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# A WHITE MAN'S BURDEN: A PORTRAIT OF E.F. WILSON, MISSIONARY IN ONTARIO, 1868-1885

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to construct a biographical portrait of a missionary-educator to the Ojibway Indians of Northern Ontario, and to show the general policies for social change which most Victorian missionaries supported. The subject of the thesis is the Rev. E.F. Wilson, 1844-1915.

Wilson established the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes for Indian children at Sault Ste. Marie in Ontario. He also was a copious writer on Indian topics. His influence on the Canadian public was thus considerable.

Essentially, Wilson's aim in his education of Indian children was to equip them with what he considered the necessary skills to enter the general Canadian work world. The entire culture of the Ojibway children was discouraged severely.

Wilson's school system, by and large, did not operate as effectively as its founder had hoped. Various barriers such as cultural shock, cultural conservatism, and prejudice from the white side, prevented the fulfillment of Wilson's aims.

Wilson himself was a fascinating and important missionary and educator of the Victorian period. Attention had been paid to the individual as well as to his milieu.

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CHAPTER I

## SOCIAL BACKGROUND AND EARLY LIFE

A number of scholars have pointed out that nineteenth century missionaries were often recruited from the ranks of the upwardly mobile lower classes. They tended to be men who had accepted and applied the virtues reflected in the "success literature" that was so common in the mid-Victorian period.[1] To become a missionary was to escape a lower class background, and to embark on a respectable career:

> Was becoming a missionary with the prospect of ordination and social advancement, also a way of escape for some? We have, I believe, to answer quite frankly 'Yes'. The missionary movement, ... was part and parcel of a social revolution in which vast numbers of ordinary people saw the opportunity of bettering themselves and took the opportunity with open hands.[2]

The missionary societies became apprehensive about this lower-class background of their missionaries. Christine Bolt writes that the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) was "sensitive" on this point and feared that their missionaries might therefore be accused of ignorance or

1. This success literature advanced the proposition that men of the lower classes could rise in the social scale by the application of individual virtues such as thrift, industry, self-denial, etc. See J.F.C. Harrison, "The Victorian Gospel of Success", Victorian Studies Vol. 1, No. 2.
2. Max Warren, Social History and Christian Mission (London, 1967), p. 51.

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social climbing."[1] Max Warren notes that from 1835-1861, the London Missionary Society asked each volunteer, "Does the desire of improving your worldly circumstances enter into the motives of this application?"[2]

William Duncan of Metlakatla,[3] a C.M.S. missionary in British Columbia, perfectly represents this type of missionary, rising by stern Christian effort, a Bible in one hand, and Samuel Smiles' Self Help[4] in the other. From a working class family, Duncan became a clerk and travelling salesman for the proprietors of a tannery and wholesale dealership in hides and leather. This was before his entry into the service of the Church Missionary Society. Duncan was now leaving the class position of his parents and ancestors, doing so with an audible cry of thanksgiving.

> .... I mixed among a class of men far my superiors in education, rank and abilities and was treated respectfully by them. Oh! I used to feel my heart overflow in gratitude, for God's wonderful love in thus elevating me from the dunghill...."[5]

1. Christine Bolt, Victorian Attitudes to Race (London, 1971), p. 127.
2. Warren, op. cit., p. 52.
3. Jean Usher, William Duncan of Metlakatla: A Victorian Missionary in British Columbia (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, 1968).
4. A series of biographical portraits showing how industry and persistence could lead to success. For a modern paperback edition see Samuel Smiles Self-Help (London, 1968).
5. Usher, op. cit., p. 8.

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In contrast to William Duncan and other missionaries of his background, stands E.F. Wilson.(1844-1915). Wilson was a member of the British upper-middle class, a son of one of the great Evangelical families. Wilson did not need to engage on a missionary career for prestige; his motives were of a personal and psychological nature, an escape from conformity rather than an escape from anonymity. If it had not been for a certain thirst for adventure and for the unexpected, Wilson would have followed the career pattern of his brothers or father: ordination and parish work in England (with an emphasis on missionary support), or entry into one of the professions.

But Wilson did have an adventurous streak which led him to flee from the prospect of a quiet parsonage life. This was evidenced when he refused to go up to Oxford as had been the family tradition. "I disliked the idea of going to Oxford as my brothers has done."[1] Instead, as he records in his own words, "A wild free life away from the restraints of civilization was my idea of happiness."[2] Wilson's desire for a missionary career accords with the generalization by Christine Bolt that "foreign missions had a lure for the Victorian

1. E.F. Wilson _Missionary Work Among the Ojebway Indians_ (London, 1886), p. 13. Henceforth _Mission Work_.
2. _Ibid_.

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seeking fame or adventure, or merely escape from a routine Church appointment in Britain."[1] Wilson, it should be stressed, was never a rebel against his background. It is ironic but entirely in character to see Wilson instilling the same civilization into the Ojibway Indians that he had fled as somewhat too confining in England.

Although personal reasons led Wilson to enter the field as a missionary, his family had long been interested in missionary activity as an important aspect of their religion. To understand his motivations, it is necessary to understand Wilson's ancestry and family.

The Wilson family had earned its wealth in the eighteenth century from the silk industry and trade. E.F. Wilson's great-grandfather on one side was William Wilson of Worton House, Oxfordshire, who married a Miss E. West in 1779. William Wilson's occupation is listed as silk merchant in the records of the Church Missionary Society,[2] as a silk manufacturer by John W. Kaye.[3] He lived until August 24th, 1821.

William Wilson is important for two reasons:

1. Bolt, _op. cit._
2. Eugene Stock _History of the Church Missionary Society_ (London, 1899), I, 70.
3. John W. Kaye, "Bishop Wilson of Calcutta", _Good Words for 1876_, p. 199.

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(1) his activity in C.M.S. circles started a family tradition of involvement in the Society -- he is listed as one of the founding committee members of the C.M.S. in 1799.[1] (2) He was responsible for the foundation of the Wilson clerical dynasty as, "He purchased the livings of Islington, Worton, Walthamstow, and Tooting for his sons-in-law."[2]

Influenced by the strength of Victorian class distinctions, E.F. Wilson chose to remember William Wilson in the Autobiographical Journal as the country gentleman he became after retirement from the silk business, about which the great grandson mentions not a word. William Wilson, we are told, was a "valuable magistrate and squire", "a prudent manager of his estates", "a kind benefactor to the poor", and a "just and liberal landlord".[3]

The fact concerning another of E.F. Wilson's great-grandfathers, Stephen Wilson, also indicate involvement in the London silk trade and Evangelical beliefs. The Dictionary of National Biography describes Stephen Wilson as "a wealthy London silk manufacturer".[4] Bateman's

1. Stock, op. cit., p. 70.
2. E.F. Wilson, Autobiographical Journal (Salt Spring Island, 1903), p. 1.
3. Ibid.
4. Sidney Lee, ed., The Dictionary of National Biography (London, 1900), LXII, 87. Henceforth D.N.B.

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_Life_ of Daniel Wilson (who was Stephen's son) describes the family as one "whose spiritual authorities were Whitefield and Richard Cecil, and which attended sometimes their parish church, sometimes Mr. Romaine's, sometimes a Dissenting chapel in White Row, sometimes the Tabernacle in Moorfields."[1] (Whitefield and Cecil were two of the most prominent Evangelical leaders.) A further indication of Stephen Wilson's Evangelicalism is his choice of educators for his son. Daniel Wilson "was removed, for higher tuition, to a school at Hackney, superintended by the Rev. John Eyre, who at one time had been curate to the well-known Richard Cecil."[2]

That Bishop Daniel Wilson's father and father-in-law both possessed the same surname is no accident, as the two men were brothers. Bishop Wilson, born on July 2nd, 1778, married his first cousin Ann, on November 25, 1803. Intermarriages of this sort were frequent at the time, as in this manner family wealth was kept in the family.

It is evident that the Wilson family was large, prosperous, and close-knit. One of their ancestors had been a Lord Mayor of London. While residing at the

1. _Anon_. _The Quarterly Review_ Vol. 114, No. 228 (London, 1863), p. 546
2. Kaye, _op. cit._, p. 199.

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Shingwauk School at Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, in the 1870's and 1880's, one of E.F. Wilson's few pastimes was the construction of a family tree. He wrote to one correspondent, "The Tree extends over a term of 200 years and will contain I hope about 300 photographs, the more ancient branches merely having their names written in the circles."[1] He had this document printed in large numbers, and sold copies to his relatives for the sum of four shillings and sixpence.

It was especially E.F. Wilson's grandfather, Daniel, who established the family name as a power in Evangelical circles. He gained fame as the fifth Bishop of Calcutta. Bishop Wilson had been intended for the silk business. But "consent having been wrung from his Father"[2], he followed a call into the ministry after graduating M.A. from St. Edmund Hall, Oxford. He then became a curate under Richard Cecil, "the most cultured and refined of all the Evangelical leaders."[3]

In 1807, Daniel Wilson returned to his alma mater as Vice-Principal of St. Edmund Hall. Balleine writes of his time spent at the college in this way:

1. Correspondence, Wilson to Notman, 24 December, 1879.
2. D.N.B., LXII, 87.
3. G.R. Balleine, A History of the Evangelical Party in the Church of England (London, 1933), p. 61.

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> Towards the end of the century Oxford again became open to Evangelicals, and St. Edmund Hall, under Crouch and Daniel Wilson, resumed its work of training those who were hoping to take orders. But the identification of the party with the weakest of all the colleges, and the fact that Simeon's name drew most of the keenest men to Cambridge, prevented Evangelicalism from gaining much real power on Oxford. For years it was only the rather mysterious 'religion of Teddy Hall'.[1]

Wilson then obtained an appointment as minister to the important Evangelical pulpit of St. John's Chapel, Bedford Row, Bloomsbury, succeeding Cecil, under whom he had been assistant curate since 1808. Of this period, the Dictionary of National Biography writes that St. John's "during the twelve years of his incumbency was well-known as the headquarters of the evangelical party in London." [2] Here he came into contact with the Clapham sect (the most prominent and wealthiest group of Evangelicals). Bateman mentions that the Thornton family, Charles Grant and his two sons, Zachary Macaulay and his son, the Wilberforces, and the Evangelical Bishop Ryder were frequent hearers.[3]

In 1824, Wilson was appointed to the living of St. Mary's, Islington, which according to the fashion of the times, was in the family patronage. Despite initial opposition from the seatholders, Balleine says that "he

1. Ibid., p. 133.
2. D.N.B., LXII, 380.
3. The Quarterly Review op. cit., p. 547.

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left behind him a parish proverbial for strength and efficiency."[1] While there, Daniel Wilson started one of the most famous of annual Clerical Meetings, which united Evangelicals for discussions on topics of common interest. Islington still to this day retains its Evangelical colours, and the Clerical Meeting attracts hundreds of clergy each year.

Although Bishop Wilson never was a member of the inner circle of the Clapham sect, he did become a favourite preacher and friend to many members of the group. On the death of Charles Grant the elder, the funeral sermon was delivered by Daniel Wilson, a sermon that "is to be found among Wilson's works".[2] Some thirty years later, when Daniel Wilson died, Henry Venn preached the funeral sermon.[3]

The Clapham sect was "a closely knit community of public-spirited, influential, highly respected, well-to-do business and professional men, their wives and families, living comfortable lives in comfortable homes."[4] This accurately describes the Wilson family itself. Most members of the sect were clergy, lawyers, Parliamentarians, or businessmen. Essentially, the Clapham sect was the upper social class of the Evangelical wing, which for the most

1. Balleine, op. cit., p. 198.
2. D.N.B., LXII, 87.
3. Max Warren, To Apply the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Henry Venn (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1971), p. 181
4. John McLeish, Evangelical Religion and Popular Education (London, 1969), p. 50.

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part lacked support from the aristocracy and gentry, and even from most of the upper middle class.

This family connexion with the Clapham sect was most important for E.F. Wilson and his dealings with the Ojibways. The spread of the Gospel to Oriental Indians had been one of the chief concerns in the early part of the nineteenth century. Along with their hatred of the Hindu religion, Clapham members had a strong aversion to India's civilization. They wished to commence a process of westernization, as opposed to many officials of the government and the East India Company, who wanted to leave the Indians as they were. The Clapham sect found "... Hindu society utterly distasteful, an unclean thing best quickly removed".[1] Their policy included "the complete assimilation of India's traditional society in the name of Christianity, trade and empire."[2]

Of even more importance to Wilson was the attitude toward the aboriginal peoples of the British Empire that Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton adopted. Buxton was the Parliamentary successor to Wilberforce in the fight against slavery. When slavery was finally ended in 1833, Buxton turned his attention to the treatment of the aborigines,

1. David Spring, "The Clapham Sect: Some Social and Political Aspects", Victorian Studies V (1961), p. 44.
2. Ibid.

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which he realized had been abominable.

> My attention has been drawn of late to the wickedness of our proceedings as a nation, towards the ignorant and barbarous natives of countries on which we seize. What have we Christians done for them? We have usurped their lands, kidnapped, enslaved, and murdered themselves.[1] (sic)

Buxton obtained a Parliamentary committee to look into the matter. The findings of this committee encouraged a general policy of westernization of the aborigines:

> And let it terminate in the entrance of millions of our fellow-men, now barbarous, ignorant, and heathen, into thy Church; let innocent commerce, civilisation, knowledge, and that which is better than all, true faith in Christ, be extended to the barbarous nations...[2]

To stress this connexion between Buxton and the Wilson family, let it be noted that Buxton's son described Daniel Wilson the elder as "his highly valued friend the Bishop of Calcutta." When one of Buxton's projects, the Niger expedition, floundered, Wilson sent Buxton a letter of encouragement:

> All will work for good. The grand blow is struck; the monster must fall like Dagon before the ark; and your honest, devoted, anxious heart shall yet be comforted with blessed tidings.[3]

Wilson's own father was scarcely less famous than Bishop Wilson, and since he spent his entire career in

1. Charles Buxton, ed. <u>Memoirs of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton</u> (London, 1850), p. 301.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 302.
3. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 470.

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England, was a more familiar personage. Also named Daniel (henceforth Prebendary) Wilson, he was born in November, 1805, and graduated B.A. from Wadham College, Oxford. Then came an appointment to the family living of Worton as rector for three years. When Bishop Wilson was named to the episcopal bench in 1832, Daniel the younger was appointed to Islington in succession to his father. Balleine assesses him as follows:

> A brusque, honest, and outspoken man with no powers of oratory, no deep learning, and no gift of personal magnetism, he yet possessed a rugged common sense that always went straight to the heart of the matter, and a resolute and immovable belief that the doctrines of the Reformation contained all that was necessary for the present and future wellbeing of man.[1]

Prebendary Wilson soon became a leader among the London Evangelicals.[2] In 1860, he became rural dean, and in 1872 was appointed Prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Many Evangelicals believed that England itself needed missionary activity almost as much as pagan lands. This stemmed from the Evangelical conviction that only a tiny minority of people (themselves) were following true Christianity. Prebendary Wilson thus became involved in home mission work:

1. Balleine, op. cit., p. 274.
2. Ibid.

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> In 1851, he discovered that nearly 28,000 men and women were beyond reach of the ordinary church organizations. They had to be reached, but how? The problem was solved by the formation of the Islington Church Home Mission. Evangelists were sent into the highways and lanes to preach the Gospel and gather congregations. The work of the evangelists was followed by the erection of churches. The Islington Church Extension Society, which was inaugurated in 1856, had for its object the raising of a fund for building ten new churches in six years. It did that, and more. It set an example to other parishes, and furnished the idea out of which grew the Bishop of London's Fund. Mr. Wilson's herculean task did not end with building the churches and filling them with congregations; he had also to choose the pastoral charge of the churches. Great tact and wisdom were needed for this duty. Fortunately, he had both. His appointments showed that he knew how to put the right man in the right place.[1]

When E.F. Wilson set off for southwestern Ontario as a C.M.S. missionary, his appointment with that society was no accident. Both Bishop and Prebendary Wilson had been prominent members and supporters of the C.M.S.

At an early date, Bishop Wilson showed signs of interest in the society. He sat on the Committee and was "the most prominent clergyman" on it, says Eugene Stock.[2] By 1824 the future Bishop had been appointed an Honorary Life Governor for "essential services to the Society."[3] His importance to the C.M.S. may have

1. "The Late Prebendary Wilson", The Evangelical Churchman October 14, 1886, p. 278.
2. Stock, op. cit., I, 265.
3. Ibid., I, 111.

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influenced the society when it chose a site for the missionary college.

> Probably the choice was a natural consequence of Bickersteth and his students being already in Barnsbury Park; but it is very likely that the expectation of Daniel Wilson's early succession to the vicarage also influenced the Society. [1]

Bishop Wilson did have one fight with the C.M.S., however, just after his elevation to the Calcutta See. The Society wished to prevent the Bishop from possessing the power of withholding licenses at will to missionaries. Bishop Wilson upheld the principle of episcopal power. Stock summarizes:

> In short, the Bishop wished the missionaries to have a status as nearly that of incumbents as the very different circumstances of the Mission-field would permit. [2]

The dispute lasted for three years, with an investigative board set up to research the matter. The findings were in favour of the Bishop, and the C.M.S. capitulated.

Prebendary Wilson was also a prominent supporter of the Society. The C.M.S. had set up a metropolitan association for the purpose of collecting funds, and of these Islington was one of the most generous. The Evangelical Churchman wrote,

> It (i.e. Islington) has taken a very prominent part in the missionary work of the church.... The Islington branch...in the forty-nine years

1. *Ibid.*, I, 265.
2. *Ibid.*, I, 423.

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> of its existence...has paid over to the parent society more than $300,000.[1]

Prebendary Wilson was suitably rewarded by appointment as an Honorary Governor for Life [2], and also as a Vice-President. [3] This last honour had previously been restricted to Bishops, nobility, and other members of the upper class. Prebendary Wilson was also active in another missionary association, the Colonial and Continental Church Society, for which he served on the General Committee and the Continental Committee.[4]

There is evidence to show that E.F. Wilson was bequeathed more than an interest in missionary matters. Simply because he was a Bishop, Daniel Wilson the elder had a great deal written about him, including the standard Victorian two-volume biography. All accounts agree that the Bishop had certain failings which can be observed in his grandson:

> As for his failings, they will have been discerned by the reader long ago. They all lay upon the side of hasty impulse, quick action, sharp words, want of consideration for others, a sanguine temperament, something of egotism, and occasional inaccuracy of statement. [5]

1. "Missionary Zeal, the Characteristic of a Living Church", The Evangelical Churchman February 17, 1878, p. 633.
2. Rosemary Keen (C.M.S. Archivist) to David Nock, 17 August, 1971.
3. Stock, op. cit., III, 298.
4. The Annual Report of the Colonial and Continental Church Society, 1882 (London, 1882).
5. The Quarterly Review op. cit., p. 548.

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It will be well to remember this passage, as these qualities are evident in the career of E.F. Wilson. But the Wilsons also possessed qualities which offset these liabilities, and they included conviction, hard work, and stubborness.

The Evangelical movement inspired and financed E.F. Wilson in his work, and led him to the mission-field. To understand Wilson it is essential to understand the Evangelicals.

In religious terms, the movement had begun as a reaction against the empty formalism of the eighteenth century. The Church then was seen as a mere appendage to the state, and the upper classes valued Christianity more as a bulwark against revolution, than as the herald of revelation. The Evangelicals, as did the Oxford Movement which followed them, believed that religion and the state of one's soul, was the most important aspect of life. Religion was a real daily concern and not just a Sunday matter. They sought to reinstate method, seriousness, regularity, and a measure of religious enthusiasm.

Because the Evangelicals were trying to effect serious religious reform within the Church, they were strenuously opposed by the orthodox clergy and laity. Opposition to the Evangelicals was so strong that they were denied preferment until well into the nineteenth century.

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Until then, they often had to be content with privately endowed chapels of lecturerships. By 1830, there were still only three Evangelical churchmen on the episcopal bench. Church unity was not helped by the Evangelical attitude that people could not be true Christians unless they had undergone an Evangelical-style 'conversion'. They considered orthodox Anglican clergy as lacking in the spiritual qualities necessary for orders.[1]

Evangelical activity manifested itself in several areas: in liberation of the slaves, in introduction of Christianity to the benighted Hindus, and in energetic preaching of the Gospel to all heathen areas. Oliver and Fage state, "Protestant Christianity had in general been slow to recognize its duty of preaching the gospel to every human being."[2]

The Evangelicals wished to rectify this situation quickly, and they began to form many missionary societies: to convert the Jews, the aborigines of South America, and to strengthen the Church in the colonies. Nor was the religious condition at home neglected. The Evangelicals formed societies for pastoral aid in the parishes, for bettering the condition of the poor, and for the distribution of religious tracts and Bibles.

1. Ford K. Brown, Fathers of the Victorians (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 63-64.
2. Roland Oliver and J.D. Fage, A Short History of Africa (Harmondsworth, England, 1970), p. 138.

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There has been some confusion in the literature as to the Evangelicals' political views: were they Whigs or Tories, conservative or reformers? The Evangelicals were often branded as dangerous radicals by ill-informed opponents. But their religious ideas and class position both made this characterization inept. They were opposed to the reactionary Tories who had a strong vested interest in the maintenance of slavery, and who feared the democratic implications of slave liberation. Yet the Evangelicals were hardly firm friends of progressive or radical ideas on the need for extended democracy. Hannah More, the leading female Evangelical, opposed the Reform Bill of 1832 to her dying breath.

The Evangelicals were not interested in politics except as a tool to further the cause of righteousness:

> The greater part of their philanthropy was genuinely evangelistic, arising out of their belief that the really vital thing was to get the poor man (and the rich man) soundly converted, and then he would be sure of everlasting happiness.[1]

The Evangelicals came mostly from the middle class, and their general aim in social work was to make the lower class "useful" and "decent", not restless or revolutionary. Dean S.C. Carpenter says, "But some of it (Evangelical

1. S.C. Carpenter, Church and People 1789-1889 (London, 1959), I, 42.

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philanthropy) was undoubtedly an attempt to make the poor more contented with their lot, and so stave off political disaster."[1]

In discussing the above material, the influences of E.F. Wilson's family background and environment have been studied for the light they shed on his formation. There were plenty of signs pointing to missionary activity--including the general Evangelical background and Wilson's immediate forebears. His own personality propelled him to actual enlistment as a missionary. There is one more factor to be considered: the influence of his mother. Wilson had written,

> When a child, it was my mother's hope and wish that I should bear the glad tidings of the Gospel to distant lands. She was a missionary in her heart herself, and it was her earnest wish that one of her boys would grow up to devote himself to that most blessed work.[2]

The Victorian age was inclined to sentiment in matters concerning the family, but this mark of filial devotion was no maudlin Victorian gesture. His mother is described as a very strong character in the Evangelical mould:

> She was a woman of rare consecration and activity.... She sent wise and comforting letters to missionaries in foreign lands, which cheered them as water from the spring cheers the thirsty

1. Ibid.
2. Wilson Missionary Work p. 13.

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> and wayworn traveller. She became a mother to the orphan children of India, rescuing them from the degradation of heathenism, and leading them to the Saviour's love. She raised large sums of money to help Wilberforce and Clarkson in their crusade against slavery....[1]

It is hardly surprising, then, that Wilson turned to the mission field since all factors seemed to point in that direction.

* * * * * * *

E.F. Wilson was born in 1844, one of the eight children of Prebendary Wilson, and his wife Lucy Sarah. By this generation the Wilson family was developing a clerical tradition.[2] His elder brother, Daniel Frederick, was the vicar of Mitcham, Surrey. His sister Emily was married to the Rev. D.B. Hanken, vicar of St. Jude's, Mildmay; another sister, Lois, was the wife of Fleet Street and Darley Abbey, Derby; still another sister Ellen Richenda married the Rev. Robert Browne of St. Peter's Ipswich, Farnham, and Eynesford, Kent.

1. "The Late Prebendary Wilson" op. cit., p. 273.
2. Clerical families were not unfrequent in England, families in which members for generations would enter the Church. In Wilson's line, this lasted at least for four generations: Bishop Daniel Wilson, Prebendary Daniel Daniel Wilson, E.F. Wilson, and his son Archibald Wilson. A clerical family par excellence were the Venn's, who maintained a clerical tradition for over three hundred years. See Michael Hennell John Venn and the Clapham Sect (London, 1958).

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E.F. Wilson himself married Frances Spooner, the daughter of the Rev. G.W. Spooner of Dunstall in Staffordshire, Inglesham in Wiltshire, All Soul's in Langham Place, and senior curate to Bishop Baring. One of Wilson's brothers-in-law was a clergyman, and his sister-in-law was married to a clergyman!

The other offspring of Prebendary Wilson took up respectable professions of the upper middle class. Arthur was a member of the London Stock Exchange, and Wilberforce, a civil engineer who became Surveyor-General of Hong Kong. Eldest sister Lucy Ann never married and stayed with her father at Barnsbury Park, Islington. She "did good work among the poor of London, and aided Foreign Missionary work.[1]

As noted, Wilson did not enjoy formal education, and refused to go up to Oxford where his grandfather had been the Vice-Principal of St. Edmund Hall. This is the first detail in the available documents that suggests an unorthodox character. Instead, he left school at the age of 17 with the idea of becoming a farmer. He went to live with the Elgar family at Wingham, Kent, about six miles from Canterbury. "Mr. Elgar was a Land Agent, and had several farms under his management."[2] It is obvious, then, that

1. E.F. Wilson Autobiographical Journal, p. 7.
2. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 17.

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Wilson was training to become a gentleman farmer--not a peasant. He stayed at the Elgars for about four years.

