

FRONTIER RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE
TO THE
PEACE RIVER AREA



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With special reference

to the

PEACE RIVER AREA

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of the requirements for the degree of

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by

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INTRODUCTION

This study is an attempt to discover, and if possible, to measure certain tendencies in the field of frontier religious organization.

The thesis is "There are types of religious organization which are peculiar to frontier environments". With this in mind, early frontiers of the United States were studied and the types of religious activity found therein. Then followed a comparison of frontier life of today with this early pattern, and it was found that the religious pattern of the modern frontier differs in many respects from the pattern of the early frontier. Then the specific frontier of the study - namely, the Peace River - was subjected to a detailed study, in order to show the likenesses or differences to the general pattern that had already been presented. The factors that influenced the growth and pattern of settlement of the area were dealt with in detail, thus showing the ecology of the area. With the ecological distribution presented, the next step was to trace the process of social interaction, in relation to the social organization of the area, particularly the religious phase of this organization.

Having presented the picture of the area, the religious distribution of the population within the area for 1921 was presented. Then a cross-section of 313 families from the area was studied in detail. The information concerning these 313

families was furnished by the Canadian Pioneer Problems Committee, which made a study of them for economic purposes. This Committee collected the data through the personal interview method, using carefully prepared questionnaire sheets. The answer to the question was recorded immediately it was given.

Some of the things which we tried to find out about these families were their religious affiliation, distance from church, relationship to the church, amount contributed, number of times they attend, and many other such things. Tables were worked out for these and other groupings, in order to present as clearly as possible the trend of religious development in the area.

The procedure from this point was to analyze in somewhat the same way the Annual Reports for the major denominational groups in the area for comparative purposes. Unfortunately, we were able to get a report of the United Church only. The work of this church is presented with an attempt to relate it to the general pattern and to trace its relationship as far as possible with the others. A purely descriptive treatment is made, with only meagre statistics of the Roman Catholic, the Anglican and Presbyterian churches. What statistical treatment is given was obtained from church schedules for these groups gathered by the same Committee in the summer of 1930. In all, twenty-five churches were studied, from a purely religious standpoint. They are distributed as follows: United Church 14, Anglican 5, Roman Catholic 3, Salvation Army 1, Lutheran 1, and the Mennonites 1. These statistics were quite fragmentary and somewhat unsatisfactory.

The whole study has shown an area in the early stages of its development, yet one that is moving steadily and somewhat rapidly in the direction of forms of religious organization which are determined by environmental factors, and also by the larger interest group in some distant centre of dominance. This organization is made possible through an efficient leadership, co-operation within the area, and financial support from the outside. Without the outside aid there would be little, if any, religious organization in the area.

CHAPTER 1.

THE FRONTIER AND ITS RELATION TO RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION

The Frontier or "fringe of settlement" has been an ever-recurring phenomenon in the distribution of man and his institutions. The new and the strange still constitute a challenge to the adventurous spirit of man, and there are still vast regions of uninhabited territory awaiting the arrival of the pioneer, in spite of some opinions to the contrary.

As early as 1890 a bulletin issued by the Superintendent of the Census Bureau, Washington, D. C., contained these words:

"Up to and including 1880 the country had a frontier of settlement but at present the unsettled area has been so broken into by isolated settlement that there can hardly be said to be a frontier line. In the discussion of its extent, its westward movement, it can not, therefore, any longer have a place in the census reports". 1.

It is interesting to note in reference to this statement, the attitude of two American writers, namely: F. J. Turner and Isaiah Bowman. Each writer, in dealing with what is fundamentally the same problem, uses the quotation, but for antithetical reasons.

F. J. Turner in a paper, read at the meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago on July 12, 1893, on "The Significance of the Frontier in American History", says,

1. Department of Census Bureau, Washington, D. C.

referring to the census statement -

"This brief official statement marks the closing of a great historic movement. Up to our own day American history has been in a large degree the history of the colonization of the Great West. The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward explain American development". 2

On the other hand, Isaiah Bowman in a pamphlet entitled "The Jordan Country", writing sometime in the fall of 1930 says:

"Nothing could be further from the truth than the oft-repeated statement that there is no longer an American frontier. The error had its origin in a four-line statement, in a report of the United States Bureau of Census for 1890. In other words, the rather definite "line" that marked the border of advancing settlement was said no longer to have that marked continuity which it had long displayed. Quite wrongly, later commentators have taken this to mean that frontier conditions had passed and that the years immediately preceding 1890 marked the end of pioneering.

As a matter of fact, frontier living is still the rule, not in one community but in scores of communities; not in isolated districts, but throughout a thousand mile belt of territory. This conclusion is reached after summer field studies of 1921 and 1930, including a traverse of several thousand miles through selected regions in the West. The details will be clearer, if we bear in mind a few generalities. It is one of the outstanding characteristics of a frontier, or pioneering people, that they live a life of experiment. Instead of doing the same thing in much the same way from year to year, and stabilizing its life to correspond to a settled agricultural practice, the frontier community is in a state of unsettlement. With unending change in strongly accented climatic and economic conditions, an entire region may not be able to cease experimentation. The pioneering type of life then becomes not a stage of development, but an ultimate result". 3

The latter view is without doubt the more scientific one, and is borne out by the ever-increasing interest during the last decade in the frontier. The frontier as an integral part of the economic and social order is absorbing the thought and interest of the best minds. So important is it that systematic

3. Isaiah Bowman in a Pamphlet "Jordan Country" P. 1.

2. F. J. Turner, Frontier in American History, Page 1.

and carefully prepared plans are followed in an attempt to get more scientific knowledge of these areas whereby haphazard schemes of settlement might be replaced by more intelligent ones.

The frontier is, as it always has been, one of the most absorbing and fascinating studies. "There is no word in the English language more stirring, more intimate, or more beloved. It has in it all the Elan of the old French phrase "En Avant". It carries all of the old Saxon command "Forward". It means the old hope of a real personal liberty and yet a real human advance in character and achievement. The frontier was the place and time of the strong man, of the self-sufficient but restless individual. It was the home of the rebel, the protestant, the unreconciled, the intolerant, the ardent and the resolute. It was not the conservative and tender man who made history, it was the man sometimes illiterate, oftentimes uncultured, the man of coarse garb and rude weapons, but the frontiersmen were the true dreamers of the nation". 4

The frontier in its broadest significance knows no country. It lies in other lands and in other times than our own. It is an area without a past, a place of new beginnings. Here the old practices and customs are subjected to the impact of a new environment. The traditional methods of regulating community services are found to be obsolete. New conditions require new technique, and at each level of mastery, a more elaborate technique is necessary. It is an area that is in constant process of development and reorganization. Contemporaneous with this phase of frontier development there is the introduction of more highly specialized and mechanical aids which rob it of its isolation and render it more accessible and attractive.

Types of Frontier.

The term "frontier" suggests a settled area of which it is the "fringe". This "fringe" is closely related to the settled area. The nature of this relation is the basis for the classification of frontier types.

R. D. Mackenzie in a paper on "Dominance and World Organization" in the American Journal of Sociology for July, 1927, says:

"There are many types of frontiers. They may be grouped, however, into three general classes, according to the nature of their economic relation to the centres of dominance". 5

It is apparent, however, that he is classifying these frontiers which have a pronounced relation to specific centres of dominance. He asserts that he is omitting any consideration of "the settlement" and the more recent "amusement centre" types of frontiers.

His three general classes which are meant to be inclusive enough for all types and applicable to any area in any time are as follows:

"First, the trade frontier, which is characterised for the most part by the exchange of primary products for manufactured goods. This has been the relation of the far-flung parts of the British Empire to the Mother Country. It is the relation of the regions of agriculture everywhere to those of manufacturing. Second, the plantation frontier, a species of the first class, but sufficiently different to merit separate consideration. The plantation frontier is usually located in or near the tropical zone. It implies large scale finance and organization, and an abundance of cheap labor supplied by subject peoples. The third type of frontier maybe designated as the industrial frontier. It implies the introduction of machine industry under outside finance and management into the less industrialized parts of the world, as for instance, the recent invasion of European and American factories into China, India, Latin America and Canada".⁶

5. R. D. Mackenzie. American Journal of Sociology, July 1927, P.29

6. R. D. Mackenzie - "The Concept of Dominance and World Organization"

As, has been already stated, this classification does not purport to be all inclusive. It does, however, claim to be capable of wide application. So that the specific types of frontier in early pioneer days are sub-divisions of these general types. For example, the trader's, hunter's, the rancher's and the farmer's frontier are grouped under the general heading "the trade frontier", while the miner's frontier belongs to the group spoken of as "the industrial frontier". The particular frontier with which we shall deal in this study is an agricultural frontier, and, therefore, it belongs to the first group.

These latter types, however, seem to be pertinent enough to our study to deserve individual mention. Little imagination is required to visualize the heterogeneity of the occupational types on the first American frontier - the Atlantic Seaboard. Each type which later gave to the advancing frontier its distinguishing characteristics was to be found on this first frontier. Only one type remained, namely the fisherman. The Atlantic seaboard was his natural habitat. For him there was no West. New lands, virgin forests, unexplored wildernesses had no appeal. His economic sense found satisfaction in the pursuit of his peculiar activity. Here he settled, made a home, made and unmade neighbours, became a unit in a group organization, which eventually began to assume institutional characteristics. Life gradually became more complex and more highly specialized, until today, the fisherman's frontier has vanished and in its place are to be found great centres of industry, and transportation

and shipping centres. The other members of the early frontier group were all on the trek away from the seaboard. Life there to them was hazardous and strange, and they were seeking an environment more in keeping with their native trends. The fur-trader, the hunter, the miner, the rancher, the farmer were all moving, probably not all at the same time, but in successive waves they passed.

"Stand at Cumberland Gap and watch the procession of civilization file past - the buffalo, the Indian, the fur-trader, the hunter, the cattle raiser, the pioneer, the farmer - and the frontier has passed by. Stand in the Rockies a century later and see the same procession with wider intervals between. The unequal rate of advance compels us to distinguish the frontier into the trader's frontier, the rancher's frontier, miner's frontier, and the farmer's frontier" 7.

In Peck's "New Guide to the West" there is this suggestive passage -

"Generally in all Western settlements, three classes, like the waves of the ocean, have rolled one after another. First the pioneer, who lives a very simple life, loosely attached to the soil. He remains until he begins to feel himself crowded out, then he moves off to another area. The next class of emigrants purchase the lands, add field to field, clear out the roads, etc. and exhibit the picture and forms of plain, frugal civilized life. Another wave rolls on. The men of capital and enterprise come. The settler is ready to sell out, and push farther into the interior and become, himself, in turn, a man of capital and enterprise. The small village rises to a spacious town or city, substantial edifices of brick, extensive fields, orchards, gardens, colleges, and churches are seen. Thus wave after wave is rolling Westward. The real Eldorado is still farther on". 8

Neither of these classifications tells the whole story. Additions no doubt will be made. There is also the probability that the future will demand a re-definition of the whole problem. The purpose of the classification is to show that different

7. Turner. op. cit Page 12

8. Peck's Guide to the West 1837. Boston.

areas are given over to different economic activity. These areas in turn tend to draw to themselves the human types adaptable to that area. In other words, the type of the area, and the individual types within it can be correlated. This holds true also of institutional types. Each area is creative in the sense that it fashions and directs the type of organized life within its domain. Externally these institutional patterns are different, but in essence they are of the parent stock. The differences that manifest themselves are products of ecological and social interaction.

Characteristics and Significance of the Frontier:

The history of the peopling of the earth's surface may be likened to a continued story of the frontier's reaching maturity and its rebirth. That story is still "to be continued". In Dawson and Gettys "Introduction to Sociology" there is a "Density Map of the World", which shows how unequal is the distribution of peoples over the earth's surface. Of "one and a half billion inhabitants, more than two-thirds are to be found in Europe India, China and Japan. Less than one-third live in the remainder of Asia, Africa, the two Americas and Australia" 9. The question which naturally arises is: Why is there such an unequal distribution? The answer is fairly obvious. The areas that are densely populated are those in which climate, soil and topography are favourable. Outside these areas population density decreases, until at the periphery there is not a single occupant. During the early days of population expansion

9. Dawson and Gettys-Introduction to Sociology p. 150.

there were no artificial devices employed to regulate or to direct such movements. Accessibility, ease of transportation and suitability were the determining factors. This world pattern is rehearsed again in the ever-recurring frontier. The same physiographic features which determine world settlement also determine the settlement of pioneer areas. The resources and topography of the area determine its pattern of settlement.

It requires only a cursory analysis of the population movements in the United States and Canada to verify the above statements. Population expansion has followed the areas of greatest accessibility and fertility. The areas today that are receiving the influx of immigration are those in which climate, soil and topography are favorable.

The effects of isolation are only of secondary importance. All frontier regions in the early stages are comparatively isolated, but this is less true today, than previously. With grim doggedness the early pioneer followed the pack horse over unbroken trails to the rim of what seemed to be an interminable forest, but nevertheless free land. True there must have been a conflict of emotions in the breasts of these hardy pioneers. On the one hand, courage and stamina were required to face these giants of the wilderness, and to hew and shape them into log cabins which were to house future nation builders. On the other hand, here was opportunity, a new day, a new task, in an entirely new environment in which to work out a future. What the result of the interaction of these two factors would be only the future could

reveal. Before long there is a clearing, the first blows for a new community have been struck, and so the work goes on, - others come, the wilderness is converted into a garden, the deserts blossom, interests grow apace, repressed wishes begin to rise above the limen of consciousness and seek expression. These individual wishes get objectified and soon some of the services of the more settled areas begin to appear and the first stages of frontier isolation begin to disappear.

Mention has already been made of the influence of the frontier upon those coming within its bounds. Emerson Hough speaks of the frontier as the "melting pot for character". A wider generalization and perchance a more applicable one is "a melting pot of the nations". The frontier is the receiving station of a great migratory system. To it comes a great variety of occupational types and of racial groups. Some of them may be "master craftsmen" in the arts practised on their chosen frontier. Others there are, who must become apprenticed to the new life and methods. Time may work these diverse types into a homogeneous group, but at first the group is marked by its heterogeneity. In the trek to the modern frontier, one can notice a more mixed group than in the earlier days. Not only can the farmer be seen in the group, the mechanic is there, the carpenter, the engineer and in some cases the nurse and doctor and teacher and minister and many other professionals are there. In a few instances, whole groups have migrated from one area to another, taking the different functionaries

along with them. In such areas frontier living is an exception rather than rule. The general pattern is, the group first, whether a mining group, a farming group or ranching group, that is, all who come, irrespective of their occupations in the old land, engage in the one specific activity. As the group grows there emerges in many instances a part-time teacher, a part-time religious functionary and other types as occasion demands. In short, it is found that here is a group of varied talent and ability, able to furnish from within itself the various professional types to the community. In some instances it has been found that an amateur theatrical troupe could be had at very short notice. When this pattern is not in evidence, the order no doubt is, the larger occupational group first, followed later by the other functionaries, probably the teacher first, or in some instances the doctor or the nurse. The religious leader is already there, that is the leader nearest the new group, is held responsible for its oversight and for possible accession, so that he imposes himself on the group, whether he is desired or not. Other agencies follow in quick succession according as the future demand is anticipated. The frontiers of today have become modernized. The Peace River frontier, excepting the extreme portions of it, has all the conveniences of a new area well advanced in its first stages of urbanization.

The frontier's significance for us lies in the fact that as a result of the ecological and social interaction therein, there evolve personality types and institutional types which

are peculiar to the area.

"The wilderness masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries tools, modes of travel and thought. It takes him from a railroad car and puts him in a birch canoe. It strips off the garments of civilization and arrays him in a hunting shirt and the moccasin. It puts him in a log cabin of the Cherokee or Iroquois and runs an Indian palisade around him. Before long he has gone to planting corn and plowing with a sharp stick, he shouts the war-cry and takes the scalp in orthodox Indian fashion. In short, at the frontier the environment is too strong for the man. He must accept the conditions it furnishes or perish. Little by little he transforms the wilderness, but, the outcome is not an old Europe but a new product". 10

This is not only true of the individual, it is also true of the institution. All our institutions have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changing environment. Only institutions that are capable of adaptation will survive on the frontier.

"The peculiarity of American institutions is, the fact that they have been compelled to adapt themselves to the changing of an expanding people - to the changes involved in crossing a continent, in winning a wilderness and in developing at each area of this progress out of the primitive economic and political conditions of the frontier into the complexity of city life". 11

The religious pattern of the area is of fundamental interest in this study. At this point the general pattern of religious activity on the frontier will be presented, followed later with a qualifying note dealing with the pattern of the modern frontier.

The religion of the frontier was the religion of the revolutionary poor.

10. F. J. Turner: op. cit - Page 4.

11. F. J. Turner: op. cit - " 2.

"The isolation of the frontier life fostered craving for companionship, suppressed the gregarious tendency, and subjected the lonely settler to the temptation of crowd suggestion to an unusual degree. In the camp meeting and in the political gathering, formal logical discourse was of no avail, while the "language of excitement" called forth an enthusiastic response". 12.

In addition to the isolation of the frontiersman, other influences inclined him to make an uncritical response to religious stimulation. "The reduction of life on the border to bare fundamentals of physical or social values, the dearth of intellectual stimulation and the lack of those effective inhibitions of emotional expression which formal education cultivates, the awesome manifestations of nature, these all make the settler subject to the feverish phenomena of revivalism". 13.

The religion of the frontier was founded in a desire for individual experience and responsibility, free from central control, and strict surveillance on the part of superior powers, ordained of God or of men. Lay preachers or lay preaching was common on the frontier, by one's fellows, who were not separated from each other by marks of superior education and culture. This attitude became expressed in the sectarian organizations of the community. The churches were voluntaristic organizations in harmony with the social structures of the individualistic society and in conformity with the conception of religion as immediate and individual experience.

This individualistic experience comes often as a result of some cataclysmic upheaval consequent upon an awakened conscience brooding over the blackness of one's past. Curiously enough, the frontier seemed to provide the very conditions from which it also furnished means of escape, for the frontier did greatly influence

12. Niebuhr H. Richard- "Social sources of Denominationalism"-P.141

13. Niebuhr op. cit. P. 140.

the morals of the emigrant. He found himself in an area where the family group relationship did not reach, free from the compulsions of legal restraint and the watchful eyes of neighbors. This in itself was harmful, for in many cases it tended to the breakdown of the customary morality. Many are the tales told of drunkenness, gambling, sexual license, profanation of the Sabbath, prevalence of profanity, by visitors to the frontier. This in turn serves as an index to the intense religious upheaval which takes place on the frontier when the settler comes under the sway of a great religious emotion, fostered in him through a sense of his wrong doing. Revivals are an ever-recurring phenomena on the frontier. This trend in religious practice, coupled with the sense of individual responsibility determine to a very large extent, the content and nature of the doctrine of these areas. The doctrine will of necessity be an incorporation of these emotional religious experiences.

This brings to the fore a very important fact, namely - the religious sects which thrive on the frontier are those which give a large place to these emotional upheavals and individual experiences. Arminianism with its belief in the co-operative activity of man in the work of salvation seems more at home on the frontier than does the predestination of Calvinism. Yet the influence of the frontier on the church has been very unequal, some were able to resist the influence of border life, or were unable to adapt themselves to it, others were attracted to the frontier as a fitting field for their labors and were readily

adjusted.

Of the churches which failed to adjust itself and remained attached to the Cultural East was the Anglican Church. The same factors which kept it from accepting the Wesleyan movement in England operated here to keep it aloof from the popular religion of the frontier. This has been somewhat changed in recent years, and the Anglican Church or a branch of it at least has made sincere attempts to become a frontier church, but only with meagre success. Many instances can be quoted to show, where in the United States it has lost whole States to the frontier denominations, particularly the Methodist.

Congregationalism seemed for a time to be a frontier type of religion, but soon proved that it was incapable of adaptation, which resulted in a schism within the group itself. The dissenting party found refuge within the Baptist fold which was essentially a type of religion readily adaptable to the frontier.

The same is true of the Presbyterian. It found it impossible to adapt its character to the needs and interests of the frontier. It did try for a time and it resulted in schisms and controversies.

There remain three other religious groups, - one has already been mentioned - which became known as the three great frontier churches, and remain so today. They are Methodist, Baptist and the Disciples of Christ.

The Methodist and the Baptist found the frontier congenial soil for their efforts. Their conception of conversion, ministry and sectarian polity both influenced and were being influenced by the religious spirit of the frontier.

