BEYOND COMMON SENSE: Ideal Love in Three Novels of Lily Dougall

by

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ABSTRACT

Lily Dougall has received next to no critical attention in contemporary scholarship, probably as a result of her gender and place in a here-to largely neglected nineteenth-century Canadian literature. This thesis contextualizes Dougall's work historically and intellectually in chapter one, and examines three of her novels in order to highlight the theme of ideal love and its relationship to faith.

Chapter one argues that popular religious sentiments of the day, evinced by the Social Gospel movement, gave Dougall a forum for her message of religious reform, and clarifies Dougall's philosophy and theology through an examination of her central non-fiction work, *Pro Christo et Ecclesia* (1900). The belief that women could be guardians of morality provided the means for her literary endeavours. Chapter one explores some of the feminine and feminist aspects of her work as writer.

Chapter two discusses the core concepts of ideal love and faith in Dougall's fifth novel, *A Question of Faith* (1895), and her familiar pitting of "common sense" characters against those exhibiting these ideal characteristics. It demonstrates that Dougall generally depicts female rather than male characters as agents of reform, and as predisposed to intimate friendships, an important concept in Dougall's model.

Chapter three examines Dougall's fourth novel, *The Mermaid* (1895), chronicling the progression of the protagonist from a less to a more idealistic frame of mind, thereby symbolizing the journey Dougall would like to see the

whole church make. Marriage is presented as a model for the ideal love Dougall believes God wants from humanity.

Chapter four considers Dougall's ninth novel, *The Earthly Purgatory* (1905). As it was in *A Question of Faith*, the love between family members is portrayed as another of the most perfect forms of love. Reason and "common sense" are examined as masculine attributes, and consequently antithetical to the female sensibility engendering the Christ life.

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Dedication

to mom and dad

with love,

Chapter I

Introduction

> *I do not believe that it belongs to the novel to teach theology; but I do believe that religious sentiments and opinions are a legitimate subject of its art, and that perhaps its highest function is to promote understanding by bringing into contact minds that habitually misinterpret one another.*
>
> *Lily Dougall*
> *Preface, The Zeit Geist (1895)*

Lily Dougall's novels are a forum for the working out of her theological position, inextricably linked to her social position, which sees the behaviour of Jesus as the epitome and example of how people should treat each other. The preceding quote succinctly encapsulates Dougall's basic philosophy - that minds habitually misinterpret one another - and her novels introduce fictional scenarios designed to explore different aspects of and reasons for the presence of these misinterpretations. These topics or, more broadly speaking, the general issue of what it means to be a Christian in terms of one's actions, provide the main focus for Dougall's entire fictional and non-fictional writing career spanning 35 years. What Lily Dougall does not say explicitly until her sixth novel, *The Zeit Geist,* is implicitly evident from her first short story, "Hath Not A Jew Eyes" published six years earlier, whose Shakespearean allusion begs the issue of the equality of all humans and the subsequent need for justice and understanding of each other, demanding, in short, love.

To create a context for the form and content of Dougall's work, this thesis will explore three of her novels: *The Mermaid* (1895), *A Question of Faith* (1895), and *The Earthly Purgatory* (1905), examining common themes across

the three texts. The state of religious belief and philosophical thought in late-Victorian Canada and the popular views of art at the time inform both Dougall's message, love, and medium, the novel. In the balance of chapter one, I will look briefly at the intellectual, social and religious context in which she wrote. This historical contextualization will include a look at the social and spiritual reforms being undertaken at the time, as well as an examination of the roles women played in these reforms and what limitations were placed on them.

Lily Dougall was born on April 16, 1858 in Montreal.[1] Her father a Scottish immigrant and her mother the daughter of a Scottish immigrant, Dougall herself went to Scotland at the age of twenty-two. There she studied at the University of Edinburgh and St. Andrew's University, graduating from the latter in 1887 with an LLA (Lady Licentiate in Arts, at that time the equivalent of an M.A. for women). Dougall divided her time between Canada and Great Britain from 1883 to 1900, settling permanently at that time in England (but continuing to make visits to Canada) until her death in 1923.

Dougall's focus on her own education, and the general academic and philosophical approach she took to her theology and writing affirm A.B. McKillop's discussion of the Scottish intellectual and cultural effects on nineteenth-century Canada, and the general importance the Scots placed on education, especially philosophy. He cites the Scots' influence on higher education as "even more profound" than their position as the "dominant element in the Canadian business elite" (24). Before the twentieth century, most of the university professors, principals, theologians and other academic

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[1] Lorraine McMullen's article entitled "Lily Dougall's vision of Canada" in *A Mazing Space* - for which bibliographic information is available in the *Works Cited* section of this paper - is the source of all biographical information on Dougall contained in this chapter.

elite in Canada were Scottish born or educated, or both. Academically, philosophy was universally valued by the Scots above all else, and they were responsible for the dominant early- to mid-nineteenth-century "Common Sense" philosophy popular in North America. While this approach was discarded later in the century, its central tenet that humans are moral creatures remained to influence succeeding philosophies, including idealism, which dominated at the end of the century. Dougall frequently attacks the "common sense" approach to morality; all of the novels examined here broach the negative consequences of this belief.

With such a history of education and philosophy behind her heritage, the importance Dougall placed on her own education, and the philosophical approach she takes in writing, should not be surprising. Dougall wanted to be a writer; "for her, writing was an intellectual pursuit, its preparation education" (McMullen 138). Her university training in the 1880s, unusual at that time for a woman, her ultimate abandonment of novels for philosophical and theological non-fiction, and her position as a facilitator of debate by the nineteen-teens, when "her home became a center for discussion of philosophical and religious issues [ultimately culminating in] . . . four collections of essays, to which she contributed" (McMullen 138) put her in an elite group of female intellectuals for her time.

In addition to her ten novels, collection of short stories, and poems, Dougall published eight non-fictional works between 1900 and 1924. The first and most famous of those, *Pro Christo et Ecclesia* (1900), had a significant effect on the religious world[2] and it is the best summary of her theology and

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[2]For quotations from some reviews of this book and a general discussion of Dougall's religious view, see Lorraine McMullen's "Lily Dougall: The religious vision of a Canadian novelist." *Studies in Religion.* 1987, 16:1, p79-90.

philosophy. In *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*, Dougall sets out her criticism of the Christian church of her time, which she finds riddled with the same problems that plagued the Jewish faith two thousand years earlier. Dougall claims that the nineteenth-century Christian church exhibits the same negative characteristics against which Jesus taught, having completely lost touch with the fundamentals by which it claims to live. Dougall outlines her understanding of what amounts to a perennial struggle in the church. She claims that those who killed Jesus were the most overtly "religious" people in Jewish society - the most zealous adherents to the law - and that the tragedy continues, as the most "religious" people in Christian society re-crucify Jesus by interpreting God through selfish, rather than selfless, opinions and actions. Dougall outlines three elements in this on-going drama (though she concentrates on the last two): Sadduceeism, Pharisaism, and the Christ-life.

The Pharisees were elitists. "The name `Pharisees' means `the separated ones,' a title apparently derived either from their separation from everything considered religiously unclean or from their separation from other people. . . . [They] were devout, zealous [worshippers] of God, and meticulous in their observance of the . . . Torah" (Beasley 284). They thought themselves closer than others to God, more acceptable to God because of their religious observances, and superior to non-Pharisees, who did not keep the laws as strictly. Dougall observes that their God was limited, in that he could only approve avowed believers who followed a narrow path of religious observance as they interpreted it. Yet "to say that their God was only such as their . . . minds admitted, is only saying of them what must be said in some sense of every church and sect" (*Pro.* 28), including, Dougall believed, the late-Victorian Christian church. This tendency on the part of all humans towards

a God-in-the-box mentality means the church must work that much harder towards ensuring such exclusivist and sectarian mentalities are not allowed to take over.

If the Pharisees were devout believers, and certainly no more sinful than anyone else, Dougall says the meaning of Jesus' denunciations "must have referred to a principle of falsity so deep that it could underlie good intention" (32). It is this "principle of falsity," this "false religion" inherent in the Pharisaic conception of God's character that Dougall sees in the church and subsequently criticizes through her writing.

The Christ-life - the emphasis of Dougall's argument - is characterised by an attitude of love totally divested of pride. This God-like love creates an apotheosis in the beholder, bringing an higher understanding of the "all-pervading pride of humanity and the humility of God" (*Pro.* 64). For Dougall, the false religion of Pharisaism - at least as far as it applies to a post-Jesus sect - is the product of a religious elite who believe God favours them for their religious devotion, and who feel pride at their accomplishment of having achieved God's favour, and disdain for those less pious than themselves. All this, says Dougall, lies in stark opposition to the life of humility they are supposed to be living.

Two important distinctions Dougall makes about the Christ-life in *Pro Christo* are that it does not seek "separation from evil-doers" (84) and it is "never preoccupied with the keeping of moral law" (101). That "Jesus . . . was friendly with those who were not good" (84) shows how little he valued a life shut off from sinners. In order to love someone, one must genuinely like everything that is likeable about that person, and this, says Dougall, is impossible without companionship and common interests. To the extent that

"Christian love" has lost this element of liking to sophistry, those outside the church have every right to jeer at the church's hypocrisy (85). The keeping of moral law is visible to others, and therefore has a tendency to breed the pious sectarianism Dougall wants to eliminate. Jesus was not concerned with the keeping of one set of rules or another, she says, but with whether people looked towards a heavenly or earthly law for guidance (104), presumably privileging those who look to God.

Dougall says that people who believe they understand the mind of God suffer almost automatically from the sin of pharisaism, for enlightenment is impossible for those who are convinced they have already attained it. "In all cases where we believe ourselves to have a means of grace ordained of God which others reject . . . it engenders in us the . . . belief that the commonalty [sic] of men in the opposite class are our inferiors in good sense, morals, and piety" (171). At this point, Dougall's rejection of "common sense" philosophy becomes pertinent, for this moral system argued that, by using common sense, most people would come to agree with what was already socially determined right and wrong. While this philosophy was rejected by the end of the century, the underlying tenet survived in people's belief systems, and Dougall, seeing the Christian church of her day, both in North America and England, as suffering from the sin of pharisaism, took up her pen with a view to showing the church its shortcomings, so that it could actively seek a more humble approach to the world. The themes and stories in her novels almost invariably come back to three basic ideas: that there are pious people who think themselves very holy; that often these people transgress the very principles they claim to uphold; that the way out of this dilemma is through love, which will lead to humility.

An important intellectual context for Dougall's work was what became known in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries as the "social gospel movement," which derived from the belief that Christianity was a social religion concerned with the quality of human relations.[3] The social gospel movement, the product of a series of scientific, social and philosophical factors, existed in various forms in Europe and North America, and resulted in the proliferation of social and socialist organisations in the early twentieth century. The introduction and widespread acceptance of evolutionary theory undermined in most people's minds the biblical view of creation, and the next logical step from evolutionary theory was to say that if God did not create the world, God was no guarantor of the social order, provided that God even existed in the first place (Cook 12). This new and radical explanation of the world pressured the Christian church in North America and Europe, philosophers and theologians into reconsidering religious orthodoxy and church doctrine. A change of some sort was necessary to simultaneously maintain integrity and belief.

John Watson, professor of Philosophy at Queen's University, brought a Scottish interpretation of Hegelian idealism with him to Canada in 1871 (Cook 9). At Queen's, along with G.M. Grant, Principal of the college, and others, Watson would become one of the major influences in bringing theological liberalism to the Protestant - and especially the Presbyterian - Church in Canada, a movement whose impact was quite noticeable in the 1890s (Cook 184) and important in theologically rationalizing the social gospel through institutional approval. Edward Caird, Watson's teacher, reconciled

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[3]This last sentence is paraphrased from Richard Allen's *The Social Passion,* where Allen states that the dramatically theological interpretation of the social gospel movement was "a call . . . to find the meaning of [life] in seeking to realize the Kingdom of God in the very fabric of society." (4)

with evolution by seeing the historical process as "a regular ascent from inorganic things, through organic things, to the self-conscious life of mind . . . [as] the unfolding of a single principle, *and that principle was spiritual* "(McKillop 184-5).[4] The result of Watson's philosophy was to reduce the church to "an organization of social betterment" (Cook 24). Wrote Watson, "Christianity is above all a religion of this world. . . . It is nothing if it is not social" (qtd in Cook 24).

A school of biblical criticism, developed in the early nineteenth century in Germany, which argued that biblical texts had to be understood in their historical context, complemented social idealism in influencing the creation of a social gospel. A major topic of conversation by the 1870s, higher, or historical, criticism had virtually been accepted (at least by certain parts of the Presbyterian Church in Canada) by the 1890s (Cook 17, 20). Higher criticism allowed the recovery of a social Jesus and put emphasis on social action, complementing intellectual idealism and reinforcing the trend towards social religion and the social gospel movement in the process. John Scrimger, professor of exegesis at Presbyterian college, said of higher criticism that "the new creed will recognize that Christianity is more a life than a creed, and will acknowledge the real presence of the Spirit of God in the hearts of many who are not disposed to trouble themselves much with creeds . . . , but who are following in the footsteps of Christ, trying to do good as they have opportunity" (Cook 20).

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[4]Caird's definition of the historical process, the culmination of which is the "self conscious life of mind," recalls Allen's reference to the Kingdom of God as the context of the end for which the social gospel is the means. The concept of Heaven as a spiritual state rather than physical place is common in religion, both in certain interpretations of Christianity, and more obviously in Buddhism. The power of associating the end product of evolution with Heaven further intensifies the justification of a social gospel as the appropriate response for a Christian church faced with scientific sabotage.

Acceptance of higher criticism was not universal. Many people, Dougall among them, felt "the higher critics were laying secular hands on a sacred book, `reducing the bible to the level of a mere product of natural law'" (Cook 17). While Dougall openly disagreed with the methods and conclusions of the higher critics, referring to higher criticism at one point as "destructive," she would have agreed with the vision of a social Jesus, one quite accessible through various gospel stories advancing a moral of love and compassion for all, especially the disenfranchised. Concerned with the set of "rules" for Christian behaviour currently in place, Dougall offers a new set of rules (although she would likely call them the old, original rules) which she takes not from a theology or philosophy intricately devised to maintain the status quo, nor from any orthodoxy or creed, but from the gospels. Dougall examines basic commandments attributed to Jesus and the ideal of his behaviour presented, makes that the standard for Christian conduct, and is dismayed to find how far astray from that ideal the church has gone.

The major element of the Christian ideal for Dougall, and the focus of this thesis, is love. The image of God as ideal love was central to the social gospel and is perhaps Dougall's closest tie to that movement, in so far as the essence of the Christ life is ideal love. Albrecht Ritschl, a German theologian of great significance to European theology in the 1870s and 1880s, believed God could not be known through reason, but through emotions and the experience of divine forgiveness. "Out of Ritschl's emphasis on the forgiving work of God, God emerged simply as love" (Allen 4). Ritschl's de-emphasizing of reason is echoed in Dougall's recurring theme that lack of reason and sense often characterizes those closest to God.

The serious questioning of religious orthodoxy resulting from scientific discoveries in the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century combined with intellectual movements in philosophy and theology around the same time to produce by the last third of the century a largely renovated Protestant church in North America and Europe. Similar but separate processes were occurring in the Catholic church, but the two did not join forces in any official way until well into the twentieth century. The new focus of the church was placed on the temporal, the "here and now." The church became less concerned with preparing for an ethereal, unforseeable future, and focused on bringing about the kingdom of God on earth. "The practical application of Christ's teachings was more important than theological controversy" (Cook 24). Likewise, Dougall sought to stop fighting within and between denominations over who was right, and to focus energy on loving and being peaceful.