By this time Wilson had just reached the age of maturity, and had spent ample time in learning about farming. It was now convenient to look about for a suitable opportunity or position.

Just at this point Bishop Cronyn and Dr. Hellmuth of the Diocese of Huron in Ontario, arrived for a tour of England. Both Cronyn and his archdeacon were strong Evangelicals and had engaged Bishop Strachan of Toronto in a bitter conflict. Cronyn believed that Strachan was untolerably "high", and he accused the venerable bishop of encouraging Roman Catholic teaching at Trinity College. In a Pastoral Letter dated 19 July, 1860, Cronyn had written,

> There has come into my hands a manuscript known as 'The Provost's Catechism', containing 741 questions and answers. The views of Christian doctrine taught in this Catechism are both unsound and un-Protestant.[1]

Bishop Stachan, never one to back down in a conflict, took the assault on Trinity College as a personal rebuff, since he himself "was most responsible for the teaching.... If the Bishop of Huron is dissatisfied with Trinity, let him establish his own Divinity School... I did this at Cobourg."[2]

1. A.H. Crowfoot <u>Benjamin Cronyn, First Bishop of Huron</u> (London, Ontario, 1957), p. 92.
2. <u>Ibid</u>.

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What is important about this episcopal conflict in relation to E.F. Wilson's early career, are the ties that were formed between Islington and Huron. Bishop Cronyn took up Strachan's challenge, and set about to form a new theological college that would be possessed of sound Protestant and Evangelical views. Because Islington and its Clerical Meeting were so famous in Evangelical circles, it was natural that Bishop Cronyn would dispatch his archdeacon there to solicit funds and support. Hellmuth spoke at the Islington Clerical Meeting of January, 1862.

> 'Evangelical men are at a very great discount in Upper and Lower Canada...' He appealed to all Evangelicals to rally to the assistance of the the proposed college.[1]

These relations between the Wilson family and the Huron Evangelicals was further strengthened when Prebendary Wilson's assistant at St. Mary's Church, Islington--the Reverend Isaac Brock--was invited by the Bishop to come out to Canada as Principal of the incipient Huron College.[2]

In 1865, when Wilson was still residing with the Elgars, Cronyn visited England for the first time. He wished to meet some of the donors who had responded to Hellmuth's appeal and "he was anxious to meet the

1. Ibid., p. 95.
2. Ibid., p. 123.

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authorities of the Church Missionary Society, and to enlist their support for his Indian Missions...."[1] On this visit Cronyn and Hellmuth met the youthful E.F. Wilson, whose family they had come to know so well. Desirous of finally setting out on his own, Wilson listened with interest to their account of a region that was still wild enough to be intriguing, but sufficiently settled to present good prospects. They "visited Wilson Coleshill where he was a farm pupil and persuaded him that the opportunities were far greater in Canada."[2]

Wilson had intended to come to Canada as a gentleman farmer. But he had been in Ontario only three days before the Almighty "put it into my heart to become a Missionary."[3] Such dramatic conversions and messages from God were quite characteristic of the Evangelical mentality and should cause no surprise. He abandoned the idea of farming altogether, and entered Huron College where he studied for two years.

Wilson's liking for adventure is seen in an incident that happened soon after: "That same summer I spent a month or six weeks on an Indian Reserve, and became, as people would say, infatuated with the Indians."[4] It was

1. Ibid., p. 104.
2. P.B. Moore Edward Francis Wilson, Missionary to the Ojibway Indians (unpublished Bachelor of Theology thesis, Huron College, London, Ontario, 1959), p. 3.
3. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 13.
4. Ibid.

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a sign of his affection for the "wild free life away from the restraints of civilization." For this "and other reasons" (which he does not mention) Wilson stayed in Canada for his theological studies, returning to England for ordination as deacon by the Bishop of London at the Chapel Royal on December 22, 1867.

In securing an appointment among the Indians of Huron Diocese, it was essential that the support of the C.M.S. be obtained. Huron was still growing quickly, and the Indians tended to get overlooked: there was not enough clergy or funds even for the white settlements. One reason for the Bishop's 1865 trip to England was to consult the Church Missionary Society about the Indians. His difficulties had not improved two years later:

> In that year (1867) the clergy in the diocese numbered eighty-eight, and the churches 145. Indeed the Bishop found it very difficult to keep his diocese supplied with pastors, for at this time there were twelve vacant missions.[1]

Matters came to a crisis just after Wilson's ordination as deacon. While in England for the first Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops

> Cronyn interviewed the secretary of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, who told him

1. Charles H. Mockridge, The Bishops of the Church of England in Canada and Newfoundland (Toronto, 1896), p. 160.

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> that the society had decided to reduce its annual grant to the diocese from 1,200 pounds to 800 pounds. The reduction meant that assistance to ten missionaries had been withdrawn.[1]

Part of the Bishop's response to this blow was to institute a special fund drive campaign; another was to lay his case before the Evangelical societies.

> I made application to the Church Missionary Society to appoint the Rev. E.F. Wilson missionary to the Indians in the Diocese, and I am happy to say that my application has been granted.....[2]

This convergence of influences is important since the C.M.S. allowed itself to enter a field in which the usual careful research and extensive knowledge of the area had not been gathered. Here was an Evangelical bishop whose diocese was in financial trouble and who wanted support for a missionary to the Indians. The proposed missionary was the offspring of one of the most influential families that had taken a traditional interest in the Society. The links were even closer, since Henry Venn, the long-time leader of the C.M.S., had earlier in his career been allied to the Wilson family by patronage. "In 1834 he (Venn) accepted the living of St. John's, Holloway, in the gift of Daniel Wilson, vicar of Islington, which he held till 1848."[3]

1. James L. Talman "Benjamin Cronyn" in Marc La Terreur, ed. <u>Dictionary of Canadian Biography</u> (Toronto, 1972), X, p. 209.
2. Moore, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 4.
3. <u>D.N.B.</u>, LVIII, 208.

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These factors are important since the failure of the mission was in part caused by the ignorance of the Society when it entered this field.

* * * * * * *

Before he left for the Ojibways of Ontario, Wilson married Frances (Fanny) Spooner on June 3rd, 1868, at Langford Church. Her father being a clergyman, the bride had been "accustomed to the refinement and comforts of a beautiful old rectory home in Goucestershire...she had never been out of England before, and all was new and strange to her."[1] They had first met "at a flower show at Coleshill, in 1863."[2] They saw each other again, and married when Wilson returned to England in 1867. He stayed for about six months.

With education, ordination, and marriage completed, Wilson set out for Canada as a C.M.S. missionary on July 1st, 1868. He and his wife arrived at London, Ontario, the See city of the diocese, on July 22, 1868. No doubt because the initiative in forming this mission had not been on the Society's part, the C.M.S. instructions were decidedly vague, "simply to go first to ... Dr. Cronyn ...and from thence to travel around and select what might

1. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 14.
2. Wilson Autobiographical Journal, p. 12.

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seem to be the best spot to make the centre for a new mission."[1] Wilson was about to begin a career among the Ojibway Indians of Ontario that lasted for a quarter of a century--from 1868 to 1893.

1. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 14.

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Chapter II

## EARLY MISSIONARY WORK

The Ojibway Indians with whom Wilson mainly dealt were, by the 1870's, thoroughly acculturated. It would be a grave error to interpret these Indians as living a "traditional" lifestyle. By 1870, the Ojibway had had an experience of some 200 years with the whiteman. This impact, mainly caused by the fur trade, had introduced widespread reliance on the whiteman for items of material culture and the beginnings of a money economy; it had added fur trapping to the aboriginal hunting and gathering mode of production, caused the addition of two new clans to account for half-breed offspring, and introduced Christian ideas of religion.

> In fact, there is no 'Chippewa culture' that can be described at this point. To what time period and local area would it relate? At one time, before the coming of the whites, there was a Chippewa culture...or there were the cultures, slightly varying, of the several clans.[1]

The prospect of the Ojibway in 1870 was one of increasing marginality. The fur trade, though still of some importance, was very much on the decline. The peak period of the fur trade in the Great Lakes Region had been 1760-1820.[2] Now with increasing white settle-

1. Harold Hickerson The Chippewa and their Neighbors: A Study in Ethnohistory (Toronto, 1970), p. 120.
2. See George Irving Quimby Indian Life in the Upper Great Lakes, 11,000 B.C. to A.D. 1800 (Chicago, 1971).

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ment the Indians were being restricted to smaller and smaller tracts of land. The Government and also missionaries were trying to encourage farming, but the Ojibway were generally slow to adopt agricultural ways. Unlike their allied tribe, the Ottawas, the Ojibway had no tradition of cultivation. The general picture in 1870 for the southeastern Ojibway[1] then, is as follows: still a heavy reliance on hunting, fishing and gathering activities, a decline in the importance of the fur trade, a decline in the larger types of game as white settlement advanced, some initial cultivation especially of maize, occasional employment in white industries.

The basis of the Ojibway economy was hunting, gathering, and fishing activities. The Ojibway way of life was essentially nomadic, although a band would not stray too far from core area.

1. R.W. Dunning distinguishes two types of Ojibway based on the particular economic base--the northern Ojibway extending to about 100 miles north of Sault Ste. Marie and the southeastern Ojibway. He says that the latter was "a maize-growing economy...it represents a different ecological type...excluded from our interest, which is that of the hunting, fishing, and trapping economies." R.W. Dunning Social and Economic Change among the Northern Ojibwa (Toronto, 1959), p. 5. This statement seems misleading, if not entirely false. The southeastern Ojibwa also relied on hunting, fishing, and trapping though it is true that they were subject to much greater land resource pressure. The Ottawa Indianswere agricultural Indians but the Ojibway themselves did not engage in it. Maize-growing was only adopted at a fairly late date under the influence of the Ottawas.

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> This variety and seasonal nature of their foods kept the Indians in constant motion. The hunting and the fishing grounds, the maple groves, the patches of wild berries, and of wild rice, lay scattered in different places often miles apart.[1]

The hunting season was in the winter from November to the end of March. During this period the Ojibway separated into single family units and dispersed "to pursue the moose, and, after the coming of Europeans, to trap foxes and other fur-bearing animals."[2] There is some disagreement as to whether families "owned" specific hunting grounds and other economic assets. The greater the impact of the whites, the more the Indians tended to individual title and ownership. However the Ojibway with whom Wilson dealt were apparently a significant exception to this tendency.

> Evidently the Ojibwa on the eastern shore of Lake Huron have been more tenacious of some of their old communistic practises than their kinsmen elsewhere, although the reason remains obscure.[3]

For the Victorian mind, a hunting society of nomadic ways and with a clan organization, represented a very low

1. Diamond Jenness *The Ojibwa Indians of Parry Island. Their Social and Religious Life* (Ottawa, 1935), p. 11. This monograph has largely been relied on since most of the Ojibway under Wilson's influence were from this area--from Sarnia to Batchawana on the Great Lakes. The research was done in 1929 and most respondents were born between 1840 and 1870, that is their youth corresponded with Wilson's period as missionary-educator.

2. *Ibid*., p. 4
3. *Ibid*., p. 7

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stage in the widely accepted view of the evolution of societies. The aim of Victorian missionaries was to induce and educate the Indians to give up hunting and nomadic ways for a settled agricultural life, and eventually incorporation into modern industrial life. Wilson reflects this attitude in this statement:

> The old people do not sufficiently realize the advantages of eduation themselves and so seem to care little whether their children are in their place at class or roving about the bush with a bow and arrow.[1]

An important feature of the Shingwauk Home was a large farm, and Wilson always had on staff a farmer so that the boys could be taught farming in a practical manner. The effort to replace the hunting lifestyle by industrial society is seen by the building of a sash factory:

> It has been started in the hope that it may prove a source of profit to the institution, and also be a means of affording employment to some of our ex-pupils and fit them for making their living by engaging at other factories when they leave us.[2]

The more traditional lifestyle was termed by Wilson "their wild savage life" and he avowed as his aim to "reclaim" the Indians from such a state and to instill

1. E.F. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 90.
2. Dominion of Canada Sessional Paper No. 3 (Ottawa, 1885), p. 24.

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in them "Christain and civilised principles."[1]

Wilson efforts in his aims to replace the basis of the Ojibway was not completely successful. Geddes in particular has stated that not many of Wilson's graduates became successful tradesmen.[2] The difficulties and barriers on both sides were too much. A close reading of Wilson's register[3] also discloses the same results. Some successes there were but by and large there was a tendency for graduates to go back to their reserves and continue life as before, although undoubtedly with less hunting and other traditional skills. Too many graduates were neither completely capable of assimilation into the new industrial society nor back into traditional tribal life.

The social organization of the Ojibway was basically one of division into clans or <u>dodems</u>. Each member of a clan felt a close relationship to other members of the clan although there be no blood kinship. Even at Parry Island in 1929 when elements of the older culture were fast disappearing, Jenness could say, "Yet the feeling

1. <u>Fourth Annual Report</u>, p. 9.
2. Col. D. Geddess "Indian Schools in Sault Ste. Marie" unpublished paper presented to the Sault Historical Society, no date c. 1965.
3. <u>Register</u> for the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Schools, 1874-1893.

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of kinship that once united fellow clansmen still survives in an attenuated form."[1] An animal or plant was associated with each clan, and many other features of natural life were associated with a particular clan, although not with any other. The clans were patrilinear and exogamous, and clan intermarriage rules extended even to the allied Ottawa and Potawatomi tribes.

So far as is evident, Wilson did not specifically discuss the clan organization. But nevertheless Wilson's general position on this as well as the overall tribal structure is easily evident. He wanted the break-up of the tribal organization and incorporation of the Ojibway into white society on the same lines as any white immigrant to Canada. Wilson was strongly opposed to a separate social organization for French Canadians and this was certainly his attitude to Indians. He accused the French Canadians of wanting to "perpetuate their self-isolation" and of speaking an "alien language". [2] Wilson's vision of society was one of unity with no particularities remaining. He looked to a society which would be "one in language, one in pursuits, tastes, ambitions, and hopes..."[3] A further

1. Jenness. op. cit., p. 8.
2. Algoma Missionary News Vol. X, No. 7. October, 1888, p. 50.
3. Third Annual Report, A.M.N.S.J., Vol. I, no. 5, November 1, 1877, p. 35.

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indication of Wilson's disregard for Indian particularism is seen in his easy acceptance of pupils from other tribes into the Shingwauk school--especially several Iroquois children, one of them a member of the Brant family. The Iroquois were traditionally the most hated enemy of the southeastern Ojibway of Ontario. Says Jenness of the Parry Island Ojibway, "They know that the hated Mohawks, nodawe, 'People who pursue in canoes,' still linger to the southward...."[1]

The Ojibway had traditionally been allied in a loose confederation with the Ottawa and Potawatomies as allied tribes. This confederation were never so structured or formal as that of the Iroquois but it did exist. Naturally with his desire to incorporate the Indians to white society, the political attitudes of the Ojibway were expected to change. Political allegiance to Canada, Britain, and especially the Queen were inculcated in the Chingwauk children. The Ojibway pupils were taught "God Save the Queen" and the Queen's Birthday, May 24, was a very important holiday at the school. Dominion Day and Guy Fawkes Day were observed. In influencing Ojibway political allegiance, Wilson was more successful than in his effort to change economic structures. Because the Ojibway did not have

1. Jenness, op. cit., p. 1.

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the well-organized national organization and consciousness of the Iroquois, it was easier to introduce the new allegiances.

The Ojibway Indians were highly religious in the sense that the sacred permeated all aspects of life, and was not highly compartmentalized as with Chirstianity. They believed in a Great Spirit, Kitchi Manido, "who is regarded not as the creator of all things, but as the source of all the power inherent to a greater or less extent in everything that exists."[1] The Great Spirit was "too exalted to concern himself with the follies of poor earthly beings..."[2] There was also an evil spirit--Mahje-munedoo who "possesses power to injure any who dare to offend him." [3] In everyday life, the Ojibway appealed to various intermediate beings who were supposed to inhabit all elements of natural life. The Ojibway believed that "all nature is one, inasmuch as everything consists of a body, soul, and shadow..."[4]

Great stress was placed on dreams, and at puberty, the rite of passage to adulthood was not completed

1. Ibid., p. 29.
2. Peter Jones History of the Ojebway Indians (London, 1861), p. 83.
3. Ibid.
4. Jenness, op. cit., p. 27.

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until a boy had undergone an isolated fast with the intention of obtaining dreams and visitations from the spirit world. At this time, the boy would receive a personal *manido*--a protector not unlike the western concept of a "guardian angel". The Ojibway believed in an after-life in the western hunting grounds. They believed all matter was possessed of a body which disappeared at death, a soul that was eternal and conscious, and a shadow which lingered at the grave and was not truly a conscious being.

Witchcraft in Ojibway society was closely related to their concept of religion. They believed that through magical means and use of stronger *manidos*, the individual could be harmed by his enemies. Accounts of Ojibway society stress the presence of witchcraft so strongly, that the picture of a paranoic society is often presented:

> It is pathetic to observe how universal is this fear of witchcraft among the present inhabitants of Parry Island. Each man suspects his neighbour of practising the nefarious art to avenge some fancied grievance....Probably there is not a single adult on the island who has not himself suffered some misfortune which he attributes to the same cause.[1]

The steps to which a believer in witchcraft leads is

1. *Ibid*., p. 87.

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amazing to the outsider. Men seek to avoid ill-will by avoiding display of emotions--the Ojibway stoicism which is so widely spoken of, "and by carefully weighing his words lest he give vent to some angry or ill-timed remark."[1] The parents of a daughter will be very careful in refusing a suitor for fear of witchcraft. One of the principal aims of the missionaries was to suppress the ancient religion including its paraphernalia of conjurors and medicine men. The result of this eager activity has been to increase the paranoia within Ojibway society. The three kinds of medicine men have gradually disappeared under missionary influence, but the fear of witchcraft has not.[2]

> The Indians on Parry Island live in constant fear of witchcraft to which they attribute many deaths believing that it has greatly increased since conjurors disappeared from their midst.[3]

In trying to teach Christianity to the Ojibway, Wilson made no serious concession to Ojibway tradition. Until his later years in Indian work when associated with The Canadian Indian, Wilson did not realize that

1. Ibid., p. 88.
2. Ibid., p. 60. Three kinds of medicine men: wabeno or healer and charm-maker, djishkiu or conjuror, and kusabindugeya or seer. At Parry Island, wizards were known as mede.
3. Ibid., p. 68.

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the Indians had complex and frequently admirable religious systems. In his earlier years under discussion here, Wilson was the typical example of a closeminded Victorian missionary. Any hint of syncretism was never thought of, let alone entertained. Wilson thought of conservative Indians who wished to retain their own religion as "bigoted Pagans".[1] It was not hard for missionaries to win nominal conversions. Wilson noted that there were not many pagans at Sarnia and at Kettle Point.

> Pagan practises had fallen altogether into disuse. There were some Indians living who had been 'medicine men,' but we never heard that they practised their charms.[2]

Nevertheless the Ojibway retained many of their essential beliefs very close below the surface. Jenness, as noted still observed strong fears of witchcraft among the Parry Island Ojibway in 1929. Wilson was constrained to note,

> how superstitious the Indians continued to be even after their acceptance of Christianity. They seemed never to lose altogether their faith in witchcraft, especially in that form by which it was believed that certain persons had power to cause sickness or misfortune to others. They seemed also to have a firm belief in dreams.[3]

1. See Algoma Missionary News, Vol. IX, No. 2, May 1st, 1886.
2. Wilson <u>Missionary Work</u>, p. 55.
3. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 56.

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Whenever one religion replaces another, aspects of the earlier faith inevitably linger much longer than is admitted by the adherents and spokesmen of the new. In producing religious change among the Ojibway it may be said that Wilson and other missionaries were more successful than in their efforts in the economic field, but less successful than their striving to change political beliefs and adherence.

With the increasing loss of independence to the whites, with increased interconnection with the whites and subsequent confinement on reserves, there occurred what has been termed "cultural breakdown"[1] or "cultural demoralization". Before contact with whites, the Ojibway had strong moral codes which were adhered to. Wilson wrote the following passage on the Ottawas, a tribe allied to the Ojibway:

> Before the white people came, the Ottawas were a moral, well-behaved people, and lived under strict laws. They were governed by twenty-one precepts, or moral commandments, which they were taught to observe just as we teach our children the Ten Commandments.[2]

This cultural breakdown was most evidently seen in abuse of alcohol and sexual license. Several times in his

1. Charles Hendry *Beyond Traplines* (Toronto, 1969), p. 35.
2. "The Ottawa Indians" *Our Forest Children* Vol.III no. 3, June 1889, p. 4

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stay at Sarnia, Wilson was forced to note incidents relating to liquor. He noted, "Unhappily there was a considerable amount of whiskey-drinking among the men..."[1] In response Wilson "did what we could to try and stem the tide of drunkeness by forming a Termperance Society..."; however he was never a man to avoid strong tactics and thus obviously approved of the "effectual check" which "has of late years been put upon the terrible practises by the action of the Dominion Government...."[2]

There is no evidence that Wilson's opposition to the misuse of alcohol was very effective. This addiction was largely caused by social problems which Wilson could not solve, and which until his later years did not really understand. No doubt individual Indians were helped to avoid a dissolute life; but just as evangelistic religion does not solve alcoholism among the working poor, neither did white missionary activity prevent misuse of liquor among Indians. The seriousness of drunkenness among demoralized Indians is noted by the frequency with which Indian syncretist prophets placed tabus or restrictions on its misuse.[3]

1. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 43.
2. Ibid., p. 43-44.
3. See Vittorio Lanternari The Religions of the Oppressed, A Study of Modern Messianic Cults (New York, 1965), pp. 70, 72, 102, 104, 108, 109, 110, 117, 119, 126,

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Unaffected by the whiteman, the Ojibway had been relatively chaste. "Apparently Woodland Indian girls were quite modest in their relations with young men, for they were closely watched by their mothers and grandmothers."[1] However Wilson found the Ojibway singularly unvirtuous in this regard. He commented that they were "immoral in their habits....both men and women and exceedingly loose in their morals."[2] It must always be remembered that the Victorians were exceedingly strict in their morals on sexuality. In combating this rampant sexuality, Wilson went as far as to separate the boys and girls into separate schools. One pamphlet mentioned the "very grave difficulties and dangers" that were found in coeducational residence in a single school by persons "only recently removed from a life of barbarism in the Forest".[3] Instead Victorian standards of chastity and restriction of sex to marriage were taught as well as the British standard of motherhood. (In Sarnia "Mothers Meetings" were founded for the Indian women).

As with his teachings on alcohol, the permanent effect on personal sexual conduct was not significant.

1. Robert and Pat Ritzenthaler <u>The Woodland Indians of theWestern Great Lakes</u> (Garden City, N.Y., 1970) p. 39.
2. P.A.C., RG 10, Vol. 2040, Wilson to Hon. A. Mackenzie, 9 April, 1875.
3. <u>Pamphlet on the Wawanosh Proposal</u>. (London, 1876), p. 1.

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Wilson's letters record a continual series of incidents sexual in nature--boy-meets-girl-in-woods variety. Several times pregnancies were caused in this manner. In addition, sexual practises as described by Landes and Dunning in the twentieth century still reveal many practises which Wilson would have considered shocking. These include sexual joking, premarital intercourse, and informal marriage practises. Landes noted that marriages were little regulated by the formal social organization, "sex interest is high", and mating was according to "private inclinations".[1] Thus it can be seen that missionary exhortations to individual purification were not very successful. Once again, isolated individuals might be affected not the group as a whole.

Wilson as with other missionaries also attempted to change the Ojibway conception of time. The Ojibway naturally were not clockwatchers and time card punchers. They did not have any real attitude of time as a commodity which would be squandered if due service was not rendered to God (the Evangelical belief) or if due service was not rendered to the pursuit of wealth (the capitalist attitude). Wilson noted these attitudes to time:

1. Ruth Landes _Ojibwa Sociology_ (New York, 1937), p. 53.

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> Indians are nearly always very much behind time in their arrangements; they do not appear yet to understand the value of time--whether in their councils, their daily work, their feasts, or in their attendance at church, they are generally behind the appointed hour. If a council is called to commence at noon, three or four Indians will have perhaps assembled at that hour; others straggle in as the day wears on...and it will probably be three o'clock before the council actually commences.[1]

Wilson tried very hard to inculcate punctuality in his pupils at the Shingwauk. The importance of time to the Victorian period is well-known. As noted above, the common religious and commercial attitudes to time were the same, though with differing reasons. However the ultimate reason for this attitude to time was undoubtedly the capitalist economy with its slogans such as "Time is money". Wilson certainly realized the commercial use of time, and the model letters that his pupils wrote reveal this wordly as well as religious understanding. Marks were given to reward punctuality. In terms of success in teaching the whiteman's sense of time, it may be guessed that the minority of graduates who integrated into Canadian society did adapt sufficiently in this matter. But those who went back to the reserve probably relearnt the traditional attitudes to time.

As may be seen, Wilson's programme was one of complete

1. Wilson Missionary Work p. 32.

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change from native social organization as found in 1870. From the above description and analysis, there can be little doubt as to why the missionaries often came into difficulties with their aboriginal converts.

