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THE CHURCH DEFENCE SOCIETY
OF OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND, 1897.

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of Master
of Arts in History at Massey University.

Lawrence Harold Barber

1970

To the memory of Malcolm Wilson;

Presbyter, Moderator, and Ecumenist.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	IV	
ABBREVIATIONS	XIV	
GLOSSARY	XV	
CHAPTER I	Introductory: From Unity to Dissent.	1
II	From Dissent into Party.	14
III	"The Defenders."	38
IV	"Foes" Active and Passive.	67
V	Diversity in Unity.	93
EPILOGUE	The 1901 Parliamentary Debate.	106
APPENDIX A.	"A.C's" Editorial. <u>Christian Outlook</u> . 11 December, 1897.	114
APPENDIX B.	A Synopsis of Union Documents.	
(i)	The 1896 Basis.	116
(ii)	The 1897 Basis.	118
(iii)	The 1901 Agreement.	121
(iv)	The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand Act, 1901.	122
APPENDIX C.	Legal Opinions.	
(i)	The Chapman and MacGregor Opinions.	125
(ii)	Sir Robert Stout's Opinion.	127
APPENDIX D.	A Brief Discussion on Northern Church Attitudes to Union.	132
BIBLIOGRAPHY		139
MAP:	Presbyteries and Parishes in the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland, 1897.	Following XX

PREFACE

In recent years there has been a marked increase of interest in New Zealand church history and sectarian controversy. Research into the beliefs and behaviour of early European missionaries has occupied the research time of an increasing number of post-graduate students during the last five years and has resulted in such useful works as Judith Binney's published analysis of the beliefs and behaviour of Thomas Kendall¹ and John Owens' doctoral investigation of the Hokianga Wesleyans.² Hugh Laracy, in his portrayal of Bishop Moran,³ P.S. O'Connor, through his racy description of Catholic - Protestant conflict,⁴ and J. Mackey with his consideration of the development within New Zealand of a parochial school system,⁵ have notably contributed to the history of the

1. Judith Binney, The Legacy of Guilt (Oxford, 1968).
2. John Owens, "The Coming of the Wesleyans to New Zealand, 1819-1840", Unpublished PhD thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1969.
3. Hugh Laracy, "The Life and Context of Bishop Patrick Moran," Unpublished M.A. Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, 1964.
4. P.S. O'Connor, "Sectarian Conflict in New Zealand, 1911-1920", Political Science, 19 (i), July, 1967, pp. 3-16.
5. J. Mackey, "The Catholic Schools and the Denominational System of Education in Auckland, 1840-68", Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Auckland, 1960.

Roman Catholic Church. Research by P.F. McKimney⁶ and K.G. Geard⁷ into the nature of the New Zealand prohibition movement and Ian Breward's published monograph on Bible-in-Schools controversies⁸ have made available analysis of socio-religious conflicts that divided New Zealanders from the late nineteenth century until well into the twentieth century. In the field of contemporary church history a symposium on religion in New Zealand including articles by J. Mols, J. Harre, and W.H. Oliver,⁹ posed questions about present day New Zealand ecclesiastical life that cannot be satisfactorily answered without an awareness of the theological and sociological development of the New Zealand churches and sects.

Despite this recently renewed interest in ecclesiastical history, and the broad range of the research projects undertaken, (from a study of Ratana¹⁰ to an examination of the history of the Church of the Latter Day Saints),¹¹ little interest has yet been shown in late

6. P.F. McKimney, "The Prohibition Movement in New Zealand, 1885-1894", unpublished M.A. Thesis, Auckland University, 1968.
7. K.J. Geard, "The Prohibition Movement, 1894-1914", unpublished M.A. Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington, In Progress.
8. Ian Breward, Godless Schools? (Christchurch, 1967.)
9. W.H. Oliver, W. Merlin Davies, Lloyd G. Geering et al; Landfall, XX (1), March 1966, pp.4-59.
10. J. Henderson, Ratana New Plymouth, 1965.
11. Ian R. Barker, "The Connexion. The Mormon Church and The Maori People", unpublished B.A. Hons. Exercise, Victoria University of Wellington, 1967.

nineteenth century religious beliefs and even less in identifying and explaining dissent within the major churches. In this research exercise I cannot hope to bridge such an extensive gap in New Zealand ecclesiastical history, yet by selecting as my subject a religious controversy of 1897 and investigating the origins, principles, and prejudices of a party within a church, I have attempted to sink a few supporting pylons into the river-bed for future bridge builders to build upon.

The concern of this thesis is to explain the slow coalescing of a party of dissent within the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland. The focus of interest is the Church Defence Society of Otago and Southland, a league of Presbyterian churchmen constituted in November 1897 following a decision by the ruling Synod of the Otago and Southland Presbyterian Church to commit the Church to union with the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. An attempt is made to identify the "Church Defenders", to outline their arguments and those of their opponents, to explain their motives, to assess the importance of "non-theological factors" in the development of their point of view, and to give some reason for their failure to delay or destroy union negotiations in 1897. Use has been made of several documents hitherto little used in New Zealand historical studies. The Gibb Papers, the Rutherford Waddell Notebooks, and the parish archives of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Dunedin, have given

useful insight into the activities and opinions of two leading participants in the Otago Church struggle.

No mention of the Church Defence Society of Otago and Southland occurs in any histories of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. James Chisholm, an ardent "Southern Church" pro-unionist used eight pages in his 1898 history of the Church of Otago and Southland, Fifty Years Syne,¹² to present a bare account of the fifty preceding years movement to union. He applauded the "Northern Church" for its continuous accommodation of "Southern Church" sensitivity, but no attempt was made to identify this sensitivity and explain the behaviour of the anti-unionists. John Dickson, a Canterbury "Northern Churchman", in 1899 published his History of the New Zealand Presbyterian Church,¹³ but gave only three pages to discuss union questions. Lest it be thought that the closeness of the culmination of union may have decided him to tread lightly on that tender spot notwithstanding his brevity he attacked "Southern Church" anti-union sentiment and argued: "As if to show how short-sighted those few spirits are who oppose the Union of the Northern and Southern Churches of New Zealand, a good deal of wooing between these communions has been going on across the Waitaki bridge. Not only have messages of love in the

12. James Chisholm, Fifty Years Syne. Dunedin, 1917.

13. John Dickson, History of the New Zealand Presbyterian Church, Dunedin, 1899.

form of church certificates, valid on both sides, and church resolutions, more or less gushing in sentiment, been passing between them, but frequent offers of marriage have been made by congregations on the one side and accepted on the other. Twenty-one pastors of Otago and Southland, being only flesh and blood like their fellows, have crossed the Waitaki in response to calls from the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand."¹⁴

Are twentieth-century New Zealand church historians any more objective in their treatment of Southern anti-union sentiment? The Very Rev. J.S. Murray in 1927 submitted for his M.A. degree a thesis entitled "The Union of the Northern and Southern Churches of The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand."¹⁵ Mr. Murray is precise and painstaking in his delineation of the tortuous movement of the two churches towards union but he abstained from any attempt to explain the motivation of the conflicting parties. J.R. Elder, sometime Professor of History at Otago University, in his centennial History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand¹⁶ built on Murray's work, again with no attempt at interpretation, and with occasional confusions, a case in point being his failure to note that in 1897 not all Kirk sessions

14. John Dickson, p.380.

15. J.S. Murray, "The Union of the Northern and Southern Churches of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand" unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Otago, 1927.

16. J.R. Elder, The History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, 1840-1940.

submitted returns in the referendum of sessions taken by the Synod. By far the most inadequate treatment of the union issue and its protagonists is in John Collie's, The Story of the Otago Free Church Settlement, (1948)¹⁶ Professor Collie intruded quotations from hymns into his text and concluded with a sermon full of advice and warning for future ecumenical encounters. He pays too much attention to reminiscences and provides a disjointed picture of the movement towards union. His chapter on "Church Union" may be excellent preaching, but it is scarcely good history.

This assessment of previous historical accounts of the union struggle makes clear that no one has yet delved into the causes and occasions of the development of a conservative resistance to the union of the "Northern" and "Southern" churches. To embark on such a study is of course to see the world in an oyster, with the concomitant risk of descending to triviality. The arena within which the "Church defenders" and their "foes" fought was indeed small, and issues such as marriage to a deceased wife's sister may appear trivial and even ludicrous by present day judgement, yet a study of this miniscule neo-Disruption provides the historian with insights into the thought processes and value judgements of a significant group of New Zealand pioneers.

16. John Collie, The Story of the Otago Free Church Settlement. Dunedin, 1948.

To aid those readers who are unfamiliar with those peculiarly ecclesiastical and theological terms used by the protagonists a glossary has been included. Where the writer has the slightest doubt whether the general historian will be au fait with a reference from the field of specialised Church history he has added a clarifying footnote.

Three sets of documents have been appended to this thesis and their inclusion is justified by the numerous references made to them by the protagonists. "A.C.'s" editorial is reproduced in its entirety to identify Church Defence Society membership and to indicate the skill of his satire. The union documents are included to indicate the revisions demanded by the Southern Church and granted by the Northern Church between 1896 and 1901.

The conflicting Chapman-MacGregor and Stout legal opinions provide a precise and germinal presentation of arguments over the legality or illegality of any union that failed to maintain the doctrine and polity of the founding fathers; arguments produced ad nauseum by the contending parties throughout 1897.

The fourth appendix, "A Brief Discussion on Northern Church Attitudes to Union", is designed to give a necessary complement to the concentration in this thesis on the Southern Presbyterian Church's attitudes to union.

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PHOTOGRAPHS

1. R.R.M. Sutherland: A leading "Defender"
facing p.15
2. William Bannerman: "Nestor of the anti-unionists"?
facing p.27
3. William Will: "Venerable Moderator"
facing p.34
4. Andrew Cameron: "A.C"?
facing p.39
5. The Presbyterian Synod of Otago and Southland,
1897 facing p.41
6. Rutherford Waddell: A "Passive" Defender.
facing p.89
7. James Gibb: A D.D. to the Victor. facing p.105

These photographs were obtained by the Rev. Eric Ross, Librarian, Hewitson Library, Dunedin, and reproduced by the Hocken Library, University of Otago.

MAPS AND TABLES

- Map I Showing the location of Presbyteries and parishes in the Church of Otago and Southland in 1897. Facing XXI
- An explanation of the organisation of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland. p.XXIII
- Table I A Comparison of the voting of ministers and elders on Sutherland's anti-union motion at the 1897 Synod. p.43.
- Table II The location of parishes rejecting the 1897 union basis. p.46.
- Table III Showing the rural concentration of anti-union leadership. p.48.
- Table IV Showing universities and theological colleges attended by leading "Foes" and "Defenders". p.51.
- Table V Indicating the dates of arrival of "Foes" and "Defenders" and the dates of ordination of New Zealand born or trained ministers. p.53.
- Table VI Stipends paid to "A.C.'s" Foes and Defenders in the financial year ending 30 September, 1897. p.55.
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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>AJHR</u>	<u>Appendix to the Journals of the House of Representatives.</u>
<u>Assembly</u>	<u>Minutes of the Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.</u>
Gibb	The Gibb Papers Presbyterian Church Office, Wellington.
<u>ODT</u>	<u>The Otago Daily Times.</u>
<u>Outlook</u>	<u>The Christian Outlook.</u>
<u>Star</u>	<u>The Evening Star.</u>
Stout	The Stout Papers Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington.
<u>Synod</u>	<u>Minutes of the Proceedings of the Presbyterian Synod of Otago and Southland.</u>
<u>Tablet</u>	<u>The New Zealand Tablet.</u>
<u>Yearbook</u>	<u>The New Zealand Official Yearbook.</u>

GLOSSARY

- Barrier Act An act of the 1697 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland requiring that all proposals to make any important alteration to the constitution of the Church should first be sent to Presbyteries for their consideration, prior to a final decision by Assembly. In 1874, 1876 and again in 1878, the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland, not wishing to limit the powers of its Synod, refused to adopt a Barrier Act but agreed to submit contentious matters to inferior courts "under the principle of the Barrier Act."
- Declaratory Act In 1879 the Scottish United Presbyterian Church passed an act relieving ministers from their obligation to subscribe to every item in the Westminster Confession. The Free Church of Scotland followed suit in 1892 in reaction to William Robertson Smith's deposition from the ministry, following a charge of heresy. The present formula signed by ministers and elders of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand is based on the Free Church Declaratory Act of 1892 and states that "the Presbyterian

Church of New Zealand holds as its subordinate standard the Westminster Confession of Faith, recognising liberty of opinion on such points as do not enter into the substance of the Faith..."

For a useful account of the place held by Declaratory acts in the Scottish Presbyterian tradition, see J.H.S. Burleigh, A Church History of Scotland. pp.366-384.

Disruption

On 18 May, 1843 the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Rt.Rev.David Welsh, refused to constitute the General Assembly and instead read to ministers and elders a protest against state interference in the affairs of the Kirk. Welsh then led over 190 ministers and elders to Cannon-mills where they inaugurated the "Free Church of Scotland". The Disruption was occasioned by Parliament's refusal to give Presbyteries and congregations a veto in cases where patrons nominated unsuitable or unpopular ministers as parish ministers. The dissidents regarded the state's refusal to amend the law, and civil court judgements against the Assembly's claim to hold the right to

determine such conflicts within the Church, as infringements of the spiritual independence of the Kirk.

Erastianism

The principle that the State has ascendancy over the Church in ecclesiastical matters. This concept was named from the views of the sixteenth century Swiss theologian, Thomas Erastus.

Evangelicals

The Evangelical party in the Church of Scotland grew in popularity and size as it opposed the infringements of the 1690 re-establishment of the authority of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland by the Patronage Act of 1712; an act that allowed patrons to appoint their nominees to vacant charges with little attention to the will of the congregations. In the early nineteenth century the Evangelicals reached the peak of their popularity through leading resistance against civil court decisions that imposed unpopular ministers on unwilling congregations. By 1843 this party took one third of Scotland's Presbyterian ministers into the Free Church of Scotland. In opposition to Moderate teaching of the commonplaces of natural and rational theology and of

the prudential virtues, the Evangelicals laid emphasis on the traditional Calvinist doctrines of sin, grace, and redemption, and aimed at awakening in their hearers a deeper personal religious experience.

Moderates

The Moderate party dominated the life of the Church of Scotland in the second half of the eighteenth century. The designation "Moderate" was given to indicate a less rigid attitude to theology, and church discipline than held by their rivals, the Evangelicals. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church, p.910, summarises ^{the} Moderate emphases; "They sought to be friends of learning, culture, and order and emphasised morality rather than dogma. They were opposed to the abolition of lay patronage, insisting that Presbyteries should induct patrons' presentees acc. (sic) to the law of the land, whether the people called them or not...". See also: A.R. Vidler, The Church in an Age of Revolution, p.56f.

Higher Criticism This term refers to the critical study of the literary methods and sources used by the authors of the Biblical documents.

The term came into currency from its use ("Higher or Historical Criticism") by W. R. Smith in The Old Testament in the Jewish Church, London, 1881;p.105. Biblical literalists sometimes, (albeit improperly), refer to scholars who use this critical method as "Modernists". Scottish and New Zealand Presbyterians acknowledge the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as their supreme standards for determining faith and conduct. The Westminster documents are regarded as the subordinate standards of the church.

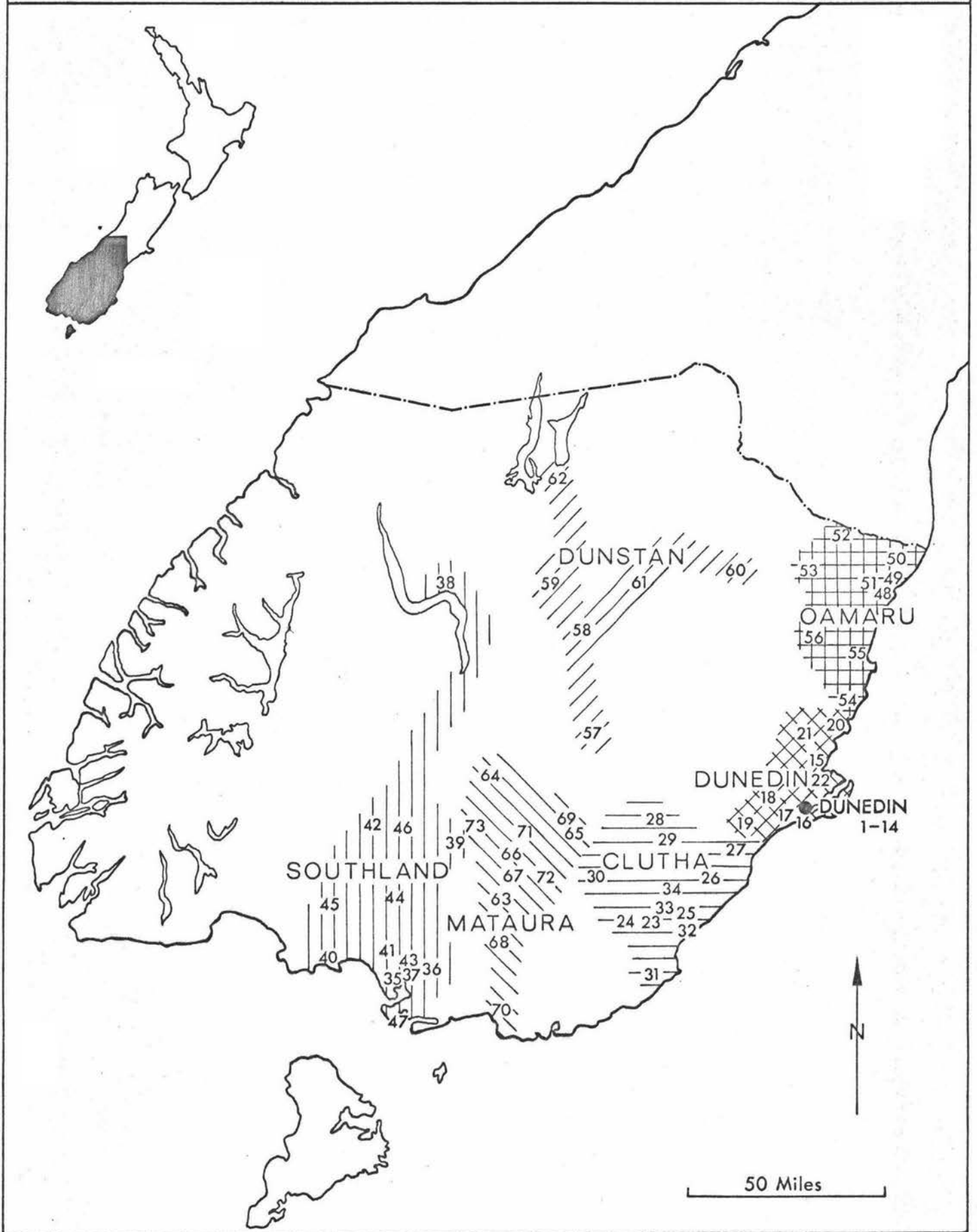
Westminster
Standards

The Westminster
Confession of
Faith

Is a profession of Presbyterian orthodoxy written by a commission of the Westminster Assembly in 1643. This Synod, appointed by the Long Parliament to reform the English Church, approved a final draft of thirty three chapters. The Scottish General Assembly adopted the Confession on 27 August, 1647 and the Westminster Confession has since established itself as a definitive statement of Presbyterian doctrine in the English-speaking world.

- The Westminster Catechisms are the "Longer" and "Shorter" Catechisms once used for teaching in Presbyterian Parish churches and schools.
- The Westminster Directory was adopted by the Church of Scotland in 1649 as its official formula for public worship. It was originally prepared by the Westminster Assembly as a replacement for the Book of Common Prayer.
- Northern Church The popular designation for the pre-1901 Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. This church was constituted in 1862 and comprised all Presbyteries north of the Waitaki river.
- Southern Church The autonomous Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland that existed prior to the 1901 union with the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.
- Sustentation Fund A central fund administered independently by both the Northern and Southern Churches to assure ministers of a basic minimum stipend. Parishes were assessed on the number of communicant members on their rolls to allow the subsidising of smaller and struggling parishes by larger and more consolidated charges.

PRESBYTERIES AND PARISHES IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND, 1897



PRESBYTERIES AND PARISHES IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OFOTAGO AND SOUTHLAND, 1897.Presbytery of Dunedin.City Parishes

1. First Church.
2. Knox Church.
3. St. Andrew's Church.
4. North Dunedin.
5. South Dunedin.
6. Mornington.
7. Anderson's Bay.
8. Kaikorai.
9. Green Island.
10. Caversham.
11. North East Valley.
12. Mosgiel.
13. Ravensbourne.
14. Chalmer's Church.

Rural Parishes.

15. Blueskin and Merton.
16. North East Harbour.
17. East Taieri.
18. North Taieri.
19. West Taieri.
20. Waikouaiti.
21. Strath Taieri.
22. Port Chalmers.

Presbytery of Clutha.Parishes.

23. Clutha.
24. Warepa and Kaihiku.
25. Inchclutha and Stirling.
26. Tokomairiro.
27. Waibola.
28. Lawrence.
29. Waitahuna.
30. Popotunoa.
31. Owaka.
32. Kaitangata.
33. Balclutha.
34. Lovell's Flat.

Presbytery of Southland.Parishes.

35. First Church, Invercargill.
36. Longbush.
37. St. Paul's, Invercargill.
38. Queenstown.
39. Limestone Plains.
40. Riverton.
41. Wallacetown.
42. Taringatura.
43. Waikiwi.
44. Winton.
45. Otautau.
46. Dipton.
47. Bluff.

Presbytery of Oamaru.Parishes.

48. St. Paul's Oamaru.
49. Columba.
50. PapaKaio.
51. Waiareka.
52. Upper Waitaki.
53. Otepopo.
54. Palmerston.
55. Hampden.
56. Macraes and Green Valley.

Presbytery of Dunstan.Parishes.

57. Teviot.
58. Alexandra and Clyde.
59. Cromwell.
60. Naseby.
61. Lauder.
62. Hawea and Wanaka.

Presbytery of Mataura.Parishes.

63. Mataura.
64. Waikaka.
65. Tapanui.
66. Knapdale.
67. Gore.
68. Wyndham.
69. Kelso.
70. Fortrose.
71. Waikaka.
72. Pukerau.
73. Riversdale.

EXPLANATORY NOTETHE SYNOD OF OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND

- The supreme court of the Church.
- Met in Dunedin yearly.
- A legislative, judicial and executive body.
- Made-up of equal numbers of ministers and elders elected by their Presbyteries.
- Presided over by an annually elected non-voting Moderator.

THE PRESBYTERIES.

- Six Presbyteries with executive and limited judicial powers
- Restricted to control of their district and subordinate to the Synod.
- Met monthly.
- Made-up of all ministers and one elder from each parish.
- Presided over by a non-voting Moderator, changed usually every six months.

KIRK SESSIONS.

- Local parish church courts.
- Seventy-three Sessions in the Synod area.
- Made-up of all elders. elected for life, and presided over by the Minister.
- Transmits overtures to Synod through Presbytery.
- Met at least monthly.

DEACON'S COURT.

- Local Parish court.
- Confined to property and financial matters.
- Subordinate to Kirk Session.
- Met at least monthly.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING.

- Made-up of all communicant members in parish.
 - Met at least annually.
 - Elects new elders and deacons.
 - Elects new minister.
 - Makes recommendations to Session.
-

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: FROM UNITY TO DISSENT.

For my good hope is, that ye shall walk as the sons of light in the midst of this wicked generation; that ye shall be as stars in the night season, who yet are not changed into darkness; that ye shall be as wheat among the cockle, and yet that ye shall not change your nature, which ye have received by grace through the fellowship and participation which we have with the Lord Jesus in His body and blood.... 1

John Knox 7 July, 1556.

This thesis attempts to explain the brief appearance in 1897 of a party within the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland. Until the last day of October 1901 there were two Presbyterian churches in New Zealand. The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, commonly called the "Northern Church", was an amalgamation of eight Presbyteries situated north of the Waitaki river, that is, north of the boundary of the former province of Otago. The second Presbyterian Church was the autonomous and provincial Church of Otago and Southland, born with the landing of Free Church of Scotland colonists from the John Wickliffe and the Philip Laing in 1848, pubescent at the formation of a Presbytery of Otago in 1854, and reaching adulthood with the establishment of a supreme governing Synod in 1867. 2

1. John Knox to his friends in Scotland, Works, IV.129. Laing edition (Edinburgh, 1864), IV, 129.
2. The first Synod was constituted on 12 January, 1865 when the former Presbytery of Otago was divided into the Presbyteries of Dunedin and Clutha. The Presbytery of Southland came into existence on 5 April, 1866.

With the formation of the Presbytery of Otago, with the inauguration of the Presbytery of Auckland in 1856, and again with the formation of the Presbytery of Wellington in 1857, the possibility of a national Presbyterian Church for New Zealand was discussed and advocated by ecclesiastical leaders as varied in their Presbyterian heritage as Thomas Burns ³ of Dunedin, who came from the Free Church of Scotland, Wellington's John Macfarlane, ⁴ who came from the Church of Scotland, and the Cameronian James Duncan ⁵ of Foxton. The 1847 Institutes of the Otago Lay Association had set aside endowments to provide for the establishment of additional parishes in Otago, and expressed the hope that there would be "a Presbytery or Presbyteries in New Zealand at the earliest possible date, to be composed of ministers in connection with the Free Church of Scotland in Otago and the other settlements in New Zealand". ⁶ Seven

3. Thomas Burns, first minister to the Otago settlement, arrived in the Philip Laing in April 1848. He was a founding father of the Free Church of Scotland having left his living at the Disruption.
4. John Macfarlane, a Church of Scotland minister, arrived off the Hutt river mouth in February 1840. He became first minister of St. Andrew's Church, Wellington.
5. J.R. Elder mistakenly suggested that James Duncan was "sent out by Relief Church of Scotland" (p.407.) Duncan was sent out by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, a church constituted in 1743 from those who rejected an Erastian settlement for Scotland and who claimed to be the true Kirk of the Covenants. The term "Cameronian" was applied to extreme Covenanters because of the leadership of this group by Richard Cameron in the 17th century. The Reformed Presbyterians united with the Free Church in 1876.
6. James Chisholm, Fifty Years Syne. p.222.

years later, on the occasion of the formation of the Presbytery of Otago, the Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland General Assembly, the Rt. Rev. Dr. James Henderson, forwarded his Church's felicitations and expressed his Church's hope "soon, we trust to be realised, of the constituting of two other Presbyteries in other settlements on the Islands, which, if formed into a Synod, may do much to strengthen and concentrate the Presbyterian cause, and thereby, as we believe, the cause of vital Christianity throughout the Colony" 7

The first serious attempt to translate these dreams of a national Presbyterian Church into practical negotiations occurred in 1861. On 4 January the Presbytery of Auckland instructed its clerk to invite the several Presbyterian ministers of the Colony to a conference that would confine its agenda to a discussion of the feasibility of a general union of all existing Presbyteries in New Zealand. After several exchanges of letters between the Auckland and Otago Presbyteries this conference was finally held in Dunedin on 20 November, 1861. The material difficulties in the way of corporate union were quickly identified - scattered settlement, irregular means of transport, and absence of roading. The conference speedily concluded that the long distances that would need to be travelled and the expenses of such travel, together with the length of time during which ministers would be absent from their pulpits, would neutralise any advantage

7. ibid, p.223.

that might come from establishing a General Assembly as the central legislative, executive, and judicial ecclesiastical court for all New Zealand Presbyterians. As an alternative the conference proposed that three Synods should be created and that all existing Presbyteries should be subordinate to one of these regional courts. The conference planned that a Southern Synod should have the superintendence of the Church in Otago, Southland, and Stewart Island; a Northern Synod would embrace Auckland, Taranaki, and Hawkes Bay; while a Central Synod would govern Presbyterians in Canterbury, Wellington, Nelson and Marlborough. It was intended that these Synods meet annually and that they exercise final jurisdiction over the affairs of the Church within their domains, being subject in matters of national policy, to the decisions of a General Assembly that would meet every second year.