That the social gospel movement achieved the foothold it did in Canada is not surprising given the influence of Scottish culture, out of which Dougall came. The Presbyterian Church - imported to Canada by Scottish immigrants - had a natural sympathy towards such a movement. "The Calvinist inheritance of Presbyterianism provided foundations for the reassertion of the social mandate of the Christian gospel. . . . Calvin, . . . Knox, . . . and . . . Edwards . . . all conceived of and promoted a society in which social and economic relationships were subject to religious control" (Allen 5). With the significant Scottish influence on Canadian intellectual, business and cultural life, Scottish idealism was widely disseminated. The predominance of Hegelian idealism in Scottish philosophy during this time reinforced the natural tendency to see close ties between the ecclesiastical and the secular, making a social movement with theological motivations (the social gospel)

an obvious reaction. Dougall's Scottish heritage and Presbyterian upbringing (although she chose to be confirmed in the Episcopal Church as a teenager, her parents were evangelical Presbyterians (McMullen 138)) made her sympathy towards such reform somewhat natural.

Although her shared set of cultural and intellectual influences with the social gospel, her desire for reform, and her ability and desire to write in an age where didactic writing by women was popular all point towards a view of Dougall as a "social gospel writer," such a view would be oversimplified and misdirected. It is in the spirit of the social gospel that she writes, but Dougall's material is not standard social gospel fare; where the social gospel advocated broader-based social solutions, Dougall emphasized more general elements of inter-human and God-human relationships, and made her primary target not so much the general population as church members, those who call themselves "Christians". Dougall specifically selects those who profess to follow in the footsteps of the one she sees as the first and greatest "social gospeller" (and the historical practitioner of ideal love on earth) and tries to ameliorate the heresy that she sees amongst them, that they might be an example to the secular world of exactly what the popular philosophy of the day should entail. She does not raise questions of fair wages for workers, or argue for accessible education for all, or discuss women's suffrage or temperance. Rather, Dougall is primarily concerned with how religious people - specifically Christians - treat each other, and with the disturbing amount of sectarianism, piety and self-righteousness among them that illustrate the difference between the ideal love exemplified by Christ and its corresponding reality.

Social change is presumably important to Dougall, but so are righteousness and love of God. For many of the social gospellers, social reform slipped from being a *means* to righteousness, to righteousness and the end in itself. Simply enacting social reforms came to be synonymous with bringing about the Kingdom of Heaven. Salem Bland, a Methodist and one the great proponents of the social gospel in Canada, recognised "the essential distinction between sacred and secular" (McKillop 220). He believed that minimum wages, free education, and women's suffrage should not be confused with knowledge of God. Like Bland, Dougall is "committed to . . . righteousness as the main element in the Kingdom of God, . . . the coming about [of which requires] radical measures of social reform," but with the caveat that social reform ultimately is not enough (McKillop 220).

This rather conservative view of righteousness is characteristic of Dougall's polemic. Her theology mixes this conservatism with what were radical conceptions about what Jesus stood for, and consequently what God asked of humanity. In addition to calling higher critics "destructive," she calls the philosophers who helped save the church from the jaws of science and create the environment of social concern "indifferent to sacrament and religious service" (*Pro* 42). Dougall rejects both the theological and philosophical movements which help create the atmosphere that made her writing so popular, in spite of her cultural ties to those movements. Instead, she makes use of the sentiments of the time to advocate a theology which, based on a conservative, straightforward interpretation of the gospels, is as radical as the social gospel, though in a way that undermines the actions of the Church specifically, rather than society generally. Dougall believes it is just as important for the Church to turn inward and heal itself as it is for it to

turn outward and heal the world; her gospel is to the ecclesiastical society before the secular one.

While Dougall wanted to be a writer, presumably to make her thoughts as widely known as possible, it is important to note that her options outside of the pen for getting her views across were slim. Unlike Professor John Watson, Principals William Dawson and G. M. Grant, and other important academics, Dougall could not get her point across in a university lecture hall, or through an opening address or convocation speech. The natural outlet was the novel.

> Many late-nineteenth-century women took to the novel as a platform for the dissemination of ideas about society, since almost all other intellectual platforms were closed to them. For the female intellectual or reformer, the novel was a natural medium for ideas. "As she and her contemporaries were fully aware, the novel was a medium for the expression of ideas about the society in which man lives. The vital issues of the day . . . were also the issues of much of the fiction of her age . . . No serious intellectual or practical issue, from the place of God in the universe to the effects on society of the development of cotton weaving machines, eluded the nineteenth century novelist . . . [she] had a sense of mission, a categorical imperative to observe, to write, and to influence readers" (Dean 7-8).

Writing on the other hand was a valid and acceptable occupation for Dougall and other women, provided it conformed to what was socially condoned both in terms of content and presentation. It was the purpose of fiction in nineteenth-century Canada to contribute in some way to the moral fabric of society, or at least not detract from it. "The prevailing view was that the purpose of literature was to instruct: morally by presenting examples of proper conduct and pedagogically by providing useful information; . . .

praiseworthy novels were expected to contain an extractable moral" (Gerson 30-1).[5]

That Dougall as a woman was able to voice her thoughts to a large audience through fiction was the result of the nineteenth century understanding, in both North America and England, that women were the guardians of social moral welfare, a role firmly established by late in the century. Rousseau claimed as early as 1762, in *Emile*, that woman had a "'natural gift' for human insight and sensibility" (Colby 32); and Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* published four years later, and probably read by most if not all Victorian novelists, with its "basic images of home and family life" (8), marks for Vineta Colby the beginning of English domestic realism, central to which was the vision of woman as the guardian of the home (8). By the middle of the nineteenth century "religious doubt was on the increase, competitive business practices seemed to poison the atmosphere, and in general there was an unprecedented crassness to society. All this led to the relocation of moral values to the home and to women" (Mitchinson 40-1).

The overwhelming popularity of the tractarian movement of the 1830s and 1840s (also seemingly dominated by women) and the appearance of John Ruskin's "Of Queen's Gardens" in *Sesame and Lilies* in 1864 helped to establish in the mind of the Victorian citizen - English and Canadian - that women possessed special abilities as guardians of morality and family ideals. "Women began to believe that they had a moral right to assume leadership,

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[5]Vineta Colby and Carole Gerson both discuss the didactic role of the late-Victorian novel. Colby says "The `problem novel,' . . . the `novel with a purpose,' or the `novel of ideas,' - at least a half-dozen terms describe . . . the same thing: the use of an art form for public edification and instruction" (9)..

since they were in the spiritual avant-garde. England seemed to be crying out for the kind of moral leadership women wished to provide" (Showalter 186). This role of women as moral leaders seeped into other, more public aspects of life by the end of the century. In the foreign mission fields, Canadian Protestant women played a leading role, and "their early and intense involvement was consistent with the prevailing view that matters of religious and moral responsibility were ones for which women had a special affinity" (Brouwer 4-5).

Women often did not possess any tangible power in this regard, says Ann Douglas, nor did they wish to. "Instead, they wished to exert `influence,' which they eulogised as a religious force. . . . discreetly omnipresent and omnipotent, ['influence'] was the suasion of moral and psychic nurture" (9). Rather than initiate change themselves, women influenced those who were in positions of power to indirectly cause change. While Douglas' research applies specifically to women living in the United States and seems to conflict with Brouwer's views, there is evidence that Canadian women's situations were not entirely different from those of their American counterparts.

Significantly, despite holding guardianship over social and moral welfare and managing life at home, women were not given professional status or officially recognized in their leadership roles by the male-dominated culture. General voting privileges, leadership and policy-making positions in large organizations aimed at improving society, and ordained ministry, were some of the areas closed to women well into the twentieth century in spite of their unofficial duties in those areas, which were often just as if not more significant than those of the men. This was a source of contention and a field

of battle for many social gospellers and suffragists like Nellie McClung, Agnes Machar, and Alice Chown.

In Dougall's case, with her specific concern for ecclesiastical reform, we can add to woman as intellectual and reformer woman as preacher. It is not clear whether Dougall might have sought ordination had the path been open to her, but it is certainly reasonable to suggest - with her focus on the lack of Christ-like behaviour amongst those who professed to follow him, and her obvious love for God and the church - that the pulpit as a potential and ideal forum would have crossed her mind. Once again though, this was not possible as it was for people like the Rev. Albert Carman or G. M. Grant.

The focus so far on Dougall's didacticism raises highly vexed issues in contemporary literary criticism. Both Barthes (1968) and Foucault (1969) have pronounced the author, that is the concept of an individual who creates a text to be read by readers, dead. It is important to note, however, that this is itself a creation of the twentieth century; for the writers and readers of the nineteenth century, the author was not a critical construct developed for the classification of texts, but an historical figure who lived and wrote certain works. Writers like Canadians Agnes Machar, Ralph Connor and Nellie McClung and Americans Marie Corelli and Harriet Beecher Stowe were not concerned with questions of narrator and author, and neither were their readers. On the contrary, the messages of books like *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852), emancipation; *Roland Graeme: Knight* (1892), unionization of labour; *The Mighty Atom* (1896), Christian-based education; *The Man From Glengarry* (1901), social and business conduct mirroring Christian values; and *Purple Springs* (1921), women's suffrage; are the focus of the stories. The desire to make those morals as obvious and as accessible as possible, and the fact that

many writers were not trying to produce art or be "fancy," resulted in straightforward narratives. No distinction was drawn between author and narrator; whether these writers were incapable or uninterested in complicating textual voice only reinforces the fact that they did not do so.

Since Dougall compiled the words and phrases highly self-conscious of her own agenda and desire to communicate her point of view (this is especially the case with the didactic novel genre) and considering her works were received by her readers in the same spirit they were written (as a group of self-conscious efforts to achieve a specific purpose), it seems reasonable to allow the historical Dougall (for the purposes of this discussion anyway) the title "author" and assume a certain amount of consistency in her works.

There is no question that the didactic form Dougall chose for her novels was a popular one, and her writing itself was indeed very well received, at least at first. This begs the question of why Dougall has been relegated to a list of authors who are no longer read and who have been the focus of little or no scholarship. The distinct lack of nineteenth-century authors in the contemporary Canadian canon has become a more contentious issue in recent years as various scholars have raised general concerns with canonization, specifically in regard to the lack of representation of women and cultural minority groups in what has traditionally been for literatures in English a largely white, male club.[6] The canon of Canadian literature, dominated by titles and authors of the twentieth century, has limited its coverage of the nineteenth century to the Confederation poets, Ralph

[6]Jane Tompkins' *Sensational Designs* offers an excellent discussion of the issue of literary canons.

Connor, L.M. Montgomery, Sara Jeannette Duncan, and a handful of others, and has almost completely ignored the eighteenth century altogether.[7]

Dougall's work has been out of print for more than sixty years. Scholarship on her was limited to the odd reference in Canadian literary and historical surveys (which often contained erroneous information) until 1986-7, when Lorraine McMullen published two articles reintroducing Dougall to Canadian literature through biographical data on the author and discussion of several prominent themes in a few of her works. Still, few people outside of those interested in the literature of the period know anything about her, and it is only with the new availability of *What Necessity Knows* (1893), reprinted in 1992, that Dougall's accessibility and potential introduction to students of literature has again become possible. The reason for the absence of Dougall and others like her from the canon is the suggestion, thanks in part to modernist critics like Northrop Frye, that nineteenth-century Canadian literature is inferior to more modern writing. As perhaps the singularly most influential voice in the criticism of Canadian literature and a highly influential modernist critic as well, Frye's comments offer a good touchstone to why writers like Dougall have been decanonized and their forms and styles rejected.

Frye's appraisal of nineteenth-century Canadian fiction, if not scathing, is at least condescending: "In nineteenth-century Canadian literature, not all the fiction is romance, but nearly all of it is formula-writing. In the books of

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[7]While this thesis falls under the canopy of Canadian literature, it seems important to note, though perhaps it is obvious, that both the subject matter and approach ignore French Canadian literature. As Northrop Frye has observed in his "Conclusion to a *Literary History of Canada*," "Canada has two languages and two literatures, and every statement made . . . about `Canadian literature' employs . . . synecdoche, putting a part for the whole. Every such statement implies a parallel or contrasting statement about French-Canadian literature" (217). As my interest here is specifically with an English writer, it is her heritage and history on which I will concentrate, aware that I am making claims which may not apply to French Canadian history or literature.

this type that I have read I remember much honest and competent work. Some of them did a good deal to form my own infantile imagination, and I could well have fared worse" (234).

According to Frye, "the poet's quest is for form [by which he chiefly means metaphor], not content" (176). I am more interested in the novel than the poem here, but if the argument runs the same for prose as it does for poetry, Dougall and other writers of similar material must surely suffer in Frye's eyes from content-infested didacticism, or rhetoric, which for Frye stands in opposition to art. "Using language . . . [to formulate] arguments . . . that will help to clarify one's view of the landscape, remains a rhetorical and not a poetic achievement. . . . To create a disinterested structure of words, in poetry or in fiction, is a very different achievement" (228).

His assertion that "the conflict involved is between the poetic impulse to construct and the rhetorical impulse to assert," and further that "the victory of the former is the sign of the maturing of the writer" (231) suggests Frye finds the didactic novel an immature literary form. "Literature," says Frye, "is conscious mythology" (232) and a society only develops a mythology as it matures. The early Canadian novelist who begins with the impulse to tell a story quickly runs into "a feeling of detachment from his (English) literary tradition" (233), ergo, no mythology and no real literature in early Canada.

Frye's first point on the inappropriateness of focusing on content, or subject matter, in art seems to miss the point that all art in some way makes a statement, and therefore has subject matter and, moreover, is didactic. I would argue that it is impossible for an artist to create something without making some kind of statement. Even claiming that a work of art is not

didactic is making a claim for the work, is taking a position on the purpose of art, is making a statement about oneself, artist or critic. Modernist aesthetic standards are no less ideologically based than the standards adopted by any other group, including didactic novelists, and are no basis for the exclusion or privileging of certain texts over others.

If it is true that "the critic, the context within which the critic reads, and the text that is interpreted are simultaneously features of a single historical movement" (Tompkins 20), then Frye's view that a didactic novel, because it is didactic, is bad art says as much about his concept of the role of the novel genre as it does about the actual value of the didactic novel. Indeed, it does little more than allow us to place Frye in one of several theoretical schools, and accept or reject his argument based on whether we agree with his belief or not. Moreover, if "it is never the case that a work stands or falls `on its own merits' since the merits - or demerits - that the reader perceives will always be a function of the situation in which he or she reads" (Tompkins 9), then it is further the responsibility of the critic to acknowledge his or her own biases and point of view, which must be as intrinsic to the critic's own frame of reference as is the one of the artist that the critic pans. Failure on the critic's part to acknowledge these differences results in the construction of a hegemonic approach to literature and automatic dismissal of anything that does not meet certain criteria.

Colby's discussion of women writing as an occupation, and the words of several women writers from the period simultaneously support and undermine Frye's argument. Vernon Lee, another popular novelist of the Victorian period, showed little love for the novel's aesthetic aspects, but saw "its practical power to influence and persuade the reader. `The novel,' she

wrote, `has less value in art, but more importance in life'" (Colby 8). Consider again Dougall's belief that the "highest function" of the novel is to "promote understanding." If the reader can not help but agree with Frye in his position that the didactic novel of the late-nineteenth century is bad art, that reader must also be aware that the writers of those novels - in many cases at least - had an entirely different concept of the novel and were not attempting to make "art." The dismissal of this type of writing in the 1950s and 1960s, and its subsequent absence in the Canadian literary canon does not appear to be based on any intrinsic lack of value in the works, but rather on political and aesthetic judgments made by people with completely different views of the function of the novel who were unable, or unwilling, to look at these texts on their own terms. "Particularly in the field of early Canadian fiction, the current limited canon more accurately reflects the choice of a few professors and publishers than the actual cultural situation of the last century" (Gerson x).

