manfully* by each other” (“Friendship” 10, emphasis added). For Lampman, friendship is a masculine commitment to mutual aid, protection and sacrifice that formed the basis of the ideal communities of “the olden time” (“Friendship” 10), and that is absent from a modern world in which “[m]an’s life runs evenly on from boyhood to old age[,] his aims are selfish[,] [and] he is striving for wealth, or power, or fame” (“Friendship” 10). *The Story of an Affinity* is a paen to the transformative power of friendship, and it is also and no less a celebration of the specific significance of friendship for masculinity and vice versa. Given Lampman’s understanding of the importance of masculine friendship for the formation of authentic communities, it is not surprising that, in the third and final section of the poem, Richard, the product of multiple formative friendships, emerges as a potential community leader who is distinguished by his capacity to evoke in others the values he has adopted through his development.

If the first section of the poem concerns the motivation that drives Richard’s self-improvement, and the second section details this improvement, the third illustrates the ability of the now developed Richard to assist others in achieving their own full potential – that is, in realizing, as he has, their own better selves. In taking on this role, Richard demonstrates his potential as a community leader, and the model of masculinity that he embodies emerges as an individual ideal that is, as his involvement with Charlotte Ambray has strongly suggested, inseparable from a communally minded investment in social improvement. The person on whom the returning Richard has the most obvious effect is Margaret. During Richard’s ten year absence, the once vibrant Margaret has been slowly overwhelmed by “the monotonous round / Of duties and incessant petty cares” (Lampman, *SA* 3:8-9). Much like Richard in the first section of the poem, her potential is “Deep-hidden” (Lampman, *SA* 3:39), and finds its expression in “formless yearning and unnamed regret” (Lampman, *SA* 3:80). As well as fulfilling Margaret romantically by uniting her with “her spirit’s answering type” (Lampman, *SA* 3:306), Richard breaks the spell of domestic drudgery that has oppressed her, and frees her “cramped and fettered capability” (Lampman, *SA* 3:41). Although Margaret initially recognizes Richard as “Her

spiritual master, large, and armed with power” (Lampman, *SA* 3:295), as Bentley explains, theirs “is to be a relationship founded on more than female submission to male ‘power’” (*Mimic Fires* 305). The power dynamic between them shifts, and they are soon walking side by side, an “action [that] suggest[s] a mutual movement towards perfection, [and] anticipates the similar procession that occurs in the final lines of the poem” (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 305). For a woman who has been “Secluded,” “cramped,” and “fettered” in “The *bondage* of [a] quiet household” (Lampman, *SA* 3:5, 41, 41, 30, emphasis added), the perception of an attainable perfection in the form of “The endless road . . . *clear* and *free*” (3:743, emphasis added) is a welcome liberation, a liberation conspicuously effected by and shared with Richard.¹⁴³ Richard is thus Margaret’s love interest, *and* her liberator whose return frees her to realize the potential that has been stultified during his absence.

Richard’s liberation of Margaret is all the more significant because of what the poem implies that he frees her to do. During Richard’s absence, Margaret has been “Secluded in her country home,” and “the monotonous round / Of duties and incessant petty cares [has] slowly deaden[ed] at the heart / The joyous fervour of her early dream” (Lampman, *SA* 3:5, 8-11), but she has nevertheless maintained “Deep-hidden, far-within . . . the sense of lost desire . . . The adventurous yearning for the freer sway” (Lampman, *SA* 3:39-42), and found ways to preserve, if not realize, her potential. In fact, Margaret becomes a leader in the community, particularly among the women of the community, and takes on the task of helping to educate the local children: “She dr[a]w[s] the best around her, and . . . plants in many a genial soil / The seeds of knowledge and divine desire” (Lampman, *SA* 3:54-56); “Among the neighbouring women she be[comes] . . . A priestess and a confidant to all” (Lampman, *SA* 3:57-59); and, “she . . . gather[s] at her heels / The

143

The conclusion of the poem does not resolve the question of Margaret’s submission to Richard. “[E]ven in the poem’s obligatory happy ending,” Bentley argues, “the tension in Margaret between dependence and independence remains” (*Mimic Fires* 306). What is certain is that Margaret has achieved the greatest degree of freedom and agency possible within the social context defined by the poem, and it is Richard who has allowed her to do so.

children . . . And tell[s] them stories . . . Wherein some core of spiritual beauty sh[ines]” (Lampman, *SA* 3:62-67), or “reads to them from books” (Lampman, *SA* 3:68), or “Unveil[s] to them . . . The wonder and the mysteries of the stars” (Lampman, *SA* 3:70-72). Margaret’s efforts are more restricted and more domestic than the work of Charlotte Ambray, but she shares with the social worker both the desire to improve her community and the ability to do so. This resemblance strongly suggests that, when united with Richard (a man who himself has a deeply felt commitment to social improvement), and allowed to realize her full potential, Margaret will emerge as a fully fledged and very capable social improver. Indeed, if she has become a revered community leader and an able educator when “cramped and fettered” (Lampman, *SA* 3:41), it is more than probable that a freed Margaret will easily be the equal of Charlotte, or even surpass that impressively accomplished woman’s ability for “merciful work” (Lampman, *SA* 2:417). Thus, by liberating Margaret, Richard specifically frees her to realize her potential as a social-improver, contributing to her well-being and, through her, to the well-being of society in general.

Although they are rivals, Richard’s interaction with the other suitor for Margaret’s hand, John Vantassel, has a similarly improving and elevating effect, allowing the other man to attain an almost unattainable masculine ideal, and increasing his ability to contribute to the good of society. Richard’s engagement with Vantassel also highlights the mature Richard’s impressive ability to safeguard the social fabric, and his enormous potential as a community leader. Replete with gothic details, the decisive encounter between Richard and Vantassel initially threatens to degenerate into a scene of tragic violence that leaves one man dead and the other guilty of his murder, and robs society of two of its luminaries.¹⁴⁴ The enraged and grief stricken Vantassel meets Richard in the

144

Although no match for the super competent Richard, Vantassel is nevertheless an impressively accomplished man. A lawyer and a politician, “a man / Of mark and value in the neighbouring town, / Honoured and loved by most, and feared by some, / Proud, generous, quick to think and do” (Lampman, *SA* 3:108-11), he is one of the leading members of his community. Moreover, the sacrifice he makes at the end of the poem suggests that, although he lacks self-control, and is “[g]iven to anger in tempestuous

middle of the night in “a quiet glade / Tenanted only by the silver moon / And the sharp shadows” (Lampman, *SA* 3:616-18), and immediately strikes at the “giant form [that] [l]oom[s] out before him” (Lampman, *SA* 3:619-20). Although Richard gives ground, and offers to explain himself, Vantassel presses the attack, provoking “The old Berserker passion of [Richard’s] youth” (Lampman, *SA* 3:646). Rather than give in to his fury, Richard controls himself, and Vantassel, “pinn[ing] [the other man] like a feather to the earth” (Lampman, *SA* 3:651), and forcing him to listen to his explanation. As well as illustrating the self-control that Richard has developed through his maturation, his mastery of Vantassel demonstrates his ability to project that self-control onto others, endowing them with his capabilities: by pinning Vantassel, Richard brings the man back to his senses, affording him the opportunity to get control of himself, and listen peacefully without being restrained or needing to be restrained. Richard’s mastery of Vantassel allows the other man to master himself. The interaction between the two men shows Richard’s capacity for leadership, and the language that Richard uses when he addresses Vantassel reinforces this aspect of the scene. Richard asks him, “Will you be governed now?” (Lampman, *SA* 3:653). Bridging the personal and the political, Richard’s use of the verb “to govern” connects his ability to control himself, to control Vantassel, and to imbue Vantassel with self-control to political leadership, implying that the abilities that allow him to succeed in his personal life would be equally effective when applied to the political realm. Richard’s actions in the scene also span the full breadth of his impressive range of competence. In physically controlling Vantassel, he employs the brute, Herculean physicality that defined him as a young, undeveloped, and uneducated man. With his “eloquent tongue” (Lampman, *SA* 3:663), Richard tells Vantassel “The story of his labour and his love” (Lampman, *SA* 3:658), bringing to bear the facility for sophisticated self-expression that marked the pinnacle of his development. These two actions span the breadth of his competence, and they also recapitulate the trajectory of his development from an impressive though essentially mute body to a master of language

gusts” (Lampman, *SA* 3:112), he has an equally impressive moral potential.

and learning. The confrontation between Richard and Vantassel is thus a compact concatenation of Richard's willingness to peacefully resolve violent situations, his ability to instill in others the virtues he possesses, his total competence, and the full scope of his development in a scene whose contents and language ground Richard's potential as a community leader in this complex mixture of abilities and virtues.

It is, however, the resolution of the poem's love triangle that provides the clearest evidence of Richard's potential as a leader, and the most conclusive proof that his self-improvement has made him a super-capable social improver. In addition to instilling in Vantassel his own capacity for self-control, Richard inspires his rival to make a personal sacrifice that, within Lampman's understanding of friendship and masculinity, approaches the supreme expression of masculine virtue. Once Richard explains himself, Vantassel renounces his claim on Margaret. "You have conquered both by force of hands," he tells Richard,

and by force of soul. I yield

. . .

May the fates

Be good to her, for I have been her friend.

I will release her from all debt to me

By word or letter. (Lampman, *SA* 3:681-87)

Vantassel's declaration frames his renunciation as an act of friendship, and reflects the tenor of his and Margaret's relationship. Although Margaret and Vantassel do become romantically involved, their relationship begins and ends as a friendship. Vantassel courts Margaret by first seeking her friendship, and, as she "gr[o]w[s] to like / The bright companion of her easiest hours" (Lampman, *SA* 3:127-28), "there gr[o]w[s] up / In Margaret's heart such friendship as not love / Could have made truer, albeit passion-free" (Lampman, *SA* 3:135-37). Margaret decides to accept Vantassel's proposal in no small part because he is "dear to her, as a close friend" (Lampman, *SA* 3:198), and she struggles with breaking her commitment to him because "their friendship ha[s] been so close and sweet" (Lampman, *SA* 3:377). In "Friendship," Lampman singles out the sacrifice of a man's life for a friend as the preeminent expression of masculine heroism. "[T]rue

friendship, such friendship as prompts men who feel it to sacrifice advantage, property, even life for those they love” (“Friendship” 10), he explains, is what distinguishes the ideal past from the degraded present. Obviously, Vantassel does not sacrifice his life *for* Margaret, but he does sacrifice his life *with* Margaret in the name of friendship, and, in making this sacrifice, he attains “the rude greatness of [an all but vanished] past” (“Friendship” 10), briefly revivifying an expired ideal of noble manliness. This sacrifice is particularly laudable because of its contrast with Vantassel’s earlier self-interest. Vantassel enters the poem “Searching the country here and there for votes” (Lampman, *SA* 3:87) – that is, as a figure preoccupied with and working towards his own advancement. His pursuit of Margaret follows from his campaigning, and is similarly self-interested. Vantassel’s renunciation of his claim on her is thus both a moment of heroic sacrifice, and a transformation of his character for the better. If the friendships that facilitated his education helped Richard achieve his full potential, in the resolution of his conflict with Vantassel, the pattern is reversed, and friendship becomes the basis of Richard helping his rival become his better self: the “gentle” “strength” (Lampman, *SA* 3:637, 648) of Richard’s persuasion allows Vantassel to realize in his renunciation both the full potential of his friendship with Margaret,¹⁴⁵ and his full potential as a man.