The findings of this conference were transmitted to Presbyteries and Kirk sessions for their consideration. On 21 November, 1862, exactly one year later, a convocation of ministers and elders met in Auckland to assess the responses made by Presbyteries and Sessions to the union plan. There was unanimous support for the basis of union and the convocation recommend the immediate constitution of a General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, at the same time making one fateful amendment to the agreed basis. Article II of the conference

agreement had asserted "that the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, the Directory of Public Worship, the form of the Presbyterian Church government, and the Second Book of Discipline, are adopted by this Church as her subordinate standard." For reasons discussed in detail in chapter two General Assembly amended this article by adding the words "in so far as these latter are applicable to the circumstances of the Church". A.B. Todd and William Will, commissioners from the Otago Presbytery, concurred with the change made and returned to Dunedin expecting to be congratulated by their Otago brethren on a task well done. Their expectation was not fulfilled and instead of a reception fit for heroes they were vilified as traitors to Free Church orthodoxy. When the Presbytery of Otago met on 23 December, 1862, to hear their report, conservative Presbyters were quick to warn that a Church that allowed hymns in place of metrical psalms and musical instruments instead of precentors was quite likely to be planning to subvert the doctrinal orthodoxy of the Otago and Southland faithful. A motion of protest that included within its text an abstention from recognition of the united Church until the original basis for union was restored, was carried by fourteen votes to six. The Otago Presbytery had opted in and out of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand in a little under one month.

A second attempt was made to unite all New Zealand Presbyterians in one Church in September 1864 when D. Bruce and James Duncan of the Northern Church approached the Otago Presbytery and attempted to alleviate southern fears of heterodoxy and liturgical innovation. The Presbytery responded favourably to this embassy and resolved "that a Union be consummated on the basis that the supreme jurisdiction in all matters of worship, government and discipline, and the temporalities of the Church, be vested in the several Synods".⁸ This resolution was received by the General Assembly on 17 October, 1864 and despite the fact that its adoption meant curtailing Assembly's authority it was agreed to. The General Assembly's accommodation, generous though it was, accomplished nothing. On 13 January, 1865 the Presbytery of Otago met to receive Session returns on the Bruce - Duncan proposals. Only four of the Presbytery's thirteen Sessions accepted the proposals without amendment and faced with this lack of unanimity the Presbytery informed the General Assembly that "instead of seeking in the meantime a union of incorporation, they would be satisfied with a union of co-operation".⁹

Six years later, in 1871, the Southern Church, since January 1865 governed by a Synod, received a third overture

8. ibid, (Meeting: 21 September, 1864) p.48.

9. Assembly, 1864. p.22.

from the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand inviting her to find some basis for union. The policy of co-operation that the Southern Church proposed in the resolution of 13 January 1865 had by this time resulted in combined missionary endeavour, exchanges of ministers, and a demand for combined theological training facilities. Voices were now raised to ask why co-operation could not become corporation? A new union committee was formed by the Southern Church; and in December 1874 a basis was brought forward that attempted to obviate doctrinal differences that might exist by allowing a place for "the rights of conscience".¹⁰ This plan proposed that for the first five years the three Synods should have complete control within their districts and that they should decide questions of liturgical change and interpretation of the Westminster standards. The Assembly agreed with these proposals but strongly advocated that cases of heresy and ministerial discipline should be reserved to the decisions of General Assembly. The Southern Church Synod demurred and an impasse was reached. Faced with a deadlock some ecumenists began to lower their sights. In late 1874 Canterbury Presbyterians moved away from support for national Presbyterian union to an alternative plan for union of the Presbyterian communities of Canterbury and Otago, to create a Presbyterian Church of the South Island.

10. Synod, 1875. Appendix. p.11.

The advantages that would accrue from such a merger were easily stated. The two provinces bordered on one another and problems of travelling and communication were comparatively insignificant. However, it was now the General Assembly's turn to apply the yeto. By an overwhelming majority the Assembly decreed that either the Southern Church entered the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand or there would be no union at all. 11

Between 1881 and 1885 a fourth attempt was made to incorporate the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland within the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. In 1881 the Southern Church Synod was petitioned by the Presbytery of Oamaru to appoint a union committee to recommence negotiations with the Northern Church. The prayer of the petitioners was supported by the influential Dr. D.M. Stuart of Knox Church, Dunedin,¹² and following Synod's adoption of the petition Dr. W. Salmond¹³ was appointed convenor of the committee. By 1882 Salmond's committee had prepared a basis for Synod to consider. The committee proposed that the government of the proposed united Church should be centralised in a General Assembly that would meet in Dunedin, that to prevent hasty Church

11. Assembly, 1875. p.10.

12. The Rev. D.M. Stuart was inducted as the first minister of Knox Church, Dunedin, in 1860. In 1872 he received a D.D. from the University of St. Andrew's. He was minister of Knox until his death in 1894.

13. The Rev. Dr. William Salmond was Professor of Theology in Dunedin from 1876-1886. In 1886 he resigned his chair to accept the chair of Philosophy at the University of Otago.

legislation by General Assembly a Barrier Act should be enforced, and that there be no Synods. When this plan was submitted to the Otago Church courts for their consideration less than half the Kirk sessions replied, and of these only seven gave unqualified approval to the proposal, while four found the plan unacceptable. Disappointed by this lack of support, Salmond in 1883 warned the Synod that union would be more difficult to complete with every year that passed. In his report to the 1884 Synod he despaired of success and lamented that the "collapse of the present effort may be accepted as final abandonment of the idea, adding, as is inevitable, moral to ever-growing administrative difficulties".¹⁴ Salmond made a last bid for success in 1885, proposing to the Synod that negotiations with the Northern Church should be at once renewed. His motion secured forty-six votes, but with thirty-seven votes¹⁵ against him he knew that if he proceeded he would risk schism in his Church.

A fifth series of negotiations began in 1891, following an overture to the Southern Church Synod from the Presbytery of Clutha, and although a motion that a committee "positively consider the matter of union" was carried by only thirty-six votes to thirty-one,¹⁶ a new

14. Synod, 1884. Appendix. p.25.

15. ibid, 1885. p.27.

16. ibid, 1891. p.22.

committee was formed under the convenorship of A.H.Stobo.¹⁷ Stobo commenced his new task with vigour and initiative. Acting entirely on his own authority he posted a questionnaire to all ministers within the Synod of Otago and Southland asking them to ascertain the attitudes of their elders to the principle of union. Armed with the resulting information, and ignoring suggestions that he should lay his returns on the table of the house, Stobo announced that the officebearers of the Southern Church were overwhelmingly in favour of union. Stobo informed the 1892 Synod, that because of this unexpected demand for action he had felt obliged to anticipate Synod's instructions and was now ready to place a new plan for union before the house.

Stobo's plan was a masterpiece of compromise. He dealt with the difficulties of costly ministerial access to meetings of General Assembly by allowing Presbyteries to appoint as their Assembly representatives those ministers they considered best able to be set free for the several weeks involved. He appeased those who were insistent that there should be no abolition of the Synod of Otago and Southland by providing that "the Synod of Otago and Southland be continued as a Synod, leaving the Northern

17. The Rev. Andrew H. Stobo, a Free Church of Scotland Minister, was ordained in Invercargill in 1860. Ill health demanded periodic withdrawals from his parish responsibilities and required him to leave the active ministry from 1879-1882.

Church to make such arrangements as to subordinate courts within its own bounds as it should see fit".¹⁸ The General Assembly was to decide its meeting places to suit the exigencies of its business and the Theological Hall was to be under the general control of the General Assembly, but under the financial control of the Synod of Otago and Southland, the ecclesiastical court that had endowed the Hall's chairs.

Stobo balked at the suggestion that his plan should at once be submitted to Presbyteries and Kirk sessions under the principle of the Barrier Act, preferring instead to hold a preliminary conference with the Northern Church to ascertain the acceptability of his proposals. When this meeting was held in 1894 Stobo engaged in some straight ecclesiastical horse-trading. Well aware that a powerful minority in his Church suspected the orthodoxy of the Northern Church, because of its seemingly undefined limits to the doctrinal latitude allowed its office bearers, Stobo persuaded the Northern Church to agree to implement a Declaratory Act, an act that would clarify where in the Confession of Faith private interpretation was allowed, and the limits of this freedom. In return he promised to attempt to persuade the Synod to accept liberty of opinion over Marriage to a Deceased Wife's Sister. ¹⁹

18. Synod, 1893. p.68.

19. This controversy is fully discussed in chapter two.

Stobo's political acumen turned the tide for the pro-union supporters in the Southern Church. The Colony had renounced provincial government and Stobo judged that the Church was ready to do likewise. Transportation was yearly becoming speedier, safer, and more comfortable, thus making invalid the old arguments that centralised Church government was rendered undesirable in a New Zealand that consisted of several colonies rather than one. Stobo presented his plan at the right psychological moment to turn defeat into the beginning of a victory, and having turned the tide he chose the right moment to resign in favour of James Gibb - the young and dynamic minister of First Church, Dunedin, who in 1894 was elected convenor of the Synod union committee.²⁰

Yet there was a price to pay for Stobo's brilliant and speedy turning of the tables on those who believed that the union issue was dead and buried. A strong and vocal minority saw the resurrection of the union issue as an attempt by **dangerous** liberals, both within and without the Southern Church, to erode the Church's orthodoxy and destroy her autonomy. Goldminers, squatters, and dissatisfied workmen had already disfigured the Free Church Zion that the founding fathers had planted in Otago and Southland. Now it seemed that the integrity and future

20. James Gibb was minister of First Church, Dunedin, from 1886-1903. He was elected the First Moderator of the united Presbyterian Church of New Zealand in 1901, and received a D.D. for his work in uniting the two Churches.

of Otago's Church was at stake. The union issue acted as a magnet to attract to itself the fears and prejudices of men who felt their dream was being destroyed. At last conservative Presbyterians in the Southern Church had found an identifiable enemy that might be blamed for all they believed to be wrong with their Church and with a godless society. The forces of dissent coalesced against union and the unionists, and from this union of dissent was born the Church Defence Society of Otago and Southland.

CHAPTER TWO.

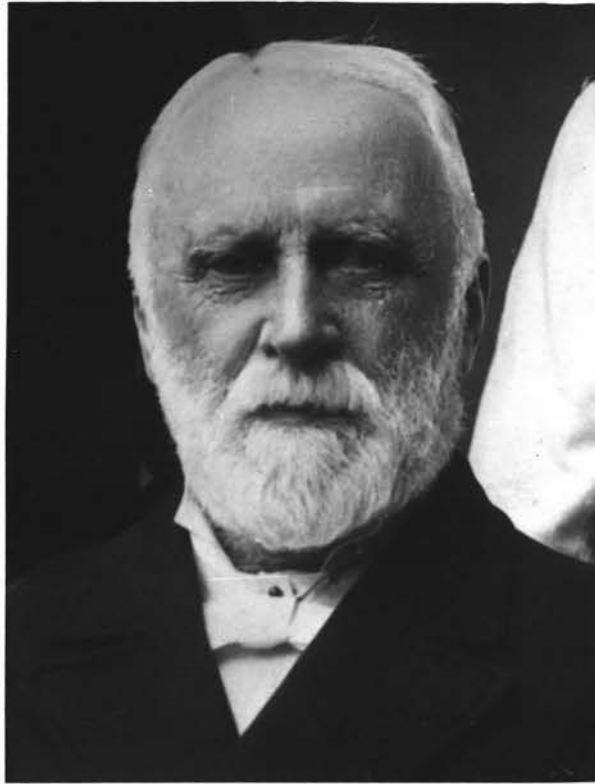
FROM DISSENT INTO PARTY.

"Nothing is more abhorrent to a reasonable man than an appeal to a majority, for it consists of a few strong men who lead, of knaves who temporise, of the feeble who are hangers on, and of the multitudes who follow without the slightest idea what they want". Goethe. ¹

On the afternoon of Tuesday, October 26th, 1897, about thirty Presbyterian ministers and elders, all from south of the Waitaki River, and all opposed to the mooted union of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland with the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, met in the Y.W.C.A. rooms in Dunedin. Although opposition from powerful and vocal Southern Church minorities had sabotaged all previous union attempts, this was the first occasion that Southern Church defenders of ecclesiastical autonomy and orthodoxy had organised themselves into a formally structured defence bloc. The press was not admitted to this inaugural meeting and it was not until Monday 29th November, 1897, that the Church Defence Society was formally constituted, its officers appointed, its basis for membership adopted, and a statement released to the provincial newspapers.

The joint - convenors of the newly formed society were both old opponents of church union and respected

1. Goethe: Quoted by Rutherford Waddell, Notebooks, 13, p.90.



R.R.M. Sutherland: A leading
"Defender"

leaders in the Southern Church. Alex. C. 'Sheepshead' Begg,² elder of First Church, Dunedin, since 1875, member of the Otago Church Board of Property, and fierce opponent of all attempts to replace metrical psalms and precentors with hymn books and instrumental music,³ had introduced an anti-union petition on the opening day of the 1897 Synod. Begg's co-convenor, the Rev. R.R.M. Sutherland, a former Scottish Free Church minister who had ministered to the Kaikorai Parish, Dunedin, since 1879, was a keen Synod debater and committeeman, an eager correspondent in Church and Provincial newspapers, and a recognised church leader, having in 1894 been Moderator of Synod.

Despite the election of Sutherland⁴ and Begg as co-convenors, the real tactician and spokesman for the Church Defence Society was the Clerk of Synod, the Rev.

2. A.C. Begg was born in 1839 at Liberton near Edinburgh. He arrived in Otago in 1859 on the Alpine to be in turn farmer, stock and station agent, and businessman. A Justice of the Peace, a member of the Otago Harbour Board, of the Dunedin Charitable Aid Board, Dunedin Licensing Committee, and of the Otago Acclimatisation Committee, Begg was defeated in the 1896 parliamentary election when he stood for Dunedin City. He earned the name "Sheepshead Begg" because in his political campaigning he was forever maintaining that the poor of Otago had only a "sheepshead" to dine on.
3. J.R. Elder, The History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, p.227.
4. R.R.M. Sutherland, a Free Church of Scotland minister, was in 1879 inducted as minister of the Kaikorai parish. In 1894 he was elected Moderator of the Synod of Otago and Southland. He was a member of the Public Questions Committee and Theological College Committee at the 1897 Synod.

William Bannerman,⁵ who by virtue of his arrival in Otago in 1853, was with William Will (the latter, paradoxically to become a major "Foe" of the Church Defence Society) a 'Father' of the Synod. Since 1876 Bannerman had been able to use his office as Clerk to delay union by questioning and attacking the constitutional propriety of the proposals brought before the Synod. The formation of the new society was to give him a "party" that could be briefed in tactics and relied upon to support his protests.

The Constitution adopted by the meeting of 29th November, 1897, made clear that the "Defenders" were against any departures from provincial church autonomy and doctrinal rectitude. The text is as follows:

Name: The Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland Defence Society.

- Objects: 1. To instruct and interest the office-bearers and people of the Church in the principles of Presbyterianism, and as to their rights and privileges as Presbyterians.
2. To set forth both the bearing on the organisations and work of the Church of Otago and Southland of union with the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand on the Basis adopted by last Synod.⁶

5. William Bannerman was clerk of Synod from 1866 to 1901. Born in Kirkcaldy, Fifeshire, in 1822 he was a student at the time of the Disruption and offered himself as a theological student for the ministry of the Free Church. After training at the Free Church Theological College, Edinburgh, he furthered his studies in Geneva under the Calvinist Church historian Merle d' Aubigne. Bannerman reached Otago on the Stately in 1854 and remained a parish minister until in 1885 he was forced to resign following a serious buggy accident in the previous year.
6. See below, Appendix B (i).

3. To secure, in the event of union, the retention of the Otago Synod as an ecclesiastical court, subordinate to a representative assembly of the United Church.
4. To secure that union on any basis shall not be completed until such basis, in its final form, has been submitted to and accepted with substantial unanimity by Presbyteries and Sessions representing the membership of the Church.

Membership: The Association shall consist of all office-bearers and members of the Church who approve of the above objects and enrol themselves as members.

Management: The affairs of the association shall be managed by a central committee in Dunedin in conjunction with district committees throughout the bounds of the Church. 7

What factors led to the formation of the Church Defence Society?

The erratic fortunes of the union cause within the Church of Otago and Southland have already been outlined in chapter one where it was suggested that the sudden revival of the union cause in the 1890's, and its speedy progress toward success, triggered off a strong reaction from the dissatisfied and disaffected in the Southern Church. They saw the new plans to unite the Northern and Southern Churches as a conspiracy bent on the destruction of the Free Church ethos in the South. Church union became their arch-villain; the focus for their pent-up antagonism against central government, theological revision, and sassenach ways. Obviously their disaffection did not spring up overnight, but over fifty years.

The formation of the Church Defence Society in October 1897 came as a climax to years of growing apprehension and fear of changes that had taken place within the Otago Church and Province. A minority that risks ex-communication, and the division of their Church, by organising a party to oppose an agreement already confirmed by a majority of office-bearers in their Church, is clearly determined as desperate. To explain their determination and desperation it is necessary to understand the development of their fears, and to isolate those changes in Otago and Southland life that they believed were deleterious to true religion and moral order.

Fear of theological revision played an important part in the clashes that eventually led to the formation of a defensive league. Suspicion that a less than orthodox theology, believed to be present in the Northern Church, might be forced on the now numerically inferior⁸ Southern Church, had grown rapidly amongst Southern Church conservatives from 1862. The occasion for this explosion of suspicion has already been identified - the unwise decision on the part of the Otago and Southland Church representatives at the union discussions that took place prior to the formation of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. The Synod of Otago and Southland had

8. OUTLOOK, 6 March 1897, p.67.
 Statistics of Church membership as at April 1896.
 Northern Church 86,712 communicant members.
 Southern Church 73,231 communicant members.

agreed that the theological and organisational basis for the future united Church should be the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Longer and Shorter Catechisms, the Directory for Public Worship, the form of Presbyterian Church Government, and the First and Second Books of Discipline, the traditional standards of Scottish and English Presbyterians.

The Southern Church representatives, William Will and A.B. Todd, agreed to add to this formula the words "as far as these latter are applicable to the circumstances of the Church". By so doing Will and Todd gave occasion for a dramatic release of suspicion amongst even some of the moderates in the Southern Church. This addition, intended to assure a self-governing church the right to make minor changes in its orders of worship and polity, became a focal point for southern opposition and resulted in the Presbytery of Otago demanding the restoration of the original formula.

The moral scruples of southern Presbyterians provided the next occasion for the development of partisan feeling in the Church of Otago and Southland. The issue was that of a most unlikely situation of marital affinity, marriage to a deceased wife's sister.

Until 1835 marriage to a deceased wife's sister was voidable in Civil Law within the United Kingdom. In 1835 Lord Lyndhurst's Marriage Act ⁹ expressly invalidated such

9. 5 and 6. Will IV c.54

marriages. Before 1835 the civil courts had paid no heed to such unions. From 1835 they ^{were} expressly prohibited and the offspring of any such union were illegitimate. The situation was complicated for New Zealanders by the fact that the New Zealand legislature had in 1880 made marriage with a deceased wife's sister valid within the colony. This decision was made (against the wishes of Maori members of the House of Representatives) ¹⁰ in order to make New Zealand law conformable with that of the colonies of Victoria, South Australia and Queensland. In the third reading debate on the Deceased Wife's Sister Marriage Bill Downie Stewart admitted that there were "perhaps not more than a dozen" such marriages in New Zealand.¹¹ However, the heavy trans-Tasman traffic in job hunters that marked the Vogelite era made consistency of law on this matter desirable.

Frontier life demanded quick re-marriage to allow for adequate care of children and the retention of the working efficiency of the bread winner. Despite the advantage to society that might accrue from allowing

10. Maori members saw the proposed enactment as a threat to the replacement of Maori marriage customs by European. They condemned the bill because it made possible a return to the former Maori custom of inter-marriage within degrees forbidden by European religion and law. See: NZPD, Vol.37, 1880, pp.138ff. Committee and Third Reading debates.
11. NZPD, Vol.37, 1880, p.303. Henry Huth, in a pamphlet of 1874, entitled The Marriage of Near of Kin Considered with Respect To The Laws of Nations, the Results of Experience, and the Teachings of Biology notes that in that year one in thirty-three widowers in England married their deceased wife's sister.p.356.

husbands to marry in this degree, for conscientious Presbyterians the prohibition of this degree of marriage in the Westminster Confession and in the Larger Catechism¹² made for a dilemma of conscience; should they obey the church or the colonial law?

Despite the British Parliament's consistent refusal to allow this degree of marriage and notwithstanding the Biblical and Confessional prohibitions, the General Assembly of the Northern Church decided in 1883, "That as the law of the land does not contravene 'anything expressly laid down in Scripture', and there is diversity of opinion... it shall be left to the individual conscience of ministers and members to determine what course they shall pursue as to celebrating and entering upon such marriages as they have to give account to God".¹³

This decision caused deep concern amongst many southern churchmen. They quickly realised that their belief in an ecclesiastical authority, one that was standardised upon an agreed confessional interpretation of the canonical scriptures, was being challenged by the assertion that the Church of their own time must assume the responsibility for making ethical and theological decisions, and

12. Westminster Confession of Faith, XXIV.4. Larger Catechism. Question 139. In the Confession, Leviticus, chapter eighteen, is cited in support of the prohibition of this marital degree. It should be noted that the Biblical citations in support of the doctrine of the Confession were inserted at the last moment at the command of the Long Parliament and against the wishes of the Westminster divines.

13. Assembly, 1883. p.157.

these decisions should be based upon the Church's own interpretation of scripture. Moreover, this interpretation might conflict with the Confession's understanding of the same scripture. The fears of the more rigid confessionalists seemed to be justified by the tone of a petition presented to the Synod of Otago and Southland by the Presbytery of Dunedin in 1888.

The Presbytery petitioned:

Whereas doubts and difficulties have arisen regarding the meaning of some part of the 'Confession', and regarding the nature and extent of the obligation under which office-bearers are placed by discharging it at their ordinations; and whereas the 'Confession does not claim to be a divinely-inspired document but acknowledges that 'all Synods or Councils since the Apostles time - whether general or particular - may err, and may have erred; therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith or practice, but are to be used as a help in both'. (See Confession; Chapter XXI: 4) It is therefore hereby overtured... to declare the view which Synod takes of difficult and disputed passages in the Confession, and to define the sense in which... ministers or other office-bearers may be permitted to regard such passages in consistence with their ordination vow. ¹⁴

Not all Southern Churchmen thought this way. The conservatives amongst the Otago Presbyterians saw the issue as black and white. Many of them were the children of Scots who in the Disruption of 1843 had rebelled against civil interference in the affairs of the Kirk and in defiance of the establishment formed a "Free Church". They had refused to allow the civil authority to dictate to them in matters of religion in Scotland and were equally determined to allow no insurpation by the state of the

Church's right to determine matters of faith and morality in New Zealand. The Northern Church appeared to them to have compromised standards by allowing the legitimacy of the New Zealand law, and for some conservatives union with a church that could act with such disregard for her heritage was tantamount to union with a heterodox church. They would have no union with men who sold their birth-right.

A "Fundamentalist" versus "Modernist" controversy added to the tension of Southern Church leaders during the 1890's. The "Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister" issue was raised at a time when the literalist interpretation of the Bible was challenged by the newly emergent "Higher Criticism" and the association of the leaders of the pro-union and Confessional revisionist group with this approach added to the distrust of the anti-union faction. Michael Watt ¹⁵ - a tutor at the Theological Hall, Dunedin, from its foundation in 1874 - gave a clear account of the form of this new technique in Biblical interpretation, which was then (by colonial standards) "radical" teaching. In an article written in 1901, he gave an explanation of a "Modernist" view of scripture that he had obviously accepted and taught for some time.

15. Michael Watt, M.A., was ordained Minister of Green Island in 1864. He was Moderator of the Synod in 1880 and was Moderator of the General Assembly of the United Church in 1903. He died in 1922.

The early reformers had no rigid, hard and fast teaching on the subject of what constituted inspired Scripture.... The early Reformers acknowledged that there was a human element accompanying inspiration and that men, speaking under the influence of the Spirit of God in the main context of their message, were not preserved from the effects of defective knowledge, or prevented from falling into little mistakes in the mere accessories of the message. 16

To the "Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister"

question and the development of "higher critical" techniques in Biblical interpretation a further issue that brought vigorous counter attack from anti-unionist Confessionalists must be added - a growing dissatisfaction amongst the more thoughtful Presbyterians with the Westminster Confession's statement on Predestination. 17

In 1888, a memorial was presented to Synod, over the name of fifteen ministers and elders, including R.R.M. Sutherland and Alex C. Begg, against the alleged erroneous teaching in a pamphlet entitled 'The Reign of Grace' written by the Rev. Professor William Salmond, who was convenor of the Synod Union Committee in the mid and late 1880's. At the 1890 Synod, Alex C. Begg brought a charge of heresy against the Rev. James Gibb, an ardent pro-unionist and convenor of the Synod Union Committee from 1894 to the consummation of Union. The complaint centred on Gibb's statement that "My very soul revolts against the statement of the Doctrine of Election as set

16. Outlook, 2 November, 1901. pp.4-5.

17. The Westminster Confession of Faith, III. "Of God's Eternal Decree."

forth in the Standards of the Church, the Confession of Faith, and the Shorter Catechism". 18.