The Disciples of Christ were natives of the soil and represented a frontier effort to gather into a single group the religious people who coming from many churches and traditions had been moulded to a common pattern by the frontier.

Prior to the coming of these three "The Society of Friends" was a frontier denomination. But owing to its lack of aggressiveness, its passive and quietistic attitude and the tendency to run true to form, this first frontier church failed to maintain its leadership". 14

The church which above all others became the frontier church in the 19th. century was the Methodist. This group has always been a missionary group and owing to its fervent piety, its sectarian polity, its lay preaching and absence of ritual, coupled with individual freedom, it can adapt itself to any group or to any community. Methodism has always been regarded as the sect of the poor, but at the same time it is a child of an aristocratic church. These two elements contributed in no small measure to its success, both in the East and West. Methodism was in tune with the spirit of the frontier to begin with, and so it was able to cultivate that spirit whole-heartedly. In one sense, the church created the frontier spirit, of which in another sense it was the child.

But these early phases in religious organization disappeared with the growth and advance of the frontier. The growth or the transition from frontier to established society is followed with a parallel development in religious organizations. The frontier usually passes from the pioneer stage to that of a settled agricultural life. A relatively stable rural population takes the

place of these early settlers. It is among the more stable groups that social institutions get established. The institutions tend to stabilize the earlier emotional experiences of the individual, and attempt to formulate a ritual, through which these individual tendencies will get expression.

The frontier sect becomes a rural church, which still retains some of its earlier characteristics, inherited from pioneer days. The revival loses its spontaneous character and a ritual is developed through which the uninitiated can be received into the inner circle of the church. The sect takes on a churchly aspect. Sunday schools and other agencies are provided whereby the younger generations might be instructed into the ways and beliefs of their fathers. Creeds whether written or unwritten arise, which become increasingly important as "symbols of social unity and social differentiation". The churches no longer concern themselves mainly with the salvation of souls, it begins to form an "Apologia" for its more secular activities and sets itself to the task of acquiring the less spiritual, but none the less desirable economic goods of life.

At this stage of the growth of the frontier church, there is evidence of a growing independence. It has gathered to itself a clientele and demands of them financial support. Until the church becomes self-supporting it remains under the dominance of the larger group in some distant centre. This group furnishes the leadership without considering the wishes of the people involved. With independence achieved, the outside organization no longer dictates, neither does it interfere in the choice of leadership

The church has become independent while yet a part of the larger organization. The frontier church up to the point at which independence is achieved is a mission, subsidized wholly or in part by the parent organization. When this stage has been passed it is no longer a frontier church, but begins to assume urban characteristics and in turn becomes a centre of dominance for the advancing frontier. The friction between the metropolis and the established community is substituted for the conflict between the established settlement and the frontier.

The frontier tends to grow up and with it the churches of the frontier become the churches of the large town and city, and take on in rapidly increasing measure the characteristics of an urban and established culture.

"Revivalism gives way to education and liturgy, camp-meetings with their high emotions are replaced by Chautauqua assemblies and missionary conferences; the homespun exhortation of the circuit rider becomes polished discourses directed to the college-bred audiences, or screaming perorations addressed to head-line readers; theological seminaries conferring B.D.'s and S.T.M.'s provide successors to the graduate of "Brush College" whose "parchments of literary honor were the horse and the saddle bags". And spontaneous movements of the spirit among men face to face with strange and vast new problems become the petrified traditions of ecclesiastical organizations - traditions which have often lost significance in a new and common environment but which have not lost their power to keep apart to the third and fourth generations the children of long forgotten frontiers". 15.

The religious aspect is only one of the phases of a cultural type that is in the making on the frontier. The same forces which give content and direction to religious attitudes also orientate the other attitudes both individual and social around values which become incorporated into structural units of community organization, and thus get objectified.

"Life on the North American Continent is conditioned by the perennial rebirth of the frontier. The successive frontiers present a moving picture of American life, moving geographically and chronologically from the Atlantic seaboard in the 17th. century to the Pacific Coast of the 19th. century, moving economically from the pathfinder, the trapper to the exploiter and land speculator. These successive frontiers present differences in location and occupation, but they display a common factor which we may call the pioneering spirit - a spirit of determination, of endurance, of independence, of ingenuity, of flexibility, of individualism, of optimism. We conceive of the American type as the product and embodiment of this frontier spirit". 16.

Of outstanding importance at this juncture is the significance of the frontier in relation to the development of individualism, equalit~~ar~~ianism and democratic ideals.

"Complex society" says Turner "is percipitated by the wilderness into a kind of primitive organization based on the family. The tendency is anti-social. It produces antipathy to control, and particularly to any direct control. The frontier individualism has from the beginning promoted democracy." 17.

Professor Osgood in an article in the Political Science Quarterly pointed out "That the frontier conditions prevalent in the colonies are important factors in the explanation of the American Revolution, where individual liberty was sometimes confused with the absence of all effective government".18

Niebuhr says "Equalitarianism in political doctrine was nurtured less in the land of the Puritans and Pilgrims than in the Western Settlements, where the common struggle for existence allowed no distinctions between high and low and where success attended effort rather than the fortune of inherited privilege". 19.

To this influence of the wilderness must be added the effect of free land. This made property owners out of city apprentices or immigrant peasants. This gave to each an indiv-

16. Hazard V. The Frontier in American Literature. Intro.XVlll

17. Turner - op. cit. Page 30

18. Osgood: Political Science Quarterly.

19. Niebuhr R. Social Sources of Denominalionalism Page 137

idual sense of worth and in turn laid the basis for the construction of democratic institutions.

Again it is maintained that the national consciousness as over against a narrow provincialism had its cradle in the West, where men from all sections and from different racial stocks met, and were thrown into conflict with the harsh and unsympathetic wilderness and with atagonistic rivals.

But the frontier does not always bring about harmony among its conflicting elements, and there is no reason that it should. In fact, its greatest contribution may lie in another direction, namely, the divisions which it caused. Owing to the peculiar economic needs of the frontier, it was thrown into sharp conflict with the old order. Its social and political theories were different. The conflict between the new and the old was largely due to the opposition between agricultural and commercial and debtor and creditor societies. But the real cause of discussion was a difference in the social and political philosophy of these two areas. The frontier believed in the "natural rights" of man and a more democratic form of government than the old settlement possessed.

Further there were real cultural differences between the two areas.

"The refinements and arts of urban society have ever been the subject of rural ridicule, while the uncouth naivete of the farmer and woodsman have always seemed offensive to those whose lives are surrounded and conditioned by the products of industry and art. The difficulty of providing adequate education for the poor, scattered communities of the frontier, and the lack of communication between the isolated settlements contributed to the cultural differentiation of the West" 20

Its relation to the Centre of Dominance:

R. D. Mackenzie says "whatever the nature of the modern frontier, it is usually more intimately connected with its distant centres of dominance than with its local hinterland". 21

This characterization seems to hold good for all time. In the earlier frontier days, the East always regarded itself as the centre of dominance of the West. As such it wanted to direct and control the policy and development of these areas. The most effective efforts of the East to regulate the frontier came through its educational and religious activity. Agencies were employed by the various organized groups to get control. Dr. Lyman Beecher speaking in 1835 declared:

"It is equally plain that the religious and political destiny of our nation is to be decided in the West". Her destiny is our destiny". 22.

It was evident from the beginning that the West would carve out its own destiny, irrespective of Eastern interference. The East soon realized that it could not force its traditions and customs upon this new area. The economic system and the peculiar economic needs of the West produced social and political theories that were opposed to those of the East. In spite of this difference in social structure, there is an interdependent relationship between these two areas. The West in many respects is bits of the old transplanted to the new. Especially is this true of the religious organization of the areas. The religious groups are not autonomous groups, but are on their way. Even after they reach this stage they are still a part

21. R. D. Mackenzie. op. cit. - P. 36

22. Turner - op. cit. 35.

of the parent group. In this way the religious life of the area is controlled in large part by distant centres of dominance.

"The more settled, staid and orderly East, with its long history, has had an edifying, as well as a steadying influence on the West. The East has given us generously of her best to found our institutions, in civic as well as in religious and educational life. Through many decades of experience the East gathered a wealth of ideas from which we in the West have richly profited in thought and action. . . . We have found the action and reaction of East and West and with each other a good thing". 23.

Despite the fact that the frontier of today is a product of social evolution, no attempt has been made in the preceding pages to trace the various stages in the process. An attempt has been made, however, to show the general pattern of frontier life up to and including the modern period.

The pattern which has been presented was wrought out during the babyhood and adolescence period of the growth and expansion of the North American Continent.

During this period every phase of life was passing through the experimental stage. That sphere of life in which the changes seemed most violent was the religious. The first American frontier region was born out of a desire for religious and personal liberty. The United States of America owes its origin to this religious frontier. Religion was the primary interest of these first settlers. This fundamental pattern persisted in each successive frontier region. One^{of}/the chief characteristics of this frontier type of religion was revivalism. It is difficult to say, whether this was an inheritance

from the old, or an acquired trait of the new. The latter viewpoint is the more tenable. Out of this revivalistic tendency there arose many religious sects. Between these different sects there was intense rivalry and sectarianism became rampant.

This phenomenon has largely disappeared from the modern frontier. There may be some isolated cases among certain sects, but the general pattern is entirely different. This is due, in part, no doubt, to the break-down of the isolation of the frontier, and in part to the multiplication of interests which break up the emotional patterns into less explosive elements. The emotionalism of the early frontier if at all prevalent today, finds other outlets for expression. These emotional attitudes are not specifically religious attitudes, but become religious when centred around a religious value.

Today, the various social activities of the frontier furnish an outlet for the emotions. One of the first accessories of the modern frontier is a "community house". This is the rallying centre for a large area. Here the community dances are held and other social functions. It is the call centre for political gatherings and it also houses the religious service on Sunday morning. Farmer's sects are formed which are attempts to give concrete form to the more abstract conceptions of the farmer's needs. These in turn, no doubt, have given rise to the farmer's movements in the political sphere. It is true that the farmer is so preoccupied with his many interests that it is only through a sympathetic understanding and at the same time a fair knowledge - assumed it may be - of his problems, that any religious approach can be made. Religion today is the last

thing to be discussed by the wise missionary, in his initial meeting with the pioneer. In fact, if he is a religious diplomat his mention of it at all will be casual and indirect. Religion is not the primary interest on the frontier of today. Many have fled from what they regard as the superhypocrisy of so-called christian denominations. The primary interest is homesteading, the making of a home in the wilds. Around this value, all interest centres. Any and every agency that helps towards this goal finds hearty support and if religion can be made practical enough-and it can-, and presented as one, among the many essential needs of the pioneer, it will be welcomed. It must have about it an element which appeals to the practical business sense of these people. It is practical religion that wins its way on the frontier, not a ritualistic type, with closed creeds. It is an area of the "new and changing", consequently fixed religious forms are obsolete.

Religion on the frontier must not only appeal to the practical business sense, but it must be run on business lines. This trend is quite noticeable in the East as well as the West. The church is patterned very much after big business and at the end of the year success is measured by quantitative results, not qualitative. The church "goes after" business in these new areas. With every advance of settlers the missionary hits the trail as well. His purpose is not "to save souls" in the old theological sense, he knows that such a notion is repugnant to the pioneer - but to carry an institutional pattern which is essential to the best type of community organization.

This form of religious activity is vastly different from these early forms. Far from being the spontaneous desire of the group itself, it is imposed upon them by the larger organization. At times there is a great deal of resistance to the coming of a religious representative. But according to one who has had real success in the early days of settlement in the Peace River, this resistance is largely resultant upon the type of representative and his method of approach. All opposition vanishes if one is a skilled technician in the art of friendly conversation. The more complete knowledge one has of the primary interests of his area, the more accessible will be his clients. Sometimes the leadership is disappointing, but an attempt is made to follow a carefully prepared program of church extension. Thousands of dollars are spent annually by the parent organization in carrying out of its plan. Many of these areas receive religious service for only five months of the year by a group of "student supplies". The day of the "lay preacher" which played such an important part in these early religious revivals is long past. Religious services are confined largely to those duly set apart or to those specially appointed for the work.

This change from the early frontier to a more modern is not only seen in the religious organization. It is true of the frontier in general. Hand methods in agriculture have been supplanted by agricultural machinery.

Agnes Dean Cameron writing of Vermilion on the Peace River in 1909 says: "Vermilion farmers boasts sulkies and gang-ploughs and the latest geared McCormick, Massey-Harris and Deering farm implements, - self binders and seeders.

Everything is up-to-date. We ourselves counted fifteen self-binders at work". 24.

New settlers are no longer transported by "scow", but by modern river boats. They move into the new areas on a "train de luxe". Trucks and automobiles are waiting to transport themselves and baggage to the "mecca" of their dreams. Telephone and telegraph are necessities not luxuries, and the radio is fast finding a place among the necessary appurtenances of the farmer of the "New North".

Emerson Hough says "The Western Canadian of today is a cherished, almost petted being. But no one ever showed any mercy to the American farmer who moved out West". 25.

24. Agnes Dean Cameron "New North" - Page 336

25. Emerson Hough "Passing of the Frontier" - Page 153.

CHAPTER 2.

THE PEACE RIVER FRONTIER, PATTERN OF SETTLEMENT AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The physiographic features and their relation to population distribution.

The world pattern of human distribution is determined largely by topography, soil and climate. In the regions in which these factors are present, there are enormous concentrations of population.

"These areas are great nuclear patches of population that have expanded until they occupy the most suitable and convenient portions of the denoted regions. From these few block patches, men straggle out into the habitats that are less fertile and comfortable What has just been pointed out is particularly true of those areas of possible settlement that are far off from the well-worn highways of the world.

The world's natural areas of settlement are separated from each other by extensive topographical barriers such as mountain ranges, oceans, seas, lakes, rivers, burning deserts, tangled jungles and icy wastes. Nevertheless the natural highways of the world by land and water connect these regions with each other at many points of accessibility". 1.

What is true of the whole, in this case, is true also of its parts. The topography and natural resources of any region, in a general way determine the distribution of man and his institutions within that region.

The Peace River country is a region in which geography has played and is playing a leading role in the settlement process. Situated as it is between Latitudes 55° and 59° North and Longitude 114° and 123° West in the Province of Alberta, can to

1. Dawson and Gettys: Introduction to Sociology pp. 157, 158.

some extent explain the long period of speculative activity within the area. But more accurate information concerning climate and natural resources of the area revealed its immense possibilities. Some parts of the area have passed from the stage in which geographic conditions dominated man's settlement, to that in which these geographic factors have been partially controlled by the inventiveness of mankind. At some points within the area these geographic conditions still dominate the process.

The Peace River area situated three hundred miles from Edmonton is, says F. H. Kitto, "the last great agricultural frontier of the Western Canadian plains". It has an area, including the drainage basins of the tributaries adjacent to the Peace, of approximately 145,000 square miles. Not all this is suitable for settlement, but approximately sixty million acres constitute the Peace River agricultural country. Of this area two thirds are in the Province of Alberta, and one third is known as the Peace River Block of British Columbia.

Some idea of the extensiveness of the country can be gained by comparing it with other known areas of the world.

"This exceeds the combined area of England, Scotland and Wales. It is nearly eight times the size of Belgium, over five times that of Denmark, more than one third the extent of France and considerably larger than the South American republic of Uruguay. Compared with well known areas in the United States, the Peace River country is larger than South Dakota, Kansas or Idaho. It is equal to the combined areas of Tennessee and Alabama and exceeds by over seven million acres those of the six New England States, together with New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland". 2.

Decades before the rapidly advancing frontier of agricultural settlement had spread from Winnipeg to Edmonton, the fame of the Peace River Valley had gone abroad. Its favorable climate, its vast plains, fertile soil and varying resources had been recounted by many a traveller. Not, however, till after the lands adjacent to Edmonton had become fairly well settled was this Peace River reserve given serious attention.

The Peace River Country as the name suggests is an area bordering on the majestic Peace River. It has its source in the Finlay and Parsnip rivers in the Rockies and flows in a northeasterly direction for a distance of about 900 miles, where it joins the Mackenzie system. Hudson Hope at the foot of the Rocky Mountain canyon marks its westerly limit, while the Vermilion chutes fifty miles below Fort Vermilion marks its Northeasterly boundry. The section of the Peace River country with which this study is concerned is the area bordering on and adjacent to the Peace River. It is bounded on the East by the Smoky and Peace rivers, on the West by the Rockies, on the South by the Wapiti River and on the North by Latitude 57° which is approximately the northern limits of the Battle River district. The Fort Vermilion area has been omitted.

Geography is not only playing a leading role in the settlement process, but it has been one of the most important factors in determining the growth and development of the area. The natural process of expansion from a settled centre has been departed from, and some 300 miles of territory have been passed in order to reach this vast inland reserve. This is due first to the fact that the territory between Edmonton and the Peace

River is rugged and unfit for active settlement. Secondly to the fertility of the soil in the area, and thirdly to the influence of the Chinook coming in from the Pacific through the mountain passes, which gives to the area an equable climate.

The pattern of distribution has been largely determined by two factors, namely, fertility of the soil, and degree of accessibility. Of the two the former seems to be by far the more important, accessibility only relatively so. The homesteader generally surmounted all barriers to transportation and got where he desired. Yet, reliance upon the natural transportation routes determined the early pattern of settlement. In the same way, settlement today follows pretty largely our modern means of transportation, namely, the highways and railroads. Two approaches to the area were open in these early days. One was by way of the Athabasca River, Lesser Slave Lake and the Peace River trail. The other was by way of Edson, Sturgeon Lake and the Grand Prairie Trail. The migrations along these natural routes gave rise to what are today the two most important towns of the Peace River area, namely, Grand Prairie and Peace River Town. These two points are the centres of greatest mobility within the country and are the distributing centres for the surrounding hinterland. Within the area population expansion has followed pretty largely the same plan. Areas of greatest fertility are more rapidly settled than poorer areas. Rivers, and there are many, have dominated the settlement process. The areas of greatest settlement have been along the Peace, but the smaller rivers and their tributaries have received their quota of settlement. The pattern of expansion is determined

pretty largely by the river courses. There are few barriers to population expansion. Barring the nature of the soil, and the heavily wooded territories, the only barriers that are to be found are the broken elevations of the Birch, Saddle and Blueberry mountains which separate Spirit River from Grand Prairie and also from Pouce Coupe. There are also ravines or "breaks" along the river banks which make these river bank margins unfit for farming purposes.

As settlement followed the areas of greatest accessibility, determined by the natural transportation routes, so later the location of the artificial means of transportation-railroad, highways - followed very closely these natural routes to the areas of settlement. The first railroad into the Peace River country followed the old Athabasca Peace River trail, crossing the Smoky River and pushing on to Spirit River. From this point a branch was built South to Grand Prairie, linking up the areas of settlement along the route. From McLennan a divisional point on the railway, a branch was run North to Peace River, crossing, thus affording easy transportation into the areas North of the Peace.

Settlement pushed out continuously from the "ends of steel" as well as adjacent to it. The settler was no doubt visualizing the approach of this easy mode of transportation with its consequent benefits, and in the majority of cases he was not disappointed. Although, sometimes the settler made a wrong guess and found himself many miles away from the railroad. The general tendency, however, was for the railroad to follow the main pattern of settlement. Later if population density

warranted it, branches were extended to the various subsidiary areas. But not all areas have railway facilities and it maybe that some never will. From the present pattern it seems quite evident, however, that in the **near** future all the strategic parts of the area will be linked up by "ribbons of steel".

From the recent pattern of settlement, it is apparent that the railroad is becoming a regulating factor in the process of settlement. It appears that homesteaders locate along lines radial to and parallel with the railway, or in areas where plans for railway lines are in the making. Even the more detached areas are anticipating the arrival of the **steel**. The modern devices of transportation and communication have contributed in a very large measure to the growth of the area. While it must be said that these agencies are only in their early stages of development, yet enough proof has been given of their future development to indicate the certain trend of the future growth of the area. This reacts favorably upon population movements. The dread of isolation has been partly banished, physical distances have been reduced, by means of telegraph and telephone. The area is linked by telegraph with Edmonton and with the outside. This system serves the larger centres of the area and branch telephone service connects up the more detached areas. There is also a tri-weekly passenger and mail service from Edmonton. These services have been developing gradually during the last decade and a half. The tri-weekly service is only of one year's growth and at the present time there are areas still untouched by these services.

The rapidity with which the provincial government follows

each new settlement with a minimum of transportation facilities is noteworthy. No sooner has a new group been located, when a road is rapidly pushed forward to meet the need of the area until the approach of more rapid means of transportation.