Carole Gerson begins the preface to her book on nineteenth-century English-Canadian fiction by quoting D.W. Robertson's statement that "if we are to compose valid criticism of work produced in earlier stylistic periods, we must do so in terms of conventions established at a time contemporary with the works themselves. If we fail to do so, we shall miss the integrity of the works we study, not to mention their significance, frequently profound, for their original audiences" (Gerson ix). It is well and good for Frye to find assertive rhetoric immature compared to poetic constructiveness. His conclusion, though, ignores the fact that assertive rhetoric addressed the issues of the day in a highly successful and popular way. These works were

greatly enjoyed when they were written, and aspects of them still appeal today.

If the reason for dismissal of this or any body of work is its overt and overly didactic nature, the critics not only misunderstand art by believing good art must not be didactic when no art can help but be didactic, but fail to see that it is didacticism that the writers of this period purposely set out to attain, and that it is precisely what the critics dismiss that should be examined. If we can agree that Dougall's work is worth scrutiny for the reasons already intimated in this chapter: that it is characteristic of but also unique for the literature of its time, that it was a highly popular form in its time and still holds interest for us today, and that when looked at in the context of the 1890s (rather than one of the 1950s or 1960s) it is often very good writing, then we can proceed in good faith with a closer look at several of her novels.

While *A Question of Faith* was published just after *The Mermaid,* I am going to deal with it first, since it provides a better introduction to the themes on which I want to focus. The fourth chapter will deal with *The Earthly Purgatory,* the latest of the three novels under examination.

Chapter II

A Question of Faith

Dougall's fifth novel, *A Question of Faith* (1895), explores several key aspects of her agenda, illustrating both pharisaic and Christ life-like approaches to personal relationships, often portraying nominal Christians as more pharisaic in attitude and behaviour and "non-believers" as closer to Christ in their actions. The novel also, as the title suggests, dramatizes Dougall's understanding of ideal faith, asking not only what it is, but who can have it and what its relationship is to religion. Faith becomes, in a sense, a litmus test for the presence or absence of the Christ life in someone, with those people exhibiting the most faith also appearing the most Christ-like, those with the least faith the most pharisaic. Love in its most ideal form is posited as the source of the deepest example of faith, that of the old man for his son, and the result of faith, in the case of the final state of Alice's relationship with the old man.

The novel simultaneously explores various aspects of the faith of five characters: Henry Harvey; Matthew Knighton; Alice Bolitho; Amy Ross; and a stranger who, with his dying son who is an Anarchist, is hiding from the law. Knighton and Harvey are compared to each other in their differing abilities to have faith in Alice, who, as they see her, behaves strangely and covertly, without explanation. Alice, who is coerced by the stranger into providing food for him and his outlaw son, is asked to have faith that the man's attempts to reform his son in his last days will be more fruitful than reformation through the more acceptable channels of public justice. Finally, and perhaps most touchingly, the old man - never identified otherwise -

must in his and his son's last days have faith that he will be able to teach his son "what love and mercy mean, [making him] understand God's justice" so that his soul will be redeemed (27).

The case of the old man is perhaps Dougall's most overtly religious examination of faith in the novel, and the most evocative personification of her idealism. Here faith closely identifies with love, the central quality of the Christ life. In the father of the outlaw, who pleads to keep his son out of jail, lies the clearest example of one who loves God. The father's effort to show his son the ramifications of his sin is an effort to show him the interconnectedness of humanity, with its relationship to "love, mercy, . . . [and] God's justice" (27). "`It was not until my boy saw that his life was my life, and his wretchedness my wretchedness, that he saw that he had done wrong to me'" (64). Moreover, the father's love for his son is so complete that "he [is] willing to give his own life, his chance of salvation, perhaps, that the son might be reconciled to God before he [goes to his judgment]" (245). The old man only appears four times in the novel (and a quasi-fifth time when Alice gives a synopsis of his beliefs) yet one is struck by the powerful presence, the incredible conviction, and the intense emotion of the man's attempt to show his son a glimpse of the love of God. The author's deliberate choice of an old man, a father who loves his son and is willing to die for him, strongly parallels Dougall's concept - and the Christian concept at large, certainly in the 1890s - of God as father, and most certainly reflects the image of God as love. The old man's dialogue is so central to Dougall's argument that some of his quotes are in the privileged script of italics; it is at these points where the author's didacticism is especially evident.

Another examination of faith in the novel, and a dramatisation of the pharisaic nature of the church, comes through the juxtaposition of Harvey and Knighton. With Alice's elusive and secretive behaviour as the focal point, the novel concerns itself with how each man responds to Alice's plea for him to understand that she cannot immediately reveal her reasons for acting the way she does. Harvey is never able to achieve the kind of trust in Alice that Knighton has, the kind which Dougall counts as important for Harvey to call himself a Christian. Knighton trusts Alice because his faith in her judgment and character supercedes any potential disagreement over how she conducts herself. Alice asks Knighton not to reveal to Harvey that she was one of the women that Harvey and Knighton had passed on the road the evening before, and he is content that her asking is "a sufficient reason" not to reveal her (75). While he realizes that Alice is involved in something potentially unsavoury, he admits that she is not ignorant and that he can trust her to do the right thing. Harvey does not have this faith in Alice and is not able to trust her without knowing the details of the situation in which she has involved herself.

Harvey's character in *A Question of Faith* touches on several aspects of Dougall's conception of the Pharisees. He is convinced that Alice's behaviour is inappropriate and tells her so. He makes no effort to understand her position and refuses to consider the possibility that *he* might be the one lacking judgment. Harvey's suspicions of Alice develop early, and the focus of Harvey's relationship with Amy - Alice's "friend" who lives in the same house with her - for much of the novel consists of positing a variety of possibilities as to why Alice acts as she does. Unable to take the hint from Knighton, who, in response to the account of Alice's meeting with the

stranger on the heath, "didn't really seem much disturbed" (147), Harvey chooses to repeatedly confront Alice about her elusiveness. Eventually Alice is forced to take food to the men late at night in an attempt to avoid Harvey's mounting concern and subsequent questioning.

Harvey also resembles the Pharisees in that he is not at anytime, by anyone, considered a "bad" person. Like the Pharisees, Harvey has the best intentions, pursuing Alice only out of concern for her well-being. In other aspects of his character Harvey is likable enough. However, what Dougall terms the "principle of falsity" underlies Harvey's mistrust of Alice and dooms him in Dougall's estimation, in spite of his good intentions.

This element of mistrust in Harvey eventually reaches unbearable proportions, creating distance rather than trust between him and Alice. The morning after Amy's frantic letter which sends Harvey out in the rain to search for the missing Alice finds the two prospective lovers discussing the situation. Harvey, very much displeased with Alice's behaviour, realizes "that the time [has] come when he [can] no longer allow her to have her own way ... if she [has] any intention of becoming his wife" (184). Harvey's lack of faith in Alice's judgment forces him to impose his own sense of correctness, and thus his own behaviour on her. He cannot "trust [Alice] to do what is right without [his] interference, and [he cannot] trust her to do what is wise" (143). Harvey is unable to trust people unless they think the way he does. Of him, Alice says to Knighton: "I have asked him to believe me, but he just puts my words aside whenever they do not happen to chime with his own notions" (272).

The sensibility Harvey demonstrates in this passage was familiar enough in Dougall's time, and she undertakes in her work to highlight the

negative consequences of the attitude that anything that does not congrue with received knowledge is automatically wrong. The "common sense" philosophy of the early nineteenth century maintained that one could come to know something just by thinking about it, eventually arriving at the same conclusion as everyone else. Any conclusion that did not synchronize with this received knowledge, or common sense, was rejected; Harvey's rejection of Alice's words because they do not agree with what he perceives to be common sense summarizes "common sense" philosophy and pharisaism.

The pinnacle of Harvey's mistrust, and the moment when it becomes clear to Alice that she cannot marry him, is his demanding to know the identity of the man Alice has been visiting in light of the fact that it is not the man from Bristol to whom he thought she owed money. She reminds him that she has told him there is nothing in the situation that need distress him, a fact that "is very hard . . . for [him] to believe" (198). Harvey continues to insist on knowing the identity of the man. When Alice maintains she knows nothing about him, Harvey claims she cannot expect him "to believe [the] nonsense [she] is talking" (200), which, of course, is exactly what she expects and what she receives from Knighton (201).

Dougall says of the Pharisees that they are not capable of reform because, convinced they are right, they would never believe reform to be necessary. Knighton says as much to Alice regarding the way Harvey has treated her. Speaking for Harvey, he says "there can be no demonstrable proof of character. As far as character is concerned, who chooses to doubt must" (280). Harvey, like the Pharisees, has chosen to believe, and therefore must believe, that those who think differently from him are in the wrong.

Like the Pharisees, Harvey judges the morality of the world by how well it meets his own set of beliefs, and his zealous "I'm-right-you're-wrong" individualism is exactly the kind of spiritual elitism that allows him to dismiss Alice's behaviour without examining his own. The conflict arising between the beliefs or viewpoints of Harvey and Alice is automatically rendered impotent by Harvey in his dismissal of her position. Alice's behaviour is implicitly linked in Harvey's mind to what he calls her lack of Christian principles, which should more accurately be termed her lack of Christian observance. Alice's behaviour towards the old man and his son embodies the Christ life more than Harvey's behaviour towards her does, despite the fact that she, unlike Harvey, does not claim to be a Christian.

Having had the promise of food and confidentiality exacted from her by the old man, Alice's immediate response is to break her promise in the interests of keeping the law and avenging her own mortification at the humiliating treatment she has received (28). Yet when she is about to tell Knighton what has happened, she is unable. Here Alice's "lie" begins (though from her viewpoint the lie is inadvertent), and she decides to support the old man in his task. At this point Alice begins to consider a higher law than the "common sense" one represented by Knighton, though a conflicting sense of duty remains for her throughout:

> It was plainly not for the good of society that this man or any other should be able to rely upon a promise compelled by force. It was not the best thing for the community in which she lived that such desperate characters should remain hidden there. It was worse for the men themselves, one aged, the other dying, to suffer want and exposure than to be placed in some prison hospital. It was plainly a most disagreeable course for herself, to keep such a secret, to prevaricate and evade the questions of her best friends, and to afford the constant help to these men that would be necessary.

> As well as Alice could spell out the dictate of common sense, it bade her notify the authorities, in the person of Mr. Knighton, that men were starving in one of the cottages on the moor, but was there not a stronger command than this?
>
> One consideration, as it appeared to Alice, was stronger, and that was the intensely disagreeable feeling of dishonour that overcame her when she had actually essayed to take the course that wisdom indicated. Out of cowardice she had given a promise, and given it in words of which the very remembrance sapped all her self-respect; she had vowed, and she had deliberately repeated the vow, and now to break it seemed such a low and bad thing to do that she must be *sure* that there was harm in keeping it before she broke it. (43-4)

Dougall believes that humans, with their limited knowledge and vision, have no business judging the spiritual fitness of others. With Alice she creates an example of the potential reward to be gained through an open-minded respect of another's position different from one's own. Alice does not agree with the old man's approach to his son's redemption, but she is aware of the importance of keeping her promise if at all possible and mercifully wishes his desires for his son might be gratified.

Dougall presents through Alice and her relationship with the old man, an example of her "grace of love through intimacy" ideal. Rather than shut off the father as a sick criminal, Alice allows him to open his heart to her, and when she sees his "efforts and inertia, . . . mistakes and wisdom, . . . pains and joys, . . . loves and hates, from his own point of view, [the] contempt [she feels when she first meets him] ceases from [her] heart (*Pro.* 125). It is out of this "spontaneous love" which Alice develops for the man that she is able to aid Gor in an act of grace near the end of the novel: helping the old man to lie down on his bed. By contrasting the reality of the reprobation of an act through its inability to meet with the general consensus, with the ideal of making judgements only in love and humility, Dougall attacks the pharisaic

mindset of the Christian church which presumes to interpret moral guidelines as it understands them and judges everyone accordingly.

Essential to an understanding of Alice, and Dougall's thesis, is knowing that Alice does not consider herself a Christian. By making her behaviour as non-believer, along with that of the old man as social outcast, the most "Christ-like," Dougall not only reinforces her thesis that those nominally the farthest from Jesus (i.e. those who do not "belong" to the faith) are often the closest in deed, but seriously indicts the church by inferring from the first premise that those who call themselves Christians often behave the least like Christ. Dougall argues that, in her own way, Alice is far more in touch than Harvey with the Spirit he claims and she denies.

Harvey's faith is at times superficial and geared to social approval, even if unconsciously so. In his ignorance, Harvey assumes that since Alice does not go to church, she is not religious, and since "people who are not religious expect so much from [those] who are," he decides, with an air that suggests the desire to get a tedious task out of the way, to "[run] down and [say] some prayers in a back seat" one Sunday morning (52-3). This scene exemplifies the Pharisaic tendency to set up outward act as tests of spiritual condition (*Pro.* 40), and with it Dougall undermines the religious piety of pharisaism that stands in the way of the true humility of the Christ life.

Alice, while not professing Christianity, has one of the most Christ-like attitudes, helping those who need help instead of condemning them for their unholiness as the Pharisees - and the contemporary church - tended to do. Dougall, in her rebuke of the church, sees its hypocrisy as a double-edged sword alienating not only those who mistakenly profess the qualities of peace, love and justice from those who require it, but also those who do in fact

possess those qualities from feeling welcome in an institution that is supposed to entail them (*Pro.* 188-9).

The other effect of Dougall's indictment of the church relates specifically to the late-Victorian period and the social gospel movement. The church was in the process of redefining itself and looking externally towards the community. Dougall's words caution the church not to sink into complacency or self-righteousness, and force the question of what a ministry to those outside the church should properly entail. A condemnatory attitude, insistence on conversion, or a haughty assumption that they are right is not an acceptable attitude for the Church to take. Rather, whatever they do, they must do with love and humility.

Gor serves a function similar to that served by Alice, providing, through her presence and action, a contrast between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Gor, however, works as the outcast who has no place in popular circles, yet understands the will of God better than those who devoutly profess their piety, while Alice's place, conversely, is only outside the church, not outside society. In biblical terms Gor is the Samaritan, the tax collector. She is considered by many to be a witch, and has chosen to physically remove herself from society; she is treated as an outcast, as one to fear and avoid if possible. Yet it is Alice and Gor who offer assistance when they are standing in the shack (the young man dead; his father dying and needing someone to help him onto his bed) even as Harvey and Knighton are busy trying to get Alice away from the place. In a nineteenth-century version of the parable of the good Samaritan, it is the heathen and the outcast who show grace and compassion, while the most religious stand and watch, fearful of defiling themselves.

Literarily, Gor fits into the well-established tradition of the muse, sharing the stage with characters such as the witches that greet Macbeth on the heath and the three knitters who warn Marlow of the darkness ahead. As a literary figure Gor provides information in some form about what is to happen. Yet the information comes - as one might expect considering Dougall's obvious Christian agenda - in the form of a parable of sorts, and relates more to theme than it does to plot. Dougall exploits Gor's character and literary value for her own religious criticism, giving her the final indictment of Harvey.

The novel is framed on either end by Gor's anecdote of the beetle with no feelers. Gor makes a connection between beetles that do not have feelers (and consequently do not know where they are going or what they are doing) and most humans, who are not at fault for knowing nothing more of God than what they can see, hear and smell: beetles without feelers. Asked if this is fair of God, and applying the latest scientific theories of evolution, Knighton suggests in response that their ancestors may have had feelers which grew weak and dropped off through lack of use. Gor drops the subject, but it is raised again at the end of the novel in relation to Harvey and "a big black bug" (284) in Gor's water bucket. Wondering whether Harvey - unable to accept any other method of behaviour than the one he is convinced is right - is to blame for figuratively bumping his head against things, Gor decides in the end that, like the beetle with no feelers continually bumping into the side of the water bucket, Harvey "might have been a bit sharper if he tried" (285).