As the debates on these doctrinal matters grew in acrimony, revisionist Presbyterians made repeated attempts to gain some liberation from what they felt to be the dead hand of the Westminster Confession. The revisionists looked to Scotland where a "Declaratory Act", granting liberty of opinion on certain matters that did not enter into the substance of the Reformed Faith, had already been granted by the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in 1879. In 1890 Synod received from the Rev. Professor John Dunlop the report of a Committee on the Confession of Faith 19 that led to proposed legislation for the adoption of a "Declaratory Act" being sent down to Presbyteries and Kirk Sessions, for their comment and decision, "under the principle of the Barrier Act". When returns were counted in 1893, twenty-three Kirk Sessions were found to approve the proposed Act (two with suggested amendments), and four Sessions disapproved. When the Rev. J.M. Fraser, of Chalmers Parish, Dunedin, 20 moved, with Bannerman as seconder, "That Synod do not adopt the proposed Declaratory Act in the view of some of its statements being not in accordance with the doctrinal constitution of this Church" the motion was defeated by ninety votes

18. Synod, 1890. p.74.

19. Synod, 1890, p.15.

20. James Murdock Fraser served in Northern Church parishes until 1877, whereafter he remained south of the Waitaki. Chalmers Church, Dunedin, required that its minister conduct public worship in Gaelic.

to fifteen.²¹

The Declaratory Act passed in 1893 made the Church, through its assembled representatives in Synod, the arbiter in any clash of opinion on what matters were or were not to be left to the private judgement of individual churchmen. It is not surprising that this decision was followed by prompt action on the part of both the revisionists and the pro-unionists to attempt a once and for all settlement of the "Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister" issue. An overture presented before the 1894 Synod reveals how closely the Union and Marriage issues had become entwined.

"Whereas, a very large majority of the office-bearers and members of this Church are desirous of Union with the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand:

Whereas, the opinion and practice of the Church of the North regarding marriage with a deceased wife's sister are at variance with the opinion and practice of this Church as to present an insuperable barrier to the consummation of the Union so much desired:

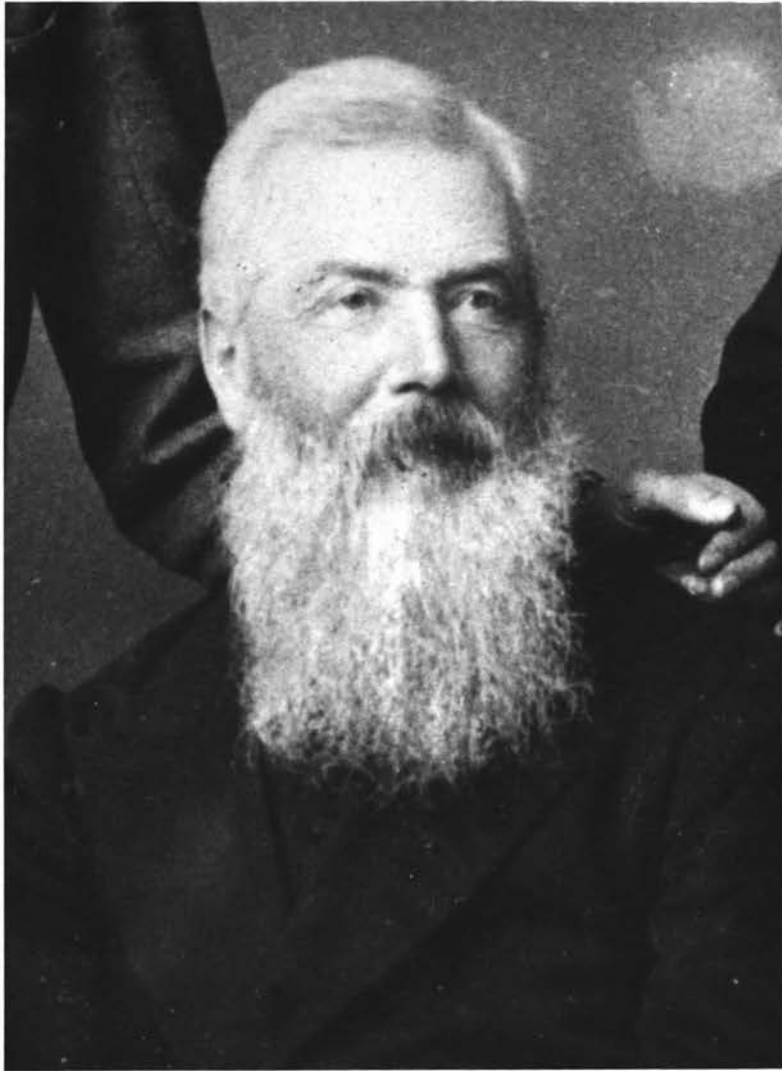
Whereas, marriage with the sister of a deceased wife is sanctioned by the civil law of this country:

And Whereas, some members of our own Church have contracted such marriages: It is Hereby Humbly Overtured by the Presbytery of Dunedin... to take these premises into its very serious consideration, and to remove the foresaid barrier to Union".²²

In 1895, on the motion of William Will, the Synod resolved "in accordance with the last article of the Declaratory Act 1893, without in any way commending or

21. Synod, 1893, p.22.

22. Synod, 1894, p.2.



William Bannerman:
"Nestor of the anti-unionists"?

authorizing such marriages, 'that it shall be left to the individual conscience'." ²³ A spate of violent newspaper correspondence followed this decision and several pamphlets carried the warfare into the homes of southern Presbyterians. Bannerman revealed the perplexity of the confessionalist anti-unionists when he described the Synodal decision as "utterly at variance with the fundamental principle of the Presbyterian Church. That principle is that the Word of God is the only rule of faith and duty". ²⁴ In 1897 the anti-unionist forces, despite increasing majorities against their protests to Synod, raised this issue again and again as an example of the dangerous heterodoxy in which the Church was involving herself in attempting to accommodate the northern Presbyterians. The "Synod Jottings" in the Christian Outlook of November, 1897, called Bannerman "the Nestor of the anti-unionists" and quoted him as stating at Synod "Marriage to a Deceased Wife's Sister was an integral part of the confessional doctrine... No Church has the power to legislate away its constitution". ²⁵ Alex C. Begg gave a fascinating ⁷ turn of phrase to the same theme: "A Deceased Wife's Sister's petticoats were being used as a screen to hide the battering ram that was to destroy the Synod". ²⁶ This issue, the theme of a Gilbertian

23. Synod, 1894, p.20.

24. William Bannerman, Resolution of Synod and Pamphlet by 'Leicus'. Relative to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister, p.3.

25. Outlook. 6 November 1897, p.483.

26. ibid, p.483.

comedy,²⁷ was for some southern churchmen a test-case by which they decided the orthodoxy and morality of their acquaintances. Because most Otago pro-unionists were also liberals in Biblical interpretation and in ethics, they failed the test and were suspected of planning to subvert the integrity of the Southern Church.

The adoption of the Declaratory Act and the subsequent 1894 decision in favour of liberty of conscience in the "Deceased Wife's Sister" marriage issue, were bitter pills for the anti-revisionists to swallow. The passing of the Declaratory Act cut the ground from beneath the feet of those conservatives who argued that the Confession was an unalterable foundation constitution to which the Church must give unqualified agreement. The Synod had asserted its right to amend its statements of belief and by this assertion had declared that a majority of nineteenth century Otago Presbyterians would decide the affairs of the Church in Otago and Southland. Yet, despite defeat on the floor of the

27. In *Iolanthe*, written in 1882, W.S. Gilbert has the Fairy Queen make Strephon decide on a Parliamentary career. She promises the Peers assembled.

'You shall sit if he sees reason,
Through the grouse and salmon season,
He shall end the cherished rights
You enjoy on Friday Nights
He shall prick that annual blister
Marriage with deceased wife's sister.

From 1835 until 1907 acts intended to legalize marriage with a deceased wife's sister were defeated at nearly every session of the British Parliament.

Synod and in voting returns from Presbyteries and Sessions on both crucial questions, the anti-revisionists were in 1894 and 1895 a powerful and vocal minority, who by appeals to the constitution of their forefathers could expect to increase their following and could hope that some future Synod might rescind the recent objectionable decisions.

After these clear defeats the anti-revisionists needed time to build up their forces for a counter-attack but time was the one thing that they were not given. In 1895 the Synod Union Committee, under the determined leadership of James Gibb, pressed on to find a basis of Union acceptable to a majority of Southern Church members. In the 1896 Synod a basis was accepted by a majority of seventy-seven votes to twenty-six²⁸ and was sent down to Presbyteries and Sessions for approval or rejection, under the "principle of the Barrier Act". From this point the position of the anti-revisionist and anti-unionist member became increasingly desperate. The likelihood of approval for the basis by subordinate Church courts gave birth to the realisation that unless they acted quickly and forcefully their Provincial Church would be swallowed up within the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, their theological reservations would be treated with scant respect by a united church built upon a foundation much

28. Synod, 1896. pp.22-27.

broader than their Free Church basis, and that their protestations over such matters as organs and hymn books would carry little weight against the overwhelmingly revisionist temper of the Northern Church.

Presbytery representatives at the Synod that met in October - November 1897 were well warned in advance by a prolific and strong-worded correspondence in both the provincial and ecclesiastical press that "Union" would be the burning issue at that session of Synod. In early March "Veritas", writing to the editor of Outlook, had supported Union with the claims that greater solidarity, deepened enthusiasms, Presbyterian prestige, greater theological stability, increased missionary opportunities, and improved theological education, would result.²⁹ In answer "Fidelity to Principle" accused "Veritas" of seeking union on "sordid grounds... for the sake of filthy lucre" and objected that the prepared basis gave "an entirely new constitution to the Church, setting aside certain standards that belong to the Church of Otago".³⁰ This correspondent went on to predict: "In the United Church the teaching of our Ministers is not to be directed and tested by the Confession of Faith as the Church's accepted interpretation of Scripture, but, by the opinions, it may be, of a majority of three, or maybe one, who like the Moderates of the Church of Scotland, may have

29. Outlook, March 6, p.71.

30. Outlook, March 20, p.94ff.

adopted Socinian ³¹ or other erroneous views of Scripture."

The claim that the constitution of the Church of Otago and Southland could not be altered, the demand that the 'Westminster Confession' interpret Scripture, ³² and the ~~juendo~~ ^{juendo} that the pro-unionists were betrayers of the Free Church heritage, were the bases of the anti-revisionist and anti-unionist attacks before and after the 1897 Synod. The revisionist and pro-unionist reply is typified by the answer of "Veritas" to "Fidelity to Principle" where "Veritas" maintained the right of a Church in the Reformed tradition to ever reform herself in the light of a better knowledge of Scripture.

"Veritas" retorted; "Of course, no Church teaching that the Scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice can have a creed or confession as anything else than a subordinate standard".

In mid 1897 the anti-revisionists obtained legal opinions from Messrs. F.R. Chapman and W.C. MacGregor, ³³

31. "Socinianism" grew from the doctrine of Lelio Sozzini (Socinus) and his nephew Fausto Sozzini, 16th century "heretics". "Fidelity to Principle" used the term to suggest that his opponents interpreted scripture in such a way as to denude it of its miraculous content. In nineteenth century sectarian controversy the term "Socinian" was used to brand opponents as upholders of Unitarian views.
32. The Westminster Confession of Faith. 1. i.
33. W.C. MacGregor was a member of the Dunedin legal firm of Smith, MacGregor and Sinclair. MacGregor, a brilliant young lawyer, was an interested party in this dispute. His father was the Rev. Dr. James MacGregor, a Professor of Divinity in New College, Edinburgh, prior to the Disruption. F.R. Chapman was a senior member of the legal firm and a frequent opponent of Sir Robert Stout. See Cyclopedia of New Zealand. Vol.4, p.241, and An Encyclopedia of New Zealand. Vol.1. pp.333-334. For a fuller account of their opinion see Appendix C (i)

who argued that doctrinal revision and church union were violations of the original constitution of the Southern Church and a breach of contract with the foundation donors of property now used by the Southern Church.

The momentary advantage gained by the anti-unionists through the publication of the Chapman-MacGregor opinion was quickly cancelled by the astuteness of the revisionist and pro-union leaders who sought and gained a contrary opinion from Sir Robert Stout.³⁴ With cutting clarity Sir Robert exposed several basic fallacies in the argument presented by his learned opponents. Stout pointed out that the Church of Otago and Southland, as such, held no property whatsoever, for all Presbyterian Synod holdings were held by a corporation, namely the Otago Presbyterian Church Board of Property.

He went on to announce that there is nothing in the Presbyterian Church of Otago Lands Act, 1866, to declare what creed the Presbyterian Church of Otago is to profess. Stout then posed a question that had as its premise the fact that the Westminster Confession of Faith, the basic confessional standard appealed to by the anti-unionists, itself declared that Synods had the right to deal with ecclesiastical matters.³⁵ Sir Robert, who delighted in playing the part of the cat amongst the ecclesiastical

34. W.P. ~~Morell~~ notes that Stout's association with Vogel was particularly unpopular in Dunedin. See An Encyclopedia of New Zealand, Vol.3, pp.321-333.

35. The Westminster Confession of Faith, XXXI, iii.

pigeons, then asked the rhetorical question: "If this court is not competent to deal with ecclesiastical matters, then can it be called a Church in the meaning of Chapter 31 of the 'Confession of Faith'?"

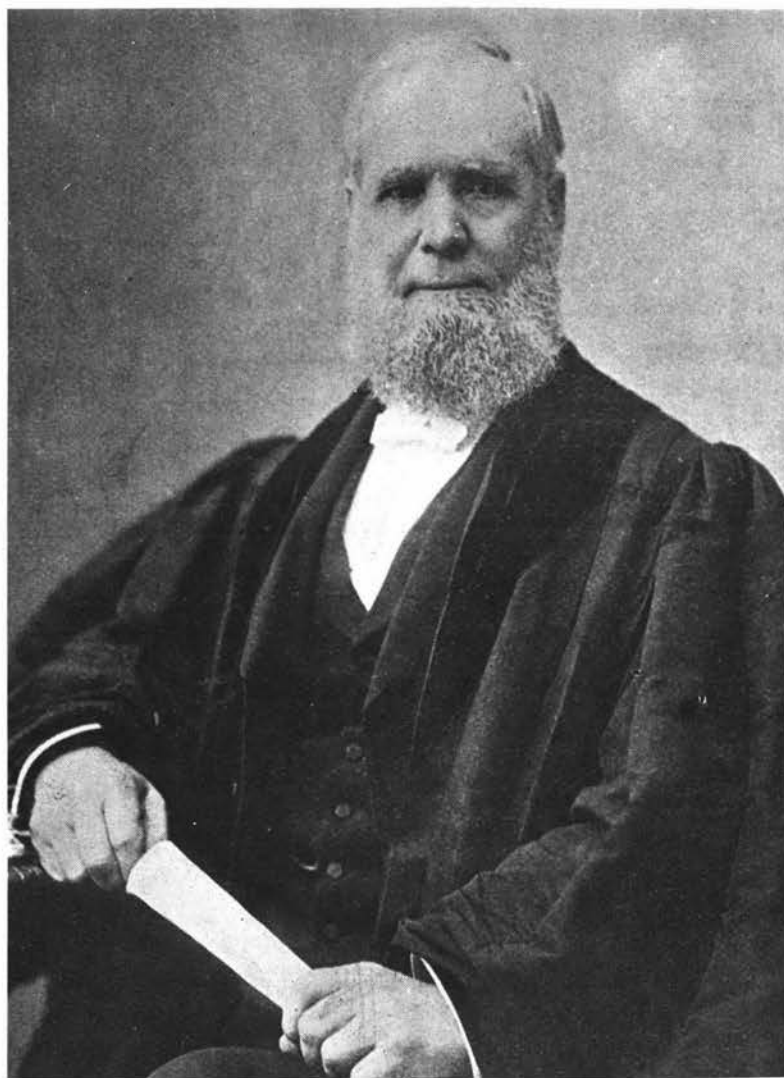
Sir Robert Stout concluded his opinion with a devastating summary:

I have shown then:

1. The property is held by a corporation and not by the Church.
2. That the Church is not bound to teach any special creed, or as a punishment to lose the right to regulate the disposal of the income of the property if it fails to do so.
3. That assuming the Church is bound by all the standards framed by the Westminster Assembly, it has the power to vary and amend the standards, and to pass such a resolution as has been quoted, 36 and agree to such a basis of union as is proposed.
4. That if it must be governed by the Free Church doctrines, polity and discipline, that there can be no appeal against the decisions of its highest courts, in such matters to the law courts, and if any of its members should so appeal they could be deposed. 37

Despite the sarcasm by "Civis", in his critical column in the Otago Daily Times, that "it is rather hard on the Rev. Mr. Sutherland that they should be instructed and rebuked by a member of the Devil's Brigade"³⁸ (Stout being a rationalist), Stout's opinion was a crushing

36. Stout refers to the Chapman-MacGregor opinion that the Synod's decision to give liberty of conscience in the "Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister" issue constituted a decision at variance with the Synod's constitution.
37. Legal Opinion by Sir Robert Stout. Issued 21 August 1897. ODT, 24 October 1897, p.3. For a fuller account of Stout's opinion see appendix C (ii)
38. ODT, 28 August 1897, p.2.



William Will:
"Venerable Moderator"

blow to the anti-revisionist and anti-unionist case.

In the correspondence column of the Otago Daily Times, "A Goldfield Presbyterian" had previously given as his opinion that "The whole question is that of adhering or not to a contract with the donators of property given to the Church on holding a certain defined doctrinal constitution." 39 Sir Robert's assertion that the Southern Church could free itself from past dogma and archaic discipline cut away the main premise from the anti-union and anti-revision case.

When Synod was opened in late October, 1897, an ardent pro-unionist, William Will, was inducted as Moderator. Synod was at once bombarded with a series of petitions and protests on doctrinal matters and on the night before Will's celebrated but partisan Moderatorial address, a "Meeting of ministers and elders opposed to the movement for the union of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland" was held. 40

The report of Will's moderatorial address given in the Otago Daily Times suggests that he had forgotten the Presbyterian tradition of Moderatorial impartiality.

The reporter commented:

I am specially impressed with the astuteness of the Venerable Moderator. It is written somewhere in the classics 'Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just, but four times he who gets his blow in fust'. He smashed up the anti-unionists in an official address or sermon on being inducted to the

39. ODT, 21 August 1897, p.2.

40. ODT, 27 October 1897, p.3.

Chair, when opportunity to reply there was none...
Clever old gentleman! Messrs Bannerman, Begg and
Sutherland, and the other trueblues, must have
found the opening exercises of Synod a very special
means of Grace. 41

In the course of his address, entitled "The Church in
Relation to its Creed", ⁴² Moderator Will quoted numer-
ous Scottish Church precedents for doctrinal revision
and made a point of using the Stout opinion to give an
edge to his sword.

When the returns from Presbytery and Session refer-
endum on the basis for union were read to Synod, the
anti-revisionists learned that the worst that they had
feared had happened. An overwhelming majority of Pres-
byteries and Kirk Sessions had voted in favour of the
basis. 43

After a debate that ranged intermittently over three
days, the convenor, Gibb, finally moved: "That the Synod
reappoint the committee and instruct it to forward the
basis of union as amended by this Synod to the Assembly
of the Northern Church to meet at Auckland, and report
to the meeting of Synod in March next". ⁴⁴ This motion
was carried by sixty-five to thirty-six against a counter
motion by Begg who tried to buy time by requesting Synod
to wait until the Church was of one mind and had found
a more satisfactory basis. ⁴⁵

41. ODT, 30 October, 1897, p.2.

42. Outlook, 30 October, 1897, p.40.

43. Synod, 1897. p.72.

44. ODT, 3 November, 1897, p.4.

45. ODT, 3 November, 1897, p.4.

With the passing of Gibb's motion, the Church of Otago and Southland committed itself to Union. Unless the Northern Church General Assembly refused to accept the serious amendment to article three of the Basis, an amendment that made the Synod's endowments "its own exclusive property",⁴⁶ the movement to union was now irreversible. The position of the anti-unionists was desperate. The pro-unionists had defeated them in three vital referrals under the principle of the Barrier Act, and in every vital vote in Synod. The impact of Stout's stern warning that appeal to the civil courts could result in excommunication forced them to keep the fight in an ecclesiastical arena where they had already tasted defeat.

The "Defenders" were caught between the devil and the deep blue sea. They claimed to be the 'true blue Presbyterians' yet if they took their protests against the majority decisions of their Synod into the civil courts they denied their much acclaimed Westminster Confession which expressly forbade appeals to the civil courts against an ecclesiastical court's decisions. Had they decided to be inconsistent and appealed to the civil courts for protection from doctrinal innovation the Synod could by majority rule have deposed them from all office and from membership in the Church of Otago

46. Elder, p.172.

and Southland.

In the light of this series of defeats, it is hard to escape the conviction that the Church Defence Society came into being too late to have any real hope of blocking the union of the two Churches, and too late to reverse the tide of doctrinal revision. When, after the completion of the Union debate, Begg handed in a protest signed by forty ministers and elders, announcing their intention "to take all legitimate means under the constitution of this Church to prevent its extinction, unless on a basis generally satisfactory to this Church",⁴⁷ his action, like that of the formation of the "Church Defence Society" on 26 October, 1897 could be little more than a gesture of defiance. Events were yet to show how dangerous the defiance of disappointed men could be. In the next chapter the "Defenders" will be identified, and examined to see how far they contributed to their own defeat.

47. ODT, 3 November 1897, p.4.

CHAPTER THREE

"THE DEFENDERS"

"There is a good deal of wholesome human nature in the Presbyterian parson. Don't judge him merely by what you see when he wags his pour (sic) in the poopit (sic). Wait till he gets to synod and lifts up his testimony on the union question... The clerical scrimmaging in First Church on Thursday night could have given points to the no-confidence debate going on during the same hours in Wellington... We hear of caucuses and cabals, of double voting, of stuffing the roll, and of cramming the synod with men of the 'right colour'... the venerable court had a real good time".¹

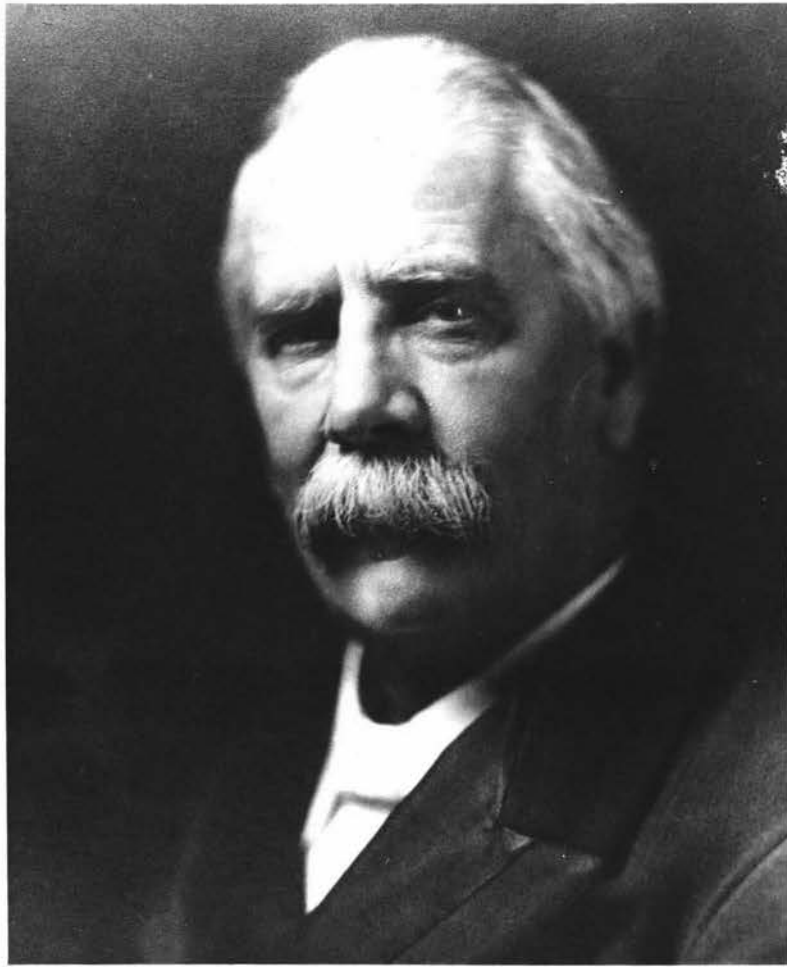
CIVIS

This chapter concerns itself with the identification of the Church of Otago and Southland Defence Society membership, with an analysis of the society's leadership and support, and with an attempt to isolate those factors that coalesced to make a powerful minority of Southern Churchmen supporters of the Defence Society.

On 11 December, 1897, twelve days after the constitution of the Church Defence Society, an editorial appeared in the Christian Outlook² lampooning the new "Defenders" of Southern Church orthodoxy and independence. Choosing

1. ODT, 30 October, 1897. p2.

2. Outlook, 11 December, 1897. p.1.



Andrew Cameron: "A.C"?

to write above the pseudonym "A.C." ³ a guest editor dismissed by reductio ad absurdum the society's charge "that the Fathers of the Church... who have spent half a lifetime in building up the Church are now ready to destroy it", and refuted the suggestion "that almost all the sons of the Church, who have been nurtured at her breast, and trained by her to serve as her ministers, must now be branded as enemies, who are ready to turn and smite to the dust the mother who bore them". ⁴

With mock horror "A.C." identified for his readers those pro-union "Foes" whose intrigues threatened the existence of the Southern Church and ironically listed the few "defenders" whose integrity might be relied upon. It is well for historians concerned with the Church Defence Society that "A.C." indulged his satirical ability, for no other identification of the leadership of this nineteenth century association is extant. No committee minutes, apart from a brief coverage of the inaugural meeting, no newspaper coverage of meetings, and no Kirk session references to correspondence from officers of the society, have

3. "A.C." was not identified in the correspondence that flared-up following his editorial. "A.C.'s" humility betrays him. His list of leading "Foes" omitted the name of a prominent member of the union committee. Andrew Cameron, Waddell's friend and minister of Anderson's Bay parish, was well suited by temperament and devotion to the union cause for the part of agent provocateur. Cameron received his B.A. from Otago in 1879 and studied for the ministry under Drs. Stuart and Watt prior to completing his theological training in Europe. He was inducted into the Anderson's Bay charge in 1884. Cameron was a founding father of Knox College and of the Presbyterian Social Service Association, a one-time Chancellor of the University of Otago and senator of the University of New Zealand, and a Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.
4. Outlook, loc.cit.

been uncovered. Because "A.C.'s" identification is then basic to any discussion of the strength and motivation of Church Defence Society membership his listing is included in the body of this text.

Foes of the Church

Rev. Wm Will, East Taieri.
 Rev. J. Gibb, First Church,
 Dunedin.
 Rev. Wm. Hewitson, Knox
 Church, Dunedin.
 Rev. Dr. M. Watt, Green Island,
 Dunedin.
 Rev. Dr. J. Dunlop, Professor
 of Theology, Dunedin.
 Rev. D. Borrie, North-East
 Valley, Dunedin.
 Rev. J. Kirkland, West Taieri.
 Rev. A. Stobo, Invercargill.
 Rev. R. Ewen, Limestone Plains.
 Rev. J. Baird, Winton.
 Rev. G. Lindsay, Invercargill.
 Rev. James Chisholm, Milton.
 Rev. J. M. Allan, Stirling.
 Rev. A. B. Todd, Oamaru.

Defenders

Rev. R. R. M. Sutherland,
 Kaikorai, Dunedin.
 Rev. Wm. Bannerman, Clerk of
 Synod, Dunedin.
 Rev. J. Christie, WaiKouaiti.
 Rev. J. M. Davidson, Matura.
 Rev. J. B. Smellie, Wyndham.
 Rev. J. M. M'Cosk Smith, Naseby.
 Rev. J. Lothian, Alexandra.
 Rev. P. B. Fraser, Lovell's
 Flat.
 Rev. W. Wright, Oamaru.