* * * * * * * *

When Wilson and his wife had first arrived in Canada, they stayed for a short time at London. However Wilson set about almost at once on his work, "the object being to choose a spot suitable for the centre of our Mission."[1] He decided on Sarnia and its adjacent St. Clair Reserve. In doing so he was responding to "their oft-repeated petition to the Bishop of Huron... that a Church of England Mission should be established among them."[2] Also of great importance was Sarnia's suitable location: it was "a favourable place for headquarters on account of boat and railway communication direct with other parts of the diocese."[3] The reserve contained a population of 400. Wilson's other most important station was Kettle Point, only thirty miles away. Until a catechist and schoolmaster were engaged about a year later, the plan was for Wilson to visit

1. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
3. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to Secretariat, 2 November, 1868.

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fortnightly and to hold services and school classes. Wilson also had three other stations under his care further afield: Sauble and Cape Croker located on the Bruce Peninsula. There was already a resident catechist at the latter reserve. Closer to Brantford was the New Credit reserve.[1]

Because of a set of interrelated factors, Wilson's mission to the Ojibway of southwestern Ontario was largely a failure. It lasted less than four years, and as far as the C.M.S. was concerned, resulted neither in a stream of converts nor in the establishment of a Native Church. For E.F. Wilson the main lasting result was the formation of a source of pupils for his Shingwauk and Wawanosh Schools. The reasons for this failure are of considerable interest and importance and will be the topic of the rest of this chapter.

The main aim of the Church Missionary Society was the conversion of the heathen. It was quite clear to the members of the society that it should not be involved in areas where other Protestant bodies, Anglican or not,

1. Population of Wilson's stations: Sarnia......400, Kettle Point.......100, Cape Croker........350, Sauble.......250, New Credit.........300

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were involved in the process of Christianization. If the C.M.S. was in the same area as another society or denomination, good relations were to be maintained. Henry Venn, leader of the C.M.S. from 1841 to 1872, emphasized the ecumenicity of missionary work in the strongest terms. The principle of non-intervention in other denominations' work was actually written into the C.M.S. constitution. Venn described it in these terms:

> The third and only other great principle which the Committee would this day remind you of, as especially suited to these times, is that which is embodied in one of the fundmental laws of our Society."[1]

Venn went on to discuss a comfortable arrangement that had been carried out in Ceylon, where a monthly union meeting had been arranged between the American, Wesleyan, and Church societies.

Considering the plight that Wilson found himself in, it is ironic that Henry Venn stressed the ecumenicity of Wilson's grandfather, the Bishop of Calcutta. Bishop Wilson had encouraged the work of non-Anglican missionaries and "invited them often to join with his own clergy in prayer."[2] At one time he presided over a meeting of

1. Max Warren To Apply the Gospel, Selections from the Writings (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1971), p. 176.
2. Ibid.

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fifty missionaries from all the Protestant societies in Bengal. In his last sermon the Bishop had stressed the following points:

> Unity and love prevail amongst the different divisions of the Protestant family; we no longer maintain the old and fatal mistake, that Christian men are not to co-operate for any thing, till they agree in every thing.[1]

If Wilson had entered a field in which there were 1400 pagans, his mission to the southern Ojibway would no doubt have been justified. But instead, he entered a field occupied already by the Methodists for over forty years. Some of these early Methodist missionaries included Thomas Hurlburt, William Ryerson, Jonathan Scott, Conrad Vandusen, Shahwundais (John Sunday), William Case, Egerton Ryerson, James Evans, and Kahkewaquonaby (Peter Jones).[2] As early as 1824 a Methodist missionary society had been organized in Upper Canada. Methodist missions had been established at New Credit, Walpole Island, Sarnia, Stony and Kettle Points, Muncey, Oneida, and Saugeen. A publication on the Ontario Indians writes,

> The Methodists had long supported a school and a missionary on the Sarnia Reserve and had a good church attendance.[3]

1. Ibid., p. 177.
2. Biographies of Hurlburt, Ryerson, Scott, Vandusen, and Shahwundais can be found in Marc La Terreur, ed. Dictionary of Canadian Biography (Toronto, 1972), X.
3. Indian Affairs Branch Indians of Ontario, An Historical Review (Ottawa, 1966), p. 28.

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In consequence, by the 1860's the greater proportion of the southern Ojibway had already been converted, either to the Methodist connexion, or to the Roman Catholics. Anglicans had been relatively absent from the field except among the Iroquois confederacy, and among the Indians at or near Garden River where a mission had been maintained since 1832. The truth is that by the time of Wilson's arrival there was little room for any appreciable number of conversions. There remained a small percentage of pagans, but they had opportunities to receive the Gospel of Christ already at hand.

In one of his earliest letters to the C.M.S., Wilson did not hide that in effect he had invaded the Methodist field. About Sarnia he wrote "the majority Methodist, a few pagans, about 14 families belonging to the Church and crying out for a missionary", about Kettle Point "half Methodists, several pagans, about 7 families anxious for a Church Missionary", New Credit "majority Methodists...about 7 families anxious for a Church Mission", Sable "used formerly to be a good proportion of Church peiople, but now from neglect have nearly all become Methodists. About 6 or 7 persons still desire a Church Mission", Cape Croker "chiefly Jesuit and Methodist. A

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Church catechist is paid by the Diocesan society and about 20 people attend the services on Sunday."[1] Despite the gloomy picture above in relation either to pagans or to Anglicans, Wilson only rejected one possible cure because of a preponderance of Methodists- - Saugeen "appear to be nearly all Methodists." In truth E.F. Wilson was a missionary virtually without pagans!

According to accounts by Wilson, the Methodists always appear in the wrong. Signs of possible conflict had been evident from the very beginning at Sarnia. Agreement to the establishment of mission by the band Council had to be obtained.

> We expected there would be a little difficulty at first, as the Methodists were already in the field, and might oppose our coming....[2]

The council agreed to allow Wilson on the reserve but trouble flared up again when Wilson tried to build a church on land donated by an Indian named Antoine Rodd:

> The difficulty is that no Indian has power to dispose of his own land, consequently the Indian whose land we are building on can only grant us the use of his land during his own life time, and even this had been called in question by some of the Methodist party who oppose it.[3]

1. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to Secretariat, 2 November, 1868.
2. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 20.
3. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to Secretariat, 2 November, 1868.

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Since the band chief Wawanosh, was a member of the Anglican minority, the Methodists went so far as to threaten his leadership status. It would seem that membership in religious denominations had become a factor in band factionalism. Wilson was finally able to resolve the matter by petitioning the Canadian Government which came to a decision favourable to the Anglicans.

Nor was this denominational squabling to end when Wilson left Sarnia for Garden River in late 1871. Almost as soon as he arrived there Wilson arranged for a day-school engaging a young lady as school mistress at 60 pounds per annum, with her brother hired to take care of the Garden River post office and wharf, and also to do some evening teaching. Soon, though Wilson had to write the following woeful lines:

> Already the Wesleyan Methodists have sent a school-teacher here to Garden River....It is a most unjustified proceeding their sending a teacher here, as at present time, there is not a single family on the Reserve belonging to that Denomination...and their only object can be to decoy away and proselytize our people. I think it woujld be only right for the Committee to communicate with the Hon. Joseph Howe, Secretary of state, who is at the head of the Indian Department, to request interference. I have already...mentioned the inconvenience arising from the situation of our present school on this side of Garden River. The Methodists have taken advantage of this and have opened a school in the very midst of our people.[1]

1. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to C.C. Fenn, 9 January, 1872.

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Wilson's anger at this intervention was unbounded. Several months later he wrote that the Methodists seemed "determined to thwart us in every possible way."[1] He didn't leave protest over this state of affairs to the C.M.S. sitting far from the scene of action back in England, but had written to Howe himself, to the Rev. Enoch Wood "the leading Methodist in Toronto" and to the Toronto Daily papers. Wilson was determined that his flock should not be lured by the Methodists.

> The Indians here are all firmly attached to the Church--and have been so since first they embraced Christianity 40 years ago.[2]

How can this continuous and unseemly denominational battle be explained? In the first instance, it is clear that Bishop Cronyn must have been aware that for the most part, Wilson would be acting more as a pastor than as a real missionary. Cronyn was short of money and clergy, especially for his Indian missions. He reached out for support to the C.M.S., and because of the common Evangelical connexion and the family background of E.F. Wilson, the society decided to enter upon the field. But they did so without their usual research and they failed to realize that there was little room in this

1. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to C.C. Fenn, 6 March, 1872.
2. Ibid.

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area for more missionary activity. Sixteen months after Wilson had reached southwestern Ontario, C.C. Fenn wrote for the C.M.S. committee to Wilson admitting that if they had known about the strength of Methodism in the region, "Their general principles would have been against their entrance upon such a field."[1]

But can we be permitted to assume that the entire blame for this squabble lies with the Methodists? Wilson had entered into an area that had long been acknowledged as a Methodist sphere of influence. Considering that there were few pagans left to convert, it is not surprising that the Methodists felt hostile. Nor did Wilson's tongue or attitude help smooth things over. Wilson had been advised to be conciliatory, to "maintain a friendly intercourse with other Protestant societies."[2] However he seems to have acted in something less than a spirit of compromise. The clear implication of his statement about Sable was that he would attempt to entice back to the Anglican fold those Indians who had entered the Methodist flock from lack of an Anglican pastor. In one letter Wilson specifically mentions about "interfering" in the Methodists' work.[3] The text of this letter

1. P.A.C., Reel A-76, C.C. Fenn to Wilson, 31 December, 1869.
2. Ibid.
3. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to the Lay Secretary, 3 February, 1869.

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(actually a summary by the Lay Secretary of Wilson's points) shows how far Wilson had fallen from a spirit of conciliation, and given vent to a sharp tongue:

> Fears 'that there is little spiritual life among the Methodists'. If their preachers were more earnest men 'with the one end in view' he should feel 'more delicacy about interfering with their work.'[1]

By actions as well, Wilson demonstrated a lack of tact or restraint. He continued to have the church built at Sarnia before official approval had come from the Indian Affairs department quite aside from the disapproval of the band.

> I am at present in communication with Gov't on the subject....In the meantime we are continuing to build without heeding our opponents; this may seem rather rash to some people, but winter is coming on and we are anxious to get our work forward and trust to God for the issue....[2]

Wilson continuously had problems with the Methodists until after 1885. From this date onwards, he began to stress the need for common action among Protestants to ward off Roman Catholic activity towards the Indians. In this earlier period, Wilson demonstrates an inability to deal rationally with his rivals in the field. There is only one side of the case available, but the conclusion is inescapable that Wilson was inclined to hasty impulse, quick action, and sharp words, just as in the case of his

1. Ibid.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to Secretariat, 2 November, 1868.

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grandfather. An incident which perhaps clinches the matter is the text of a letter which Wilson sent to the Sault Ste. Marie Pioneer. In it he makes a charge that sounds most unlikely considering the Methodists' attitude to strong drink. It is true that Garden River had been divided between the Anglicans and Roman Catholics for forty years, although there is one account of Methodist visitation to this area in early days[1] :

> A good deal has been said of the wonderful progress of the Methodist Indian Mission at Garden River. As the Church of England clergyman at present representing that place I have hitherto said nothing; but when it comes to the Methodists taking two of our prominent Church members to a Camp Meeting up the Lake, and bringing one of them back in a state of intoxication for which he got 15 days in the gaol, I think it is time to disabuse the public mind as to the prosperity of that Mission and to assert in simple words that although the Methodists have been using their utmost endeavours to alienate the Indians (since the time of our fire in 1873) from us, they have hitherto been entirely unsuccessful, as not a single Indian on the Garden River Reserve as far as I am aware, belongs to their denomination, unless perchance they have persuaded this unfortunate man in gaol to join them.[2]

As a young Missionary anxious to impress his own Bishop, Wilson may have been rash. Another factor may be his background. The evidence here is somewhat conflicting. It was noted that Stephen Wilson's family

1. Mrs F. Stephenson One Hundred Years of Canadian Methodist Missions 1824-1924 (Toronto, 1925), p. 78.
2. Correspondence , Wilson to the editor of the Pioneer, 13 August, 1977.

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attended non-conformist chapels, and that Bishop Wilson encouraged common activities between all Protestant missionaries. However it is true that as the nineteenth century wore on, the Evangelicals became less and less friendly with Methodists and dissenters. Charles Simeon, one of the great figures of the Evangelical movement in the first third of the nineteenth century, encouraged this separation, and Bishop Wilson was a friend of Simeon.

> Simeon was fundamentally and essentially an Evangelical of Evangelicals, but not less distinctly a loyal son of the Church of England. The fault which Simeon saw in some of his brother-Evangelicals he was himself most careful to avoid. Indeed, his determined churchmanship gave annoyance to some of his followers, who said that Mr. Simeon was more of a Churchman than a Gospel-man.[1]

Bishop Neill has described this movement from flirtation with Methodists and other dissenters to a more firm churchmanship as follows:

> There had been a time in the eighteenth century when Evangelical clergymen had followed lines of action doubtfully compatible with loyalty to the Church of their ordination. The influence of Charles Simeon swung the movement the other way, and all the Evangelicals of the first half of the nineteenth century were convinced and devoted churchmen.[2]

1. Ollard, S.L. and Crosse, Gordon <u>A Dictionary of English Church History</u> (London, 1912), p. 560.
2. Stephen Neill <u>Anglicanism</u> (Harmondsworth, England, 1965), p. 236.

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Similarly J.S. Reynolds describes Bishop Wilson as a "strong churchman."[1] The Bishop himself stressed his adherence to the Church in terms which are understated but clear,

> He regarded the 'mild and, I hope firm Churchmanship, which I have maintained all my life at home' as 'of infinite importance.' "[2]

We have already seen his defence of the church establishment even against the wishes of the C.M.S. If Bishop Wilson encouraged ecumenicalism in India, one suspects that it was on Church of England terms. In Ontario, on the other hand, there had been a tradition of bitter conflict between Anglican and Methodist dating from the special privileges which the Church of England had obtained under the Constitution of 1791 and through custom.

E.F. Wilson emphasized in later years the strict Church upbringing he had undergone, and a tradition of disdain for dissenters in his family. He was undoubtedly exaggerating, especially since his father had married a lady from a Quaker family[3], but there is probably some truth in it:

> For 200 years past at any rate I know my ancestors have been church people. I was never brought up to intermingle with persons of other denominations, indeed I had an innate dread of 'dissenter' as

1. J.S. Reynolds The Evangelicals at Oxford, 1735-1871, A Record of an Unchronicled Movement (Oxford, 1953), p. 187.
2. Ollard and Crosse op. cit., p. 642.
3. Wilson Autobiographical Journal, p. 2.

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a people below caste....[1]

* * * * * * * * *

The C.M.S. was quite dismayed when it found out the truth about its Ojibway mission. They "had no idea of the pre-occupation of the field by other Missionary Agencies to the extent which you say and statistics exhibit."[2] After the first year, the matter of the confinuance of the mission became a continuing concern to the society. It had a much stronger arrangement at Red River in Ruperts Land. Should Wilson be transferred there became, in the C.M.S. mind, a recurring question. The continuance of the Huron Mission came to depend on using the southern Ojibway as material to build up Venn's Native Church so that the work could be carried to the Lake Superior region, where it was believed that there still existed a large body of heathen. Because the C.M.S. believed that such a work "will ultimately place you in the legitimate sphere of a Missionary of our Society, viz. in the more remote settlements where the Pagan Indians shall at least preponderate,"[3] the Committee felt they could break their own rule and could "justify their interference with other Missionary Agencies at

1. "Our Pagan Indians" A.M.N. Vol. IX, No. 7, March 1, 1887, p. 60.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Fenn to Wilson, 31 December, 1869.
3. Ibid.

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work in Huron."[1] Wilson was to work at building up a Native Church and was to educate and encourage the entry of "Native Agency" (i.e. Indian personnel) into the field, but his aims were to be securely fixed on "the regions beyond."[2]

During the years 1868 to 1872, Wilson was in the employment of the C.M.S., the largest of English missionary societies. By the late 1860's, the society had been engaged in its work for 70 years, and especially under the long leadership of the Rev. Henry Venn (who was also a member of one of the great Evangelical families) it developed a thorough social plan and policy in its field work. A missionary under its auspices could not do, or was not supposed to do, merely what he thought best in the field, but was to adhere to certain principles which the society made sure the evangelist knew through the C.M.S. college, its magazines, journals, and lengthy correspondence.

Foremost among these principles was the Native Church Policy. In relation to religious matters, Venn was no paternalistic imperialist advocating that the white missionary hold the aboriginal savages under his

1. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Fenn to Wilson, 31 December, 1869.
2. Ibid.

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thumb. The aim of Venn's policy was the "euthanasia" of missions. The missionary was to be a temporary and intermediate figure. He was to build up the necessary institutions for a native Church, aided by the local people. When his task was finished, he would be free to go to some new field of endeavour. Henry Venn had a real horror of the missionary acting as pastor,

> it is important to keep in view the distinction between the office of a Missionary, who preaches to the heathen, and instructs inquirers or recent converts, and the office of a Pastor, who ministers in holy things to a congregation of Native Christians.[1]

While he recognized that a missionary might undertake pastoral care for a time, Venn emphasized that "as soon as settled congregations are formed", this work should be turned over to native pastors.

The ultimate aim of the missionary was to make himself superfluous. Henry Venn expressed it thus:

> it should be borne in mind that the progress of a mission mainly depends upon the training up and the location of Native Pastors; and that, as it has been happily expressed, 'the euthanasia of a Mission', takes place when a Missionary, surrounded by well-trained Native Congregations under Native Pastors, is able to resign all pastoral work into their hands, and gradually to relax his superintendence over the Pastors themselves, till it insensibly ceases; and so the Mission passes into a settled Christian community. Then the Missionary and all Missionary agency should be transferred to 'the regions beyond'.[2]

1. R.P. Flindall, ed. The Church of England 1815-1948, A Documentary History (London, 1972), p. 138.
2. Ibid., p. 140.

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Venn's policy was justified by several considerations, both religious and practical. There was the injunction of the Apostle Paul that the work of a missionary "was the gathering and forming of local churches....He thus in each place put...a self-governed Christian community."[1]

Perhaps somewhat more to the point was the realization that the number of available British missionaries was inadequate to evangelize the entire world.

> Transplant the whole clergy of England into China, place them as they are placed here, so many clergymen to so many people, and what would be the consequence: You would have supplied just one twentieth part of the population of China.[2]

A third consideration stems from the nature of mid-century Victorian England, nourished on a diet of "self-help" literature emphasizing one's own, independent efforts. If "self-help" was not advocated as a principle, thought Venn, the new Christians were apt to fall into the belief that others would always supply their religious needs. Venn was also anxious that Christianity not become identified as a foreign influence, liable to expulsion later as a result of any national feelings. "The C.M.S. under Venn aimed to make Christianity indigenous and not exotic, with many centres instead of one."[3]

1. Jean Usher "Apostles and Aborigines: the Social Theory of the Church Missionary Society" Histoire Sociale-Social History No. 7, April, 1971, p. 42.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

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We can see the great emphasis that Henry Venn placed on the training of native personnel for all religious ranks from catechist to ordained clergyman and Bishop. Venn was so concerned about this that he was quite willing to waive European standards if only the native pastorate was truly pious and earnest in their adherence to the faith.

> Venn was less concerned in fact with the intellectual and academic qualifications of the native ministers than with establishing the principle of a native pastorate as soon as possible....It was not even necessarily desirable that a native minister should have reached an approximation of a European standard of intellectual development.[1]

For as the Church Missionary *Intelligencer* explained in its columns, it would "not at all answer" that native pastors should be in advance of their flock. Several times in his correspondence to Wilson, Henry Venn objected that the Rev. John Jacobs, an Ojibway clergyman ordained in 1869 by the Bishop of Huron, was too "anglicised" for use as a Church Missionary Society employee to the pagan Indians of Lake Superior. While Venn supported Wilson's plan to place several young Indians (prospective catechists and eventual clergymen) into the Sarnia grammar school for their "secular" education, he made it clear that a choice should be made of,

1. *Ibid*., p. 44.

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> not only promising youths, but such as are under the influence of divine grace, truly spotless characters and that you would wait till the Lord provides such material for the work.[1]

Another important corollary to Venn's plan was the hope that the native church should become self-supporting. Of course this was absolutely necessary if the Society was to evangelize the world in one or two generations as was its hope and aim. "There were practical advantages to this policy, for to do so would certainly relieve the pressure upon the society's limited funds."[2] In instructions which he gave to missionaries embarking for Sierra Leone and Abeokuta, Venn emphasized the principle of self-support. "Never let them imagine that the Society is to do all and pay all."[3] The people were to build schools from their own voluntary labour and funds, and were to pay for their teachers and books. This principle of self-support was also important in that it was hoped the Christianized natives would support the extension of the work to their neighbours and co-nationals, leaving the Society itself scope to move to other spheres.

> It was imperative, too, that the converts be able to support their own teacher and pastor and, if possible to demonstrate the vitality of their

1. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Henry Venn to Wilson, 11 November, 1870.
2. Usher, "Apostles and Aborigines..." p. 45.
3. *Ibid*.

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> religion by supporting their own evangelists to the extant heathen."[1]

In a careful and thorough series of letters, the Committee explained exactly how and what Wilson was to do for this purpose. Wilson during this period(1870 and early 1871) was able to give increased emphasis to the organization of a Native Church since the Bishop of Huron had ordained an Ojibway catechist and teacher to Holy Orders. The question arose of how best to distribute the two men. It was decided that the best plan was for Wilson to leave residence on the St. Clair Reserve (where he had settled on January 29, 1869) and move back to Sarnia. The Indian clergyman, John Jacobs, would then become the pastor of the St. Clair and Kettle Point stations and Wilson was to retain,

> a general kind of superintendence and the occasional use of the pulpit at your own discretion: but making the native the Pastor."[2]

Again is seen the C.M.S. emphasis on building up a feeling of independence in aboriginal converts.

> A native pastor at Kettle Point and a white clergyman at Sarnia both ministering to Indians tends to lower the position of the Native.[3]

1. Ibid.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Henry Venn to Wilson, 31 December, 1869.
3. Ibid.

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Christopher Fenn of the C.M.S. committee had written to Wilson that his aim in Huron should be to build "a large and flourishing Native Church, self-supporting and self-governing...it would supply the Native Agency and the encouraging example of an existing Native Church for the evangelization of the Heathen."[1] Henry Venn himself, however, deemed it desirable to correspond with Wilson to make sure the young missionary knew what was required. The essential in this plan was to form a Native Church Council "composed of the most pious Indians and a few Missionaries, not too many Missionaries as to overshadow the native element."[2] This organization would be formed so that when extension of evangelization did take place, there would come from Huron a supply of "Native catechists of a firmer character and of more enlargement of mind than can be found in a new mission."[3]

Also to be formed was a Native Church fund. There already was a fund of that name established by the Church Society of Huron, to provide missionaries, catechists, interpreters and schoolmasters. But it was not at all what Venn advocated since this fund was established <u>for</u> the Indians but was not <u>of</u> them. In other words,

1. P.A.C., Reel A-76, C.C. Fenn to Wilson, 28 March, 1871.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Henry Venn to Wilson, 11 November, 1870.
3. <u>Ibid</u>.

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it did not fit into his ideas of completely separate, self-supporting native institutions. The purpose of the Native Church Fund,

> in the sense of the C.M.S. was to be "the contributions of the Native Christians, towards the support of their native pastors...collected weekly according to the ability of the Indians. The Indians should also have a voice in the management of this fund, together with the missionaries. C.M.S. will give grants-in-aid but the natives must understand the duty of supporting their minister.[1]

The mission was not to remain at Huron for long as a controversy arose between Bishop Cronyn and Henry Venn as to the desirability of the Native Church plan. To understand why Venn's plans were so poorly received in the diocese of Huron, it must be realized that he envisioned separate and independent native churches manned with their own native clergy and episcopate. His idea was best suited for a region where numbers ensured that Europeans would never be in the majority. But the case of India or the African countries was far different from that of Canada.

Certainly by the time of Wilson's arrival to Sarnia, the question was no longer in doubt for the Indians of this region. Demographically, the Ojibway

1. *Ibid*.

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of southwestern Ontario had fallen into numerical insignificance whereas until 1815 they had formed an important element of the population.

More and more, the attitude was becoming throughout Ontario to treat the Indians as much like incoming immigrant groups as possible. The following passage from the Toronto Globe voices this opinion very well:

> Englishman and Frenchman, Scot, Irishman, German, and Swede, are content to yield up their boasted nationalities, and mingle in the common Canadian stock. They are not exterminated by becoming Canadians; and neither need the civilized Indian be exterminated, though he share in the same lot, and merge in the common stock our Canadian people. The Indian tribes of yandotte, or Ottawa, Mississaguas, Mohawks, or Cayuga, will indeed disappear; but not by extermination or extinction. They will simply be merged into the common stock of the Canadian people, like the clan McNab, the Seaforth Mackenzies, or any other body of emigrants who have cast their lot among us, and won thereby a share in the common prosperity of our Province and Dominion.[1]

In such a climate there was no room for the Native Church idea as Venn envisioned it. Despite the Evangelical connexion between the Diocese of Huron and the C.M.S., Venn's uncompromising desire to push through his plans drove a wedge between the two groups. Bishop Cronyn explained his views in a letter to "my dear friend

1. "Our Indian Reserves" The Globe, Vol. XXIX, No. 56, Whole No. 6850, 5 March, 1872.