As was the case with Richard’s “governing” of Vantassel, Lampman employs Richard’s inspiration of his rival’s heroic renunciation to gesture towards his mature protagonist’s capacity to act as an agent of social cohesion, and a leader by adding a layer

145

It may seem counterintuitive to say that Vantassel’s renunciation of his romantic claim on Margaret constitutes the realization of the full potential of his friendship with her, but it releases her to find a happiness and fulfillment with Richard that she could never have with Vantassel. “In marriage with Vantassel [Margaret] beh[o]ld[s] / The certain failure of one half her life” (Lampman, *SA* 3:376-77) and she recognizes that “[h]er life with Vantassel would be still / The same long round of plain activities” (Lampman, *SA* 3:195-96) that have stifled her during Richard’s ten year absence. Vantassel’s renunciation liberates her from the stultification of a life with him. As a selfless act motivated by the desire for Margaret to find the greatest possible happiness, even though it is most probably a permanent break with her, it is an expression of care, goodwill, and, most of all, friendship.

of social significance to an otherwise personal interaction. For Lampman, “true friendship” is a vanished ideal of masculine heroism, and it is also the bond that united the ideal societies of the past. Although “the olden time[s]” (“Friendship” 10), Lampman writes,

were ages of suffering and anxiety, and oppression; but yet a man possess that one very great source of happiness – confidence in the faithful attachment of his friends and a knowledge that in an hour of reverse a trusty arm would be uplifted to save him, something really risked out of friendship for him. (“Friendship” 11)

In the modern world, “[a man] has lost and can never know that most perfect happiness that rises out of faith in the attachment of those who would call themselves his friends” (“Friendship” 11), and Lampman attributes this loss to the disconnection and self-interestedness that pervades contemporary society, to the “cold, selfishly-struggling, ever changing beings” (“Friendship” 12) that constitute its masses. Thus, in prompting Vantassel to renounce his claim on Margaret, Richard allows his rival to achieve a personal triumph of masculine heroism, and, even more important, inspires him to affirm his commitment to what is for Lampman the most authentic, most ideal, and most valuable of social bonds. Given the profoundly pessimistic view of modern society Lampman takes in both “Friendship” and *The Story of an Affinity*, it is difficult to imagine a more important contribution to social cohesion, or a more important quality for a leader to possess than the ability to inspire expressions of “true friendship” in others. Vantassel is himself an accomplished community leader, a lawyer, a politician, and “a man / Of mark and value in the neighbouring town, / Honoured and loved by most, and feared by some” (Lampman, *SA* 3:109-11), and the manner and facility with which Richard governs, inspires and, by winning Margaret from him, replaces Vantassel hints that part of “The endless road before” (Lampman, *SA* 3:743) Richard may be his rise to prominence as a community leader. Although strengthened by his union with Margaret – a woman with a marked propensity for taking on leadership roles – this hint is less significant than the fact that it is, specifically, Vantassel that Richard moves to a selfless act that affirms an ideal social bond.

As already observed, Vantassel is a politician who meets Margaret in “the

midmost noise and heat / Of a fierce-fought electoral campaign” (Lampman, *SA* 3:84) – that is, he is engaged in the self-interested pursuit of a position as a public servant.

Moreover, his love for Margaret leads him into competition with Richard. Self-interested politicians and competition were two of the more pressing ills that Lampman saw afflicting Canadian society. In “The Modern Politician” Lampman rebuked the political class:

Gone are the grandeurs of the world's iron youth,
When kings were mighty, being made by swords.
Now comes the transit age, the age of brass,
When clowns into the vacant empires pass,
Blinding the multitude with specious words.
To them faith, kinship, truth and verity,
Man's sacred rights and very holiest thing,
Are but the counters at a desperate play,
Flippant and reckless what the end may be,
So that they glitter, each his little day,
The little mimic of a vanished king.

With its reference to an ideal past when “kings were . . . made by swords,” the poem echoes “Friendship” – specifically, the essay’s emphasis on the goodness of past ages, and its idealization of martial violence – and the poem thus partakes in the value structure that condemns Vantassel’s self-interestedness and valorizes his sacrifice. The resemblances between Vantassel and the subject of the poem extend beyond their shared profession. Vantassel’s words are not exactly “specious,” but he is not always forthright and honest. Vantassel’s courtship of Margaret is a “siege” that he prosecutes “with slow and patient care” (Lampman, *SA* 3:134), winning her friendship before even beginning to consider declaring his love. Although not malicious, this calculated approach to wooing is superficially pleasing, very close to being deceptive, and even closer to being manipulative. Moreover, before renouncing his claim on Margaret, Vantassel is strikingly “little.” Vantassel is at his most selfish when he attempts to resolve his conflict with Richard by attacking him. In addition to Vantassel’s violent vengefulness looking small-minded in contrast with Richard’s pacific reasonableness, Vantassel himself appears diminutive next to the Herculean Richard. Richard has “a giant form,” possesses

“mountainous strength,” and “tower[s]” over Vantassel when he is “pinned . . . like a feather to the earth” (Lampman, *SA* 3: 619, 648, 657, 651). Next to the mature, imposing, and ethically exemplary Richard, Vantassel looks very much “The little mimic,” although Richard is far from being “a vanished king.” If the self-interestedness that inflects Vantassel’s political ambitions and his love of Margaret is problematic, the rivalry with Richard that it leads him into is just as bad.

In his essay “[Socialism,]”¹⁴⁶ Lampman criticizes competition as the “wrong and unhuman principle at the bottom of our whole industrial system” and declares that “the cause of competition is the cause of anarchy, pessimism and disbelief in a possible manhood for human nature just emerging from its barbarous infancy” (187, 186). He advocates in the strongest terms the value of “community and brotherhood” and “the collective” (Lampman, “[Socialism]” 186, 187). Although the focus of the essay is strictly economic, the contrast it establishes between the values of competition and community resonates with the material of *The Story of an Affinity* – specifically, with Richard and Vantassel’s rivalry. As romantic rivals, Richard and Vantassel are in competition for Margaret’s hand. Richard demonstrates his own commitment to community by refusing Vantassel’s invitation to fight, or, put differently, by refusing to engage in a violent competition for Margaret. Instead, in an act that is redolent of

146

Bentley argues that the “evidence . . . suggest[s] that ‘[Socialism]’ was written in the mid-eighteen nineties, possibly in or about 1895” (“Editorial Notes,” *The Essays and Reviews of Archibald Lampman* 352). This would place the essay slightly after the year, 1893, in which Lampman did the bulk of the work on *The Story of an Affinity*. However, as Bentley notes, “Lampman’s engagement with Socialism may safely be assumed to date from at least the mid-eighties when, to judge by a spate of articles in Canadian periodicals (see, for example, the June 1885 to June 1886 issues of *Rouge et Noir*), the origins, tenets and schemes of the various thinkers and groups who advocated community over competition became subjects of widespread interest and discussion in Canada” (“Editorial Notes,” *The Essays and Reviews of Archibald Lampman* 352). Thus, although “[Socialism]” may (the dating of the essay is speculative at best) postdate the writing of *The Story of an Affinity*, Lampman’s engagement with the ideas contained in the essay most certainly predates the composition of the poem, and the essay can legitimately be read as an expression of beliefs Lampman held while writing *The Story of an Affinity*.

“brotherhood” and faith in the goodness of his fellow man, Richard places his fate in his rival’s hands. When Vanatassel relinquishes his claim on Margaret, he likewise refuses to compete for her. More important, his act of self-sacrifice affirms a commitment to the common good that is fundamentally antithetical to the “wrong and unhuman principle” of competition. Thus, Richard not only allows Vantassel to realize his full potential as a man, but his influence also specifically transforms Vantassel from a selfish competitor into a selfless man committed to the value of community – that is, from a “Modern Politician” into one of the “many that in heart and head / [are] of the better world and the securer path, / Men, wholesome, tolerant, temperate and sincere” (Lampman, *SA* 2:366-68). That Richard is able to effect such a transformation in a man who is both a personal rival and an accomplished political leader makes it clear that Richard’s development has equipped him to remedy two of the great ills Lampman sees afflicting society: self-interested politicians and competition. By providing a concrete example of Richard transforming an actual politician, the poem demonstrates in no uncertain terms his unique qualifications as an agent of social cohesion: Richard may never himself become a leader, but his influence will make the leaders he meets better men and better leaders.

The Story of an Affinity is not set in Canada, and, indeed, none of Lampman’s works quoted here contain any details that tie them to the poet’s home country, but they nevertheless speak powerfully, if not directly, to the Canadian context in which they were produced. The transformation of Vantassel most probably reflects Lampman’s own negative view of Canadian politics and Canadian politicians. As James Doyle observes, Lampman reacted “against the seamy side of politics in Ottawa” (11), and it is easy to see Richard asking the pinned and overmastered Vantassel “Will you be governed now?” as an instance of wish fulfillment on the part of an author who was thoroughly fed up with the misbehaviour of national politicians. Although not explicitly offered as such, the penultimate scene of the poem nevertheless stands as an immediately relevant commentary on the state of Canadian politics that offers the ideal model of masculinity embodied by Richard as a solution to the problem of a political culture defined more by self-interestedness than a commitment to the good of the country. More generally, *The*

Story of an Affinity's promotion of the values of social responsibility, community, and selflessness over selfish individualism is in keeping with the values of Lampman's nationalist contemporaries whose opponents consistently placed individual economic or minority cultural interests ahead of responsibility to the national community. In yoking together individual achievement and social responsibility, Lampman envisioned a model of super-competent masculinity that was in line with nationalist models of masculinity, and, more specifically, with the staking of individual manhood on a commitment to the collective of the nation that featured prominently in nationalist works such as Charles G.D. Roberts's "Canada." The "fit" between Lampman's poem and the new nationalism is made all the tighter by the details of Richard's acquisition of his total competence. Developed through a process of socialization that stresses the value and virtue of mutual affiliation, and that culminates in Richard's emergence as an agent of social cohesion, Richard's total competence cannot be disassociated from his participation in *The Story of an Affinity*'s various communities. Drawing from the urban and the rural, the rich and the poor, the intellectual, the aesthetic and the industrial communities of the nation, the breadth of Richard's competence springs from the breadth of his social integration, and endows him with the unique capacity to unite the very communities that contribute to his development. Although itself not a nationalist poem, *The Story of an Affinity* shares with more nationalist works the understanding of the totally competent man as a super-competent agent of social cohesion. *The Man from Glengarry* deploys a strikingly similar version of the totally competent man, but in the service of an explicitly nationalist agenda.