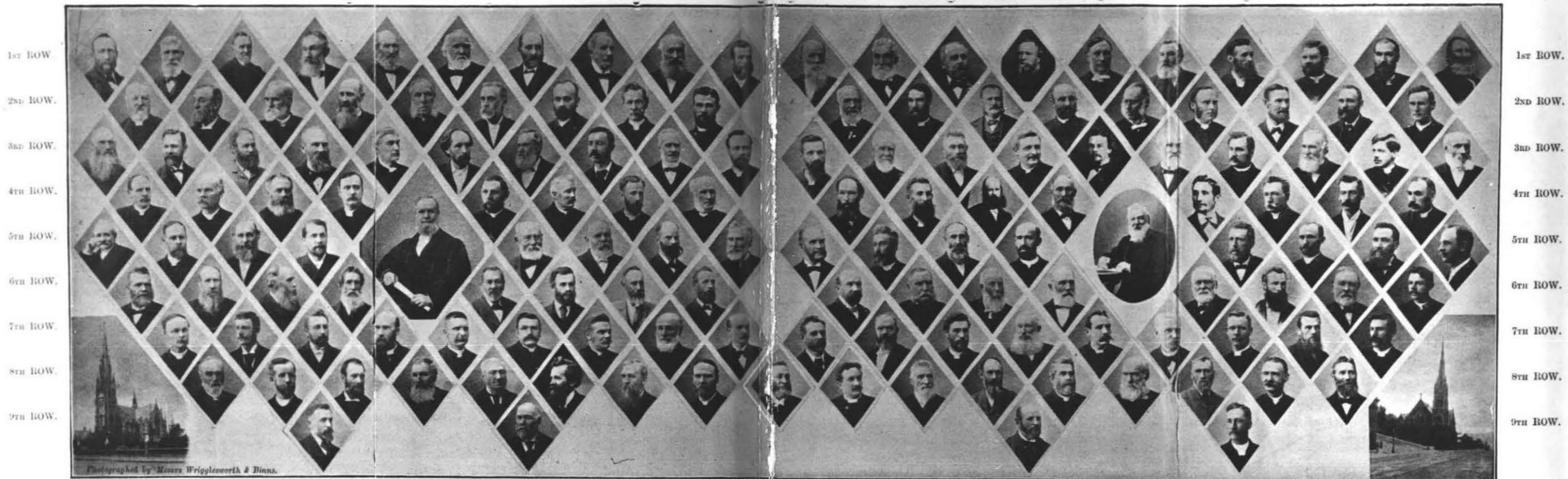
5

Not one of those named in "A.C.'s" columns disputed the party-tag attached to them although every opportunity to do so was given to them by Rutherford Waddell, editor of the Christian Outlook⁶ before he closed his correspondence columns to any further discussion of "A.C.'s" embarrassing bombshell. Exercising his right of reply "A.C." jubilantly noted the coincidence to his listing of the

5. ibid.

6. Rutherford Waddell, minister of St. Andrew's parish, Dunedin, arrived in New Zealand in 1877 as an immigrant minister sponsored by the Canterbury Presbyterian Association. From 18 April, 1879 until 1919 he ministered to St. Andrew's parish, Dunedin, where he became involved in humanitarian work and took part in the 1888 protest against the sweating of tailoresses. An M.A. from Queen's University, Belfast, Waddell was appointed by the 1893 Synod as editor of the newly formed Christian Outlook.

1st Row.—Mr J. Dow Mr F. Marshall Mr John Reid Mr W. Hutton Mr W. Martin Mr J. Paterson Mr. G. Moir Mr. H. Wise Mr Thomson Mr A. Harvie Rev. J. Baird Mr M'William Mr Ramsay Rev. T. Neave Rev. Alexander Rev. R. Ewen Mr M'Fetridge Rev. J. Blackie Rev. G. Lindsay Mr. J. Shaw.
 2nd Row.—Rev. J. Kirkland Rev. M'Kerrow Rev. Finlayson Rev. D. Borrie Prof. Dunlop Rev. Sutherland Rev. W. H. Ash Rev. Fraser Rev. J. Griffiths Mr G. Dawson Rev. E. Bissett Rev. R. Thornton Mr M'Caw Rev. A. Stobo Rev. W. White Mr Blaikie Mr Lindsay Rev. A. MacDonald
 3rd Row.—Mr R. Leishman Mr M'Nicoll Mr W. Leslie Mr W. Couston Rev. Dr. Watt Dr. Waddell Mr C. Moore Mr J. Tait Mr W. Scott Rev. A. Don Rev. R. Blair Mr Hutchison Mr W. Hain Rev. J. G. Smith Mr Macdonald Mr J. Don Rev. W. M'Laren Mr Christie Rev. W. Brown Mr M'Gregor
 4th Row.—Rev. T. Paulin Rev. M'Intyre Rev. A. Greig Rev. J. Gibb Rev. Hewitson Rev. Tennent Rev. Porter Rev. Campbell Mr H. Ross Rev. W. Nichol Rev. J. Steven Mr Goodall Mr Youngson Rev. P. Hay Mr A. Fraser Rev. W. Wright
 5th Row.—Mr G. Reid Rev. I. Jolly Mr Somerville Rev. Cameron Rev. W. WILL, Moderator of Synod Mr J. Waddell Rev. Dutton Mr Henderson Rev. J. Christie Mr R. Jackson Rev. J. Standing Mr Robertson Rev. A. Thomson Rev. W. BANNERMAN Mr. R. Steel Rev. J. Clarke Mr. J. Bruce Rev. J. Cumming Clerk of Synod.



6th Row.—Mr W. Begg Mr J. M'Lay Mr T. Adam Mr M'Corkindale Mr A. McNicol Mr T. Tait Mr J. Johnston Mr W. Paterson Mr Chisholm Rev. J. Gellie Rev. M'C. Smith Mr Johnson Mr Cargill Rev. J. Lothian Mr A. C. Begg Rev. W. Grant
 7th Row.—Rev. W. H. Gray Rev. Somerville Rev. J. S. Reid Rev. Chisholm Rev. J. Will Rev. Kilpatrick Rev. Fairmaid Rev. Dalrymple Mr J. Bremner Mr W. H. Rose Rev. J. Davidson Rev. P. Ramsay Mr M'Kinna Rev. J. A. Asher Dr. Copland Rev. A. Begg Mr C. Knowles Rev. G. Miller
 8th Row.—Rev. G. Hall Rev. Smellie Rev. J. Smail Rev. J. M. Allan Mr Clark Rev. J. U. Spence Rev. Michelsen Rev. Currie Rev. T. Ford Rev. J. Milne Mr Stewart Mr W. M'Kay Rev. W. Kyd Rev. A. B. Todd Mr M. Dickie Rev. Carter Mr W. Ayson
 9th Row.—Rev. P. B. Fraser Mr J. Taylor Mr J. Pullar Rev. J. Johnston

PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD OF OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND, 1897.

THE PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD OF OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND, 1897.

sides taken by protagonists,⁷ Yet the omission of Andrew Cameron's name from the list of "Foes" raises a question concerning the completeness of "A.C's" list. He was apparently correct in the delineation of party loyalties held by the names he included but how many names has he thought fit to miss from his list?

Because the Dunedin Evening Star published voting lists for the Church union division in the Synod session of 29 October, 1897 it is possible to check "A.C's" listing for notable omissions. A long debate preceded this division and leaders from both sides made clear in their appeals to Synod that this was a crucial debate. In his opening address Union committee convenor Gibb warned that for the Southern Church to withdraw from the present union would be "unbrotherly, nearsighted, and selfish" conduct."⁸ The Star reporter said of his summing-up: "He made an earnest and eloquent appeal for members to vote on the question with a due consciousness of the responsibility which attached to their decision."⁹

William Bannerman was equally determined that synodsmen should choose whom they would serve and said of the unionists that they had attempted to build a house without a foundation. Bannerman accused the unionist party of harming the well-being of the church by the constant irritation occasioned by their obsession with union and he held "that the quashing once again of this union proposal

7. Outlook 8 January, 1898. pp 598-599

8. Star, 28 October, 1897. p4.

9. Star, 29 October, 1897. pl.

would be the best and quickest way of leading to a better state of things amongst them." ¹⁰

The urgency of the 29 October debate and division is proven. On this critical occasion what forces other than those listed as "Defenders" by "A.C." rallied to the side of the Church Defence Society?

Two motions were placed before the house. Convenor Gibb moved "That the Synod receive the report of the Committee on Union and proceed to consider seriatim the articles on the basis of union." ¹¹ Gibb received eighty-three votes in support of his motion to secure a majority of thirty-six over a contra-motion by Defence Society leader R.R.M. Sutherland who called the Synod to "declare its conviction that it is not expedient to prosecute the present enterprise any further, and therefore pass from the proposal." ¹² Beside "A.C.'s" nine stalwarts the Defence Society commanded the allegiance of another eight ministers, including the influential J.U. Spence. ¹³ Far more important, and completely ignored in "A.C.'s" analysis, is the fact that twenty nine elders voted for Sutherland's motion, a number not much smaller than the thirty-seven who voted for Gibb.

By careful use of Synod voting figures and with attention to the Presbyteries represented by these elders, it

10. Star, loc.cit.

11. ibid.

12. ibid.

13. J. Urwin Spence was inducted in 1880 as minister of Popotunoa parish in the Clutha Presbytery having formerly ministered to the Waipawa parish in the Hawke's Bay. In 1897 he was a leading member of the Synod Temperance Committee.

is possible to clarify the degree to which anti-unionism, and support for the aims of the Defence Society, permeated Otago and Southland.

It must not be assumed that Ministers and Elders representing the same parishes at Synod agreed over the union question. Table I compares and contrasts the voting of ministers and elders for all parishes where the elder voted against the 1897 union basis by voting for Sutherland's motion. A definite divergence of viewpoint between ministers and elders emerges from these figures.

TABLE I.

A COMPARISON OF MINISTERIAL AND LAY VOTING ON SUTHERLAND'S ANTI-UNION MOTION OF 29 OCTOBER, 1897.

<u>Presbytery</u>	<u>Parish</u>	<u>Elder</u>	<u>Elder's Vote</u>	<u>Minister</u>	<u>Minister's Vote</u>
Dunedin	Strath Taieri	Harvie	<u>For</u>	Kirkland	<u>Against</u>
	Waitati	Reid	<u>For</u>	Finlayson	<u>Against</u>
Mataura	Riversdale	Stewart	<u>For</u>	vacant	---
	Kelso	McKay	<u>For</u>	Kyd	<u>Against</u>
	Gore	Copland	<u>For</u>	Asher	<u>Against</u>
	Pukerau	Pullar	<u>For</u>	vacant	---
	Waikaka	Ayson	<u>For</u>	Miller	<u>Against</u>
Oamaru	Lower Waitaki	Goodall	<u>For</u>	Johnston	<u>Against</u>
	Palmerston	Steel	<u>For</u>	Clarke	<u>Against</u>
	Otepopo	Robertson	<u>For</u>	Thompson	<u>For</u>
	Hampden	Angus Ross	<u>For</u>	Nicoll	<u>For</u>
	Columba	Fraser	<u>For</u>	Wright	<u>For</u>
	St. Paul's	Rose	<u>For</u>	Milne	<u>Against</u>
	Clutha	Paterson	<u>For</u>	Dalrymple	<u>Against</u>
Clutha	Popotunoa	Taylor	<u>For</u>	Spence	<u>For</u>
	Kaitangata	Johnson	<u>For</u>	Fairmaid	<u>Against</u>
	Lovells Flat	N. Begg	<u>For</u>	Fraser	<u>For</u>
Southland	Wallacetown	Blackie	<u>For</u>	White	<u>Against</u>
	St. Paul's,				
	Invercargill	Shaw	<u>For</u>	Lindsay	Absent (known unionist)
Dunstan	Woodlands	Dawson	<u>For</u>	Bissett	<u>For</u>
	Alexandra- Clyde	A. C. Begg	<u>For</u>	Lothian	Absent (known anti- unionist)
	Pembroke	Bruce	<u>For</u>	Grant	<u>Against</u>

It is obvious from an analysis of Table I that twelve ministers of the twenty-two parishes where the elders voted for Sutherland's anti-union motion were not in accord with their elders on this issue.

Only in the Presbytery of Oamaru was there a solid coincidence of ministerial and elder votes against union. Where the elder representing a smaller parish voted for Sutherland's motion it must not be assumed that his vote reflected an anti-union opinion in the parish represented. Some parishes with few elders, and these busy in October and November with seasonal farming responsibilities, asked for Dunedin elders to be appointed as their representatives to Synod. Under Presbyterian Polity an elder elected to a Presbytery or Synod is not regarded as a delegate bound to the opinions of the body that has elected him their representative but may vote as his conscience dictates. A.C. Begg, who appears in the Synod lists as elder for Alexandra - Clyde, accurately reflected the views of that parish's Kirk Session when he voted for Sutherland's motion, but elder McKay of Kelso, who voted against his session's acceptance of the basis, represented a small band of conservative elders who accepted office as synodsmen and voted consistently against union with disregard for the convictions of the parishes they represented. These representatives were selected by Presbyteries and not by Kirk Sessions and where the Presbytery was anti-union it is hardly surprising that a Dunedin elder of like viewpoint received an appointment as synodsmen.

Table I indicates that fewer ministers than laymen were willing to support Sutherland's attempt to sabotage the 1897 union basis and that of his 22 elder supporters 12 had their votes cancelled by opposing votes by their ministers. This table further suggests that support for the "Defender's" cause came mainly from rural parishes. The apparently rural concentration of the party and its lack of large scale support in the towns will now be discussed.

Prior to the 1897 Synod all parishes within the Synod bounds were given the opportunity to vote on a basis of union sent down to them under the principle of the "Barrier Act." Gibb tabled the returns from this referendum of Presbyteries and Kirk sessions on 27 October, 1897 and reported that 57 of the 65 sessions that had submitted returns were in favour of the basis. Gibb then noted with satisfaction, that "it is only right to point out that these figures, though showing a decided majority for Union, do not at first glance give a correct impression of the number of office-bearers who have endorsed the remit. The majority is very much larger than it seems. If the lists are examined carefully it will be seen that, with one or two exceptions, the Sessions favourable to Union are the largest Sessions of the Church. In the Dunstan Presbytery, all the Sessions either reject the Basis altogether, or disapprove of the Synod being shorn of its ecclesiastical functions; but the entire membership in full communion of the congregations of this Presbytery is only 477, or less than half of, say, Knox Church, Dunedin." 14

14. Synod, 1897. p77.

Gibb further informed the Synod that the total eldership of the six Kirk sessions of Dunstan were about equal in strength to that of Knox Church and that at least two of the anti-union returns were cases of duplicate voting where Kirk sessions appointed as interim - sessions for newly established rural parishes voted in their own right and then again as the sessions of the new charges. Thus the anti-union Cromwell elders voted as Wanaka session and the Otepopo elders as the session at Hampden.

Table II indicates the accuracy of Gibb's contention that the anti-unionists received the bulk of their support from numerically weak rural parishes.

TABLE II.

THE LOCATION AND MEMBERSHIP OF PARISHES REJECTING THE
1897 UNION BASIS.

<u>Presbytery</u>	<u>Parish</u>	<u>Membership</u>	
Dunedin	Kaikorai	231	722 members from a Presbytery total of 5,634
	Chalmers	138	
	Portobello	162	
	Waikouati	117	
	Blueskin and Merton	<u>124</u>	
Oamaru	Hampden	80	531 members from a Presbytery total of 1,523
	Columba	240	
	Palmerston	187	
	Papakaio	<u>124</u>	
Clutha	Clutha	184	472 members from a Presbytery total of 2,372
	Lovell's Flat	71	
	Popotunoa	<u>218</u>	
Southland	Oteramika	74	195 members from a Presbytery total of 2,308
	Longbush	<u>121</u>	
Dunstan	Naseby	150	All 495 members
	Roxburgh	90	
	Alexandra-Clyde	100	
	Cromwell	70	
	Lauder	65	
	Hawea and Wanaka	<u>20</u>	
Mataura	Gore	242	499 members from a Presbytery total of 1,533
	Waikaka	130	
	Riversdale	<u>77</u>	

Of the 13,865 communicant members of the Church of Otago and Southland only 2,915 were committed by their Kirk sessions against the 1897 basis and of this number 2,135 belonged to rural parishes. Only the Dunstan Presbytery unanimously opposed the basis, with all six sessions voting against it. Of the five remaining Presbyteries Oamaru gave the greatest support to the anti-unionist cause with four out of nine sessions against the basis. Three out of eleven Mataura sessions opposed it as did three out of twelve sessions from the Presbytery of Clutha. Significantly, in the two largest Presbyteries the basis received firm support with only two of Southland's thirteen sessions opposing it and five of Dunedin's twenty two sessions offering opposition.

Further evidence of the rural concentration of anti-unionism in Otago and Southland is provided by an analysis of the type of parish, from whence "A.C's" leading "Defenders" and "Foes" were drawn. Table III reveals that only three of the nine leading "Defenders" were ministers to town parishes while nine of the fifteen "Foes" came from town charges.

TABLE III.

SHOWING THE RURAL CONCENTRATION OF ANTI-UNION LEADERSHIP.
(after "A.C.'s" listing).

<u>"Defenders"</u>		
<u>Minister</u>	<u>Parish</u>	<u>Classification</u>
Sutherland	Kaikorai	<u>Town</u>
Bannerman	Roslyn	<u>Town</u>
Christie	Hawksbury	<u>Country</u>
Davidson	Mataura	<u>Country</u>
Smellie	Wyndham	<u>Country</u>
M'Cossh Smith	Naseby	<u>Country</u>
Lothian	Alexandra-Clyde	<u>Country</u>
P.B. Fraser	Lovell's Flat	<u>Country</u>
W. Wright	St. Columba	<u>Country</u>
	Oamaru	<u>Town</u>
) Six country parishes. Three town parishes.
<u>"Foes"</u>		
Will	East Taieri	<u>Country</u>
Gibb	First, Dunedin	<u>Town</u>
Hewitson	Knox, Dunedin	<u>Town</u>
Watt	Green Island	<u>Town</u>
Dunlop	Theological Hall	<u>Town</u>
Borrie	North East Valley	<u>Town</u>
Kirkland	West Taieri	<u>Country</u>
Stobo	Invercargill	<u>Town</u>
R. Ewen	Limestone Plains	<u>Country</u>
J. Baird	Winton	<u>Country</u>
Lindsay	St. Paul's Invercargill.	<u>Town</u>
Chisholm	Milton	<u>Country</u>
Allan	Stirling	<u>Country</u>
Todd	Oamaru	<u>Town</u>
) Six country parishes. Eight town parishes.

In the eight leading "Defender's" parishes the average membership was 170.5 communicants while in the fifteen "Foe's" charges the average size of congregation was 355 communicants, over twice that number.

What explanation can be given of the anti-union sentiment fomented in Dunstan and Oamaru Presbyteries?

Isolation, and suspicion of their apparently more comfortable town brethren, in part account for the reaction of Dunstan Presbyters. C.S.W. Moore indicates in his

regional history¹⁵ that at this time the inhabitants of Central Otago were frustrated by governmental slowness in constructing the railway authorised by the Railway Construction Act of 1879. By 1897 the rail-head had reached Ranfurly but bad roads and long winters made journeys to Dunedin a long and arduous business, economic depression, and unstable returns for primary products joined with isolation to breed envy, distrust, and opposition to town leadership. Without any historical justification for so doing the people of Central Otago looked back to the period of Provincial government as to a golden age and persuaded themselves that had this form of government been retained that the region's problems would be far less pressing. It was but a short step to transfer this line of thought into the ecclesiastical world and argue that as a central government had not given Dunstan its due so a centralised church would similarly neglect the Otago heartland. With this emotional undergirding it is not surprising that the Dunstan Presbytery fought for the retention of the provincial church structure with crusading zeal.

Oamaru's support for the cause of the "Defenders" to some extent reflected similar motivation to that of Dunstan but added to this was the impact of James MacGregor,¹⁷

15. C.S.W. Moore, The Dunstan: A History of the Alexandra-Clyde District. p46.
16. Dr MacGregor was to show his colours in 1899 when his name was to appear above that of Sutherland, Bannerman and Begg, in a protest against any alteration by a majority vote in the doctrinal standards of the Church.

former Edinburgh professor of Theology, who since 1881 had ministered in and about Oamaru. MacGregor, a writer of theological text books and a pamphleteer, fiercely opposed any doctrinal revision away from foundation Free Church dogmas, and associated Gibb, Dunlop, and Chisholm with heterodoxy. As the three last named were ardent pro-unionists this was sufficient to blight the movement and made MacGregor a strong anti-unionist.

In determining what factors beside rural isolation led to the adoption of anti-unionist views in 1897 Otago, an immediate problem of the unavailability of source material emerges. Probably data is extant revealing the national origin, educational standard, time of arrival in the province, and political interests of those elders who supported the Defence Society. However, to research this material would entail a study of private correspondence and diaries, would require a careful perusal of local press obituary columns, and would demand an investigation that could not be expected for this research exercise. Because this material is not easily available the review of the national origins, educational qualifications, date of arrival in the province, financial position, and theological opinion of the "Defenders", is confined to the clerical members of the Defence Society. The assembled information concerning the ministerial "Defenders" and "Foes" was gained from a collation of data in Elder's ministerial register, an appendix to his History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.

Help has been given by Synod, Presbytery and Kirk session minutes, obituary columns in the Outlook and secular press, and in response to inquiries made with the descendants of the ministers concerned.

No divergence in national origins explains the proclivity of the "Defenders" for in the main they and their foes were Scots. Only W. Wright and D. Borrie, of all listed by "A.C.", were native born New Zealanders, the rest were Scotsmen.

Again no easy explanation is attainable by contrasting the academic training of the two groups of leaders. Both groups were educated to the high standard of university and theological education demanded by 19th century Scottish Presbyterianism. Table IV lists the almae matres and the degrees of "A.C.'s" "Defenders" and "Foes".

TABLE IV.

UNIVERSITIES AND THEOLOGICAL COLLEGES ATTENDED AND DEGREES ATTAINED BY "A.C.'s" "DEFENDERS" AND "FOES".

<u>Defenders</u>		<u>Foes</u>	
Sutherland.	New College, Edinburgh.	Will. Gibb.	New College, Edinburgh
Bannerman.	Free Church College, Edinburgh.		United Presbyterian College, Edinburgh.
Christie.	Edinburgh and Glasgow.	Hewitson.	Ormond College, Melbourne.
Davidson.	M.A. Edinburgh.	Watt.	Melbourne University and Ormond.
Smellie.	Glasgow and Edinburgh.	Dunlop.	M.A., D.D. Aberdeen and German Universities.
M'Cosh. Smith.	Aberdeen.	Borrie.	M.A., D.D. Glasgow and Glasgow Theological Hall
Lothian.	Glasgow.	Kirkland.	University of Otago.
Fraser.	M.A. Aberdeen and Otago.	Stobo.	Aberdeen.
Wright.	Otago.	Baird.	Glasgow and New College, Edinburgh.
		Ewen.	Glasgow and Free Church College, Edinburgh.
		Lindsay.	M.A. Aberdeen.
		Smith.	Glasgow and United Presbyterian Hall.
			Edinburgh and United Presbyterian Hall.

Chisholm.	Edinburgh and Otago.
Allan.	M.A. Glasgow and Free Church Hall, Edinburgh.
Todd.	B.A. St. Andrew's and Free Church Hall, Edinburgh.

The absence of degrees after some names in no way indicates an inferior education. The Disruption resulted in the withdrawal of Free Church students from the ancient Scottish universities whose theological faculties were administered by the established Church of Scotland. The creation of alternative colleges and halls quickly followed yet although these new creations were taught by some of the best scholars in Scotland it was some time before they gained the right to submit candidates for degrees or grant their own degrees.

No variations in age separates the two groups. At the time of the 1897 Synod Bannerman was seventy-five and Will but three years his junior while the average age of the "Defenders" was fifty-two and the average age of the "Foes" fifty-one.

On Boxing Day 1897 "Nisi Dominus Frustra," in a counter-attack against "A.C.'s" editorial, labelled union supporters "new chums." 17 How true was his assumption that the "Defenders" were old identities with a greater investment in the development of the provincial church? Table V indicates the year of arrival in Otago and Southland of the leading protagonists or, in the case of those either born in New Zealand or entering the ministry after New Zealand training, the date of ordination.

17. Outlook, 25 December, 1897. p.570

TABLE V.

TO SHOW THE DATE OF ARRIVAL OF "FOES" AND "DEFENDERS"
IN NEW ZEALAND AND THE DATES OF ORDINATION OF NATIVE
BORN OR TRAINED MINISTERS.

<u>"Defenders"</u>		<u>"Foes"</u>	
Sutherland	1879	Will	1854
Bannerman	1854	Gibb	1886
Christie	1863	Hewitson	1895
Davidson	1866	Watt	1864
Smellie	1891	Dunlop	1887
M'Cosh Smith	1871	Borrie	1884
Lothian	1879	Kirkland	1863
Fraser	1897	Stobo	1860
Wright	1883	Baird	1870
		Ewen	1872
		Lindsay	1889
		Smith	1887
		Chisholm	1870
		Allan	1863
		Todd	1859

The average length of pastorate within the Synod's bounds for both "Defenders" and "Foes" was twenty three years. Each group claimed the allegiance of a member who had been over forty years in the Otago Church. The "Defenders" owned the loyalty of two ministers who had been between thirty to forty years in the Church, as against the "Foes" five, and one minister who had been between twenty and thirty years as against the "Foes" three. Those who had ministered a lesser span of time balanced each other exactly.

It is apparent that "Nisi Dominus Frustra" had no just cause for declaring his opponents to be "new chums". Both "Foes" and "Defenders" had on the level of tenure of service equal rights to speak for their Church.

A Minister of the Church does not live by words alone for even he must eat. An appraisal of the stipends paid

to Otago and Southland ministers in 1897 makes obvious that the Presbyterian boast that all ministers are equal did not carry as a corollary equal stipends.

Because of unequal parish membership rolls and because parishes newly founded, or with small communicant rolls, had the same basic overheads to pay without a corresponding income to pay them, a system had been devised that assured all ministers of a standard minimum stipend, and left parishes the right to supplement this stipend if they wished. The intent of the "Sustentation Fund" was to tax the larger and well-established congregations in order to build up new parishes and keep uneconomic parishes with a minister. The Sustentation Fund Report for 1897 shows that the basic stipend was far from princely. An equal dividend of £99.0.4. was declared for the half-year ending 31 March, 1897 while a similar dividend of £100.1.9. was declared for the six months ending 30 September, 1897. ¹⁸

What increment did wealthier parishes add to this basic stipend? Table VI attempts to show that equal pay for equal work did not exist within the Otago and Southland Presbyterian Church in 1897 and that dissatisfaction amongst hard-travelling rural ministers may have led to reaction against a cause dear to their well-paid city and town brethren.