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and brother":

> The plan of erecting a native church under a native pastorate would undo what we have always been labouring to effect, the union of the Indians with their fellow subjects without distinction of race. Under our system the Indians have been recognized as members of our Church, they attend our meetings, they send delegates to our Synods, they contribute to our funds and they are taught to regard themselves as of the same household of faith....Those who manage the secular affairs of the Indians are beginning to see that the Indians have been too long treated as children and that it is time to deal with them as with their fellow subjects, to grant them the same privileges and to lay on them the same burthens as their white brethren bear....Were the staple population of the country Indian, and the whites a few scattered ones among them, then a native Church and and pastorate would be necessary for them..But in my diocese the staple population is white and the Indians are few and scattered and we feel it is for their benefit to make them as much and as soon as we can feel that they are one with us as fellow citizens and as fellow Christians.[1]

Although Cronyn and the people of his diocese felt that it was time that the Indians should be treated as adults rather than children, they were not so ready to give up control over financial matters. And surely fiscal independence is one of the major signs of adulthood--independence from the parents. "All who know the character and state of the Indians in this country will agree that they would not be good managers of the fund."[2]

1. C.M.S. Archives, Bishop Benjamin Cronyn to Henry Venn, 15 December, 1870.
2. *Ibid*.

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Early in 1870, Wilson had already warned the C.M.S. that,

> The Bishop considers that it would be in vain to expect even at a distant period the establishment of a self-supporting native church and in that opinion all the missionaries agree.[1]

But Henry Venn was a man with firm convictions and he was certain that his scheme of native churches was the best means to promote Christianity among the heathen. Perhaps it was--but there were very few heathen left in the Diocese of Huron. Warned but undaunted, the C.M.S. advised Wilson to go ahead with implementing the Native Church Policy.

Henry Venn responded to Bishop Cronyn's letter with an epistle in which he gave no ground.

> Our Committee, unhappily, differ in judgment from the Church Society of the Diocese of Huron on the two points to which you allude, viz. first, the fusion of the two races in one church and secondly the separate Native Church Fund. The question has often been discussed in the areas of Rupert's Land, New Zealand...and other missions. The system of amalgamation naturally presents itself in the first instances, but the promise and results of the two systems, seems, in the judgment of our Committee to be negative to the attempt of amalgamation.[2]

There requires little skill at reading between lines to realize that the C.M.S. and Henry Venn, in particular,

1. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to the C.M.S. Committee, 7 February, 1870.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Henry Venn to the Bishop of Huron, 26 August, 1871.

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had been considerably piqued.

> But as you say that your diocese see the matter in another light and have long acted upon it, we are bound to give you credit for the knowledge of local circumstances to support your judgment in your case.[1]

And perhaps Venn had good reason for a feeling of resentment, since the Society had been led into a mission without pagans, and then had been told that they could not apply their own system. It must have seemed something like ingratitude on the part of Bishop Cronyn, who so recently had been acting the part of a "mitred mendicant".

Left uninfluenced by their own missionary, the C.M.S. would certainly have shifted Wilson to their mission in Rupert's Land. They wondered if "the few thousand native Indians" around Lakes Huron and Superior might not be better left to "the missionary zeal of the Churches of Christ in Canada proper...."[2] As early as December, 1869 the Committee had mulled over the proposal to attempt evangelization of the Lake Superior Indians from the C.M.S. base at Red River if the establishment of a Native Church failed in Ontario. Fenn had written that if the plan failed "the question would then arise whether you ought not to remove from Huron to some other District nearer the Red River, so as to have a basis of operations

1. Ibid.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-76, C.C. Fenn to Wilson, 28 March, 1871.

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in Rupert's Land."[1] Fenn added that the Committee would not go further into the matter "as they trust the occasion for raising it may not occur."[2]

Now that the break from Huron had occurred, however, Wilson became settled at Garden River, the reserve for a band of 320 Ojibways, ten miles from Sault Ste. Marie. Influenced by a series of occurrences, Wilson had decided that this was the station that he most approved of. When the decision came in 1872 for the C.M.S. to abandon their support of Garden River, Wilson had become so attached to the area that he refused the Society's directives.

In the late summer and early fall of 1869 Wilson visited Garden River for the first time during a period for recuperation from a severe attack of fever. There was already a mission maintained here by the New England Company. The resident clergyman was the Rev. James Chance who had been there since 1854.

This first visit firmly put the Sault Ste. Marie area into Wilson's thought and he undoubtedly began to see possibilities for it as the centre of his own work if opportunities beckoned. He writes,

1. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Fenn to Wilson, 31 December, 1869.
2. Ibid.

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> It was on this visit to Garden River that I first felt drawn in spirit towards the Indians of the Lake Superior region, that there first entered into my mind the idea of an institution for training the young Indians, and that I first made the acquaintance of the old Indian chief, Augustin Shingwauk.[1]

He also makes a statement that is very revealing about character, a facet already mentioned earlier. Wilson, although he never repudiated his civilization and made his ministry one of teaching that civilization to the Indians, felt confined in those very areas from which it emerged. He was attracted to surroundings in which there was still a chance for adventure:

> The Indians of Garden River were not nearly so far advanced in civilization as those of Sarnia.[2]

Wilson was attracted by this wildness, and even if his task was to tame that wildness, he wished to savour it before the march of civilization had swept it away. Wilson concluded that "there was something very attractive and fascinating about this first visit to the wilds of Algoma."[3]

In the late spring of 1870 Wilson set out for a missionary tour of the Lakehead. This gave him the opportunity of seeing Garden River and the Rev. James

1. Wilson *Mission Work*, p. 48.
2. *Ibid*., p. 51.
3. *Ibid*., p. 50.

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Chance again, since Wilson was travelling with the Canadian forces proceeding to the Metis troubles at Red River. At Sault Ste. Marie,

> The Americans would not allow us to use the American canal, so everything had to be loaded on the Canadian side and portaged up the head of the rapids.[1]

As this caused a long delay Wilson "was glad...to renew my acquaintance with the Indians whom we had met last fall." [2]

The events of this voyage demonstrate that Wilson was not as serious about his supposed vocation of missionary, and that he was becoming more interested in pastoral and educational duties. The aim of Wilson's mission, after it had become clear to the C.M.S. that there was a paucity of pagans in Huron Diocese, was to plan for the conversion of the Lake Superior heathen. The C.M.S. and even Wilson assumed that there remained a large number of Indians ignorant of the Gospel in this region. But at Fort William he was "disappointed to discover that they were all Roman Catholics."[3] Although there were some pagans in the area, the number was very small. Wilson had to admit,

> ...I was a little disappointed that there was not a large number of pagan Indians among whom I might look forward to establish Missions in the future.[4]

1. Wilson <u>Autobiographical Journal</u>, p. 33.
2. Wilson <u>Missionary Work</u>, p. 62.
3. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 63.
4. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 68.

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Nor were there any converts to be gained at Garden River, since this area had long been tended by Roman Catholic and Anglican missionaries. The Rev. James Chance had had "the unspeakable satisfaction" of admitting an old man who was the last pagan at Garden River into the Christian church.[1] Despite these findings Wilson did not alert his Society about the meagre number of souls requiring salvation.

That desire to leave Huron which Wilson had first felt in 1869, he now felt more strongly:

> Altogether, the result of my trips to Garden River and to Lake Superior was that I felt inwardly drawn to come and labour among the people of these more Northern regions in preference to remaining among the semi-civilized Indians of Sarnia. How the way would open I could not at that time foresee, or how soon it might be my lot to move into these wilder regions, I could not tell. It was merely an unshaped thought, the beginning of a desire created in my breast.[2]

Once again can be seen Wilson's liking for adventure, and his distaste for life in settled and civilized areas. His character was that of a pioneer, the man who paves the way for but precedes extensive settlement. Wilson realized this facet of his character, and on his resignation in 1892, wrote:

1. Mrs. J. Chance Our Work Among the Indians (London, Ontario, n.d. -c. 1897), p. 34.
2. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 68.

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> The pioneering work as regards these homes is all over. Any man of ordinary ability, who will be kind and patient with the Indian children, and make it his work in life to help them upward, ought to be successful as a principal.[1]

The way for Garden River opened quicker and more easily than Wilson expected. In 1871, the New England Company transferred James Chance who had been resident missionary in Garden River since 1854, to the Iroquois reserve near Brantford. Wilson went to fill in at this station in the summer of that year. He had undertaken this task for the Indian Committee of the Diocese of Toronto,

> as Mr. Chance is already on the point of leaving, and if left alone there would be danger of the Jesuits gaining ground and over-throwing the work of the Church.[2]

This opening had arisen just when Wilson was looking for a centre for his Lake Superior mission, and shortly after the culmination of the conflict between the C.M.S. and the Bishop of Huron. This concurrence of incidents convinced Wilson that the Almighty had taken a hand in indicating that the C.M.S. did indeed have a field in the Lake Superior country.

> I feel that this Garden River Mission becoming vacant just at the time when the Committee had resolved to remove from Sarnia is a sure

1. "Rev. E.F. Wilson's Resignation" Algoma Missionary News N.S. Vol. IV, no. 10, 15 November, 1892, p. 77.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to C.C. Fenn, 13 May, 1871.

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> sign that God is opening our way for work in these regions. I quite look forward now to this Garden River Mission becoming our headquarters....[1]

Wilson removed to Garden River on a permanent basis at the end of September, 1871. Henry Venn reminded him of his duties in carrying out the Society's plans (now unencumbered by Cronyn), which were,

> to stir up an aggressive missionary spirit amongst the converted Indians, so that some of them may go out as evangelists among their countrymen, at their own charges, or supported by their converted Brethern...[2]

The Ojibway mission had become distasteful to the C.M.S. because of the paucity of pagans, the occupation of the field by the Methodists, the ensuing conflict with the Methodists, and also because ofthe clash between two leading Evangelicals, Bishop Cronyn and Henry Venn. There is a third factor that led to a frustration of the Society's plans: E.F. Wilson himself.

Henry Venn had attempted to devise a missionary scheme of world-wide application. That plan had depended on recognition of the abilities of coloured and aboriginal peoples. Venn's ideas were quite revolutionary since he assumed that values such as self-help and initiative, so characteristic of the Victorian age, could be applied

1. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to Henry Venn, 20 June, 1871.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Henry Venn to Wilson, 29 August, 1871.

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to foreign parts as well. Not all agreed. As Flindall notes,

> An enlightened attitude towards native cultures, thought, and languages was slow in developing, and the entrusting of ecclesiastical oversight to native Christians was not generally acceptable to Churches. [1]

The application of Venn's schemes depended on the reliability of the missionary in the field. Great effort was made to ensure that the missionary knew what he was expected to do. As was seen, Henry Venn and Christopher Fenn both engaged in lengthy correspondence to explain step by step the Native Church and Native Pastorate plans. But in the last analysis, success depended on the attitudes of the missionary, and the missionary was subject to influences that might pull in another direction. In the case of E.F. Wilson, there was the attraction of the ideas of Bishop Cronyn and his diocese. There were also the conclusions that the missionary himself would reach after dealing with his people.

Probably Henry Venn's ideas applied best when two conditions obtained: a. the native population was still in the majority b. the native population had not yet succumbed to the social disorganization and demoralization that often resulted when an aboriginal culture came into

1. Flindall, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

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contact with a white culture. Neither of these conditions applied in the Lake Huron and southern Lake Superior regions. Bishop Cronyn's letter to Henry Venn mention both points. In reference to the demographic aspects,

> Were the staple population of the country Indian, and the whites a few scattered ones among them, then a native Church and pastorate would be necessary for them. But in my diocese the staple population is white...

About social disorganization, let us quote Bishop Cronyn again:

> Those who manage the secular affairs of the Indians are beginning to see that the Indians have been too long treated as children...All ho know the character and state of the Indians in this country will agree that they would not be good managers of the fund.

It did not take Wilson long to comprehend what seemed to him to be the disorganization of the Indians. As he lived among them, he came to the conclusions that they were sexually and morally loose, given too much to strong drink, and ignorant of the real advantages of education for their children. He notes about the prevalence of drinking:

> Unhappily there was a considerable amount of whiskey-drinking among the men, and sometimes drunken fights would occur in close proximity to the house. A son of Antoine Rodd's was particularly vicious when under the influence of liquor; once he frightened us all by making a murderous attack on his father with his tomahawk and gun, and the old man had to escape back into the Bush for his life....We did what

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> we could to try and stem the tide of drunkenness by forming a Temperance Society, which a large number of the Indians joined; but a more effectual check has of late years been put upon the terrible practise by the action of the Dominion Government.[1]

Wilson was also shocked by Ojibway sexual practises, a subject to be discussed later. In brief, however, he was scandalized by what he considered promiscuity and moral looseness. "With no more affection than an coyotte feels for its mate, he brought her to his wigwam to minister to his wants."[2] Wilson had been forced to admit that the Indians near civilization were often worse than "wild" Indians.[3] Such observations could not but adversely affect the implementation of a Native Church Policy, since such a policy depended on the missionary treating the natives as sovereign and mature people.

Wilson was unsuccessful at implementing Venn's policies, and this failure proved to be the last straw for the C.M.S. For example, Wilson had trouble with providing Kettle Point with a catechist. Without consulting Henry Venn, Wilson tried to adopt a solution that completely went against the idea of a Native Agency. He was "in communication with an Englishman (Burkitt)

1. Wilson _Missionary Work_, p. 43.
2. "The Indian To-day" _The Canadian Indian_ I (1890), p. 28.
3. Wilson _Missionary Work_, p. 56.

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with a view of engaging him as catechist for Kettle Point, no native forthcoming."[1] The only reason that Burkitt was not engaged was that he would not come our for less than sixty pounds.[2] In consequence, although Wilson had not been able to find an Indian suitable for the post, adversity now spurred him to look harder. "He is now in treaty with an Indian named Madwayosh for the office. The salary would be $200, equal to &41.3.4."[3] At first Madwayosh, who was the middle-aged chief of the band, did well. "His examination was satisfactory and his 'si quis' was read in the church."[4] But in July 1870 Wilson found him defective for unstated reasons. "[I] was not well satisfied with him and I fear I must dispense with his services."[5] Differing attitudes in reference to native agency is also seen in the estimation of John Jacobs. Jacobs was an Ojibway who had been priested by Bishop Cronyn in 1869. Wilson was well satisfied with him and wanted to use him at Garden River. Henry Venn considered Jacobs too anglicized for use in the northern regions.

1. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to J. Mee, 5 January, 1869.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to Lay Secretary, 19 January, 1869.
3. Ibid.
4. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to the Lay Secretary, 3 February, 1869.
5. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to C.C. Fenn, 5 July, 1870.

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Wilson's greatest difficulties stemmed from the plans to educate Indian youths for future employment as native agency. At first he undertook to send Wilson Jacobs to the grammar school in Sarnia but this failed. Then he took Jacobs and another Ojibway boy named White into his family.

> He gives them 3 hours every day, and allows them $4 each per month towards board and clothing and shall charge this each quarter to the Society unless instructed to the contrary.[1]

Neither did this plan work however. "The usual result has been that at the end of the quarter school has not been regularly attended and little progress made."[2] Wilson had responded by deducting the allowance but naturally this had "caused dissatisfaction".

By this time Wilson had to acknowledge that the selection and education of native persons as catechists had become his "greatest and most perplexing difficulty, every plan that I have tried hitherto has failed...."[3] As Wilson realized, the plan of native agency would be "comparatively fruitless" unless a suitable staff of young men could be trained.

At this juncture, Wilson decided to take matters into his own hands, to board, teach and oversee the candidates in his house. Neither did this plan work out, however, and combined with a certain lack of zeal

1. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to E. Hutchinson, 11 January, 1870.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to Fenn, 12 Se tember, 1870.
3. Ibid.

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on the part of the Indians to engage in voluntary work and to accept the responsibilities of independence (as Wilson believed), he virtually came to the conclusion that "it seems to break down the scheme altogether for Native Agency."[1]

When Wilson came to Garden River, his faith in his proteges had been shaken since they had been found attending "Indian dances". For this he temporarily suspended them.

> Notwithstanding the excellent character they bear and the high profession that they have made of religion, I still fear that they have been all the time deceiving me.[2]

Now his faith in them was completely shattered since they had broken into a dry goods store at Garden River and stolen some goods. Chief Shingwauk had apprehended them in the act. There were clear signs that Wilson was becoming more and more reluctant to follow the plans of his leader, Henry Venn. As far as Wilson was concerned, field conditions contradicted the theoretical propositions that Venn had created back in safe London, far from any contact with aboriginal reality. In a very real sense Wilson was becoming mutinous to the Society of which he was a missionary.

1. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to C.C. Fenn, 9 January, 1872.
2. <u>Ibid</u>.

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> These are the only two young men among the Indians whom I have ever met that would seem at all suitable to be educated Teachers. There are none on this Garden River Reserve ...and I feel unwilling to make the attempt again.[1]

Wilson also failed to enact another important point of Venn's Native Church plan--the use of volunteer native labour, and the increasing willingness of the Indians to pay the costs of their own clergymen. Ultimately the idea was advanced by Venn that the converted natives would desire to pay the costs for the evangelization of their neighbours. Wilson did spend a good deal of effort to persuade the Ojibway that they could help pay for the costs of their own mission. When he wanted to raise a frame church at Sarnia, he had asked the following questions of a Mr. Levière, a French Métis resident:

> Now, supposing we were to do this, what would the Indians be willing to give? Would they work without pay? I want the white people to see that the Indians are really in earnest; I sould like to point to our church and say, 'The Indians built this church without pay, because it was their wish to build a house to God.' Do you think the Indians are ready to do this? Are you ready to give a helping hand yourself?[2]

One particular aspect of this volunteer, self-supporting attitude that Wilson had never been able to instill was a willingness by catechists and teachers

1. Ibid.
2. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 103.

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to work unpaid. Venn wrote in 1871:

> The system of paid agency should be always regarded as secondary...to the voluntary agency sustained by the love of which 'Little Pine' spoke well in Toronto for the extension of Christianity.[1]

Venn went on to explain how the conversion of the New Zealand Maoris had occurred. The catechists had received nothing, and they worked at a full-time normal job, only itinerating among their neighbours for a part of the year.

> When food and clothing became dear their allowances were only a blanket and occasional supplies of flour or potatoes. Under this system the whole population was in a few years prepared for instruction and baptism....[2]

But if this plan had worked for the Maoris, it seemed less efficacious with the Ojibway, who expected a large part of their ministrations to be provided for them. Wilson wrote in January, 1872,

> The people appear to have had a great deal done for them under the New. England Co. so that I have had difficulty even in inducing them to supply fuel and oil for the Church and School...the idea seems to be impressed on their minds that everything ought to come from the old country.[3]

The reasoning of the Ojibway in being so less malleable than their Maori counterparts seems composed of several

1. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Henry Venn to Wilson, 29 August, 1871.
2. Ibid.
3. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to C.C. Fenn, 9 January, 1872.

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elements. Wilson notes the differing policy of the missionary societies. The New England Company and other groups did not lay as much stress on self-help as did the C.M.S. Competition between Protestant and Roman Catholic denominations (and in some areas between Protestants) may have led to a situation in which each church tried to outbid each other. The Garden River Ojibway chiefs , in addition, had never fully gotten over their loss of land to the whites and expected a good deal in return. "We Indians are too poor to help ourselves, and so we look to you white people who now occupy our hunting grounds to help us."[1] All these considerations compounded the problem.

In this matter as in the Indian catechist subject, Wilson felt that the Native Church Policy could not be implemented. He had come to the belief that very little of Venn's scheme could be utilized, and thus it is not surprising that Wilson and Venn soon parted ways. "Under such circumstances, I feel sure the Committee would not oblige me to enforce the system."[2] The Indians even regarded a proposition to work without pay "as an attempt to imposition or trickery".[3] Having

1. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 103
2. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to Fenn, 8 April, 1872.
3. Ibid.

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just removed from the obstructions of Bishop Cronyn, the C.M.S. found less than a year later that their own missionary was no more willing to implement their policy.

From the very first, Wilson had been much more independent than the average C.M.S. missionary. Probably his family background contributed to this stance. Another factor was that he had never undergone the indoctrination in C.M.S. principles at the Society's college in Islington. Wilson had been educated in the Diocese of Huron's new theological college which his family had helped to build. Because of the wealth of his family and friends, Wilson was not dependent on the C.M.S. for funds and thus in a sense was only "half" their missionary. An example of this financial independence was the church that he built at the St. Clair reserve. The church cost $400 and the mission-house $750. Of this amount the C.M.S. contributed about half, but the rest came from "personal friends". Wilson wrote,

> It was very encouraging to me that our cause was being taken up in England; a little circular had been printed and distributed, and by the middle of October 64 pounds had been contributed towards the erection of our Mission buildings.[1]

1. Wilson *Missionary Work*, p. 24.

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The aim of the C.M.S. was conversion, although it also encouraged its missionaries to uplift the civilization of the new native Christians. The society had been surprised when they found there was no large body of pagans in the diocese of Huron. Contrary to reality and what Wilson found out on his missionary tours, there were relatively few pagans on Lake Superior. As far as the Society was concerned, the aim of the move to Superior was to move Wilson closer to the heathen. They still did not realize that there was a paucity of pagans.

> I have dwelt upon these fundamental missionary principles because you are in a very different position in Garden River from that of Sarnia. In Huron the Indians were surrounded by Christian communities: now you have wastes of heathenism spread before you.[1]

But whereas the C.M.S. still wanted Wilson to act as a missionary to pagans, Wilson was changing his emphasis to that of an educator, a person who would spend most of his time uplifting the level of civilization among the Ojibway. Wilson wrote,

> The Ojebway Indians are now just in that transition stage in which they particularly require a helping hand to lift them up to a respectable position of life, and to afford them the means of gaining their livelihood as a civilised

1. P.A.C., Reel A-76, Henry Venn to Wilson, 29 ugust, 1871.

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Christian people.[1]

As early as 1870, Wilson had begun to think in terms of an industrial school to the Indians. In 1871 he had written to Henry Venn about his plans for such a school.

> ...I earnestly trust that we may soon have a seminary for training teachers and children and instructing in farming and various branches of industry. At the N.E. Co. Institution at Brantford they have 100 children and it answers admirably.[2]

The chiefs at Garden River, Shingwauk and Bukhwujenene, supported the plan, and Wilson found that the Indians were so enthusiastic that they had set aside 300 acres for such an establishment.

The crisis in C.M.S. support of the mission came in July, 1872. The Committee had been unable to decide on June 25th, and had asked Wilson to attend and discuss the meeting as he was in England soliciting funds for the new school with Bukhwujenene. On July 2nd, the Committee passed the following resolutions:

> 1. That this Committee do not see their way to undertake a permanent Mission among the Canadian Indians: they hope that some arrangement may be made through the medium of other societies for supplying Garden River either by a Native Catechist, or Industrial Agent. But in order to wind up affairs at Garden River, and put the Mission upon a new footing, the Committee will enable Mr. Wilson to return thither for 6 or 9 months.

1. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 12.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to Henry Venn, 20 June, 1871.

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2. That it be proposed to Mr. Wilson that he be transferred to the Red River to take charge of St. Andrew's Church, vacated by Mr. Gardiner, and to be associated with Archdeacon Cowley.[1]

After three years of pondering this idea of switching Wilson to the better established mission at Red River, the C.M.S. members finally made up their mind. But E.F. Wilson had become so attached to his project of an industrial school for the Indians that he was not willing to leave. Here again we see the man's financial and psychological spirit of independence. A man of lesser means and lower class background could not have survived such an abandonment.

Wilson realized that his mission with the C.M.S. had been a failure. In his last letter to the society he wrote that the Sarnia Mission had had "a somewhat depressing effect" in the uncertainty which surrounded its existence. He regretted that "such continued changes should have caused considerable expense to the Society"[2], but as he had not expected the sudden extinction of the mission, had spent more money on plant operations than he would otherwise have done. He acknowledged that his experience had "not been without its beneficial effect" as he had studied the Ojibway language and character.

1. C.M.S. Archives, G/C 1/40, p. 162. Minutes of the Committee of Correspondence, 2 July, 1872.
2. P.A.C., Reel A-80, Wilson to the C.M.S. Committee, 24 November, 1872.

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The question remains to what degree Wilson was responsible for luring the C.M.S. into a region in which it really had no place. The evidence suggests that Cronyn and Wilson had together originally decided that the Indians of the diocese needed a pastor. It is very hard to accept that they did not realize either the activity of the Methodists or the absence of pagans, especially as Wilson had worked among the Ojibway during the summers before his ordination.

Because of a lack of funds and the connexion of the Wilson name to the C.M.S., it was only natural that the Bishop should turn to the society for aid. He had already done so in his visit of 1865 to England. A reading of the early chapters of Missionary Work Among the Ojebway reveals that Wilson's work was almost entirely of a pastoral nature. Wilson was doing what he wanted to do but not what the C.M.S. wanted him to do. Even when he did try to apply the Native Church Policy of Henry Venn, he did so only with partial conviction. As a strong-willed person convinced in his own opinions, Wilson restrained himself to the arm-chair policies of Venn with little grace. Although this period was valuable for Wilson in the knowledge of the Ojibway language and customs that it gave him, the mission had been a serious failure for the C.M.S.

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## Chapter III

## THE SCHOOLS OF E.F. WILSON: HISTORY, PURPOSE, AND ACHIEVEMENT

The question now arises why Wilson felt directed to build schools for the Ojibway Indians. To answer this question we must do three things: discuss certain Victorian ideas on civilization and Christianity, give a background on the Algoma area, and describe the state of the Indians in this region, and their chiefs.