II

Making a Great Man Good, and a Good Nation Great: The Development of Ranald Macdonald

“Connor’s earliest novels,” Clarence Karr argues,¹⁴⁷ “were above all preoccupied with maintaining social equilibrium in a society undergoing an immense transition into its modern, urban, industrial phase” (80). Indeed, Connor’s ability to provide answers to the challenges posed by the transformations of modernity was one of his and his novels’ central appeals. His publisher, George Doran, self-consciously “offered Connor to [the public] . . . as a Sky Pilot shepherding his flock of readers into a moral and wholesome future in which evil would be restrained and the integrity of communities maintained” (Karr 80). Part of what made Connor so obviously suited to the role of shepherd or guide was his ability to give his readers, in particular his male readers, exemplary models of behaviour in the form of idealized male protagonists whose breadth of competence, powerful moral codes, and ability to instill their values in others made them uniquely capable of promoting social order. Of the heroes of Connor’s early works, the mature Ranald Macdonald stands out because of the combination of a breadth of competence and a capacity for leadership that equip him to champion the ideal of social cohesion on the broadest possible stage. He is remarkable even among Connor’s many remarkable men because he is an exemplary national man who brings all of the qualities that define Canadian manhood specifically to bear on the fight for national unity. Ranald becomes a nationalist agent of social cohesion as an effect of the combination of his acquisition of total competence with a process of socialization that endows him with both the desire and the ability to consolidate the national community. Ranald is a great man who is transformed into a good man through his social integration. He, in turn, acts to promote the strong social bonds needed for Canada to make the transition from a good to a great nation. What is more, his active promotion of social and national cohesion is complemented by a development that reads as an allegorical unification of the nation.

147

Karr focuses primarily on *Black Rock* (1898) and *The Sky Pilot* (1899), but the comment is equally applicable to *The Man from Glengarry*. Published a mere two years after *The Sky Pilot*, *The Man from Glengarry* shares Connor’s first two novels’ concerns with the atomizing effects of modernity, social cohesion, and the maintenance of strong communities.

Thus Ranald emerges as both an agent and a symbol of national unity.

As was observed in the Introduction to this thesis, *The Man from Glengarry* can be roughly divided into three distinct units that are commensurate with the stages of Ranald's life: his introduction as a savage, uneducated and uncivilized adolescent; his education and development under the supervision of Mrs. Murray, the minister's wife; and his confirmation of the effect of that education and development on his character through his accumulation as a grown man of wealth, the respect of his peers, social connections, and good deeds. As the formation of his bond with Mrs. Murray, and his subsequent acquisition of respect, social connections, and a well deserved reputation as a social reformer indicate, Ranald's development as a totally competent man is concurrent with, and, indeed, inseparable from his social integration. Much like Richard's, Ranald's development sees his transformation from an adolescent delinquent with a propensity for socially corrosive acts of violence to a super/totally competent leader whose substantial gifts are placed in the service of the good of both local and national communities.

Ranald begins the novel as a boy on the verge of manhood, but a boy nevertheless, and a boy who is the mirror image of his father's atavistic, hyper-violent, and profoundly antisocial masculinity. When *The Man from Glengarry* opens, it has been three years since Macdonald Bhain, the leader of the Glengarry logging gang, has found God and exchanged "carousing [and] fighting" for "Behaving himself" (Connor 17, 18) – that is, for sobriety and "refusing all invitations to fight unless 'necessity was laid upon him'" (Connor 18). Of the Glengarry men, only Macdonald Dubh, Macdonald Bhain's brother and Ranald's father, has objected to this change, and, although he has "f[a]ll[en] into line" (Connor 18), his "temper [is] [still] swift to blaze" and he preserves the unthinking love of violence that made "[f]ighting . . . like wine to" (Connor 18, 16-17) his brother before he was saved. Most significant for Ranald's development, although Macdonald Dubh follows his brother's rules, he continues to ascribe to the primitive moral code Macdonald Bhain has rejected in favour of Christian charity and forgiveness, a moral code that stakes a man's manhood on his ability to personally (and violently) avenge any wrongs committed against him. It is the choice between a progressive Christian charity and a

regressive vengeful violence¹⁴⁸ that plays out in the protracted brawl that takes up the novel's first two chapters, and the same choice that establishes the starting point for Ranald's development/socialization, and inaugurates the personal struggle that will define it.

In the fight that ensues when Macdonald Dubh finds the river blocked by the Murphy gang's logs, Louis LeNoir catches Ranald's father off guard, knocks him down, and gives him a severe beating. When Macdonald Bhain rescues his brother, and the other men with him, he is faced with the choice of letting LeNoir go (a choice that accords with the Glengarry boss' rule of only resorting to violence when it is "a plain necessity" (Connor 25)), or avenging his battered brother. He sticks to his principles, telling his brother, "'Vengeance is mine saith the Lord,' and I have solemnly promised the minister not to smite for glory or revenge" when Macdonald Dubh says he will kill LeNoir some day (Connor 33). He also refuses LeNoir's provocations, and only agrees to fight him after LeNoir strikes him repeatedly:

"Now the Lord be praised," [Macdonald Bhain] cried, joy breaking out in his face. "He has delivered my enemy into my hand. For it is the third time he has smitten me, and that is beyond the limit appointed by Himself." With this he advanced upon LeNoir with a glad heart. His conscience clear at last. (Connor 35)

Although Macdonald Bhain's entry into the combat is in accordance with his Christian principles, he loses sight of them during the fight, and it is only his brother's plea that he

148

The link between progress and "Behaving oneself" is made clear by the commercial success Macdonald's gang has once he begins to enforce "the new order" (Connor 18). "Macdonald soon bec[o]me[s] famous on the Ottawa" (Connor 18) for, among other things, paying "the highest wages" (Connor 18). The connection between Christian values, progress, and economic productivity introduced in the opening chapter informs much of the rest of the novel, and is specifically evident in Ranald's ability to increase the productivity of the British Columbia logging camps that he manages by Macdonald Bhain's strategy of paying the highest wages and holding the men to the highest standard of behaviour. As Colonel Thorp and the disgruntled shareholders of the company are forced to admit, the only reason Ranald is not as successful as his "famous" uncle is because the political uncertainty in the province "has an exceedingly depressing effect upon business" (Connor 433).

not take his revenge from him that prevents Macdonald Bhain from breaking LeNoir's back. Macdonald Dubh's "cry for vengeance . . . recall[s] [Macdonald Bhain] to himself" (Connor 37), shocking him by showing how far out of line with his moral code the action he is about to take is, and providing the motivation he needs to control himself. In juxtaposing Macdonald Dubh's plea and Macdonald Bhain's hard won restraint,¹⁴⁹ Connor favourably contrasts the self-control that is integral to Macdonald Bhain's Christian charity with the basic selfishness that motivates Macdonald Dubh's desire for revenge, and defines the negative and positive poles of a range of masculine behaviour within which he immediately situates his protagonist.

With its combination of robust physicality, hard won self-restraint, and religiosity, this scene reads like a textbook example of muscular Christianity. This interpretation is reinforced by the conclusion of Macdonald Bhain's struggle with himself. Despite having mastered himself in the moment, he has not purged himself of the desire for vengeance. His crisis of conscience is only resolved when he is overcome with a vision that harrows his body and soul, and leaves him "pale and wet, but calm, and . . . exalted" (Connor 40). The opening chapters of *The Man from Glengarry* thus seem to place the novel firmly in the tradition of muscular Christianity, but what follows clearly distinguishes Connor's perspective from that of Thomas Hughes and other advocates of the philosophy. Connor does not limit the capacity for physical bravery, self-control, or self-sacrifice to his male characters, and, indeed, it is a woman who is the novel's preeminent example of the brand of Christian faith shared by Macdonald Bhain and Ranald. Mrs. Murray has "the power of one who sees with open eyes the unseen, and who loves to forgetting of self those from

149

Connor emphasizes Macdonald Bhain's struggle to master his desire for vengeance. The night after the fight, he wrestles with his feelings, formulating and then rejecting a plan to hunt LeNoir down and kill him himself, and remonstrating with God. Finally, he has an ecstatic vision that purges him of his negative emotions and leaves him "calm, and [with] an exalted look in his eyes" (Connor 40). Ranald witnesses this scene. Macdonald Bhain's struggle impresses his nephew, leaving Ranald "awe stricken" (Connor 40), and stands as the first, immediate example of the masculine self-mastery and salvation by faith that will be key components in Ranald's own renunciation of vengeful violence and his development into a good man.

whom the Infinite love poured Itself out in death” (Connor 375), and she is a tireless worker for good who bears the visible marks (“lines of pain and care” (Connor 464)) of the sacrifices she makes to bring others to God. She is at one and the same time the novel’s most religious, most selfless, and most communally minded character as well as the person who has the most beneficial effect on the greatest number of people. The fact – a fact acknowledged by men such as Ranald and Colonel Thorpe – that Mrs. Murray is the embodiment of the ideal Christian provides ample evidence that, although men such as Macdonald Bhain and the mature Ranald are both muscular and Christian, *The Man from Glengarry* cannot be classified as a work of muscular Christianity without substantial qualification. For this reason, the following treats the religious aspects of the novel from the point of view of Christian charity, rather than that of muscular Christianity.

Although Macdonald Bhain provides a positive example of masculinity, Ranald is closer to his self-indulgent, vengeful father than to his self-mastering, Christian uncle. As soon as Macdonald Bhain releases LeNoir, Ranald confronts his uncle, pointing out his father’s injuries and demanding that Macdonald Bhain finish what he has started. “Why did you not break his back? You said you would! The brute, beast!” (Connor 38), he yells, but it is Ranald with his uncontrolled rage who is the brutish and the bestial one. When Macdonald Bhain reiterates his refusal to kill LeNoir, and tells the boy, as he told his father, “Vengeance is mine saith the Lord” (Connor 38), Ranald declares that he will kill LeNoir himself, and “spring[s] *like a wildcat* at [him]” (Connor 38, emphasis added). This is the second time in as many chapters that Ranald has been likened to an animal. Earlier, in order to free himself from LeNoir’s grip, Ranald has “squirm[ed] round *like a cat* [and] sunk his teeth into LeNoir’s wrist” (Connor 22, emphasis added). These analogies suggest that Ranald’s lack of moral/spiritual¹⁵⁰ development makes him almost

150

As explained in the Introduction, *The Man from Glengarry* manifests Connor’s own deeply held beliefs, and effectively conflates religion and morality, implying that to be moral is to be religious and to be religious is to be moral. Essentially, in the novel, right action is inseparable from godly action.

subhuman, and that the masculine culture of the shanty-men is primitive in the extreme, if not problematically retrogressive. What is more, by hurling himself at the defenseless LeNoir, Ranald inadvertently replicates the circumstances of the beating that LeNoir administered to the prone and dazed Macdonald Dubh, implying that within the rigid confines of the novel's moral code vengeance is comparable to the original crime, and an avenger is no better than his victim. The similarity between LeNoir and Macdonald Dubh's names reinforces this point: "Noir" is French for black, "Dubh" is Scottish Gaelic for black, and, with their shared ethical overtones, their names hint at the moral equivalency of the two men. Not only does Ranald share his father's commitment to a masculine code of vengeful violence, but he also eagerly takes on the responsibility for avenging his father, declaring to LeNoir, "The day will come when I will do to you what you have done to my father, and if my father die, then by the life of God . . . I will have your life for it" (Connor 38), and effectively starting a blood feud with him. These words are "not goot words" (Connor 38), Macdonald Bhain opines, and the success of Ranald's development will depend on him becoming sufficiently committed to the principles of Christian charity and forgiveness to repudiate his "not goot words," and, by repudiating them, demonstrate that he has become a good man.