Fundamental to the settlement process of the area were these natural transportation routes. Later developments in transportation facilities followed these natural routes. These, coupled with the nature of the soil and the ease by which vast portions can be settled have determined the pattern of settlement.

History and Settlement:

Having shown the forces which determine settlement, it is our purpose in the following, to show something of the history and settlement of the area. Population growth and expansion have followed closely the different stages in the development of transportation facilities. Previous to 1916 when the first railway came into the area, there were only a few who attempted the long arduous trek by the Athabasca-Peace trail, or the Sturgeon Lake-Grand Prairie trail. The Indian and fur-trader had long been there. Mackenzie as early as 1792 wintered at what is now Peace River town. There were forts at Fort Vermilion in 1798, at Dunvegan in 1800 and at Fort St. John in 1805.

It is difficult to place the exact time when the first permanent settlement in the Peace River began. The fur-trader was no doubt the first settler and forms the vanguard of later settlement.

"Harmon, a famous fur-trader, of Dunvegan, writes about going into winter quarters in 1808", and under date June 2nd. of the same year we find the entry "The seeds which we sowed in the garden have sprung up and grow remarkably well". On July 21st. he writes - "We have cut down our barley and I think it is the finest that I have seen in any country. The soil on the points of land along the river is excellent". 3.

"One of the first men to realize that the Peace River country should be investigated with a view to being opened was Dr. John Schultz. When a Senator at Ottawa he prevailed upon that body to appoint a commission to look into the matter. He met with little support because many thought it was useless to spend time in studying the far North. However, he prevailed and the commission was appointed. As a result of the investigation during which travellers, missionaries, surveyors, settlers, mounted police and others were examined, it was found that there was a wonderful country in the North. But, in conclusion the commission would hardly advise settlers to push their way thither since there was no railway communication to make living there, with profit, possible. But, notwithstanding, the absence of railways, settlers began to go in by twos and threes and scatter along the banks of the river, as in the Shaftesbury Settlement near the crossing begun in 1888 by Rev. J. Gough Brick, of the Church of England. Others went into the Spirit River district south of Fort Dunvegan and still others went into the Grand Prairie Country". 4.

Yet, in spite of its long and interesting history, there were only a few pioneer settlers previous to 1911. Some of these were missionaries to the Indians and fur-traders who farmed small plots of land in conjunction with their other work. The census of 1911 shows that the population of the whole district including Indians was 2,226. This does not include the Peace River block. The racial distribution of the population at this time was as follows: English, Irish, Scotch, French, German, Indians, Scandinavians, Austrians, Hungarians, Dutch, Italian, Russian, Poles, Doukobours.

3. Macbeth, R. G.: The Romance of Western Canada. P. 238

4. Macbeth, R. G.: The Romance of Western Canada. P. 240

Commencing about 1911 a steady stream of settlers poured into the district and took possession of the choicest farming lands. Settlement continued during the war years. The war having checked immigration from Europe, the area received its new-comers for a time from the older settled areas of Canada and the adjacent states of the American Republic. Then came the returned soldiers. Certain lands were set apart for their exclusive choice. The country thus received an exceptionally high percentage of English speaking people. British subjects of French extraction also accounted for a fair proportion. In the census report of 1921, the population of the area was 18,489 of which the English speaking group numbered 8,780. Then followed in numerical order, Indians 2,870, French 1,795, Scandinavian 1,658, German 916, Dutch 415, Austrians 235, Russians 218, Ukranians 126, Other nationality groups of less than one hundred, arranged in descending order, were Belgians, Italians, Poles, Chinese and Japanese, Hebrew, Finnish, Negro, Greek, and a group unspecified. What the census of 1931 will disclose can be predicted with some degree of accuracy. Reliable estimates today place the population of the Peace River Country at 60,000.

Many of the areas have already moved out of the frontier class. They have become thickly settled communities, have made rapid strides in development and are already on a par with the old agricultural communities of the province as regards the various advantages of civilization. Settlement is going on rapidly, so that up and down the river from Hudson's Hope to Fort Vermilion, can be seen many scattered little settlements growing up and fast becoming consolidated.

The Natural Divisions of the Area.

Settlement within the area tended to spread in two main divisions, one, comprising the choice prairies North of the Peace River and immediately west of the crossing of the old trail, and the other comprising the Grand Prairie lands south of the Peace and west of the Smoky. These two main divisions have been broken up into a number of lesser districts each with its centre of distribution. The early settlement process within the area was voluntary and undirected. More recent settlement has been determined by land settlement schemes, controlled through the land settlement agencies located at Peace River and Grand Prairie. But, even with these settlement schemes, there is the tendency to follow the older pattern of distribution.

The whole area that is commonly spoken of as the Peace River Area is divided into fourteen districts. For the purposes of this study, the Lesser Slave, High Prairie, Sturgeon Lake, McLennan-Falher and Fort Vermilion districts are omitted. We are mainly concerned with the nine districts of the centre and western portion of the area. The Battle River district is our most northerly point, Grand Prairie the most southerly, Hudson Hope the most westerly and Peace River the most easterly. Within these boundaries lie the districts which chiefly concern us. The boundaries of each of these districts are not clearly defined. In some cases there is considerable overlapping, but there is sufficient unity and similarity with each district to distinguish it from the adjoining one. We shall take each district separately and make some brief comments on each.

(1) The Peace River District.

This district includes an area North and West of the Peace, as well as a new area growing up east of the Peace, and extending as far as Little Prairie. The Northern limits of it may be said to be "Clear Hills" in the Whitemund locality. It reaches South to Whitelaw in the Fairview district. Settlement in this district followed the old trail in from Edmonton and later came the railroad. What is now Peace River town became a kind of a distributing centre for the surrounding hinterland. It also became an inland port for river travel North and South. Consequently this settlement grew rapidly and became the nucleus of the whole district. From this point settlement pushed west and north. Small settlements began to grow up at many points within the area. Some of the more important points in the district are: Roma, Grimshaw, Lilien-dale, Griffin Creek, Berwyn, Brownvale, Kerndale, Last Lake, Lac Cardinal, Warrensville and Weberville, and in the North in the Whitemund locality Clear Hills. South and East of the river there is growing up the settlement of Little Prairie and adjacent to the railroad there are growing up settlements radiating from Judah, McPherson and Nampa.

The study of the Peace River district has brought to the fore some facts relevant to the southern part of the district, namely the Griffin Creek and Berwyn area. There seems to be sufficient difference between this and the Peace River district proper to admit of separate mention. The area surrounding Peace River town on the east and west sides of the river is rough and poor soil, somewhat unsuited for extensive settlement.

While the Griffin Creek-Berwyn section is by the nature of its soil and its location suited for an extensive agricultural settlement, and judging by the present rate of growth it will become one of the larger centres of the whole area. And, further, the settlement process in this vicinity was carried on independent of Peace River, so that Berwyn itself might be regarded as the centre of a district, indeed it does have as much claim to such as Fairview, which has been treated separately. But as previous studies have regarded it as part of the Peace River district, we are willing to have it remain so in this study, after making the above objections. No attempt is made to relegate Peace River town to a place of little importance in the area. In a very large sense, Peace River Town does for the Northern half what Grand Prairie does for the Southern. That is, there are centre fundamental services that these larger units render to the whole group. It does appear further that Grand Prairie is fast becoming the centre of dominance for the whole area, Peace River included. These smaller units are rapidly becoming only partially dependent upon these two larger centres. This partial dependence will no doubt in time give place to a relative interdependence among them all.

(3) Grande Prairie District.

This district is the most extensive area of treeless plains in the whole Peace River country. It radiated from Lake Saskatoon, the last trading post on the old Peace River Dunvegan

wagon road. To the east it swept nearly as far as the Smoky. To the South the Wapiti. On the North it was separated from the Spirit River by the Saddle Hills and Blueberry Mountains. To the West it extended to the foothills of the Rockies. Early pioneers very appropriately called this vast open stretch of land the "Grande Prairie."

This area has been divided into two districts by the height of land known as Saskatoon Mountain. Also the settlement process radiated from two distinct centres, thus justifying the division of the district into Grande Prairie East and West. We will deal with each separately.

(a) Grand Prairie East.

One of the earliest agricultural settlements was that of "Flying Shot Lake" near the present town of Grande Prairie. Settlement began here in 1908 and followed with great rapidity. The census of 1921 showed that there were over 4,000 people in the district. As Peace River in the North, so Grande Prairie in the South was the nucleus of the whole district. It is interesting to note how closely settlement follows the course of the river. Within this district many prosperous centres have grown up due to successful agricultural settlement. The principal centre is Grande Prairie. Other important and growing centres are Sexsmith, Clairmont and Wembly, thriving villages are seen at Dunsdale, Bredin, Niobe, La Glace, Buffalo, Lake Webster, Teepee Creek, Smoky River, Kleskum Hill, Bezanson and Glen Leslie. What is of even greater significance for study is that this east Grande Prairie section

has passed the pioneer stage and is to-day one of the most prosperous agricultural regions of the Western Canadian plains. Grande Prairie is the administrative and commercial centre of the extensive southeastern part of the Peace River country. In it are to be found offices and representatives of nearly all federal and provincial services concerned with the public business of the district.

Generally speaking, the era of homesteading is a thing of the past in this area. Settlement is rapidly pushing out into the regions east of the Smoky.

(b) Grande Prairie West.

This area was often referred to as the Beaver Lodge - Valhalla District, because its earliest extensive settlement radiated from the hamlets of "Beaver Lodge and Valhalla. But owing to settlement being so widespread, today this is no longer tenable. Divisions are so clearly traceable both natural and social that one is justified in treating this as a separate district. Previous to 1928 settlement was rather slow, because the greater part of the area was twenty miles from the railroad. But with the coming of the railroad, the settlement process was speeded up. The growth during the first year of railroad facilities was phenomenal. The best known community in the district is Beaver Lodge., home of W. D. Allright, who operates a Dominion Experimental Station. Beaver Lodge was the centre of the first considerable agricultural operations south of the Spirit River. Southerly and along the Red Willow River

are thriving communities at Halcourt, Leighmore, Rio Grande, Elmworth and Hinton Trail. To the North-West are Clearview, Goodfare and Albright.

Hythe in this district and Fairview in the district of that name, are the two most notable examples we have of the influence of transportation facilities upon population growth and expansion. Hythe is situated ten miles North West of Beaver Lodge and sprang into existence almost overnight on the arrival of the steel. The steel reached it in 1928 and a few months later Hythe was an incorporated village of 358 persons.

Mention must also be made of a nationality group located in the North-West part of the district. Here is a group of Scandinavians settled in a relatively closed area, which is known as the Valhalla Settlement. This settlement is in itself a distributing centre for a wide area. Already five or six townships radiate from this centre. Further north there are two other townships centering around Northfield which are predominantly Scandinavian and of this same type of social organization which might also be included in the area. The selection of this location was made in 1912 and the first settlers arrived in 1913. Valhalla has no railway service. A good highway connects it with Sexsmith, Hythe, and Brainard on the main highway Northwest of Hythe.

(3) The Spirit River District.

North of the Grande Prairie district and separated from it by the Saddle and Blueberry Mountains, is the Spirit River district. The Spirit River locality might be said to extend to the heavily wooded "breaks" of the Peace River in the North and the Smoky in the East. This is not an extensive area, but it includes several townships on a plateau south of the Peace. Some of the townships include the village of Spirit River, Roycroft, Prestville, Manir, Wanham, Belloy Rahab, Eaglesham, Tangent and Watmo along the first railroad of 1916. And Esher, Woking and Braeburn on the branch line between Spirit River and Grande Prairie. Heart Valley and Peoria are situated on a tributary of the Smoky. The advent of the railroad in 1916 made of Spirit River a temporary western terminus and it still remains the end of steel for this area.

(4) Fairview District.

Lying between the Spirit River and Peace River districts is the Fairview district. The centre of the district previous to the advent of the railroad was Waterhole. In 1929 the railroad came into the area and the energetic village of Fairview sprang up almost immediately. In 1930 it was an incorporated village of 300 persons. The district receives its name from this new centre, which also became the distributing centre for the whole district. With the additional advantages of railroad transportation the Fairview district promises to continue its rapid development. Land settlement has been particularly aggressive in the north and west parts of the district. Even

before steel had reached within 15 miles of its present terminus, and when the old hamlet of Waterhole, which practically went out of existence in favor of Fairview, was the principal business centre, a thriving settlement had sprung up at Hines Creek some fifteen or twenty miles beyond it. Some settlers are now located ninety miles beyond Fairview. At the present time Hines Creek is the terminus of the railroad in that area. The principal settlements in the Fairview district are: Whitelaw, Bluesky, Vanrena, Friedenstal, Erin Lodge, Lothrop, Red Star, Dunvegan and Hines Creek.

(5) Battle River District:

This area is situated almost due North of Peace River Town and about fifty miles distant. Grimshaw is the nearest railway point. There is a fair highway from Grimshaw to the district. Notikewin, which is the heart of the district, is about twelve or fifteen miles due west of the Peace River, and was reached by a wagon trail from the Peace River crossing. A little later another trail was cut from the crossing through the Whitemund district. Perhaps in no other part of the whole Peace River country has the settlement been more rapid and spectacular than in the Battle River district during the past four years. In 1926 the population was practically negligible. In 1930 the approximate population of the district was 2,000. The building of a highway by the provincial government was followed by the construction of a telegraph line by the Dominion Government in 1929. This service was extended to Fort Vermilion in 1930.

The districts which have been dealt with in the preceding pages are all located in the Province of Alberta. The three that are to follow are located in the Province of British Columbia and are known as "The Peace River Block".

(6) Pouce Coupe District.

Northwest from Beaver Lodge and Hythe and west from Spirit River and separated from them by an intervening belt of wooded hilly country is the Pouce Coupe district. The district lies on a high plateau in the south east part of the block. During the grading of the railway from Spirit River it was settled with a rush, but owing to the failure to complete the road, the settlers suffered severely. They were forced for a time to haul the produce of their land over trails to Grande Prairie. Later a good highway was provided to give an outlet to Beaver Lodge at the end of the steel. At the present time both highway and railroad serve the area to Fort St. John. Three principal hamlets are Pouce Coupe, Rolla and Dawson Creek. Other rural centres are Kilkeeran, Arras and Sunset Prairie. The total population of the Peace River block was estimated to be about five thousand in 1929. The greater number of these were located in the Pouce Coupe district.

(7) Fort St. John District.

Fort St. John district is situated north of the Peace River, almost in the centre of the Block. It was established as a fur-trading post in 1805. In spite of the fact that Fort St. John is still a remote part of the Peace River Country, it

has settled with astonishing rapidity, particularly during 1928 and succeeding years. The principal centres of settlement are Fort St. John, Grand Haven, Taylor and Bear Flat. Moutenay and Rose Prairie are located well to the north of Fort St. John and there are scattered and rapidly consolidating settlements over other wide areas.

(8) Hudson Hope District.

Hudson Hope is located on the north bank of the Peace River and is the westerly limit of the Peace River block. It is the gateway from the great plains to the mountain regions. During the summer motorboats ply up and down the river from Peace River town, giving on an average a fortnightly service. In the immediate vicinity of Hudson Hope on either side of the river there is very little agricultural land. The country is rather hilly, rough and stony. A few homesteads have been located at Hudson Hope. Near the mouth of Halfway River there is a little community called Stony Creek. Hudson Hope is provided with telegraph service, being the terminus of the Edmonton-Peace River Government line. It holds a very strategic position, being in the direct path of any railroad that might be projected through the mountains by the low pass of the Peace River Valley.

The Social Organization of the Area.

In the preceding pages we have been dealing with ecological interaction which has determined the pattern of distribution within the area. We have attempted to show the influence of

transportation and communication upon this distribution. In doing so we have been dealing with the impersonal, and almost unconscious phase of distribution. The process by which this area has been settled is in the nature of "a long and continuous experiment".

"The evolutionists use the phrases "the struggle for existence" and the "survival of the fittest" in dealing with the problem of experimental location. The concept competition first applied to economic facts, and then extended to other fields deals with the same phenomena. In any case, the process of location takes place within the ecological order in existence when any individual or social institutions begins its life cycle, and each is subject to the main trends of growth and change going on within the order". 5.

This spatial distribution of man and his institutions is known as the ecological order. This ecological pattern of distribution is of fundamental importance, because it marks out physical distances between the units and determines the direction of social contact. It is the framework upon which the social order is woven.

"The units of the ecological order jostle each other for position in space and time, but ecological interaction is characteristically external. It is inter-action without contact. Contact is the initial stage in social interaction".6.

It is this social interaction between these spatially distributed units which is our chief concern at this juncture.

"For through social interaction these spatially distributed units are brought under the bond of common practices and experiences which constitute society. Physical and social distances are overcome by means of communication. In social interaction mind penetrates mind and social groups interchange something of their own life. Human society takes on form and organization when its mobile units participate in a system of common aims to which they have contributed" . 7.

5. Dawson & Gettys: op. cit. P. 220

6. Dawson & Gettys: op. cit. P. 280

7. Dawson & Gettys: op. cit. P. 227.

The form of organization or social structure within an area of relative isolation differs from that of the more densely populated areas. Many of the units of social organization are imposed from without. They are, however, conditioned by the interaction within the area.

In studying the organization of the Peace River area, one thing that stands out pre-eminently is the close relationship of the new to the old. This area in spite of its brief existence has many of the earmarks of an old area. In fact many of the old established areas have not the specialized forms of organization which are to be found there. It seems that a certain pattern of organization is held for the area, based upon modern invention and methods, and just as soon as settlement reaches a population density sufficient to warrant the introduction of such forms, it is immediately brought about. The area is at the present time incorporated into rural municipalities, towns and villages. In 1929 there were in the area fifteen incorporated municipalities made up as follows, two towns, Grande Prairie and Peace River, eight villages, Grimshaw, Fairview, Spirit River, Sexsmith, Clairmont, Wembly, Beaverlodge and Hythe, and five rural municipalities, Peace River, Fairview, Spirit River, Grand Prairie and Bear Lake.

Each local group has its own community organization. There are indications of a healthy rivalry between the larger centres. These centres have become aware at an early stage in their development, that effective means of control are fundamental to their continued existence. For, while there are some wants that are universal, there are others that are particular to

each group. To help achieve these, each town or village of importance, organizes as a unit. Through Chambers of Commerce and Trades Councils each group attempts to control and direct the economic activities of its particular group. These forms of organization are the media between the new and the old, and are largely instrumental in obtaining more and better recognition from the outside world.

It is apparent that its contacts with the out-group are more intimate than the contacts within the area. It is dependent on the out-group for a market for its products, also for machinery and other farm needs. It is dependent also for its transportation and communication facilities, and also for its various institutional services such as banks, schools, churches, etc. So that the types of organization which obtains within the area are replicas of the old. The area is very closely related to the larger provincial and federal groups through its political groups. Each major party has its working group within the area. In fact, this seems to be one of the major, if not the major interest. The area has two representatives in the Provincial Legislature and one in the Federal Parliament.

One can find within the area an attempt to organize all the fundamental wishes and attitudes of the group. There are fraternal societies for the men, women's institutes and young peoples' clubs which try to give expression to these underlying attitudes and wishes. Some of these groups, if not all, are merely transplanted in the new environment. Members of these groups have migrated to the area, and they long for the social life of the old group. As soon as a sufficient number of like

mind can be found, a request is sent to the headquarters of the organization and a charter is granted. This form of group activity seems to have a greater hold upon the individual than the religious activity, for rarely do we find a group asking for religious services. It may be that it is taken for granted that religious services will follow in due course. It may also be due to the fact that these secular organizations are very closely linked up with the play and recreational activities of the group.

The Play and Recreation Life of the Area:

This phase of frontier life is pretty much a product of the in-group, although the patterns are those of older groups. One of the first buildings apart from the homesteads to be erected in the area is a community house. This institution can be regarded as germane to the soil. It is not imposed from without. It is the voluntary and spontaneous expression of a fundamental human interest. Some place for community functions, socials, dances, entertainments and so forth, is regarded as of primary importance. There is no dearth of talent among these frontier groups. Amateur theatricals can be produced at very short notice, and a many instrument orchestra can be furnished on request, for such is the diversity of talent among these frontier settlers. The community house serves all purposes in the early stages of development on the frontier. Not infrequently have the "left-overs" of a Saturday night ball furnished the background for a Sunday morning religious service.

The visitor to the area if he were to judge by the nature and variety of the sports and entertainment to be found there would be forced to conclude that he was in an area of long time settlement. No lover of sport need be without his favorite form of recreation. For here one can hunt, fish, motor, skate, ski, play baseball, football, golf, tennis, hockey, or spend a while on the curling rink, or go to hear his favorite actress in the recent talkie. One would never imagine apart from the sparsely populated aspect of the area, that he was in a frontier region of only twenty years growth.

