

*“THE CHICAGO HOME MISSIONARY AND CHURCH EXTENSION SOCIETY AND  
METHODIST EMBOURGEOISMENT IN PROGRESSIVE ERA CHICAGO”*

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## INTRODUCTION

As religious communities came to and developed in the city of Chicago, they quickly realized the challenges laid before them were vast and previously unseen. Industrialization had not just changed the economic landscape of the city, but the political, social, and religious landscapes as well. Many individuals who came from the countryside for work brought their own patterns of religiosity with them and were able to connect with likeminded people. Thus, congregations would grow from those of similar background and often ignored the wider problems of the city. Compounding this issue was the growing social stratification in the city.<sup>1</sup>

The social ill that engulfed Chicago after The Fire of 1871 created dire circumstances for the poor and immigrant, which brought a variety of Christian responses to the fore. Jane Addams and other likeminded humanitarians with Christian backgrounds (but not necessarily Christian conviction) supplied immigrants with food, job training, and acculturation. Dwight Moody and a host of other evangelicals held mass revivals, but were largely unsuccessful with engaging the urban poor or addressing societal issues as they opted to cultivate a culture of middle-class evangelicalism. A select few evangelical organizations, both local and national, provided food and shelter for the poor, aided in unemployment services, and set up rescue homes for women, while criticizing the standing social order.<sup>2</sup> The Methodist Episcopal Church (MEC) was not one of those evangelical organizations.

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<sup>1</sup> Sydney Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 741.

<sup>2</sup> For the most comprehensive exploration of evangelicals engaged in social service ministry on a national scale see, Norris Magnuson, *Salvation in the Slums: Evangelical Social Work, 1865-1920*, (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1977). For a similar work on nineteenth century evangelical social work in England, see Kathleen Heasman, *Evangelicals in Action: an Appraisal of Their Social Work in the Victorian Era*, (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1962).

## METHODIST EMBOURGEOISMENT

The MEC was the largest denomination within the fastest growing sector of Protestantism in the United States during the nineteenth century: Methodism.<sup>3</sup> As the MEC was a burgeoning, fickle denomination of the American populist, it became swept up in American national identity<sup>4</sup> and exceptionalism, desires of respectability, and modes of embourgeoisement.<sup>5</sup> These Methodists, who were three generations and a continent removed from the movement's founder, John Wesley, by and large failed to embrace Wesley's social ethics. Wesley never promoted ideas of social respectability or cultural embourgeoisement; conversely, he so emphasized simple, pious living that seeking after social respectability is counter to Wesley's social ethics. This paper serves as an exposé of the failure of Progressive Era Chicago Methodists to continue Wesley's ethic of preferentially serving the poor.

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<sup>3</sup> There is a distinction between “The Methodist Episcopal Church” and “Methodism” as the former refers to one specific denomination and the latter refers to a larger demographic of Protestantism, under which numerous other denominations and organizations found their identity. These include The Methodist Episcopal Church, South; The African Methodist Episcopal Church; The African Methodist Episcopal Church, Zion; The Wesleyan Methodist Connexion; The Free Methodist Church; and The Methodist Protestant Church among others.

<sup>4</sup> In the organizational phase of American Methodism, its leaders called a conference in 1784 (the Christmas Conference) in which they claimed their ecclesial independence as a logical flow after national independence from Britain. This showed an initial development in the overarching trajectory of American Methodism adopting typical American attitudes such as expansionism and exceptionalism. John Wesley, “Minutes of Several Conversations between the Rev. Mr. Wesley and others, from the year 1744, to 1789,” *The Works of the Reverend John Wesley, A.M.* Vol. 10, edited by John Emory (J. Emory and B. Waugh: J Collard Printer, 1831), 212. Methodist Episcopal Church, *A Form of Discipline, for the Ministers, Preachers, and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, Considered and Approved at a Conference Held at Baltimore, in the State of Maryland, on Monday the 27<sup>th</sup> of December, 1784* (New York: W. Ross, 1787), 4.

<sup>5</sup> A major contribution to the laxity of Methodists was their upward class mobility, or embourgeoisement. As Methodists became wealthy and moved to the city, they lost their ‘old-time religion’ ways. Their financial and material prosperity manifested in the formalization of their churches (in architecture and worship style) and the desire to take part in worldly amusements and comforts. Those who were not part of such embourgeoisement became self-segregated and sectarian as they launched a competition between cultural styles and economic differences. Such holiness communities harkened back to Wesley's ideals of simplicity and sanctification. This caused a rift against the urban Methodist bourgeois who wanted to worship in “respectable” churches. See Charles Edwin Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion: the Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2002), xiv-xvii. For the original use of the term “embourgeoisement,” see Donald W. Dayton, ““The Search for the Historical Evangelicalism’: George Marsden’s *History of Fuller Seminary* as a Case Study” reprinted in Christian T. Collins Winn, ed., *From the Margins: A Celebration of the Theological Work of Donald W. Dayton*, (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2007), 264.