The relationship between this characterisation of Harvey and Dougall's thesis in *Pro Christo et Ecclesia* may not be immediately clear. In *Pro Christo* Dougall affirms the devoutness of the pharisaic approach, saying it is

misguided, not insincere. She maintains that the Pharisees were so convinced they were right, they were, in effect, incorrigible. Obviously she does not perceive the church in her day as totally pharisaic in nature, or there would be no point in trying to effect change in it, and Gor's impression of Harvey connects him in terms of corrigibility to the late-Victorian church. The suggestion that Harvey, or the church, might have been a bit sharper had he (it) tried implies it is not totally outside Harvey's (the church's) power to change. Harvey, then, is representative not of the Pharisees, but of a church which is in danger in so far as it exhibits pharisaic behaviour.

There is another way to look at the division between the characters and their actions in the death scene in the shack: it is the two women who help while the men watch. The idea that women are spiritually superior is common in the late-Victorian novel, in which they are portrayed as guardians of the social morality of the day. While Dougall does not argue that women are categorically more spiritual or closer to God than men, she does make women the characters from which her readership would have had the most to learn. In *A Question of Faith*, the old man represents a spiritual state and an ability to love that is to be emulated, and Knighton is portrayed as a man who is better able to trust and have faith than many. It is also true, though, that these two men are older than the other characters, with the exception of Gor, and perhaps more mature and wise in their outlooks. But Alice is given the most significant decision-making role in the novel. Alice, as a non-Christian, is asked to have faith and does so, where the two nominal Christians, Amy and Harvey, appear incapable of true faith. Into Alice's struggle and development the reader is given a glimpse, and if the story is in part a character study of Alice and Harvey, it is also a comparison between

how Dougall sees the Christian church behave and how she would like to see it behave, a comparison between the real and the ideal.

Alice's dilemma over whether or not to keep the promise she has made extends beyond the rule of law and her own ego. Her decision becomes a partially utilitarian one where the concerns of all involved are taken into account: the safety of the other villagers and the health of the father and son themselves are compared to the vow she has made and the words she has spoken. The path Alice takes in solving her dilemma of whether or not to break her promise, the subsequent anger and frustration felt by Harvey, and the concern on Knighton's part raise important issues around the subject of problem solving, and give us insight into Dougall's underlying feminist approach to reform.

Carol Gilligan, in her book *In A Different Voice,* looks at the different ways in which women and men solve moral dilemmas based on their respective understandings of "right" and "wrong," "good" and "bad," and her findings lend insight into Alice's and Harvey's different moral understandings. Gilligan suggests that because women are the primary caretakers of children, boys achieve early an understanding of their own differentiation (sexually based, in relation to their mothers) where as girls see themselves as "same"; "masculinity is defined through separation, . . . femininity . . . through attachment" (Gilligan 8). This tendency towards the external rather than the internal, Piaget and Lever would agree, appears to incite boys to a greater interest in the legal - the control and ordering of the group - as absolute, where girls have a more pragmatic, utilitarian view towards legality, accepting it only in so far as it facilitates more intimate interactions (10). Where males (like Harvey) come to see themselves as the

"generalized other" in large groups, females (like Alice) take the role of the "particular other" in more intimate settings (11). Erikson's development model also sees "male identity as forged in relationship to the world and . . . female identity as awakened in a relationship of intimacy with another person" (Gilligan 13). While men tend to believe in a universal "right" and "wrong," women tend to be more likely to evaluate each situation on its own merits. The existence of such different paradigms helps clarify Alice's and Harvey's conflicting responses, for it reinforces the possibility that Harvey is unable to sympathize with Alice's perspective due to his own assuredness that she has, in protecting criminals and "deceiving" her friends, contravened what is unquestionably the right thing to do.

This feminist interpretation of "right" and "wrong" gives new insight into Dougall's distinction between pharisaism and the Christ life, for what is pharisaism but the certainty that there is an incontrovertible right way (a "universal principle of justice") and wrong way, and a condemnation of anyone who chooses the latter; and what is the Christ life but an invocation of love so profound that man's systems of right and wrong are recognized as inferior to God's and that it therefore becomes our duty to love each person individually as best we can and leave judgment to God? I do not use "man's" in the previous sentence unconsciously as the generic, but purposefully, for Dougall must have known that the moral system of her society and her religion was, and still is, a patriarchal one, and her response, at least unconsciously, must have taken that into account. Alice realizes what Dougall believes about the incomplete nature of human - in relation to heavenly - wisdom, and the danger of putting such an incomplete system before love: "If I had been free to act upon my own judgment, . . . I should

have had no right to coerce the old man merely on the ground that I was right and he was wrong. I could only have fallen back upon the opinion of the medical profession that a man's body is of first importance, and upon the law, which would say he must be put in jail" (247).

The Jesus Dougall advocates is not expressly feminist, but he is socialist, and was certainly concerned with the groups who were religiously and socially disenfranchised (which amounted to the same thing in the highly theocratic Hebrew culture), including non-Jews, criminals, the sick, and women, to name a few. It makes sense that Dougall often chooses women to represent the Christ life she wants to see the church adopt for two reasons: because they are part of the fringe, which in the Christian tradition becomes the centre; and because of the moral nature attributed to women as "natural" in the Victorian period. Similarly we can see why the characters who hold the qualities of the church that Dougall rejects as un-Christ-like are often men, since the same Christian principle that puts those on the outside in the middle, takes those in the middle and places them on the periphery, viz. "The first shall be last, and the last shall be first". Moreover, if the church is characterised as an institution controlled by men, there must be something un-Christ like about men's general behaviour.

In Dougall's work there is early evidence of the current feminist critique of masculine-specific references to God. Dougall was more than likely familiar with Elizabeth Cady Stanton's *Woman's Bible* (1895), which argued for a gender-inclusive deity. In her exegesis of the creation stories in Genesis, Stanton says that, regarding the doctrine of the trinity, "instead of three male personages, as generally represented, a Heavenly Father, Mother and Son would seem more rational" (14). Quoting the text that says "God created man

in *his own image, male and female*" (14-5; her emphasis), Stanton says that "if language has any meaning, we have . . . a plain declaration of the . . . feminine element in the Godhead, equal in power and glory with the masculine" (14). Dougall's negative response towards certain progressive movements of her own time suggests she would find this feminine appellation of God offensive,[8] and yet her willingness to invest a proper following of Christ with feminine attributes lends itself to considering God in a gender inclusive or gender neutral way, if not a specifically feminine one.

The narrator suggests several times that Alice has not used common sense in her actions. Alice herself confesses to Knighton that she has "not acted with common sense" (227); that she suspects Knighton thinks her conduct has been "idiotic" (22). Of Harvey she says that he can only believe in someone when they "[make] manifest their good sense . . . to him" (225-6), implying she has not done that, since he has not believed in her. Harvey tells Alice something she is apparently not aware of: that one need not keep a promise made in defense of one's own life, and one need not have read ethics books to know that, since it "is only a practical question of common sense" (242). Once again, the system of moral evaluation by which Harvey lives does not work for Alice. Her insistence on standing by her intuition rather than conforming as she should - and as Amy does - signifies her to Harvey and Amy as "unreasonable".

Amy's place in this model of female gender associated with insight and an idealistic Christian lifestyle is problematic because although she is a

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[8]A note about *The Woman's Bible* from the editors of the 1972 reprinted edition says it "outraged orthodox, church-going feminists, deeply disturbed the reunited suffrage movement (which officially disowned the work at its 1896 convention), and contributed to the shift in power within the National American Woman Suffrage Association . . ." The chance of Dougall having approved of this work, given what is known about her theology, is unlikely.

woman, she demonstrates all the negative traits Harvey does, and none of the positive traits Alice does. Amy, a perfect example of the fact that not all of Dougall's women are intended to be spiritual role models, is a more "traditional" and conventional female character. That Amy does exactly what she as a woman is expected to do is evinced most clearly in Harvey's extreme comfort with her. Unlike Alice, Amy does not threaten his masculinity, self-conceived superiority, or "sensible" understanding of what is acceptable behaviour. Amy is diminutive, always submissive and agreeable, able to stroke Harvey's ego and affirm his belief in his own righteousness. Alice's refusal to perform a passive and submissive role for Harvey, and her insistence on maintaining first and foremost her own integrity, further demonstrates Dougall's feminist approach to this character.

Alice, by her own - and others - admission, has apparently not used common sense. "Common sense," however, implies maintenance of the *status quo*, which Dougall is trying to change, and it is not necessarily therefore a positive trait. In Alice's case, her lack of "common sense" is what allows her to make the right decision and do the "Christ-like" thing, just as Ritschl indicated in his own comments on religion and God. Stereotypically, women are often considered by men to be lacking in common sense, and Dougall's rejection of common sense is a further blow to a patriarchal system that has shown itself severely deficient in instituting and maintaining anything close to an ideal conception of the Christ life. Dougall's rejection of common sense is also an outright condemnation of her implicit indictment of the mentality of common sense philosophy, as represented by Harvey.

Further to the argument of Dougall's early feminist approach is her position on friendship. Dougall, in *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*, lists as one of the

elements of the Christ life that it "will count friendships, intimate and more distant, obligatory" (92).

> That Jesus sought and won personal affection is perhaps the most marked difference between him and the Jewish rabbis. Whoever has known friendship between mind and mind, heart and heart, as the greatest earthly good, knows that nothing less could have had power to give those twelve mundane men their superior insight into "the mysteries of the kingdom"; whoever has not known [friendship] cannot have seen Jesus in the depth and breadth of his self-revelation. If a man does not realize communion with his brother whom he has seen, he cannot know how to commune with the unseen. . . . The light (of God) must filter down to us through the Christ . . . and the brother always near us, by fellowship. . . . Friendship is the supreme means of grace. (*Pro.* 92-3)

Gilligan regards this conception of the vital importance of friendship as a particularly feminine characteristic in the same way that a utilitarian and situation-based moral focus, rather than a universal one, is feminine. She quotes Daniel Levinson's (1978) developmental study (conducted entirely with males) where he concludes that

> in our interviews, friendship was largely noticeable by its absence. As a tentative generalization we would say that close friendship with a man or a woman is rarely experienced by American men. . . . In general, . . . most men do not have an intimate male friend of the kind that they recall fondly from boyhood or youth. . . . most men have not had an intimate non-sexual relationship with a woman.
>
> (Levinson qtd. in Gilligan 154)

Conversely, in Gilligan's study, women, "in response to the request to describe themselves . . . describe a relationship, depicting their identity in [the context of others] . . . [just as] the standard of moral judgment that informs their assessment of self is a standard of relationship, an ethic of nurturance, responsibility, and care" (159).

The parallels to be seen between Dougall and Gilligan on the importance of friendship are important for two reasons. First, they further tie Dougall's conception of Christ as described in what she calls "the Christ life" to a highly feminised view-point, supporting the relationship I have suggested exists between Gilligan's understanding of a female moral ethic and Dougall's desired behaviour for Christians. Second, they support the argument that the fact that Dougall often made female characters the ones whom she wanted the church to emulate, and male characters the ones who most closely resembled the church in its existence as a Victorian patriarchal institution. The apparent odiousness to the narrator of female characters like Amy who maintain the status quo of self-abnegation for Victorian women further reinforces Dougall's feminist stance.

A Question of Faith provides a good introduction to some of Dougall's main themes that she carries on in subsequent works: ideal versus real faith, ideal versus real love, the inadequacy of "common sense" in matters of faith, and the role women can play in reforming church and society. *The Mermaid* and *The Earthly Purgatory* constitute part of the fleshing out of these ideas in Dougall's writing, helping to establish her as feminist, philosopher and theologian in the process.

Chapter III

The Mermaid

The Mermaid (1895) was Dougall's fourth novel, published the same year as *A Question of Faith.* It is one of four Dougall novels set in Canada, though the only one being considered in the present study. Set initially on Prince Edward Island and later on the Magdalen Islands, *The Mermaid* constitutes another examination of some of the themes apparent in *A Question of Faith*. The novel depicts the process of "enlightenment," or progression from a pharisaic paradigm to one more Christ-like, in the main character, Caius Simpson. Not surprisingly, this process occurs through Caius' discovery of love, particularly ideal love, and is facilitated by the central female character, Josephine Le Maitre. Ideal love continues to act as a central transforming vehicle for Dougall's characters, and women continue to be the principal characters who model this kind of love.

Caius was strictly brought up by a father whose "view of righteousness was derived from puritan tradition" (2); the initial description of Caius' moral state is highly pharisaic, and might just as easily have described Hal Harvey in *Question*:

> As a youth, Caius heartily endorsed his father's views, and felt superior to all who were more lax. He had been born into that religious school which teaches that a man should think for himself on every question, provided he arrives at a foregone conclusion. Caius, at the age of eighteen, had already done much reasoning on certain subjects, and proved his work by observing that his conclusions tallied with set models. (2)

The second sentence of this quote perfectly elucidates the common sense philosophy to which Dougall is in opposition. Caius, like Harvey and

Alden, the lawyer in *The Earthly Purgatory*, judges any conclusions different from the standard, or "acceptable," ones wrong; to the extent that these conclusions are moral, the person holding the renegade conclusion is immoral.

Dougall undermines "common sense" logic by introducing characters who, in thinking through a moral dilemma, come to different conclusions than those more traditionally considered acceptable. The result is a series of socially unacceptable acts, murder in the case of *The Mermaid* and harbouring or protecting a criminal in *A Question of Faith* and *Earthly Purgatory*, which, however, in their respective contexts are difficult for the reader to label "immoral". Dougall replaces the "common sense" system of moral decision making with one that relies on the Christ life, which bases decisions on love and humility, which leads to the absence of judgment.

The question of what it means to be moral is raised at several times in relation to several characters in *The Mermaid*. O'Shea vows that if Le Maitre were to ever return to Josephine, he would kill him, for if Josephine had to live with her husband it would kill her, and, according to O'Shea, "it's as good one murder should be done as another" (205). When Le Maitre does return, O'Shea, failing to convince Josephine to go away and save herself from her husband, apparently takes things into his own hands. We are never entirely sure whether Le Maitre's death is accident or murder, though Caius thinks - and circumstantial evidence corroborates - that O'Shea tips the boat on purpose and makes sure Le Maitre does not rise to the surface, even as he appears to be doing everything he can to save him.

The issue of interpretation is a salient factor in all three novels under observation here, and is a significant element of Dougall's design, affecting

both reader response to the text and the characterisation of the pharisaic males. In each novel Dougall asks the reader to identify with one of the principal characters needing to make a difficult moral decision. Both Harvey and Alden are arrested in their capacity for acceptance by their inability to understand the moral decisions of Alice and Hermione respectively in any way other than the one dictated by their limited moral understanding of the world. The pressure on the reader is not to make the same narrow-minded moral judgment.

If O'Shea undergoes any moral struggle with this murder, either before or after the act, the reader is not aware of it. He hates Le Maitre and worships Josephine. He seems to be satisfied that if he can not persuade Josephine to go away, murdering Le Maitre is the only way to save her. Dougall makes no effort to reprimand or condone the murder, but contextualizes it with another one that occurs at the beginning of the novel, with the murderess finally being allowed her defence at the end of the book.

The story of Mrs. Day and her murdered baby, like the scenes with Gor and the "beetles without feelers" in *A Question of Faith,* functions thematically to raise an issue in an almost parable-like manner. The novel then continues on with a related but different story, which expands on the nuances and intricacies not discussed in the initial story, often so subtly it is not noticeable that there is a connection between the two. Near the end of the novel both tales are resolved simultaneously, and in such a way that each helps enlighten the other. It should also be noted that in both novels, the central characters of the parables are women, and socially disenfranchised ones: Gor, labeled a witch; Mrs. Day, labeled "a strange woman" (10), "mad" (19),and pronounced insane at her murder trial.