18. Synod, 1897. p.90.

TABLE VI.STIPENDS PAID TO "A.C.'s" "FOES AND "DEFENDERS" IN THE
FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING 30th SEPTEMBER, 1897.¹⁹[/to the nearest pound/

<u>"Foes"</u>	<u>Stipend</u>	<u>"Defenders"</u>	<u>Stipend</u>
Will	£ 323	Sutherland	£ 250
Gibb	£ 700	Bannerman	£ 191
Hewitson	£ 650	Christie	£ 220
Watt	£ 361	Davidson	£ 200
Dunlop	£ 600	Smellie	£ 200
Borrie	£ 221	M'Cosh Smith	£ 219
Kirkland	£ 292	Lothian	£ 200
Stobo	£ 200	Fraser	£ 200
Ewen	£ 200	Wright	£ 250
Baird	£ 240		
Lindsay	£ 350		
Smith	£ 400		
Chisholm	£ 350		
Allan	£ 200		
Todd	£ 95		

A simple analysis of Table VI. at once reveals that the pro-unionist leaders received for 1897 an average income of £345.10.0. while their anti-union opponents were in receipt of £132.0.0. per annum less, with an average stipend of only £213.10.0.

Yet to show a large discrepancy in annual between the two groups is in no way to establish an underlying resentment of this inequality on the part of the "Defenders". All that can be suggested is that it is possible that some anti-union sentiment was reinforced as "Defenders" worked out their household budgets. It is equally fair to suggest that Clerk Bannerman, prevented from exer-

19. Michael Watt received £100.0.0. of his stipend from the Theological Hall in return for his lecturing, A.B. Todd, an emeritus minister, received his £95.0.0. from the Infirm Ministers Fund and William Bannerman was paid £100.0.0. for his services as Clerk of Synod and received in addition £91.0.0. from the aged and Infirm Ministers Fund.

cising his office as a parish minister by two serious accidents, may also have contemplated that in a united church the responsibilities of the clerkship of the Synod of Otago and Southland would be so reduced that it might seem an unnecessary burden on the church to pay him the additional £100.0.0. clerkship fee most welcome to a minister who received only £91.0.0. per annum from the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund.

Amongst the "Defenders" arose a fear that Otago's Church endowments might be lost in any union with the Northern Church. In its charter of 1847 the Otago Lay Association pledged itself to devote one-eighth of the purchase money received from the sale of its 144,600 acres to educational purposes. Of this money one-third was in time invested in landed property and a Church Board of Property was set up to administer its distribution. By an Act passed by the colonial legislature in 1866 the Presbyterian Church of Otago was empowered to institute an ecclesiastical fund and an educational fund into which rents from these endowments were paid. The ecclesiastical fund was responsible for the building and repairing of manses and churches and the endowment of theological chairs. The education fund was designed to endow literary chairs at the University of Otago.

Southern churchmen feared that on the occasion of union the government might find some way of seizing these endowments and those Otago and Southland parishes particularly needful of these funds for church building and repairs would be placed in a difficult financial position. Even

the editor of the Roman Catholic national weekly, the New Zealand Tablet recognised this danger and on 13th August, 1897, after commenting on the Southern Church's adoption of a Declaratory Act that "as they have already swallowed the camel... there should be no need to strain at the deceased wife's ~~sister~~", went on to inform Catholic readers that the more serious hindrance to Presbyterian union was the financial question. The Tablet editor observed that "the Southern Church has numerous and valuable endowments which the Northern Church has not, and the difficulty of arriving at a satisfactory financial basis of reunion is what has really kept the matter in abeyance for many years".²⁰ Even Gibb, Stout's friend, but ^{and} no friend of Seddon, felt apprehension over the government's attitude to church lands. His apprehension was revealed in the fierceness of his rebuttal of the possibility of a government church-land seizure in the Synod debate of 27 October, 1897 when he argued: "Were they to fear that Parliament would take away the property of the Otago Synod? Would the Legislature do it? What would the Anglicans of Canterbury have to say to that? What would the Wesleyans of Nelson have to say to it? What would the Christians of any denomination in New Zealand have to say to it? If Sir Richard Seddon were ten times the man he is, or ten times the autocrat he is said to be, he or any other Government would be cast down the very instant such a thing was

20. Tablet, 13 August, 1897. p.2.

mentioned." ²¹ Gibb knew well that in Otago Seddon was an unpopular figure disliked on account of his usurpation of a premiership that many Provincials regarded as frightfully belonging to Stout who had spent twenty-nine years in Otago, and that to jibe at a pretentious "Sir" Richard Seddon would gain him the affection of many uncommitted synodsmen. Nevertheless between 1893 and 1897 Seddon's government had bought an area of more than 1,500,000 acres of unused native land and his Minister of Lands now eyed church endowments with greedy interest.

Although Bannerman was employing fear as a debating tactic he accurately assessed the government's interest in church lands when he replied to Gibb on 28 October, pointing out "that it was not so long ago since the Minister of Lands had expressed the desire to hand over the church lands to the land boards for administration, giving part of the revenue to the county councils, the remainder evidently to be administered by the Land Board for the benefit of the church." ²² John McKenzie had cast his eyes on the Synod's endowment and the Church Defence Society was right to assume that the occasion of union might provide the government with an opportunity for seizure. Had not Sir Robert Stout previously opined that the lands were held by a property trust and not by

21. Star, 28 October, 1897. p.4.

22. Star, 29 October, 1897. p.1.

the church per se, Seddon might not have been content to nod his head in acceptance of Robert McNab's assurance that the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand Bill, 1901, was not an attempt "to set aside a decision of the Supreme Court respecting lands which have been granted by the Maoris to early denominations."²³

Fear of land seizure was a drum that the "Defenders" might well have used to rally the south about them. They beat this drum rarely and without gusto for the retention of their property was only part of their demand. Their real concern was for the retention of kirk, glebe, and "bawbies" in the hands of men who held rigidly to the doctrinal standard and liturgical practices of the founding fathers. Their essential argument went much further than propounding that union with the north meant union with a bastardised Presbyterianism. They argued that apart from themselves the salt of the south had lost its savour. They had established their own mythology, that Otago had once been ruled by the saints and that a new generation betrayed the heritage of the founding fathers. This motivation to dissent, caused by both a hardening of the doctrinal arteries and by the desire of Otago and Southland backwoodsmen to sound a last trumpet blast against the end of the provincial period in the colony's life, appeared again and again in the letters and speeches of the "Defenders".

23. NZPD, Vol. 116, House 24 July, 1901. p. 588 (see above Appendix D)

Whoever "A Goldfield Presbyterian" was, he could not have stated the case for the "Defenders" more concisely than he did in a letter of 21 August, 1897 when he announced that "the whole question is that of adhering or not to a contract with donators of property, given the church on her holding a certain defined doctrinal constitution." 24

This claim that the Founding Fathers had forever fixed the doctrine and form of government of the Otago Church was not new. In 1885, when the Synod considered an earlier and abortive union proposal, conservative opinion in the south protested that the Synod had no power "by vote of a majority to form a union that would make an end... of governmental... independence." 25

This insistence that the church of the present was bound to maintain the ecclesiastical structures and theological formulations of a former generation, even though the needs of contemporary society might call for revised structures and an elaborated doctrine, sprang directly out of the Scottish Evangelical party's fear of "Moderatism" with all its compromise with the social order of the day, and from a self-righteousness that came with a giving-up of parishes, manse, and stipends, in defence of "true belief", at the Disruption. In 1885 the Otago sons of

24. ODT, 21 August, 1897. p.2.

25. Synod, 1885. p.26.

the Disruption were very much on the defensive against innovation and association with those outside the "true Israel". It was this fear of corruption that led three later leading pro-unionists, and "foes", to support the above quoted protest against amalgamation with the suspect Northern Church. William Will, Michael Watt, and James Kirkland, at that point of time were, at one with William Bannerman, R.R.M. Sutherland, and A.C. Begg (as Bannerman delighted in taunting his opponents in the 1897 Synod).

Yet what Bannerman lampooned as inconsistency might be lauded by others as growth and maturity. The break between the future "Foes" and "Defenders" came in the first instant not over union but over demands from elders and ministers for relief from the need to give assent to every article in the Westminster Confession and the Shorter and Larger Catechisms. In 1886 when James MacGregor, led Bannerman, Sutherland, and Begg in a protest "that a resolution of Synod cannot alter the doctrinal constitution of this Church", their short-term allies had deserted them. ²⁶ Again, in 1888, when Professor Salmond was accused before the Synod of having publicised "erroneous teaching" in his pamphlet The Reign of Grace, ²⁷ only A. Stobo of "A.C.'s" "Foes" appended

26. Synod, 1886. p.49.

27. Synod, 1888. p.106.

his name to the charge. When in 1893 the Synod adopted a Declaratory Act that allowed the church to grant liberty of opinion on any doctrines expressed in the Confession regarded by Synod to be on the periphery of the faith, the conservative forces began to raise the cry of "faith betrayed!"

William Bannerman in 1895 entered into a literary debate with one "Laicus"²⁸ over the issue of marriage with a deceased wife's sister but found the idea so strange that Synod rather than an ancient codex had become the arbiter of heresy that he propounded the odd theory that the Declaratory Act defended the theology of the Church at the time of the time of the passing of the Declaratory Act and there could be no departure from that new doctrinal standard.²⁹ For Bannerman and his cohorts theology was a static rather than a dynamic phenomenon.

Successful politicians must always have a viable issue if they would catch the interest and gain the support of their constituents. As the 1890's progressed the Otago Church's embryonic defenders found that fewer and fewer synodsmen were prepared to follow them into the Synod voting lobby, or sign their protests over unbiblical marriages and libertarian declaratory acts. As

28. William Bannerman, Revolution of Synod and Pamphlet By "Laicus". Relative to Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister. Wilkie, Dunedin, 1895. p.3.

29. Outlook, 25 December, 1897. p.570.

New Zealand became a nation and citizens of Otago and Southland became used to being more than provincials, interest waned in retaining Otago as the last preserve for unimpeachable Disruption Presbyterianism. Railway construction, the financial affairs of Joseph Ward, and Liberal land policy, evoked much greater interest. In desperation and relief the conservative faction grasped at the revived union issue as a new field within which they might re-apply their charges of a church betrayed and rally the faithful in defence of the dream of an Otago holy Zion.

In defence of the "true Israel" the "Defenders" maintained they were even ready to threaten their opponents with such an Erastian remedy as the law court; it is significant that they did not go beyond offering the threat. The Chapman-MacGregor opinion was favourable to their cause and was argued vigorously. This opinion stressed that the faith of the founding fathers was the measuring rod for deciding the possession of Synod endowments. Chapman maintained "that the law recognises those only as interested in the property who use it in connection with the scheme of doctrines included in the constitution, holding that those who depart from it renounce their right of property."³⁰ MacGregor quoted Lord Eldon's judgement "that the civil court... will not

30. Star, 7 August, 1897. p.1.

permit those who choose to depart from the constitution of the church to share in the benefits of the endowments.³¹

Notwithstanding the fierceness of the "Defenders" charges of heterodoxy and their frightening bogey of Otago's Free Church heritage destroyed by union, they failed to convince their compatriots.

As Synods, Presbyteries and Parishes, gave union an overwhelming majority the "defenders" became more and more desperate. In their desperation their arguments became contradictory. On 25 December, 1897 "Nisi Dominus Frustra" called for a referendum on the union issue, even though the anti-union case depended upon maintaining that irrespective of contemporary opinion the intentions of the founding fathers must determine the use made of church buildings, lands and funds. A further departure from a previous position was made by P.B. Fraser who on 1 January, 1898 demanded that the whole question of union must be sent down to Presbyteries and congregations under a Barrier Act - despite the fact that no such act existed in the Southern Church. 32

The Presbytery of Dunstan, with remarkable disregard for the fact that Presbyteries and parish sessions had already voted, argued that a "mere casual vote of Synod"

31. ibid.

32. Outlook, 1 January, 1898. p.587.

had pushed through the union vote and, despite the anti-
Erastian Disruption principles of that Presbytery,
threatened to take the Synod to law. ³³

Discredited by muddled arguments the "Church
Defenders" also lost support through their use of tedious
and annoying procedural tactics in the Synod. Sutherland's
demand for a three-fifths majority of Kirk sessions and
Presbyteries before the union could be culminated was
as unacceptable to Synod as was his argument that Synod
could by a majority of one "substitute for the Holy Bible
the Mormon Bible or the Lyceum Guide." ³⁴ One moment
P.B. Fraser was hot against union while the next he was
trying to convince Synod that he wished the united church
to hold the right to decide whether or not the Theological
Hall should be in Dunedin. ³⁵ Synod's moment of most
utter disbelief must surely have come when Bannerman had
the temerity to suggest that the long-suffering Northern
Church "had not signified... willingness to go into union."
Begg's final "protest" and the birth of "The Church
Defence Society" carried little weight with many Presby-
terians tired and annoyed by the persistancy and intoler-
ance of the "Defenders".

At the end the "Defenders" were their own worst
enemies. Their obstinacy and inflexibility brought

33. ODT, 15 December, 1897. p.3.

34. Star, 28 October, 1897. p.4.

35. Star, 3 November, 1897. p.4.

from a frustrated Presbyterian the plea "For once let us have a Synod characterised by peace and goodwill... There was the deceased wife's sister question... then on its very heels the union question. Not one Synod session for a quiet breath!"³⁶ From the critical pen of the editor of the Tablet came an even more telling rejection of their basic philosophy.

Wrote Henry Cleary; "Many of our readers have probably heard of the Argyleshire elder who, when asked how his local kirk was getting along, replied: "Aweel, we had four hundred members. Then we had a division, and there were only two hundred left. Next, we had a disruption, an' only ten were left. Then we had a heresy trial, an' noo there's only me an' ma Brither Duncan; an' I hae great doots o' Duncan's orthodoxy".³⁷

36. ODT, 11 August, 1897. p.4.

37. Tablet, 21 January, 1898. p.17.

CHAPTER FOUR

"FOES": ACTIVE AND PASSIVE

"A consistent politician is a man who always votes on our side; a partisan is one who always votes on the other side. A man with the courage of his convictions is one who leaves the other side and comes over to ours; a renegade is a man who leaves us and goes over to the other side".

Rutherford Waddell.¹

"The office-bearers and members of our Church should give earnest heed to that warning especially when they know that these same princes in whom they are asked to trust blindly, claim the right and power of changing the Creed and the Constitution of the Church from top to bottom, according to their own sweet Will, and of terminating the existence of the Church as a self-governing Church, by a majority vote of Synod, or by the casting vote of a partisan Moderator".

R.R.M. Sutherland.²
25 December, 1897.

In estimating the worth of their brother synodsmen the "Defenders" assumed the values expressed by Rutherford Waddell's anonymous political commentator in the quotation that heads this chapter. As they worked from the Biblical premise "that he who is not for us is against us" the anti-unionists aggregated as their foes not only the active liberal and pro-union churchmen but also all who because of commitment to other issues, or apathy over the union proposal, sat unmoved in their Synod seats whilst the "Defenders" warned, threatened, and appealed.

1. Rutherford Waddell, Notebooks. No.3, Book 2. p.20.
2. Outlook, 25 December, 1897. p.570.

Any assessment of the rout of the "Defenders" must attend not only to the support, tactics, and arguments of "A.C.'s" "Foes", and to the "cunning of "Sweet Will", but must also explain the quiescence of those churchmen who failed to rally to the defence of the Otago Church autonomy.

This appreciation of the success and tactics of the pro-union leadership is established on the premise that the "Defenders" faced two enemies - their easily identified foes led by Gibb, Will, Cameron and Chisholm, and also a less easily identifiable but far more dangerous foe, a section of church opinion unimpressed by their cries of "wolf", disenchanted by their persistency and increasingly concerned with other priorities.

What attitudes of mind combined to create the "Foes" of the Church Defence Society? What advantages were held by the pro-union party and how did the leading "Foes" employ these advantages to gain sweeping majorities in the 1897 Sessional and Presbytery referendum and in the lobbies of Synod?

The active "Foes" have already been identified and their ability to arouse suspicion and fear in the minds of their more conservative brethren has been noted. This fear and suspicion was born of an awareness amongst the conservatives that some of the brethren who had left Scotland with them for New Zealand and with whom they were united in a harsh pioneering life had not stood still in their theological thinking. Scottish theological journals

of the 1880's and 1890's were increasingly concerned with the impact of Darwinism on Christian thought; biblical and historical criticism became the subjects of innumerable articles, and the impact of German theology helped propagate Newman's "anti-dogmatic principle." McLeod Campbell, through his book The Nature of the Atonement³ created "a brighter, clearer, theological atmosphere, purged of Calvinistic gloom"⁴ and Edinburgh University's Robert Flint⁵ in his Theism and his Anti-Theistic Theories attempted to identify those principles Christianity held in common with other religions, science, and rationalism. These ideas soon filtered through into the sermons and addresses of the more experiential and less rigorously confessional of the Otago and Southland ministers.

Theological liberalism in the Otago settlement was by no means the preserve of youth. That William Will's doctrinal arteries had not hardened with age was made obvious in 1897 when this seventy-two year old veteran demanded in his moderatorial address that the Church must always be involved in daring re-statements of her creeds

3. John McLeod Campbell was charged with heresy by the 1831 General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. Campbell found the doctrine of election irreconcilable with active evangelism and outlined a doctrine of atonement, wherein Christ offers pardon freely to all men. By one hundred and nineteen votes to sixteen Campbell was deposed from the ministry.
4. J.H.S. Burleigh, A Church History of Scotland. p.383.
5. Robert Flint, Professor of Divinity at Edinburgh University, 1876-1903.

and confessions. To support his demand for doctrinal revision Will quoted the 1886 Moderator of the Free Church of Scotland, the Rt Rev. R. Wilson, who had declared that the Church "must always vindicate her right to revise, to purge, to add to".⁶ Principal Brown of Aberdeen Free Church Theological Hall was also enlisted by Will to support his thesis, this time to attack the bastion of conservatism, the Westminster Confession, with the declaration that "the Westminster divines had not only put too many things into their Creed, but had inverted their proper order".⁷

For Bannerman, Sutherland, Begg, Fraser and their fellow "Defenders" these ideas were more than novel, they were erosive of the basic doctrinal standards of Scottish Presbyterianism. The leading "Defenders" held that the Confession and associate catechisms contained a sufficient and binding interpretation of the biblical faith. From their point of view it was permissible to explain and interpret this body of doctrine more elaborately in the face of new situations but no contradiction of the dogma and scriptural interpretation posited in these standards was to be permitted. From this fixed position advances in biblical and historical studies, and new ventures in apologetics [The discipline that relates theology to new secular learning], were scholastic exercises unrelated to the real work of the church.

6. Outlook, 30 October, 1897. p.471.

7. ibid.

Despite the opposition of the conservative wing of the Church the liberal pro-unionists continued to make use of the most recent works from European and British scholars. Michael Watt, lecturer in Biblical Studies for the Synod, in 1901 published an account of views on "higher criticism" that he had long held. Watt stressed that the Bible was written by men conditioned by their social context and wrote of the 16th and 17th century reformers that they "acknowledged that there was a human element accompanying inspiration and that men, speaking under the influence of the spirit of God in the main contents of their message, were not preserved from the effects of defective knowledge, or prevented from falling into little mistakes in the mere accessories of the message." 8

This attitude to the Bible, following the theories of the German Biblical scholars E. Reuss and Julius Wellhausen, was newly established in Scottish Theological Halls in the mid-century and by the 1890's had reached the point where scholars were attempting to pass on their new learning to the pews. A typical attempt to popularise "Higher Criticism" was made by Professor Harper, Ormond College, Melbourne, when in early 1897 he informed readers of the Outlook that "the whole Bible, as we have it, is the result of Historic Criticism in former days." Harper went on to ask, "Why is Ruth put after Judges?"

8. Outlook, 2 November, 1906. p.4.

Or, why does Leviticus come before Jeremiah? Plainly because of the conclusions the historic critics of various times and countries have come to about the periods when, and the authors by whom, those several books were written." ⁹

The "Church Defenders" were not slow to note that the same men who had manoeuvred the Declaratory Act through Synod, and had spoken in favour of liberty of conscience over marriage with a deceased wife's sister, and who were heeding and popularising the ideas of German Biblical scholars and heretic Scot theologians, were the same men who led the union movement in the Church. The suspicion engendered by such a coalition of interests together with an awareness of the more liberal theological attitudes existent in the Northern Church was sufficient to awaken the fear that a conspiracy was afoot to subvert true religion.

Well led by an outstanding and unified union committee the active "Foes" were able to argue a simple and consistent case in favour of union. "Veritas" summed-up the pro-union case very neatly in March, 1897 under nine headings. He argued:

- i. Union is a Christian duty as John's gospel, chapter 17, shows.
- ii. We are committed by the vote of our Presbyteries and sessions.
- iii. Unity is in harmony with the best Presbyterian tradition.
- iv. Unity will give solidarity to the Church.
- v. Union will deepen enthusiasm and liberality.
- vi. It will add to the prestige of our supreme court.
- vii. Union will give greater theological stability.

9. Outlook, 13 February, 1897. p.28.

- viii. It will benefit our theological hall.
- ix. A more suitable opportunity will not be found. 10.

Otago and Southland congregations easily understood St. John's argument that the world would believe only if the church could give evidence of the nature of Christian unity by healing its own divisions. Pro-unionists were not slow to remind their parishioners that only a small and vociferous minority of the Southern Church opposed union and that the Westminster Confession, designated by their opponents the foundation stone of Presbyterian particularity, was in its origins an eccumenical document designed as a theological basis for the union of the reformed churches of England, Scotland and Ireland. By 1897 twenty-one Southern Church ministers had accepted calls from Northern Church parishes and twenty-one Northern church ministers had been translated to parishes in the church of Otago and Southland. Pro-unionists argued from these figures that close harmony and inter-relationship already existed and that complete corporate union was the logical conclusion to this interchange of ministers. 11

The argument proposed by "Veritas", that union would result in a more effective missionary impact, appealed to Southern Churchmen. Both churches were immensely missionary-minded in the late 19th century. In 1852

- 10. Outlook, 13 March, 1897. p.80.
- 11. John Dickson, History of the New Zealand Presbyterian Church. p.380.

the Rev. John Inglis of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland left the Maoris of the Manawatu to work for the Presbyterian Church amongst the New Hebrides. The Northern Church General Assembly in 1862 selected the New Hebrides as a Foreign Mission Field. In 1867 the Southern Church Synod resolved to support a missionary in the New Hebrides and in 1869 the Rev. Peter Milne of Otago was appointed to this ministry.¹² Co-operation in missionary work already existed prior to union and pro-union leaders were quick to suggest that more efficient use of missionary funds and manpower would certainly result from union, and that a united Presbyterian Church would raise more money for missions.

When leading "Foes" claimed that union would add prestige to the supreme court of the Church they were arguing that just as international statesmen were more likely to heed the opinions expressed in a national Parliament than they would be to heed those expressed in Provincial Councils, so New Zealand politicians, educationalists, and the general public, would be more likely to attend to the advice and heed the warnings of a national General Assembly than those of miniscule Synod of Otago and Southland. Unionists were not slow to appeal to a developing New Zealand nationalism.

The argument propounded by "Veritas" that union would bring in its wake greater theological stability

12. ibid, p.342.

was less obviously true. To conservative Southern Church ministers the diversity of theological traditions existent in the Northern Church Ministry suggested that theological wrangling might well be accentuated by union. How would the Northern Church complement of forty-three Free Church ministers, eleven Presbyterian Church of Ireland ministers, eight established Church of Scotland ministers, four English Presbyterian Church ministers, five former Congregationalist ministers and three former Methodist ministers,¹³ coalesce with the predominantly Free Church Ministry of Otago? "Veritas's" answer was that in the Northern Church this diversity of Presbyterian traditions blended together in harmony and that on a larger ecclesiastical stage Southern Church rigorists would find that they had to exist cheek to jowl with men of differing opinions, and would be such a weak minority that they would have no alternative but to accept their situation.

How would union effect theological training? Although by 1897 nearly thirty Northern Church ministers had received some part of their training in New Zealand,¹⁴

few of these had been trained at the colony's one Theological Hall in Dunedin. "Veritas" anticipated a rapid increase in the roll of this institution once students from the north were trained to an accepted

13. John Collie, The Story of the Free Church Settlement p.160.

14. Dickson, p.379.

national standard in place of the uneven standards determined by their respective Presbyteries.

The last argument advanced by "Veritas" was that a more suitable opportunity for union will not be found. Gibb's opening address in the 1897 union debate expanded this point with careful precision. Said Gibb: "Fifty years ago the originators of the Otago settlement and Church indicated their desire that the Presbyterians of New Zealand should unite 'at the earliest possible date'. On seven different occasions the Synod has attempted to fulfil this desire, and seven times has the Synod failed to give effect to the schemes of union proposed by itself. We are now in the eighth effort to accomplish the consummation which the majority of the Synod believe to be necessary to the highest welfare of the church of our Fathers in this colony. Surely it is not too much to expect that we shall on this occasion go on with the work we have taken in hand to the very end." ¹⁵ The leading "Foes" were well aware that another defeat for a union basis, another agreement to delay the consummation of union until conservative opinion was satisfied, would result in widespread dejection and foster a belief that union would never become a reality. They were determined that in 1897 the church would irrevocably commit itself to union. In the eyes of "Defenders" this determination smacked of dangerous haste and "Veritas's" argu-

15. Star, 28 October, 1897. p.4.

ments were contradicted by "Fidelity to Principle" who claimed that the pro-unionists paid too little regard to theology and too much regard to the material advantages of union. "Veritas" was accused of favouring union on "sordid grounds... for the sake of filthy lucre" but the heavy majorities in favour of union given by Sessions, Presbyteries, and in Synod suggest that innuendo was no answer to a reasoned case.

The active "Foes" were characterised by an intense belief in the authority of the contemporary church to decide its destiny and formulate its doctrines. Their opponents claimed to be anti-Erastian yet Robert Stout properly showed that their threat of civil court proceedings against the fomentors of union was the worst kind of Erastianism. In his rebuttal of the Chapman-MacGregor opinions Stout argued that the Church of Scotland since the Reformation had held hard to its spiritual independence, and that it was in defence of this spiritual independence that the founding fathers of Otago had left their livings at the Disruption. Presbyterian churchmanship, especially Presbyterian Free Churchmanship, allowed for no appeal in ecclesiastical matters against decisions of the supreme ecclesiastical court. Stout opined that "there can be no appeal against the decisions of its highest court in such matters to the law courts, and if any of its members should so appeal they could be deposed".¹⁶

16. Outlook, 20 March, 1897. p.94.

However, a few "Defenders" did note with "True Blue" that it was the Union committee of Synod that first of all invoked the aid of the state by planning to place before Parliament a bill that would make union a statutory act.¹⁷ Following this move the "Defenders" warned that they might invoke the protection of the courts to preserve their heritage from Northern Church corruption. In answer to this threat the pro-unionists affirmed the Synod's right to settle the affairs of the Church. Isaac Jolly, an unnamed "Foe", stated his abhorrence of any appeal to civic authority when he argued "as one who grew up in the Free Church of Scotland, and who will ever be attached to her principles... that it sounds passing strange to me to hear men who boast of their adherence to Free Church principles to resort at every turn to threats of civil pains and penalties to try to prevent our Church following what it believes to be the line of duty on purely spiritual matters."¹⁸

Yet how much of this use of the term "Erastian" was rhetoric? "Civis", in his weekly column, tired of the long letters wherein churchmen lambasted each other with this name-calling, professed himself an "Erastian" in the hope that he might adjudicate on clerical offenders and sentence them to seven days "for slang-whanging."¹⁹

17. ODT, 17 August, 1897. p.4.

18. ODT, 20 August, 1897. p.4.

19. ODT, 21 August, 1897. p.2.

The active "Foes" were then theological liberals who were imbued with a conviction that union was God's will for their Church, who were able to present their case logically and persuasively, and were determined that that the Church of Otago and Southland of 1897 should decide its own destiny.