The location of these various recreational activities throws an interesting sidelight on the social complex of the different groups. Some of these types of activities can be associated with different nationality groups, so that if one wishes to ski one would find that form of recreation predominant in the Scandinavian settlement of Valhalla. If one wishes to golf he will find this favorite sport among the predominantly English groups, at Grande Prairie, Clairmont and Peace River. The other forms can also be correlated with different racial types and the centres for each activity are found pretty much within the same interest group.

The Educational Organization:

The educational advantages of the area are excellent. This, in part, may be said to be an imposed institution, because the Province of Alberta has a public school system which applies to every part of the area, no matter how remote.

This system makes it compulsory for the different areas to furnish educational facilities for its youth. The Department of Education is very much alive to the child's intellectual and educational welfare. No area can for any length of time deny its children the advantages of an education. As soon as eight children of school age are found within a district of approximately four miles square, a school district may be established. Suitable buildings must be erected and equipped by the district. Cost of operation of these schools is met partly by taxation within the district, and partly by government grant.

The Peace River country is divided into two inspectorates, namely, Peace River and Grande Prairie.

In the Peace River Inspectorate which includes the territory north and west of the Peace, and east of the Smoky and Little Smoky rivers, there were eighty schools at the beginning of 1930. The total enrolment in these schools is approximately 2,800. In Peace River there is a high school, and in a number of the other smaller places, one or two years of high school work is also given.

The Grand Prairie Inspectorate includes that part of the Peace River country south of the Peace and west of the Smoky and Little Smoky. At the beginning of 1930 there were in this area eighty two schools with an enrolment of 3,000. There is a High School at Grande Prairie and many of the other smaller places do one or two years of High.

A further provision is made for High School education apart from that already mentioned. Four rural high school districts

are formed by consolidating a number of regular school districts. The cost of such schools is distributed among the districts comprising the rural school units. All high school students in the district are taken care of in that way. At the present time there are four such districts, Berwyn, and Fairview in the Peace River inspectorate; Spirit River and Beaverlodge in the Grand Prairie inspectorate.

Even more liberal provision is made in the Province of British Columbia in which the Peace River block is situated. The British Columbia government will establish a school in any locality, pay the teacher's salary and aid in the erection of a school house provided that there are at least ten children of school age available for attendance.

The first schools were established in this district in the autumn of 1915. In 1929 there were twenty five schools in the area with an attendance of five hundred. In the main the work done is elementary, but at Rolla high school work is taken up. During 1930 the Department of Education inaugurated a correspondence system whereby pupils attending the country schools are enabled to take up high school work, regardless of whether there is a high school in the district or not.

Religious Organization.

At the beginning of the 19th. century the western frontier was still unpeopled save for the fur-traders and the aboriginal nomadic population. The beginnings of permanent settlement are associated with the Red River settlement founded by Earl Selkirk. With the advent of the Red River settlers about 1811

a new day dawned for the frontier. Church life was now possible in the West. This was not, however, the first attempt at sending missionaries to the West. Missionaries were sent to the natives in the closing years of the 17th. century.

Dr. Oliver says "The first reference to the task of providing for the religious needs of the western frontier, that I have been able to discover, is to be found in a Minute book of the Hudson Bay Company. The date is April 30, 1683. Mr. John French, M. A., was appointed to the post of minister at the Bay at £20 a year. Whether he ever reached the Bay is unknown, but it is very unlikely..... There was no church life on the Prairies before the coming of the Selkirk colonists. Not many explorers in the West were fired by a zeal for religion". 8.

The first ship that came to Hudson Bay brought a group of settlers the majority of whom were Presbyterian, but there were also some Roman Catholics in the group. Among them was a Roman Catholic priest, but he returned without venturing into the frontier at all. The Presbyterians expected the early arrival of a minister of their own persuasion. He was slow in arriving. In the meantime an elder was authorized to baptize and to marry. A layman, Captain Miles Macdonnell, also employed the Roman Catholic rite for baptisms and marriages, for there had been no Roman Catholic missionary in the area for sixty years. In 1818 the Bishop of Quebec sent two missionaries to the settlement. From that time permanent missionary work was carried on on the Western Plains.

In October, 1820, an Anglican Minister, Rev. John West, arrived on the frontier. His appearance was the occasion for discord. This was to be expected in an area which was either

Catholic or Presbyterian. He tried his best to overcome the prejudices of these Scotch settlers, but the Anglican liturgy was an abomination to these Gaelic folk, and so Mr. West left the colony June 10, 1823. This struggle against the Anglican liturgy was to be continued for years. Up to 1865 apart from the reading of a few selected prayers from the Prayer Book, the whole service was Presbyterian. The church has learnt much from this early struggle and on the frontier today the Anglican liturgy is adapted to time, place and needs of the group to whom it ministers.

The beginnings of the Wesleyan work on the western frontier dates from 1840. The mission was inaugurated by the British Wesleyan Missionary Committee. The first permanent missionary to locate in what is now Alberta, was Rev. R. T. Rundle, who arrived at Fort Edmonton on September 18, 1840.

From what has been stated, religious beginnings on the western frontier had their origin in the British Isles. From these first beginnings missionaries pushed out into the unchurched areas. The story of how these different units became eventually Canadian churches has been told in many of the histories of church unions in Canada. It is sufficient for our purpose here just to state that the Canadian churches in the main became responsible for the churching of its own areas. Although the Anglican Church in these western areas still receives aid from the English societies.

The beginnings of missionary activity in the "New North", particularly in that part of it known as the Peace River Country,

are difficult to trace. We do know, however, that missionaries of the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church were early on the ground. As early as 1878 the Church of England secured Mr. Lawrence to go to Fort Vermilion to look after their farm there. As, has been mentioned in another connection, the Shaftesbury Settlement was started by Rev. J. Gough Brick about 1888.

Previous to 1911 there was only a small group of settlers in the area, so that there was no extensive missionary activity previous to that time. Previous missionary efforts were directed toward the fur-trader and the Indian. The period since 1911 has been the period of rapid missionary development. In 1911, the Roman Catholic, Anglican and Methodist Churches were working in the area, particularly in the vicinity of Grande Prairie and Peace River. There may have been other sects working there as well. It is barely possible that both the Lutheran and Presbyterian Churches had missions there at that time, although there were less than fifty of that religious affiliation in the area at the time. At this stage of development, the Roman Catholic Church was by far the largest, being in ratio of five to one to the next largest group, the Anglican. There were eleven different sects besides an unspecified group in the area at this time.

The following decade experienced an unparalleled growth in the migration to the area. The population increased by 1,000 per cent. The number of different sects increased from eleven to nineteen. The five major groups at this time were in order of their numerical strength, Roman Catholic, Presby-

terian, Anglican, Methodist and Lutheran. The increase in the Presbyterian and Lutheran groups is quite marked. Particularly, is this true of the Presbyterians. It had risen from a poor seventh to a good second and the ratio between it and the Roman Catholic group is 1:1.5. The Lutherans, while they have increased greatly, still are in the same ratio to the other group. The Methodists have shown a proportionate decrease. Other groups in the area in 1921 sufficiently large to warrant recognition are, the Baptist, the Greek Church, and probably the Adventists. What the census of 1931 will reveal is purely a matter of conjecture. Church statistical records may show the trend, but only a fraction of the population becomes definitely attached to any church group. So, that church records are no criteria of the denominational distribution of the population, neither are they any criteria by which to measure religious interest. They, if they have any value whatever, are only relative.

The denominational distribution has been somewhat changed since the census of 1921. In 1925 the Presbyterian and Methodist churches and the Congregational group within the area, became a part of the United Church of Canada. This union reduced the major religious denominations for a time, at least, to three. But the wave of opposition which spread over the Eastern Provinces resulting in a continuing Presbyterian Church was felt within the frontier area as well. It seems as if these mission fields were not sufficiently autonomous to be given the privilege of deciding whether they would "concur" or not. They were literally dragged in. Consequently there was disharmony within some groups,

and since 1925 whole groups in these western areas have again become reinstated into the parent fold.

The process by which the Presbyterian Church went into the Peace River again is not quite clear. It may be by invitation from some individuals within the area, or it may have been purely and simply a prospective mission. The latter seems to fit the facts of the case as we know them. However, the church began working in the area again, and is quite aggressive. The rivalry which must of necessity result from the presence of two antagonistic groups within the same territory will react unfavorably upon each interacting group, in that it will tend to a greater degree to unity and solidarity within each group. But what the reaction will be from a social and religious standpoint cannot be predicted with any degree of accuracy.

The religious organization of the area as we now know it, revolves around the three major groups already mentioned, namely the Roman Catholic, the Anglican and the United Church. Of the first very little will be said, because information and statistics are not available. It can be said however, that, in reference to the fundamental pattern of religious organization of the frontier, it is a typical representative. It came as a mission imposed by the out-group, and in many areas it still maintains that status. In other areas it has outgrown its missionary status and has become an independent group. Perhaps, as in no other group, one can see the control from the outside. Convents, churches, hospitals and so forth are built in the larger centres by the outside financial

interests of the church. In some communities a modern building of brick or stone greets the eye of the visitor, which appears to be entirely out of harmony with its surroundings. As to the inner organization and policy of the church, our information is scant. The conjecture is that the rigidity of the Roman Catholic liturgy has to conform with the frontier conditions, as well as that of the other church groups. One assumes that quite often improvised altars have to be erected upon which to offer the Holy Eucharist. These conditions, if at all prevalent, is a more temporary phase of religious development, than in the Protestant groups. Church edifices and symbolism are not as essential to Protestant forms of worship. Consequently they can shape their church program to the needs of a new and growing community. And, as one student has said, "a log church building with rough benches as pews is a more suitable environment for a farmer in overalls, than a stately edifice embellished with statuary and revelling in symbolism".

The two groups with which we will be concerned particularly are the Anglican and United Churches. While the policy of the Roman Catholic Church is primarily to reach its own, the policy of these two groups is to reach the unchurched areas, irrespective of religious affiliation. It might be said that these two groups are competitors in the area. This does not mean that there is wholesale prosletyzing on the part of each. It does mean, however, that each group is striving to get there and get there first, if possible. Where one group finds the other already established, there is no attempt to win

adherents from within the group. If there are any of the same religious persuasion as the arriving sect, it will naturally try to win them. The unchurched areas are the primary objectives of these groups. These are the two great missionary groups of the area, and as a result, they feel a sense of obligation to the unchurched group. Into these unchurched areas comes either group. There is no discrimination, Irrespective of past religious attachments, each person's interest is solicited and more often than not it is obtained. In the first approach to the new area, the religious affiliation if at all sought, is incidental to the primary object of getting a religious group started within the area. Of course, it is assumed that the pattern which this group will eventually take on will be that of the mission worker, whether Anglican or United Church. This group is invariably composed of different denominational types, but all are bound by a fundamental interest. And within these new areas past affiliations are no barriers to the formation of a religious group. This, however, does happen, the original group might be a religious centre from which other groups are diffused. Many persons within the group may belong to, but not be a part of the group. They are willing to accept and aid the new group, only as long as there is no group of their own denomination within reasonable distance. This does not hold true of the Roman Catholic groups, but in some isolated cases, this does happen and Protestant ministers have officiated at Roman Catholic burial services, and used the Catholic ritual or as much of it as they knew how to use. But in the main, Roman Catholic members remain aloof from other church groups and travel long

distances to their particular group. To the Protestant, distance is an important factor. If there is a church group within reasonable distance, one may become attached, but one will not go far in search of such a group. As soon as one's own particular group arrives in the area, the old group is forsaken and the newly-arrived one chosen. This probably explains in some measure why, out of a large constituency, so few are actual members of a church group.

The Anglican Church is doing quite an extensive work in the Peace River area. The Diocese of Athabasca includes within its territory the whole of the Peace River country. The Peace River block is a part of the Caledonia Diocese of the Province of British Columbia.

The United Church divides its work in the Peace River country into two Presbyteries which are a part of the Alberta Conference. These two Presbyteries followed the natural divisions of the area. The Grande Prairie Presbytery includes the work south of the Peace, and the Peace River Presbytery the work North of the Peace. As far as the United Church is concerned, the Peace River country is still a mission area. In the Peace River presbytery not one charge pays the minimum salary, each is subsidized in part from the Home Mission Board. And the newer areas are subsidized in full. These areas have only intermittent student supply during the vacation period. In the Grand Prairie presbytery all the charges are subsidized with the exception of Grande Prairie, and Grande Prairie pays less than the minimum salary. At least it did so in 1930.

The Valhalla Settlement requires separate mention because it is unique in itself. Its religious organization is a national type. This type was transported from the old area of settlement to the new. The same is true of the area as a whole. They have built a church at Valhalla centre costing in the vicinity of \$7,000.00. The religious type is Lutheran.

OTHER UNITS OF SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.

1. Hospital and Medical Services:

There are nine very creditable hospitals in the area and three others are planned. Three of the nine are Roman Catholic institutions and two of the projected ones. The Roman Catholic hospitals are located at Grouard, McLennan and Fort Vermilion. The two that are, by this time, under course of construction, are located at McLennan and Fort St. John. The new one at McLennan will undoubtedly replace the structure already there. The third one that is being planned is the Peace River Municipal Hospital which will serve the whole hospital district of Peace River. Grand Prairie already has a municipal hospital erected in 1928 at a cost of \$75,000 with accommodation for forty patients. The remaining ones are cottage hospitals located at Peace River, Berwyn, High Prairie, Fairview and a Red Cross hospital at Pouce Coupé. There are fifteen physicians practising in the large centres, and the Alberta Department of Public Health has placed a number of physicians in the outlying districts where settlement is taking place rapidly, in order that skilled medical

service might be available. These locations include Fort Vermilion, Notikewin and Slave Lake. Well qualified nurses are stationed at Jarvie and Wanham.

2. Banks.

Scattered throughout the area from the Peace to the Rockies and from Notikewin to Grande Prairie are branches of the largest banking institutions of Canada. In all, there are twenty-five branches, representing the Royal Bank of Canada, the Canadian Bank of Commerce, the Bank of Montreal, The Imperial Bank of Canada, the Banque Canadienne, Nationale. Other financial institutions are also to be found in the area. Some of these are trust, mortgage, loan and insurance companies.

3. Newspapers.

The area, as has been shown, is divided owing to population diffusion from specific centres, into certain natural divisions. In the same way it can be said that the area is divided into four newspaper divisions. This division reflects the inner organization of the area, the papers in turn reflect an area consciousness. The whole content of the paper-news, advertisements and so forth, has an area complex. Each paper is sold to the area and is trying its utmost to sell its area first. An examination of the subscribers to each paper would no doubt reveal the prejudices within each group, and the conflict pattern which is being worked out within the whole area. The names and places of publication indicate the areas served by each paper. The Record is published at Peace River, the Herald at Grande Prairie,

the Northern Review at Fairview, and the Peace River Block News at Rolla, B.C. These four papers serve each in its own area, the whole of the Peace River country. It does seem significant that with Grande Prairie fast becoming the centre of dominance for the whole area, that it still publishes its own sectional paper. One would expect a paper for the whole area published from that centre. It may be that the area has not yet sufficiently developed an area consciousness, to warrant such a venture. The future will undoubtedly compel such a step.

The Peace River frontier is growing up. In many places it has already passed the frontier stage. The nature of its transportation and communication facilities removes it far from the typical frontier of earlier days. The part played by the physiographic features of the area in the competitive process which has made the area pattern what it is can be easily traced. The social organization of the area is a result of the interaction between the new area and the centres of dominance, and between the various units within the area. Each unit is in some measure inter-related, and each new unit entering the area disturbs for the time being the social equilibrium of the area, and tends to a realignment in the social structure. Of the various units of social organization within the area, the one that stands out predominantly as still retaining frontier characteristics is the religious one. These religious units are still in the mission stage and are supported wholly or in part by money obtained by the parent group from the old churched areas. A further index of its

frontier character is the nature of its ministerial supply. A greater part of the work is done by student supply during the vacation period. With few exceptions all advanced religious pioneering is done by students or travelling missionaries not attached to the area. The parent organization follows up the work done in this way as rapidly as possible, but many areas for a long period of time receive only intermittent religious services.

There are, however, evidences in the more settled areas of the "coming of age" of the religious organizations. Every year shows an increase in the local financial support, with a consequent decrease in subsidy. Judging from the process of population growth and expansion it looks as if the Peace River might yet become a centre of dominance for an area of expanding settlement in the Mackenzie River district, and North of Fort St. John. The trend of religious activity also seems to indicate that the area of the Peace might in turn become the centre of missionary activity into the advancing frontier regions of the still "New North".

CHAPTER 3

THE RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS OF THE PEACE RIVER AREA

The different organized religious groups of the Peace River are the result of missionary activity on the part of a parent organization with headquarters at some distant centre. These organized units represent only a part of the whole religious complex of the area. There are many unorganized groupings representing different religious sects. This is caused by the number of immigrants which are coming into the area. They not only represent different nationality types, but different religious types as well, and some of them waive any religious attachments at all. Still they are the raw material out of which the institutional patterns are woven. Many of these immigrants come from old settled areas, and have specific religious backgrounds and training, yet comparatively few of them manifest any active religious interest in the new area. The majority is so pre-occupied with what at the moment appears to be more major interests that they have no leisure for religious activity and little or no interest. This, in part, explains the struggle for existence on the part of the religious institution in the early days of its pioneering. It also explains why the whole work in the new area has to be carried by the outside group, until such time as interest can be re-awakened in the area itself.

Although there is a lack of interest in organized religion within the area, every person with the exception of a small group, representing a fraction of one percent, claims some denominational affiliation. This is due no doubt to previous attachments. It

is important, however, in that it furnishes a working basis for these religious institutions that enter the area to church it. It assures them of a group from whom they have a right to expect a sympathetic reaction to their advances. On the other hand it shows a large group of varied denominational affiliation for whom no attempts are being made to furnish a church home, because the fewness of their numbers do not warrant such a move. These groupings are grist for the denominational mill and each organized group accepts the right of the other group to reach out and serve these unchurched groups. As far as religious activity is concerned, in these new and unchurched areas, the only real distinction that is made is between Catholic and non-Catholic groups. The efforts of Catholic missionaries are confined chiefly to their own people, and the way they reach the most distant ones is truly amazing. The non-Catholic groups, or more specifically the Protestant groups, are ministered to irrespective of religious affiliation. Specific religious practices come later. To the Protestant missionary every new and unchurched area is an open field. He knows and recognizes no denominational barriers. There is something about these frontier conditions, in their early stages, that knows no creeds. Creeds are not born on the frontier, they are the free-will offering of sometimes over-zealous and religiously warped administrative executives. The frontier has been fleeing from a divided Protestantism and working for a unification of interests and a conservation of resources. And whatever organized religion might do or not do in the East, in these newer Western Areas, it works

with all creeds, under whatever circumstances it finds, and in the way that will best fit the needs of the group.

The religious complexity and at the same time the religious opportunity within the area will be shown statistically. All told, there are 18,489 persons in the whole area. These are divided into twenty different groupings, representing as many denominations and sects. The data given in the table are from the census reports of 1921. It is unfortunate that the census year is 1931 and not 1930. For the distribution, according to 1931, will show a more interesting picture of the religious denominations in the area. From an analysis and comparison of the census reports of 1911 with those of 1921, one would venture to predict that with the possible addition of some minor sects, the religious distribution will follow much the same pattern of distribution for the five major groups, namely, the Roman Catholic, the Church of England, the Presbyterian, Methodist and Lutheran. The ratio between these different groups changed slightly in favor of the non-catholic groups. The 1931 census will show a somewhat different distribution because in 1925 the Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist groups united to form one religious body - The United Church of Canada. And for the first time in the history of the census reports in Canada, a United Church group will be one of the major, maybe the major religious group in the area. It will undoubtedly be the largest single denomination in the Peace River. The Presbyterian group will still be listed, because a new group is in the making, being started in 1929. This group is part of quite a large group

scattered over Canada who elected to remain out of Union.