The answer to the first query listed above is the fact that in the Victorian era, the concepts of civilization and Christianity had become so entwined that "they could not conceive of a civilised man who was not a Christian, nor could they envisage an uncivilised Christian."[1]

H.A.C. Cairns has discussed this point in reference to a London Missionary Society employee:

> The real point of Carson's analysis was not, as he imagined, that Christianity and civilization had always been co-terminious but his incapacity to recall the diversity of social and economic conditions with which Christianity had existed before the nineteenth century. The problem was his inability to distinguish the Christian from the non-Christian content of his own thought, rather than the inability of the African to understand an inherent civilized content of Christianity which, on examination, always turned out to be synonymous with nineteenth-century British values. For those missionaries unable to see the distinction, cultural imperialism was an inevitable accompaniment to proselytization.[2]

1. Usher, "Apostles and Aborigines..." op. cit., p. 37.
2. H.A.C. Cairns Prelude to Imperialism: British Reactions to Central African Society, 1840-1890 (London, 1965), p. 200.

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In addition, the "humanitarian" attitude had become one of inculcating British learning and civilization in aboriginal peoples. Less humanitarian persons simply wanted to take advantage of the opportunities which their superior powers rendered possible. However the humanitarian position, strongly supported by the Evangelicals, gained in strength throughout Victoria's reign. The theme of "the white man's burden" to lesser breeds without the law" is already seen in the Parliamentary Committee that Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton had instigated. The Committee asked if Britain's assets, "her eminence, her strength, her wealth, her prosperity, her intellectuality, her moral and her religious advantages" could have been bestowed for any other purpose than "to carry civilization and humanity, peace and good government, and, above all, the knowledge of the true God, to the uttermost ends of the earth?"[1]

And the prosperity of Britain confirmed to the missionary's satisfaction that his religion was also superior. "For the nineteenth-century missionary it was reassuring to verify the efficacy and divinity

1. Report of the Select Committee on Aborigines (2nd ed., Capetown, 1966), p.76.

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of religion by the secular measurements of prosperity and power."[1] Thus the missionary, who was almost always a humanitarian, in the mode listed above, was in the happy position of being absolutely sure that he was bringing both temporal, intellectual, and religious improvement to the aboriginal peoples.

The only possible obstacle to the missionary was the question whether the aboriginal peoples were capable of learning and making use of superior instruction. As one critic put it:

> We cannot expect African cannibals to rise at one bound from the worship of lizards to an intelligent comprehension of the Athanasian creed.[2]

The missionaries, of course, could not support this view and from a psychological standpoint were virtually forced to adopt an optimistic interpretation of the coloured peoples' possibilities. They advocated the more comfortable position that the power of the Christian gospel was such that it could draw the natives upward.

> The comparative missionary optimism as to the eventual success of his task was perhaps less a reflection of a generous assessment of African capacities than a requirement of the faith--a belief in the special efficacy of the gospel as an instrument of social and religious change among even the last advanced members of the human family.[3]

1. Ibid., p. 202.
2. Ibid., p. 211.
3. Ibid., p. 214.

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But there was also biblical support for the missionary view, and for Evangelicals, who placed such an emphasis on the Bible (as opposed to tradition), this must have been of great importance. Philip, in the Acts of the Apostles had converted and baptized an African who was "an Ethiopian eunuch, a minister of Canadace, the Queen of Ethiopa, and a steward of her treasury..."[1] One of the favourite biblical texts among the Evangelicals, Bishop Wilson among them, was St. Paul's assertion that in the faith "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all, and in all."[2]

One further factor encouraged missionaries in America. There was a widely-held theory that the Indians were the descendants of the ten lost tribes of Israel. If this was the case, the Indians, no matter what their present appearance, obviously had intellectual possibilities. E.F. Wilson inclined to this theory. In his Manual of the Ojebway Language (1874) Wilson expounded that Ojibway was probably related to Hebrew, so striking were the similarities. "And a rather singular coincidence also is, that the verb

1. Acts 8:27
2. Stock, op. cit., I, 301. A text of S. Paul.

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to be is ahyah, pronounced very much as the Hebrew."[1]

To sum up, Wilson was following several lines of Victorian thought when he suggested that schools for the Ojibway be built. Civilization and Christianization were closely linked and must be closely linked if religious roots were to take firm hold. Britain had a mission to tutor and civilize the lesser people of the world. He was also adhering to the optimistic missionary view that aboriginal and coloured peoples were not incapable by nature, and that they possessed a potential for learning which had previously been left untapped.

If certain Victorian doctrines encouraged missionaries to interest themselves in educational work, another consideration was the actual condition of the Algoma region. The essential answer is that the Ojibway in this region were going through changes which the most southerly Indians had undergone thirty or forty years previously. Their traditional lifestyle was becoming more and more untenable. As E.F. Wilson saw, the Ojibway of this region needed help in the transition between a hunting and trapping lifestyle, and a more sedentary one forced by the incoming of white settlement.

1. Wilson Manual of the Ojebway Language, p. iv.

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Perhaps we can argue with the specific remedy that Wilson offered, but his essential diagnosis was quite correct.

By the time that Wilson arrived to the Algoma region, the Indians were indeed "just in that transition stage in which they particularly require a helping hand to lift them up to a respectable position in life, and to afford them the means of gaining their livelihood as a civilized Christian people." The twenty five years previous to Wilson's arrival had seen the opening up of this area to white settlement. The Indians had been relatively untouched by white civilization until 1849. Even in 1854 when the Chances, an Anglican missionary and his wife, arrived, "There were not more than a dozen white people all told at the Canadian Sault."[1] In 1850 there had been eight white people: the Hudson's Bay factor, his wife and son, the Custom's Collector and his wife, and three others.[2]

In the late 1840's interest in the Algoma area was first aroused by mineral discoveries. Several mines were established, but the government had still signed no treaty with the Indians. As far as the Ojibway were concerned, the land still belonged to them as it

1. Mrs. Chance _op cit._
2. E.H. Capp _Bauwating: The Annals of Sault Sainte Marie_ (Sault Ste. Marie, 1904), p. 186.

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had belonged to their fathers. The mine speculators had been leased an area near Point Maimanse by the government "much to the chagrin of the Indians who still regarded the property as theirs."[1] The Toronto *Globe* was inclined to attribute the whole incident to outside half-breed agitators. At any event, "a band of Indians and half-breeds, to the number of 150...armed with small arms and one cannon, a six pounder, stolen from the Hudson Bay Co., provisions, etc.,"[2] set out to attack the Quebec Mining Company.

The *Globe* went on to describe further,

> Mr. Wilson, the collector of customs on the Canada side left the Sault in the evening with a party of six men, in a light bark canoe, in hopes of reaching the mines before the Indians, and apprising the workmen of their situation, so that they could meet the enemy with a strong force. There were believed to be nearly 200 miners in the vicinity, and should Mr. Wilson and party arrive before the mauraders, they will no doubt give them a reception little anticipated.[3]

Perhaps it was fortunate that when Major Wilson (as he actually was) arrived at the camp, he found that they had to surrender "as there were neither weapons nor ammunition in the camp...."[4] On December 2, 1849, the

1. *Ibid.*
2. *The* (Toronto) *Globe*, Vol. VI, No. 118, 1 December, 1849.
3. *Ibid.*
4. Capp, *op. cit.*

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government sent a Captain Cooper with a detachment of troops and "immediately placed the leader and four others under arrest. The prisoners were sent next day to Penitanguishene...."[1]

Thus the Ojibway were made to understand that they no longer had control over the Algoma region: it was a sign that heralded the end of their independence. All that was left was the signing of a treaty so that white incomers would no longer be subjected to such an "outrage". The Robinson treaties for Lakes Superior and Huron were signed in 1850, and in reference to the incident above, a clause was included which forbad the Indians to "hinder or prevent persons from exploring or searching for minerals or other valuable production in any part of the territory hereby ceded to Her Majesty."[2]

Probably more destructive to the Ojibway lifestyle was the coming of white farmers and settlers. In 1852 there came a certain David Pim and his wife to Sault Ste. Marie "who rightly claimed to be the first English settlers here, for those who had preceded them were either government officials or Hudson's Bay officers."[3] Gradually the lands of southern Ontario were being filled

1. Ibid.
2. Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada Bulletin 202: Native Rights in Canada (Toronto, 1970), p. 18.
3. Capp, op. cit.

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up, and the young men of the agricultural regions were looking for new land to settle. They began to turn northwards:

> Strachan's main aim for a northern bishopric was to evangelize the Indians along the upper Great Lakes. The project gained new urgency in the 1860's with the beginning of significant white settlement in Muskoka and other northern areas. The influx of settlers was accelerated by Ontario's Free Grant and Homestead of 1868, which opened up 26 townships in Muskoka and Parry Sound, 5 in the vicinity of Sault Ste. Marie, as well as St. Joseph's Island. Settlers were granted up to 200 acres, and in the 1870's they poured into the free grant areas, some from southern Ontario, others from the British Isles.[1]

Signs of growth began to appear. The Homestead Act has been mentioned above. In 1858 Algoma was organized as a judicial district with its headquarters at Sault Ste. Marie.[2] In 1873 Algoma was set aside as a separate Anglican diocese, and by the 1870's there were already several newspapers in the region, including the Pioneer. The population rose from eight in 1850, to 304 by 1866, and nearly 500 by 1873. By the time that Wilson appeared, it was becoming less and less possible for the Indians to survive either by hunting or by fur-trapping. The local Indian agent wrote in his reports: "Very few of the Indians on this reserve [Garden River] are hunters;

1. D.M. Landon "Frederick Dawson Fauquier: Pioneer Bishop of Algoma." Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society Vol. XI, No. 4, December, 1969), p. 18.
2. F.W. Colloton Algoma (Sault Ste. Marie, 1951), p. 9.

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the number of fur-bearing animals taken is therefore very small."[1]

Here, then, was just the field for E.F. Wilson. He had decided that the Indians in the diocese of Huron were "semi-civilized" to the point that they now needed missionaries with pioneer qualities no longer. But the Algoma Indians were at a juncture where Wilson could play the role that he so much desired: helping the natives bridge that gap between their natural or semi-natural state, and that of civilization.

And one more factor encouraged Wilson to settle in Algoma: his agreement with the chiefs at Garden River. The attitude of the Indians to white civilization and settlement varied according to conditions. Any military hopes the Ojibway in this region may have entertained, had been dispelled by the 1849 mining incident. It is not clear what role the Garden River chiefs Augustin Shingwauk and Bukhwujenene played. By Wilson's arrival, however, they had decided that adoption of most elements of white civilization would be the best policy. They realized what the impact of white settlement implied.

> The time is passed for my people to live by hunting and fishing as our forefathers used to do; if we are to continue to exist at all we must learn to gain our living in the same way as the white people.[2]

1. Dominion of Canada <u>Sessional Paper, No. 8, 1873-74</u> (Ottawa, 1875), p. 37.
2. Wilson <u>Mission</u> Work, p. 12.

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In his own mind, Shingwauk associated the religious teaching of the British with their material and numerical superiority. He was anxious to make his people strong and therefore advocated adoption of British culture:

> Ah, that is how it is with the English nation, every day they get more wise; every day they find out something new. The Great Spirit blesses them, and teaches them all these things because they are Christians and follow the true religion.[1]

Wilson could hardly have met up with Indian chiefs more congenial to his own way of thinking, and the three men became close associates, each encouraging western and British teaching.

In connexion with Wilson's character, it is important to note that he could only get along with those who agreed with him. He had an inability to understand the mind of someone placed in a different class or cultural setting. Wilson was able to get along with Shingwauk and Bukhwujenene very well as they agreed almost completely with his ideas: Shingwauk had even set aside 300 acres for an industrial school before Wilson's arrival.

When Wilson travelled in the West after 1885, however, he found Indians who didn't agree with the ideas; Indians who still believed in the efficacy of their traditional society. About one Salteaux chief he wrote,

1. "Little Pine's Journal" Algoma Missionary News and Shingwauk Journal Vol. I, No. 8, February 1, 1878, p. 62.

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> The chief was polite, even suave, in his manner, but he is a bigoted Pagan, and has no wish for christian (sic) teaching for his people, nor did he show any desire to have his children educated.[1]

Wilson could only get along with persons who agreed with his pronounced religious and social views and this often led him to harsh words and vendettas. When Father Huguonnard of the Qu'appelle school wrote to Wilson praising his journal Our Forest Indian and asking for some information about American treatment of the Indians, Wilson wrote back:

> ...I abhor the teaching of your Church and would to God that a thousand of your priests would follow in the footsteps of McGlynn and refuse to be any longer tyranized over by Rome.[2]

Such an attitude was typical of the man: he could only get along with those whose ideas were almost the same as his. More examples of this facet of his character will be included later.

Shingwauk deserves credit for the idea of an industrial school for his people. When James Chance was transferred to the Iroquois, Shingwauk became alarmed that Garden River would be abandoned. He took matters into his own hands by travelling to Bishop Bethune to appeal that Wilson be appointed to the post. He also

1. "The Rev. E.F. Wilson's Trip to the North-West" Algoma Missionary News Vol VIII, No. 6, November 1st, 1885, p. 104.
2. Correspondence Wilson to Father Huguonnard, 15 August, 1887.

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raised the matter of a school, and before the Diocesan Mission Board (Algoma diocese had not yet been split off) he voiced the hope "that before I died I should see a big teaching wigwam built at Garden River."[1]

The money raised for the school was collected in two trips by Wilson and the chiefs. In the first, Shingwauk and Wilson canvassed southern Ontario. This first tour was disappointing; only $300 was collected. As Shingwauk shrewdly pointed out, "three hundred dollars is not enough to make religion increase."[2] It was decided to make a journey to England. Bukhwujenene, Shingwauk's younger brother, was chosen for that venture. In both these tours, advantage was taken of the exotic aspects of an Indian chieftain--exactly those features that Christianization and civilization would seek to replace. "He is dressed in the full costume of the Chippewa Tribe, to which he belongs--viz. skins, feathers."[3]

It was on this trip that the hard blow of the C.M.S. abandonment of the mission was related. This again shows the independent and even defiant aspect of Wilson's character since he went ahead with these

1. "Little Pine's Journal" op. cit.
2. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 85.
3. Wilson Autobiographical Journal, p. 35.

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fund drives to southern Ontario and England despite the distinct possiblity that the society might not renew their one year commitment.

Matters were smoothed when Wilson was promised support from the Colonial and Continental Church Society, and from the letter of an anonymous donor who wrote, "'A friend will guarantee you 100 pounds a year if you will remain at your post at Garden River.'"[1] The trip was successful and eight hundred pounds ($4000) was collected. Wilson was able to take advantage of his many clerical relations and in-laws.

On September 22nd, 1873 the Shingwauk Home at Garden River was completed and opened--twelve days after F.D. Fauquier was elected as the first bishop of the new missionary diocese of Algoma. Only six days later the school went up in flames and all was lost, except, most happily, lives. Both Wilson and the Rev. E.H. Capp, a later historian of Sault Ste. Marie, indicate that arson may have been involved. Neither indicates the suspected party.

The question arose whether the work would be resumed. Wilson did not even have insurance to cover the damages.

1. Wilson *Missionary Work*, p. 110.

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> The whole loss was estimated at about 1,300 pounds. The carpenters had only been out a day or two, and I was intending to insure the building the following week.[1]

But signs appeared, that to the Evangelical mind of E.F. Wilson, were tokens of Divine favour. Great amounts of money from both Canada and England poured in; the government also contributed generously. Soon it became clear that the work would be able to continue on an even bigger scale. Double the amount of money expended on the first institution was collected for the second. The effect on Wilson was "to draw out fresh faith and trust in my heavenly Father."[2]

The second Shingwauk Home was placed, perhaps for reasons of security, at Sault Ste. Marie rather than Garden River. The new site was actually in the countryside about two miles from the Sault. It was a 90-acre plot of virgin land overlooking the St. Mary's River. "The bush was so dense that we could see nothing of the river from where we were working."[3]

The effective life of the new Shingwauk Home began in the fall of 1874, with the building only partially complete. A more formal opening of the complete institution was arranged on August 2nd, 1875, with an impressive

1. Ibid., p. 135.
2. Ibid., p. 141.
3. Wilson Autobiographical Journal, p. 39.

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entourage assembled.

Although the new Shingwauk Home had been intended for both male and female pupils, another home for girls had to be built, since the Ojibway children were found to be more sexually precocious than an Evangelical, Victorian, clergyman found desirable. In a pamphlet that circulated in England, it was explained that the present arrangement was "most undesirable" since it "necessitates the dwelling under one roof of young persons of both sexes, only recently removed from a life of barbarism in the Forest."[1] The Committee tried to be discreet in its solicitations and,

> would not enter into any details with regard to the very grave difficulties and dangers that are found practically to attend any attempt to bring up such boys and girls as are the inmates of the Homes, on the same premises and in the one house.[2]

A look at certain Ojibway sexual mores quickly reveals practises that would certainly shock a person like Wilson. In the Victorian period, sex in the middle classes had become restricted to certain specifically

1. This seems to have been the only reason for the decision to build schools. None other is mentioned, and the indications are that Wilson would have kept on with the one school except for sexual irregularities. Certainly by this time, he was no longer under the influence of Henry Venn or the C.M.S.
2. English Committee Pamphlet on the Wawanosh Proposal (London, 1876), p. 1.

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defined relationships. The Regency period just previous had been much looser and freer, but by Wilson's generation, the Evangelical cause of sexual and moral strictness had triumphed.

> The lax sexual morality of the (Regency) age was particularly a source of horror to the Evangelicals. One of the worst of sins, sexual promiscuity was taken as a matter of course beyond other immoralities.[1]

In contrast to this Evangelical view, Landes says that Ojibway customs are "little regulated by the formal social organization."[2] The idea "paramount in Ojibwa marriage" is mating according to "private inclinations."[3] "Sex interest is high" which results in many reckless marriages and separations. Certainly Wilson would have been most shocked by this statement: "Open living together, with or without due regard for the incest prohibitions, is called marriage."[4] Dunning notes a practise that young Ojibway boys he observed wore their caps reversed, which meant they were "chasing girls".[5]

Besides actual incidents of sexual intercourse between unmarried pupils (which certainly took place), it is likely that Wilson may have been offended by the highly elaborate sexual joking practises of cross cousins.

1. Brown, op. cit., p. 21.
2. Landes op. cit., p. 53.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid., p. 54.
5. Dunning op. cit. Between pages 82 and 83.

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Wilson could not fail to consider this as foul-mouthed and dirty. But until after 1885, when he began to take an ethnological interest in the Indians, it is unlikely thathe understood the Ojibway social system well enough to understand the complexity and specificity of this practise. Much of the joking, as Dunning records[1], concerned disparaging comments on the opposite person's genitals. Dunning understands the impression that these practises would make:

> Strangers living in Ojibwa territory often label the people stupid, dirty, etc. It seems possible that the crudity and boisterous quality of the joking relationship might contribute to this kind of value judgment. In the same way the people are sometimes labelled immoral. This may be because of the pre-marital expression which is understood as license by foreigners.[2]

Wilson actually drew the conclusions that Dunning lists above. Perhaps his interpretation of Ojibway society in this matter was deepened by his own character, which as we have seen, was not inclined to sympathetic understanding of others. Shortly before the Wawanosh Pamphlet (the girl's school was named after Chief Wawanosh of Sarnia) was printed, Wilson had written a long letter to the Prime Minister, Alexander Mackenzie. He said the Ojibway were a difficult people to deal with and were,

1. *Ibid.*, p. 127.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 126.

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> low in principle, and are naturally of idle habits and low animal tastes...living as they do, whole families in one room, tends to make them filthy in their persons and immoral in their habits...both men and women are exceedingly loose in their morals.[1]

During 1876 and 1877 Wilson launched a fund-raising drive for the Wawanosh. He was hampered by the depression in Canada at this time. A back wing with provision for ten girls was built, but it seemed that the Wawanosh would have to close. Fortunately the wealthy Miss Peache in England contributed a substantial amount just at this point. She was the sister of the Rev. Alfred Peache, and both brother and sister were generous donors to the dioceses of Algoma and Huron. As a result, the new school was finally completed and opened in 1879. It housed 30 girls, although it was not usually full. The number of boys was always greater at the Homes: on July 5, 1891 Wilson reported that in the preceding 17 years the Homes had received 511 pupils of whom only 190 were girls.[2]

* * * * * * * * *

Above has been given an account of the reasons for the building of the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Schools. It is now necessary to give an outline of the education that was being taught at these schools. To understand,

1. P.A.C., RG 10, Vol. 2040, Wilson to Hon. A. Mackenzie, 9 April, 1875.
2. Dominion of Canada, <u>Sessional Paper, no. 14, 1891</u> (Ottawa, 1892), p. 22.

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the curriculum, however, it is desirable to understand what aim Wilson had in mind for his graduates. The curriculum would be affected by the futures that the principal had in mind for his charges.

In the first three years of the Shingwauk, Wilson planned a model community to be established at Batchawana. (Batchawana is a bay about 30 miles north of Sault Ste. Marie on the shores of Lake Superior). The idea of model communities had long been current among missionaries, and was used in Africa as well as North America. In Canada, a very famous aboriginal model community was that of Metlakatla founded by William Duncan. The C.M.S. often favoured such communities, and the idea of the Batchawana settlement may have been one of the relatively few plans that Wilson retained from his experience with the society.

The attraction of a model community was twofold: the natives could be kept away from the retrograde influence of frontier whites, and they could also be shielded from the hostile environment of those natives who still clung to the traditional culture and religion. About this second point, Roland Oliver has written:

> Within the enclaves there was no social ostracism to be endured for Christ's sake. There was no sorcerer to threaten with all too material injury the intending backslider from his vested interest. The ancestral spirits, whose power was purely local, could not pursue the delinquent to wreak their vengeance. There were no sexual initiation rites

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> and no ceremonial debauches to inflame the passions beyond their normal vigour. Instead, there was a new social solidarity calculated to support the ethical doctrines of Christianity.[1]

The Indians of the region near Sault Ste. Marie were almost entirely converted, so Wilson did not need to fear the influence of a still vibrant native religious tradition. But he was very disillusioned about the stage of civilization and morals that the older folk had reached. He was very much afraid that the graduates would be dragged downwards if they were subject again to the influence of their untutored parents and relative.

Wilson referred to the parental generation of his pupils as "the old unimprovable people of the passing generation."[2] He believed that the old reservations were reservoirs of "disorganized" Indians, and that the reservations should be broken down or radically altered.

> Supposing this plan to succeed, there is no reason why in time all the present Indian Reserves which are looked upon as blots in the country should not be gradually effaced--as the old people die off--these Reserves of far more hopeful appearance to take their place.[3]

The realization that graduates of the residential school programme might revert to the level of reservation life was recognized by many missionary and government officials. The poet and Indian Affairs administrator Duncan Campbell

1. Roland A. Oliver <u>The Missionary Factor in East Africa</u> (London, 1969), p. 64.
2. Wilson to Mackenzie, <u>op. cit</u>.
3. <u>Ibid</u>.

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Scott, wrote "The danger was recognized that they might relapse to the level of reserve life as soon as they came into contact with their parents."[1] He noted that many of the graduates did indeed become "leaders in the pagan life of the reserves, instead of contributing to the improvement of their surrounding."[2]

From the above comments it can be seen that the older generation were viewed with the greatest suspicion. The great hope was in the children who could be removed from their parents, and be made subject to an education devised for them by the whites. However this fear that the graduates would revert to the level of reserve life shows that there was apprehension that the educational process might not be as successful as could be hoped.

The Batchawana scheme never was instituted for a number of reasons, among which is the fact that the government and public opinion was beginning to favour integration of the Indians into white society. The _Globe_, already quoted, hoped that the Indians would eventually be assimilated into the general population just like the Seaforth Mackenzies. After two years of waiting for financial support to be promised to the model community plan, Wilson wrote the following letter:

1. Duncan Campbell Scott "Indian Affairs, 1867-1912" _Canada and Its Provinces_ eds. Adam Shortt and Arthur Doughty, (Toronto, 1914), VII, 615.
2. _Ibid_.

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> In making this application I would beg to add that our reason for withdrawing from the Batcheewauning, scheme for the present is that upon due consideration and after some experience with our boys it seems to us that it will be of more advantage to them in after life to become incorporated with the white population than to be living on land specially set apart for them.[1]

The reasons for supporting this plan of "incorporation" or "amalgamation" with the white population are rather complex. There was the desire for Indian lands that would be freed for white settlement if the reserves were done away with. To Wilson it seemed that even the Indian graduates remained too "Indian" if they lived in a common village. The Sunday Magazine expressed another reason, that it was unreasonable to expect the Indians would be able to live apart for long in a country where they represented such a small minority.

> It has been no part of Mr. Wilson's plan to gather his Indian boys into a village apart; such a separation may work well for a time, but in a country like Canada it would be impossible to maintain it for long; rather, he has sought to fit them to mix with their fellow white subjects and so to fit them that they may be benefited and not injured by the contact.[2]

Both in Canada and the United States the movement for Indian integration into the white population grew rapidly in the 1870's and 1880's. It was quite a natural reaction for missionaries who believed that

1. Correspondence Wilson to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, 8 November, 1877.
2. "A Red Indian Boys Home" A.M.N.S.J. Vol. IV, No. 6, 1881.