Just as Gor's beetle anecdote is connected to the larger narrative concerning Harvey, so are there parallels between Mrs. Day and the concerns of Mme. Le Maitre. In both cases, the women are the victims of their husbands' cruelty, feel trapped in their respective situations, but possess a clear faith in the mercy of God to liberate them. Mrs. Day tells Caius that she and her children are "going to see a friend" where there will be a welcome for them. (12) The three simple sentences she contributes to the short conversation with Caius demonstrate her certainty that God will save them in their time of need. Mme. Le Maitre's response to Caius' wanting to know why she doesn't end her marriage is longer than three sentences, but conveys a similar faith: "You see, I have talked to God and the Holy Mother about this. I know . . . they will do what is good for me. I ask God always that Le Maitre may not come back to me, so now I know that if . . . he does come back it will be God's will. Who am I that I should know best?" (214) Later, when Josephine refuses to flee the island in the face of her husband's return because she feels God requires her to stay, Caius asks her how she knows God requires it. Her response is that she "has prayed. [She knows] God has taken this thing in his own hand" (242).

The issues raised by Le Maitre's murder reflect back on and enlighten the circumstances surrounding the murder of the baby. O'Shea kills Le Maitre, not because he hates him (though he does) but because he loves Josephine. While he gets away with the murder, he performs the act knowing that he might get caught and that his wife and children would suffer from his absence. The potential risk involved shows the murder is an act of love for Madame Le Maitre.

Mrs. Day intends to drown all three of her children and herself, believing they will all go to heaven, escaping the abusive Farmer Day in the process. "Day, he is a bad father; he don't care for the children or me. That's why I've put her in the water" (274). That she and her children lead a miserable life is evident to Caius, and the look of sadness in the children's eyes touches his heart. (5) Mrs. Day loves her baby and chooses to kill because she feels she would be doing what would be best for the girl. She too takes a risk, but unlike O'Shea is caught and punished. Like O'Shea's murder, Mrs. Day's murder is also an act of love.

By introducing love as the initiator of universally condemned actions like murder, Dougall asks her audience not only what it means to be moral, but what the nature of love is. The question for Mrs. Day is one of euthanasia: is it worse to let someone you love live and suffer than it is to put them out of their misery by killing them? For O'Shea, it is a choice of which one of two people must die if both cannot live. The distinction the text asks us to make as readers is the one between morality and legality, the same distinction Alice has to make, and the same distinction Jesus asked the Pharisees to make, according to Dougall. The assumption in that religious group - Judaism being a legalistic religion - was that keeping the law was synonymous with doing the will of God, ergo, knowing the law and following the law to the letter meant knowing and following the will of God to the letter. Presumably, anyone who can claim to be in such a position is also in a position to decide who is not following the will of God and isolate them. Jesus' goal was to break down the law of the people and replace it with a higher law of love. (Pro 102)

Dougall's belief that the same pharisaic principle existed in the church of her own day lead her to suggest modern-day examples of the breaking of

laws upon which everyone would have agreed ("Thou shalt not kill," for example), and to show how they could be violated in obedience to a higher law, that of ideal love. Nowhere does Dougall condone the behaviour of either O'Shea or Mrs. Day; to claim that Dougall is in favor of murder under certain circumstances based on this evidence would be silly. However, she does want to do several things: highlight the other wrongs committed here that lead to the murders: the behaviour of Captain Le Maitre towards his young wife and of farmer Day to his wife and children; and ask the question that if these murders adhere to a higher law than human law, should humans be allowed to pass judgment, or should that not be left to God? One of the central issues of *The Mermaid*, as it is to a lesser degree in *A Question of Faith*, and even more so in *The Earthly Purgatory*, is love in its most perfect form. Ideal love is not only the motivation for two morally questionable murders, but also the ultimate salvatory vehicle for Caius Simpson.

These stories of murder also allow Dougall to criticize the church. It is following the rule of the church that women must obey and be subservient to their husbands that creates these situations in the first place. If the church were to be more responsible in advocating fair and loving treatment of all, these women would have had other options for removing themselves from abusive situations with their husbands and Mrs. Day and O'Shea would not have felt forced into killing.

Caius begins the novel with several pharisaic qualities, including a heavy concern for outward appearance and a "holier than thou" approach to others, that added to his being a male makes him, like Hal Harvey, a likely figure to represent the church as it stands in need of change. After Jim Hogan has pulled Caius from the water, saving him from certain death, Caius is

forced to recognize that Jim has exceeded him in several respects, a difficult thing to do as "[Caius] looked down upon him as a person of low taste and doubtful morals" (16). In medical school, Caius' character really begins to show itself. He is extremely concerned with his physical appearance and with whom he associates (34). Moreover, he has acquired the behaviour he learned from his father.

> He was a sober young man: as his father's teaching had been strict, so he was now strict in his rule over himself. He frequented religious services, going about listening to popular preachers of all sorts, and critically commenting upon their sermons to his friends. He was really a very religious and well-intentioned man, all of which stood in his favour with the more sober portion of society whose favour he courted. . . . He was conceited and self-righteous, but not obviously so. (35)

Upon his graduation from medical school in the big city of Montreal, Caius returns to his parents' home on Prince Edward Island. His response to the people there is uniformly one of condescension. His mother's reaction to seeing him with his cousin Mabel is that they will eventually marry, an attitude which Caius now finds vulgar. "He had no contempt for it, because it was his mother who was betraying vulgarity. He felt sorry that she should be like that - that all the men and women with whom she was associated were like that. He felt sorry for Mabel, because she enjoyed it, and consequently more tenderhearted towards her than he had ever felt before" (52). He has become very elitist, and contemptuous of his family and the islanders generally.

Caius' view of himself as superior to all those around him denies him at least two experiences fundamental in Dougall's mind to the Christ life: love and friendship. When Jim Hogan tries to befriend Caius, the latter sees Jim as "the acknowledged leader of the young men of that part who were not

above certain low and mischievous practices to which Caius did not dream of condescending. Caius repulsed the offer of friendship extended to him" (40). Also, "the households with which his parents were friendly made great merrymaking over his return. . . . Caius was not diverted; he had not the good-nature to be in sympathy with the sort of hilarity that was exacted from him" (40). Good nature and friendliness have become scarce qualities in Caius. On the subject of love, Caius' response to his mother's questions of his choosing a marriage partner "[assures] her that [Caius'] expression and [his] words [arise] from a heart ignorant of the quality of love" (37).

Caius' first incitement to love signifies the beginning of his movement away from his pharisaic attitude. Caius falls in love with the mermaid (all the more significant since Caius is a man of science and the mermaid is a mythological creature), and when he goes to study in Europe, "the influence of the beautiful face [remains] with him. That which had come to him was the new birth of mind . . . --the opening of the inward eye to the meaning and joy of all things" (71). Caius is at first "more or less unconscious that this love had been the door to the more wealthy gardens of his mind" (72), and is only reminded of his feelings by seeing his love again, in the form of Madame Le Maitre, on his mission to Cloud Island three years later.

As a good man of science Caius has rejected his Christian upbringing, but as a "child of the age [who dares] not deny its highest precepts," he responds to "those stirring principles of Socialism . . . abroad in the world" (81) and decides to go help the people of Cloud Island as petitioned upon his return from Europe. As a point in his favor, and a way to distinguish him from the pharisaic mindset with which he has been at times so far associated, "he [does] not think so much of the applause of others as of the real

worthiness of the deed" (82). When he sees the affluence of the islanders on the main island on which he lands, he is indignant that "people so apparently well-to-do should let their neighbors die without extending a helping hand" (92). These general philanthropic tendencies show that the seeds of change are there, that Caius is corrigible; his enforced isolation and winter-long sojourn with the people of Cloud Island give the seeds time to sprout, the corrective forces time to work.

Caius' experiences on Cloud Island are an important part of his development; a similar process occurs for Durgan in *The Earthly Purgatory* and will be discussed in the next chapter. Isolation as a necessary means to spiritual enlightenment is a common myth. The Buddha went into the forest alone where he was tempted three times; five hundred years later Jesus went to the desert for forty days and forty nights, where he too was tempted. Mohammed spent much time alone in a cave, meditating, after which he received the Koran. Caius too makes his own spiritual progress in part through his isolation. Cloud Island is figuratively isolated by its name. It is as though it is suspended and difficult to get to. Narratively, it is isolated by ice for four months of the year so that no ships can leave or arrive. Josephine warns him before he comes not to do so unless he is "willing to be cut off from the world" (77), a lot to ask of anyone. He is given another opportunity to leave shortly after his arrival, but elects not to go. Significantly, Caius chooses his isolation, just as the enlightened men mentioned above chose theirs.

Caius works hard all winter at saving lives, one of the ultimate hero acts in all mythologies. He does not get paid, and works not for "the applause of others [so much] as [for] the real worthiness of the deed" (82). What is

more, he works among outcasts. The ladies on the first island he arrives at call the inhabitants of Cloud Island "a worthless set" (88). Leaving the material comfort of that first night, his efforts are not appreciated by the islanders for the first while, and yet he continues there with Josephine to do what he can.

Caius' ultimate moral dilemma in the novel comes when he must decide what his response to the return of Captain Le Maitre will be. Aware of O'Shea's willingness to murder, but ignorant of any definitive plan on his part, Caius struggles with and ultimately accepts for himself the responsibility of killing Le Maitre in the interests of Josephine. The presentation of O'Shea's plan to send Josephine away with Caius relieves him of the responsibility of murder, yet at the crucial moment, when Josephine is tempted to run and not accept God's will, Caius does not back up O'Shea's plea, but tells Josephine to follow her own conscience, asking her forgiveness for trying to tempt her. He is scorned by O'Shea for this, but Dougall's response is quite different: "A man cannot see the forces at work upon his inmost self. [Caius] did not know that Josephine's soul had taken his by the hand and lifted it up -- that his love for her had risen from earth to heaven when he feared the slightest wrong-doing for her more than all other misfortune" (248).

In chapter two I suggested Alice's role as the one who could show Harvey the error of his ways in *A Question of Faith* was, if not dependent upon, at least supported by her being a woman. This relationship between the feminine and spiritual growth into the Christ life continues in *The Mermaid*. The spiritual state of Caius can be seen as representative of that of the church as Dougall sees it, and his growth through to the end of the novel is presumably what Dougall wishes for the church. Josephine represents for

Caius (and the reader) what Alice represents for Harvey, that is, an offer of redemption from his current path, and a model of behaviour which he should try to emulate. More than that though, Josephine represents an ideal spiritual level attained by few. If Josephine exceeds Alice in her spirituality, it is fitting that Caius seems to have a greater potential for growth than Harvey.

On his arrival at Cloud Island, Caius recognizes the figure from the ocean walking behind him on the beach and, wondering about her connection with the island, relates her somehow to Mme. Le Maitre. The realization that the two are one does not occur until near the end of his winter-long sojourn on the island, and by this time he has gotten to know something of the personality of the woman, making his love for her more substantial than when it simply entailed love of the face and laugh of the mermaid. When Caius discovers the truth of Mme. Le Maitre's identity, he tells her of his love, yet he does not understand the full significance of his own feelings the way she does: "It was plain now that she saw and believed the truth of his love; it appeared too, that she felt it to be a blessing. He could not understand this, but she wasted no words in explanation" (199).

Though Caius has already learned to love the mermaid, it is Josephine who first figuratively extends her hand to him by giving him more credit for his goodness than he gives himself. To her plea for help, which tells him he is "a good man . . . [who goes] to church, and [believes] in the Divine Christ, who was also a physician" (77), Caius thinks to himself that "[he] has neither the belief nor the enthusiasm she [attributes] to [him]" (78). It is initially Josephine's faith that pulls Caius up to the level he attains by the end of the novel.

This idealisation of Caius' ability to love precipitates his behaviour towards Farmer Day upon returning to Prince Edward Island. With Caius' return to his parents' home and the impending death of Mrs. Day, a second framing event similar to the one involving Mrs. Day occurs between Caius and Farmer Day. The effect too is similar, highlighting in this case the development of Caius. The following quote accurately describes the apotheosis which labels Caius' growth a success and signifies his readiness to marry the angelic Josephine:

> It was nine years since Caius had first made up his mind that Day was a monster of brutality and wickedness; now he could not think himself back into the state of mind that could have formed such a judgment. When Caius had condemned Day, he had been a religious youth who thought well of himself; now his old religious habits and beliefs had dropped off, but he did not think well of himself or harshly of his neighbour. In those days he had felt sufficient for life; now all his feeling was summed up in the desire that was scarcely a hope, that some heavenly power, holy and strong, would come to his aid.
>
> It is when the whole good of life hangs in a trembling balance that people become like children, and feel the need of the motherly powers of Heaven. Caius sat with Day for two hours, and Josephine did not come down to speak to him. He was glad to know that Day's evening passed the more easily because he sat there with him; he was glad of that when he was glad of nothing that concerned himself. (283-4)

Caius has learned humility, which for Dougall is the fruit of love, and central to the Christ life. In the words of Josephine, Caius' soul has grown into the kind that allows him to be happy. For Josephine, it is the process of living a good life and going through the gate of suffering which allows the soul to grow to the stage where it can rejoice.

Dougall's polemic here reflects Keats' definition earlier in the century of the world as "the vale of Soul-making" as opposed to "the vale of tears." For Keats, "the use of . . . a World of Pains and troubles is to school an

intelligence and make it a soul" (250). Intelligences, of which there may be millions, says Keats, only become souls when they acquire identities which in turn can only be accomplished when the "heart [can] feel and suffer in a thousand diverse ways" (250). The process identified by Josephine and experienced to a degree in the preceding quote by Caius exemplifies Dougall's concern with the real versus the ideal. Caius' decision to support Josephine in her decision to wait for her returning husband and his refusal to murder Captain LeMaitre show he has gone beyond the level of murder in his soul making. Caius refrains from murder as much as he would like to do it. The soul making which takes place in Caius is part of his journey towards the ideal, where Josephine waits for him, having grown her soul through her own suffering.

The union the two achieve at this point in their relationship echoes the epigraph to the novel: "Lady I fain would tell how evermore/Thy soul I know not from thy body nor/Thee from myself, neither our love from God." With the growth of the speaker's soul, his heightened perception causes him to focus on the soul of his lover, so that even the physical body - the most tangible part of her existence - is defined by and recognized in terms of the intangible aspect of her being. The woman's soul defines and gives meaning to her body, but also transcends it, mingling and uniting with the speaker's soul so that the two are often indistinguishable. In the first line, the soul becomes the point of reference for the self, so that in the third line "Thee from myself" means "your soul from mine." "Our love" is the love not of or between their bodies, but of and between their souls, and this love is so perfect it is indistinguishable from God. Thus, the love between the two souls

results in an actual apotheosis of the lovers, a process paralleled in Josephine and Caius' relationship, and explanatory of Dougall's thesis on ideal love.

It is important that Caius does not discover that Josephine is the mermaid until near the end of his stay on Cloud Island. Caius has learned to love in a nearly ideal way only through his experiences on the island which have taught him humility and "made" his soul into something greater than it was when he arrived there. When he discovers that Josephine and the mermaid are one, he has reached a point in his development where he is capable of a love true and deep enough to warrant someone like Josephine. It is only when Caius is able to truly love that he is introduced to Josephine, the woman he has come to respect in many ways, as the mermaid with whom he has for so long been irrationally in love.