Table 1. The Religious distribution in the Peace River Area, according to Divisions Numbers 15 and 16 of the Census Report of 1921.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage of whole</u>
All Groups	18,489	100
Roman Catholic	6,074	32.9
Presbyterian	3,525	19.1
Church of England	2,912	15.8
Methodist	2,395	12.9
Lutherans	1,679	9.1
Baptists	733	3.9
Greek Church	321	1.8
Adventists	96	.5
Mennonites	91	.49
Protestants	89	.48
Salvation Army	45	.25
Congregational	39	.21
Jews	36	.19
Mormons	29	.16
Eastern Religions	27	.15
Christians	23	.13
Brethern	10	.05
Disciples of Christ	1	. 0
Sects	337	1.82
Unspecified	24	.13

This table shows that the Roman Catholic group is by far the largest single denominational group and is in ratio of 1:1.9 to the whole non-Catholic group. This can be explained in part by the fact that Census Division Number 15 deals with a stretch of country bordering on and adjacent to the railroad from Peace River to Lesser Slave Lake. In this area there is a large French population, mainly belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. This stretch of country does not belong to the Peace River proper. But as some sections of it are included in the area, it was thought best to give the distribution for Divisions 15, 16 in order that comparisons might be made with a later table showing the distribution for Division 16 and two municipalities of Division 15. Within this distribution there are three groups that require mention. The first, is the group listed as Protestants. This is a group which for various reasons won't be recognized as affiliated with any religious sect. They do, however, insist that they are not Roman Catholics and therefore are grouped under the general heading Protestants. In the census distribution there are 89 so listed. These are in fact potential adherents of the protestant groups and will eventually be absorbed into these groups. The second group is the Christians. This group is fast becoming a sect. It stands in the same relation to Paganism as the Protestant group to Catholicism. They refuse to be regarded as a part of a recognized religious group, and far from being Pagan, they are Christians in a stricter sense of the term, than the duly organized groups, and demand to be thus classified. The last group is the sects. This is a number of minor religious groups, too few in number and too difficult

to classify separately. They are, therefore, grouped under this general term. Judging from this distribution, one would say that as far as the religious denominations are concerned, the area is fearfully and frightfully growing. In the United States of America with its centuries of religious history, there are at the present time 212 different denominational groups and in the Peace River with less than two decades of religious history, there is one-tenth as many religious groupings. The social significance of such a variety of sects is far reaching. One of the most damaging influences in community organization is the sectionalism that is fostered by the different religious groups. The trend of rural church organization today is toward a unification of function and a centralization of interests. The situation in this rural area is the reverse. The area has broken up into many interest groups. The fault is largely with the outside religious organization. These organizations impose themselves upon the area. And it is quite the natural thing to expect each individual to attend his own group, if that group is forced upon him. But, if that group is absent the policy is to attend - if at all - the church in the community, no matter what its religious color might be, assuming of course it belongs to the larger Protestant family. This is all the more aggravating when each separate unit is dependent upon outside financial support. In the majority of cases full support is received from the administrative offices of the parent organization, or from some church or churches in the East that are sponsoring such a pseudo-religious programme.

Religious distribution according to Census Division 16.

The Canadian Pioneer Problems Committee's survey upon which this study is based, did not work in area included in Division 15. Their activities were centred mainly in the area west of the Peace and Smoky Rivers. Therefore it is necessary to show the religious distribution of this specific area. We have, however, included in the table a small area East of the river, but which belongs to the religious district of Peace River. This small area includes Nampa, Judah, McPherson and Little Prairie. According to the Census they comprise municipalities 825,826. They include 251 persons.

Table 11. The Religious Distribution in Division 16,
Province of Alberta Census Report 1921, including
Municipalities 825,826 of Division 15.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage of Whole</u>
All groups	12,382	100.
Roman Catholic	2,834	22.9
Presbyterian	2,766	22.34
Church of England	1,976	15.95
Methodist	1,871	15.11
Lutheran	1,438	11.62
Baptists	549	4.43
Greek Church	287	2.31
Mennonites	90	.73
Protestants	79	.64

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percentage of whole</u>
Adventists	43	.35
Salvation Army	35	.28
Jews	30	.24
Congregational	27	.22
Christians	20	.16
Eastern Religions	16	.13
Brethren	6	.6
Disciples of Christ	1	.008
Sects	283	2.29
Unspecified	4	.03

This distribution shows the same number of religious groups but in different proportion. The Roman Catholic group still heads the list, but there is only a difference of 68 persons between it and the nearest group. The reason has already been given for the large percentage in Table 1. The ratio of Catholic including the Greek Church, has been changed from 1:1.9 to 1:3. By this it seems that the Peace River area proper is committed to a very large extent to the Protestant groups, and in particular to the United Church group, because out of a total non-catholic group of 9,548 almost half or 4,664 belong to the United Church, that is, to the groups comprising the United Church. By comparing the number listed as sects in Table 11. with that in Table 1., one concludes that these sects follow pretty largely the Protestant groups. It is true they are chips off the larger Protestant block, but it does appear

very significant that they are found in larger numbers in areas that are predominantly Protestant. Of 337 persons listed in this group for the whole area, 283 of them are within the more protestant portion of the country, and only 54 are to be found in an area where the Roman Catholic distribution is almost 2:1. Even these sects apparently find a more suitable environment among their own original group. Among the 251 persons at Nampa, Judah, McPherson and Little Prairie we have 75 Roman Catholics, 53 Presbyterians, 52 Church of England, 36 Methodists, 19 Lutheran, 2 Baptists and 7 of the Greek Church. The other groupings are not represented with the exception of 8 who belong to the group of sects.

Religious interests play little if any part in population distribution among the Protestant groups. Among the Roman Catholic it does seem evident that there is a tendency to concentrate in areas, where their religious group is predominant.

Distribution according to the sample of 313 families taken
from the area.

Research workers of the Canadian Pioneer Problems Committee worked in the area during the summer of 1930 and took a sample of some 313 families representing the different parts of the area, and also representing the varied fundamental interests of the area. These 313 families were interviewed personally, and were questioned concerning the different phases of their activity. Questionnaires had been prepared beforehand and answers given were written in on the spot. One might say that a complete census of these families was taken. Of peculiar

interest to this study is the report which shows the religious interest of the group. The group was questioned as to denominational affiliation, distance from religious services, the amount contributed toward these services, who goes to church and who does not, the relation of the children to the church and so forth. The answers to these and many other questions help in determining the value of the church to the area. It is possible with this data to measure fairly accurately the religious interest in the area. Table 111 shows the distribution according to the stated religious attachments of these 313 families in the area.

Table 111 Religious Distribution according to the sample of 313 families taken by the Canadian Pioneer Problems Committee in summer of 1930.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>No.of Families</u>	<u>No. of persons</u>	<u>Percentage of total</u>
All groups	313	1137	
Roman Catholic	43	199	18.8
Church of England	32	117	10.3
United	107	400	35.2
Lutheran	29	102	8.9
Presbyterian	21	66	5.8
Baptist	3	31	2.7
Others	10	51	4.5
Unspecified	68	171	15.

Average number of persons per family 3.7

Average number of persons per Catholic family 4.6

Average number of persons per non-Catholic family 3.3

This table shows the distribution for six religious groups. This classification will be maintained throughout the study. One notices for the first time in this table a group listed as United. As it has already been stated that on June 10, 1925, the Presbyterian Church, the Congregational Church and the Methodist Church in Canada consummated an organic union, it is necessary to explain the presence of a Presbyterian group in the distribution table. While it is true that the Presbyterian Church in Canada went into the Union, many congregations and minority groups of other congregations scattered all over Canada elected to remain out, so that there was a continuing Presbyterian Church in Canada. The use of the name Presbyterian by the continuing group has been and is a controversial issue between the two groups, namely, the "in-group" and the "out-group". This dissension from the church did not affect the Peace River Area. The whole work of the Presbyterian Church in the Peace River entered Union in 1925. The statistics for the United Church include the three former bodies. For four years there were no Presbyterian workers in the area. In 1929 a missionary was sent in and there is now a Presbyterian Church in Brownvale and others in different parts of the area have been planned. A more complete story of this new group is given at a later point. The group listed as others is made up as follows: Christians 7, Nazarene 1, Seventh Day Adventist 12, Salvation Army 10, Believers 2, Bible Students 7, Brotherhood 2, and 4 who call themselves Congregational. This, I believe, is an error. They belong rightly with the United Church group.

The large group classed as having no religious affiliation is significant out of such a small sample. It has been shown, however, in the distributions according to Tables 1 and 11 that there was quite a large group of Protestants. With each census enumeration this group increased somewhat out of proportion to the increase in the other groups. In this sample the second largest group is listed as "unspecified". It may be that some of them can be taken care of within the Protestant group, but only a small proportion can be so treated. In fact, the enumerator claims that any who regarded themselves as Protestant so stated it. A better explanation is, the enumerator was unable to ascertain all the facts concerning this group and therefore these questions remained blank. Because of this a large group has been put in the unspecified class. With more complete information this group would no doubt be divided up among the non-Catholic groups. They are relatively unimportant in this study because they afford no measurable data whereby one can evaluate their religious interest. They are a totally disinterested group. Only six out of one hundred and seventy one contributed anything toward religious service of any kind. The distribution shows quite conclusively that the Church of the Peace River is the United Church. This is not surprising because within it are incorporated the traditions of three religious bodies which can minister to the emotional complexity of any mixed group, and further, there is such a happy blending of liturgy and congregational freedom with evangelical fervour that the most versatile can find satisfaction for his wishes. One of these uniting churches has always been a frontier church. It has always been the claim of

Methodism that "the world is my parish". The smaller religious bodies are having a difficult time to survive. They are dependent to a large extent upon the area, because their numbers are too few to warrant the giving of any grant from the outside. Consequently, they play only a very minor role in the religious development of the area.

Proportion of the Population in the Church.

One of the tests of effectiveness of the church is the proportion of the population which it enrolls. In this respect the Peace River area makes a fairly good showing, when the newness of the area is considered. And again, two hundred of the members are Catholic. All told 42.5 per cent of the total population of the sample are church members. We have not, as far as I know, any statistics showing a national average for Canada. The national average for the United States as a whole as shown by the 1926 Religious Census is 46.6 per cent. The average for the Peace River when compared with that is not as low as at first thought. One cannot say that there was any marked regional variation in respect to church membership on the whole. The Roman Catholic distribution is heavy in the Fairview district. From the distribution it appears that this district is the stronghold of Catholicism. This large grouping is due in part to the concentration of Catholics in and around Friedenstal. Here is to be found one of their strongest centres in the area. It is a well organized and well equipped centre of religious activity. Scattered throughout the other areas the Catholics are sparsely

distributed.

In treating statistically the membership distribution within the area, we were confronted with the problem of making a fair comparison between the Catholic and non-Catholic groups. For it was known that every last person was a member of the Catholic Church, while within the non-Catholic groups only a small percentage in many cases were members. To avoid doing an injustice to either group, it was decided to present two distribution tables, one showing the distribution irrespective of age, the other showing it from 13 years old upward. This age limit of 13 was chosen because it is the limit agreed upon by the Institute of Social and Religious Research and further it is the age at which candidates are received for Confirmation in the Church of England. It was thought that a distribution within these age limits would make it possible to make more favorable comparisons between the groups.

Table 1V. Distribution into members and adherents within the different denominational groups, irrespective of age.

Denom.	Total	M e m b e r s						A d h e r e n t s			
		No	Total %	Attend No.	Attend %	Non Att.	No.	Total %	Attend No.	Attend %	Non-Att
United	400	102	26	93	91	9	298	75	190	63	108
C.of Eng.	117	60	51	48	80	18	57	49	26	46	31
Roman Cath.	199	199	100	147	74	52					
Presbyterian	66	15	23	14	93	1	51	77	22	43	29
Lutheran	102	52	51	50	96	2	50	49	19	38	31
Baptist	31	27	87	23	89	4	4	13	3	75	1
Others	51	28	55	18	66	10	23	45	11	49	12
Unspecified	171										
Totals	1137	483	43	393	81	90	483	43	271	56	212

The terms member and adherent need some explanation in order to understand the table. The term "member" is used here to mean all those whose names are on the membership roll of the church whether active or not. The term "adherent" means all those whose names are on the constituency roll of the church, they may be baptized or unbaptized; they may not attend the church at all, but they call themselves by a church name. For the sake of clarity we have divided each of these categories into attending and non-attending groups.

As already stated, the whole group of Catholics is listed as members, consequently the distribution is favorable toward that group. Among the United Church group only 1 in 4 is a member. It appears here that only those who specifically stated that such was their relationship to the church, are listed as church members. A large group of catechumens or preparatory members are placed in the adherent group. The same is true for the other non-conformist groups, although not in such startling proportions. A fifty-fifty division for the Church of England is, I am sure, an incorrect picture. For fully fifty per cent of that adherent group are very likely making ready for confirmation. The fault is not, however, with the enumerator, but with the content that was put into some of the terms used. If these terms had been used according to the definition given them by the churches a lot of the ambiguity would have been avoided, and a more accurate distribution would have resulted. As it is, the Protestant groups are not receiving an equal weighting with the Catholic. This is why the second table was

thought of. The high proportion of non-attending inactive persons in both categories is difficult to account for. It would seem to indicate a failure on the part of the church to furnish a sufficiently compelling program, or qualified leadership. The criticisms that are hurled at the church are not too severe. In many instances they are somewhat harsh, but by and in the large, they are the result of personal prejudices or grievances. Sheer indifference seems to be the greatest contributing factor. The church is a tame sort of a place. Some place is wanted, that will give plenty of thrills and lift one above the boredom of one's surroundings. The church is a good enough place, but it is uninteresting. In some areas, there seems to be conflict between the interests of the community and the church's policy. It is thought that the church is constantly issuing mandates prohibiting this, that or something else and rather than be regarded as a breaker of the law, one will refrain from becoming subject to the law. Whatever the causes are, the fact remains that in this area not more than one-fifth of the population are active church members. By active here we mean a member who contributes regularly and attends occasionally. The large group of unspecified persons raises certain questions as well. But if the size of the group is due, as has been intimated in another connection, to the inability on the part of the enumerator to secure complete information, then it is quite possible that this group would be materially reduced if that information were forthcoming. Nevertheless it is quite characteristic, not only of a frontier area, but of a settled area, that within it there are groups of wholly disinter-

ested persons.

The table which deals with the religious groupings from 13 years old and upward may present a different picture, although it is very questionable.

Table V. Showing the distribution of members and adherents from 13 years old and upward.

Denom.	Total	M e m b e r s						A d h e r e n t s			
					Non.						
		- -	Total	Attend.	Att.	- -	-Total	Attend.	Non-		
		No.	%	No.	%		No.	%	No.	Att.	
United	283	100	35	91	91	9	185	35	143	77	42
C.of Eng.	85	44	52	38	86	6	41	48	22	56	19
Roman Cath.	110	110	100	87	79	23					
Presbyterian	49	15	31	14	93	1	34	69	17	50	17
Lutheran	73	49	67	47	96	2	24	33	13	54	11
Baptist	21	20	95	20	100	0	1	5			
Others	35	23	66	17	74	6	12	34	4	33	8
Unspecified	122										
Totals	778	361	46	314	87	47	297	38	199	67	98

Very little change can be noticed in the distribution with an age limit of 13 years and up. The Protestant groups still stand in about the same proportion to the Catholic group. One thing that is significant in both these tables is the attendance average for the groups. The attendance average is much higher among the Protestant groups than among the Catholics. This is due in large measure to distance from religious services. The distance factor will be treated in another connection. Mention

is made of it here, to show that within the Protestant groups particularly the non-conformist groups, the leader serves a much smaller area and thereby the church is more accessible. The Catholic leaders and in some measure the Anglican leaders are responsible for whole districts necessitating the traversing of hundreds of miles of territory. The large percentage of adherents does not necessarily mean a lack of interest. Rather it is a phenomenon of these groups, that the membership is rarely ever more than 50% of the total population of the group. This percentage indicates a healthy religious interest. Judged from membership statistics, the religious organization of the area compares very favorably with religious organization statistics for Canada as a whole and the United States. The facts which are set forth in this table are true of the whole area. Membership within the Protestant groups represents only a small portion of the total population, but the attendance within this membership limit is wholly good. It is natural, I suppose, that in communities where the proportion of members to the total population is small, the people should take more interest in the church than people in localities where the membership is high. Again, in areas where a small percentage of the population are members, there are no social or economic advantages to be gained by joining the church, so that generally speaking, only people vitally interested in it become members. Moreover, the very fact that the members are relatively few makes them feel keenly their individual responsibilities. This is especially true in new communities. Here the members who first established churches often developed the crusader attitude with all the

zeal that the term implies.

In addition to the greater interest on the part of the members themselves, there is another factor of real importance. In areas where relatively few people are definitely affiliated with the church, a considerable number of persons attend who are not members. This is particularly true in the area under study.

Membership ratios do affect the church. In older settled areas where membership ratios are high, it becomes quite the traditional thing to do to join the church. People become church members not from religious motives but purely from social and economic considerations. So that the religiously lukewarm join the church. All the best people in town belong, and the man who does not affiliate himself with the church is in danger of losing status. Just as it takes more courage to be a church member in areas where few belong, so in localities where it is traditional to join it takes either moral courage or stony indifference to public opinion to stay out.

Church Attendance:

It is thought that the attendance interest ratio is a far better standard for judging the church than are the membership ratios. It is true, however, that these two sets of data are closely correlated, or in other words, changes in one are accompanied by changes in the other. Thus in an area in which the membership is low, one would expect to find the attendance interest low and vice versa. But the facts of the case contradict this. The amount of time that people give to the church does not vary to the same extent as do membership ratios. The interest

of the Protestant population in their churches, if measured by monthly attendance, is much more uniform than membership figures would lead us to believe. From a sociological standpoint, this is an interesting fact, because it shows that the hold of the church upon the people is more constant throughout the rural areas than has generally been believed. In other words, people in rural areas attend church with greater uniformity than they join it. For this reason we feel that the attendance interest ratio is a better index of the place of the church in the life of an area, than are membership ratios.

Table VI. Yearly attendance interest of individual persons from 13 years old and upwards, according to denominational affiliation.

<u>No. of Times</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>R. C.</u>	<u>United</u>	<u>C. of</u> <u>E.</u>	<u>Luth.</u>	<u>Presb.</u>	<u>Bapt.</u>	<u>Others</u>
Not at all	138	20	46	22	14	18	1	17
0-4	156	23	74	35	12	8	0	4
5-9	71	0	47	15	7	2	0	0
10-14	78	3	46	8	10	6	0	5
15-19	22	1	18	0	0	3	0	0
20-24	49	6	24	3	6	6	3	1
25-29	41	13	18	0	5	2	2	1
30-34	28	2	17	0	6	0	2	1
35-39	21	0	17	2	2	0	0	0
40-44	45	7	14	3	11	7	3	0
45-49	15	8	0	0	4	0	3	0
50-54	125	76	19	4	5	0	11	10
55-59	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
60-up	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Totals	797	167	340	92	85	52	25	39
Percentages		21.	42.7	11.6	10.7	7.5	3.1	5.

This distribution shows the actual yearly attendance interest of this group of 797 persons. It will be noticed that there is quite a concentration below 4 and above 50. The Protestant groups are responsible for the concentration below 4, while the Catholic group claims the high attendance ratio above 50. It is significant, however, that 20 persons out of 138 represent the non-attending Catholics. This is a very small proportion compared to the Protestant group, and these are so far removed from church services that it is impossible for them to attend. The concentration around the low of 4 is due in part to the fact that this number represents the sole opportunities which these people had to attend church. So that if the averages were taken per the opportunities to attend, this would in all probability near the 100 per cent mark. The high attendance record of the Catholic group is due also to the opposite phenomenon. Of the 167 attending Catholics, Fairview district accounts for 129. At this point there are religious services regularly during Sunday and week-days as well. And the large Catholic group in and around Friedenstal accounts for a large percentage of the attendance.

The table further corroborates what has already been said, that a large group, not church members attend fairly regularly. The United Church membership total for the sample is 100. But 294 persons attended religious services from one to fifty times during the year. The same is true of the Church of England, although there is not such a wide margin between membership and attendance as in the former group.

In attempting to note the relation between distance and

church attendance, all distances over 15 miles have been eliminated and the average taken under 15. Some farmsteads, especially on the fringe, are as much as 60 miles away from a church. The only service they get is the spasmodic visit of the travelling missionary. The effect of distance upon church attendance is quite marked. Of course it is to be expected that with a church in the immediate neighborhood there is more apt to be a better attendance ratio. The Catholic group has the highest average distance and their attendance compares favorably with the Church of England group, which has less than half the distance.

It is, of course, impossible to tell what part of the poor attendance showing results from lack of opportunities to attend church, and what part is owing to the lack of religious interest, but granting that a sparse population and extreme youth are detrimental factors to church development over which we have little or no control, we are forced to the conclusion that differences in religious interests from place to place vary even less than our attendance interest ratios would indicate. In other words, if the people from place to place had equal opportunity to attend churches, they would probably participate in their services with even greater uniformity than at present.