In their desire to embrace a respectable identity, the MEC turned inward as a denomination. Believing that they were God's specially chosen to bring about salvation to the nation and world; the MEC focused its energy and resources for self-preservation and self-growth. This included a new focus on material growth and the acquisition of church property, in addition to membership growth. The financial resources for the success of such goals were predicated on the recruitment and support of economically advantaged members. Many of the emerging lay leaders of early nineteenth century Methodism were men of significant economic means. Such men who were attracted to the MEC and its increasing embourgeoisement were themselves climbers of the social ladder as opposed to men of generational wealth. As a result, such men maintained middle-class values and some parts of middle-class lifestyle while accumulating wealth and societal power. Financial success in and of itself was not the goal of these lay leaders, nor was it the goal of the MEC. Rather, the bourgeois values and societal significance that came along with financial success further distanced the denomination from both a history of revivalism and austerity and an identity of simplicity and social inadequacy. Simply, it created an avenue for Methodism to reinvent itself as "respectable."<sup>6</sup>

As the MEC came to terms with their own middle-class status and the success of their cause to lead the denomination to respectability, the overall mission of the church shifted. Chicago Methodists were vastly shaped by their infatuation of a respectable identity that it significantly formed their interactions with their fellow Chicagoans. Churches drew their congregants primarily from the neighborhoods in which they were situated, thus individual churches relied on their physical location to attract members. When they wanted to attract

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<sup>6</sup> Thomas Lenhart, "Methodist Piety in an Industrializing Society: Chicago, 1865-1914," (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 1981), 29; Timothy R. Morrissey, "To Provide for All Classes: The Methodist Church and Class in Chicago, 1871-1939," (PhD diss., Yale University, 2007), 38.

middle- and upper-class parishioners they moved to more affluent neighborhoods. More specifically, they moved to suburban communities.<sup>7</sup>

As neighborhoods changed, congregations faced the difficulty of retaining old congregants and attracting new ones. Many of the historic “Great Eight”<sup>8</sup> Methodist congregations in Chicago simply moved their churches out of the historic downtown area and into more affluent neighborhoods, where the majority of their congregants had moved to already.

The historic MEC congregations that moved out of their changing neighborhoods in downtown Chicago stand as examples of a larger phenomenon in the MEC: the desire of respectability was made manifest through the building of expensive and ornate Gothic church buildings in the growing affluent neighborhoods. After 1871, MEC congregations determined to build even bigger and more beautiful buildings after theirs were consumed by the Fire, proving that the last bits of austerity were casualties of the Fire as well. Such was a component of the natural progression of an upwardly mobile class: they were no longer simple folk, therefore simple log cabin preaching houses would not suffice.<sup>9</sup> The architecture and design of emerging MEC churches in Chicago were built to “worship the God of beauty in the beautiful things of holiness.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Morriss, “To Provide for All Classes,” abstract. Suburbs developed as streetcar lines and sewage lines expanded far away from the city in anticipation of population growth. Suburbs relieved some of the congestion of the city and offered a country lifestyle along with city privileges. Suburban populations were not simply composed of middle-class people but also working class people (albeit working class people with some financial stability). Donald Miller, *City of the Century: The Epic of Chicago and the Making of America*, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 273-278.

<sup>8</sup> The “Great Eight” of Chicago Methodist Episcopal Churches included First (originally named the Clark Street Church), Grace (originally called The Methodist Episcopal Society of Indiana Street Chapel), Trinity, Centenary, Park Ave., Wabash Ave., Wesley, and Western Ave. John Thompson, *The Soul of Chicago* (Chicago: The Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1920), 15.

<sup>9</sup> For an understanding of the background of this practice starting in the 1820s, see Daniel F. Flores, “Respectable Methodists: Nathan Bangs and the Rise of Respectability in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Early National Period,” (PhD diss., Drew University, 2004), 123-128.

<sup>10</sup> Thompson, *The Soul of Chicago*, 9.

The desire for newly renovated and more ornate churches was encouraged and primarily financed by the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society (CHMCES) after 1885. Such changes only served to quicken and solidify the departure of emotional and experiential worship practiced by earlier Methodists in simple buildings and in the open air. In its place stood tall, intimidating cathedrals that replaced an emphasis of egalitarianism (previously inherent in simplistic preaching houses) with the promotion of hierarchy. This was a reflection of the growing ethos of the MEC: adopting formality in worship and emphasizing hierachal relationships within the church helped them garner respectability in the wider religious landscape. W. E. Tilroe interpreted the growth of large and expensive churches as a “track of wisdom” and the “call from God.”<sup>11</sup>

#### THE CHMCES AND THE EXPANSION OF THE BOURGEOIS METHODISM

After 1885, the vanguard of bourgeois Methodism responsible for the explosive growth and overall upward mobility of the MEC in Chicago was not individual churches but the CHMCES.<sup>12</sup> The CHMCES was the financial and connectional power responsible for the extraordinary growth of English-speaking MEC churches and missions<sup>13</sup> in Chicago. The

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<sup>11</sup> W. E. Tilroe, “Chicago Methodism,” in *The Revival: a Symposium*, edit by J. H. MacDonald (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1905), 109.