Josephine is repeatedly associated with angelic or heavenly imagery. Not only does she live on Cloud Island - as angels might be depicted living on islands of cloud - but she holds a prominent place there, one might even say *the* prominent place. Everyone knows her, including people on the other island nearby, and all seem to respect her and her leadership. Her surname, Le Maitre, or "The Master," lends weight to her role on Cloud Island as a leader. When Caius asks O'Shea who Mme. Le Maitre is, he immediately responds, "`an angel from heaven'" (151). When Caius and she part company on the beach, he looks back to see her horse "casting up a little cloud of snow behind it" so that she is "riding as it were upon a small white cloud" (181), like an angel. When Caius confesses his love for her, he looks up at one point, "astonished to detect a look upon her face that would have become an angel who had received some fresh beatitude" (199).

Josephine possesses both the qualities initially wanting in Caius: love and humility. When Caius says the people of Cloud Island do not deserve that he or Josephine should sacrifice their lives to them, she replies: "Ah, no, . . . they do not deserve that. But what do we deserve--you and I?" (132) All she does for the people of Cloud Island she does out of love, which she sees as "the greatest happiness" (238). Josephine's spirituality is not bound to conform to a human doctrine, but free to grow with integrity. She is devout in her own way, though she probably doesn't know whether she is Protestant or "Papist" (161). Dougall feels this to be the best way: "the truest hearts . . . don't trouble about religious opinions; they have got the essential oil expressed out of them, and that's all they want" (161-2).

While Josephine's supremacy of spirit allows her to nurture Caius, she remains, in terms of her ability to effect change in the islanders, quite powerless. She is respected by them and "keeps everything running in very good order" (126), but she is unable to persuade the islanders to take the simple steps necessary to help stop the diphtheria epidemic. Josephine's role, in the larger social context, is not controlling, but indirectly persuasive. To Caius she says: "perhaps they will listen to you, because you are a man and a doctor" (150). Josephine is able to exert influence where she cannot effect direct change.

As she does later in *Pro Christo et Ecclesia*, Dougall stresses here the importance of friendship and companionship, qualities authenticated in part by how much emphasis Josephine places on them. She tells Caius that the angels painted the marriage scene on the cliff "because it is the best thing to paint, . . . the best human thing" (179). While a modern and pessimistic reading might disagree, ideally we might still look at marriage as the ultimate

sign of love, companionship, friendship and commitment between two people--all the qualities that describe the Christ life. "[Marriage] is the best thing we can think of, except God" (179).

> You see, when I was at school in a convent I had a friend. I was perfectly happy when I was with her and she with me; it was a marriage. When we went in the garden or on the sea, we were only happy when we were with each other. . . . Many people are not given grace to be lonely--they are sufficient to themselves. They say it is enough to worship God; it is a lie. He cannot be pleased; it is selfish even to be content to worship God alone (179-80).

The symbolic importance of marriage in the Christian tradition further informs Dougall's understanding of ideal love and the Christ life. The church is conceived of as a marriage partner, and the bride of Christ; all those who consider themselves Christians are by implication also brides of Christ. Marriage therefore, is at its best not only the perfect relationship between two people, but between people and God. The term "perfect" is important here, because where marriage is the ideal relationship, its reality, both between people and between people and God, is flawed. Of the picture in the hill Josephine says "if [it] crumbles to pieces, that does not alter the fact that the angels made it lovely" (179). Similarly, the Christ life is Dougall's idealisation of a Christian lifestyle as contrasted with the reality of the nineteenth-century church.

The fact that Josephine and Caius are the only ones who see the image in the cliff, and that he sees it only because she shows it to him reinforces marriage as an emblem of ideal love, and Josephine's custodial role over its understanding and expression. It is not clear from the text whether this is a travelled route and no one has ever bothered to look up, or whether they are in an out-of-the-way place. Significantly though, "it was a new road for

[Caius]; he had never attempted it before" (178), and this picture of marriage, of love, affects him deeply.

Josephine's living of the Christ life makes her a model to the rest of the inhabitants of the island, and a personification of the ideal in Dougall's model. When Caius enters her house for the first time "he [begins] to suspect that he [has] passed from the region of the real into the ideal" (130). Josephine's ideal nature also contrasts with Caius, particularly his inability to live ideally. Reflecting on his own initial response to the mermaid, Caius fears investigating the issue because of the scorn he would receive. "The ideal man who acted thus would no doubt be jeered at, but, secure in his own integrity, he could easily support the jeers. Caius would willingly have changed places with this hero, but he could not bring himself to act the part" (50).

Dougall again emphasises the importance of friendship in *The Mermaid*. When Josephine tells Caius that love, suffering and God are all good (199), "his heart [does] not rebel so bitterly . . . as it would have done if he had not felt . . . that his present experience was in some sort a *comradeship* with her" (201; my emphasis). Le Maitre's sin in leaving his wife seems to be that he has deprived her of everything that should be good about marriage while at the same time preventing her from experiencing a marriage the way God intended. "I think that if *anyone* . . . were to come to me from out the big world . . . and offer to talk to me, I could not do anything else than desire their companionship" (211).

Happiness - his and ours, says Josephine - is why God came to earth in the first place. "He was not content only to bless us, He wanted us to enjoy him. He wanted that happiness from us; and He wanted us to expect it from

him and each other" (239). Suffering, she says, is the gate to happiness (240) -- the necessary means in an imperfect world and not the end that God intends. If happiness, companionship, friendship and love are good, it is just their opposites that are not good. Caius hurts when he is made aware during the seal hunt that he does not belong on the island. "[The islanders] had their interests, their hopes and fears; he had nothing in common with any of them; he was alone with his pain, and his pain was just this, that he was alone" (191). Likewise, Josephine's pain is that she is alone, married but deserted.

The Mermaid reintroduces the topic of common sense and feminine sensibility, and the relationship between reason and morality. In *The Mermaid,* as in *Question,* nonsense and lack of sense are feminine attributes, quaint and expected in women, unacceptable and combated in men. Josephine - the angel, Caius' redeemer, and the most spiritual of all - is often lacking in sense, or reason. "With sweet unreason [Josephine sets] aside all authority when it [clashes] with her opinion" (179). Inside her home for the first time, Caius regards the decor and says to himself: "she is a romantic-minded woman ... I wonder if she has much sense after all?" (130) In the first quote, the maintenance of the status quo makes rebellion against authority unreasonable; in the second, the dualistic nature of western thought creates apparently mutually exclusive oppositions: the romantic-minded over against the sensible.

Caius on the other hand tends to fall back on reason as the final decision maker. In contemplating Le Maitre's murder, he is momentarily arrested by reason. "His whole being revolted from the thought; when the deed came before his eyes, it seemed to him that only in some dark feverish imagination could he have dreamed of acting it out, that of course in plain

common sense, that daylight of the mind, he could not will to do this" (225). Common sense attaches itself in this quote to daylight; lack of common sense to feverish darkness, and the masculine and the feminine are further associated with good and evil respectively.

One of the most vivid images in *Heart of Darkness* is the woman on the bank who seems to control the natives. There, close to the heart of darkness, she is powerfully mysterious and described in often animalistic terms as are the other natives. She is closely associated with, and representative of, all that the darkness means for Marlow. Darkness is symbolized by the unknown of the interior of the dark continent for whites in the colonial period; women; lack of reason; lack of sense. We fear what we do not understand, what is different; and the different - the other, which a patriarchal system misunderstands - is female. That these images exist in western literature is evinced by the fact that they need to be pointed out. The average reader is so used to the connection between "female" and "other" that it seems natural. Part of the function of a feminist criticism is to highlight and question these associations, and Dougall challenges the paradigm, not by breaking the associations (which she quite obviously maintains), but by challenging the groups of associations at the point where they are labeled "good" or "bad." Josephine is everything that men accuse women of being, and this is precisely her strength.

Again on the question of Josephine's marriage,

> reason, common sense, [appears] to [Caius] to do away with what slight moral or religious obligation [is] involved in such a marriage; yet he [is] quite sure . . . that this young wife, left without friend or protector, would [be] upon a very much lower level if she had thought in the manner as he [does], . . . [and] he [reflects] . . . that he should not love her at all if she [were to take]

> a stand less high in its *sweet unreasonableness* (216-7; my emphasis).

His reason for this: *"had she done otherwise, she would not have been Josephine"* (217; my emphasis). Hence, Josephine's entire character, affiliation with heaven, and salvific capability are inextricably tied to her "sweet unreasonableness," to her femininity.

The extended quote from page two of *The Mermaid* cited at the beginning of this chapter continues with the following insight on Caius: "As a result, he was, if not a reasonable being, a reasoning and a moral one" (2). Here the relationship between reason and morality is inverted and Caius' behaviour - and by extension Harvey's as well - is initially described as unreasonable. The distinction is made between reasonable on the one hand and reasoning and moral on the other. Dougall explicitly states that reasonable behaviour may be immoral, at least as far as society defines morality, thereby privileging unreasonable behaviour. The moral nature of Caius described in the opening pages of the novel is a real, earthly morality, whereas the morality he possesses by the end reveals his growth towards idealism, ideal love, and increased faith.

Faith is something Josephine possesses and Caius learns through his associations with her. With her submission to the return of her husband, and through her comments that tell us *why* she submits, we learn she has enormous faith in God (242). To the quip that her faith goes so far as to be ridiculous at times, Dougall would likely reply "exactly." Caius finds that "the lady whom he [loves is] a person whom he [is] obliged to invent. . . . He [has] not a shadow of proof of her existence" (158). To fall in love with an imaginary woman is a big step for a man of science whose mother, not long

before, knew he had no concept of love, even for a woman like Mabel, whose existence is assured.

Towards the end of the novel Mrs. Day shows Caius the floating device that Josephine had used and which gave her the appearance of a mermaid. "It was torn now, or, rather, it seemed that it had been cut from top to bottom . . . one great rent . . ." (280). Juxtaposing this with a scene from the account of Jesus death in the Gospel of Matthew, of which Dougall would most certainly have been aware provides an important comment on Josephine's importance: "at that moment (when Jesus died) the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom" (Matt 27:54).

Josephine's heavenly and salvific qualities become at this point Christ-like, not in that she is sacrificed, but in that Caius is shown the mystery. The curtain of the temple separated the Holy of Holies - the part of the Jewish temple in which Yahweh lived, and where only the High Priest could enter once a year - from the common section of the temple. One interpretation of this myth is that in dying, Jesus dispelled the mystery that separated God from the people, bringing them together. The reason for his death is attributed to the love of God for the people. Applying those ideas to this text, love, through Josephine, rips the curtain of mystery and allows Caius to understand what he could not understand before, bringing him into contact with Josephine and the Christ life. It is not all his years of studying science that liberates Caius, but love and a feminine sensibility. The faith that he has learned from Josephine has been rewarded.

Chapter IV

The Earthly Purgatory

Dougall's ninth novel, *The Earthly Purgatory* (1905), further explores the concepts dealt with in *Pro Christo et Ecclesia* and her earlier novels. Ideal love is presented in the form of Hermione's willingness to sacrifice her own happiness for her father's safety. Hermione, like Alice in *A Question of Faith* and Josephine in *The Mermaid*, comes to a moral decision - not to reveal the truth of the Claxton case, thus sparing her father from earthly "justice" - through her own reasoning and adheres to her decision in spite of its lack of "common sense" for someone like Alden, whose officious nature prevents him from understanding Hermione's reasoning. Hermione, living in love and humility, personifies the Christ life; Alden, bogged down in a quagmire of legalism, is a pharisaic character who resembles the Christian church's blinding legalism and consequent insensitivity and lack of humility.

The title of the novel indicates its setting. At the top of Deer mountain and poised between heaven and earth, though obviously tied to the latter, the setting for much of the novel is a place of anonymity and solitude. Caius Simpson and Neil Durgan possess many similar traits, one of the similarities being their psychological and moral development. Since these two work as protagonists, much of the action of the novels takes place in a context of relative isolation, one on a literal island, one on a figurative one.

The sense of isolation from the world in *The Earthly Purgatory* is reiterated through descriptions of clouds cutting off the view of the towns below, thus giving the impression of living on an island with "the adjacent

mountain-tops . . . like [other] black islands in mid-ocean" (63). Indeed, "there are not many houses in the whole mountain range at this altitude" (31). Durgan, and the two sisters to a lesser extent, have "out of war and play and love . . . brought only [themselves] and such [coats] as [are] as much part of a [human] as its fur is a part of an animal" (7-8). For all three, but perhaps especially for Durgan, there is the sense that, as in death, they have left earthly possessions behind - divorcing themselves from their past and their families - and have begun new lives, though temporary and purgatorial, somewhere between heaven and earth.

The similarities between this isolated locus and that in *The Mermaid* are significant. The top of the mountain on certain days is like an island in the clouds; the location for much of the action in *The Mermaid* is Cloud Island. Those who have arrived on the mountain have left everything behind them, just as Caius and Josephine have done. Both places are sources of spiritual development (for Bertha, Durgan, and Caius) as well as havens for the spiritually advanced (Hermione and Josephine). *A Question of Faith* represents a slightly different situation in that there is nothing heavenly or isolated about its location. The heath however, while more obviously a part of earth, performs a similar function. Isolated from the village, the cottages there have been abandoned by society. Here is a place for Alice to develop spiritually as she works through her dilemma, and a place of refuge for two spiritually advanced characters: Gor and the old father.

The people who live on Deer mountain have all in some sense fled society and are engaged in some type of atonement. The two sisters have fled the north in the wake of the trial of Hermione for the murder of her father in which she was acquitted, to take refuge in solitude and anonymity in the

south. With emancipation, Adam and his wife have come to the mountain and help the sisters any way they can. While the need or achievement of atonement is not as clear for this couple as it is for the others, they are definitely refugees as the others are. Durgan, part of a wealthy southern family stripped of everything in the civil war save name and reputation, has come to the mountain to work a mica mine, for which he receives a small salary. His daughter dead and his wife having left him, he too has chosen to live out the remaining years of his life isolated and secluded from the rest of the world. The atonement sought by the characters on Deer Mountain, in so far as it is purgatorial, is based on actions, and this produces in the novel a dual emphasis incorporating both faith (essential to Dougall's polemic) and works.

Dougall's use of characters to illustrate her beliefs is not as clear cut in *Earthly Purgatory* as in *Question of Faith* and *Mermaid*. While this makes the characters somewhat harder to categorize, it provides the reader with more realistic examples of Dougall's pharisaic personalities than those in *Question*, which often appear more theoretical and polarised. *The Earthly Purgatory*, like *Question of Faith*, seems less of an effort by Dougall to chronicle spiritual advancement in a character than *The Mermaid*. Alden and Harvey, the ones most needing correction, apparently learn little or nothing from their experiences. Rather, both novels set up the opportunity for renewal and development in the less extreme, more corrigible characters of Alice and Durgan, and, more importantly for the didactic model of Dougall's work I am suggesting exists, exemplify the actual and the ideal (in the opposing pairs of

Harvey and Alice, and Alden and Josephine) in the hope of shifting readers from the former to the latter.[9]

Alden's function as a lawyer is to uphold and enforce the laws of his society, which he believes tantamount to the laws of God. His highest allegiance - above which he places nothing - is "to the law of [his] country, and the law of [his] God" (224). He places this allegiance above all friendships and bonds with humanity, including his relationship with his beloved Hermione. Even if re-opening the Claxton case means causing her public suffering after all the private pain she has endured, Alden will do it to see "justice" done. He would even be willing to march his own son to the gallows had he been the one to kill Claxton (135). He can "[concede] no mercy to a criminal," admitting he has "no choice" but to follow the law. (254) Alden then, like the Pharisees, has no higher allegiance than the fulfillment of the law, and he, like them, is merciless in adhering to it (291). Bertha understands this about Alden, that he would "sacrifice [the sisters] to a fetish [called] `justice,' pretending it is God . . . even if it cost him his own life" (149).