Ranald's commitment to what is a fundamentally anti-social code of behaviour is all the more problematic because this behaviour it is not restricted to "the shanties" of the Ottawa river (Connor 16). Connor distinguishes Glengarry county from the forests where the men go in the winter to log: the former is the place where they "hew from the solid forest, homes for themselves and their children" (Connor 15), where they work towards strengthening the infrastructure of society and fostering the development of tightly knit communities; the latter is a socially marginal, exclusively masculine space "[r]emote from the restraints of law and of society" (Connor 16). Although he does not endorse the anti-social behaviour of the men in the shanties, Connor understands, and even excuses it, pointing out that it is, at the very least, appropriate to their environment: "living in wild surroundings and in hourly touch with danger, small wonder that often the shanty-men were wild and reckless" (Connor 16). Ranald, however, does not confine his anti-social

behaviour to the space where it is normative, if not good; instead, he brings the ethics of the shanties back with him to the farms of Glengarry county, and is consequently both a marginal member of the community, and a socially disruptive force within it.

Isolated from its neighbours, the Macdonald homestead is more bush than farm; reflecting the characters and social positions of both its male residents, it “st[ands] far back from the cross-road in a small clearing encircled by thick bush” (Connor 58). Macdonald Dubh “[has] not ma[de] as much progress as his neighbours in his conflict with the forest” (58), not because he is not “a hard worker and a good man with the axe,” but because “his heart [is] more in the forest than in the farm” (Connor 58). By failing to carry out the socially progressive work of pioneering, Ranald’s father has preserved the forest and the retrogressive masculine values associated with it, distinguishing himself from his peers by his stubborn refusal to develop both his farm and himself. Macdonald Dubh’s “habits of life [have] wrought a kind of wildness in him which set[s] him apart from the thrifty, steady-going people among whom he live[s]” (Connor 58); as the minister says, “Ranald is just wild enough, like his father before him” (Connor 100), and the boy is likewise set apart from the community.¹⁵¹ Although Ranald is certain that he will “some day . . . be a great man” (Connor 108), and Mrs. Murray sees in him the potential to be a good man, as the minister explains, he is nonetheless “a daring young rascal [who is involved in] any mischief going on in the countryside” (Connor 101). His past misdeeds include “let[ting] off the dam . . . so that the saw-mill could not run for a week” (Connor 101), and “abus[ing] poor Duncie McBain so that he was carried home groaning” (Connor 101) – that is, striking a direct blow to the economic productivity of

151

Connor makes much the same point in slightly different terms a few chapters later: Macdonald Dubh and his son, living a half-savage life in their lonely back clearing, were regarded by their neighbors with a certain degree of distrust and fear. They were not like other people. They seldom mingled in the social festivities of the community, and consequently were more or less excluded from friendship and free intercourse with their neighbors. Ranald, shy, proud, and sensitive, felt this exclusion, and in return kept himself aloof even from the boys, and especially from the girls of his own age. (74)

the community,¹⁵² and committing an act of violence. Even more troubling is the feud that Ranald engages in with Aleck McGregor. This conflict is less deadly, but its violence nevertheless recalls the feud between Ranald, his father and LeNoir, and demonstrates Ranald's willingness to menace the integrity of the Glengarry community by importing the vengeful violence of "the shanties." The penchant for vengeful violence expressed in Ranald's commitment to avenge his father thus bespeaks a more general propensity for antisocial behaviour, and his development from a wild teenager into a great man who is also a good one will depend specifically on his renunciation of his feud with LeNoir, and more generally but no less significantly on his transformation from a disruptive into a productive member of the community.

Not only do Ranald's vengeful father, and his self-mastering uncle define the negative and positive poles of masculine behaviour, but they also mark, respectively, the beginning and end points of Ranald's developmental trajectory. Ranald's growth sees him become less and less like his father, and more and more like his uncle until, at the climax of his development, Macdonald Bhain can honestly say of his nephew, "I will not be putting him below myself" (304), and be speaking as much to Ranald's spiritual and moral fibre as to his impressive physique and his worth in a fight. The positive nature of this transformation is somewhat simplistically indicated by the two men's names. As already observed, "Dubh" is Scottish Gaelic for "black," and, in keeping with Connor's theme, "Bhain" is Scottish Gaelic for "white." Ranald's maturation thus sees him progress from the vengeful violence of his father to the moral/spiritual goodness of his uncle, moving, as their names have it, from black to white. Three incidents in the novel – Ranald's ride through the bush with Mrs. Murray, his arrangement of the homecoming of the body of Mack Cameron, and his competition with Aleck McGregor at the logging bee

152

As the discussion of *Lawrie Todd* and *Boggle Corbet* in the preceding chapter suggests, the mill was an important structure in the early development of settlements. It was often both a focus of communal effort, and the source of communal wealth, and interfering with it, as Ranald did, could have very real consequences for the well being and viability of a community.

– serve as markers of Ranald’s development, registering the extent and the nature of his growth, and measuring out the process by which he comes to progressively resemble his uncle.

Ranald’s transformation is a result of his renovating relationship with Mrs. Murray. Not surprisingly, the formation of his bond with her is also a moment of personal growth for him, and the first indication that he is capable of something approximating Macdonald Bhain’s selflessness and self-control. Ranald comes to the manse looking for help for his injured father. On the ride back to the farm, he and Mrs. Murray are pursued by wolves. Although his colt is faster than Mrs. Murray’s pony, Ranald tells Mrs. Murray to ride ahead while holding his own horse back. Interposing himself between the wolves and the minister’s wife, affords him the opportunity to slow the wolves down by throwing his coat behind him, and allows the two of them to reach safety. The incident makes Mrs. Murray “a friend ready to offer life for him” (Connor 57), and gives a glimpse of Ranald’s potential to be something other than self-interested, violent, and socially marginal.¹⁵³ Although “[t]he truth [is] [that] Ranald would rather be alone if the wolves came out” (Connor 51), he acquiesces to Mrs. Murray’s request to ride through the forest, according with the consensus that has made “the minister’s wife[’s] . . . fearlessness . . . proverbial in the community” (Connor 51), coming in line with the values of the community of Glengarry county for the first time in the novel, and indicating, albeit in a small way, his capacity for socially appropriate behaviour. During the ride itself, he demonstrates a combination of selflessness, self-control, and presence of mind that is the antithesis of the unrestrained selfishness that drives the ethic of vengeful violence he has inherited from his father. The change in Mrs. Murray’s perception of Ranald reflects the crucial significance of the ride, and the aspects of his character that it illuminates: “In the shy,

153

This recalls the ideal of friendship that lies behind Lampman’s *The Story of an Affinity*. “Friendship” was published in *Rouge et Noir 2* in 1881, and a substantially edited version of the *The Story of an Affinity* was published in *Poems of Archibald Lampman* (1900). It is possible that either of these works influenced *The Man from Glengarry*, but it is more likely that this similarity reflects an affinity between Lampman and Connor’s thought rather than any specific influence of the former on the later.

awkward, almost sullen lad there had suddenly been revealed in those moments of peril the cool, daring man, full of resource and capable of self-sacrifice” (Connor 74); and, it might be said, more generally, in the recalcitrant and vengeful adolescent, there has been revealed the potential to be a great and a good man.

In framing the ride as revealing the “man” in the “lad,” Connor identifies it as a moment of maturation: the connection Ranald forms with Mrs. Murray during it initiates his social integration, his moral/spiritual development, and his progression towards renouncing his vow to avenge his father, and embracing the Christian charity advocated by Macdonald Bhain. When Mrs. Murray hears about the brawl, she praises Macdonald Bhain’s restraint, and she tells Ranald he should follow his uncle’s example, and forgive LeNoir. Ranald, however, rejects her admonishment, and repeats his vow to avenge his father. As they return to the manse over the same road along which the wolves pursued them the night before, “the memory of their [her and Ranald’s] saving” (Connor 73) prompts her to try again by reiterating her message of forgiveness when Ranald leaves her at the manse door: “Our Father in heaven was very good to us, Ranald,” she says, “and we should be like him. He forgives and loves, and we should, too” (Connor 73). Although these words run contrary to Ranald’s desires, and he has already rejected a similar injunction, coming from the saintly Mrs. Murray in the context of the sacrifice she has made to care for his father,¹⁵⁴ they have an impact, and he “fe[els] somehow that it might be possible to forgive” (Connor 73). Ranald’s act of selflessness incites Mrs.

154

Spending the night caring for Macdonald Dubh is very much a sacrifice for Mrs. Murray, one of an uncountable number of sacrifices she makes for the residents of Glengarry county. Despite being from the city, and essentially unsuited to rural life, she “g[ives] herself without stint to her husband’s people, with never a thought of self-pity or self-praise . . . And scores of women and men are living better and braver lives because they had her for their minister’s wife” (Connor 48). Her sacrifice, however, is not without a toll. At the end of the novel, Ranald is “struck . . . to the heart to see the marks of many a long day’s work upon the face of [Mrs. Murray,] the woman who had done more for him than all the rest of the world” (Connor 463). The extent of her aging testifies to the extent of her commitment to the well-being of those around her, and drives home exactly how much her good work, work like caring for Ranald and his father, costs her.

Murray to persist in admonishing him until she succeeds in inciting his transformation. The bond that Ranald forms with Mrs. Murray is the first relationship he establishes with someone outside of the men of the Glengarry gang; their friendship “beg[*i*n[s] a new phase of life for Ranald” (Connor 74), for their reciprocal interaction provides a positive alternative to the reciprocal violence of the shanties by establishing the relationship on the basis of which he is drawn progressively into the community of Glengarry county. If Mrs. Murray earns her “place in [Ranald’s] imagination where men set their divinities” (Connor 74) – the place from which she is able to inspire and direct his maturation – because she conjoins the parallel virtues of Christian charity and social integration, she is able to do so because of the potential Ranald reveals to her on the ride. What is more, the potential that Ranald shows the minister’s wife suggests that, under the right influence, the “man” emerging from the “lad” will be more like the forgiving white Macdonald than the vengeful black Macdonald.

Ranald quickly begins to realize this potential. His handling of the return of Mack Cameron’s body shows that under Mrs. Murray’s influence he has become more emotionally sensitive, more socially integrated and aware, and more able to selflessly set aside his own feelings to see tragedy through the eyes of those it affects most. The letter Ranald receives from Yankee sending word from Macdonald Bhain that Mack has been drowned effectively nominates the young man as a community leader. In giving him the responsibility of getting a wagon to transport the body, of informing those most effected by the death (Mack’s relatives and his sweetheart), and of arranging the funeral, Macdonald Bhain assigns his nephew tasks normally carried out by the head of the Glengarry logging gang. Despite his youth, and his history of anti-social behaviour, Ranald acquits himself with maturity, sensitivity, and self-possession. He recognizes that “[i]t will be hard on Bella McGregor [Mack’s sweetheart]” (Connor 152), and recruits Mrs. Murray to help him because she is better equipped to tell Bella, and to comfort her after she has been told. Ranald appreciates the magnitude of the tragedy for Bella; moreover, his understanding of the emotional impact of the death is sufficiently sophisticated and nuanced for him to mitigate the blow by carefully selecting the

messenger who delivers the news. In the moment of crisis, he is aware of, sensitive to, and able to manage the emotional responses of others. What is more, his responsibilities have him recruiting men and women from around the county, as well as balancing the practical work of arranging the transportation of the body and the funeral with the emotional responses of a community that will be deeply and widely effected by the death. All of this, but above all his careful management of practical and affective considerations, demonstrates an awareness of the complex network of relationships that make up the community. This awareness of the social connections that bind the people of Glengarry County together indicates in itself that Ranald is more fully and meaningfully embedded in the community than the isolation of his father's farm, and the "distrust and fear" (Connor 74) their neighbours hold them in might suggest. Moreover, it implies that Ranald has all the resources necessary to function as a full member of the community if he chooses to.