Within the sample there are 39 persons who attend other denominations than their own. Thirty-four of these attend the United Church and five of them being United attend the Anglican. The assumption is that there is no church of their own religious persuasion in the area. This phenomenon has already been dealt with in another connection. The religiously inclined will attend

whatever church is at their disposal until such time as their own church arrives. They will then worship at their own altar.

Church Support or the Money Measure:

If it were not for outside assistance there would be less religious work,- one is moved to say there would be no religious work - in these new areas than there is. This aid is responsible wholly or in part for the church building itself. As soon as the work gets established, the area itself begins to contribute towards the support of the church. It is this phase of the church life in relation to the area that concerns us at this point. We want to see whether the financial support given to the church is a reliable index of the religious interest of the area. It has long been known that there are wide differences in the individual contributions of members, not only from church to church, but from region to region and it is often assumed that these variations are owing to differences in the religious interest of the members. People have the habit of judging churches by their contributions. A church that gives twenty-five dollars a member is held up as a shining example of christian stewardship, while the one that gives but a few dollars a year is felt to be religiously lukewarm. It is our contention that just because one church has given more than another is no proof that it has made greater sacrifices. It is the old story of the widow's mite. May not a contribution of five dollars a member coming from a poor country mean far more in terms of self-denial and church interest than twenty-five dollars per member coming from a rich agricultural region? In other words, are not the differ-

ences in the contributions of the two caused largely by differences in economic prosperity?

Table Vll. gives the total number from 13 years and up who contributed to the different churches in the area studied. These figures are based upon the actual statement made by the contributor to the enumerator. To my knowledge no attempt has been made to check up on the accuracy of the statements given. They are given in this table for what they are worth. They do, however, show the total numbers out of the sample who are supporting the church. The enumerator took the totals only for the whole family. In order to present a distribution per person, it was found necessary to divide up the total among the members of the family from 13 and upwards. For example, if the total for a family is \$20.00 and there are four members above 13 in the family group, each member is regarded as giving \$5.00 and is so listed in the table.

Table Vll. Contributors by groups-from 13 years upward, devoted to salary, upkeep and benevolences.

Contribution	Total	United	C.of E.	R.C.	Presb.	Bapt.	Luth.	Other No. Den.	No. Den
\$0 - 1.99	70	32	14	8	5	0	4	6	1
2 - 3.99	126	53	13	7	20	0	23	5	5
4 - 5.99	97	50	4	25	9	0	7	0	2
6 - 7.99	49	23	10	8	0	0	8	0	0
8 - 9.99	64	38	2	12	2	0	7	3	0
10-11.99	39	13	7	10	2	0	7	0	0
12-13.99	17	5	0	5	4	1	2	0	0
14-15.99	4	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0
16-17.99	6	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
18 - up	<u>25</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Totals	497	231	52	83	42	6	59	15	9
% of whole		47.	10.	17.	8.	1.	12.	3.	
No. not contributing		52.	33	27	7	15	14	20	

The term "benevolences" is used to cover the amounts paid by the various church groups towards work of the larger church group, such as the Missionary and Maintenance Fund of the United Church. The money given by the individual person is generally given towards a specific object, namely salary, or missions and so forth. No distinction was made in these cases, therefore all is grouped under the one main classification. The distribution does not admit of any comparison because the United Church group is the largest group of the sample, and consequently it shows a larger number contributing than among the other groups. The United Church group represent almost half the total number of contributors, and also shows the full range of the distribution for the various intervals. It receives 14 out of 25 subscriptions at the highest point of distribution. The Roman Catholic group follows second, but shows that the point of greatest concentration for it is at the \$5.00 although it is quite evenly divided among the different groups until it reaches the \$14.00 mark, then there is a decidedly falling off. The Anglican group falls within the intervals from \$1.00 to \$12. Beyond this point there are only two persons contributing, and these belong to the higher income group.

In comparing this table with the membership and adherent table for the same groups, it shows that there are 168 persons who are connected with the churches in one of these categories, who do not contribute anything at all, these are divided up among the different denominational groups, as follows: United 52, Church of England 33, Roman Catholic 27, Presbyterian 7, Lutheran 14, Baptist 15, Others 20. The group that is classi-

fied as unspecified contributes 9 persons to the totals given, so that after this group of 113 is deducted there still remains 168 persons with definite religious affiliation who do not contribute anything at all. Various reasons might be given for this, lack of interest, distance and so forth, but what seems to be the one that fits the case best is the smallness of income. Many of these persons included in this group belong to an income group less than \$750.00. This group does not include the total number, but it shows the trend towards the relation between cash income and church contribution.

Table Vlll. aims to set forth this relation. In this table the distribution is in terms of family units and not individual persons. It purports to show that church giving is dependent upon the economic prosperity of the group, and only relatively so to religious interest.

Table Vlll. The relation of Cash income to church contributions in terms of the family unit.

<u>Income Groups</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>Amt. Contrib.</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Family's Contrib.</u>	<u>% of Whole</u>	<u>Average per family</u>
Less 1000	87	\$216.	\$2.48	25	29.9	\$8.64
1000-1999	80	550.	6.88	46	57.5	11.95
2000-2999	48	492.	10.25	33	68.8	14.91
3000-3999	40	592.	14.75	27	67.5	21.96
4000-4999	24	464.	19.25	20	83.3	23.20
5000 & over	34	592.	17.41	28	82.4	21.14
Total	313	2906	9.28	179	57.2	16.24

In Table Vlll. it was found that 168 persons were non-contributors, and it was thought that quite a number of these were non-contributors because of their small income. This, however, does not tell all the story, for there are many scattered among the other income groups who do not contribute either. Table Vlll. shows the number of families within each income group and the number that are actually contributing with the averages for each. It shows that only 29.9 per cent of the total low income group gives anything at all. There is a gradual increase in the number contributing until you reach the highest income group, which in this case ranges from \$5000 to \$14,000. In this group there is a slight falling off, but not enough to say that from this group on there would be a decrease. The decrease is not of sufficient importance to warrant such a decision. This distribution, however, does seem to substantiate what has already been said that the small percentage of contributors in this first group is due to small income, for it will be shown in a later distribution that the relation between what this group contributes to the church and what it spends on other social activities compares favorably with the higher income groups. They are only \$1.26 below the general average for the whole group. The income group \$3000-3999 does not show a true average, because there is one contributor within the group who gave \$106.00. The true average, omitting this person, is for the whole group \$12.20 and for the number contributing \$18.69. The same is true of the highest income group of all. One subscriber paid \$100.00. The true average for this group as a whole is \$14.90 and for those contributing it is \$18.72. The

peak is reached in the income group of \$4000-4999. This group represents the largest number contributing, it also represents the highest average per family and is \$13.92 above the general average for the whole group. It does appear that barring fluctuations in income that church support is divided fairly evenly over the whole range of the group. There were a few abnormal cases left out of our statistical analysis entirely. These belonged to an abnormally high income group, that is abnormal according to the norm of the group. Their contributions were many times the general average, so it was thought best to omit them entirely.

This support on the part of a new area is somewhat surprising. Many old areas have a less average than this. In rich localities one would expect to find a high average, but it is not so, the richer the locality, the less immediate becomes the necessity of large financial sacrifices. Since a small part of the income of well-to-do members represents more actual cash than does the greater part in the case of the poorer people, the need for the giving of a large proportion of their wealth steadily decreases with increasing prosperity, so that one arrives at a saturation point in church giving. When a congregation attains a certain average of wealth there is little incentive to the members to give more. The church program is standardized and the present rate of giving can take care of all the needs. This may explain the peak in the above table, it also explains the falling-off tendency above the \$5000 income level. From this distribution one can conclude, - First, that the average individual contributions tend to

increase with the increasing wealth of the area in which the Church is located,- And, secondly, that the richer the area, the less the members give in proportion to the means at their disposal.

Contribution per Person for each Denomination.

We have presented a table showing the numbers of persons in each denomination, who give within a range of \$2.00. We have also shown the average contribution per family according to income groups, irrespective of denominations. Table 1X. will show the average amount contributed by each person, from 13 years and up in their different denominational groups. A glance at this table will show that these organized religious groups would cease to function if it were not for help that is afforded from the outside.

Table 1X. Contributions per person from 13 years old and upwards according to denominational affiliation.

<u>Denomination</u>	<u>Church Population</u>	<u>Total amt. given</u>	<u>Average per Person</u>
United	283	\$1741.	\$6.15
Church of E.	85	250.	2.94
Roman Cath.	110	639.	5.80
Presbyterian	49	165.	3.37
Lutheran	73	284	3.89
Baptist	21.	/ 162	7.71
Others	35	60	1.71
Unspecified	122	65	.53
Totals	778	\$3366.	\$4.33

/ One family gave \$100. of this amount.

The general average of \$4.33 is low according to standards set for agricultural rural communities. But all figures accessible at the present time are for old established communities, with a settled membership. The average for such a community as that is about \$16.00. When one considers the brevity of the religious history of this area, one sees in the distribution shown an area well on its way to equal and surpass the averages of the older communities. Religious organization in the Peace River is in its infancy compared with these more settled regions, yet it shows definite signs of eclipsing these regions. Every year shows a marked increase in the local support that the churches receive from the area.

Distribution of Population according to Areas.

For survey purposes, the Canadian Pioneer Committee divided up the Peace River country into five areas or districts. These districts are not arbitrarily bounded, but they do represent a fairly consistent unity within themselves. Physical, economic and social factors were considered in determining these areas. The purpose of the following table is to show the religious complexity within each area so classified. The Areas are as follows:

1. Fairview
2. Rolla
3. Grande Prairie, Wembley, Beaver Lodge, Valhalla, Halcourt and Rio Grande.
4. Berwyn, Grimshaw and Lac Cardinal
5. The Fringe: Battle River, Hines Creek and Clear Hills.

Table X. The Religious Distribution according to Areas.

<u>District</u>	<u>No. of People</u>	<u>R. C.</u>	<u>C.of</u>	<u>United</u>	<u>Presb.</u>	<u>Bapt.</u>	<u>Luth.</u>	<u>Unspec.</u>
			<u>E.</u>					
Fairview	302	129	11	86	2	0	8	66
Rolla	108	18	11	93	3	11	7	37
Berwyn	172	21	8	51	13	4	5	69
Grande Prairie	232	11	17	85	24	0	46	49
Fringe	234	23	51	74	5	7	14	60
Total	1120	202	99	389	47	22	80	282
Percentages		18	8.8	34.7	3.3	1.9	6.3	25.1

This table shows that the Roman Catholic group is centered in the Fairview area, and about evenly divided in the rest of the area. The Church of England is strongest on the gringe. It presents the picture of the United Church about evenly divided in the five areas. This indicates that the whole area is being churchd by this group. The Church of England group, if the sample can be relied upon is not a very potent factor in the area. The two religious groups that are directing pretty largely the religious life of the area, are the Roman Catholic and the United. The Roman Catholic Church ministers to its own group, and therefore is dependent upon natural increase and population movements in which its own group is represented. The United Church ministers to all creeds, all classes and all races, and the pattern of distribution which has been seen in all the tables presented is indicative of what the future of that organization will be. Its a new church, in a new area, with an ever-

changing program. It recognizes neither credal nor racial barriers, but ministers to all alike.

Comparison of Attendance and Contribution within these areas irrespective of denomination.

It was thought significant after presenting the distribution in areas to make a comparison between the attendance and contribution in these areas and the area as a whole. Toward this end Table Xl. has been prepared. It shows the total number of people in each area according to the sample and distributes them according to attendance interest and total amount contributed, with averages for each person 13 years and upwards.

Table Xl. Comparison of Attendance and Contribution for the five districts with the area as a whole. Age limit 13 years and up.

Areas	Total Pop.	Church Pop.	Unspecified	Attendance		Contribution	
				No.	%	Total	Ave. per person
Fairview	201	177	24	136	76.8	\$1502	\$8.49
Rolla	160	137	23	87	63.5	344	2.51
Berwyn	144	199	25	70	58.8	528	4.44
Grande Prairie	185	174	11	124	71.3	827	4.75
Fringe	192	159	33	91	57.2	80	.50
Whole Area	882	766	116	508	66.3	3281	4.28

Table lX shows the average per person for the whole area according to their denominational groupings to be \$4.33. The difference of 5¢ between these two averages is due to one or two discarded cards being left in for the attendance distribution.

Fairview and Grande Prairie show the largest percentages of attendance and at the same time the largest average contribution per person. The Fairview district as far as the sample is concerned is predominantly Catholic, while the Grande Prairie district is predominantly United. Each of the three older settled areas shows a ratio of giving in fair proportion to the area as a whole. The fringe district and Rolla, which might also be regarded as a fringe, because religious activity there is of very recent growth, show a decided falling-off from the average. Rolla approximates the average and shows that it is well on the way, and is beginning to assume some measure of responsibility. The Fringe is wholly dependent upon outside aid. It is significant that at such an early stage in its development it shows such interest as it does. Taking the five districts together, it shows that the work of the churches is fairly evenly divided and that the response from each district is quite uniform. The high average contribution is to be expected in the Fairview District. Wherever the Catholic Church is well organized that phenomena is present. The average for the Protestant groups is significant when it is borne in mind that contributions are voluntary.

The Relation between the amount spent on Social Activities and that spent on the Church.

Two items of expenditure have here been compared with givings to the church, namely, the amount spent on theatre going and that spent on social activities, such as clubs, recreational and play activities and so forth. It was thought

that this comparison might show the place of the church in the mind of these groups, in as far as the money measure can be taken as a reliable index. The same income groups are used as in Table VIII. the relation of cash income to church contribution.

Table XII. Amounts spent on Theatre, Social Participation and the Church in terms of family units.

Income Groups	No.	Grand Total	Theatre	Social Particip.	Total for Theatre, & Soc.P.	Churches	%
Less than \$1000	87	\$813	\$141	\$456	\$597	\$216	36
1000-1999	80	2929	457	1922	2379	550	23
2000-2999	48	1945	331	1122	1453	492	34
3000-3999	40	2130	512	1026	1538	592	38
4000-4999	24	1518	312	742	1054	464	44
Over 5000	34	3282	640	2050	2690	592	22
Totals	313	12617	2393	7318	9711	2906	
Averages		\$40.27	\$7.64	\$23.38	\$30.70	\$9.28	

This distribution shows that only 23% of the total spent on those three items went to the church. The theatre and the church were active competitors at all times and in the highest income group the theatre won out. In only three cases out of 313 families was it found that the church alone received support. In many instances, the church received nothing at all. Earlier tables show the percentages contributing to the church out of these various income groups. In all 179 families contribute to the church, but it is safe to say that 95% of the total supported either the theatre or the other social activities or

both. In some cases the theatre was omitted, in others social participation, but invariably if either had to go it was the church. This may not be a fair criterion by which to judge the church interest in the area, but it sure is an index of the attitudes of the people towards these things as expressed through the sum spent on each. The amount spent on each of these also determines the attendance rate. The church service can be participated in without any admission fee, but the theatre and other activities charge admission fees. By the amount spent, one can judge that the attendance interest runs high. In the last analysis it can be said that these facts point away from the church and towards these social activities. Because of this unequal distribution of income in this way, the church has to be carried by the outside, until it comes of age and the area becomes densely populated enough to take over the financial interests and satisfy them. These other institutions of the area are not subsidized by the outside. They meet an immediate response and are financially successful from the start. But the church remains a mission for a long time and in many cases for all the time.

Summary:

Up to this point we have been dealing with facts collected during the summer of 1930, by the Canadian Pioneer Problems Committee. We have attempted to gather together these facts and to classify them in a way that would present a picture of religious organization in the area that would be true and significant. That there were inadequacies in the data goes without saying. Still, the sample follows pretty closely the religious distribution as revealed by the Census. In analyzing the sample, I have wondered whether the preponderance of United over the other groups is warrantable. It may be that it was more difficult to secure data from some of the other groups, hence the reason for the scanty figures. From the sample, however, and from the Census Reports that have been available, it looks as if the United Church stands in that proportion to the other groups. Barring that possibility, the sample gives a fairly comprehensive picture of the trend of religious organization in the area., and from it one can predict the direction of the future growth and development of religious organization in the area.

In the following pages, a short history and statistical analysis where available, will be given of the United Church, The Roman Catholic Church, The Church of England, the Presbyterian, and a short description of two or three other groups of which we have a little information. Some of the information which will be given was gathered from the area in 1930. Most of it will be taken from Annual Reports of the different denominations, and some has been gathered through personal interviews with persons who have worked

in the areas as missionaries.

The United Church of Canada.

The United Church of Canada is the result of an organic union between the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches in Canada. This group is without doubt the largest single religious group in the Peace River Area. For this group we have fairly complete statistical data, which we will present in very simple form. The first thing we will do is to present a table showing the points at which the United Church is working in the area. It will only be possible to present the name of the centre. The different points on the charge will have to be omitted. A figure in brackets will indicate the number of points served. It is hoped at a later date to have a map showing the religious distribution in the area. The work of the United Church in the area is divided into two Presbyteries, namely the Grand Prairie and Peace River Presbyteries. The one table will be used for both presbyteries.

Table 1. Membership and attendance, according to pastoral charges, in relation to the total population served.

Grande Prairie Presbytery.

<u>Pastoral Charge</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Total Persons</u>	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Average preaching vices pr. Mo.</u>	<u>Average Ser- attend.</u>
Beave Lodge(4)	87	430	39	2.4	30
Blueberry(2)	35	150			
Clairmont(4)	104	511	41		
Fort St. John(4)	39	142			
Grande Prairie(1)	100	470	116	8	100
Hythe(5)	105	436	6	4	35
Pouce Coupe(5)	65	320			
Rolla (4)	93	377	15	2.4	28
Sexsmith(6)	100	320	67	2.4	25
Spirit River(4)	71	303	53		
Sunset Prairie(4)	37	180			
Wanham (3)	45	185	10		
Wembley(5)	80	290	81		40
River Top- a new field					

Peace River Presbytery.

Berwyn(6)	111	485	22	2	18
Clear Hills(2)	23	100			
Fairview(8)	148	576	111	2.3	22
Fort Vermillion (4)	20	100	8		
Grimshaw (3)	59	176	12	2.	18
High Prairie(2)	80	250	7		
Hines Creek(4)	33	148		2	12
Kinuso(7)	115	459			
McLennan(3)	58	255	8		
Nampa (3)	42	134	15		

<u>P. C.</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Per.</u>	<u>Mem.</u>	<u>Ser. per mo.</u>	<u>Av. Attend.</u>
Notikewin (2)	44	153		2.6	20
Peace River (6)	113	565	64		
Whitelaw (6)	146	469	9	2	20
Rio Grande	37			1	150
Totals (100)	1879.	7509	684		
Division 16	1737	7020	669		

The above table is compiled from two sets of data. The number of preaching services and attendance are taken from schedules gathered by the Committee in summer of 1930. The remainder is taken from the Year Book of the United Church. From the Year Book I have listed all the fields that were actually worked up to and including May 1930. Some of these charges are outside Division 16, and consequently not a part of the Canadian Pioneer Problems Committee Project. The following pastoral charges are outside Division 16,- High Prairie, Kinuso and McLennan. I shall first give the totals as given in the Year Book, then I shall make deductions for the three named. The total number of United Church families in the area, including Fort Vermillion is 1626. The total number of persons is 6535. Of this group barely more than 10 per cent are members. Many of the areas have no membership at all. The church reaches something over 100 different points within the area. Rio Grande is a new charge recently opened. It was reported on by the C.P.P.C. The Church reports have no mention of it. This distribution shows as far as the United Church is concerned,

that it is attempting to place religious services within easy reach of every family group. The attendance figures are too few to be of any real value at all. A fair index to attendance can be had by taking the percentages for the sample as applied to membership and adherents and applying them to the membership and adherent figures in the above sample. Even this would only give the average total attendance within groups. One would need to know the number of services held to be at all in position to reckon attendance interest. I think the attendance interest has been shown quite clearly by the sample. And what will be shown in this and the following tables will corroborate to a large extent the findings of the sample. The only two measures that can be applied to the church from these reports are the membership ratios and the per member contributions.

Church Property.