But the legal is not the holy, and this is exactly Dougall's point: that humanity and God's concept of justice are not the same thing, and as God's law comes above humanity's law, the latter must never confuse itself with the former, for the "business [of humanity] is not the attempt to keep the law . . . [but to] pray and trust" (*Pro.* 101-2). Hermione, who understands best this difference between the divine and the mundane, explicitly states Dougall's argument to Durgan as he contemplates what to do with the information given him by the imprisoned 'Dolphus. "You think you understand justice,

[9]In addition to the resemblance between Harvey and Alden, there are other complementary relationships between characters in the works under examination here. This chapter will consist mainly of a systematic comparison of the parallels between characters in this and the other two novels previously discussed.

and that there is someone you ought to bring to justice. Justice belongs to God. He alone can mete it out in this world so as to save the soul that has sinned. Are you afraid to leave it to him?" (204). Hermione, who has left justice to God and has worked solely by love, is glad she has done so, for she recognizes, as Dougall would say Jesus did, that what is necessary is not to condemn others through a pious assumption of understanding God's will, but to be open to them with "a good heart of spontaneous love" (*Pro* 125), "because God respects and trusts and loves them" (*Pro* 49).

Just as Harvey is unable to trust Alice because of her unwillingness to put "God's law" first, so Alden finds himself, in his efforts to mete out justice, suspecting Hermione of playing a role in her father's murder. Alden draws the conclusion from the letters from Hermione to Beardsley - letters actually written to her father, as we find out later - that she had taken Beardsley as her lover (252), and that she has aided and abetted him, if not in her father's murder itself, at least in hiding him from justice afterwards. Having convinced himself of Hermione's complicity in the matter, Alden tells Bertha that "the course which [her] sister . . . pursued appears to [him] suicidal" (256), and that he can not "endorse her action further," even if he wanted to. This inability on Alden's part to refrain from making judgments of others, marginalizing and condemning them in the process, not only demonstrates Dougall's concern for the danger of tunnel vision in piety, but represents the larger problem of what Dougall calls "the sin of sight," the assurance that one knows God's will in any matter (*Pro* 171).

Alden is a ruthless, merciless man. Hermione pleads with him for empathy, saying "think what it would have been like if it had been your father"(327); Durgan wonders whether this appeal would reach Alden,

especially in the light of his apparent willingness to convict his own son if necessary. When the stranger describing himself as Adolphus Courthope escapes, Alden is "pitiless" in his anger against him (302). When Durgan suggests that Claxton, being human, "might have a latent soul in him" (330), Alden responds by citing his list of crimes (not for the first time) and saying that Claxton "has a soul, humanly speaking, beyond hope of redemption" (330-1). Alden fails to see that redemption is possible only, Dougall would say, because it is *not* a matter of human decision or influence. Alden's earthly law restricts his ability to love; Hermione's heavenly law expands hers. Alden has a "little soul" (333), which has yet to be made big, as Keats' soul-making process suggests is necessary for a heart. Alden is very much trapped in the "unschooled intelligence" stage of Keats' model.

Hermione is spiritually stronger than Alden, and it is his weakness of heart that forces him to lean on the law for support, finding justification for his attitude in that long-standing tradition. Alden is only as sure of himself as he is sure of what the law asks of him; Hermione's superior fortitude and will evinces the weakness of his position. When Alden tries to confront Hermione in her house with his new information and hypothesis of her guilt, she turns to Durgan, inviting him to stay but saying she does not need his protection. In refusing to allow Alden to wield the power of evidence against her, she renders his own strength as an individual impotent, so that when Hermione looks at Alden as she invites Durgan to stay (a further sign from Hermione that she will not be ruled by human law), Durgan "[sees] the little man quiver with distress" (241). And again, when Hermione finally informs Alden of the secret she has kept from him (something she does in her own time, not his), that her father is alive, it is "the strength of her will"

that keeps him from moving (321). Alden has no control over himself; he is a tool of the law and helpless without it. He is "*forced* in the name of common justice" to gather evidence against Hermione, breaking her confidence in the process (250; my emphasis).

Durgan is an intelligent man who is generally good and more open-minded than Alden. With his strong sense of right and wrong he resembles Alden in his facility in condemning those he is convinced are in the wrong and supporting those he is convinced are in the right. Sure that Hermione is innocent, neither Alden, Bertha, nor all the circumstantial evidence available can weaken his belief. When Alden begins to doubt Hermione, Durgan is the only one who has faith in her innocence. Durgan can be highly condemnatory, exemplified by his attitude towards Adam's wife and the mulatto, `Dolphus, and his anger towards Bertha when he realizes she suspects her sister of her father's murder. He tells her she is "very foolish" (155), and later that he "never liked [her] so well since [he] knew [her] thoughts about [her] sister" (343). His preoccupation with bringing `Dolphus to "justice," and lack of sympathy for Eve is part of the reason he is in Purgatory. He compares the two to a "brood of snakes" (88). This is not a categorical statement against blacks, for he spares Adam who is good by virtue of his innocence and simplicity, from the fate that he would wish on `Dolphus and Eve: death.

Durgan is not a particularly proud man, and he places the welfare of those around him equal to or above his own. He has lost what many would call everything, and from this experience he has learned humility. Seeing his friend Adam alone after the death of his wife, Durgan gets down on his knees with him, humbling himself, showing Adam the similarities in their

burdens. "We were both reared in the same old place, Adam. You'll not forget that I'm lonely in the world now, too, and a poor working man like yourself" (105). Despite his dislike for Eve, he does "all he can in the interests of justice and humanity" to identify her murderer before he returns to his own hut on the mountain (107). Hermione, the epitome of goodness, sees enough of that quality in Durgan to hope she can find in him a confessor for her obviously troubled sister (90). When Durgan sees Claxton lying paralyzed, helpless and weak, he feels his "involuntary sympathy" (312); this sympathy is an important characteristic in Dougall's schema. Through his behaviour towards those around him, Durgan achieves the grace he has come to the mountain to find, and this works along with his ability to have faith in Hermione to make him a father figure and a leader amongst the people on the mountain.

What further distinguishes Durgan from Alden is that while Durgan condemns Eve and `Dolphus, he retains the ability to see their actions from other perspectives, thereby freeing him to the possibility of making decisions independently of received knowledge and coming to conclusions different from those exhibiting "common sense". For all his condemnation of Eve, Durgan's thoughts as he stares down at her dead body revolve around his own part in her sin, wondering if it is not him after all - as a white - who must accept the blame for her character. "In [Eve] was the blood of fathers who . . . sold their own children as slaves. What chance had she to have in her nerve or fibre that could vibrate to any sense of good? If her spirit had now passed to plead at the bar of some great judgment- hall, on whose head must the doom of her transgressions fall?" (105). Durgan can admit that he might be wrong in some of his moral judgments of others because he sees that there are variables affecting each act of which he is not aware. Alden on

the other hand is convinced his moral judgments are always right, and the principal quality that separates Durgan and Alden on this point is humility. Durgan's capacity for humility is what makes his tendency towards judgment corrigible and allows him to be in Purgatory in the first place. Alden, too convinced of his own righteousness to see his errors or learn anything, is incorrigible, and must leave the mountain because it can offer him nothing. Dougall suggests that Alden will likely "return in a placable mood" (334), one more open to correction.

Durgan is not totally unsympathetic to the doctor's description of `Dolphus' final actions. In response to the account of `Dolphus' "interest in his fellows and his desire for justice to be done," Durgan "[smiles] sadly at the pathos" (309). The penultimate reference to `Dolphus combines a manifestation of the difference between Durgan and Alden with a gospel-based reference which further informs Dougall's concept of the Christ life. To Durgan the doctor says: "You think this yellow fellow and his sort mere trash . . . but I'm inclined to think he would have made a good citizen with any sort of training. He had more public spirit than ten of our corrupt politicians rolled into one" (310). The gospel-based allusion is to `Dolphus, who, as an outcast, would have been exactly the type to whom Jesus believed his ministry was directed. Hermione realizes this and shows as much kindness to `Dolphus as she can. He too has a mortal soul, she says to Durgan, and "even if we can't get real religion into his mind, we can show him kindness which must help him to believe in the mercy of God" (88). Durgan's attitude towards `Dolphus is implicitly condemned as un-Christ-like, and an inappropriate paradigm for the church at large.

Bertha's place in the novel also requires examination. During most of the novel, indeed for the two years between the trial and the beginning of the time frame covered in the story, Bertha lives in her own private hell of suspicion that her sister murdered their father in a fit of madness, and fear that the madness could return at any moment, resulting in more violence. Not only is Bertha afraid of her sister, but she is afraid to let anyone know of her suspicions and continually evades Durgan's inquiries into the source of her fear. Psychologically troubled, Bertha is in need of help from heaven (26), and asks from Durgan that he only allow her to be as she must without asking why (69). Bertha's inability to believe in the good will of her sister causes her suffering. That Durgan, a total stranger, is immediately convinced of Hermione's innocence, dismisses Bertha's fears as misplaced and insists that there is another explanation, reinforces the fact that this is something to which Bertha alone is blind, and questions the faith of a woman who has grown up loving Hermione as much as it praises the faith of the stranger who has come to mine on the mountain.

Bertha's paranoia is the source for one of three central "questions of faith" in the novel, all of which centre around Hermione (Alden believes Hermione has been unfaithful to him; Durgan is the only one who implicitly trusts her from the beginning, regardless of the accusations leveled against her). Bertha has made her own judgments about her sister's state of mind, convincing herself Hermione is mentally unstable and has murdered their father. Bertha is in need of healing, and able to affect this healing partly through working the orchard. To Bertha's inquiry as to how she might alter the radical defect in her personality - her inability to have faith - Durgan suggests she should "go on laying out the orchard [she was] working at in

spring," saying that he has "gained so much from delving that [he offers her] the same occupation with a certificate of merit" (343). Delving into rock or earth becomes a salvific process, so that, in the end, the earthly purgatory ceases to be a place of suffering and begins to be a place of healing, atonement and emancipation through work.

Hermione exhibits the qualities of heavenly love, forgiveness, and justice through the suspension of condemnation, which Dougall identifies as essential in her historical theology of Jesus. It is this likeness to Jesus that Dougall feels is missing at large in the church and must be made a priority incumbent upon the church to demonstrate. Durgan is impressed by the lady who, "in the thick of troubles, seemed by her very life to point to God" (113). It is presumably her presence in part which leads Durgan to think of the place as "a dream of home" (114), and say to himself that "surely, if the angel of peace could ever seek an earthly dwelling, she might alight [there]" (114)[10]. While Hermione is willing to protect her father from an earthly justice which she feels in its ignorance would be unjust, she is not willing to let anyone else suffer in his place (164).

Hermione has already sacrificed much for her father's sake, though she was allowed to keep her life through her acquittal on murder charges. She has "accepted her blackened reputation with dignity" (168), devoted herself to taking care of her sister, and denied her love for Alden by refusing to marry him for fear of ruining his reputation with her own (169). In searching for a motive for her actions, Durgan can find "love, blind love, [as] the only motive strong enough to initiate and sustain such a course of action" (170).

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[10]Another parallel between Hermione and Josephine is this specific reference to their angelic qualities and nature.

It is Hermione's understanding of love, so much broader and deeper than Alden's, which provides the basis for their eventual estrangement. Alden's concept of love has limits defined by the laws he defends, and justice and forgiveness only apply to those who remain within the law. Hermione's understanding of love transcends most human limitations and in that way more closely approximates Dougall's conception of the heavenly ideal of love. Hermione is dismayed to find that Alden "can concede no mercy to a criminal" (254) as she has, and as Jesus did. "Can" is important here; for Alden, like the Pharisees, and like Harvey, appears incapable of changing. Blind to his narrow-mindedness, Alden is sure he is doing God's will.

Hermione knows her father is alive, and her love for him not only allows her to sacrifice her life to his safety, but to do it without grudge or bitterness. When he is brought back to her, she forgives him totally and unconditionally, kissing him and promising to "keep [him] safe [and] take real good care of [him]" (315). Her next line: "We have a beautiful home ready for you" (315) has a definite Christian connotation suggestive of Jesus' preparing rooms in heaven, knowing that certain people will follow him there. Hermione has been rewarded for her love in that the object of that love has been returned to her, which she did not expect to happen.

Hermione's presence in purgatory is a complicated one, as what she must atone for is unclear in light of her apparent characterisation as representative of the ideal. The task ultimately given her - the care of her father - is, however, one she welcomes with joy. Unlike Durgan's mine and Bertha's orchard, Hermione's task is something she undertakes willingly, something she has always wanted to do. Purgatory for some, the mountain

has heavenly overtones for Hermione, for in a sense she has received her reward for the grace and love she has shown her father.

Hermione connects with Josephine in *Mermaid* and the father of the criminal in *Question*, in that they, more than any other characters in these works, all personify ideal love and consequently all point the way towards the Christ life, the epitome of Christian conduct. Hermione and the father are further linked in that the principal manifestation of their love exists within the context of a nuclear family: her love for her father, his for his son; both desiring their loved one's spiritual salvation. Dougall states in her non-fiction that she counts familial bonds - like marriage - as approaching the ideal form of love between people, because between members of families the bonds of love tend to be the strongest, most constant, and most forgiving.

Another link across the three novels involves the relationships between Hermione, Josephine and the old man, and Durgan, Caius and Alice, respectively. These latter three characters all, through their interactions with the utopian figures, increase their own potentials for developing similar sensibilities. While Caius is the only character to have his growth chronicled, Durgan and Alice are shown to have the potential for growth. Dougall gives the reader a hint of the beginnings of the growth process through the admirable actions of Durgan and Alice, and suggests that the process will continue through the characters' associations with people and activities that will facilitate that journey: Alice is connected with Knighton, who is wise and understands her; Durgan remains close to Hermione's influence and continues labouring physically in the hope of attaining grace.

Hermione's concern with her father when he was still "alive" was the state of his soul. Alden describes it as "her anxiety concerning the state of

irreligion in which he lived" (227), and later tells Durgan she was "very anxious as to his spiritual state (and that) it was her greatest desire that he should seek salvation" (304). In the letters Alden finds, which he mistakenly believes to have been written to Beardsley, Hermione implores her father "to turn to God in repentance and accept the Christian salvation" (269). This is almost exactly the same language used in *Question* to describe the old man's strongest desire for his son. In both cases Dougall provides examples of what she likely perceives as the ideal for evangelism. Those who evangelise do so in love and humility, acting not through coercion, but by example.

In both cases, the relationship between two family members provides the bond between martyr and other, and the word "martyr" is accurate here, for both Hermione and the old man give their lives for the ones they love. She is willing to bring the earthly punishment of death on herself to spare her father - just as the father was willing to sacrifice his own life to assure his son's salvation - and in the absence of death, she sacrifices her hope of love with Alden for her father's safety. Both of these acts are in turn based on an obviously Christian model, where the father sacrifices the son (part of the self in a Trinitarian model), for the one he loves, in this case all creation. Once again, Dougall offers her readers examples of ideal love to contrast with the reality of characters like Alden and Harvey.

The three most spiritual characters can also be linked in terms of their relationships with others. At the risk of oversimplifying Dougall's approach to fiction, just as we see Josephine, Hermione and the old man as stereotypical representatives of the Christ life, so do similar parallel relationships form a stereotype of characters representing pharisaism.[11] In

[11]The exception to this for the three novels examined here is *The Mermaid*. Alden and Harvey are both strongly pharisaic, possessing the qualities Dougall attributes as necessary for such, and

between these relatively extreme forms exist characters who grow from poorer to better practitioners of the Christ life, chiefly as a result of their intercourse with those who characterize it best. Thus, we can see a parallel between the relationships of Josephine and Caius, Hermione and Durgan, and the father and Alice, where in each case the lifestyle of the former (emphasis on action rather than rhetoric is important) becomes a corrective, and an instructive and enlightening model for the latter. If certain characters represent ideal and seriously flawed examples of Christian behaviour for Dougall, Durgan and especially Caius, represent the possibility of change, of re-direction into a more fruitful (and for the Christian church, more appropriate) lifestyle, while Alice demonstrates that not only do Christians not have a monopoly on the Christ life, but sometimes fail miserably compared to non-Christians.