Not only does Ranald demonstrate his commitment to the community and his sociability, but he does so in the context of taking on a leadership role in which he actively works to strengthen the community. The funeral that he arranges includes a wake that is "for the comfort of the living" (Connor 166), and that allows the community to gather, share their grief, and reaffirm the bonds that have been shaken by the loss. After his brother's beating, Macdonald Bhain speaks to his men, telling them, "There will be no more of this. 'Vengeance will be mine saith the Lord! . . . The Lord will do His own work'" (Connor 45). He also puts a stop to any potential reprisals and turns a tragedy with the very real potential to undermine his men's Christian principles into an opportunity to strengthen both their commitment to their faith, and to the community defined by it. In managing the community's grief, and, specifically, in turning a blow to the people of Glengarry county into an opportunity to reaffirm their solidarity, Ranald thus resembles his uncle. If Mack's death sees Ranald demonstrate a breadth of social competence that spans the full range of social engagement from the microcosm of an individual's response to loss to the macrocosm of the well being of the community as a whole, it is Ranald's ability to manage his own grief and anger that is by far the most

significant aspect of this episode.

Coming a relatively short time after LeNoir's beating of Macdonald Dubh, the Glengarry man's death at the hands of a French logger seems to be perfectly calculated to remind Ranald of that event, and rekindle the rage that fuels his desire for revenge. The fact that Mack was trying to save his killer from drowning makes his death even more shocking, unjust, and provoking than Macdonald Dubh's beating. Given the resemblance of the two events, Ranald's relative lack of maturity, the rawness of his anger at LeNoir, and his close relationship with Mack,¹⁵⁵ it would be more than understandable if Ranald met the news with the same wild and vengeful rage with which he responded to the crippling of his father. Ranald, however, does not act like his old self. When he sees Bella tending her cattle, he speaks "bitterly" of the death, and "his face [is] set in angry pain" (Connor 156), but this brief flash is the closest he comes to the animalistic rage of the early chapters. Moreover, unlike the "hot hate" (Connor 38) that filled his voice when he swore vengeance on LeNoir, his bitterness and "angry pain" are not directed at an external object. Even when Ranald does show anger, the momentary lapse suggests that he is containing, rather than heedlessly expressing, his inappropriate emotions, and thus mitigating their negative effects on himself and those around him. He is mastering himself, and the deliberate care with which he "think[s] things out and mak[es] his plans [for the funeral]" (Connor 151) attests to the extent of his new found self-control.

Not only does Ranald control his emotions, but he also acts selflessly, giving the grief of others and the good of the community priority over his own loss despite being obviously and profoundly effected by Mack's death. Indeed, Ranald's own emotions fade into the background, receiving a few cursory mentions in a pair of chapters that are primarily taken up with describing the arrangements he makes, and how the community

¹⁵⁵

Ranald tells Maimie that he was very close to Mack. "He was good to me in the camp," Ranald says to her, "Many's the time he made it easy for me" (153). In combination with Ranald's enthusiastic admiration for Mack's skill with an axe and his abilities as a fighter, this suggests that, more than being a friend, Mack was a substitute father figure, and makes the difference in Ranald's responses to his father's crippling and Mack's death all the more significant.

responds to the loss. This marks another point of similarity between Ranald and his uncle. Macdonald Bhain's response to the death is to delegate the writing of the letter to Yankee, and arranging the funeral to Ranald. The uncle and the nephew thus share a mutual understanding that, at a time of loss, their role is to make arrangements without making themselves or their grief the focus of attention. Ranald's selfless concern for the emotional well-being of others also stands in stark contrast to the callous selfishness of demanding that Macdonald Bhain break LeNoir's back after having been given ample proof of the emotional and spiritual toll this would take on his uncle. The selfless and self control that Ranald exhibits confirm that he has become aware both of the feeling of others, and of the impact of his actions on the feelings of others. This awareness is itself a sign of his growing maturity: it brings with it "a sense of responsibility that awaken[s] the man in him" (162), it gives the first indication that his socialization will outfit him for a role as a community leader, and it implies that as he embraces that role he will become more and more like his uncle, like, as Yankee puts it in his letter, "The Boss" (Connor 150).

The logging Bee strengthens the link that Mack's funeral establishes between self-control, the ability to function as an integral, productive member of the community, and the refusal to indulge in vengeful violence. It also reveals that, if Ranald can master himself and embrace Christian charity, he has the potential, not just to match, but to surpass, Macdonald Bhain's goodness. Although they are both present, within the social context of the Bee, neither Ranald nor Aleck McGregor are willing to pursue their feud. Ranald feels that in his role as a host "it behoove[s] him to be courteous" (Connor 202). His subordination of his anti-social desire for violence to the dictates of etiquette testifies to his internalization of the norms and values of the community. For his part, Aleck understands that he is "engaged in a kind and neighbourly undertaking, and he [is] too much of a man to spoil it by any private grudge" (Connor 202). Both recognize that the bee is neither the time nor the place to feud openly, but they do not entirely set aside their conflict. Rather than fight, Ranald and Aleck sublimate their vengeful violence into a competition over who can clear their section of the brulé the fastest, thus channelling their

anti-social impulses into a socially productive, and, in Aleck's case, a philanthropic activity.

The competition looks towards the end of the novel by anticipating the transformation of the Glengarry gang's battle-cry, "Glengarry forever," into a chant "heard . . . on many a hard-fought foot-ball field" (Connor 473). It also demonstrates Ranald's growing capacity for self-control. Ranald is only able to gain ground on, and eventually surpass Aleck by "refrain[ing] from hurrying" Farquhar's "slow and sure and steady" team of horses (Connor 201, 199) – that is, by controlling his impulse to rush, and adapting his working style to the temperament of the team just as he has adapted his behaviour to the social circumstances of the bee. Ranald's handling of the horses recalls his reigning in of his colt during his ride through the forest with Mrs. Murray, but the competition is a longer, more demanding challenge during which Ranald is lauded by Farquhar and the minister for his "great exhibition, not only of skill, but of endurance and patience" (Connor 220). These are "great virtues" (Connor 220). They are, also and not coincidentally, the virtues that would allow Ranald to suffer Aleck's taunts without responding, and to break the cycle of reciprocal aggression in which the two of them are locked. Ranald demonstrates the very abilities necessary not only to momentarily set aside his feud, but also to bring an end to its vengeful violence all together. As the contest concludes, Farquhar exclaims, "Yon lad will be making as good a man as yourself [Macdonald Bhain]" (Connor 210), and Ranald's uncle replies "Aye, and a better, pray God" (Connor 210). Their acclaim confirms that Ranald is beginning to resemble his Christian, self-mastering uncle more than his violent, vengeful father – that he is, in Connor's simple terms, becoming more white than black.

However, if Ranald shows the ability to temporarily set aside his feud with Aleck and channel his anti-social impulses into a socially productive activity, he is not yet ready to give it up permanently, or to relinquish his commitment to his father's ethic of vengeful violence. At the end of the bee, he reaffirms his desire to avenge himself on Aleck, saying to Yankee, "I will be even with him someday" (Connor 219). As Ranald nears the end of his development, his unyielding commitment to vengeful violence, and,

specifically, to avenging his father, becomes the only remaining barrier to his complete integration into the community. Soon after the bee, Glengarry County is caught up in the throws of the Great Revival, a mass religious movement that unites the community in their spiritual fervour, and that compels even Macdonald Dubh to forgive LeNoir and join the church. The climax of Ranald's feud with Aleck, a fight in which Ranald is "beaten to a 'bloody pulp'" (Connor 248) but is victorious, immediately precedes the revival, and explains why Ranald, unlike his now reformed, forgiving and pacific father, "remain[s] unmoved by the tide of religious feeling that [is] everywhere surging through the hearts of the [Glengarry] people" (Connor 267). Ranald's inability to relinquish his vengeance makes him incapable of joining the revivalists in their embrace of Christian charity,¹⁵⁶ and divides him from his father,¹⁵⁷ his mentor, Mrs. Murray, and the community at large. If his desire for vengeance bars him from being fully socially integrated, it also stands in the way of him achieving his full potential as a man. Mrs. Murray says to him,

[t]he Lord means you to be a noble man, Ranald – a man with the heart and purpose to do some good in the world, to be a blessing to his fellows; and it is a

¹⁵⁶

The revival is sparked by a sermon from a visiting professor of divinity that emphasizes "the supreme grace of love" (254). The professor's message is at odds with the church elders' arid, formalistic, and doctrinaire theology, and it is the appeal of "the grace of love" (255) that moves the people of Glengarry County. The sermon is very much keeping with Gordon's own faith. Much like the professor, "[s]peaking before the Social Service Congress in Toronto in 1914, Charles Gordon [himself] pleaded with the delegates to abandon a God who was a distant and transcendent, stern ruler of the universe, exacting obedience and hard on the trail of every sinner, and replace him with a more human, loving God who was active in the daily affairs of the world" (Karr 87).

¹⁵⁷

As well as forgiving LeNoir, Macdonald Dubh instructs his son to forgive him. "And, Ranald, you too will be forgiving him?" (272) Macdonald Dubh asks from his death bed. Ranald first refuses his father's request. He then exclaims, "Oh, father, I will forgive him" (272), suggesting that he is approaching the point where he can relinquish his attachment to vengeful violence, but is not yet able to do so. By putting compliance with his father's dying request off to an indefinite future time, Ranald marks the difference in values that divides him from his father, and a community now united by a commitment to Christian charity while holding open the possibility of his eventual reconciliation with them.

poor thing to be so filled up with selfishness as to have no thought of the honor of God or of the good of men . . . I would be grieved to think that you should fail of becoming a noble man, strong and brave; strong enough to forgive and brave enough to serve. (281-82)

Her hopes for Ranald are fulfilled when he forgives LeNoir in an episode that confirms Ranald's strength, his bravery, his selflessness, and his nobility, but, even more important, shows that his socialization has made him "a blessing to his fellows" by making him a uniquely effective agent of social cohesion.

When LeNoir is cornered by a group of Gatineau loggers in Quebec City, Ranald leads the Glengarry men to his rescue, saving the Frenchman from exactly the sort of crippling beating that LeNoir gave his father. This selfless act of charity brings to bear both Ranald's moral/spiritual and his physical strength. It is, however, the events that follow the rescue that most comprehensively demonstrate that he has fulfilled the potential Mrs. Murray saw in him to be a great and a good man. When a contrite LeNoir comes to Ranald and apologizes for beating his father, Ranald forgives him, making his complete adoption of the Christian values of the people of Glengarry County explicit, and signalling his full integration into the community of his birth. In saying "I-forgive-you-too" (Connor 304), Ranald erases the final barrier that divides him from the community that has been united by the Great Revival.