The value of the church property is given for each charge and shows total value for the whole area. We had hoped that statistics were available for the other religious groups, so that comparisons could be made between the relative values of the church property. As this is not the case, one can only present the amount of property with its values and leave it to the reader to decide in what ratio it stands to similar areas and to more settled ones.. In all these tables it is necessary to bear in mind the youth of the area. One is also confronted with the fact that this church property is not an index to the religious interest of the area. It would be

interesting indeed to know just what proportion of the church property was actually contributed by the area. My guess is that it would represent a very small percentage. The church buildings are almost invariably built with outside capital. Sometimes the area itself contributes towards the building fund and quite often the lot is donated, but the burden of building is assumed by outside capital. In some places a church plant is furnished the community, without any community help whatever. The Church at Notikewin was built in this way. It was felt that this was going to be the centre of a rapidly growing area, and it would indeed be a good investment to place a church fully equipped right on the spot. This was done and the results seem to justify the venture.

In Table 11. only those Pastoral Charges will be dealt with which have church property. Any charge outside the specific area under study will also be omitted.

Table 11. Church Property - churches, manses, investments, etc.

<u>Pastoral Charge</u>	<u>Value of Church</u>	<u>Value of Manse</u>	<u>Investments</u>	<u>Debt</u>	<u>Insurance</u>
Beaver Lodge	\$5775	\$ 2100		\$2500	\$ 6000
Clairmount	2500	700			2600
Grande Prairie	11325	2135	100	5304	12180
Hythe	4000	2100		3000	1500
Rolla	2800	680		450	2100
Sexsmith	5800	1940		1900	6800
Spirit River	6150	1600	3500		2200
Wanham		220			
Wembley	5000	2250		200	3175
Rio Grande	6000			3000	
Berwyn	4900	1750		700	4500
Fairview	6000	2550	75	4200	5000
Grimshaw	3000	100		685	
Peace River	2250	2750	150	150	3000
Whitelaw	950	575		100	1120
Notikewin	6000				
Totals	\$67050	\$20450	\$3825	\$22189	\$46175

This table is made up from the Annual Report of 1930 and supplemented by the later report of the C.P.P.C. A few minor additions have been made, particularly in reference to new church buildings that were not valued in the Minutes of Presbytery. It is assumed that the value of church property given in each charge includes the out-stations as well as the centre. Church value, includes building contents and site. Value of Parsonage includes the building, the site and the furniture. There are two other charges in the Peace River Presbytery not included in the totals, that have church property, namely High Prairie and McLennan. These two are outside the area under study. We have no other property statistics with which to make a comparison and therefore cannot say whether this represents a fair average for the area or not. It does, however, appear that a property value approximating \$100,000 is a creditable showing for a new area. On this total property value there is a debt of only \$22,189. This does not represent the religious interest of the area, rather it represents the interest of the outgroup, and also their confidence in the future development of the area. This does not mean that the area itself has not contributed towards the building funds. It has, but not in proportion sufficiently large to warrant us using it as a measure of religious interest. One might add, however, that the fact that they contribute at all is indicative of some interest in the religious development in the area. A better index of the religious interest, in as far as the money measure can be used, is the amounts contributed within the area to the various religious organizations. This will be presented in two tables which are to follow.

Church Income.

The income of the churches in the area for 1930 according to the Annual Report was \$26,427 for all purposes. This amount was actually raised by the people themselves. This represents a per capita giving of \$3.76, and a per membership giving \$39.50. The per capita giving compares quite favorably with the sample for the whole area. The per capita for the whole area, according to the sample, was \$4.28. The per capita givings for the United Church group from 13 years old and up was \$6.15. The average of \$3.76 is obtained by dividing the total number of persons into the total amount contributed. So that if it were possible to eliminate all under 13 years in the church reports, the final average would approximate quite closely the sample. The total income of the area including Home Mission grants was \$38105. Of this amount the area itself raised 69%. It was helped to the extent of 31%, or \$11,778, of the total. About \$4000 of this total was spent on student supply during the vacation period, the remainder was given to nine churches, which received an average of little over \$800. Table 111. presents the financial situation of the area in its entirety.

Table 111. Income from the Area for religious purposes, and amount of subsidy.

<u>Pastoral Charge</u>	<u>Local</u> <u>Purposes</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Md.M Fund</u> <u>& Conference</u>	<u>Subsidy for</u> <u>Salary</u>
Beaver Lodge	\$ 3267	\$ 600	\$ 124	\$ 1300
Grande Prairie	2495	1701	324	
Hythe	300	147	5	700
Rolla	506	600	15	1000
Sexsmith	1280	1000	130	825
Spirit River	1157	1200	209	625
Wembley	1054	1325	254	500
Berwyn	1340	486	70	1300
Fairview	1655	800	74	1100
Peace River	1200	625	165	1200
Whitelaw	54	80		386
Grimshaw		159	10	300
Sunset Prairie		30		300
Wanham		68	15	300
Pouce Coupe		200		300
Fort St. John			20	1300
Clairmount	271	390	71	650
Blueberry		30		300
Clear Hills		11		336
Hines Creek		25		391
Notikewin		15		350
Nampa	17	103		315
Totals	14596	9595	1486	11778
Grand Total for the area - \$26427				
Amount of Subsidy -		\$11778		

There are 22 pastoral charges listed. Of this number 12 up to and including 1930 were student supply fields. These fields are financed entirely by the Home Mission Board. The total remuneration for the supply period is \$300. Any money raised on the charge during this period is to be forwarded to the Mission Board, and credited to the church in the area. There is only one church in the whole area that is self-supporting. Grande Prairie Church paid in 1930 \$1701 towards ministerial support, which was \$99 below the minimum salary. All other charges in the area are subsidized. But, although each charge receives money from the Mission Board, each in turn sends money for the Maintenance and Extension Fund of the Church. During 1930 the sum of \$1486 was contributed by the area to this Fund. Four charges in the area gave to Hospital upkeep. Grande Prairie led with \$750. Peace River, Fairview and Berwyn each contributed \$20, \$15, and \$10 respectively. This showing on the part of a new area is very creditable. It demonstrates beyond any question, I think, that organized Protestant religion does not exist here, because of pressure and help from outside sources. It exists it is true by the aid received from these outside sources, but this aid is only a temporary phase of the religious organization during the critical period of infancy and adolescence, maybe only during infancy. This record will stand comparison with old and well-organized rural areas.

The Sunday Schools and Social Religious Organizations.

In the area we find that there are 35 Sunday Schools, 24 Ladies' Aid Societies, 24 Young Peoples' Societies, and 7

Woman's Missionary Societies. With the exception of Fort St. John, there is a Sunday School in every pastoral charge in the area, and in many of the subsidiary points. The Ladies' Aid Societies are scattered quite evenly throughout the area. The only places in which there is no society are summer stations served by student supply. The Young Peoples' Societies are to be found in some of the more highly organized charges, although there is one reported at Sunset Prairie. But ordinarily these are found in the more settled areas. The Women's Missionary Society is only found in the well-organized charges. It is about the last organization to come in. The seven societies found in the area are divided up between Beaver Lodge, Clairmont and Grande Prairie, each with 3, 2, and 2 respectively.

Table IV. The Sunday Schools, Ladies Aid Societies and Young Peoples' Organizations.

Pastoral Charge	Sunday Schools			Ladies' Aids			Y. P. S.		
	No.	Mem'ship	Income	No.	Mem'ship	In- come	No.	Mem.	In.
Beaver Lodge	3	69	\$83	3	50	\$448	-	-	\$-
Blueberry	1	12							
Clairmont	2	131	132	3	53	710	1	15	12
Grand Prairie	1	222	283	1	54	639	5	93	76
Hythe	3	124	113	1	25	220			
Pouce Coupe	4	50							
Rolla	3	131	137	1	19	358			
Sexsmith	1	57	51	1	20	335	2	20	70
Spirit River	2	105	140	3	40	962	2	20	
Sunset Prairie	1	7					1	20	
Wembley	3	131	155	3	40	700	3	36	42
Berwyn	2	35	38	2	22	374	5	35	100
Clear Hills	1	20							
Fairview	1	72	72	1	22	585	3	27	25
Grimshaw	1	32	--	1	14				
Nampa	1	18		1	16	17			
Peace River	3	87	152	2	28	487			
Whitelaw	2	43	20	1	9	34	2	28	

	<u>Sunday Schools</u>			<u>Ladies' Aids</u>			<u>Y. P. S.</u>		
	No.	Mem'- ship	Income	No.	Mem'ship	Income	No.	Memb'	Inco.
Totals	35	1346	1376	24	412	5869	24	294	325
Average per Group			\$39.			\$245			14
Average per member			\$1			\$ 14			\$1.10

The Sunday School is one of the most important organizations in the area. In many places it carries on a good share of the program of church work. In most cases it is open every Sunday, even in churches that do not have a weekly service. And even in places where there are no churches, or school buildings, it is held in the home of some interested person. The Sunday School organization of the area has progressed much more rapidly than the actual churching of the area. In fact it is through the Sunday School in many instances that the church gets into the area. The Sunday School enrollment represents more than one-fifth of the total church population and there are many schools that are yet in the process of organization.

The Ladies' Aid plays a very important part in the life of the church. Its function is more social and economic than religious. It raises the money to pay off the debt, to furnish the manse, to redecorate the church and to do the other things that are needed. It meets monthly or bi-monthly and works in the interest of the church of which it is a part. It puts on community socials, bazaars and so forth, and in this way finances its program.

The Young People's Organizations are also more social than religious. They are the group who puts on plays, recitals,

illustrated lectures, etc. Part of the income from these forms of entertainment goes to the church, the other part is kept for the use of the society. The aim of the Society is to furnish a rallying centre for the youth of the community and to keep them interested in the church. In most Young People's Societies, there is small place in the program for strictly religious activity. The major part of the program is given over to social activities, for only in this way, and in many cases, not even then, can the interest be enlisted.

The Women's Missionary Societies are groups given over to the study of missions, and the money raised by the group is given specifically to this work. This is less of a social activity group, although the social aspect of the program is a determining fact in enlisting interest in the total program of the group. No table was made for this group, as they were only found in three charges. In the seven societies there are a total of 103 members and they raised in 1930 \$306. which was given to the work of the parent organization outside the area. These groups are definitely committed to work over and above what is done for the area itself. They do not contribute anything to the local church budget. The members of these groups are without doubt members of the Ladies' Aid Societies at the same time, so that through this society they contribute their share towards the local work.

The Leaders of the Church.

Up to this time nothing has been said concerning the leaders of the church, still it only requires a casual glance at the statistical analysis to see that they are one of the important

elements in the situation. The leadership of the church is of two kinds, lay and clerical. The lay leaders are those who sit upon church boards, serve on Sunday School staffs, and officer other activities of the church. The church official boards are, of course, the most important of these groups, because they determine the policies of the church. These official boards are dominated by the employer and mercantile and to some extent the professional groups of the village. The officers of the Sunday Schools and other officials are also in the majority of cases chosen from these groups within the community.

~~But~~ But important and powerful as the governing bodies of the individual churches are, it is the minister who is looked upon as the leader of his people and who determines in a large measure the program of his church.

Within the area studied there was an average of one minister including summer supply, to every four points. The average is much less than this if student supply is omitted. For out of 24 pastoral charges in the two presbyteries, 12 of them are student supply. In the area under study 11 out of the 24 are student supply fields. These students who go to these fields in the summer time, are in training for the ministry in the different theological colleges throughout Canada and this summer work is really a part of their training, for two summers doing mission work counts as a year's experience, which is the minimum requirement of every student before he can receive ordination, even though he has met the college requirements. The unfortunate thing about this source of supply is that many of them have had

no previous experience. Consequently, their very best is but awkward attempts at imitation, which result in embarrassing situations for the community served and painful experiences for the student. On the whole, the work of the student has been quite acceptable and productive of permanent results. It is to be understood that they are only pioneering in the work, or else they are working in areas whose population has been depleted by migratory movements toward the larger centres, and cannot any longer retain the services of a trained minister. The ideal of the church is a trained ministry. Toward this end it has two courses of study. First, a four years mixed Arts and Theology, after Matriculation. Secondly, the B. A. Degree, followed by three years in Theology leading to the B. D. Degree. No person becomes a minister of the United Church of Canada unless he has at least completed the shorter course. The Peace River area will be manned by ordained trained men just as soon as the church population warrants it, and the Home Mission Board can support it. At the present time there are in the two Presbyteries of the area fifteen ordained ministers. Leaving out McLennan and High Prairie, there are thirteen ordained ministers in the area. Three of these, namely Nelson T. Chapple of Grand Prairie, W. H. Moss of Hythe, H. E. Parker of Notikewin, have their M. A., B. D., Degrees. Three, S. R. Hunt, of Beaver Lodge, A. L. Carr of Wembley, and Joseph E. Kirk of Fairview, have their B. A., B. D. Degrees. Three, J. G. McNeill, of Clairmont, A. J. Mitchell of Spirit River, G. S. Cassmore of Whitelaw, have their B. A. And John Selkirk of Peace River, L. A. Thompson of Berwyn, Robert Simons of Sexsmith, and E. E. Rogers of Rolla,

all have their college testamur as associates in divinity. According to the schedules brought back from the area, there is an ordained minister at Hines Creek, and one at Grimshaw, both of whom have completed the four years' course. These appointments have have been made since June 1930.

I question whether there is any other rural area in the whole church that has such a quota of University trained men. Of course, someone might raise the question as to whether these men are rendering effective leadership or not. They may be University graduates and be out of harmony with their surroundings. As in all areas, sometimes it happens, that a minister's stand on some social issue prejudices his position in the community. Such was the case in one of the charges in this area. The minister's attitude on the prohibition issue cost him his charge, and he was removed to some other area. This independence of thought is not a bad thing, rather it is good, if properly tempered with good judgment and a comprehensive knowledge of the whole realm of facts concerning the issue at stake. On the whole, the leadership in the area is good. The United Church has been happy in its choice of men. They seem to know the problems of a new and rapidly growing area, and they are not seeking to bring about any cataclysmic changes, but are attempting to give intelligent direction to, and to bring under efficient control, the forces that are contributing towards the area's growth and development. The problem in the Peace River area is not one of training and education alone. It is the problem of knowing the area, and the processes that are at work there. In other words, it is the problem of knowing what the environment

and cultural factors are, which are determining the sum total organization of the area. This knowledge can only be had through an exhaustive study of these social problems and forces supplemented by experience. No "hit or miss" methods will be effective. The student of social phenomena in all its varied aspects will render efficient service in any such area as this.

The Church of England.

The Church of England in Canada is an episcopate divided into four ecclesiastical provinces, each with its own metropolitan. One of the presiding metropolitans is also Primate of the whole Canadian church. Each ecclesiastical province is divided into a number of dioceses each with its own Bishop. The Peace River area which we are studying, is a part of the Diocese of Athabasca, which is a part of the ecclesiastical province of Rupert's Land. The Diocese of Athabasca includes ^{it} within/the whole of the Peace River country and the extreme northern part of Saskatchewan.

The Year Book of the Church of England in Canada does not give any detailed statistics of the work of the church and further I was unable to secure a report for the Diocese of Athabasca, consequently, I am unable to present anything like a complete picture of the work of the church in the area.

The Year Book, or Annual Report, does give a summary of the work at end of each report for each diocese. Many of the points in the Athabasca Diocese are not pertinent to our study. It might, however, be useful from a comparative standpoint to present these facts. At this point, it is necessary to

mention that the Peace River block belongs in the Caledonia diocese of British Columbia. Only one centre in which we are interested is mentioned, namely, Pouce Coupe. The total statistics for the whole of the diocese of Athabasca are:

Congregations	Priests	Deacons	S. S.	Churches	Parsonages
60	10	3	20	33	15

Finances.

<u>RECEIPTS</u>		<u>EXPENDITURES</u>		
All Purposes	Subsidy	Salary	Parish Upkeep	Church Property
3500	16,000	14,500	2900	90,000

Of the 60 congregations, 39 are included in our study. They are divided up into districts or parishes, each with a centre. In order to present a picture of the area covered, the parish or mission centre is listed with the different congregations.

Parish Centre.

1. Beaver Lodge
Mission
2. Grand Prairie
3. Wembley
4. Peace River

Congregations of the Parish.

St. Marks, Halcourt, Beaver Lodge, Hythe, Morrisons Corner, Red Willow.

Christ Church, Sexsmith, Tepee Creek Flying Shot, Bredin, De Bolt.

St. Andrews, Lake Saskatoon, Buffalo Lakes, Richmond Hill.

East Peace River, Judah, Nampa, McLennan, Donnelly.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 5. Spirit River | Spirit River, Belloy. |
| 6. West Peace River
(Eastern District) | Griffin Creek, Berwyn,
Grimshaw, Brownvale, Last
Lakes. |
| 7. West Peace River
(Western District) | Fairview, Waterhole, Van
Rena, Dunvegan, Whitelaw,
Englewood, Friedenstal,
Golden Meadow, Erin Lodge. |
| 8. Pouce Coupe | Fort St. John, Hudson
Hope, Dawson Creek, Rolla
Kilkerran, North Swan Lake,
South Swan Lake, East Pouce
Coupe, Landry, Riverside,
Central, Progress, Sunset
Prairie, Baldonnel, Taylor
Flats, Charlie's Lake,
Indian Creek. |

This list shows the extent of the church's work in the area, and how inadequately manned it is. Eight men are trying to hold this area for the church. Pouce Coupe district alone could find plenty for the eight men to do. Here is quite an important difference between the United Church and the Church of England, and helps to explain the reason why the United Church is fast becoming the church of the area. The United Church at the present time has 25 men in the area for a period

of time each year, 14 resident men, and her territory is not as extensive as this. It is impossible to do real efficient work with such large areas to care for. There is this advantage, however, the minister is in the area all the year round, even though his services to the outlying stations are spasmodic and uncertain. In this way, I think, he renders more efficient services to stable community organization, than the temporary supply who just spends the vacation period. With the church's policy of "churching" these fringe areas are in contact with a more or less distant centre. While it is true that during the winter time some of these points may be cut off from religious service for a long period of time, yet the very fact that there is a parish priest resident in the area tends to the religious solidarity of the area.

There is some student work done in the area, but little compared to the United. There is an organization in the Church of England Church known as "The Fellowship of the West", which finances missionary activities in the area by travelling missionaries. These workers are in the main ordained ministers of the church. Sometimes laymen go to work in conjunction with the cleric. During the summers of 1929 and 1930, Reverends Elton Scott, Geoffrey Quiton and R. K. Naylor were in the area. Mr. Naylor went as far west as Hudson's Hope, the western limit of the Peace River block. With conservative estimate, Mr. Naylor thinks that the Church of England is more strongly represented in the Peace River block than any other single church. He also states, and in this he is in agreement with H. G. Lester, a student Missionary in the area in 1930, that North of Fort St. John is definitely committed to the United Church. Up to 1930

there was no church in the block north of the river. During 1930 the Anglican church made great progress throughout the block under Rural-Dean Proctor. Over fifty children were baptized besides several adults. A new church has been built at Sunset Prairie. At Dawson Creek a church hall has been built and is almost clear of debt, practically the whole of the money having been raised by the Ladies of the congregation. This was built first in the old town, but when the railway came, it was moved with the other buildings to the new town site. An extensive building program is now under way. A church is to be erected at Pouce Coupe during the spring and summer of 1931. Already some funds are in hand. \$750.00 has been promised from England, and \$550. has been raised locally. At Rolla lots have been secured and a like amount promised from England. A church building has been made possible at Fort St. John by financial assistance from England. The most urgent need of the area at the present time is two ordained assistants to divide up the work on this extensive mission field. During the year \$2500. have been raised by the church throughout the block and \$7500 have been received from England. It appears that this church is subsidized by the church in England and not by the Canadian church.

The Sunday School Mission Van.

The Church of England in the Peace River has done something really unique in religious pioneering. The Sunday School Mission Van is a travelling kitchen, parlor, dining room, sleeping room, lecture hall, library and Sunday School literature distributing centre apart from being an effective means of transportation.

Two young ladies are in charge of each van. One is chauffeuress and is responsible for the care of the car, the other is teacher, lecturer and preacher. Services are held, whenever a suitable building is found. The farmsteads are visited, the children are gathered together and given some religious instruction. Sunday School literature is left at each home. The names of all the children are forwarded to the nearest publishing house. All unbaptized children and all ready for confirmation are reported to the nearest minister. The children are kept supplied with literature through the Sunday School Post (S.S.P.). During 1930 over 450 children were enrolled in the S.S.P. in the Peace River Block. These workers do not touch organized villages at all and in rural areas where there is a church working, they purposely avoid any clash. But in unchurched areas they visit every homestead irrespective of creed. This, from the church's standpoint, is the greatest single piece of work done in the area.