A discussion of characters in this novel - especially in the case of a thesis focusing in part on the theology of the author - would be remiss in not mentioning Godson and his father. Both are sent away by Bertha on Durgan's suggestion, and only the son returns, willing to sacrifice his life to live on the mountain and help take care of Claxton and be close to Bertha. His sacrifice to forsake the world for Bertha's sake is not unlike Hermione's sacrifice for her father, for both are rooted in love. The young Godson's role in Bertha's life has definite salvific qualities, incorporating themes of companionship and fellowship. Although no marriage between Godson and Bertha is intended (it is because Godson has learned that he is too far beneath Bertha to court her that Durgan allows him to return), Godson's presence provides Bertha with

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being highly incorrigible. Caius begins as a highly pharisaic character, but undergoes a transformation, at which point we are left with no one to represent that class. There is no accurate parallel with Alden and Harvey in *The Mermaid*, except perhaps Caius' father, whose role is too minor to be significant.

things similar to that of a marriage: friendship, companionship, and Godson's love for Bertha. "`But I can't get the rows straight alone ... or prepare the ground,'" says Bertha to Durgan. He tells her "[she] needs help sadly, and perhaps [they] will both learn more wisdom than [he] was able to impart when [he] first interfered" (344). Godson is not *the* Son of God, but he is *a* son of God, as is his father, and will perform the duty such as he can.

Again in *Earthly Purgatory*, Dougall raises the same issues she did ten years earlier with *Question* and *The Mermaid*; it is often difficult to tell how much if any change has taken place in her philosophy on these recurring points. Her education and intellect make it unlikely that her philosophy and theology did not grow during this time, but the similarities across the texts suggest that there remain for Dougall certain basics required for a Christian lifestyle. Friendship, which played a significant role in *The Mermaid* in terms of Josephine's loneliness and the importance of marriage, is raised again in *Earthly Purgatory*, though with far less emphasis. Bertha, faced with the task of releasing Godson and his father from her service tells Durgan she "[stands] in need of human friends as well as of [her] animals . . . to keep [her] human. . . . [She] must get [her] mind freshened by every human [she comes] across" (47-8). The issue of friendship, of community with other humans remains a significant one in a system based on the view of a Jesus who made friends and took pleasure in community.

If Bertha's words in the preceding quote are a challenge to Durgan, he accepts it, and the result re-affirms Dougall's point on friendship. When she has told him her suspicions about her sister, he sees her pain and says: "the thoughts you are enduring . . . are too terrible for you to bear alone. You must trust in me. We Southerners were never taught to think, as the Puritans did,

that the whole heart of God could be translated into a human code" (150). Not only do friendship and communion make pain easier to bear, but they broaden one's perspective through knowing others who think differently, ultimately teaching one more about God. Durgan's offer of friendship is an act which helps to endow him with more grace.

Another issue familiar by now is that of trust and faith. Durgan summarizes the question of Hermione's secrecy. He speaks to Alden, but indirectly the words apply to Bertha as well. In either case, the speech also affirms one of Durgan's most positive attributes, his faithfulness.

> Are you able to *trust* Miss Claxton's goodness against all evidence to the contrary, or are you not? You have assured me that no one who knew her could mistrust her; and you, of all people, not only know her best, but, pardon me, love her. . . . I *believe* in her. I cannot conceive of any circumstance that could justify her secrecy and double-dealing; but I *believe* there is a justification. (223, my emphasis)

True belief, says Dougall, occurs only when justification becomes impossible, a concept with much history in the Christian tradition.

Logic, rationality and common sense are again contrasted with their opposites in this text, and again lack of the former qualities is largely the property of women. Dougall's presentation of the illogical and irrational here is not as straight forward as it is in her previous novels, undermining and at times apparently contradicting the patterns presented in earlier works. I have suggested that in the first two works a positive correlation exists between a lack of common sense, femaleness, and heightened or greater spirituality. Femininity is traditionally intuitive, while maleness is associated with reason. In *Earthly Purgatory* this correlation is, though equally informative, not universally constant. Hermione, the most spiritual character of all, *is* a

woman, but she is also described as reasonable. Durgan cites this reason in his appeal to Alden to trust her (225), saying Alden "must trust to her good sense" (231). Alden himself appeals to her good sense in relation to any promises of silence she might have kept regarding the one who committed the murder. (244) Running contrary to this, and supportive of the initial relationship exhibited in the first two texts, Alden excuses the sentiment of Hermione's letters to whom he believes to be Beardsley, calling them undoubted proofs that for him she felt "the madness . . . of love" (269). True love, like faith, requires a certain degree of "madness," or a lack of sense.

While this is the only explicit reference to any lack of common sense in Hermione, other characters are at times portrayed as "mad," but these are predominantly male, and the madness is of another sort. Claxton "[loses] all control of himself or any knowledge of what he [is] doing" when he kills Beardsley (323), and the act occurs partly as a result of his inability to make Beardsley "see his own folly" (322), and being "naturally angered by the folly of the man" (323). "Madness" in Hermione's case does not refer to lunacy or mental instability, but the willingness to live outside the boundaries of what is considered common sense.

At the same time there are two references which offer insight into the concept of madness, which, although they do not apply to Hermione, still enlighten her own "madness". First, Durgan remembers meeting `Dolphus on the night of Eve's murder and thinking his warning about Durgan's wife was produced by delirium (102). Later on he finds that "mad utterance . . . gradually taking the form of truth" (274). Second, when Durgan questions Bertha on her calm response to discovering her father is alive, she responds: "I was so dreadfully excited that I thought I was going mad; and then seemed

to grow still inside" (298). The connections made here between madness on the one hand, and truth and stillness on the other suggest the proximity between them. The mystery of madness is that it is a source of truth and stillness, which are not far from the spiritual state achieved by Hermione, Josephine and the old man.

Perhaps the final word on madness should go to the final reference in this, the latest of the three texts looked at here. Bertha confesses to Durgan that she dislikes her father and is ashamed to be with her sister, and says she has no comfort in religion because she thinks "God is cruel, or most likely it is all chance and there is no reason at the heart of the universe," to which Durgan replies: "You are quite ready to believe now in God's insanity" (342). God is insane; therefore, to believe in God requires faith, which is madness; all those who are closest to God are in some way mad by earthly standards, like the man in Plato's myth who returns to the cave from the bright sun. "Madness" as it applies to Hermione, love and God, is not the instability of those three, but a pejorative term that reflects the inability of the rest of society to comprehend fully, or even largely for that matter, what they entail.

Not strictly concerned with madness, but tied to Dougall's feminist perspective, is Alden's comment suggesting a superior feminine virtue. "Women . . . have no standard of manly virtue. . . . a man who knew the world could [never] slur over such vice, such perfidy in a parent" (331). Alden assumes that "manly virtue" is preferred to the feminine, but within the context of this and other works by the same author, the reader knows the commentary to be otherwise. It is largely Hermione's femininity that allows her to exhibit a higher virtue than Alden's limited one. I say "largely" because

women do not have a monopoly on virtue, as witnessed by the old father and Knighton in *Question,* and Caius and Durgan to a lesser degree.

All the texts looked at here have placed a high emphasis on love. Love has taken several forms, platonic and romantic, but in all cases has been a significant factor in Dougall's model called the "Christ life." She counts love as the essential ingredient of Jesus' message, and it is the source of almost everything she espouses. It is young Godson's love which ultimately saves Bertha, giving her a chance at redemption in the form of forgiving her father for what he has done, forgiving herself for what she has done to her sister, and restoration of her love for both of them and herself. The most significant manifestation of love exhibited in the novel, however, is by Hermione for her father. Hermione has based her actions, her decisions regarding her father, on love. She has lived love, and the importance of love to her is evident.

Love and faith combine to inform the purgatory theme of the novel. More specifically, love is the basic active virtue which, when combined with faith, provides the ability for an individual to perform good works with the best intentions and in the best sense. Faith leads to good works, and must be demonstrated, along with love, by the person doing the works. Good works without faith and love are worthless in terms of their salvific capabilities. Bertha becomes a surrogate mother to a variety of orphaned animals, but her lack of faith in her sister's innocence ensures her state of misery and fear will continue. Durgan is the only one with faith in Hermione, and though his lack of love in certain cases - his inability to forgive Eve and 'Dolphus - forces him to continue his work in the mines, his limited ability to love means his good works and faith do provide him with some grace.

Conversely, faith and love lead inevitably to good works. Hermione's faith in God's mercy and love for her father eventually give her the opportunity to save his soul, and Durgan's faith in and love for Hermione allow him to support her when others (Alden and Bertha) turn against her. Deer Mountain, like Purgatory, is a place where the residents can increase their potential for love and faith through work, and in turn, with increased love and faith, perform good works in order to be released. The absence of the ability to love and have faith keep Alden out of Purgatory for an extended period, while Hermione's near perfecting of those qualities allow her to enact a permanent labour of love for her father. In a sense, Hermione is released from Purgatory to find her heaven on earth in caring for her father.

It is in the last thirty pages or so that we get what amounts to the core of Dougall's beliefs on love and forgiveness. Hermione's reunion with her father is preceded by Alden's listing of the sins of the father: "selfishness and vanity, and little to respect in his character" (303). The reunion of the two lives of father and daughter, "the life gained by self-giving and the life lost by self-saving" (315), is anointed with Hermione's kiss and enveloped by her joy. Durgan realizes that "the criminal [has] been restored to [Hermione] in the only way in which it was possible for his life to be preserved for a time, and for him to be allowed to die in peace. . . . It was again [Hermione's] privilege to lavish love upon him, to reap the result of her sacrifice by tending to his lingering life and telling him her treasure of faith - of the mercy of God and the hope of heaven" (316-7). The language here is almost identical to that used to teach the son of God's love in *Question* and in both cases we see ultimate, perfect love involving a sacrifice of life, literal in one text, symbolic

in the other, again paralleling the Christian myth of ideal love expressed through Christ.

Love is also treated metaphorically in *Purgatory*, its presence interwoven with flowers and rain. The night that Claxton lies paralyzed it begins to rain, so that by the time he is found in the morning, his disguise has washed away, leaving behind a sick and pitiful old man. It is in "the tears of the [next] morning" (316) that Hermione is rejoined with her beloved father. The water of Hermione's and Bertha's tears has combined with the rain water to baptize the father in the midst of his sin, washing it away before he is restored to his family. The rains also restore the vines and the passion flower so that they "[glow] with life-renewing moisture," and destroy the love-lies-bleeding (320). Love no longer lies bleeding, but can flourish passionately and immediately for Hermione, and in time for her father and sister.

Dougall moves finally from the metaphorical to the metaphysical in her treatment of love. Her starting point is the essence of earthly love, that of kindred.[12] Part of the conversation between Durgan and Bertha follows, with Durgan speaking first.

> ". . . if the ties of kindred did not give a closer embrace than the world does, . . . there would be no bright spark of the sacred fire of the next world in this."
>
> "'Fire.' We think of heaven as light, not heat."
>
> "And we think of hell as heat, not light: yet we know light and heat to be one and the same thing; and both are the supreme need of life, and both are the only adequate symbols of love" (341).

[12]The strongest forms of love for Dougall are within families. Both examples of love which come closest to perfection exist between family members: the old man's love for his son; and Hermione's love for her father.

This is a problematic passage in terms of Dougall's precise meaning, but it seems to speak of a transcendent love which is beyond the point where human perception distinguishes between "love" (heaven), and "not-love" (hell). Only God, suggests Dougall, can comprehend love to this degree, but humans can come close through loving others, and through kindred love.

Conclusion

Over the course of her literary career, Lily Dougall continued to explore what was for her an issue central to calling oneself a Christian: the struggle to overcome the natural tendency to privilege one's own moral views over the moral views of others as good, right, and the product of "common sense"; and the sacrifice of this moral high ground to a humility that recognizes the inadequacy of human knowledge and understanding in attempting to know God's will. Dougall identified this tension between tending to count oneself as morally correct and those not conforming as morally incorrect, and the challenge to relinquish opprobrium of others, as one of the principal sources of the Christian struggle, and the basis for the conflict between the Pharisees and Jesus. The struggle for those who want to emulate Christ, said Dougall, is constantly to fight what "common sense" dictates, and the way to do this - the way of Jesus - is through perfect, or ideal, love. Common sense is not enough.

Dougall's agenda included providing the Christian church of her day with a vision for reform on individual and communal levels. She used the type of love that should exist between a husband and wife, the type that should exist amongst the members of a close family, as touchstones for the kind of love she believed Jesus advocated for everyone. While Dougall's ultimate concern was the whole of the church, she envisioned the process of change as an individual one: like Caius Simpson, each person needed to embark on their own journey of betterment, their own process of soul-making.

Through her novels, short stories and later through her essays and other non-fictional works, Dougall essayed to present for her readers a new model for behaviour. Dougall's approach relied not only on presenting an

ideal model, but on revealing the shortcomings of the contemporary model; the novels pit characters who represent Pharisaical and Christ-life paradigms respectively against each other to further dramatize the inappropriateness of judgementalism, sectarianism and intolerance in the Christian church.

The confluence of several historical processes gave Dougall a platform to articulate a theology of love with strong feminist overtones. The debates about Christian social action around the turn of the century made Dougall's concern with reform a popular subject. The assertion that women were appropriate guardians of social morality, tools of influence on social behaviour, and valid writers of popular, socially corrective literature, gave Dougall the literary vehicle to disseminate her views to a large audience via the pen.

Dougall's novels, as this thesis has suggested, constitute various efforts to present modern, fictionalized reproductions of the struggle between pharisaism and "common sense" on the one hand; and the Christ life, characterised by ideal love and faith, on the other. Dougall also draws a parallel between common sense and masculinity, and ideal love and femininity: most of Dougall's characters representing ideal love are female, most of those representing pharisaism, men.

While it seems undoubtable that over-arching themes exist in Dougall's writing, it is also the case that my initial, naive attempts to comfortably categorize Dougall failed. While she relies on the spirit alive at the turn of the century that allowed the social gospel movement to take root, and is herself interested in reform issues, she resists classification as a social gospel writer. She does, however, share many characteristics of women writers at the turn of the century.

Silenced Sextet (1993), Carrie MacMillan's, Lorraine McMullen's and Elizabeth Waterston's examination of six nineteenth-century Canadian women novelists, offers in its introduction several general insights into the fate of Dougall's contemporaries, and their words are familiar. Their lives often shrouded in mystery, their works out of print and for the most part highly inaccessible, writers like Dougall enjoyed fairly intense, if short-lived, popularity (5), were affected by deep religious sentiments (7) and social concerns (9), and owe their present anonymity in large part to a "[critical] academy . . . in the early twentieth century - teachers, editors and reviewers - [which] was an all-male group, unable to see or appreciate the language, concerns, and structures of women's writing" (10).

This thesis, the introduction to the reprinted *What Necessity Knows* (1992), and the two essays by Lorraine McMullen listed in the "Works Cited" section that follows constitute the whole of modern scholarship on this author. Much is left to be discussed, and there are many more writers like Lily Dougall out there: writers who have been silenced, and who, if allowed to speak, can address issues that are still being discussed, can still entertain and provoke us.

In this thesis I have examined Dougall largely from a literary point of view, considering as well some feminist and historical aspects of her work. Just as important, I think, is the issue of her message for theologians. As we approach the end of another century and another millenium, religious intolerance and the presumption of moral superiority, both at inter-denominational and inter-faith levels remain at disturbingly high levels. Dougall's concern with and for the church is still relevant, for the prevalence of pharisaism that Dougall called "on-going" is just that, and the modern

church owes it to itself to continue the struggle against it, just as modern literary criticism owes it to itself to let the voices of the past be heard.

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