LeNoir is so affected by the fact that the full-grown and imposing Ranald "could kill [him]" and has "made a vow to kill [him]," but, instead, saved his life because of "the grace of God" (304) that he asks first Macdonald Bhain and then Ranald for their friendship. Both men accept the offer, and the exchange recalls two signal moments in Ranald's development: LeNoir offering his friendship to Macdonald Bhain at the conclusion of the novel's opening brawl, and Ranald's formation of his bond with Mrs. Murray. LeNoir uses almost exactly the same language on each of the two occasions that he asks for Macdonald Bhain's friendship, saying, first, "You mak friends wit me," and, second, "You mak' de good frien' wit me" (Connor 39, 305), and tying the beginning of the feud to its end. More important, however, is the now repentant LeNoir's offer of friendship to Ranald for it signals that the mature Ranald is the equal of his uncle. Ranald

is no longer an onlooker, an immature, peripheral actor who can only beg full-grown men to enact his vengeance; he is himself a full-grown man who is the centre of the action, and one of the two loci of power in the scene. By joining his uncle in accepting LeNoir's offer of friendship, Ranald demonstrates that he has completed his development away from the negative example of Macdonald Dubh towards the ideal of Macdonald Bhain, and that his uncle is correct in "not . . . putting [Ranald] below [him]self" (Connor 304) either physically, morally or spiritually. The resemblance between Ranald's reconciliation with LeNoir, and his bond with Mrs. Murray makes a similar, but even more significant point about his development.

Ranald wins "a friend ready to offer life for him" (Connor 57) by selflessly endangering himself to save Mrs. Murray from the wolves, and his similarly selfless rescue of LeNoire produces much the same result. Indeed, LeNoire literally offers his life to the Glengarry gang in gratitude, telling the Glengarry boss, Macdonald Bhain, "You be my boss, I be your man – what you call – slave" (Connor 306). Although the dynamic between Ranald and LeNoir resembles the inception of Ranald and Mrs. Murray's relationship, Ranald's role within it is very different, and this difference registers the extent of his transformation. Ranald is for LeNoir what Mrs. Murray was for him – a model of selflessness, goodness, and Christian charity with the moral/spiritual force to inspire in LeNoir a radical transformation that is tantamount to a conversion. Under the influence of Ranald's example, LeNoir begs Macdonald Bhain to let him join the Glengarry men, and to teach him how to be good: "I'm ver' bad man me," LeNoir says, "I lak to know how you do dat – what you say – forgive. You show me how" (Connor 306). Just as Mrs. Murray's influence transforms Ranald from an anti-social adolescent into a socially integrated paragon of masculine virtue, so Ranald's example transforms LeNoir from an impenitent perpetrator of socially destructive violence into a repentant man committed to living a socially productive life as a member of a community defined by self-control, sobriety, and Christian virtue. Thus the climax of Ranald's development sees him emerge as a fully integrated and productive member of the Glengarry community, and, moreover, as an incipient social reformer who is able to expand the

community by inspiring outsiders (in LeNoir's case, an actual enemy of the community) to commit to the values of the Glengarry gang and the Great Revival. The reconciliation with is also an allegorical reconciliation of the Scottish and French communities in Canada that is powerfully suggestive of Ranald's future role as an advocate for national unity.

Although Ranald's developmental progress is measured by his increasing resemblance to Macdonald Bhain, and although he comes to share his uncle's mixture of physical power and spiritual/moral virtue, in his capacity to convert violent, recalcitrant men to the values of the Glengarry community, the mature Ranald more strongly resembles the other positive influence in his life. Like Richard Stahlberg, who develops through a series of improving friendships into the man who prompts the sacrifice that stands as *The Story of an Affinity's* signal example of "true friendship," Ranald reflects the mechanism of his growth, emerging from his development as a masculine version of his mentor – as a muscular social reformer whose moral, spiritual and social sensibilities are cast in the mould of Mrs. Murray.¹⁵⁸

Also like Richard, Ranald's socialization is linked to the development of his total competence, albeit not quite as directly as it is for Lampman's protagonist. Mrs. Murray gives Ranald books to read and encourages his attendance at school, pushing him to add intellectual abilities to his physical ones as part and parcel of her campaign to integrate him into the community. The similarities between the climactic completion of Ranald's socialization, and the equally climactic revelation of the breadth of his competence confirm this connection, and prefigure the mutual contributions that sociability and total competence make to Ranald's subsequent accomplishments. As explained in the Introduction of this thesis, Ranald's victory at cards marks the end of his acquisition of new abilities, and the beginning of the portion of the narrative dedicated to the demonstration of the extent of his capabilities. Like the reconciliation with LeNoir, it has

158

The fact that a woman serves as the model for Ranald's mature identity further supports the claim that *The Man from Glengarry* is far from exhibiting anything resembling conventional muscular Christianity.

Ranald selflessly coming to the aid of a beset upon French logger. Both incidents also see Ranald exhibiting a comparable degree of self-possession and ability. During the rescue, Ranald's "arms work . . . with the systematic precision of piston-rods" (Connor 301), and he plays cards like he fights – with an "absolute self-command" (Connor 339) that is mechanical in its "unswerving purpose[fulness]" (Connor 339). In fact, the card game reads like a recapitulation of the rescue with the focus changed from the completion of Ranald's moral/spiritual/social¹⁵⁹ development to the confirmation of his total competence. The similarity between the incidents suggests that his sociability and his total competence are analogous, even mutually completing, and this suggestion is confirmed as their complimentary operation allows the mature Ranald to successfully navigate a truly impressive variety of social situations. For example, Ranald gains acceptance to the Albert Club, "the [most] exclusive club in the capital city of upper Canada" (Connor 359), because he is a "known . . . friend of Captain De Lacy's of Quebec . . . *and* a sport, begad, of the first water" (Connor 359-60, emphasis added). On the one hand, the reference to his friendship with De Lacy recalls Ranald's friendships with Mrs. Murray and LeNoir,¹⁶⁰ the process of social integration that they bracket, and

¹⁵⁹

Ranald's moral, spiritual, and social development are so thoroughly interdependent that they are essentially one and the same. Connor makes Ranald's social integration dependent on his acceptance of the spiritual and moral values of the community, effectively tying morality, spirituality, and sociability together. This is far from surprising coming from a writer who consistently offered his readers religious remedies to social ills, making spirituality the basis of his vision of "a moral and wholesome future in which evil would be restrained and the integrity of communities maintained" (Karr 80).

¹⁶⁰

This connection of the saintly Mrs. Murray and the reformed LeNoir to the morally compromised De Lacy may seem strange from anything but an allegorical perspective, but it is not unmerited. The identification of De Lacy as Ranald's friend is one of a very small number of references to friendship in the novel. Ranald has mentors, antagonists, helpers, disciples, partners, rivals, etc., but he has few friends, and even fewer friends who are explicitly identified as such. Thus, despite the difference between De Lacy, and Ranald's other two friends, the passage inevitably recalls Mrs. Murray and LeNoir. Moreover, by showing that Ranald can benefit from a friendship with someone like De Lacy, it gestures towards the adaptability of Ranald's sociability; like his mastery of

the sociability that results from that process. On the other hand, his aptitude for sports (in particular, for rugby, a game that Ranald would come to as a complete neophyte) speaks to the transferability of Ranald's physical gifts, and to the breadth of his competence. It is also worth noting that, as well as demonstrating the cooperative action of Ranald's total competence and his sociability, this passage is one of the clearer instances of the allegorical dimension of the narrative. With its combination of the Scottish Ranald, the French De Lacy, and the emphatically English (Prince) Albert Club, Ranald's acceptance into the club allegorically enacts the unification of three of the nation's most important cultural groups. Because he is as sociable as he is totally competent and vice versa, Ranald is an Albert man, and the same complimentary combination of ability and sociability makes him an ideal community leader, and an allegorical symbol of national unity.

In the closing chapters of the novel, Ranald works to promote social cohesion at first the local, and then the national level. As a manager for the British-American Coal and Lumber Company in British Columbia, Ranald is responsible for a group of men who are easily as violently anti-social and out of control as any of the loggers he grew up with. He uses controlled force (striking only when provoked, and then only the minimum force necessary) to win the respect and compel the obedience of the men. However, Ranald does not stop at simply enforcing order. Over the protests of the company's share holders, he begins to "deal fairly by the men" (Connor 424), and works to improve them: he raises wages, reduces the extortionary prices in the company's stores, and establishes reading rooms and lending libraries in his camps, engaging in what Colonel Thorp accurately characterizes as "philanthropy" (Connor 423), and earning himself a reputation as "a visionary. . . an idealist" (Connor 431). Ranald combines the knowledge and abilities he acquired in "the shanties" along the Ottawa River with the values and virtues that he learned from Mrs. Murray, bringing the full breadth of his experience to the task of managing/improving the loggers, and illustrating "his . . . genius for the picking of his

cards, the benefit Ranald derives from his connection to the Lieutenant implies that one of Ranald's talents is putting bad means to good ends.

men and binding them to his interests” (Connor 443). The result is the transformation of the violent and chaotic gang who were in the process of destroying their own bunkhouse in a drunken rage when Ranald first met them into a community of men united by their respect for themselves, for Ranald as a leader, and for the values he espouses. Ranald achieves all of this while increasing productivity, for, as Colonel Thorp observes, “there never was such an amount of timber got out with the same number of men since the company started work” (Connor 425). The transformation that Ranald produces in the loggers is in its broad strokes the same as the change Mrs. Murray produced in him, but carried out on a much larger scale. Ranald’s success as a social improver thus confirms him as a super-competent agent of social cohesion whose development has equipped him to transform not just individuals like LeNoir, but whole communities.

Immediately after impressing Colonel Thorp with his accomplishments in the logging camps of British Columbia, Ranald demonstrates that his abilities extend beyond uniting local communities, and transforming violent, socially marginal men to firing crowds with nationalist fervour, swaying the leaders of the nation, and generally shoring up the weakening bonds of the national community. The final Chapter’s of *The Man from Glengarry* are set after Confederation, but before work began in earnest on the Canadian Pacific Railway, when British Columbia was becoming restive, and British Columbians were beginning to loudly question the wisdom of joining a country that was manifestly failing to live up to its end of the bargain they had struck. At a political meeting in New Westminster, Ranald confronts the rising tide of discontent, and, in “his first speech at a great meeting” (Connor 445), singlehandedly changes the sentiment of the crowd from angry separationism to fervent nationalism:

His [Ranald’s] calm logic made clear the folly of even considering separation; his knowledge of, and his unbounded faith in, the resources of the province, and more than all, his impassioned picturing of the future of the great Dominion reaching from ocean to ocean, knit together by ties of common interest, and a common loyalty that would become more vividly real when the provinces had been brought more closely together by the promised railway. (Connor 445)

Like his management of the logging camps, Ranald’s address combines both his total

competence and his sociability. The success of Ranald's very first major speech (the first speech of any kind that he gives in the novel) is yet another example of his apparently unbounded breadth of ability. The emphasis that he places on "common interest, and . . . common loyalty" testifies to the deep investment in community he owes to his socialization by Mrs. Murray. Even more important, the passage sees Ranald's capacity to inspire people (largely, but not exclusively, men) to commit to their communities extend to the reader. The second clause in the sentence describing his speech is a sentence fragment whose paratactic construction and irregularity capture the excitement of the moment. What is more, the fragment invites the reader to complete it by following the template of the first clause, and adding something like "made clear the benefits and virtues of remaining in Confederation." The reader is solicited as an active contributor to the text, placing him/her in a position analogous to the audience Ranald solicits as active contributors to national unity. The text thus recruits the reader as a nationalist by inviting him/her to contribute to the success of Ranald's performance. This is the basis on which Ranald conventionally inspires commitment,¹⁶¹ and this speech is the moment in the novel when the reader is most immediately engaged with Ranald's ability to unite communities.