Another interesting phase of the work in the area is the relation between ritual and practice. One very notable departure is the presence of a lady preacher. Another is in relation to the Holy Communion. In the Eastern areas and in the established centres of the West, the Holy Communion is strictly a morning service, among the Anglo-Catholics it must be a fast communion. Rev. Elton Scott, who is an Anglo-Catholic, worked in the area in 1929, and found himself only too willing in any garb, at any time, in any place, with the crudest improvised altar, to administer the Holy Communion to any who so desired. The Church must either adapt itself to the changing

social environment, or else it must die. Ritualism is absent in these frontier areas during the early stages of development. As the frontier comes of age, the church grows apace, then ritualism comes into its own. In the early stages an adapted and adaptable ritual is not only essential, but a necessity.

Out of a sample group of 25 churches studied by the C. P.-P. C. in summer of 1930, five were Church of England. The information on these schedules are somewhat fragmentary, but it does show in some degree the pattern of organization of these groups, which is fairly representative of the total pattern. The following table presents the information as per the schedules.

Table 11.

Parish	No. of families	No. of preaching Pts.	Average No. of services per month.	Average attendance per Sunday
Berwyn	100	7	2.3	16.3
Beaverlodge	35	4	3	16.
Pouce Coupe		16	2.7	23.4
Hines Creek		5	2.	20
Fairview	68			
Indians	257	6	13.3	30

Table 111. Church Property and Church Support.

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Value of Church</u>	<u>Value of Manse</u>	<u>Cash Salary</u>	<u>Raised locally</u>	<u>Outside</u>
Berwyn	\$1000	\$800	\$1200	\$800	\$400
Beaver Lodge	1800	1000	1200	300	900
Hythe	1800				
Rio Grande	600				
Pouce Coupe		2200	1500	1500	
Kilcarren	2000				
Sunset Prairie	1500				
Dawson Creek	1000				
Hines Creek					1000
Fairview	2000	1500	1200	400	800

This sample from the standpoint of its distribution over the area is quite representative. It touches the fringe at Hines Creek, the old areas of settlement around Fairview and Berwyn. The newer areas, yet more settled than the fringe, at Beaver Lodge and Pouce Coupe. The church at Hines Creek is very young, and is therefore wholly subsidized. Beaver Lodge is the centre of a large area, but the population in this area is so mixed racially and religiously that the future of the church is not too bright. In Rio Grande and Hythe there is quite a large group of Russians, French and Irish. The religion of these groups would be Catholic. The coming of the railroad disturbed the social equilibrium of this area. Movements of population were towards the railway. This much needed asset also resulted in

increased migration into the area, and an increased interest in the area as a whole. This has been reflected in the church life, for it compelled a reorganization of the whole program of the church.

The church work of which Berwyn is the centre, has suffered by the coming of the Presbyterians into Brownvale. This area has suffered from changing pastorates, consequently it lacks efficient organization. The Fairview work has also been spasmodic, the present priest who has been there but a year is already putting a new vitality into a lagging group. What seems to be the most efficient church district in the area is at Pouce Coupe. Mention has already been made of the work there. As meagre as the sample is, it is sufficient to show some of the major trends which are true of the area as a whole. The attendance interest is low, local support is in its infancy, and the area is heavily subsidized. The picture presents on the whole a sincere and painstaking attempt to reach out to the very fringes of the area, with a religious institution which in spite of indifference and lackadaisical response will occupy first place in the thought, life and expressional activities of the creative persons and groups within the radius of its influence.

Mention has already been made of the work of the Sunday School Van, and the S. S. P. In the sample there are five Sunday Schools with an enrollment of 52, eleven Women's Associations with a total membership of 43, and 7 Guides with an enrollment of 50.

Leadership.

The problem of leadership is not in the quality but in the quantity. These eight men in the area are attempting to do the impossible. Some of them have enviable pioneer records. They are all trained ordained ministers of the church. Some of them are University graduates as well as graduates of the theological seminary. One of the ministers has spent seventeen years in the area. The church has every reason to be proud of her representatives in the area. The need is not for spasmodic visits from travelling missionaries, but a one hundred percent increase in the ordained ministers quota for the area. But as the Church of England is not committed to a missionary program to the same degree as the United Church, the financial support is not forthcoming, even if the ministerial supply were. Consequently the work of the church suffers for want of more leaders, leaders of the type already there, but more of them.

The Presbyterian Church.

Owing to the change brought about by the Act of Union in June 1925, it is necessary to show the relation of this church to the area during its last year of separate existence. The Proceedings of the 51st. General Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Canada on June 3-9, 1925, show that in the Presbytery of the Peace River, there were six aid-receiving charges and six mission fields. Three of these charges do not fall under our study. The charges at that time are as follows:

<u>Pastoral Charge</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Persons</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Amt. raised.</u>
Clairmont (5)	40	125	10	\$ 545
Fort Vermillion (9)	26	150	9	269
Grande Prairie(1)	50	350	50	1500
Peace River (2)	30	160	40	1165
Pouce Coupe (8)	35	275	5	361
Fort St.John(5)	31	100		
Spirit River (5)	61	235	42	1132
Grimshaw - worked with Peace River				
Sexsmith(6)	68	250		690
Totals 41	341	1645	166	5662

This was the situation at the time of Union. These churches and congregations all entered Union. For almost two years, nothing was done by the continuing church to again reopen the area. In 1927 Mr. D. K. Perrie was sent in to "spy out" the land. And on the strength of his report, two mission fields were mapped out, one in Grimshaw and one in Brainard. In the summer of 1928 two students were working there. The result of their work showed that if the church wanted to get a footing in the area, it must send in a full-time ordained man. Mr. Wright, an ordained man, was secured in 1929 and sent in. In the words of Mr. White, Synodical Missionary in the Proceedings of 1930.- "He lost no time in getting over his field and quickly saw his chance of planting the Presbyterian Church in Brownvale, where for a considerable time no religious service of any kind had been held. At his third service fully fifty

were present. He called a meeting at the close of the service, to find out the mind of the people. Twenty seven remained and voted a Presbyterian church in the community and appointed a committee to canvass the district for subscriptions to the building". Mr. Wright remained and they succeeded in securing \$1000 cash, a site, and a promise of voluntary labor. The church building was immediately started and on Jan. 5th., 1930, it was dedicated. Thus after only three months of effort, the Presbyterian Church was planted in the promising village of Brownvale. Part of the cost of the building was met by friends in Edmonton, Calgary and Montreal. This is up to the present the only Presbyterian Church in the Peace River. Attempts have been made S. of the river to locate as many Presbyterian families as possible, and it looks that likely centres for churches are Bear Lake, Brainard and Grande Prairie. Mr. Wright in speaking of the work in Grande Prairie says - "There have been mumbled criticisms and by some we are considered intruders, but we make no apology".

The work of the church in the area has been confined largely to areas already churched. It is true that the growth of the area may furnish ample scope for this new group, but the series of unions that have marked religious institutional life in Canada were directly the result of these frontier situations. The very problem that the frontier attempted to solve by the unification of efforts and resources is being perpetuated by the dissenting group of one of the uniting churches. What effect the presence of this church in the area will have, in which there is already a Presbyterian Church, is difficult to

say. It is quite evident at present that each is quite conscious of the other's presence and at times it is quite overtly manifest. The C.P.P.C. workers found a work starting up at Pouce Coupe, and reaching out along the railroad to Brainard and on to Bear Lake. This worker received for the summer months a total of \$60. and his board. The average collections for the period was \$1.75 per Sunday. No mention is made of this in the report of 1930. One centre only is listed from which the whole area is covered. Grand Prairie is centre from which Bear Lake, Brainard, Brownvale, Notikewin and Little Prairie is served. There are in this whole territory, 115 families, 1 Sunday School with 35 members. There are no church members yet. The amount raised for all purposes was \$2065, an average of \$17.90 per family. No report is made of what was raised for salary. The work was subsidized to the extent of \$600.00.

The Roman Catholic Church.

In the area under study there were in 1921 2,834 Roman Catholics. In the sample there were 202 Catholics. The greater number of Catholics is to be found in the Fairview district and the Fringe around Clear Hills and Battle River. The statistical analysis of the sample which has been presented shows the relation between this group and the other groups of the area. The policy of the church is closely adhered to in the new region. The missionary stage of this group's development is more short-lived than the non-Catholic groups. The international character of the church's organization reaches to the most far flung corner of the church state, and the resources of the church are at the

disposal of the new group. A further characteristic of the church is seen at work in this area, namely compulsory financial support. Each family, or person of age is required to contribute a certain percentage of income to the church budget. And sometimes this is paid in kind. This, coupled with the apparent attachment, makes this group more unified and contributes to the more rapid development of it, than of the Protestant groups. Church records for this group were not accessible. Therefore only meagre statistics are available. The C.P.P.C. obtained some statistical information on three churches, namely, Grand Prairie, Berwyn and Battle River. These three churches have a total membership of 655 and an average attendance of 70 persons per Sunday. The Grand Prairie Church dates its history from 1920. Previously it was the centre of a Catholic Mission to a very wide area. There was a resident father in charge of the whole area. In 1921 the church was built. The Bishop advanced \$5000 and \$1200 was raised locally. There is also here a fine house and garage valued at \$2400. The work at Grande Prairie is very progressive. Father Josse, who is in charge, has been twenty-eight years in the area, twelve of which has been spent with this church. He is assisted by Father Serrand, who is in charge of missions. Secular education as far as the Catholics are concerned is under the parochial system. This church has passed out of the frontier group and is self-supporting. Outside help is always accessible for any extension project. The church at Berwyn shows evidence of unity and solidarity in organization. Father Wagner has been in the area for

seventeen years, ten of which have been spent with this church. This area has still a mission status in spite of a settled pastorate of ten years. This is due in part to the racial types within the area. Within this church there are Irish, German, Czechs, Hungarian, half-breeds, Poles and Ukrainians. The priest has occasionally to speak in three different languages. These racial elements present great difficulties to church organization. One generation is not long enough for these groups to become assimilated. Yet in spite of the difference the work is growing, and the new generation will complete what the present one is working upon.

The Battle River area is part of the Fringe. It has no railway communication, but is connected with Grimshaw by highway. The work here is comparatively new. It has a listed membership of 230, but many of them are not definitely related to the church work. Organization within this group is in its infancy. The only religious activity within the group at the present time is the regular church service. What local contributions there are are given in kind. The work is entirely supported from the outside. A church has been built with outside capital. Father Borsutsky is confronted with the same problem here as Father Wagner in the Berwyn area. Several nationalities are represented within the church group. Consequently there is no common language. The largest single group is German, and the service is conducted in the language of the largest group. The Father is quite anxious that they should have a common language and wishes that it might be English. This area is filling up rapidly, and the largest group at present is Catholic. Not only is the Catholic

church attending to the religious and educational needs of its constituency, it is also providing them with medical services. They already have hospitals in the area and there is another in course of erection at Fort St. John. The trend of organization as far as the Catholic Church is concerned, shows that none of its members will for any length of time be deprived of a church home, educational facilities, nor hospital and nursing services.

Two other groups are increasing in sufficient numbers, that in the future religious organization of the area they will have to be reckoned with, namely, the Lutheran and the Baptist. The Lutheran Church serves the whole settlement of Valhalla and there is quite a Lutheran population growing up in other scattered portions of the area. The Baptist group is increasing much more slowly, but looks as if it will become a permanent unit in the total religious organization of the area. The various sects have their representatives in the area, each contributing its share to the total religious complex of the area and at the same time aggravating the problem of social control.

CHAPTER IV.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The main purpose of this study was not merely to assemble facts about the religious organization of the area, but to measure, as far as possible, the degree of interrelations between the different series of facts, relating to the organization. In what way are environmental factors related to the Church? How and to what extent does economic prosperity affect the Church? What is the effect of large or small membership on the Church? What percentage of the population attends Church? Answers were sought to these and other similar questions.

Environmental factors influencing the Church.

In respect to environmental factors influencing the church, it was found that there is a decided tendency for economic conditions to affect not only the financial aspect of the church's life, but in addition, all the other phases of its life, dependent upon the local support of its members. The study showed the average contribution varied with the wealth of the locality and the different income groups. It also showed what is quite evident, that the presence or absence of a resident minister was dependent upon these factors. This, however, was postulated from the beginning. The area was conceived of as a mission of the parent church and as such the large percentage of support was thus furnished. Many of the

were manned by non-resident, part-time student workers. This is strictly a phenomena of the United Church. The Anglican Church does not make any extensive use of students and the Catholic Church not at all. Recognizing these facts, it still remains that the areas in which church life is progressing is the area of comparative prosperity and it is also the area of the resident minister. The data also shows that there is a saturation point in church giving, that economic factors were relatively unimportant when the group attained a high income level. It showed that increasing prosperity beyond a certain point did not mean increased per capita contributions to the church. There seemed to be a point at which the individual contributions reached a maximum and beyond that point they were unaffected by an increase in wealth. The explanation seemed to lie in the highly stereotyped program of the church which seemed to offer relatively little variation, compared with the variation in wealth. It did not require any larger income to finance its program and consequently, the "dead line" in giving was reached. Thus the question arises whether church leaders should plan to put on a more varied program in the rich regions.

The study also showed density of population to be another environmental factor, that limits church development. The results disclosed a definite tendency for the church as judged by the attendance interest of the people to increase in importance in relation to the increase of the population of the area. In this connection it was also seen that increasing density does not continue indefinitely according to the increase in a church's development, but that this trend too reaches a maximum. Rather the opposite was evident, that the church probably tends to

decline beyond a certain point. In the words of Luther B. Fry, there is an "optimum density" under which the church thrives best.

The racial make up of the population was found also to directly affect the church. Particularly so was this true in relation to two of the Catholic churches studied. The success of these charges was retarded owing to the racial complex of the group, belonging to the church. They had no common language and the priest-in-charge could not speak the language of each group. Services in one of the churches were conducted in three different languages. In the second church, the language of the largest group was used. This meant that probably 50% of all who were a part of that church were deprived of the preaching mission of the church.

The racial make-up of the population also affected the religious distribution in the area. Some sections were predominantly French and Catholic in religion. Another area was Scandinavian and Lutheran in religion, the same was true of the other racial groups, they can be correlated with their different religious interest group.

It has been quite clearly demonstrated, I think, from the study that organized religion is more highly sensitive to changes in the social and economic^{conditions,} than has generally been believed.

The internal factors influencing the Church.

Under this head we shall deal with the various ways of measuring the church. The various measures used were,- the membership measure, the money measure, and the attendance

interest measure. And it was found that the attendance interest measure was the most reliable of all. The actual cash that a member gives to his church is so closely tied up with his economic prosperity, that financial comparison mean little or nothing as indices of religious interest, unless, of course, the churches are situated in equally prosperous areas, and each member has the same opportunity to contribute. It was impossible to determine accurately from the data available but the tendency seemed to be that in the localities and among the income groups which gave the largest donations in money, there was the poorest religious showing when judged by membership or attendance interest ratio. This tendency is important because it means that unless the churches have equally prosperous members, that as between one church and another, there is no ground whatever for the conclusion that differences in the average contribution of members indicate differences in religious interest. The mere fact that on the average a member of one church contributes only \$4. a year and another \$40. tells nothing about the church interest until we know the relative prosperity of both these churches. In the study it was shown that the highest average contribution per member was for the United Church group. This does not mean anything unless we were able to compare the average incomes of the other groups, and even then it is no reliable index to the religious interest of the group. Further in reference to this money measure, the religious organizations of which these denominations are a part, do not set much store by it as an index to the religious interest. Because for long periods of time these churches are subsidized. It was found that only one of the United Church group in the area is self-

supporting. Statistics for the other major groups were not available, but from what information we had, the work of these groups was supported wholly or in part by the outside group. So that these administrative boards feel that it is due to social and economic conditions that the area is not self-supporting, and consider^{it} a worth-while investment to carry the area until such time as it can become self-supporting.

The membership ratio is a far better standard ordinarily by which to judge the religious interest. But if we accept this as a standard of measurement, for the area, then the religious interest is at very low ebb. Only a small fraction of the total Protestant population are members of a church, but over 90% claim some religious affiliation, that is, they are on the constituency roll of the church.

Nevertheless the membership ratio was not as satisfactory as the attendance interest ratio, which is the average time contribution of the inhabitants to the church. This is only natural, since the amount of time people devote to an organization is obviously more significant of their interest in that organization, than is the mere fact of their being members of it. This is particularly true of the church, since in some areas social pressure is so strong that it predisposes a person to join the church, while in other localities the reverse is true.

The attendance interest ratio for the area, considering the minimum of opportunity that is afforded large numbers to attend, and the distance factor, is somewhat high. The partially organized condition of the most of the area and the wholly unorganized

condition of other parts must be taken into consideration in evaluating the attendance interest ratio. In the groups studied it was found that the attendance interest ratio compared very favorably with the older settled areas of Canada and the United States.

The Function and Policy of the Church.

The church is a social institution. As such it must be the organization of the people whom it serves. Rural institutions must be permeated with the rural idea of things, and adapted to work in harmony with the mechanisms of the rural system, its mode of life, its customs and its ideals. the rural church has its definite sphere of activity. It cannot hope to become, and indeed should not become, the centre of every community activity. To the church are surrendered all matters pertaining to the moral, religious and spiritual life of the community. The rural church becomes therefore a community centre for these social activities that involve any of these phases of life. Professor Butterfield puts the function of the country church thus -

"The function of the country church is to create, to maintain, and to enlarge both individual and community ideals, under the inspiration and guidance of christian motives and teaching, and to help rural people to incarnate these ideals in personal and family life, in industrial effort, in political development, and in social relationships". 1.

The church in the Peace River area is attempting, to put it in the strictly theological sense, to bring men to God, and at the same time is leading in the task of kingdom building.

1. Vogt Paul. The Country Church and Community P. 135.

Each denominational group is contributing in its own way to this task. The outward liturgical forms and practices are different, but the ultimate purpose is the same.

The study has shown that each church was compelled to adapt itself to the new environment. A new policy had to be worked out to fit the rapidly changing area. Traditional customs and practices were departed from and the church program made to conform to the time, place and needs of the area. It was also shown that the frontier church is the one that can most readily adapt itself. This explains the reason why the United Church is by far the outstanding church in the area at the present time. But this is not the whole story. The extension program of the United Church is supported quite liberally by the more wealthy areas, and further, the fact that it does not depend upon a trained ordained ministry for pioneering in these areas. It uses the student as a connecting link between the area and the church outside. Through the student the area in many instances is brought under a trained leadership.

It was thought at the beginning of the study that the church was the social centre for the area. This is not the case. Long before the arrival of the church the social life of the community is well organized. This must not be taken to mean that the church stands aloof from these things. Not at all,- it is rather by active participation in many of these things that it reaches the masses. But primarily the church in the area is strictly a religious centre.

Leadership.

Earlier studies that have been made of rural churches, have always deplored the lack of efficient leadership. Country ministers have not been properly trained, and some have had no training at all. Most of these studies have been made of the rural ministry of the United States. The same to a very large extent is true today. The fault may not be with the minister, it may be with the college or seminary. The average seminary professor knows little about the country at first hand. It is very true that rural communities need a special type of leadership.

Whatever be the criticism of these other areas, the churches in the Peace River have no occasion to deplore the inefficiency of their leaders. From the standpoint of academic training, they can stand comparison with any group of ministers in any rural area of the church. Without exception, every resident man has fulfilled the minimum requirements of the church. Many of them hold University and Seminary degrees. But this, after all, does not say that they^{are}/fitted for this type of church work. But judging from the results, there are no "misfits" at present in the area. It is true, however, that a minister who is to work in one of these areas must get the point of view of rural life. He must be rural-minded. This does not mean that he must use the language of the uneducated lumberman or farmer. It does mean that he should know enough of Canadian life to be able to distinguish between its urban and rural factors, tendencies and ideals. It does not mean either that one must be born in the country to be a rural minister, although this may

be an advantage. The qualities of personal leadership, whatever the habitat, mean more in the equipment of the minister than any accident of boyhood surroundings. The man who can not orient himself in rural life would not be worth while as a country minister. It happens that at the present time, some of the ministers in the area were city born.

The churches have been exceedingly fortunate in their choice of leaders. The astounding progress that has been made in the religious organization of the area, can be attributed in large measure to this efficient leadership. The church in this area is not suffering from inefficient leaders, but from too few of them. Many more ministers are needed, and not only ministers, but intelligent lay-workers and teachers who are specially trained for rural service. Given an adequate leadership, the churches of the area will gradually become self-supporting and will in turn help other needy areas to escape from a situation in which it was itself for a long time enthralled

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