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Indians were as capable of civilization as whites, if removed from the degenerate influence of their parents soon enough. What could be more "humanitarian" than to accord the Indians equality of citizenship and lifestyle with the whites.

Wilson believed that Canada was a British country and that all minority groups should adjust and assimilate into the larger community. He criticized French-Canadians for speaking an "alien language: and for their desire to "perpetuate their self-isolation."[1] Wilson dreamed of a future,

> when the present barrier between the White and the Indian population will be broken down, and one in language, one in pursuits, tastes, ambitions and hopes, they will join "on equal terms in building up this great country.'"[2]

With the above aims in mind, it is clear that Wilson would seek to educate his pupils in British-Canadian civilization as thoroughly as possible. And, on the other hand, he would try and obliterate whatever remained of Indian culture, except for some very marginal aspects. He praised the Ojibway for lacking profanity in their tongue, a claim which has been repeated by a modern anthropologist.[3] Wilson believed that there would be

1. "The French in Northern Ontario" A.M.N. Vol. X, No. 7, October, 1888, p. 50.
2. R.A.C. RG 10, Vol. 2040, Third Annual Report, 1877.
3. John M. Cooper Notes on the Ethnology of the Otchipwe (Washington, 1933).

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be no deepseated prejudice against Indians, if only they could be made to learn all the aspects of white culture as well as did the whites themselves:

> I believe that there is through Canada a kindly feeling towards the Indian race, that it is only their dirty habits, their undisciplined behaviour, and their speaking another language, that prevents their intermingling with the White people. I believe also that there is in the Indian a perfect capability of adapting himself to the customs of the White people...but he wants the advantages given him while young, and he requires to be drilled into the use of those advantages.[1]

The aim of the school was to act the part of a white surrogate parent, to present the Indian pupil with all the aspects of white culture that he would have missed on his home reserve. The future of the Indian graduate, let us remember, was not to return home, but was to find work in white towns or to work on white farms. In other words, the Indian would not be accepted unless he had lost all his Indianness.

> The Indian child must be taught many things which came to the white child without the schoolmaster's aid. From the days of its birth, the child of civilized parents is constantly in contact with civilized modes of life, of action, thought, speech, dress; and is surrounded by a thousand beneficient influences....He [the Indian child] must be led out from the conditions of his birth, in his early years, into the environments of civilized domestic life; and he must be thus led by his teacher.[2]

1. Correspondence Wilson to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, 2 August, 1877.
2. "Indian Training" The Canadian Indian September, 1890, p. 29.

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The general plan that Wilson followed at the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes was by no means innovative. This programme of Christian and western teaching, plus preparation for entry into the general Canadian community, was especially encouraged by the Conservative government which came to power in 1878. Nicholas Flood Davin was dispatched by the new Macdonald administration to look at American policies and educational institutions. His findings were submitted on March 14, 1879 in a Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half Breeds.

Since the 1830's, Canadian policy for the Indians has rarely varied from a plan of integrating the natives into the general Canadian society. But the optimism or pessimism on how quickly this might be accomplished has varied. During this second Macdonald administration, optimism was quite high. Wilson was thereby encouraged and supported in his plans. As Kathryn Kozak writes, "The goal sought by the officials was eventual assimilation."[1]

The views that the new Conservative government adhered to were almost exactly the same as Wilson's. Wilson was probably too independent to be dictated to

1. Kathryn Kozak, Education and the Blackfeet: 1870-1900 (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, Edmonton, 1971), p. 48.

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by the administration. However, it was a happy concurrence, from Wilson's point of view, and he could push forward his views unopposed. The only significant difference between the government and Wilson was the latter's opinion that the Indians ought to be subject to greater compulsion in matters that were intended for their good. The government, at this time, was afraid that the use of force or compulsion might backfire. But Wilson believed that just as the law had been used to suppress the liquor trade with the Indians, the law ought also to be used to force Indian children to attend the schools.

The Conservative administration agreed with Wilson that the natives were "a people lacking restraint and discipline, economically unstable, politically simplistic, socially immoral and culturally void..."[1] They also agreed with Wilson's great faith in schools and education: "The child was envisioned as one who would readily shed and bury his aboriginal customs and ideas and acquire the ideas and habits of the white man."[2]

Therefore the programme that Wilson advanced in his schools, both in accord with the government and

1. _Ibid._, p. 47.
2. _Ibid._, p. 54.

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with his own ideas, was to promote the Christianization and westernization of the Indians, and to attempt to drastically curtail Indian culture. Wilson, then, did not invent a school system, but followed current practises encouraged by the government.

Naturally, one of the major subjects of attack in these residential schools was the Indian language.

> Increased demands for fluency in English were intended to spell the death of the Indian language. The native tongue was forbidden in all schools "because if the ideas and sentiments of white people are to be acquired it must be done by such contact as required a thorough understanding of their language."[1]

If the Indians were to be "amalgamated" into Canadian society, a good knowledge of English would be essential while the native languages would lose their importance. The *Fourth Annual Report* said:

> We make a great point of insisting on the boys talking English as, for their advancement in civilization, this is, of all things, the most necessary. Twice a week we have English class. The more advancad boys sit with their slates and write out definitions of English words; the rest of the boys form line in two classes and are taught *vive voce*, besides being put through certain manual exercises such as shutting the door, putting a slate on the bench, pulling down the blind, etc.; the object being to teach them to understand, and obey promptly, directions given in English.[2]

1. *Ibid.*, p. 75.
2. *Fourth Annual Report*, p. 20.

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The speaking of "Indian" (until after 1885 almost invariably Ojibway) was forbidden in Wilson's school during the day except at tea time between six and seven p.m. In order to enforce this rule, Wilson followed a plan "by which the boys are induced, in a goodhumoured way, to keep a check on one another about talking Indian."[1] This plan or variants of it have been quite common in situations where a dominant language is imposed on the speakers of a minority language. Each Saturday a certain number of buttons were given out to every boy, the amount depending on the length of time spent at the Shingwauk, with new boys getting the most buttons. If a boy was caught talking "Indian", his companion was to demand a button from the culprit. At the end of the week, an accounting was made with the boys who had returned the most buttons receiving a prize of nuts.

Some scope for the speaking of Ojibway was allowed in religious exercises and at tea time. Later in Wilson's stay at Sault Ste. Marie, he became stricter about this matter. The stick as well as the carrot was brought into use. "We bring this (proficiency in English) about principally by great strictness--sometimes

1. *Ibid.*

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punishing heavily any old pupil who presumes to break the rule."[1] This combination of positive and negative pressures resulted in Wilson's being able to boast (and it was a boast): "Not a word of Indian is heard from our Indian boys after six months in the institution. All their play among themselves while at play, is in English."[2] Any boy guilty of speaking "Indian" had, at the very least, to face Wilson during the punishment period at seven p.m.:

> One perhaps has broken a window, another was late in getting up in the morning, another has broken the rules by talking Indian...each boy is admonished or punished as may seem best.[3]

The process of cultural displacement was also encouraged even down to the level of games.

> The educative process revealed the department's intention of burying all that was Indian, including traditional games, dances, and native crafts. The government approved, as principals reported that the children were being taught to forget their Indian games as well as habits and customs.[4]

The only Indian game that was countenanced at the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes was lacrosse, and this was at least one area, in which the Indian influenced the white.

1. Dominion of Canada, Sessional Paper, no. 3, 1884 (Ottawa, 1885), p. 24.
2. Ibid.
3. "A Day at the Shingwauk" Our Forest Children Vol. II, No. 10, Christmas, 1888, p. 16.
4. Kozak, op. cit., p. 75.

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Such games as cricket, baseball, soccer, and marbles were played by the boys. In the available accounts of the children at play, they are praised most when playing with or looking like white children. In 1877 Wilson had taken two Indian boys, Charlie and Ben, on a tour to raise money for the schools. He found it a "great pleasure and satisfaction to me, to see those two boys chatting freely and playing ball and cricket with their white companions..."[1] In a column intended for the Sunday Schools, the writer "Barbara Birchbark" was asked: "George W--- wants to know if the boys ever play games like white boys do, and what games they like best. Well, last summer base ball was all the rage." Barbara commented that in their new baseball suits the Indian boys "...really looked exceedingly nice, 'quite like English boys' as some one remarked."[2] Other games included a swing, climbing pole, horizontal bars, and a covered skittle alley.[3]

The boys were also taught British and European types of music, such as patriotic, religious, and popular songs. Wilson regarded the teaching of music as very important, and he always required that a

1. Third Annual Report.
2. "Letter to the Sunday Schools" Our Forest Children Vol. IV, No. 4, July, 1890, p. 209.
3. "Our Indian Homes" A.M.N.S.J. Vol. I, No. 12, June 1, 1878, p. 98.

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schoolmaster be able to sing or play the harmonium.

A brass band organized in the 1880's, was very popular. Both the band and the various sporting teams aimed at encouraging interaction between the children and the white residents of Sault Ste. Marie. The base-ball team played against white teams from the village, and the band played for events in the community. "The band boys are going to play twice a week at Sault Ste. Marie, in the rink."[1] As seen before, the children were most praised when they most closely resembled white children of their own age.

> At four o'clock Mr. Wilson, his family, Mr. Wotton the organist, and about forty Indian boys were assembled for choir practise. It was indeed an interesting sight to see those children, many of them, no doubt gathered from homes where paganism, ignorance, and filth combined to make life wretched; and now there they stand, well dressed, clean, and wholesome looking, and unitedly lifting up their voices in the House of the Lord, in songs of praise to the Great Jehovah. The boys all seem to have some musical talent. As we listened to the practise, we could almost imagine we heard the strains of some surpliced choir in England.[2]

British and Canadian civil and religious holidays were celebrated at the Shingwauk and Wawanosh. These included Christmas, Easter, Dominion Day, Guy Fawkes Day, New Year's and Victoria Day. Emphasis was placed

1. Our Forest Children, Vol. IV, No. 4, July, 1890, p. 210.
2. "Visit to the Shingwauk Chapel" A.M.N. Vol. IX, No. 2, May 1, 1886, p. 21.

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on teaching the children a proper respect for the Queen. It is evident that the custom of Santa Claus was unknown to the Ojibway children. As Barbara Birch-bark wrote, "Many of them were new boys and had not the faintest idea what was going to happen."[1] The celebrations at Christmas included festooning with evergreens, a tree, distribution of candles, candies, and gifts, stockings, special games, exchange of cards and gifts, and Christmas dinner.

Wilson was preparing his pupils for work in white society, and therefore the children were taught elements that would prove useful in this transition. Special emphasis was placed on the teaching of the white value structure, values of particular use to employers:

> The course in ethics was one means of building up unwavering character. The virtues of cleanliness, obedience, respect, order, efficiency, independence, thrift, honesty, duty, and patriotism were all highly esteemed and earnestly indocrinated.[2]

The above list cited exactly those values that Samuel Smiles had favoured so highly. Traits which might have been fostered because of their agreement with moral or Christian considerations, were actually

1. "Letter to the Sunday Schools" Our Forest Children Vol. III, No. 12, March, 1890, p. 143.
2. Kozak, op. cit., p. 73.

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taught because of their positive impact in "getting on" in the world of work. Missionaries such as Wilson, however, would probably have seen no discrepancy. John Maggrah explained that honesty was literally the best policy. "Hundreds of men and boys have got into high offices for their honesty. When a man looks out for a boy to work for him, he does not choose a strong and active boy, but an honest boy."[1]

Another value emphasized was politeness. "Politeness," said John, "often gives people a good situation." John also recounted the following story which emphasizes the material advantages of good manners:

> Once a man wanted to choose out a boy among a crowd of boys to work for him. He got them to come into his office one by one. Some came in without shutting the door, and did not seem to care how they spoke. The last boy came; before opening the door he cleaned his feet, knocked the door, shut it quietly, and took off his hat. The man at once noticed how the boy acted, and for this reason he choosed (sic) him. The boy was polite.[2]

Wilson made sure his pupils learned such values as punctuality and cleanliness, so important to an

1. Dominion of Canada Sessional Paper, No. 16, 1888 (Ottawa, 1889), p. 23.
2. Ibid.

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employer. One boy wrote, "And anything we want to do we ought to do it at once and not to be late, and we ought not to be late in the roll call, and we must not get late in school."[1] Another pupil who wrote a model letter wrote, "I think Brant got about 30 bad marks on punctuality....But I think the biger boys (sic) are trying to be punctual and to keep themselves tidy, by the looks of them, as far as I know."[2] Still another passage by one of the children emphasized: "Now, when children are sent to school, they are taught to keep themselves tidy, and be like gentlemen and ladies after they leave school."[3]

The children at Wilsons' schools had come from an environment in which their activity was largely unstructured. But the white society in which they were being encouraged to enter was quite otherwise. White people live by the clock and a steady regular routine. The daily pattern at the Shingwauk was also a routine, one that encouraged the pupils' to realise that time was not their own --that they had to react to clocks and bells, and to accomplish

1. "On Tidiness and Punctuality" Our Forest Children Vol. III, No. 4, July, 1889, p.30
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.

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specific tasks within specific times. The boys were wakened at six a.m. by a large bell set off by the captain; as soon as all were washed and dressed, the monitor in each dormitory called for silence for prayer, then "the stair gates are unlocked".[1] The roll call was taken by the teacher in the class room; breakfast was eaten at seven a.m., the boys proceeding at the sound of another bell, "in an orderly manner" to their places.

After the meal the boys were "dismissed in the same orderly manner". Half of the school went to work and the other half to class, with some doing chores. At eight a.m. prayers were said except by those who had parted for work. After prayers was bed-making: "The boys file up in order to their dormitories, take their places at the head of his bed, and at word from the monitor, rapidly and neatly make their beds."

After this a half-hour play period for the morning scholars followed. At nine a.m. another bell rang out for the beginning of class, which ended at noon. At a few minutes past twelve, dinner was eaten. Then there was play for the morning workers until two, and the morning scholars till one.

1. "A Day at the Shingwauk" Our Forest Children Vol. II, No. 10, Christmas, 1888, pp. 15-16.

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The two halves of the school traded places for the afternoon. Preparation under a monitor went on for half an hour until the arrival of the master at 2.30 p.m. Tea was at six, and evening prayers at seven. After prayers came singing or school preparation, with justice being dispatched by E.F.Wilson. "None are allowed to report each other's misconduct, only their own." The boys went to bed gradually from 7:15 p.m. for the youngest, to 9:15 p.m. for the most senior. Although the daily schedule held some differentiation of tasks, and contained several play periods, still there was a large amount of marching, bells and prayers.

Much of this emphasis on routine was to correct what was considered the Indian incapacity for regularity of conduct. If they were to amalgamate with the whites, the Ojibways would have to be able to work the long, tedious hours typical of the nineteenth-century working class --60 hours a week. Wilson admitted that even he was doubtful about this at first. But having seen the results himself, he was able to give a positive yes: "Our apprentice boys work ten hours a day, six days a week, and very rarely ask for a holiday. Having once become accustomed to regular work, they like it, and will stick to it as well as any white man."[1]

1. Fourth Annual Report, p.23.

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Perhaps a final aspect that should be mentioned was the emphasis placed on competition. A four-tiered classification of the pupils was employed: victor, aspirant, below mark, and lag. "The result of the six examinations alluded to is that out of 85 boys -- 10 were always victors, 28 victor or aspirant, 29 generally below mark or lags."[1]

The prize night was an important event at the school with eminent whites and Indians attending. The children were encouraged to work towards individual distinction. "The pupils are thus obliged to keep constantly and steadily at work through the whole year in order to gain prizes."[2]

Wilson, as was a rather common attitude of the time, saw the Anglo-Saxon as particularly blessed with a desire for accumulation and competition. At one time, he thought of filling up the school with white orphans. Besides offering a charity to the boys, and aiding the Indian children in their English, the idea was advanced "with the view of imbuing the Indian boys with a little more of that spirit and perseverance which generally characterizes the Anglo-Saxon race and enable them to

1. "Our Indian Homes" A.M.N.S.J., Vol. VI, No. 5, May 1st, 1883, p.27.
2. Dominion of Canada Sessional Paper, No. 15, 1887 (Ottawa, 1888), p.26.

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make their way in the world."[1]

The results of this spirit of competition and desire to make one's way is seen in the text of a letter from David Waubegegis about his efforts to beat his white rivals at Trinity College School:

> I am trying hard to get a prize. I hope the boys at Shingwauk are studying hard too. The boys here are studying till 10 o'clock at night. I think I will be head in Latin, for I am always ahead in our form, and the boys are so stupid they can't tell between nouns and adjectives. I am the only one that declined them right this morning.[2]

While the boys were being taught trades, farming, and in a few cases white collar occupations, the girls were trained in domestic duties, either for future employment as domestics or as wives to the Shingwauk graduates. The girls rose at 6.30 a.m. "as they do all the work of the Home, to prepare them for making good servants." [3] The essential qualities to be a good servant, as the following citation clearly shows, were docility, quietness, and obedience.

> Several Wawanosh girls are now out in service. The mistress of one writes: 'We find N. very satisfactory. She is kind and obliging, and if not hurried, does very well. She is also very honest. She seldom goes out except with

1. Correspondence Wilson to H.Reed, June 30, 1886.
2. Dominion of Canada Sessional Paper No. 8, 1886 (Ottawa, 1887), p.18
3. "The Wawanosh Home" A.M.N.S.J. Vol. V, No. 1, January 1, 1882, p.2.

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> one of the children or to Church with ourselves.' [1]

The other future for the girls was to be married to the educated male pupils, and the proper mating was considered very important. "The officials hoped to see the educated marrying each other. A marriage comprised of a 'civilized' husband and an 'uncivilized' wife was seen as a disaster."[2] This aim is voiced in Mrs. Fauquier's comment:

> Our hopes are also that, by and by, some of these Wawanosh girls and Shingwauk boys may be united in marriage, and by their good conduct, and tidily kept cottages, prove living recommendations to the benighted ones among whom their lot may be cast.[3]

As noted, however, there were almost twice as many boys as girls that passed through the schools while E.F.Wilson was principal. As well, the new location for the Wawanosh School, which was some three miles distant, proved a barrier. However, the boys and girls came together at least on Sundays, and there were a number of unions that resulted.

* * * * * *

The avowed aim of both government and missionaries was to prepare the Indians for as high a place

1. Our Forest Children Vol. III, No. 13, April, 1890, p.163
2. Kozak op. cit., p.72.
3. "Wawanosh Home" A.M.N.S.J. Vol. IV, No. 4, April 1st, 1881, p.18.

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in white society as possible. "There was to be no limit placed on the progress of Indian children: those who had special aptitudes were to be encouraged to become teachers and clerks in connection with the Department, as well as fitted to launch out on commercial and professional careers."[1]

Wilson agreed with these aims and saw his function as one of raising up the Indians. "Our object in undertaking this voluntary work, is to raise the Indians from their present low degraded position, and to place them on an equal footing with their white neighbours."[2] A number of the Shingwauk male graduates were indeed successful enough to obtain this status: one or two as clergymen, and a handful who became teachers or clerks and civil servants.

But Wilson and the department were realistic and they realised that for the most part, the graduates would enter at a more humble station. Wilson emphasized that the true benefit of his schools would not affect the current pupils but rather a future generation. For the most part, the pupils who finished their course were to become tradesmen and journeymen, farmers and

1. Kozak _op. cit._, p.55
2. _Correspondence_ Wilson to the Superintendent of _Indian Affairs_, August 2, 1877.

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agricultural labourers.

A recognition of what was in store for the Indians, at least in the next few generations, is seen by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Hayter Reed's objection in 1888, to the Mohawk Institute's practise of class-room instruction for two-thirds of the day. "He thought that should not be done --'unless it be intended to train children to earn their bread by brainwork rather than by manual labour, at least half of their day should be devoted to acquiring skill in the latter.'"[1]

The Mohawk and Iroquois Indians were the most 'civilized' natives of Ontario and perhaps of all Canada, and had had schools for many decades by 1888. This illustrates how long the government expected that the Indians would fit mostly into the lower occupations of white society.

Earlier, Wilson had used a system whereby the first two years of the curriculum was devoted entirely to class-room studies, the third year to half scholastic and half industrial training, with the last two years spent entirely at trades and apprenticeship. This

1. Jacqueline Kennedy <u>Qu'appelle Industrial School: White 'Rites' for the Indians of the Old North-West</u> unpublished M.A. thesis, Institute of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, Ottawa, 1970, p.91.

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conflicted with the government's policy, and he changed to the programme which has been described above: the half-day concept, half the teaching day devoted to academic instruction, and the other half to trades or farming.

But as events actually turned out, the above discussion is rather theoretical. It is a matter of fact that the Shingwauk and Wawanosh schools failed in their objectives. There are a number of reasons for this failure, but a most important one is that the children could neither be attracted nor enforced to stay their full term of five years.

Table I Average Stay of Pupils

| | No. of pupils | Average stay |
|---|---|---|
| 1874-1879 | 149 | 2.2 years |
| 1880-1885 | 146 | 2.35 years |

Source: _Our Indian Homes Register_ (1894)

As we have seen, Wilson planned that his pupils go through a process of entire cultural replacement. Having completed their course of five years, they would then be oriented towards entering into the general Canadian population. But as Table I above reveals, the average stay per child was less than 2½years. This clearly was not long enough, and for most of the Ojibway children, their stay at the Shingwauk or Wawanosh Homes, was a short incident in their adolescent years. Computed

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from the <u>Register</u> it also emerges that average age of entry was 11.88 years. Most of the children, then, were only under Wilson's care from age 12-15.

Why the pupils were unsuccessful, from Wilson's point of view, obviously stems from their background. After 1885, Wilson began to accept Indian children from all areas of Canada. Until 1885, however, the children were mainly Ojibway or members of the Ojibway allied tribes, and mainly from the dioceses of Algoma or Huron. Wilson's stay at Huron had least been useful in this respect.

Table II Tribal Origin of Children 1880-1885

| Tribe | Number |
|---|---|
| Ojibway | 124 |
| Ottawa | 11 |
| Pottawatomi | 8 |
| Delaware | 2 |
| Abenaki | 1 |
| Total | 146 |

Source: <u>Our Indian Homes Register</u> (1894)

Wilson always accepted children from denominations other than his own, and it may have been this sort of intervention that so infuriated the Methodists. The Ojibway children at the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes were actually in a minority between 1880-1885. Wilson explained several times that he did not make a conscious effort to convert any children that weren't Anglican. But all pupils were expected to

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follow the common course of religious studies, and to attend church services and prayer meetings.

Table III Religious Affiliation of the Children 1880-1885

| Religion | Number |
|---|---|
| Church of England | 60 |
| Methodist | 43 |
| Roman Catholic | 41 |
| Moravians | 2 |
| Total | 146 |

Source: Our Indian Homes Register (1894)

Table IV Reserve Origin of the Children 1880-1885

| Reserve | Number |
|---|---|
| Sarnia | 34 |
| Walpole Island | 30 |
| Garden River | 12 |
| Christian Island | 10 |
| Serpent River | 10 |
| Cape Croker | 8 |
| Sheshegwahning | 6 |
| Surgar Island, Mich | 5 |
| Nipigon, Sailor's Encampment, Spanish River, Parry Island | 4 |
| Wikwemikong, Man | 3 |
| Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., Moravian Town, Sucker Creek, Man., Jack Fish Bay, U.S | 2 |
| Kettle Point, Little Current, Shequiandah, Algoma Mills | 1 |
| Total | 146 |

Source: Our Indian Homes Register (1894)

Thus the profile of the Indian pupil at Wilson's schools is as follows: Ojibway, from the dioceses of Algoma or Huron, were more likely to be Methodist or Roman Catholic although with the Anglican children in a plurality.

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Part of the responsibility for the relative failure of the schools by Wilson's own standards, lies with the parents. Wilson had been able to get along famously with several Indian chiefs and leaders because of a similarity of views. However, by no means all of the Indians agreed with their chiefs that total cultural replacement was desirable. Many of the parents were dismayed that, from their perspective, most of the teaching was irrelevant. Wilson's experience with a day school, at Garden River before the establishment of the Shingwauk, showed the difficulties involved with the parents.

But although the building of a residential school distant from the Indians, solved part of the problem, it created others. The parents became reluctant to let their children register, and when they did allow them to register, they were liable to second thoughts. It enraged Wilson when the children were removed by their relatives before the agreed-upon term was completed. He consistently advocated stern action by the government, so that once in the school, the children could not be removed.

When these suggestions failed, Wilson devised plans of his own. One such idea was to implement a

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school year so that the long summer holiday was removed. This would prevent the adults from getting used to their children at home for a period of some two months, and thus become reluctant to let them depart again. Wilson wrote:

> It is so hard to induce the Indians to send their children regularly to school. There may be thirty names on the register, but the average attendance is probably not more than nine or ten, possibly at times twelve to fifteen. It seems to be the same everywhere. The old people do not sufficiently realise the advantages of education themselves, and so seem to care little whether their children are in their place at class or roving about the bush with a bow and arrow.[1]

If Wilson had considered that to the parents, the education their children were receiving was irrelevant, their lack of enthusiasm might have been more understandable. If the Shingwauk had been teaching improved methods of hunting, or other aspects of Ojibway culture, the older generation who did not agree with their chiefs would have been more enthusiastic. But Wilson was teaching the total cultural replacement of one culture by another. Wilson lamented: "It is also an unfortunate circumstance for us if we can only take into our Institutions just such children and of such an age as the parents may offer us, and are obliged to pass over young intelligent

1. Wilson Missionary Work, p.90.

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looking children whom we feel sure would benefit far more by receiving a course of instruction."[1] He believed that it was necessary that some measures be taken "to oblige Indian parents to send their children to school at a proper age and when at school to keep them there for a proper period."[2]

Besides cultural traditionalism and conservatism, there was one other main problem that Wilson faced, relative to the Indian parents. In English civilization it was considered highly desirable to send one's children far away for education to a boarding school. It was the highest aim of the English middle class to send their children to the actually private "public schools". However, with the Ojibway, it was quite otherwise. In any event, the Ojibway educational system was based on the imitation of the adults by the children. Thus it was rooted in Ojibway culture that the children b close to their parents. "While pre-adolescent girls follow their mother's activities, boys of this age take an increasing interest in those of their fathers....By the age of fifteen a boy is out on the trapping line, helping his father, and running with the toboggan as a fledgling trapper."[3]

1. P.A.C., RG 10, Vol. 2023, Wilson to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, August 2, 1877.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Dunning *op. cit.*, pp. 99-100.