If Ranald is capable of promoting national unity by shaping public sentiment, he is equally capable of doing so by influencing the decisions of political leaders. As part of British Columbia's delegation to Ottawa, and then in private conversation with him at a party, Ranald impresses on Sir John A. Macdonald the importance of fulfilling his promise, and starting construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad for quelling "annexation sentiment" (Connor 454) in the province. The Prime Minister tells him, "You are the first man from that country [British Columbia] that knows what I want to know" (Connor 458), and, when Macdonald subsequently "promis[es] that the Canadian

161

Ranald owes his success as a community leader to his "genius for . . . binding [men] to his interests" (Connor 443). This is what he does with the loggers in British Columbia, and, for that matter, with LeNoir. By giving the reader the task of completing a sentence describing Ranald's successful conversion of his audience from separationists to nationalists, Connor is similarly "binding [the reader] to [Ranald's] interests" (Connor 443).

Pacific Railway should be begun [in the] fall” (Connor 468), it is clear that Ranald has had a significant, if not a determining, affect on his decision. The Introduction to this thesis pointed out that Ranald is an example of the “archetypal [early] Canadian man who seem[s] oddly classless” (Dean 12) because of the effortless fluidity with which he moves from one social strata to the next. Certainly, Ranald is comfortable at all levels of Canadian society, but far more important is the fact that, at every level of society, from the lowest to the highest, he is equally effective as a community leader, as an agent of social unity who champions common values, “common interests, and . . . common loyalties” (Connor 445). From Glengarry county, to Quebec City, from British Columbia to Ottawa, from logging camps to town meetings, and from bush farms to the halls of power, the breadth of his ability to promote social cohesion matches the breadth of his competence.

Ranald thus serves as the fulcrum of Connor’s portrayal of ideal individual and collective identities. On the one hand, as a fully socially integrated totally competent man – that is, as a man who is as good as he is productive, as godly as he is capable, and as gentle as he is powerful – Ranald stands as a singular example of an achieved ideal of Canadian manhood. On the other hand, as a super competent agent of social cohesion who is equally effective at uniting communities at all levels of society, he stands as an exemplary champion of an ideal national community capable of bringing to fruition the promise of Confederation, and making his own “impassioned pictur[e] of the great Dominion” (Connor 445) a reality. These two dimensions of Ranald are linked by his socialization: it is through his social integration that Ranald achieves his full potential as a (totally competent) man, and it is that same process that inculcates in him the values that give rise to his ambitious hopes for the nation. What is more, by focusing the narrative, first, on Ranald’s socialization, and, second, on his resulting ability to unite communities, Connor draws a causal link between individual and collective perfectibility. This link is strengthened by Ranald’s emergence as an allegorical symbol of national unity, and Connor thus makes the achievement of an individual masculine ideal continuous with and complimentary to the achievement of a unified national community.

As an exhortatory example designed to inspire male readers to better themselves, the communities in which they live, and the nation as a whole, much of the force of Ranald's appeal derives from the novel's implication that it is only by aspiring to his example that individual Canadian men can legitimately take on roles of national importance. The novel ends with Ranald and Kate resolving the misunderstanding that separates them, and confirming their love for one another, an event that is promptly marked, in the last sentence of the book, by the men of the Albert chanting "the old battle-cry, heard long ago on the river, but afterward on many a hard-fought foot-ball field, 'Glengarry forever'" (Connor 473). *The Man from Glengarry's* final scene describes a very personal triumph for Ranald, but its final sentence is a collective affirmation of that triumph, of Ranald himself, and of the values of which he is the book's chief exemplar. The men of the Albert's iteration of "Glengarry forever" is explicitly framed as an imitation of the cry of the Glengarry logging gang, and is implicitly an imitation of the shouts of the crowd that Ranald converts from separatism to nationalism, and who "br[eak] forth, 'Glengarry!, Glengarry!'" (Connor 446) when he does so; the cry joins the disparate communities of the novel into a single unit, conflating Glengarry county, Toronto, and British Columbia. With the phrase "afterward on many a hard-fought foot-ball field," Connor completes the dilation of the community defined by the slogan, detaching it from the social/historical context of Glengarry county, and even the textual context of the novel, projecting it into an undefined future, opening it up to any man willing to celebrate Ranald and "the men who conquered . . . [t]he solid forests of Glengarry" (Connor, Preface 7). The novel thus closes by more or less explicitly offering Ranald as a national icon, and as much as explicitly inviting the male reader to participate in the collective work of nation building by imitating the men of whom Ranald is the idealized representative. In his Preface to the novel, Connor writes, "not wealth, not enterprise, not energy, can build a nation into sure greatness, but men, and only men" (7). "[T]o make this clear is . . . part of the purpose of this book" (Connor, Preface 7), he explains, and, it might be added, to compel the male reader's commitment to the nation by presenting him with an image of national manhood that binds together individual and

collective identities in a masculine ideal is the purpose of its central character.

III

Comprehending the Country/Comprehending the Totally Competent Man

In addition to uniting the national community and presenting male readers with a compact and compelling exhortation to commit to the ideal of national unity, *The Man from Glengarry* also provides an overview of the history of the totally competent man. Just as the narrative of Ranald's development comprehends and binds together the country, so too does it comprehend the totally competent man, looking backwards over the emergence of this figure at the same time that it looks forward to the future of the nation. Ranald's transformation from an animalistic, anti-social adolescent who embraces a masculine ethic of vengeful violence into a mature manager who is adept at improving both the men under him and their productivity echoes the developmental trajectory outlined in *Abram's Plains*, and, in particular, the links Thomas Cary's poem draws between the management of the violent masculine body and economic productivity. This echo is amplified by Connor's association of vengeful violence with the loggers of the Ottawa River, an association that all but references¹⁶² Cary's treatment of the extremity of Native Peoples' "savagery" and the Lower Canadian logging industry. Ranald's early investment in vengeful violence, and his eventual adoption of a genteel moral code can also be read as a reflection of *Wacousta's* transition from its vengeful Herculean protagonist to the combination of athleticism and morality in Frederick's sons. The transformation of Ranald's aggressive masculine body from a threat to the social order into a powerful force for social and national good recalls Susanna Moodie's appropriation of the productivity of similarly Herculean, lower-class bodies to the development of a distinctly genteel nation.

¹⁶²

Of course, Connor was not familiar with Cary's poem. The similarities between the two works reflect the persistence of a particular cultural perspective rather than any direct line of influence. In fact, it is doubtful that Connor was familiar with any of the works discussed in Chapters 2 through 6 of this thesis.

What is more, Connor's protagonist's transformation at the hands of a genteel, educated, and urbane woman who is far from at home in the bush of Glengarry County is strikingly reminiscent of Moodie's own investment in her ability to manage aggressive masculine bodies – specifically, in her ability to appropriate them to a regulatory system of genteel values, and thus reinforce/perpetuate her own genteel identity. With his combination of pragmatic business acumen, his refined moral, affective, and social sensibilities, and his willingness and ability to act as a community leader, Ranald looks like nothing less than the ideal man that would result from the productive amalgamation of the instrumental and affective extremes represented by Lawrie Todd and Bogle Corbet. And, finally, Ranald embodies early Canadian literary nationalism's emphasis on masculinity, catholicity, and nordicity: he is an Herculean example of masculine heroism; he reflects a Thomas D'Arcy McGee-style catholicity in symbolically uniting Scottish, French and English communities, and, moreover, in championing national unity over sectarian interests; and, with his formative ties to the logging industry of northern Ontario, he is cast in the mold of a classic northman. Ranald not only unites the national community, but through his development he also gathers up the history of the development of a uniquely Canadian masculine identity; he thus offers male readers an exhortatory example of a model of manhood that is all the more powerfully compelling for being uniquely national, uniquely able, and uniquely their own.

The first chapter of this thesis began by illustrating how Charles G.D. Roberts's poem "Canada" exhorts its male readers to affirm their masculinity by embracing the new nation. If Roberts's reader refuses his Canadianness, it explained, he effectively states his preference for "rest[ing] with babes and slaves," for, indeed, being babyish and slavish rather than "giant-limbed," leonine and forceful like Roberts's personification of Canada. In juxtaposing the alienated, impulsive, and violent adolescent Ranald of the novel's beginning with the mature, self-possessed, self-controlled, and super-competent nation builder of its conclusion, Connor offers the male reader a similar choice. From Roberts and Connor's shared perspective, the male reader is Canadian *and* manly, or neither. The

popularity of “Canada,” and *The Man from Glengarry*¹⁶³ suggests that, at least for a time, this masculinist appeal was as convincing as it was stringent.

163

Bentley explains that, “to judge by the number of times that it was reprinted, excerpted, anthologized, and praised in the 1880s and ‘90s, “Canada” was one of the best known and most admired poems by any Canadian poet” (*The Confederation Group* 71). *The Man from Glengarry* was arguably even more popular than Roberts’s poem. By 1914, the novel “had sold two hundred and fifty thousand copies” (Marshall 178). Connor in particular saw a precipitous decline in his reputations and popularity after the First World War, a decline that was certainly linked to the decreasing popular appeal of his particular blend of masculinity, Christianity, and nationalism.

Works Cited

- Adam, G. Mercer. Introduction. *Canada's Patriot Statesman: The Life and Career of the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald*. By Adam, G. Mercer, and Joseph Edmund Collins. Toronto, 1891. v-xviii. Print.
- Adam, G. Mercer, and Joseph Edmund Collins. *Canada's Patriot Statesman: The Life and Career of the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald*. Toronto, 1891. Print.
- Adams, James Eli. *Dandies and Desert Saints: Styles of Victorian Manhood*. New York: Cornell U P, 1995. Print.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. New York: Verso, 1983. Print.
- Ballstadt, Carl ed. *Major John Richardson: a Selection of Reviews and Criticism*. Montreal: Lawrence M. Lande Foundation, 1972. Print.
- . "Thomas D'Arcy McGee as a Father of Canadian Literature." *Studies in Canadian Literature*. 1 (1976): 85-95. Print.
- Beckow, S.M. "From the Watch-Towers of Patriotism: Theories of Literary Growth in Canada, 1864-1914." *Journal of Canadian Studies*. 9.3 (1974): 3-14. Print.
- Bentley, D. M .R. *Canadian Architexts: Essays on Literature and Architecture in Canada 1759-2005*.
- . Editorial Notes. *The Essays and Reviews of Archibald Lampman*. By Archibald Lampman. Ed. D.M.R. Bentley. London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1996. 199-366. Print.
- . Introduction. *Abram's Plains: a Poem*. By Thomas Carey. Ed. D. M. R. Bentley. London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1986. xi-xlvi. Print.
- . Introduction. *The Essays and Reviews of Archibald Lampman*. By Archibald Lampman. Ed. D.M.R. Bentley. London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1996. xi-xxxv. Print.
- . Introduction. *The Story of an Affinity*. By Archibald Lampman. Ed. D.M.R. Bentley.