What advantages did these leading pro-unionists hold in their battles with the "Defenders"? A most powerful argument in aid of the union cause was the attitude of the Mother Church, the Free Church of Scotland, to the New Zealand union venture. The publication in Scotland of Essays on Christian Re-Union in 1845 marked the beginning of a change in direction, however slow moving, towards pan-Presbyterian co-operation and eventual union.²⁰ In 1845 Thomas Chalmers, the leader of the Disruption divines, joined with other Scottish and English church leaders in advocacy for an Evangelical Alliance.²¹ In 1847 the Secession and Relief Synods²² united to form the United Presbyterian Church and in 1852 a majority of the United Original Seceders²³ joined

20. Ruth Rouse and S.C. Neill, A History of the Ecumenical Movement, p.284

21. An inter-denominational body formed in 1846 to "associate and concentrate the strength of enlightened protestantism against the encroachments of popery and puseyism, and to promote the interests of a Scriptural Christianity." See Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church pp.477-478.

22. The Relief Church was formed from a Scottish Presbyterian schism of 1761.

23. The united Secession Church was formed in Scotland in 1820 from an amalgamation of the "Old Lights" and "New Lights", successors of the 18th Century Burghers.!

the Free Church. 1876 marked the juncture of the Reformed Presbyterian Church with the Free Church of Scotland while by 1897 negotiations for a union between the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church of Scotland were well on their way to the successful union of 1900.

Australian union success provided the pro-unionists with an additional argument. K.J. Cable contends of Australian Presbyterianism that "when two or three Presbyterians were gathered together, there was the spectre of schism in their midst",²⁴ even so it was a spectre that haunted them into changing their ways. Prior to 1901 five of the six Australian colonies had their own Presbyterian Church, with the sixth, Western Australia existing as a Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria. In 1879 the Victorian General Assembly had pressed for the creation of a Federal General Assembly and in 1886 this Assembly was established, with advisory powers. Proposals were then made to unite the State Churches into a Federal union on the establishment of Commonwealth Federation. In Gibb and Hewitson the "Foes" possessed leaders who had studied and lived within the Australian union negotiations.

Canadian Presbyterian union success also made an impact on the imagination of New Zealand Presbyterians.

24. K.J. Cable, "Protestant Problems in Mid-19th Century New South Wales." Journal of Religious History, 3 (2), 1964 p.122.

"Veritas" used the 1875 union of all four strains of Canadian Presbyterianism as an example in his letter of 13 March, contending that if Canadian Presbyterians, separated by greater distances and more varied traditions, could unite New Zealand Presbyterians could unite, with ever greater ease. In 1897 the active "Foes" controlled the Synod Union committee. A careful examination of the composition of Synod standing committees for 1897 shows a balance, whether deliberate or not, of liberals and conservatives. One committee stands out as an exception to this rule -- the union committee. Only one anti-unionist, William Downie Stewart, was a member of this committee. Downie Stewart, a Legislative Councillor, was an ill man with only one more of his fifty-five years left in 1897. However, in August, 1897 he roused himself to attack Stout's legal opinion, holding that Sir Robert had ignored the third section of the 1876 act.

Wrote Downie Stewart, "by the proposed union the Synod as a church court is to be abolished -- that is to say, it is to be deprived of all ecclesiastical or spiritual jurisdiction. The Synod thus ceasing to exist as a church court there would be no body left within the meaning of the act to regulate the management of the trusts." ²⁵ Downie Stewart ignored or misunderstood an essential argument in Stout's case viz;

25. ODT, 25 August, 1897. p.4.

that there was nothing in the Presbyterian Church of Otago Lands Act, 1866, to limit the Church of Otago and Southland in deciding any future theological or organisational changes. Stout contended that union "does not violate any agreement with any members. It does not change the purpose of any trust property... The union agreement can be so framed as to leave the Synod of Otago and Southland ... unfettered in the passing of regulations to guide the Church Board of Property in distributing the income". At the time of the 1897 Synod Downie Stewart was neither in attendance as a councillor²⁶ or a Synodsmen. His ill-health allowed the Synod Union committee to speak with one voice - Gibb's voice.

On the crucial vote on 28 October all committee members who were in attendance at Synod voted for Gibb's motion, with the exception of Moderator Will who was by his office debarred from voting. That this unity grew out of close and tenacious committee grapplings with both the principle and basis of union and not from deliberate initial packing of the committee seems evidenced by the diversity of views publicly expressed from time to time by members. Borrie was by far the fiercest pro-unionist on this committee. His Synod remarks on 28 October revealed his attitude to his opponents.

26. NZPD, Vol. XCIX, 1897. Downie Stewart's name is not recorded amongst the councillors present.

"Union would have the effect of banishing from the church some very undesirable elements... Union would rid them of caucuses and cabals!"²⁷ Finlayson, of more moderate temperament, felt the need to verbally chastise "A.C." for his editorial, and did so with the comment that "to speak ironically as you have done, sneering at a number of the ministers of our church, is surely not the way to promote either union or charity."²⁸ Keith Ramsay, an elder, drew a large number of previously luke-warm elders into the pro-union camp by arguing that the union of the two churches was God's will and should not be held up by scheming ecclesiastical politicians. Ramsay caricatured his opponents as "would - be leading members of the Synod who seemed to live and move and have their being in hair - splitting, diving on this and that little think, and giving every possible attention to the letter of a think, altogether oblivious of the spirit."²⁹

The Church union committee of 1897 was obviously overweighted by pro-unionists but before it is accepted that "A.C.'s" "Foes" rigged appointments to this committee, cognisance must be taken of solicitor MacGregor's advice to the Defenders to withdraw from involvement in union negotiations, and then, at the point when the pro-unionists brought their bill before the Legislature,

27. Star, 29 October, 1897. p.1.

28. Outlook, 18 December, 1897. p.563.

29. Star, 3 November, 1897. p.4.

take legal action.³⁰ Perhaps "Defenders" had been nominated to this committee and, with the exception of Downie Stewart, had refused nomination.

Although the "Foes" denounced "packing the Church with men of the right colour" the "Defenders" did not complain either in Synod or the press of unfair composition of the union committee. Their silence suggests that they had no wish to be involved on this committee, despite the opportunities membership would provide for delaying union by protracted debate and procedural wrangling.

The success of the leading "Foes" in gaining the allegiance of the Synod cannot be set down to superior debating skill. Gibb's vigorous and fluent command of language, Will's patriarchal appearance and status as senior minister of the Church, and Cameron's penetrating mind provided a powerful triumvirate to lead off every debate, yet on the other side counsel for the "Defence", Sutherland could be equally fluent and commanding while Bannerman was undoubtedly the most eloquent debater in the house. One rustic elder commented, in broad Scots, of Bannerman's performance. "I goes into Dunedin to Seenod, and I sits doon thern, and Mr. Bannerman he stan's up ad he shust puts his thumbs in his waistcoat pooches,

30. See above. Appendix C. Especially; "... those who adhere to the original constitution of the church need not adopt any active proceedings until some overt action is taken on the Part of the majority...."

and he wheeps them a' " 31.

What other factors led to the success of the "Foes" in capturing majorities on the floor of Synod? It is untrue to suggest that they controlled the procedure of the house merely because Will, a notorious "Foe", was Moderator for the year. Indeed under a Presbyterian system of government where the moderatorial office goes by rotation, and the moderator is debarred from moving motions and from participation in debate, it might be argued that it was fortuitous for the "Defenders" that Will was Moderator for the year. On the other hand, Bannerman by virtue of his office as clerk, and because of his length of tenure as clerk, was far better able to place the business of the house to the advantage of his party had he so wished to do.

The active "Foes" had many assets that gave them advantages over their opponents. It did their cause no harm to have that "clever old gentleman" Will, smash-up his anti-unionists in an official sermon on being inducted to the chair, even if it did make the opening exercises of Synod a very special means of grace for some. Well led by an outstanding and unified union committee the active "Foes" were able to present a clear case, supported by the union successes and negotiations in process overseas, aided by unexpected help from unchurched intellectuals, those who with Stout were on the side of liberal

and rational thought and against inflexibility and obscurantism, and brought to a successful issue as much by the intransigence and fanaticism of their antagonists as by their own good management.

It is relatively easy to identify those who feel strongly on any issue. They usually register their opinions in the correspondence of the press, in speeches, and at the ballot box. The active "Foes" of ecclesiastical isolation for Otago and Southland did just that. To identify the passive "Foes" of such isolation, those who were so sure that union would be carried that they felt no pressure to fight, and those who regarded the union issue as a minor fracas that interrupted the real work of the church, or was typical of the way Christians carried on their business, is a much more difficult affair.

To the extent that Otago and Southland newspapers were a gauge of public concern over the union struggle, it must be allowed that the heavy correspondence in all three major provincial papers, together with editorials, suggests popular concern. It is easy to exaggerate this interest. The financial affairs of J.G. Ward, the Horowhenua block scandal, and British foreign relations, received much greater space and more regular attention. In November, 1897 the Southland Times was more interested in Bluff Harbour than in the tactics of the Defence Society,³² although this Society's formation was marked

32. Southland Times, 3 November, 1897. p.3.

by a brief and objective report. ³³ Colonel Pole Penton's recommendations for improvements in New Zealand's defences gained more space than did plans to defend the Kirk. ³⁴ Under the title "Faith and Honesty" there followed no plea for a Church free from heresy and unionists but an advertisement for Hondai Lanka tea. ³⁵

Most southern Presbyterian parishes held their annual congregational meetings in November and December, occasions that allowed any communicant member with a complaint to air his views. Significantly, none of the leading provincial newspapers that reported these meetings paid attention to any voices raised in protest against union, or Synod's decision, and it would seem from this that in the larger congregations, who alone were reported, there was little concern to dispute the decision of the supreme ecclesiastical court. In reports of the First Church, Dunedin, annual meeting there is no record of A.C. Begg causing any disturbance. ³⁶ Note has already been made of the pre-occupation of local papers with drains, roads and bridges.

Union was not the only controversial issue before the Church in 1897 and some churchmen felt that the Kirk was unduly pre-occupied with union to the neglect of weightier issues. Temperance advocates were sure that

33. This article of twenty-four lines is entitled "Southern Presbyterians on Defensive".

34. Southland Times, 6 November, 1897. p.3.

35. Southland Times, 14 December, 1897.

36. Star, 26 November, 1897. p.1.

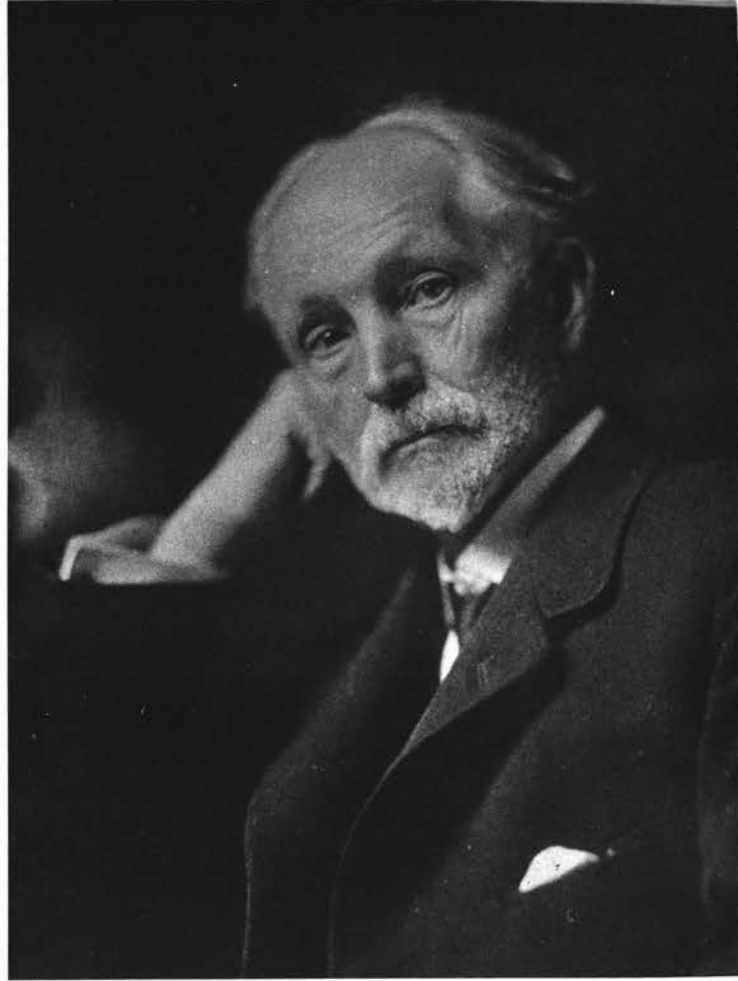
this was the case. The Alcoholic Sale Control Act of 1893³⁷ had given electors an opportunity to determine every three years whether they wished to continue, discontinue, or reduce public house licenses in their licensing districts. The December 1896 referendum gave the temperance cause a 37.82% vote for "no license" and a 36.38% vote for "reduction."³⁸ This large vote for "No license" and "reduction" made the advocates of national prohibition confident that they would gain complete victory in 1899 and they prepared for the 1899 referendum with all the spirit that their cause denied. So great was the interest taken by the Outlook in prohibition propaganda that in August 1897 a correspondent to the secular press reminded the editor of the Outlook that although his paper was subsidised by Synod funds "you cannot give two pages to let out Presbyterian people know the opinion of two eminent solicitors on the issues involved in this union question".³⁹

At first sight this appears to be typical of the "defence" tactics of victory by way of embarrassing the opposition however, the fact that Rutherford Waddell, editor of the Outlook, chose to give yet another editorial on temperance on the date of "A.C.'s" exercise of a

37. 57 Vict. 1893. p.34.

38. Prohibitionist fervour was so intense in the Church of Otago and Southland that serious consideration was given to making abstinence a condition of communicant membership. Synod 1897, p.168.

39. ODT, 14 August, 1897. p.2.



Rutherford Waddell:
A "Passive" Defender.

right of reply does suggest a pre-occupation with plans to defeat the "demon in the bottle".

Another cause attracting adherents from the Otago Church was that hardy annual "Bible-in-schools." Ian Breward has established how ferociously this issue was debated in Victorian New Zealand.⁴⁰ In 1897 the Synod Education Committee called for a public referendum in the hope that the secular basis of the 1877 act would be repeated. In an address to the Otago Educational Institute on 25 June, 1897 Rutherford Waddell expressed his concern on this issue vigorously. "The State makes no provision for moral and spiritual training... In my judgement it is one of the great blots on our otherwise excellent system... If it is the duty of the State to provide an education that qualifies for citizenship, and if no true citizenship is possible which omits the moral element, then the state fails in not providing for such a culture."⁴¹

One of those who might be termed passive "Foes", who voted for union without excitement and in the hope that that union battle would soon be over, was Rutherford Waddell. Obviously this literatus of Queen's University, Belfast, who with George Fenwick and Silas Spragg had exposed the sweating of Dunedin's seamstresses in 1888, cannot be assumed typical of this heterogenous

40. Ian Breward, Godless Schools? Christchurch, 1968.

41. Lawrence Barber, "The Defence of Secular Education in New Zealand, 1877-1937." Delta, 4 May, 1969.p.46.

group, yet he does indicate the stand of those who believed they had more important work to do. In 1897 Waddell opened the Walker Street Free Reading Room to provide the poor of the city with free access to good literature. During August and September 1897 Waddell lectured on Mill on the Floss, Australian poets, and Ruskin's nature worship. When "A.C.'s" editorial exploded on the church Waddell was immersed in Browning's The Ring and the Book. 42

Waddell held as his educational philosophy that "it is as natural and noble a culture to know Imogen and Cordelia, Romola or Adam Bede, Pamphilia and Guinevere, as to know the Coprolites of an extinct brute, or the spawn of frogs, or the latest formula for sheep dip." 43 This christian humanist, who attempted to place a quick embargo on the correspondence that followed "A.C.'s" editorial, seemed by his action to suggest that he would like to add "to know the latest union arguments" to his coprolites, spawning frogs, and sheep dip.

For Waddell, and those who thought like him, the plight of the colony's poor and unemployed was of far greater urgency than the culmination of church union. Waddell and his nameless disciples were doctrinaire

42. St. Andrew's Church Monthly, 4.(1). September, 1897. p.1. (A preview of Waddell's lecturing programme).

43. Rutherford Waddell, Memories and Hopes. p.37.

reformers, almost socialist in their convictions.⁴⁴ They were of importance to the active "Foes" in that radicals, especially Stout, saw them as allies, and persuaded that there was a remnant of rationality left in the church, delivered an occasional blow against their opponents, the "Defenders".

In 1897 Gibb and his pro-union leadership possessed advantages in Synod that gave them an overwhelming victory. Satisfactory referendum results, a theological temper favouring doctrinal liberalism, the obsession of their opponents with issues no longer politically viable, a "friendly" Moderator, a willingness on the part of the Northern Church to offer charitable compromises to southern church prejudices, the dying of provincialist sentiment and a growing New Zealand nationalism, speedier transport facilities, and pro-union votes from a group anxious to rid the Church of a time-consuming controversy; these factors combined to bring about the victory of the "Foes" and the defeat of the "Defenders."

44. Programme of Monthly Lectures on the above subject delivered by the Rev. R. Waddell, M.A., under the auspices of the St. Andrew's Church Young Mens' Association. The programme for Lecture III indicates the depth of Waddell's treatment of his subject.

"Lecture III. - Socialism

Leaders of socialism and History of its Growth.
Idealistic Stage - More's Utopia, Campanella's
City of the Sun.

Bacon's New Atlantis - St. Simon.

Critical Prosaic stage - Fourier, Louis Blanc, Proudhon.
German Socialism: Scientific Constructive Stage.

Rudbertus - Karl Marx and Lassale.

The 4th Lecture will fully explain the solution which Socialism offers regarding Industrial Reform.

The 5th Lecture if time will allow, will treat of Christian Socialism."

St. Andrew's Church Quarterly 4; May 1888 pp.6-8.

The Prospectus for this course of lectures is reproduced in its entirety in my article, "Rutherford Waddell: a Preaching Politician and a Political Parson". Forum, XXIII, (3) May 1970. pp.13-14.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION: DIVERSITY IN UNITY.

"So far as I am concerned, if I can be of any use, I will readily pass over ten seas to effect the object in view... at present, when our purpose is to unite the sentiments of all good and learned men - and so, according to the rule of Scripture, to bring the separate Churches into one - neither labour nor trouble of any kind ought to be spared".

John Calvin to Archbishop Cranmer. 1552.¹

In 1898 James Chisholm complained that "whoever undertakes to write the history of the Union movement... will find it a perplexing maze. He will be weary and sad before he gets half way through its windings; and unless a clear call of God keeps him persistent he will turn away with a bruised feeling about all his energies".²

James Chisholm's complaint over the complexity of the New Zealand Presbyterian Union struggle is unjustified. The ebb and flow of the tide against union corresponded to the degree of success or failure that the anti-unionists met with as they warned the Southern Church of the dangers of absorption, exposed the theological and liturgical innovations lurking ⁱⁿ the Northern Church,

1. Calvin to Cranmer. Letter 1619, J. Calvini opera quae supersent omnia XIV, (313).
2. James Chisholm, Fifty Years Syne p.221.

and pointed to the danger to religion and property that would come with loss of provincial church autonomy.

However, perhaps the history of the union contest was "a perplexing maze" to Chisholm because the protagonists from time to time appeared to change sides. Will and Dunlop, consistent pro-unionists, did vote against the 1885 ³ union basis but their vote was against a particular basis that they believed could be bettered, and their negative vote was given at a stage when a time consuming and rugged communication network seemed to demand church government by three Synods, rather than through a colonial General Assembly. On other occasions anti-unionists appeared to embrace the union cause. Bannerman and Fraser intervened in debate with suggestions for the improvement of union plans, ⁴ yet ironically their suggestions were always contentious, and if accepted would have delayed union for years.

In 1901 Bannerman and his associates entered a united church alongside "Foes" who had worked hard to make possible their entry. This ability on the part of both parties to finally accept that life in tension together was preferable to life apart suggests that from the start they had far more in common than their conflict might suggest.

How great were the differences that existed between

3. Synod, 1885. p.26.

4. Star, 4 November, 1897. p.1. 3 November, 1897. p.4.

the "Defenders" and their "Foes"? Were there differences in kind or in degree? The pro-unionist and anti-unionist groupings within the Otago and Southland Church shared the same Presbyterian heritage, faced common pastoral and social problems, and joined together in their opposition to secularism, rationalism, and their ancient enemies "Catholicism" and "Episcopalianism". They were all of a kind, late nineteenth century colonial Presbyterians, but differed, because of opposing theologies of authority and tradition, in the perspectives they brought to problems facing the church.

By identifying and discussing the main concerns of late nineteenth century Presbyterian churchmen we should be able to decide where, and to what degree, the "Defenders" differed from the rest of the church.

The main pre-occupation of New Zealand's Presbyterian churches in the 1890's was with the provision of religious ordinances for new communities that sprang-up in profusion following the Liberal government's implementation of a land settlement policy. Following the Land for Settlement Acts of 1892 and 1894 up to 31 March, 1897, thirty-three estates were sub-divided providing ninety-five thousand, three hundred and forty-eight acres, for one thousand and fifty-one new settlers.⁵ The Village-Homestead scheme, an experiment in community settlement, added one thousand, five hundred and forty-

5. Yearbook, 1897. p.108.

three workers to New Zealand's farming economy.⁶ In the year ending 31 March, 1898, sixty thousand, three hundred and nineteen acres were purchased in the Otago and Southland land districts, under its Lands for Settlement Scheme. The New Zealand total purchase for that year was one hundred and fifty-four thousand, six hundred and twenty-three acres Otago and Southland purchases were over one third of the whole.⁷

Between 1891 and 1897 the number of dairy factories in the colony had increased by 289% and the tramp of the cow-cockies gumboots resounded as they entered a capitalist society.⁸ Both General Assembly and Synod accepted responsibility for the provision of churches, ministers, and manses, for these new communities. In the South, Lovell's Flat, Macraes and Green Valley Parish, Hawea and Wanaka Parish, and Riversdale, were newly formed charges, supported largely by the church extension Fund.⁹ Gibb and Sutherland rubbed shoulders on the Synod Church Extension Committee, as did Borrie and M'Cosh-Smith.¹⁰ A.C. Begg, convenor of the Synods Committee of Finance and Church Erection, gave every help to church extension, despite the recurrent problem of maintaining even a minimum ministerial stipend.

6. ibid p.371.

7. AJHR, 1895. Vol.1. C-5

8. I am indebted to Professor W.H. Oliver for this expression. See W.H. Oliver, "Reeves, Sinclair and the social Pattern". Munz, Peter: ed; The Feel of Truth. p.167.

9. Synod, 1897. pp.5-6.

10. ibid, p.123.

Southern Church "Defenders", their opponents, and Northern Church leaders, were united in 1897 in the concern to establish Presbyterian churches and ministers in every sizable new community. Urban population growth posed problems for the church in the 1890's.

New Zealand's urban population considerably increased between the years 1891 and 1896. In Auckland the increase was 12.3%, in Wellington 22.1%, in Christchurch 7.3%, and in Dunedin 3.1%. ¹¹ The comparative smallness of Dunedin's increase indicates a depression in her industrial and commercial life and this depression gave rise to well organised and vocal trade unionism, and to a more doctrinaire and neo-socialist liberalism in that city. A spokesman for this radical opinion was J.A. Miller, elected in 1896 as member for Dunedin City, who was Secretary of the Federated Seamen's Union and Maritime Labour Council.

Questions of labour relations and how to best assist a depressed working class caused both conservative and liberal southern church leaders to scratch their heads in perplexity.

Most ministers thought in terms of traditional charity and preferred to treat the symptoms rather than

11. ibid, p.102. Yearbook, 1897. p.91.

	<u>1891</u>	<u>1896</u>
Auckland	51,287	57,616
Wellington	34,190	41,758
Christchurch	47,846	51,330
Dunedin	45,869	47,280

the causes of the disease. Many held to economic theories that saw wealth as subject to an inexorable law of supply and demand and agreed with Dr. R. White, Moderator of the New South Wales General Assembly, who had declared in 1892 that "All that is needful, all that is desirable, is food and raiment in quantity and in quality sufficient to maintain a sound mind in a sound body. Anything beyond this is not a blessing but a curse." ¹²

Only a few, led by Waddell, protested at this philosophy of capitalist determinism. Their protest was ignored by most of their associates who preferred to keep religion out of politics and politics out of religion, and who saw the Otago labour leaders as dangerous, rationalists and socialists who were too friendly with that free-thinker Stout. Again "Defenders" and "Foes" agreed!

In 1897 Otago and Southland Presbyterianism was preoccupied with traditional church concerns. The Synod of Otago and Southland had been horrified at the news that a Marine Board had dared disturb the sanctity of a Napier sabbath. It protested against ship sailings on the sabbath and was distressed as late as 1900 by the repairing of the permanent way on Sundays, and sent its Moderator, and Clerk, together with Waddell, to inform the Hon. J.G. Ward, Minister of Railways, it was "outraged by this desecration of the Lord's Day." ¹³

12. R.B. Walker, Presbyterians in Late 19th Century New South Wales. p.57.

13. Synod, 1900. pp.10-11.

Over questions of Sabbath observance and support for missions, Bible-in-Schools and Temperance, the Synod knew no division into "Defenders" and "Foes". Bannerman, Gibb and Waddell were natural allies against the incursions of secularism and the liquor trade.

It has been alleged that the "Defenders" were vestigial Provincialists. Were the "Defenders" any more provincialist than their opponents? It is true that Bannerman, Begg, Sutherland and Fraser consistently demanded the retention of the Synod as a governing church court. It is also true that the majority of Southern Church Synodsmen were not prepared to have the Synod totally destroyed and went some way towards meeting the "Defenders" objection when they requested and gained the retention of the Synod as a body responsible for the maintenance and distribution of church endowments, south of the Waitaki.

The "Foes" did not rise in a body to demand the elimination of the Synod, and argue that any form of continued existence might be a threat to the sovereignty of General Assembly, and a danger to small Southern Presbyteries. The "Foes" obviously were as sentimental in their regard for the Synod as were the "Defenders" and played their part in keeping alive the Synod's prestige and power by allowing it to retain the right to appoint Theological Hall professors and administer its funds without any check from General Assembly.