<sup>12</sup> The CHMCES was incorporated in 1885 and was the successor of the Chicago District Missionary and Church Extension Society, which had started in 1870 and was responsible for erecting 11 churches in Chicago. Those responsible for incorporating the CHMCES were affluent businessmen in Chicago, such as H. N. Higginbotham, the president of the World’s Fair. *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1894* (Chicago: E. J. Decker Company, 1895), 8; *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1895* (Chicago: Cranston & Curts, 1896), 1; *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1910-11* (Chicago: Jennings & Graham, 1911), 18. [After the first reference to individual annual reports, they will be referred to as “*Annual Report of the CHMCES for*,” followed by the corresponding year.]

<sup>13</sup> It is important to note that the term “mission” in the CHMCES name was tied to church expansion, not social ministry. Under the auspices of the CHMCES, a “missions” was the equivalent of a modern day “church plant.” Once a mission was financially self-sufficient and able to secure land and build a church building, it became a church. As is shown below, the CHMCES did not provide an institutional effort at providing social services or social ministry as it often associated with the term “mission.” Instead, the missions of the CHMCES focused on

primary function of the CHM CES was to expand the MEC within Cook County through establishing new churches in emerging suburbs, paying off congregations debt, financing pastors, and building newer, more aesthetically pleasing church buildings.<sup>14</sup>

The germination of this plan for suburban expansion was modeled after the Roman Catholic Church, which controlled the “centers of influence” by acquiring property, selling it for profit, and reinvesting in better property. Such a practice would command the respect of the Chicago business world, they thought, and would ultimately bolster the ability to generate more income. It was believed that such income would be the primary tool for Christianizing the city, which in turn would shape the nation and ultimately the world. This provided an all-encompassing theological motivation, legitimizing the desire to pursue middle- and upper-class congregants to the neglect of the poor and laboring classes.<sup>15</sup>

Making inroads with middle-class Chicagoans necessitated the establishment of churches in emerging suburbs. The population of Chicago was constantly growing, and with new technologies making transportation more efficient, middle-class Chicagoans were able to build homes in the suburbs while continuing to work in the city. Specifically, the expansion of railroad and steam car travel were instrumental in this expansion. In the emerging suburbs, one could find a “refined society of Christian homes,” which were “beautiful and commodious.” Investing in these suburbs, with well-placed churches, would create “untold value in the years to come.”<sup>16</sup>

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Sunday worship, Sunday schools, social meetings, and pastoral work. As will be shown throughout this project, the missions of the CHM CES were radically different than the holiness missions explored in later chapters.

Related to this issue are the “institutional churches” of the MEC. The few congregations who did seek to regularly engage in social ministry/social service before 1907 were called “institutional churches.” The Halsted Street Institutional Church was the largest, and most active church among the poor, laboring, and immigrant communities.

<sup>14</sup> *Articles of Incorporation of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society with Reports for 1885 and 1886*, (Chicago: unknown publisher, 1887), 20.

<sup>15</sup> Tilroe, “Chicago Methodism,” 106-108.

<sup>16</sup> *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1887* (Chicago: R. R. McCabe & Co., Printers, 1888), 18-19.

The irony of the name *Chicago Home Mission and Church Extension Society* was that their primary focus was not Chicago proper, but the growing suburbs in the rest of Cook County.

Bourgeois Methodists were very aware of the economic and social potential of Chicago. They wanted to prepare for the oncoming masses flocking to the city for business opportunities; hence, they built their churches in areas that were ripe for middle-class population growth. In order to obtain a significant presence among those in power, it was vitally necessary for the whole of Chicago Methodism to support the cause of suburban expansion. On calling for action, the corresponding secretary for the CHMCES, Luke Hitchcock, said, “When you shall see this population doubled, the opportunities that now present themselves for *controlling* and shaping the long future of the on-coming millions, will have passed away.”<sup>17</sup> The overarching belief was that by establishing churches in emerging communities, the MEC would stem the tide of “irreligion” and “ungodliness” while gaining congregants among the desirable classes. In choosing new sites for missions, the Society focused on “important centers of influence and power.” It was their belief that by focusing on areas with the potential for growth in population, and more importantly in influence and power, Methodism would become the dominant religious expression among the powerful in Chicago.