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Again and again Wilson found that the Ojibway did not like sending their children hundreds of miles distant. Wrote the Indian Agent at Parry Sound, "...I explained the matter to the differing bands in Council showing them the advantages it held out for their children--but the answer was that although they wished for education for their children, they want not to send them so far from their parents."[1] When Wilson visited the Indians on the Prairies in 1885, he came up against the same problems, naturally intensified because of the much greater distances. O Keness, a Cree chief, "seemed to approve of the Indian children being educated, but did not think they would send their children so far."[2]

In reference to Wilson's character, the point has been stressed that Wilson found it difficult to sympathize with the feelings of persons other than his own kind. This is demonstrated in the matter of his attitude to the parents over the question of the education of the children. Wilson simply thought the parents were being backward, stupid, and obstructionist. He showed no comprehension that a people might be so culturally conservative or nationalistic as not to want their own

1. P.A.C., RG 10, Vol. 2023, Indian Agent at Parry Sound to E.A. Meredith, Deputy of the Minister of the Interior.
2. "The Rev. E.F. Wilson's Trip to the North-West" A.M.N., Vol. IX, No. 2, May 1st, 1886, p. 23.

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culture destroyed:

> I cannot see that any good would arise by bringing the matter before the Indian councils; a large majority of the men attending those councils are quite incapable of giving a sensible opinion on the subject, many of the old men think that we are spoiling the children by educating them.[1]

It is this lack of understanding of others, voiced in such acid tones, that makes it difficult for the modern person to sympathize with Wilson. It was this same man who stood before the Indian Councils asking for the financial support of his magazine for Indians, the Pipe of Peace. He seemed to think the Council intelligent enough then![2]

The schools also largely failed in their task because the conditions that the children underwent at the Shingwauk were so foreign to them, that they either rebelled or became apathetic. One of the drawbacks of Wilson's scheme was that he did not get the children to come almost until adolescence. For such an ambitious programme of cultural replacement as he envisaged, this was too late. Psychology has revealed how crucial to later character formation are the early years of childhood.

1. P.A.C., RG 10. Vol. 2023, Wilson to the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, August 2, 1877.
2. The Indian Council at Sarnia, June 27, 1878. 90 delegates attended.

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The vast difference in culture from which the Indian child came, is seen in the following verses by a Miss Wheeler. They are less than immortal poetry, but make the point:

> I was so wild and happy on the banks of my native stream;
> Of such things as care and sorrow I never once did dream,
> In hunting, fishing, paddling, my days I did employ;
> Oh! why were you so cruel to a poor Indian boy?
>
> I do not want to read and write, and work the livelong day,
> I'd rather lie in my canoe and with my brothers play.
> You might have left me peacefully these pleasures to enjoy,
> But no! you care not for the sighs of a poor Indian boy.
>
> Oh! take me back! oh take me back, or I know my heart will break,
> Back to my dear old wigwam on the shore of my native lake:
> And ne'er again shall the white man, with his clever wiles decoy,
> From among his own loved people a wild free Indian boy.[1]

A modern Indian has described the residential school experience as follows. Perhaps the account is exaggerated and excessive, nevertheless, this must have been the feelings of many of the Ojibway children at the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Schools. It is hard enough to get white children to appreciate the structured,

1. Fourth Annual Report, p. 25.

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harsh school environment.

> Residential school was no bed of sweet balsam for the young Indian student. Often as early as the age of five, he was yanked forcibly from his parents' arms and taken scores of miles away to the residential school, where a system of harsh discipline combined with an utterly foreign environment quite literally left him in a state of shock. No effort was made to ease his introduction. He was jerked out of his bed at six o'clock in the morning, made to kneel at the side of his bed to thank God, presumably for letting him sleep until six, marched army fashion to communal washrooms, then to a chapel for morning prayers, back to a school dining hall where he had to listen to interminable Latin or English graces before he could touch the rapidly cooling gruel on the slab table before him. Then it was back to his room for half an hour. He hadn't been allowed to speak once up to now, and all too soon he had to march to a cold, cheerless classroom where the day started with still more prayers. So it went, daylong and day after day--march to lunch, march to play periods of half an hour each afternoon, march to bed by eight o'clock.[1]

The above description is almost entirely applicable to the programme of the Shingwauk day. Cardinal writes, "If the priest-teachers knew of the anthropological evidence which even then suggested that Indians have a different time sense than whites...they paid no heed."[2] The different time sense was one element of Ojibway culture that Wilson understood, even before his greater

1. Harold Cardinal, The Unjust Society. The Tragedy of Canada's Indians (Edmonton, 1969), p. 85.
2. Ibid., p. 86.

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ethnological interests after 1885.

> Indians are nearly always very much behind time in their arrangements; they do not appear yet to understand the value of time--whether in their councils, their daily work, their feasts, or their attendance at church, they are generally behind the appointed hour.[1]

But the attitude of Wilson, as with most of the missionaries, was not to take this gap as a reason for modifying the school system to benefit the children, but as a further factor demonstrating that Indian aspects of culture must be changed immediately and totally. Thus punctuality was taught as an important virtue, and tardy children had to face Wilson at the punishment hour of seven p.m.

Even the emphasis on "wrong-doing" and punishment was alien to Ojibway children. Mores of the society were implemented by community consensus. There was little use of physical punishment in the education of the young:

> All of these persons (mother, elder siblings and relatives) exert little discipline.... Corporal punishment is never needed to establish or re-establish the father's authority. Mild teasing and laughing are sometimes used by the father, and are more than sufficient to control the son.[2]

When the Ojibway child came to the Shingwauk,

1. Wilson, Missionary Work, p. 32.
2. Dunning, op. cit., p. 92.

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he found more Draconian measures in operation. There was a definite system of punishment, with a "jail" kept in operation for the severest offenders. The children often resented their punishment, especially since they often received blame for behaviour that would have been perfectly acceptable in their own culture: tardiness, sexual joking etc. The most extreme example of resentment at punishment was an attempt by one boy to set the Shingwauk on fire.

> In a few minutes the school master's bedroom, and the large front dormitory were filled with a rolling cloud of thick smoke, and flames were seen bursting up through the floor. Meantime inquiries were made as to the origin of the fire, and it became clear that it began at the lock-up, in which a refractory boy was at the time confined. A short examination proved conclusively that the fire was this boy's work.[1]

When the Ojibway children came to the Shingwauk, they were taught and disciplined by white males. We have seen that the Ojibway father did not severely chastise his children. But the father was away much of the time, and the mother possessed even less authority over her male children. The mother in an Ojibway family is completely subordinate to the male children, except in earliest childhood.

1. "Fire at the Shingwauk Home" Our Forest Children Vol. III, No. 7, October, 1889, pp. 77-78.

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> The son accepts and takes for granted his mother's role of service to the male members of the household, and in spite of the fact that he may be the most junior member, nevertheless his interest in his father's pursuits and those of his age/sex mates leads him to enforce his privileged position and to reject his former dependent status vis-a-vis his mother.[1]

The fact that the child's whole experience up to his entry into the Shingwauk, was considered as useless and actually detrimental, also led to frustration and shock. Until his registration at age 11 or 12, the Ojibway male had been learning to hunt small animals and fish, had experienced a good deal of freedom, learnt skills appropriate to the forest or lake environment such as paddling, carving, target practise. Now all this formation which had given status in Ojibway society was no longer valid. Even the language which the child had been taught by his parents, was considered inferior.

> He was turned toward a life that was foreign to him and one that he could not be part of. But he was a stranger to his people upon his return. The child went to school an Indian. The young man emerged a nothing.[2]

If the Ojibway child stayed for the full term of five years, between 11 and 12 at entrance, and 16 or 17 on leaving, he had skipped a most important

1. Dunning, _op. cit._, p. 95.
2. Cardinal, _op. cit._, p. 87.

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period of his upbringing. It was just during these adolescent years that the young male was finally coming into his own, was advancing to the hunting of the larger animals (there was a celebration at the first kill of each animal by a young male), was beginning to seriously court, and was given an individual trapping ground.

The negative environment in which the Indian child found himself is reflected in numerous ways: by the average stay per child of less than 2½ years, by overt acts of hostility such as trying to burn the school down, by escapes and runaways (amounting to about 7% of the enrolment), and by much sickness.

Knowing as we do now, how important the psychological state of the individual is to his health, it cannot be doubted that much of the sickness reflected dissatisfaction on the part of the sick child. If the child was sick enough, he was taken home. More serious illness resulted in several deaths over the years. Often a slump in enrolment from the home area of the child would result.

Homesickness was also a great problem, as might be expected. When homesickness became too strong, escapes were attempted. Wilson usually organized "retrieval"

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operations after the child, since he felt that he was being "robbed" of material. The child's parents had agreed for him to stay a certain period, and Wilson was determined that the terms would be kept. Using it more as an excuse, Wilson would often give chase because the child had escaped in clothing from the institution. Chapter XXIX of Missionary Work among the Ojebway is devoted to the rather dismal accounts of expeditions setting out after escaped boys.

> A lamp was lighted, and we told the boys who were lying on the floor and scarcely awake yet, to get up and come along, and then our sailor boys each took charge of one prisoner, and we marched them down to the boat.[1]

Of course, all was not gloom, and Wilson was able to record successes. H was able to write in his Register about Joseph Esquimau: "Teacher. 5 years. Employed as catechist and school-teacher at Neepigon. Married Osh-kahpudkeda's daughter (the chief in that area)--had 2 children--wife died. Still at Neepigon '90. Returned to Little Current, fall 1891. Made great progress. Learned Algebra, Euclid, Latin, Greek."[2]

Or John Wigwaus: "Bootmaker, 5 years. Living on Sugar Island 1887. Married with 1 child. Steady. C. of E. Doing very well '92."[3]

1. Wilson, Missionary Work, p. 169.
2. E.F. Wilson, Our Indian Homes Register.
3. Ibid.

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However Wilson's aims were generally frustrated because he could not get the best children to come. He could not get those who did come to stay. Many of those who learned a trade did not follow it in after-life. Most of the pupils--even the five-year graduates, went home to reserve life.

Some circumstances beyond Wilson's control contributed to this failure of his plan. Prejudice against Indians was wider than he would admit. Wilson believed that if only the Indian would accept white culture, there would be no bias. Secondly, the widespread depression of Canada in the 1870's, 80's, and early 90's, discouraged the entry of the relatively few graduates into white villages. Increasing mechanization also tended to render the trades learned at residential schools redundant.

> In most cases jobs were scarce. The occupations that they were preparing for had few openings. For example, in the case of shoemaking, factory made boots were cheaper and quicker to obtain than those the students made by hand....Emphasis was placed upon more students becoming proficient in agricultural pursuits and the learning of trades was correspondingly de-emphasized.[1]

Wilson failed to realize all the obstacles which lay in the way of the completion of his plans. Wilson

1. Kozak, op. cit., p. 78.

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shared an optimism typical of missionaries and clerical educators. This optimism expressed itself in the belief that the Christian religion and British civilization were so powerful that all who experienced this culture would be willing and able to adopt it. Given the conditions as they were, this often was not the case.

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## Chapter IV

## FAMILY LIFE AND PERSONALITY

E.F. Wilson had set out for Canada just at the beginning of his years of maturity. He had been commissioned as a missionary to the Ojibway at the age of 24. By the time that he had established the second Shingwauk Home in 1874, Wilson had arrived at his thirtieth birthday. By this time he had spent some six years in the field, had learned the Ojibway language, had written a manual of that language, and had slowly--perhaps all too slowly--learnt the ways and customs of the Indians among whom he served. Thus, by the time that he had opened the Shingwauk Home, Wilson was no longer a novice, but a mature missionary.

Wilson had married Fanny Spooner, the daughter of an English clergyman. Despite all the available books and documents that he left behind, Wilson's wife is never a figure of much attention. Much of her time until the late 1880's was spent in care of the numerous children that graced the marriage. In the introduction to "My Wife and I"--a long account of a trip to the Indian country and schools of the United States that was published in Our Forest Children and The Canadian Indian--Wilson notes that, "Her time has been occupied at home, looking after the babies. No sooner was one able to crawl about the house, but there was another

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in the cradle."[1] Because of this, Mrs. Wilson had not accompanied her husband on the increasingly numerous trips that he took during the mid 1880's.

The death of Mabel Laurie had, of course, been a great tragedy. She had been "very ill with inflammation of the lungs"[2] and her condition may have been worsened by the events of the night of the fire. In Missionary Work Wilson tell us that it was pouring rain on 28 September, 1873, and the attendant shock and panic was general. Wilson devoted a page to the death of the baby girl. At least he and Mrs. Wilson escaped the dismal fate of the Chances (missionary at Garden River from 1854-1871), four of whose five children died before age 21. The blow was hard enough, and Mrs. Wilson herself had been so sick that it was feared lest she might die as well. Fortunately, she recuperated at Collingwood, where Wilson took his family for the fall and winter of 1873-1874.

1. "My Wife and I" Our Forest Children Vol. III, No. 3, N.S. No. I, p. 8. Boys 1) Archibald Edward, 4 May 1869. 2) Francis Bertram, 13 September, 1870. 3) Arthur Llewelyn, 1 May, 1876. 4) Norman Wolfe, 23 October, 1879. 5) Daniel Keith, 15 February, 1881. Girls 6) Evelyn Grace, 2 September 1871. 7) Mabel Laurie, c. 1872, d. 30 September 1873. 8) Winifred Lois, 22 October, 1873. 9) Kathleen Manorie, 13 April, 1875. 10) Florence Muriel, 29 August,1877. 11) Frances Nona, 24 October, 1878.
2. Wilson Missionary Work, p. 131.

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As a loyal missionary wife, Mrs. Wilson went with her husband to his various stations. Like him she had been honoured with Indian names. Her name in Ojibway was Nah-we-gee-zhe-goo-qua, which is to say "Lady of the Sky". However Mrs. Wilson was somewhat less taken with the Indians than was her husband, who, it will be remembered, was "infatuated with the Indians". Wilson said about the Indians, "I like them all. My wife likes a few, and bears with the rest."[1] But Mrs. Wilson had to get along with them even if she lacked her husband's enthusiasm, since after "our arrival in Canada her companions had been for the most part Indian lads and maidens..."[2]

The weight of events had conspired so as particularly to isolate Mrs. Wilson from the outside. Her last visit away from the Algoma region before the Wilsons' journey to the United States recorded in "My Wife and I", had been to England in 1880, at the time when Wilson had had to withdraw from his work for many months because of illness.

Aside from this she had been isolated in Sault Ste.

1. "My Wife and I" op. cit., p. 9.
2. Ibid., p. 11.

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Marie, a growing but still small and rustic town. She had grown up in the more refined seclusion of an English country parsonage, in a "dear old Rectory, mantled with clematis and jessamine and honeysuckle".[1]

Sault Ste. Marie is at an isolated position from any centre of importance--approximately 500 miles from Toronto, Detroit, Ottawa, or the Lakehead. Sudbury was as close as 200 miles, but was at this time, still a struggling village about the same size as the Sault. As a consequence Mrs. Wilson had fallen out of touch with the outside civilized world, and her husband felt obligated to explain why she had been isolated without break for nine years. Mrs. Wilson was growing out of contact with progress!

> This little prologue seems necessary to lead up to the very astounding fact, that my spouse had never up to this date seen a telephone. However, she had the privilege of seeing one during our stay at our friend's house in Ottawa...[2]

Mrs. Wilson seems to have had a good time on this journey, and certainly she and her husband went through many experiences; experiences that sometimes ended up as adventures. Mrs. Wilson seems to have been a resourceful person, and several times while her husband was away

1. *Ibid*., p. 9.
2. *Ibid*., p. 11.

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from the Shingwauk, she did much of the work, such as keeping up the correspondence and carrying on the necessary aspects of business.

E.F. Wilson had the great advantages in character of being independent-minded and relishing hard work. He could hardly have built up his various projects, if this had not been true. To a great extent he was the embodiment of the virtues that Samuel Smiles extolled. He was certainly outspoken, and it is difficult to assess at what degree outspokenness becomes a fault rather than a virtue. Wilson was undoubtedly something of an egotist, and one anonymous reader of the Missionary Work Among the Ojebway Indians copy that resides at the Diocese of Algoma Synod Archives, was so outraged that Wilson neglected the contributions of a long-time Anglican missionary to Algoma who preceded Wilson, that he marked up the book to correct this neglect. The missionary in question was Dr. O Meara, who had also done linguistic work on the Ojibway language.

Wilson was quite patriarchal, and he demanded that his employees give themselves up to his exclusive service. Perhaps his attitudes to servants was not so outstanding in an age where such opinions were common. The Wilson

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family usually had several servants some of whom were Indian, and despite the fact that at least one of them had been in the family service for many years, Wilson mentions this only in passing.

The lower employees especially had to agree to what would be considered outrageous restraints upon their freedom. Much of this restraint, directed at the female servants, was occasioned by the laudable aim to keep up moral standards to their proper level. Nevertheless the mind boggles at this set of instructions that was given to the laundry girls:

> RULES FOR THE LAUNDRY GIRLS 1. To come to the Institution by the front way only and to go in an out by the class-room door only. 2. To have no communication with the boys. 3. Mrs. Bridge to be responsible for the girls when not at work, especially from 6 to 7 every evening and Sunday afternoons. 4. No going out after dark to be allowed. 5. Nancy to be at Mr. Wilson from 7 to 10 in the morning. To do needle work for the Institution at the laundry from 10 to 12, and from 1 to 3. To be at Mr. Wilsons again from 3 to 6. Except on Saturdays when it will be from 4 to 6 and in the evening from 7 to 8. 6. The girls to come to Bible reading on Fridays from 7 to 8 and to Sunday Schools...from 3 to 4.30. 7. Jane to work in the laundry from 7 to 12 and from 1 to 6 every day but on Saturday to begin mending at 10 o'clock. 8. Both girls on Saturday to do mending...from 10 to 12 and from 1 to 4. Jane to keep on till 6. 9. When the girls go out for a run they must keep on the land the same side of the road as Mrs. Bridges and not go out of

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> sight of her house without leave, never to go to the bush. 10. Each girl will receive $4 a month but will be fined for breaking any rules. 11. To walk to church on Sundays with Mrs. Bridges' children.[1]

One cannot help thinking of a scene from Charles Dickens...

Another characteristic of Wilson was his disputatious nature. Examples of this have already been given, and whether he was communicating with stable-boy or bishop, his manner scarcely differed. Wilson was always convinced that he was right on any matter. Undoubtedly this characteristic had been strengthened from two sources: his class position in England, and his religious party connexion. Coming from an upper middle class family in England, Wilson felt rather condescending in his relations with colonials. He always considered himself as a Briton in Canada, rather than as a British Canadian. He was carrying the "white man's burden" not only to the Canadian Indian, but to some lesser extent, to Canadians as well.

In addition, the Evangelicals were not well known for their sympathy with those who differed from their opinions. It was common in the earlier history of the Evangelical party for them to gloat over "converts"

1. Correspondence April, 1881.

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from the orthodox clergy, just as Roman Catholics used to gloat over the conversion of an Anglo-Catholic. A reading of Wilson's correspondence with his tradesmen, teachers, and employees reveals endless arguments.

Perhaps it was not all Wilson's fault. Living in the freer and less-class bound air of Canada, with a frontier still open, people of the lower classes from England were less liable to submit under the heavy yoke to which they had been accustomed at home. Sault Ste. Marie was not a very attractive spot at the time, and was isolated, therefore contracting new servants or employees was not a simple matter. Some of these employees did try to take advantage of an advantageous position. They demanded higher wages, less work, and were less deferential than Wilson, undeterred by the reality in which he found himself, expected.

But on his side, Wilson felt free to intervene sharply in matters concerning the Shingwauk Home, or in his function as Bishop's Commissary. Perhaps most amazing was his action in the "Appleby" affair. Appleby was the resident clergyman at St. Luke's, in Sault Ste. Marie. He was suspected by many of the prominent members of the congregation of improper sexual conduct. One of the most

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prominent parishioners and citizens was named Plummer. A hospital in Sault Ste. Marie is called after the Plummer family, and the actor Christopher Plummer is related to the same family. The Plummer in question was a leading businessman and became mayor of the village.

He sent a letter to Wilson complaining of this matter, backed by such other prominent citizens as Simpson, Hamilton, Brown, and Abbott. Wilson wrote back the following reply as Commissary which certainly was to the point, but reveals little tact:

> As an outsider I can afford to speak more plainly than Mr. Appleby would probably either wish or dare to do. The poor man--like most of the Canadian clergy--is in danger of being starved out or driven out from his living--if he dare to open his mouth. What I would say is this. You have a hardworking, earnest and devoted clergyman who never neglects his duty...it would be hard to find his equal. What do you give him for all his pains--what sympathy do you show?...Of all the congregations that I have reached to in Canada, I think I never met with one so utterly unsympathetic as that of St. Lukes...Who among you is of the smallest help or use to our hard-worked bishop?...If you do not like this letter you can tear it up but as far as I am concerned it is open to the inspection of any member of the St. Luke's ongregation.[1]

However it turned out there had been some fire behind the smoke. It is unlikely that Appleby received a fair hearing,

1. Correspondence 17 January, 1881, Wilson to Plummer.

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and it particularly enraged Wilson that Appleby dared to defend himself before a full church. After having defended Appleby so staunchly, he was forced to retract, and order him from the diocese.

> When I first heard of those terrible charges against you while at Garden River, I felt shocked and grieved and my idea was to see you as soon as possible and hear from your own lips what had happened.... For yourself there can be no question that the sooner you are away for parts unknown the better for yourself, your family and the Church--your remaining here can only lead to further publicity and exposure.[1]

However the climax of this story in the light that it sheds on Wilson's abrasive character, is the following letter that he sent to the same Plummer, who apparently was engaging in some immoral conduct of his own.

> For the sake of morality and good name of this place which within the last few days has been so terribly outraged we the undersigned feel bound to put a check to all proceedings which though passed off by many as harmless and innocent seemed to us to be of a scandalous nature. We therefore give you notice that unless you at once and entirely cease your intimacy with Miss Annie Simpson and keep entirely away from her society we shall withdraw our patronage from your business.[2]

Sault Ste. Marie from this flurry of scandal seems to resemble Peyton Place or Harper Valley, and Wilson's actions are somewhat questionable--firstly in his blind

1. Correspondence Wilson to Appleby, 25 May, 1881.
2. Correspondence Wilson to Plummer, 25 May, 1881.

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defence of Appleby, secondly in his refusal to give Appleby a hearing after receiving some contrary evidence, thirdly in his harsh words against the leading parishioners (although perhaps they were needed), and fourthly in his rather superior actions as moral judge.

What had enraged Wilson about Appleby had been that the latter,

> had gone so far as to declare in church to the congregation that there was no foundation for the charges brought against you and this in the face of such absolute evidence as there appeared to be, I confess I was stunned.[1]

It is impossible to say if Appleby was guilty of the charge that he dallied sexually with a young girl, but if he did so it is curious that his wife did not turn against him, but against Wilson. She raised a scandal implying that he was misusing funds that had been intended for the Wawanosh Home. She printed letters in various church papers, and coupled with the fact that several Indian children had just died and that this alienated the Indians, affairs at Sault Ste. Marie seemed very dismal.

Mrs. Appleby's charge was undoubtedly false in the sense that Wilson "embezzled" funds. But there are indications that he was not the best business manager in

1. Wilson Autobiographical Journal, p. 66.

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the world, and he may have indeed placed some monies intended for the Wawanosh in the wrong account. Mr Appleby fled to the United States, and this scandalous episode was so far forgotten that eventually he achieved preferment in the American church to the status of archdeacon.

Another episode that shows a facet of Wilson's character concerns the episcopal election of 1882 and its aftermath. It seems very likely that Wilson had ambitions toward the bishopric of Algoma. In his Autobiographical Journal is included the following newspaper clipping from a Montreal paper where the Synod was held:[1]

> The provincial synod of the Church of England opens in this city tomorrow for the special and only object of electing a missionary bishop for the diocese. It is understood t at the only candidate whose name will be presented is Rev. E.F. Wilson, of the Shingwauk Home, improvement and elevation he had devoted all his energies at great sacrifices for fifteen years past...He is in the prime of life, and is said by those who know him to have all the high qualities in the oversight of such a diocese. His election, which he does not solicit, is expecte to be unanimous.[2]

Additional verification that Wilson hoped to become bishop is added by a letter from a man named C.W. Johnson

1. The early bishops of Algoma were elected by the Canadian Provincial Synod, that is, from representatives of most of the Ontario and Quebec dioceses
2. Wilson Autobiographical Journal, p. 66.