An anti-catholic bogey haunted late nineteenth century New Zealand Presbyterians. In 1896 the Rev. J. Dickson, author of History of the New Zealand Presbyterian Church, published three anti-Catholic pamphlets.

14 This leading pro-unionist was typical of New Zealand Presbyterians of his era in his fear of, and opposition to, Roman Catholicism and Anglican Episcopalianism. The 1880's and 1890's saw a growing sectarian sentiment in New Zealand marked by a profusion of literature attacking the Roman Catholic Church. Gibb and Cleary crossed swords in the secular Press and Tablet, with Cleary suggesting the Gibb might well read the one-penny Catholic children's catechism.¹⁵ The formation of the Imperial Protestant Federation in 1896 and the proliferation of Loyal Orange Lodges throughout New Zealand furthered this sectarian temper. Gibb and the Dunedin Anglican clergy argued the merits and defects of Episcopalian and Presbyterian government for some time, until finally agreeing that the real enemy was Rome.¹⁶

The Church "Defenders" and their "Foes" had in their anti-Catholicism another bond of unity.

There were real differences, however. Chapters three and four have clarified that there were real dif-

14. J. Dickson, "A Reply to Father Le Menant des Chesnais" Protestantism Versus Romanism, No.2. Protestantism Versus Romanism, No.3. Timaru, 1896.
15. This exchange continued in the Tablet until the first world war.
16. Gibb, [nd] From "Anglican Cleric", Dunedin.

ferences between the parties, and that these were important enough to bring the "Defenders" to threaten the church with civil court action. Basically these theological differences involved the question of authority in the church and the inspiration of scripture. The "Foes" accepted Calvin's dictum that the church must ever reform herself in the light of the Gospel.¹⁷ For them this meant that it was the duty of each generation of churchmen to re-express the faith and re-organise the life of the church to best serve society. The "Defenders" paid lip service to Calvin's dictum but saw the Westminster Assembly as a settlement of Church order and doctrine that could not be tampered with without emasculating the Faith.

One group placed its trust in the ability of the contemporary Church to understand and recognise God's will. The more conservative group, distrusting the judgement of the contemporary church, appealed to the saints; or rather to the Westminster saints of the seventeenth century.

This difference over authority affected their attitude to scripture. Many of the "Defenders" felt free to interpret the Bible following the methodology of the new historical critics. They believed that they had better scholastic tools than any previous generation and

17. John Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, IV, 1. 16.

could with God's help work out the application of the Biblical message to their generation. On the other hand the "Foes" regarded the Westminster Confession as an indispensable interpretative tool, and when modern scholarship threatened the dogmatic presuppositions of the Confession they attacked modern scholarship.

What accommodation could, and did, the pro-unionists offer the unwilling minority? When provincialism was in favour as the form of colonial government a virtual federation was envisaged, with separate synodical governments for the North Island, the South Island north of the Waitaki, and Otago and Southland. As the country's mood changed in favour of central government the majorities in Synod and Assembly moved in favour of the emasculation of New Zealand's one Presbyterian provincial Synod and its replacement by one General Assembly for all New Zealand. This volte face caused bitter resentment on the part of conservative and rural southern churchmen who felt betrayed, as was shown in the case of Bannerman's jibe at his opponents in the 1897 Synod.

A fair case can be made that the pro-unionists did accommodate the "defenders" to a high degree. On no occasion was their right to state their case within the frame work of regular church procedures denied them. As late as the April Synod 1901 Bannerman was listened to when he "spoke strongly, asserting that they were

committing themselves to a mass of confusion, violating the very fundamentals of the original constitution of the church, defeating its policy, and endangering its existence." ¹⁸ An elder had commented in the Outlook five months before that Bannerman's dogmatism was "sometimes not a little trying." ¹⁹ Yet he was allowed to make his case to the end and at the end Gibb was able to take the dissidents aside and persuade them to enter the union "under the cover of their protest"; ²⁰ a face-saving and charitable device.

It is speculation to argue that but for Gibb calling together his opponents and offering to meet their terms a schism would have occurred. Bannerman has the right to be taken at his work and his word in reply to Gibb's challenge of October, 1897 that his party would withdraw from the church was an emphatic "No!" ²¹

Following union the leaders of both groups adapted well to the new ethos. Will did not even wait until he had signed the uniting act before he announced plans for an even broader union. In a speech made before he affixed his signature he announced, "There is good reason to believe that the time will come, sooner probably than many imagine, when all the so-called Evangelical Churches, all the non-sacerdotal churches, will become,

18. Outlook, 20 April, 1901. p.14.

19. Outlook, 10 November, 1900. p.23.

20. Outlook, 2 March, 1901. p.1.

21. Star, 28 October, 1897. p.4.

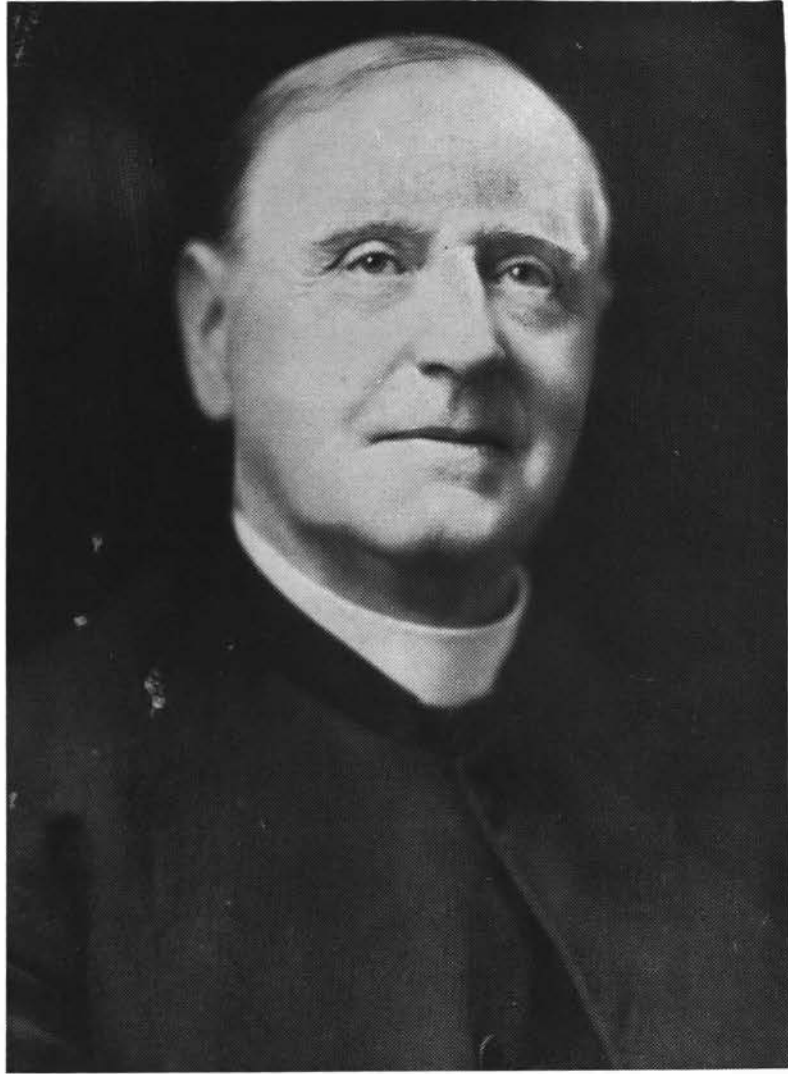
if not united, at least one federated body." P.B. Fraser accepted membership of the union committee of the united Presbyterian Church of New Zealand where he had every opportunity to cry "heresy" as he did in 1904 when he foresaw that with the next union, as he had predicted for the present, "the proposal to fling away the Westminster Confession and substitute for it a short and easy creed... is received with the same wave of popular enthusiasm as the 'masses' receive the latest political nostrum for their immediate social salvation." 22

The "Defenders" found a home in the United Church basically because they were churchmen who were prepared to remain within the church unless their position was quite untenable. Their theological position in the United Church was no worse than in the Southern Church. No hardships were added.

The Declaratory Act, hymns, and marriage with a deceased wife's sister were no more menacing than before. Had they really believed their theological integrity to be eternally endangered by living in a church that accepted these "novelties" they would have left the Church of Otago and Southland well before union.

On 31 October 1901, All Saint's Day, the feuding saints of Otago and Southland were joined to the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. As a tribute to those who had worked towards this union Edinburgh University con-

22. P.B. Fraser, The Union of the Churches and the Coming Presbyterian Assembly. p.9.



James Gibb:
A D.D. to the Victor.

ferred as might be expected, a D.D. on Gibb. Unexpectedly, Bannerman received his D.D. also.

Of all the tributes that the new Presbyterian Church of New Zealand received on this occasion perhaps the most realistic came from the Tablet. Using the term "separated brethren" well before the ecumenical thaw began to draw Protestants and Roman Catholics together the editor commented: "Catholics look with a friendly interest on the movement towards unity which has brought to a successful issue herein, and which **has** been for some time stirring the spirit of our separated brethren of various creeds throughout the English-speaking world. The movement - to which we wish God's speed - marks the revolt of right reason and Christian feeling against the woful [sic] multiplications and divisions which have ever been the bane of the Reformed creeds, and which are the natural and predicted outcome of the principle of private judgment." 23.

One last nod of praise for the "Defenders". In the final analysis they exercised this "principle of private judgment" responsibly and stayed in the church in the hope of reforming her to their Westminster model when they could have added yet another schism to Presbyterianism's unenviable catalogue.

23. Tablet, 31 October, 1901. p.1.

E P I L O G U E

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ON THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND BILL, 1901

To ensure that at the signing of the union agreement the property, endowments, and funds of uniting churches would become the possession of the united church, with the exceptions of certain endowments that were to remain in the custody of the Synod of Otago and Southland, R. McNab ¹ was entrusted with the task of steering through the legislature a bill prepared by Messrs. T.M. McDonald and C. Payne, solicitors. ² In moving the bill's second

1. Robert McNab M.A. LL.B, was member of the House of Representatives for Mataka and an elder of the Church. He later gained fame as the compiler of Historical Records of New Zealand and as writer of The Old Whaling Days, and made his debut into local body life in 1891 on election to the Southland Education Board. In 1893 he stood in the Liberal interest for Mataka and defeated G.F. Richardson. Richardson regained the seat in 1896 but on his retirement from politics in 1898 McNab again became member. As a loyal Kirk elder of pronounced pro-union views and as a former solicitor of the firm Chapman, Sinclair and White, McNab was a logical choice as the mover and advocate of "The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand bill"; a private bill.
2. T.M. McDonald was formerly solicitor for the Provincial Council of Southland and was senior partner in the Invercargill firm of T.M. McDonald and son. C.J. Payne was a partner in the Dunedin firm of barristers and solicitors, Payne and Downie Stewart, the solicitors to the Otago Presbyterian Church Board of Property. It would seem that the Northern Church in its eagerness to accommodate those Southern Church conservatives who were holding up the introduction of the bill, turned over the task of final re-drafting to the Synod. As clerk of Synod Bannerman may well have used his office to instruct the solicitors to prepare a draft that would either accommodate the theological opinion of his group or prove so unacceptable to the churches that union might be further delayed.

reading on 24 July, 1901³ McNab informed the House that legislation was made necessary by an agreement between the contracting parties to retain the Synod "for the purpose of carrying out the trusts under which lands are now held. After re-assuring J. Allen,⁴ member for Bruce, that his vote for this bill would in no way jeopardize the continuation of the three church-endowed chairs at the University of Otago, McNab then attended to W.J. Napier's⁵ contention that a Royal Commission was needed to inquire into the titles of all native lands granted to religious bodies in the first years of the colony, and to Premier Seddon's questioning of the title possessed by the Otago and Southland Church to the lands

3. NZPD, Vol.116, House. 24 July, 1901, p.586.
4. James Allen held a Cambridge B.A. and was eager to expand tertiary education in the colony. A member of All Saint's Anglican Church he very probably suspected that the Presbyterian "establishment" in Otago might well at some future date use the early ratification of Synod control over all Presbyterian endowments in Otago and Southland to release itself from its present commitment to give financial support to the University of Otago and use endowments intended for the furtherance of education for other purposes.
5. W.J. Napier, an Irish - Catholic barrister and solicitor, was a strong advocate for government re-purchase of freehold for re-division into "lease - in - perpetuity" holdings. (See "Land for Settlements" debate. NZPD, Vol.116, House. July 23, 1901. pp.558-561). The tenor of his speech in the 'Presbyterian Church of New Zealand' debate is that where grants are not being used for the purposes for which they were originally granted then the state had a right to intervene. It may be assumed that he had in mind the seizure or purchase by the crown of any lands so misused.

indicated, by informing the House that the bill dealt only with 144,600 acres sold by the New Zealand Land Company to the Lay Association of the Free Church of Scotland between 1847 and 1852, land held in trust on clear title.⁶

On 13 August, 1901 A.R. Guinness, chairman of committees, reported to the House that the schedule to the bill had been struck out in committee, the preamble amended accordingly, and the words "for all time" deleted from line four, clause three. The deleted schedule consisted of a summary of the cardinal historical doctrines of the Presbyterian ecclesiastical tradition, an agreed theological basis for union. McNab, speaking in defence of the deletion of the schedule, argued that the Presbyterians of New Zealand were uniting at their own will and owned the right to alter and re-state their doctrines. If parliament made the schedule law then it was imposing an Erastian control over church affairs and interfering in the life of a Christian tradition that had always opposed Erastianism. The solicitors who drew up the bill had bungled and whilst the bill was before the House both uniting churches realised the implication of the preamble provision that "on and after the passing of this Act the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland and the

6. Seddon's intervention in the debate may well have been occasioned by his parliament's concern with the "landless natives of the middle island". A report on the measures taken in setting apart land to meet the needs of South Island Maoris is found in AJHR, Vol.3, 1901. G - I.

Presbyterian Church of New Zealand shall be held to be united in one Church, spiritually and ecclesiastically, under the name of 'the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand', subject to this Act and the terms and provisions set forth in the Schedule to this Act".⁷ Both churches were now determined that the signatures of their moderators and not the signature of the Governor should affect their union and were determined not to make the civil courts judges of orthodoxy and heresy.

At this point the "Defenders" attempted a last ditch stand. The schedule had been included in the bill to assure the conservation of the traditional standards of Free Church Presbyterianism and they saw in this attempt to remove the schedule a threat to a continuum of orthodoxy in the united church. Ignoring Sir Robert Stout's stern warning that deposition from the church could attend any attempts to thwart the will of the church by appeal to secular courts the "defenders" lobbied the high court of Parliament.

The "Defenders" were not without friends in the debate that followed the chairman of committees report on the bill. J.W. Thomson, member for Clutha, informed members that he had a letter from a Clergyman in Dunedin who wished to see the bill passed as introduced. David Buddo, member for Kaiapoi, was less antagonistic towards the schedule's deletion but stated his preference for its

7. NZPD, Vol.116. p.435.

retention as a valuable historical record. Thomas MacKenzie,⁸ member for Waihemo and since 1901 Mayor of Roslyn, then exploded into wrath against the bill, warning the House that "Some of the oldest and most respected ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Otago declare that if the Schedule is not made part of the Bill it will cause very great trouble to the Church in Otago. I Have had very strong letters upon this point... I am simply voicing the opinion of these worthy clergymen, and not my own... But the gentlemen I refer to are perhaps the most representative of the Church of Otago... If this is struck out, they state that they will be deprived of what they hold to be the best feature in connection with the whole measure, and a declaration of the actual constitution under which the southern Church agreed to unite with the north." ⁹

8. T.M. MacKenzie, a champion of Otago interests after the style of Macandrew and Pyke, was member for Clutha from 1887-1896. Following an appointment as a trade commissioner to Britain he was in 1900 elected as member for Waihemo at a by-election following the resignation of Sir John Mackenzie. An indication of MacKenzie's style and opinion is shown in his contribution to the 'Dunedin City and Suburban Tramways bill' debate when he congratulated a colleague on his plea "for the preservation of the reserves which the wise founders of this fair Colony said should be the heritage of the people. He has opposed the vandals, and the speculators, and the Bond Street merchant, and the 'fat men' of Dunedin". (See: NZPD, Vol.117. July 30 1901, p.67.) Allen and MacKenzie had clashed over this Dunedin bill.
9. NZPD, Vol.117, House. 13 August 1901. p.437.

"Slippery Tam", as MacKenzie was called by his opponents, had been in Britain on a produce sales commission for the government between 1896 and 1899, and this absence may explain his wild statement that "the concessions granted by the honourable member for Mataura were never contemplated by the supreme Court of the Presbyterian Church of Otago".¹⁰ Yet the very wildness of his statements sounded a familiar refrain in McNab's ear and he quickly suspected that while the voice was that of MacKenzie the words may have been born of a different source.¹¹ McNab ventured that "without saying that the amanuensis was the same as the writer of the letter to the honourable member for the Clutha.... I can say this... that the great opponent of union in every shape and form in the Southern Presbyterian Church of this colony has been the Rev. Dr. Bannerman, and the reverend gentleman, I am advised, lives in the borough of which the honourable gentleman is the worthy mayor."¹²

Warming to his subject McNab noted that it was passing strange that it was not until the moment that the bill came before the House that members should be informed that the union should not be concluded if the schedule be retained. He expressed regret that it was

10. ibid, p.436.

11. ibid, p.437.

12. ibid,

"just at that psychological moment the leader of the opposition to Union - Dr. Bannerman - should find the importance of keeping the Schedule in the Bill, although the result of keeping it in the Bill would be to prevent Union. It was very unfortunate that the reverend gentleman who was interested should himself have communicated with anybody at all in this house".¹³

Tom MacKenzie intervened to make a personal explanation to the House. He denied reception of any communication from Bannerman, whom he acknowledged as "that grand old monument in Otago" who "does not give way to every breath of popular opinion".¹⁴

Whether members accepted MacKenzie's explanation or not they responded by passing the third reading without a dissenting vote. Members had learnt from their innumerable debates over "Bible-in-Schools" and "state aid to Church schools" that the religious tiger should not be taken by the tail any more than needful.

The Church Defence Society's supporters had chosen the wrong location and the wrong advocate for their stand. On 16 August 1901 the bill received a first reading before another "grand old monument", the Legislative Council. On 20 August, 1901 a second reading was moved by the Hon. George McLean, M.L.C. Otago, who informed the council that "there is no opposition to the

13. ibid.

14. ibid.

Bill - it is private measure".¹⁵ No councillor disputed his judgement and on 11 September, 1901 the bill was read a third time and unanimously approved. With the Governor's assent the Act became law. Resistance ended there for no "ecclesiastical De Wet" appeared "armed and ready to carry on guerilla warfare in a region where the union flag was flying".¹⁶

15. NZPD, Vol. 117. Council. 20 August, 1901. p.463.

16. Outlook, 2 March, 1901. p.20.

A P P E N D I X A"A.C.'s" EDITORIAL: OUTLOOK 11 December, 1897. p.1.The Church Defence Association.

And so we have at last the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland Defence Association. We are not told how many ministers and office-bearers were present in the Y.W.C.A. Rooms when the Association was formed on the 29th November, and therefore cannot be sure of the strength of our defenders. However, as Mr. A.C. Begg and the Rev. R.R.M. Sutherland are the joint-commanders of the defence forces, we may rest assured that no foe will lay unholy hands upon our Zion without considerable risk to limb and life. That is something for which to be thankful! The announcement that a Church Defence Association has been formed has set us thinking as to the foes from whom we are to be defended. These, it appears, are the promoters and supporters of Union with our brethren in the North. Of course, the defenders, though unnamed in the report of the meeting of the 29th November, will be represented by those who have opposed Union. Perhaps it may help the members of the Otago Church to appreciate the danger that threatens if we indicate a few of the men who are foes to be reared and fought against, and some of the defenders:-

FOES OF THE CHURCH.

Rev. Wm. Will, East Taieri.
 Rev. J. Gibb, First Church.
 Rev. Wm. Hewitson, Knox Church.
 Rev. Dr Watt, Green Island.
 Rev. Dr Dunlop, Professor.
 Rev. Borrie, North-East Valley.
 Rev. J. Kirkland, West Taieri.
 Rev. A. Stobo, Invercargill.
 Rev. R. Ewen, Limestone Plains.
 Rev. J. Baird, Winton.
 Rev. G. Lindsay, Invercargill.
 Rev. J. G. Smith, Invercargill.
 Rev. James Chisholm, Milton.
 Rev. J. M. Allan, Stirling.
 Rev. A. B. Todd, Oamaru.

DEFENDERS.

Rev. R. R. M. Sutherland, Kaikorai.
 Rev. Wm. Bannerman, Clerk of Synod.
 Rev. J. Christie, Waikouaiti.
 Rev. J. M. Davidson, Mataura.
 Rev. J. B. Smellie, Wyndham.
 Rev. J. M'Cosk Smith, Naseby.
 Rev. J. Lothian, Alexandra.
 Rev. P. B. Fraser, Lovell's Flat.
 Rev. W. Wright, Oamaru.

In the above lists we have mentioned only the names of ministers; similar lists of elders for and against Union would be equally suggestive. From the above it seems that the fathers of the Church - Messrs. Will, Watt, Stobo, Todd, &c. - who have spent half a lifetime in building up the Church, are now ready to destroy it, and that of the pioneer ministers Mr. Bannerman stands almost

alone in defence. We find also that the men whom the Church has delighted to honour by putting them in its high places - namely, Messrs. Gibb (of First Church), Hewitson (Knox Church), Dunlop (Professor), Chisholm (Milton), Gibson Smith (Invercargill), &c. - are to be distrusted, and opposed by defenders led by Messrs Sutherland (of Kaikorai), J.M. Davidson (of Mataura), McCosh Smith (of Naseby), and Wright (of Oamaru). Another strange fact to be noted is that almost all the sons of the Church, who have been nurtured at her breast, and trained by her to serve as her ministers, must now be branded as enemies, who are ready to turn and smite to the dust the mother who bore them. What a pitiful sight! - D. Borrie, I. Jolly, R. Fairmaid, J.A. Will, J.A. Asher, &c., among the enemies of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland. We can scarcely believe it possible, even though the trumpeters of this Defence Association proclaim it as a fact.

But perhaps the defenders do not charge the fathers and sons, as well as the main body of the ministers of the Church with malice; it may be their madness they fear. Not the will to hurt they attribute, but the want of wit to know what makes for the Church's good. So be it. The men we have honoured in the past are fools or knaves, or perhaps both. The true men and wise are the members of this Defence Association. We commend these thoughts to the members and office-bearers who may be asked to face the foe, as members of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland Defence Association.

A P P E N D I X BA SYNOPSIS OF SYNOD UNION DOCUMENTS(i) THE BASIS FOR UNION ADOPTED BY THE
SYNOD IN 1896

1. That the United Church shall include and consist of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, as existing previously to the Union, and of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland, as existing previously to the Union, and that the name of the United Church shall be the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.
2. That the doctrinal basis of the said Presbyterian Church of New Zealand shall be the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme standard, and the only rule of faith and practice, and the Westminster Confession of Faith, as interpreted by the Declaratory Act, as subordinate standard, with liberty of opinion in regard to marriage with a deceased wife's sister.
3. That the United Church shall be constituted and governed by Sessions, Presbyteries, and a General Assembly consisting of all ministers in charge, with an elder from each Session, and such other Ministers as may have seats in their respective Presbyteries, which shall be designated the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. But inasmuch as the Synod of Otago and Southland owns and administers trust properties and funds, these shall remain its own exclusive property, and it shall continue in full possession of all the rights pertaining to it in this respect with the power to meet from time to time for the due administration of its trusts.
4. That the first meeting of the Assembly shall be held in Dunedin, and the Assembly shall itself determine and fix its next place of meeting from year to year, but ordinarily the Assembly shall meet alternately at Wellington and Dunedin.
5. That in order to secure a satisfactory attendance at the General Assembly, each Presbytery of the United Church shall appoint one half of the number of their ministers and as many elders, whose travelling expenses to and from the General Assembly shall be paid from the Assembly Expenses Funds.

6. That the principles of the Sustentation Fund, namely, that every ordained minister, in a charge, is a servant of the Church, and entitled to adequate maintenance from the collective Church - shall be recognised as determining all arrangements for the support of the ministry.
7. That considering the difficulties attendant on the immediate unification of the financial methods hitherto in use, the General Assembly shall at first recognise: (1) The Sustentation Fund Scheme and Church Extension Fund as at present in operation in the Church of Otago and Southland. (2) The Church Extension Scheme (which is for the double purpose of Sustentation and Extension) of the Northern Church, as now administered; it being understood that the General Assembly shall address itself without delay to gradually effect a uniform scheme for the support of the ministry and Church Extension; and (3) Meanwhile these funds shall be administered separately by Committees of the General Assembly of the United Church, in terms of their respective Regulations.
8. That the Missionary Funds of the two Churches shall be amalgamated and devoted to the support of the Missions which are now being carried on by the respective Churches.
9. That while aiming at an amalgamation of the Widows' and Orphans' Funds and of the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Funds, at as early a date as possible, yet having respect to the duty of administering these Funds on sound financial principles, it is agreed: (1) That the respective funds in each Church shall be kept distinct; widows, orphans, and ministers having claims only on the Fund wherewith they were connected at the date of the Union. (2) That after the Union, and until further arrangements are made, ministers shall connect themselves with the Fund to which they belong territorially and the Funds shall be administered separately by a Committee of the United Church, in terms of present Regulations.
10. That Dunedin shall be the seat of the Theological Hall.
11. That while the appointment and removal of Theological Professors must remain with the Synod of Otago and Southland in terms of the Act 1866; yet, inasmuch as such appointments and removals are of the highest importance to the whole Church, it is necessary that the Assembly and Synod should act harmoniously in this matter, and that therefore, prior to any appointment or removal being made by the Synod, the mind of the General Assembly shall be ascertained.
12. That the operation of the Barrier Act shall apply to all proposals for fresh legislation.

(ii) THE BASIS FOR UNION ADOPTED BY THE SYNOD

IN 1897

1. That the United Church shall include and consist of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand as existing previously to the Union, and of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland, as existing previously to the Union, and that the name of the United Church shall be the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.
2. That the doctrinal basis of the said Presbyterian Church of New Zealand shall be the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the Supreme Standard and the only rule of faith and practice, and the Westminster Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms, as interpreted by the Declaratory Act, as Subordinate Standards, with liberty of opinion in regard to marriage with a deceased Wife's sister.
3. The United Church shall be constituted and governed by Sessions, Presbyteries and a General Assembly, consisting of all ministers in charges, with an elder from each Session, and such other ministers as may have seats in their respective Presbyteries, which shall be designated the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. But inasmuch as the Synod of Otago and Southland owns and administers Trust properties and funds, these shall remain its own exclusive property, and it shall continue in full possession of all the rights pertaining to it in this respect - retaining its separate name and existence as a Church Court, and having supreme authority in all matters connected with its Trust funds, and limited in its jurisdiction to the Province of Otago exclusively, and to the administration of these Trusts, and with power to meet from time to time, as occasion may require.
4. That the first meeting of the Assembly shall be held in Dunedin, and the Assembly itself shall determine and fix the next place of meeting from year to year, but ordinarily the Assembly shall meet alternately at Wellington and Dunedin.
5. That in order to secure a satisfactory attendance at the General Assembly each Presbytery of the United Church shall appoint one-half of the number of their ministers, and as many elders, whose travelling expenses to and from the General Assembly shall be paid from the Assembly Expense Fund.