- London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1986. xi-xxxi. Print.
- . *Mimic Fires: Accounts of Early Long Poems on Canada*. Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's U P, 1994. Print.
- . *Mnemographia Canadensis: Essays on Memory, Community, and Environment in Canada, with Particular Reference to London, Ontario, Volume 1: Muse and Recall*. London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1999. Print.
- . *The Confederation Group of Canadian Poets, 1880-1897*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2004. Print.
- . *The Gay]Grey Moose: Essays on the Ecologies and Mythologies of Canadian Poetry 1690-1990*. Ottawa: U of Ottawa P, 1992. Print.
- Berger, Carl. *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1970. Print.
- Boyce, D. George. *Nationalism in Ireland*. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 1995. Print.
- Brownlie, W. M. *John Galt: Social Historian*. Greenock, Scotland: Greenock Philosophical Society, 1952. Print.
- Carlyle, Thomas. *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*. Eds. Michael K. Goldberg, Joel J. Brattin, and Mark Engel. Berkeley: U of California P, 1993. Print.
- Cary, Thomas. *Abram's Plains: a Poem*. Ed. D. M. R. Bentley. London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1986. Print.
- Cixous, Hélène. "Sorties." *The Newly Born Woman*. By Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément. Trans. Betsy Wing. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1986. 63-134. Print.
- Coleman, Daniel. *White Civility: the Literary Project of English Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2006. Print.
- Collins, Joseph Edmund. *Life and Times of the Right Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald*. Toronto, 1883. Print.
- Connor, Ralph. *Black Rock: a Tale of the Selkirks*. Toronto: 1898. Print.
- . Preface. *The Man from Glengarry: a Tale of the Ottawa*. By Ralph Connor.

- Toronto: The Westminster Company Limited, 1901. 7. Print.
- . *The Man from Glengarry: a Tale of the Ottawa*. Toronto: The Westminster Company Limited, 1901. Print.
- . *The Sky Pilot: a Tale of the Foothills*. Toronto: 1899. Print.
- Crawford, Isabella Valancy. *Malcolm's Katie: a Love Story*. Ed. D. M. R. Bentley. London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1994. Print.
- Cronk, Douglas ed. *Wacousta; or, the Prophecy; a Tale of the Canadas*. By John Richardson. Ottawa: Carleton U P, 1987. Print.
- D'Arcy McGee, Thomas. "American Relations and Canadian Duties." *Speeches and Addresses Chiefly on the Subject of British-American Union*. Ed. Thomas D'Arcy McGee. London, 1865. 33-37. Print.
- . *Canadian Ballads and Occasional Verses*. Montreal, 1858. Print.
- . "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion." *1825 – D'Archy McGee – 1925: A Collection of Speeches and Addresses*. Ed. Charles Murphy. Toronto: MacMillan Co. Limited, 1937. 1-21. Print.
- Davis, Richard. *The Young Ireland Movement*. Totowa, N.J.: Barnes & Noble, 1988. Print.
- Dean, Misao. *Practising Femininity: Domestic Realism and the Performance of Gender in Early Canadian Fiction*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1998. Print.
- Dewart, Edward Hartley. Introductory Essay. *Selections from Canadian Poets with Occasional Critical and Biographical Notes and an Introductory Essay on Canadian Poetry*. Edward Hartley Dewart ed. Douglas Lochhead general ed. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1973. ix-xix. Print.
- Dickinson, Peter. *Here is Queer: Nationalisms, Sexualities, and the Literatures of Canada*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1999. Print.
- Doyle, James. "The Politics of Nature: Archibald Lampman's Socialism." *Canadian Poetry: Studies/Documents/Reviews*. 45 (1999): 10-30.
- Duffy, Charles Gavan. Introduction: Ballad Poetry of Ireland. *The Ballad Poetry of Ireland*. Charles Gavan Duffy ed. 5th ed. Dublin, 1845. xi-xlvi. Print.

- . Preface to the Fourth Edition. *The Ballad Poetry of Ireland*. Charles Gavan Duffy ed. 5th ed. Dublin, 1845. v-vi. Print.
- Dugger, Julie M. "Black Ireland's Race: Thomas Carlyle and the Young Ireland Movement" *Victorian Studies*. 48.3 (2006): 461-485. Print.
- Ferguson, Samuel. *Lament for the Death of Thomas Davis*. Dublin, 1847. Print.
- Galt, John. *Bogle Corbet; or, the Emigrants*. 3 vols. London, 1831. Print.
- . *Lawrie Todd; or, the Settlers in the Woods*. 3 vols. London, 1830. Print.
- Gerson, Carol. "Nobler Savages: Representations of Native Women in the Writings of Susanna Moodie and Catharine Parr Traill" *Roughing it in the Bush; or, Forest Life I Canada*. Ed. Michael Peterman. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007. 522-537. Print.
- Gibbon, Edward. *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Ed. J. B. Bury. 7 vols. New York: AMS P, 1974. Print.
- Gordon, Ian A. *John Galt: the Life of a Writer*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1972. Print.
- Grace, Sherrill E. *Canada and the Idea of North*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's U P, 2001. Print.
- Graves, Alfred P. *Irish Literary and Musical Studies*. London: Elkin Mathews, 1913. Print.
- Haliburton, R. G. "Intercolonial Trade: Our Only Safeguard Against Disunion." Ottawa, 1868. Print.
- . "The Men of the North and Their Place in History." Montreal, 1868. Print.
- Harrold, Charles Frederick. *Carlyle and German Thought: 1819-1834*. New York: AMS P, 1978. Print.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. Introduction *The Invention of Tradition*. Eds. Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1983. 1-14. Print.
- . *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1990. Print.
- Hulan, Renée. *Northern Experience and the Myths of Canadian Culture*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's U P, 2002. Print.

- Karr, Clarence. *Authors and Audiences: Popular Canadian Fiction in the Early Twentieth Century*. Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's U P, 2000.
- Lampman, Archibald. "Friendship." *The Essays and Reviews of Archibald Lampman*. Ed. D. M. R. Bentley. London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1996. 10-12. Print.
- . "[Socialism]." *The Essays and Reviews of Archibald Lampman*. Ed. D. M. R. Bentley. London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1996. 186-190. Print.
- . *The Poems of Archibald Lampman*. 4th ed. Ed. Duncan Campbell Scott. Toronto: Morang & Co. Limited, 1915. Print.
- . *The Story of an Affinity*. Ed. D.M.R. Bentley. London, Canada: Canadian Poetry P, 1986. Print.
- Leacock, Stephen. *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*. Ed. D. M. R. Bentley. New York: W. W. Norton, 2006. Print.
- Lighthall, W.D. Introduction. *Songs of the Great Dominion: Voices from the Forests and Waters, the Settlements and Cities of Canada*. Ed. W. D. Lighthall. London, 1889. xxi-xxxvii. Print.
- . ed. *Songs of the Great Dominion: Voices from the Forests and Waters, the Settlements and Cities of Canada*. London, 1889. Print.
- Marshal, David B. "'I thank god . . . that I am proud of my boy': Fatherhood and Religion in the Gordon Family." *Essays in Honour of Michael Bliss: Figuring the Social*. Ed. E. A. Heaman, Alison Li, and Shelley McKellar. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2008. 177-210. Print.
- Morgan, Henry J. *Bibliotheca Canadensis or a Manual of Canadian Literature*. Ottawa, 1867. Print.
- Moodie, Susanna. *Flora Lyndsay; or, Passages in an Eventful Life*. New York, 1854.
- . Introduction to the 1871 Edition. *Roughing it in the Bush; or, Forest Life in Canada*. Ed. Michael Peterman. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007. 344-350. Print.
- . *Roughing it in the Bush; or, Forest Life in Canada*. Ed. Michael Peterman. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007. Print.
- Nelson, Dana D. *National Manhood: Capitalist Citizenship and the Imagined Fraternity*

- of White Men*. Durham: Duke U P, 1998. Print.
- O'Neil, Patrick. *Ireland and Germany: A Study in Literary Relations*. New York: P. Lang, 1985. Print.
- Peterman, Michael. "Reconstructing the Palladium of British America: How the Rebellion of 1837 and Charles Fothergill Helped to Establish Susanna Moodie as a Writer in Canada." *Roughing it in the Bush; or, Forest Life I Canada*. Ed. Michael Peterman. New York: W. W. Norton, 2007. 538-558. Print.
- Pomeroy, E. M. *Sir Charles G. D. Roberts: a Biography*. Toronto: Ryerson P, 1943. Print.
- Renan, Ernest. "What is a Nation?" Trans. Martin Thom. *Nation and Narration*. Ed. Homi K. Bhabha. London: Routledge, 1990. 8-22. Print.
- Richardson, John. *Wacousta; or , the Prophecy; a Tale of the Canadas*. Ed. David Staines. Toronton: McClelland & Stewart, 1991. Print.
- Roberts, Charles G.D. "Canada." *Songs of the Great Dominion: Voices from the Forests and Waters, the Settlements and Cities of Canada*. Ed. W. D. Lighthall. London, 1889. 18-20. Print.
- Ross, Catherine Sheldrick.ed. *Recovering Canada's First Novelist: Proceedings from the John Richardson Conference*. Erin, Ontario: Porcupine's Quill, 1984. Print.
- Schama, Simon. *Landscape and Memory*. New York: A. A. Knopf, 1995. Print.
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia U P, 1985. Print.
- Shakespeare, William. *The Life of Timon of Athens*. Ed. John Jowett. Oxford: Oxford U P, 2004. Print.
- Sillard, P.A. *Life of John Mitchell with an Historical Sketch of the '48 Movement in Ireland*. 3rd ed. Dublin: Duffy & Co., 1908, Print.
- Smith, Goldwin. *Canada and the Canadian Question*. Ed. Carl Berger. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1971. Print.
- Tacitus, Cornelius. *Agricola, Germany, and Dialogue on Orators*. Trans. Herbert W. Bonario. Norman: U of Oklahoma P, 1991. Print.

- Truill, Catharine Parr. *The Female Emigrant's Guide, and Hints on Canadian Housekeeping*. Toronto, 1858.
- Warner, Donald F. *The Idea of Continental Union: Agitation for the Annexation of Canada to the United States, 1849-1893*. Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1960. Print.
- Waterston, Elizabeth. Introduction. *Bogle Corbet*. Ed. Elizabeth Waterston. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1977. 1-7. Print.
- . Preface. *John Galt: Reappraisals*. Ed. Elizabeth Waterston. Guelph: Ampersand Printing, 1985. 6-8. Print.
- . *Rapt in Plaid: Canadian Literature and Scottish Tradition*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 2001. Print.
- Wetherell, J.E. ed. *Later Canadian Poems*. Toronto, 1893.
- Whatley, Christopher A. "Annals of the Parish and History." *John Galt, 1779-1979*. Ed. Christopher A. Whatley. Edinburgh: Ramsay Head P, 1979. 51-63. Print.
- Wilson, David A. *Thomas D'Arcy McGee: Passion, Reason, and Politics 1825-1857*. vol 1. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's U P, 2008. Print.

Vita

Name: Aaron Schneider

Post-Secondary Education and Degrees:

Trent University
Peterborough, ON, Canada
1995-1999 B.A. Hons.

Queen's University
Kingston, ON, Canada
1999-2000 M.A.

The University of Western Ontario
London, ON, Canada
2001-2011

Related Work Experience:

Instructor
The University of Western Ontario
2005-2011