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to the Dominion Churchman. "A rumour is in circulations (sic) that the Rev. E.F. Wilson, manager of the 'Shingwauk Home,' Sault Ste. Marie, is an aspirant to the bishopric."[1] Johnson was peeved because Wilson had made a visit throughout Algoma as Commissary after the previous Bishop's death, and had only gone through the "favoured portion of the district" in Muskoka. Johnson was disgrunted at this oversight and felt that "if he desires the appointment" Wilson should have also stopped at the more remote regions.

Johnson's resentment waxed so strong that he questioned if Wilson was suitable for the appointment:

> I hope it will not be considered presumptuous in those whose interest is at stake, to ask if he is in every way qualified to fill so important a position, one involving issues of such vital importance to all. Does this management of the Shingwauk Home bear a record of his fitness? Would he introduce methods of Church teaching that would subvert the good that has, after almost insurmountable difficulties been done so far throughout the district.[2]

Wilson aroused these suspicions of his episcopal ambition by the rather extensive tour that he took of most of the Canadian Provincial dioceses before the election. An announcement in the Dominion Churchman read:

1. C.W. Johnson, "Algoma" Dominion Churchman, April 20, 1882, p. 189.
2. Ibid.

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> The Rev. E.F. Wilson, Commissary of the diocese of Algoma, expects to leave Sault Ste. Marie on the 7th of March for a six or seven weeks tour through the Huron, Niagara, Toronto, Ontario, and Montreal dioceses; his object being to report on the present position, wants, and prospects of the missionary diocese of Algoma. It seems to be admitted on all sides that something must be done to place this missionary diocese on a more financial base before a new bishop is appointed. Mr. Wilson therefore hopes that arrangements will be made for holding public meetings at such places as time will allow hime to visit; he also hopes to address Sunday-schools on behalf of his Indian Homes, and will have a little Indian boy with him.[1]

However events turned against Wilson. The House of Bishops did not want to elect anybody at that time, but wanted to wait until financial backing suitable to Algoma's needs could be found. The lower House did not agree, and the upper House gave in. But the one name they sent down for consideration was not that of Wilson, but of Edward Sullivan, a brilliant Montreal preacher of Irish origin and international reputation.

Although some delegates felt that such a person should not be "wasted" on a distant poverty-stricken diocese like Algoma, the nomination was carried. Sullivan agreed to the appointment despite lower remuneration, and Wilson's last hope for the bishopric was dashed

1. "Sickness at the Indian Home" Dominion Churchman February 23, 1882, p. 89.

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when Sullivan turned down the See of Huron which was offered him only a year later.

Many other clergy have sought for episcopal position, and have tried to aid the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in their direction. But Wilson allowed himself to harbour a resentment against Bishop Sullivan that lasted the length of his career. Strictly from party considerations, the two men should have got along as they were both of the Evangelical connexion. About Sullivan, the Dominion Churchman wrote,

> He has usually connected himself with the so-called Evangelical section of the Church, but has always been respected and esteemed by all Churchmen, on account of the moderation and true charity which have always characterized his utterances.[1]

However the two men did not get along. The difference that Wilson always emphasized was the Bishop's differing view on Indians and Indian education. After his retirement to Salt Spring Island, British Columbia, Wilson wrote in answer to a letter to the third bishop of the diocese, George Thornloe, this reply:

> I never felt the same interest in the work after Bishop Sullivan took hold of it-as his views were not quite the same as mine. When I just started

1. Dominion Churchman, May 4, 1882, p. 8.

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> the Homes my Bishop was the Bishop of Toronto. Bishop Fauquiere [sic] was always most cordial and helpful and placed full reliance in me. He never wished to make the Homes a Diocesan affair.[1]

True to form, Wilson did not hesitate to criticize the Bishop to his own face, a rather irregular proceeding in the days when episcopal office was similar to an absolute monarchy:[2]

> While I have the greatest regard for you as Bishop and believe entirely in the sincerity both of your goodwill towards myself and family--and of all your acts for the benefit of the Diocese, still I cannot feel that you are a friend to the Indians. I have been feeling more and more discouraged about my work among the Indians ever since you became Bishop. Our Homes have been gradually being going down instead of up. You have several times discouraged me in my plans for their welfare and have not suggested any better ones in their place. I don't believe you will be offended at all this... I am not acting the cantankerous. I am simply unburdening my mind to you. I think you look upon the Indians as a poor miserable set incapable of much improvement--just a little romance about them sufficient to furnish a story once and again for a missionary meeting--but beyond that of very little account...My work here was commenced before any Diocese of Algoma was in existence. I was opposed to the formation of the Diocese. I should have very much preferred for my work to have continued in connection with Toronto as I believe the support would have been much more liberal.[3]

The purpose of this last sentence is unclear, unless it attacks the moral jurisdiction of the Bishop over

1. Loose letter at Algoma Synod Archives, Wilson to Thornloe, June 28, 1907. (Written at Salt Spring Island, British Columbia).
2. These days are not entirely dead now and certainly were current until the very recent past.
3. Correspondence, Wilson to Sullivan, 28 April, 1885.

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Wilson. Yet the latter had been quite eager that the diocese should continue when its existence had been threatened during the 1882 Provincial Synod. He wrote to W.M. Jarvis,

> You will I hope ere this have received a copy of my address about Algoma...There is not the shade of a reason for not electing a new bishop...The idea of giving up the diocese is confined I am persuaded to a very small band of individuals. The work is of God and must be carried on.[1]

What person with any knowledge of the complex motives of men can doubt that there was a direct causal connexion between Wilson's dislike of his Bishop, and his failure in episcopal ambition? At any rate, this continuing conflict which lasted until Wilson left Sault Ste. Marie in 1893, shows Wilson's independent, disputatious, and somewhat tactless character. When Wilson left, he tried to get all his support shifted to his Elkhorn establishment which by then was being managed by his youthful son, Archibald. Wilson's aim was to force the Canadian people to increase their support so that the Shingwauk would not go under. It hardly occurred to Wilson that his act might be interpreted as hostile.

1. Correspondence Wilson to Jarvis, 17 April, 1882.

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Time and time again he wrote diatribes about what he called the "cold Christians" of Canada. This last gesture was an attempt at forcing matters.

However Bishop Sullivan, with the ruin of the schools impending, could not see matters in the same light. At a meeting of the diocesan standing Committee held on September 26th 1893, he

> was sorry to state that the late principal had endeavoured to alienate the subscriptions of English friends from the Shingwauk to the Home at Elkhorn, and that in a manner that was totally void of commendation.[1]

Bishop Sullivan managed to get in the last exchange of the simmering dispute, although Wilson would not have been aware of it. During both Fauquier's and Sullivan's tenure, Wilson had always been the commissary of the diocese. At the same standing committee,

> The Bishop expressed his gratitude to the Commissary and added that though he had on several occasions been absent in England and always had a Commissary, yet this was the first report that had been presented to him.[2]

Wilson's life naturally falls into four main divisions from 1844 until 1865 in England, from 1865 to 1885 in Canada training for the priesthood and acting as missionary

1. "Seventh Meeting of the Standing Committee" A.M.N. N.S. Vol. V, No. 10, October 16, 1893, p. 67.
2. Ibid.

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and educator but without any scholarly knowledge of Indians. The second phase is also characterized by the building and consolidation of the Shingwauk and Wawanosh schools. The third phase is from 1885 until 1893. This period includes Wilson's great birth of interest in ethnohistory, his building of other schools in the west, and during those last years, his radicalization away from the customary paternalism of missionaries and government officials. The last phase is that of his "quiet" years as rector on Salt Spring Island. (Not that quiet, however, as even there Wilson was something like the 'stormy petrel" of the island[1]).

This thesis stops at the year 1885, and it is necessary to tell why Wilson became so interested in the Prairie Indians. The answer involves a very interesting weaving of personal and public reasons. Perhaps the latter were merely a justification for the first. It is quite clear at any rate that the explanation why Wilson became interested in the West and began to create plans of expansion, was more involved than the reasons which he gave in the Algoma Missionary News.

1885 was of course, the year of the Riel "Rebellion".

1. Bea Hamilton Salt Spring Island (Vancouver, 1969), pp. 114-122.

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Wilson didn't display any doubt which side he favoured to win. He asserted that Riel had "raised the flag of rebellion" and that "happily we have the Canadian Pacific railway in a fair way towards completion, the better so to get Canadian troops to the scene of action.[1]

Nevertheless Wilson was deeply disturbed at the events which had led up to the rebellion. His theme was that of the injustice of the precipitous white intrusion onto the Indians' hunting grounds. The Indians should have been prepared for the necessary transition in their way of life, before white settlement.

> Would it not have been better to have been less eager about the immediate possession of those vast hunting grounds, and to have limited for a score of years or so the progress of the surveyor with his chain? Would it not have been better gradually to have drawn those 50,000 roaming Indians within the coils of civilization, instead of shutting them up so suddenly in reserved lands like prison houses, and compelling them to farm or die?"[2]

But what was done was done, and therefore Wilson advocated the immediate education of as many of the Prairie Indian children as possible. Like his approach

1. "The Rebellion in the North West" <u>A.M.N.</u> Vol. VIII, No. 3, May 1st, 1885, p. 81.
2. "The Northwest Rebellion" <u>A.M.N.</u> Vol. VIII, No. 4, July 1st, 1885, p. 89.

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to the Ojibway parents, he had no great hopes for the elder Cree, Blackfeet, and other Indian people.

> Would it not be better to train a couple of hundred young Indians in an institution such as ours, and gradually fit them for civilised life, than to take adult Indians from the chase and to go to all the expense of giving them seed, cattle, etc., and providing a farm instructor, and after all to have to fight them?[1]

Thus, in his own justification Wilson wrote that he wished to expand his work to the Prairies because of the seriousness of the objective situation. He set off for the West on July 24th 1885, accompanied by three boys, determined to find out conditions at first hand.

The more personal reason why Wilson responded so quickly to the evident challenges of the Riel Rebellion stems from the fact that he felt a deep weariness and aversion to continuing at his duties in connexion to the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes. A number of matters led to this frame of mind: they included his dislike of Bishop Sullivan, the responsiblities of his growing family, and the strain of the job. He wrote a lengthy letter to his father, Prebendary Wilson:

I think it well to write to you fully and ask your

1. Ibid., p. 90.

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> advise as to whether I ought now after my 16 years of missionary life here in Canada--and now that my children are growing up and requiring to be educated and my income altogether too small to meet our necessities--to think of making some change....It is a question also whether if I were to give up this work, I am particularly well fitted for any other. Whether I could get employment elsewhere suited to my nature, tastes and capabilities and at any better remuneration than I at present receive. I think if I did this--the oversight of some school or schools somewhere would perhaps suit me the best but I would like to have less responsibility as I think it is this perhaps more than anything else that is wearing me out. I don't think anyone knows what a constant unbroken strain it is upon me. I have really no time to myself, no time for reading, hardly any time for reading the newspaper. Everything from the least to the greatest connected with these Homes falls on myself....The question then is--Is it not my duty in the fact of all these difficulties--with our funds falling off, my own income so small, my children growing up and requiring to be educated, the Indians generally so apathetic about sending their children, the results of our work so far so comparatively little, is it my duty still to remain here-- or might I not after these 10 years of service be relieved and find work elsewhere.[1]

Wilson's depression did not disappear immediately but lasted several months--in fact until news was published on the Riel uprising. At the end of January 1885, Wilson still wanted a change, but was now thinking of simply removing to the town of Sault Ste. Marie proper as a rector to the white populace. Under this plan he might still

1. Correspondence Wilson to Prebendary Wilson, 8 October, 1884.

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retain a general superintendence of the Homes. Thus he would be,

> freed from all that detail of work which so ties one down, and which a layman would undertake I believe better than myself--such as buying hay and coal and cordwood, and seeing after carpenters work and bootmaking--and--well you know all about i it.[1]

Apparently the rectorship at Sault Ste. Marie and its outpost, Korah, was available, and Wilson had been making contacts among the people. Presumably he got along better with some of them than did Plummer and the other leading citizenry. "I like the Sault and Korah people and I think they like me--I have felt drawn as it were to them this winter."[2]

In mulling over the Saint Lukes post, Wilson did one thing that may have been questionable. James Chance, the former missionary at Garden River until 1871, was being considered for the vacant position. Naturally as Commissary and as an "old hand" of the diocese, Wilson's opinion was asked as to Chance's capability. Wilson replied rather acidly--and without consistency: "They are nice people...but Mr. C. used to be of a quarrelsome disposition which prevented his

1. Correspondence Wilson to unknown recipient, perhaps his father, 30 January, 1885.
2. Ibid.

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getting on, I don't know how he is now."[1]

Was this not a matter of the pot calling the kettle black, and in a situation which was probably a matter of conflict of interst? Whatever Wilson thought, Chance became a respected cleric of the diocese of Huron, beloved of his parishioners at Tyrconnel, and a Canon of the Cathedral in London. On his death in 1897, Chance rated an extensive obituary in the Dominion Churchman, a publication which did not emphasize obituaries as a custom.

Wilson did not leave the Algoma region, or even his charge at the Shingwauk. His worries were somewhat lightened by hiring a superintendent to run the day to day affairs of the schools, in addition to the regular staff. He continued as the principal but gave so much of his time to scholarly stuides on the Indians and planning for new projects, that he became divorced from the more minute worries.

As the 1880's wore on, Wilson also spent a great deal of time travelling through the West and to the United States. He only queried the possibility of moving once

1. Correspondence Wilson to Sullivan, 10 January, 1885.

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more, and this was the idea of moving his family to Banff and opening a model school there. The idea was for the wealthy people who vacationed there to have their heart strings and purse strings loosened as they saw what strides the Indian children could make in civilization.

Wilson's periods of moodiness are not out of character since he did not have a great fund of patience. This was at the same time a virtue and a fault. He plunged forward where others were too timid. He usually had a positive mind that contemplated successes rather than failures. But if Providence did not move in the direction and at the speed which Wilson expected, he was liable to make rash moves or speak hasty words.

Bishop Sullivan was not the only episcopal personage that Wilson did not agree with. He had been planning to build a branch home in the diocese of Huron, but the bishop objected. Wilson wrote back: "I am a little disappointed with your letter--but all I doubt not will in a little while become clear."[1]

Wilson was also non-plussed when he met a rebuff

1. Correspondence, Wilson to the Bishop of Huron, January 1, 1886.

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at the hands of the Bishop of Rupert's Land. He made the unlikely sounding charge that the bishop was thwarting him over anger at having failed to secure him into Rupert's Land back in 1873 when Wilson was still attached to the C.M.S.[1]

There is no doubt that E.F. Wilson was not the easiest man to get along with, that he had grave faults of character. However, it is also true that he did get things done that others would not have, that he was very hardworking and persistent, and that he had a great hope to prove of use in uplifting the Indians according to the standards of British society.

1. The following are excerpts of letters by Wilson about his troubles with bishops. The first is to a wealthy donor, Mr. Rowswell, dated June 17, 1887: "I am still strongly in favour of erecting the Branch Home at Elkhorn--and only hope that the Bishop will agree to it. I am beginning to think that Bishops are inclined to hold back rather than to help forward Indian work. I have had trouble with 2 or 3 of them. However I hope your Bishop will be sensible and see the advantage that it will be to carry out our plan." Another letter to Rowswell is dated July 18, 1887, "Then, the Bishops give me no encouragement. The Bishop of Rupert's Land consents but that is all. He does not offer me God's speed or offer me the least encouragement.... My own Bishop Sullivan gives me no encouragement.... Bishop-elect Pink gives me no encouragement in regard to the proposed Banff Home." These passages indicate to what extent Wilson failed to see any problem from a viewpoint other than his own. Wilson's tone, that he hoped the Bishop of Rupert's Land would be sensible, is obviously very patronizing. In the Victorian period, it was not often that a clergyman would adopt a patronizing attitude to his Bishop.

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There have been better men than Wilson, and yet, when all has been said, the pioneer district of Algoma was undoubtedly quite lucky to have had such a resident over a period of twenty years. He was a flawed giant but still a giant among his fellow Canadian clergy. He too rated an extensive obituary in the pages of the Dominion Churchman when he died in 1915.

Perhaps his tragedy was not achieving elevation to an episcopal see. In that position, his characteristics might have fitted well, especially in a pioneer see. Most bishops of the time were confident in their Divine support and inspiration, and Wilson's sharp tongue and curt ways might have been effective in the wielding of episcopal power. At the same time, Wilson suffered from an excess of certain of his virtues, and he would not have escaped the same sort of criticism that his grandmother received.

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Chapter V

## CONCLUSIONS

When a man from a family of distinction and wealth leaves his own country, forsakes a comfortable career, and becomes a missionary to far-off aboriginal peoples, one is faced with a question of oonsiderable interest. What were his motivations for doing so? If the missionary in question had been poor and from a low social background, entry into the mission field might be interpreted as an attempt to win status, as Jean Usher has shown in the case of William Duncan. As we have seen however, E.F. Wilson came from a prominent Evangelical family, and his motivations were somewhat differnnt.

There were elements in Wilson's character which led him to such an occupation. He loved adventure and challenge, and would not have been content with a quiet curacy. But it has also been evident how important was Wilson's Evangelical background.

Missionary activity was one of the central concerns of Anglican Evangelicalism--whether building churches for the poor in England as did Prebendary Wilson, or converting Hindu souls as Bishop Wilson did during his long tenure of the Calcutta see. Even the females of the Wilson line engaged in missionary

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support roles. E.F. Wilson was only following in the traditions of his family, his religious party, and his social backgrounds when he decided to become a missionary.

In the nineteenth century, Britain reached the zenith of her power. She had accomplished this by an early industrial revolution, and a rapid rise to extensive imperial power. Such power led to a desire for an empire that would give access to wider markets and easier sources of raw materials. Most Britons were so impressed and conscious of their own success, that they came to believe they were the most advanced people in the world. Leading religious, literary, and educational figures of the times similarly concluded that British religion, literature and education must be the world's best.

Among persons of a humanitarian tendency the belief was engendered that Britons had a responsibility to raise up inferior peoples to the peak of British civilization. This has been called the "white man's burden", but in the Victorian period it was an especially British burden.[1]

Wilson started out his career as a missionary

1. The British did not even regard most other Europeans, especially those from the southern part of the continent, as on the same level. See also British rhetoric on the Boers during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902.

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under the Church Missionary Society. He shared the Evangelical and Victorian hope that all non-Christian peoples would be converted in one or two generations. The protection of the Empire provided unequalled opportunities for the Evangelicals to found new missions.

As with most Victorian missionaries, E.F. Wilson conceived of "civilization" and "Christianization" as virtually the same process. But while Henry Venn also realized the close ties that were believed to exist between these two processes, he always kept the primary matter of conversion in mind. He encouraged his missionaries to introduce British education and habits among their converts. Still, he wanted the C.M.S. to remain essentially a means for the conversion of the heathen.

In his work among the Ojibway of Ontario, Wilson had found that pagans were rare. Christianity might still be nothing more than a thin layer hiding older practises. However, other religious groups, especially the Methodists and Roman Catholics, had accomplished the initial steps of conversion.

The C.M.S. had as one of its founding principles that it should not interfere with the activit-

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ies of other Protestant bodies. When it became clear that fewer than 10 percent of the Ojibway were still pagans, it was inevitable that the society depart for new fields where the Gospel had not penetrated. The C.M.S. wished to shift the base of its mission operations to Manitoba, and to commence missionization of any unconverted Indians left in the Lake Superior region, from the west rather than from the south east.

For a short time, however, it appeared that Wilson's mission would stay in the Huron diocese for several years. A study of this particular mission reveals it to have been example of a case in which Henry Venn's ideas were not applicable. Venn had devised an all-encompassing theory of missionization that he wanted to implement in all areas.

However, his plans were most suitable in regions where the natives remained in the majority, and where therefore, weight of numbers ensured the natives their own institutional structure. In an area like the diocese of Huron, where the native people had been placed into a very small minority, the ascendant whites would not tolerate a set of parallel structures. Thus the conflict which ensued between the Bishop of Huron and Henry Venn.

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E.F. Wilson soon turned his primary attention to the education of the Indians, and to general efforts to "uplift" the civilization of the Ojibway. Like most missionaries, Wilson tended to an optimistic view of the capabilities of aboriginal peoples. He believed that he had found a linguistic link between Hebrew and the Ojibway language.

In general, the missionary belief in the capabilities of native peoples was a psychological necessity if they were to engage in their work enthusiastically. Whereas non-missionaries often assumed that British civilization and religion were too advanced for the aboriginal peoples, most missionaries paid their compliments to Scripture in another way. They believed the strength of the Christian religion to be so powerful that it could raise up the natives to British standards.

Thus Wilson, with the aid of wealthy Evangelical connections in England, succeeded in building the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Homes. The education dispensed involved a total orientation to British standards. And this British orientation went beyond academic instruction, and included all aspects of culture. The children were taught British or Canadian history, literature,

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religion, dress, food, music, manners, games, and work and ethical attitudes. They were prepared for entry into the general white Canadian society.

This society may be described as advanced agricultural, with powerful influences setting industrialization and urbanization into motion.[1] The Indian children would be prepared for the standard 60 hour weeks of the Canadian working class. The Shingwauk graduates would be employed on farms or in trades. Wawanosh graduates were prepared for domestic service or marriage to a Shingwauk boy.

The usual result of the education received at Wilson's schools was, from the white view, demoralization and failure. Naturally there were a few brilliant successes: boys who later became clergymen, teachers, or clerks in white society. However, even the children who succeeded in integrating themselves in white society at a lower rung, were rather few in number.

As Colonel Geddes points out: "Generally speaking, the children failed in attempts to use the trades skills learned at the Shingwauk Home..."[2]

The gap between the Indian and white social

1. See André Raynauld The Canadian Economic System (Toronto, 1969), p. 52. "A very marked increase also occurred in the decade of 1900-1910, and this increase serves as a basis, among other observations, for Rostow's thesis according to which Canada, before the First World War, went through a period of rapid 'take-off' in the race for growth and economic expansion."
2. Geddes, op. cit., p. 5.

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systems was still great enough that complete cultural replacement was not often achieved satisfactorily.

On the Indians' side, Wilson's failure was due to two factors. The first is indicated in what may be termed "cultural conservatism". Not all of the Indian people were so anxious for the replacement of their culture as were Chiefs Shingwauk and Bukh-wujenene. Most of the education that the children received at the Shingwauk would have seemed useless and absolutely harmful to parents who still expected their offspring to continue in the traditional Indian lifestyle.

Secondly, the children at the Shingwauk did not arrive until they were about age 11. By this time they had been too far instructed in one culture. Their "culture shock" at learning that their previously acquired skills and knowledge were frowned upon, was naturally very grave.

In addition, missionaries such as Wilson believed so strongly in the education and civilization they were imparting, that they could not engage in a dialogue with the Indian older folk. The missionaries had already taken the natives' "side" against other Britons who were less charitable about the capabilities

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of aborigines.

If the natives did not rush to accept this great benefit, it must result from an ignorant or short-sighted perception by the older people. Thus in missionary literature the idea is often present that British education and culture might have to be forced on the reluctant savage :the Indians must be forced to be free. Wilson wrote:

> I think the Indians for their real advancement, require to be held with a somewhat firmer hand, and that if they will not see what is good for them that they should be made to do so....I am inclined to think that if the Department would procure the necessary legislation and pass a law for the compulsory education of Indian children in the same way as a law has been passed prohibiting the sale of liquor to them, that the effect would be most beneficial.[1]

With the best of intentions and with complete knowledge of what he wanted to do and why, Wilson was pursuing a policy of what many recent Indian polemicists have called cultural genocide. Of course, he believed that what the Indians would gain was far more than what they would lose.

Today we are much less sure of the benefits of western civilization, and many, perhaps, are much

1. P.A.C., RG 10, Vol. 2023, Wilson to the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, August 2, 1877.

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readier once again to acknowledge the merits of the "noble savage". The nineteenth century observer would have thought it absurd to posit that the Indian might have some real contribution to civilization. The Indians, such an observer thought, were savages and not so noble as many in the 1700's had assumed.

Wilson's career is also interesting because of his own personality. In some ways, he was like the hero of a Greek tragedy. Wilson possessed great talents, but he was also badly flawed, and it was partly his personality flaws that led him to withdraw from the mission field before his 50th year.

Wilson was an originator, a builder, a worker, and in his own words, a pioneer figure. But he did not possess tact, or diplomatic subtlety. He so thoroughly assumed that his work was the work of God, that he often failed to consult or keep on good relations with the Bishops. He forgot that men are not angels, and that even the most laudable of projects must often withstand maddening red-tape and delay before they can be established on a lasting basis.

An example of this is Wilson's relationship with Bishop Sullivan. Increasingly, Wilson alienated this man with whom it was so important to keep good

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relations. Wilson himself was inclined to be imperious. Coming from a distinguished English family, he always remained the upper middle class Briton in the colonies. Wilson's "white man's burden" was also, to some extent, directed to the Canadian colonists.

In advocating a process of one-way change to white standards, Wilson was hardly alone. Most government and missionary personnel looked forward to the assimilation of the Indians into white society. Patronizingly, they assumed that cultural replacement was a natural process, or that it was in the Indians' long-range best interests. Unfortunately, like E.F. Wilson before 1890, most Canadian government and missionary officials assumed they knew better what the Indians wanted and needed than did the native peoples themselves.

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