6. That until the methods of ministerial support at present existing in the two Churches respectively can be unified, the Sustentation Fund shall be maintained, where and to the extent to which it at present exists.
7. That considering the difficulties attendant on an immediate unification of the financial methods hitherto in use, the General Assembly shall at first recognise:-
 - (1) The Sustentation Fund Scheme and Church Extension Fund, present in operation in the Church of Otago and Southland.
 - (2) The Church Extension Scheme (which is for the double purpose of Sustentation and Extension) of the Northern Church, as now administered; it being understood that the General Assembly shall address itself without delay to gradually effect uniform schemes for the support of the ministry and Church Extension; and that no vital change be made in the Sustentation Fund of either Church until a three-fifths majority of Kirk Sessions and Presbyteries within the respective branches of the United Church affected by the change shall declare themselves in favour of the change.
 - (3) Meanwhile these funds shall be administered separately by the Committees of the General Assembly of the United Church in terms of their respective Regulations, and until the Sustentation Fund and Church Extension Fund of the two Churches be amalgamated, the Rules and Regulations may be amended from time to time - those of the Church of Otago and Southland by a Committee consisting of the whole membership of Synod and those of the Church of New Zealand, by a committee consisting of the members of Assembly, representing congregations north of the Waitaki.
8. That the Missionary Funds of the two Churches be amalgamated, and devoted to the support of the Missions which are now being carried on by the respective Churches.
9. That while aiming at an Amalgamation of the Widows' and Orphans' Funds at as early a date as possible, yet having respect to the duty of administering these Funds on sound financial principles, it is agreed:-
 - (1) That the respective funds in each Church shall be kept distinct widows, orphans, and ministers having claims only on the Fund wherewith they were connected at the date of the Union:

- (2) That after the Union, and until further arrangements are made, ministers shall connect themselves with the Fund to which they belong territorially, and the Funds shall be administered separately by a Committee of the United Church, in terms of present regulations; and that, until the Widows' and Orphans' Funds and the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Funds of the two Churches be amalgamated, the Rules and Regulations of the said Funds may be amended from time to time by a Committee consisting of the whole membership of the Synod of Otago and Southland, in terms of the present Regulations, and those of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand by a Committee consisting of the members of the Assembly representing congregations north of the Waitaki.
10. That Dunedin shall be the seat of the Theological Hall.
11. That the appointment and removal of Theological Professors shall remain with the Synod of Otago and Southland, in terms of the Act of 1866; but no Professor shall be appointed to, or removed from, or retained in his position against the express decision of the General Assembly.
12. That the Barrier Act shall apply to all proposals for fresh legislation.

(iii) THE 1901 AGREEMENT

This Agreement, made the thirtieth day of April, one thousand nine hundred and one between THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF OTAGO and SOUTHLAND, of the one part, and THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH of NEW ZEALAND, of the other part, witnesseth that the said two Churches hereby agree to become and be united as one Church upon the terms expressed in the following articles that is to say:-

ARTICLE I. - That the United Church shall include and consist of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand as existing previously to the Union, and of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland, as existing previously to the Union, and that the name of the United Church shall be the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand.

ARTICLE II. - That the doctrinal basis of the said Presbyterian Church of New Zealand shall be the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the Supreme Standard, and the only rule of faith and practice, and the Westminster Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechism, as interpreted by the Declaratory Act, as Subordinate Standards, with liberty of opinion in regard to marriage with a deceased wife's sister.

ARTICLE III. - The United Church shall be governed by sessions, Presbyteries, and a general assembly, designated the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, in which all the ministers of the Church and an elder from each Session shall have the right to be present and take full part in the business, but the right to vote shall be limited to the representative ministers and elders, who shall be appointed by the Presbyteries in the proportion of one-half of the number on their rolls. But inasmuch as the Synod of Otago and Southland owns and administers trust property and funds, these shall remain its own exclusive property and it shall continue in full possession of all the rights pertaining to it in this respect - retaining its separate name and existence as a Church Court, and having supreme authority in all matters connected with its trust funds; and having also authority to exercise ecclesiastical functions of a provincial Synod such as belong to the Synods of the Free Church of Scotland subordinate to the General Assembly.

ARTICLE IV. -- That the first meeting of the Assembly shall be held in Dunedin, and the Assembly shall itself determine and fix the next place of meeting from year to year, but ordinarily, the Assembly shall meet alternately at Wellington and Dunedin.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEW ZEALAND ACT

1 ED. VII. 1901

An Act to make certain Provisions in reference to the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland, and the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, respectively, and to define the Rights in respect of the Property of such Churches, and for other Purposes. 19th September, 1901.

WHEREAS "The Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland," referred to in "The Presbyterian Church of Otago Lands Act, 1866," and the other Acts amending the same, and the several Ordinances of the late Provincial Council of Otago relating to such Church, and "The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand," referred to in "The Presbyterian Church Property Act, 1885," have agreed to unite and to form one body or denomination of Christians under the name of "The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand": And whereas the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland is the highest Church Court of and represents the Church referred to in the said Act of the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-six and amending Acts, and the said Ordinances, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand is the highest Court of and represents such Church: And whereas the said Churches, by an agreement signed by the Moderator of the said Synod and the Moderator of the said General Assembly, have agreed to unite upon certain terms: And whereas, in order to remove any doubt as to the effect of such union on the property or rights of such respective Churches, and for other purposes, it is desirable to make provision in manner hereinafter appearing:

BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED by the General Assembly of New Zealand in Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:-

1. The Short Title of this Act is "The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand Act, 1901."
2. For the purpose of carrying out and giving effect to the various powers, trusts, and provisions relating to the property now or which may hereafter be vested in or held by or on behalf of the Otago Presbyterian Church Board of Property, or the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland, exercisable under any Act or

Ordinances by the said Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland, such Synod shall continue on the same basis as it existed prior to the said union, and in regard to the management or administration of such property shall, notwithstanding such union, continue to have all the powers, rights, and privileges now or hereafter possessed by or vested in such Synod under any Act, Ordinances, regulation, or otherwise, with supreme authority in such matters.

3. Neither the said union nor anything contained in this Act shall in any wise affect the property referred to in the last preceding section, or the trusts affecting the same, and such property shall continue to be held exclusively for the purposes and by or on behalf of the persons respectively now or for the time being entitled thereto in the Provincial District of Otago, and all the rents and income from such property, or any proceeds therefrom, shall be held or applied for the purposes and by or on behalf of such parties respectively, in accordance with the trusts or provisions for the time being affecting the same respectively; and for the purposes aforesaid, the persons, bodies of persons corporate or otherwise, and Church Courts for the time being in the Provincial District of Otago, and forming part of or connected with the said united Church, shall have, enjoy, and exercisethe same rights, interests, and powers, and be subject to the same duties and responsibilities, in relation to the said property and the income thereof, as the persons, bodies of persons, Church Courts constituting or connected with the said Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland, respectively had enjoyed, exercised, and were subject to before the said union; and in the construction of the statutory provisions relating to the qualification and appointment of new Trustees the name of the said united Church, that is to say, the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, shall be substituted for that of the Presbyterian Church of Otago and Southland.
4. Neither the said union nor anything contained in this Act shall be deemed to affect the law or the trusts relating to property belonging for the time being to congregations connected with either of the said uniting Churches; but where, in any deed declaring the trusts similar to those contained in a trust deed affecting a property belonging to any congregation connected with either of the said uniting Churches, reference is made to such Church, such reference after the said union shall be read as meaning the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, united as aforesaid.

5. On and after the said union taking effect, the words "General Assembly," or any similar expression in "The Presbyterian Church Property Act, 1885," shall mean the said General Assembly of the said United Church.

A P P E N D I X C

LEGAL OPINIONS GIVEN CONCERNING THE RIGHTS OF THE SYNOD OF OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND TO ALTER ITS CONSTITUTIONAL BASIS WITHOUT FORFEITING TRUST ENDOWMENTS.

(i) The Chapman and MacGregor Opinions.

a. Chapman.

The church has no power, still less has its Synod the power, by a majority however large, to alter its constitution in the face of a protesting minority, whether large or small. The right of the minority, however small, to stand upon the constitution as formulated by the founders, despite the desire of the majority to alter that constitution or modify the doctrines settled by it, is one of the most clearly-defined rights in our law.

In the event of union on the proposed basis being resolved on by a majority the remedies of the minority are of a passive character, as the courts will not entertain questions of doctrine apart from rights of property (*Forbes v. Eden*, supra; *Baldwin v. Pascoe* 7 N.Z.L.R. 759, per Denniston J.) though they will freely entertain such questions as relate to mixed spiritual and temporal matters (*Brown v. Curé*, of Montreal.L.R., 6 P.C., 157). The remedies, however, are:

- (a) Generally to ignore the resolution and the basis of union as ultra vires of the Synod and incapable of being enforced.
- (b) To see that all ministers coming into incumbencies conform to the law as expressed in the procedure relating to induction.
- (c) To oppose legislation designed to alter the constitution and doctrines of the church and to force such altered doctrines upon the church.

I think it is highly improbable that Parliament will so deal with the property settled on the whole church as to force upon an unwilling minority doctrines which are at variance with their opinions, seeing that colonial Parliaments do not interfere in matters of doctrine, while the law recognises those only as interested in the property who use it in connection with the scheme of doctrines included in the constitution, holding that those who depart from it renounce their right of property. 1

1. Star, 7 August, 1897, p.1.

b. MacGregor.

The resolution of the Synod of 1895 leaving it to the "individual conscience of ministers and members" to determine their own course with respect to marriage with a deceased wife's sister is a violation, or attempted violation, of the constitution of the Otago Church. The words of the Proposed Basis of union on the same point "with liberty of opinion in regard to marriage with a deceased wife's sister" are, in effect, identical with the above resolution, and are equally at variance with the constitution of the Otago Church (as also with the form of title deeds for churches and manses). Moreover, the resolution and basis for union above referred to would conflict with vows made (in Otago) by probationers before ordination and ministers before induction, in which they severally solemnly declare that they sincerely own and declare "the Whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith to be the truths of God," and own the same as the confession of their faith. An essential part of that "whole doctrine" is the prohibition of marriage with a deceased wife's sister. If ministers are to be allowed liberty of opinion with respect to that doctrine, it is clear that it becomes immaterial whether it be held by them or not. In my opinion it is essential that such a doctrine should be either "approved or reprobated" and there can be no middle path.

In the event of union on the proposed basis being resolved on by a majority, those who adhere to the original constitution of the church need not adopt any active proceedings until some overt action is taken on the part of the majority. Until the nature of such overt action is known it is impossible to state with accuracy the exact remedy or remedies open to those who oppose such action. Lord Eldon, quoted in the preceding answer, that the civil court (in the present case the Supreme Court of New Zealand) will not permit those who choose to depart from the constitution of the church to share in the benefits of the endowments. In other words, if and whenever the question at issue ceases to be one purely of doctrine, and becomes wholly or in part a conflict as to trust property, the Supreme Court will interfere for the vindication and protection of the rights of those adhering to the original constitution of the church. Meantime, all the parties opposed to union need to do is to rest on their legal rights - treating the resolution and basis of union as ultra vires, and therefore as not binding, and opposing by constitutional methods any legislation by which it may be attempted in any way to alter the constitution of the Otago Church.

As I am requested to state anything which may appear to me to be worthy of consideration, it may not be out of

place to say a word or two as to what may be termed the "political" aspect of the matter. In theory, no doubt Parliament is omnipotent, and may make or unmake creeds as well as constitutions. As to the power of the Parliament of New Zealand to interfere, there can therefore be no question. It is difficult, however, to conceive of any Legislature passing a measure or measures designed to deprive those members of a church who adhere to the tenets of the founders of that church of the property held in trust for the benefit of those "holding and continuing to hold" those tenets as the standard of their faith.

It will be clear from the forgoing that, in my opinion, by legislative action alone can any effective step be taken in the direction of union. In other words, it will be essential that the section of the church desirous of union should apply to Parliament direct on the subject. What the result of that application may be it is impossible to predict, especially in view of the fact that opposition to the proposed legislation is certain to be strenuous. One thing, however, is clear, and that is the extreme danger of bringing under the notice of a Parliament notoriously not prejudiced in favour of ecclesiastical endowments the fact that two large sections of a wealthy church are compelled to appeal to the Legislature to settle the ultimate destination of their church property. In the result it may be that the property in dispute may be appropriated by Parliament in a direction not contemplated or desired either by unionists or non-unionists. 2

(ii) Opinion by Sir Robert Stout. (Stout's opinion has been slightly abridged)

It will be well to state how the property which is called the property belonging to the Church is held. I do this because, though it might have been thought that on a question affecting the status and position of a church and especially of a church founded as a branch of the Free Church of Scotland, the question of property would have been a very secondary consideration, it has been made of primary importance. The Church as a church holds no property, and there is no trust declared concerning the property held by the Property Board that the Church must teach any particular creed. What, then, is the position of the property called the property of the church?

By the Presbyterian Church of Otago Lands Act, 1866, the lands described in the schedule to the Act - lands that had been set apart by the Otago Association for the Presbyterian Church and for education - were vested in trustees and all former trusts concerning the lands were ended and discharged...

There is nothing in this Act declaring what creed the Presbyterian Church of Otago "or the Synod of Otago and Southland" is to profess... The wonder would have been if the statute of any Parliament had defined the functions, powers, or privileges of a church founded as a branch of the Free Church of Scotland...

The property therefore is held not by the church, but by a corporation outside the church and on the trusts I have mentioned. [Sir Robert had previously itemised the trusts concerned].

So long as there is a Synod of Otago and Southland competent to make regulations for the guidance of the corporation, and manses and churches to repair, or churches requiring new manses, and theological or literary chairs to be endowed, the property will remain with the corporation, and it cannot be interfered with by any courts of law. There is nothing in the statute saying that the property will return to the grantor - the Crown - if, for example some details of the Westminster Confession are ignored by the Synod or by the Presbyterian Church in Otago and Southland.

Can it be said that there ceases to be the Synod referred to in the Act of 1866, when, for example, the following resolution is passed by this Synod, viz:- "The Synod having considered the overtures relative to marriage with a deceased wife's sister, and having consulted the Presbyteries of the church, resolves - 'That without committing the Church to an approval of such marriages, it shall be left to the individual conscience of ministers and members to determine what course they shall pursue in celebrating or entering upon any such marriages, as they shall have to give an account to God'."

Or, if the church unites with another church affirming this doctrinal basis, does the Presbyterian Church or its Synod cease to be the bodies referred to in the Act of 1866 - viz:-

"That the doctrinal basis of the said Presbyterian Church of New Zealand shall be the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme standard and only rule of faith and practice, and the Westminster Confession of Faith... as interpreted by the Declaratory Act as subordinate standards, with liberty of opinion in regard to marriage with a deceased wife's sister".

I have already said that the statutes refer to no creed or standards as the conditions on which the property is held. I assume, however, that the Presbyterian Church is, to quote the institutions signed by the lay members of the association and recited in the 1866 Act, to be governed according to the doctrines, polity and discipline of the Free Church of Scotland, of which Free Church the Confession of Faith and other standards framed by the Westminster Assembly of Divines form the fundamental standards.

The main point really is, does the statement of the standards and polity, &c; preclude the Presbyterian Church of Otago from varying in its discipline or polity or creed from the minutest detail of any of the Westminster Standards? Has the Church no power to deal with theological questions (save with the sanction of Parliament) in any way not permitted by these "fundamental standards"?

The Westminster Confession assumes the Church has power to determine controversies of faith... There is ample power in the Synod, as the highest court of the Church, to deal with this question of marriage with a deceased wife's sister, and in my opinion the resolution passed by the Synod is not beyond its powers. If this court is not competent to deal with ecclesiastical matters then can it be called a church in the meaning of chapter thirty-one of the Confession of Faith?

No United Presbyterian accepts without qualification chapter twenty-three of the Confession nor article two of chapter thirty-one. I would like to know how many ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Otago believe that "the civil magistrate hath authority and it is his duty to take order that unity and peace be preserved in the church that the truth of God be kept pure and entire etc;"

I am asked can the law courts interfere if the proposed union is carried out, and will an act of Parliament be necessary?

The cases in which courts interfere with churches may be summarised under the following heads:-

1. If the Church passes an act or law which violates the provisions of an Act of Parliament, and persons are thereby injured in their civil rights. This was the famous Auchterarder Case (Kinnoull v. Auchterarder 6 Cl and Fin.642)
2. If a contract made with a minister is violated, such as depriving him of his office contrary to the law of the church (MacMillan v. The Free Church) The Cardross Case.
3. If property is used contrary to the trusts on which it was settled Lady Hawley's case, for example. (7.Sim;307, Attorney - General v Pearson, 7 Si.290).

The courts do not interfere with any church that varies its creed or basis of membership, especially if in its standards there is power given to do so. (Forbes v. Edea, L.R; H.ofL; 1 Sc; Div;568). Nor do the courts interfere with the churches in the performance of purely spiritual functions. (Baldwin v Pascoe, 7 N.Z;L.R.759).

I cannot see how the proposed union comes under any of the three classes of cases I have mentioned. It does not violate any agreement with any member. It does not change the purpose of any trust property. An Act of Parliament is not required to permit the union. The union agreement can be so framed as to leave the Synod of Otago and Southland free and unfettered in the passing of regulations to guide the Church Board of Property in distributing the income.

I have dealt with this question apart from one consideration that is to my mind of paramount importance. I have advised as if this was not a church that was founded as a branch of the Free Church of Scotland, and was not governed according to the doctrine, polity and discipline thereof. If this is binding on the Presbyterian Church of Otago, and it seems to me just as binding as what are called the "fundamental standards", what shall be said of its members who suggest an appeal to the law courts to decide on the validity of a resolution of the Synod?

I am afraid the traditions of the Free Church must have been forgotten, and that the "ten years Conflict" has been buried in oblivion? What was it that those who signed the protest and deed of demission fought for? Was it not the spiritual independence of the Church? According to them the law courts had no control over the decision of their Synods in matters of doctrine or conscience. Is it forgotten that the Free Church party asserted, even after the decision of the House of Lords in the Auchterarder case, that they never admitted - "that because in its consequences it may infringe on patrimonial (civil) rights it is hence ascertained to have been incompetent for the General Assembly to enforce an Act of its own".

It would surely be a peculiar, if not pathetic mode of celebrating the jubilee of this branch of the Free Church of Scotland if next year some of its members appealed to the Supreme Court of New Zealand against decisions of the Synod - the supreme court of the church, on spiritual matters.

... I have shown then:-

1. The property is held by a corporation, not by the church.

2. That the church is not bound to teach any special creed, and as a punishment lose the right to regulate the disposal of the income of the property if it fails to do so.
3. That assuming the church is bound by all the standards framed by the Westminster Assembly, it has power to vary and amend the standards, and to pass such a resolution as has been quoted, and agree to such a basis of union as is proposed.
4. That if it must be governed by the Free Church doctrines, polity, and discipline, then there can be no appeal against the decisions of its highest court in such matters to the law courts, and if any of its members should so appeal they could be deposed.

August 21, 1897.

Robert Stout. 3

A P P E N D I X D

A BRIEF DISCUSSION OF NORTHERN CHURCH ATTITUDES
TO UNION.

"The Northern Church has always been in favour of union. It was from Otago that opposition came". 1 .

The Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, the "Northern Church," was constituted in 1862 in Auckland from representatives of the Presbyteries of Auckland and Wellington, with initial approval from, and then withdrawal from, by the Synod of Otago and Southland. By 1897 the Northern Church was divided into eight Presbyteries that sent representative ministers and elders to an annual General Assembly.

The Presbyteries, in order of foundation, were:

- Auckland (1856)
- Wellington (1857)
- Christchurch (1864)
- Hawkes Bay (1865)
- Nelson (1869)
- Timaru (1873)
- Westland (1875)
- and Wanganui (1884)

Note has already been taken in the introductory chapter of exchanges of correspondence between the Presbyteries of Auckland, Otago, and Wellington, in the first two decades of settlement. 2 The warmth for union ex-

1. Outlook, 2 March, 1901. p.9. Debate on the Northern Church Union Committee's report to General Assembly.
2. See above chapter 1.

pressed by northern Presbyteries at the time continued without diminution despite the Synod's renunciation in the 1862 Assembly ³ and the disappointment engendered by the failure of the 1865 negotiations, wherein the Presbytery of Otago decided that because four of its Kirk sessions suggested amendments to the basis it could not proceed, ⁴ and notwithstanding the failure of the 1870 - 75 negotiations torpedoed by Synod's demand that provincial Synods and not General Assembly should be the final court of appeal in all matters of discipline for the first five years following union. ⁵

Northern Church persistence is evidenced in an overture brought from the Presbytery of Timaru to General Assembly in 1883 ⁶ advocating an initial union of the Presbyterian Churches of the South Island. However, by this time national sentiment was ascendant over provincialist opinion in the church, and unwilling to embark on a half-measure the General Assembly dismissed the overture, with only two representatives voting for it. ⁷ In 1893 Northern Church faithfulness to the union dream was rewarded with an approach from the Synod that informed

3. W. Will and A.B. Todd, the Otago Church Commissioners, gave full assent on behalf of their Church, to the union basis.
4. Notwithstanding the agreement of nine sessions that the basis was satisfactory and should be proceeded with.
5. Synod, 1875. p.11.
6. Assembly, 1883. p.17.
7. ibid, p.25.

General Assembly that unofficial schemes⁸ for union were being discussed within the Southern Church and requested permission for the Synod's delegates to discuss these with Assembly officials.

J.S. Murray affirms the consistency of Northern Church desire for union when in writing about this occasion he states "that the attitude of the Northern Church ... was clearly demonstrated by the reception which was accorded the Otago Deputies, who attended the Meeting of the General Assembly at Christchurch in the following February. Practically the whole evening was allotted to them and to the subject which they brought before the Assembly. After hearing the Deputies the Assembly expressed its great pleasure at their visit, and its unaltered attachment to the principles of union, and cordially reciprocated the feelings which led the Southern Church to re-open the question".⁹

A committee was quickly formed to meet with the Southern commissioners but disagreement soon became obvious over two issues. While the Synod required that it continue as a judicial and executive court of the church, with regional authority, the Northern Church was prepared to bend no further than to allow the Synod existence as a corporate body, "for the sole purpose of con-

8. A.H. Stobo, convenor of the Southern Church Union Committee, had on his own authority sent a questionnaire to ministers. Stobo took no part in the events of 1897 because of ill-health and died in 1898.
9. Murray, J.S. The Union of the Northern and Southern Churches of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand. p.28.

...serving its legal rights and interests in its trust properties".¹⁰ The Northern Church insisted on a national legislative body, with Presbyteries as the executive agents of this national court. It was not prepared to allow the continuance of a regional legislature that would forever be reserving issues of national concern to its own judgment and so thwarting the basic point of union; a unified church with instruments of government subordinate to a single General Assembly.

A second bone of contention was Gilbert's "annual blister" marriage with a deceased wife's sister.¹¹ The Northern Church guaranteed that it would accept the Otago Church's Declaratory Act providing that the Southern Church recognised as valid the colonial government's authorisation of the legality of marriage within this decree. This bargain was doubly unacceptable to conservative opinion within the Southern Church and Stobo resigned his convenorship, to be replaced by Gibb.¹²

The Northern Church's refusal to enter any union that made a united church the slave of Southern Church regionalism and doctrinal rigorism soon paid dividends. In 1895, on a motion by William Will, Synod allowed that marriage with a deceased wife's sister was legitimate in God's eyes as well as in the sight of the state. Union discussions had moved Southern Church Presbyteries and

10. Synod, 1894, p.60. Report of Deputies.

11. See above Chapter 2.

12. Synod, 1894, p.28.

sessions to overture Synod to remove impediments to both unions. 13

That Northern Churchmen were from time to time impotent and frustrated with Southern concession to a conservative minority is true. T.F. Robertson, minister of Ponsonby, wrote to Gibb in March, 1896: "I suppose you find the work of Unity hard at times in Otago, and not too many ardent souls capable of rising above lesser things to the larger national viewpoint....I suppose the chief difficulty is the position of the Synod of Otago in a united Church". 14

It is equally true that some Northern Church leaders did little to assist in meeting the scruples of "their weaker brethren". Apart from singing to organs and marrying the wrong wives, statements made publicly by leading Northern Churchmen stank of heresy to conservative southerners. R. Erwin, M.A., minister of North Belt Church, Christchurch, and Moderator of the 1897 Northern Church General Assembly, did little to reassure the southern minority in his moderatorial address. Spoke the Moderator:

13. In 1891 the Presbytery of Clutha overtured Synod in favour of speedy action in union negotiations. The preamble to the overture shows a concern to make clear that a united church is a tenet of Calvin's theology. "Whereas, in accordance with the catholic and unifying spirit of Presbyterianism, our Church has almost from the beginning of her history aimed at an incorporating union with the church in the northern parts of New Zealand...." Synod 1891 p.73.
14. Gibb; T.F. Robertson to Gibb. Personal correspondence dated 23 March, 1896.

"Unconsciously to many of ourselves, the faith of the evangelical section of the Church has been gradually transmuted, till very few of us would accept as his own the statement of some of the cardinal doctrines of the faith as made by one of the leading evangelicals, of say, fifty years ago. The adoption of Declaratory Acts by many of the Presbyterian Churches is an open confession that the sense in which they understand the statements of doctrine contained in these subordinate standards has been modified. Often the use of the old phrase tends to blind us to the fact that our statements of the truth thus indicated is different, and is liable to introduce confusion into the minds of both preacher and hearer, and hence our ceasing to use them would give both freedom and power to our preaching".¹⁵

What motivated the perseverance of Northern churchmen over the fifty years of tortuous union negotiations? According to an Outlook correspondent in 1901, it was "the spirit of John Calvin, who said that he would 'cross seven seas to effect the union of scattered churches'".¹⁶ Feelings of national identity and arguments that mission work and church extension work could be more economically undertaken by a church were also important. In St. Paul's Presbyterian Hall, Wanganui, in March 1901, the Northern Church unanimously committed itself to union with the

15. Outlook, 20 February, 1897. pp.38-39.

16. Outlook, 2 March, 1901. p.19.

Southern Church. In seconding the motion of support, aged former "Cameronian" John Duncan of Foxton regaled a story told him by the pioneer minister to Otago, Dr. Stuart, "of a couple that had been engaged in early years, and after a lapse of forty years.... were brought together and marriage followed. On the day of the marriage the bride said to the doctor, 'Long looked for come at last!'"¹⁷ Duncan informed the house that he had looked for this day and believed that the Northern Church's long years as suitor were about to end. "A successful issue was near at hand".¹⁸

17. ibid, p.21.

18. ibid.

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