Such an effort was deemed successful in the early years as MEC growth was plentiful. Between 1878 and 1889, English speaking churches of the MEC in Cook County grew in membership from 6,849 to 12,538; Sunday school participants from 10,813 to 19,394; church buildings from thirty-six to fifty-eight; and parsonages from one to twenty. Additionally, the Society was responsible for rebuilding ten old church buildings, starting thirteen missions, and

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<sup>17</sup> Luke Hitchcock, *A Statement of the Work of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society and some Suggestions for its Prosecution Presented to the Chicago Preachers' Meeting, November 8, 1886* [bound with *Articles of Incorporation of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society with Reports for 1885 and 1886*, (Chicago, 1887)], 2. Emphasis added.

doubling the total Cook County MEC property value from \$900,000 to \$1,800,000 in the same time period.<sup>18</sup> By 1893, the CHM CES had claimed responsibility for a full third of all Methodist presence in Chicago and its vicinity.<sup>19</sup>

Hitchcock explained to the MEC churches in the city that it was their duty to contribute to the growth of suburban churches. He reminded them that so many of them had been financially supported by the Clark Street Board (First Church), which had given more than \$200,000 to city churches, helping to pay for buildings and to absolve debts. According to Hitchcock, it was time to invest less in the “benevolences of the Church” (social ministries), and more into the expansion of bourgeois Methodism. Thus, the CHM CES was intentionally diverting money away from relief efforts for the poor in order to establish religious communities in the growing suburbs.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to diverting funds from the city to the suburbs, the CHM CES found opportunities to collaborate with emerging companies. In 1884, they established a mission near 133<sup>rd</sup> St., sixteen miles south of the city limits, because the Rolling Stock Company had established a business nearby, which promised to employ 2,000 to 3,000 men.<sup>21</sup> In 1888, in Placerdale (around 119<sup>th</sup> street, far south of the city limits), a car manufacturing company asked the MEC to aid them in establishing religious services and a church, to provide for their workers.<sup>22</sup> In 1890, they built a church in the suburb of Harvey, two miles south of the city limits, which was rapidly transforming into a prosperous manufacturing suburb.<sup>23</sup> In 1892, The Grant Locomotive Works Company had begun to build a facility in Cicero and the town was

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<sup>18</sup> *Annual Report of CHM CES for 1888*, 18.

<sup>19</sup> *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1893* (Chicago: E. J. Decker Company, 1894), 8.

<sup>20</sup> Luke Hitchcock, *A Statement of the Work of the CHM CES*, 3-9, 12-14.

<sup>21</sup> *Articles of Incorporation of the CHM CES*, 14.

<sup>22</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1888*, 16.

<sup>23</sup> *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1890* (Chicago: R. R. McCabe & Co., 1891), 20.

ready to embrace a middle-class identity with the help of religious formation and control. To do so, the Land Syndicate of Cicero offered to grant the MEC three lots of land (each 75x125 feet) if they in turn agreed to build a church costing no less than \$2,000.<sup>24</sup>

It is apparent that suburban communities held a reciprocal desire for respectable Christianity to be established in their communities. The suburbs gained a controlling organization that helped maintain civil order and respectability, leading to the suburb's growth and financial stability. As a result, the MEC gained a larger presence and more income-generating members. Bourgeois Methodism's participation in such work is certainly an exercise of social control as they worked in tandem with emerging capitalistic enterprises to shape the social order.<sup>25</sup>

The Society made it a standard practice to side with businesses and affluent individuals as opposed to the working-class, especially those with radical political ideologies. The CHM CES lamented the strikes of 1886, specifically because they had financially harmed individuals and businesses, and had thus prevented money and supplies to be donated to the Society.<sup>26</sup> They furthermore promoted ideas of capitalism as jointly responsible with Protestant religion to accomplish the agenda of the nation. Believing they were helping keep socialism at bay, they said, "we owe it to the influence of this missionary spirit and missionary work, that our city authorities have been able to keep down the threatening power of anarchy and socialism."<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1892* (Chicago: W. P. Dunn & Co., 1893), 12.

<sup>25</sup> There were exceptions to this within the MEC, most notably in William Carwardine's defense of the workers in the Pullman Strike of 1894. He sided with the employees and defended them to a national audience claiming that their strike was justified due to their "unmerciful" work conditions. He further observed that "We as a nation are dividing ourselves...into two classes, the rich and the poor, the oppressor and the oppressed." William Carwardine, "The Pullman Strike." In vol. 2 of *The Methodist Experience in America: a Sourcebook* ed. Russell E. Richey, Kenneth E. Rowe, and Jean Miller Schmidt, 449-450 (Nashville, Abingdon Press, 2000), originally published in *The Pullman Strike* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr & Co., 1894).

<sup>26</sup> Luke Hitchcock, *The CHM CES*, 14.

<sup>27</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1887*, 17.

In another report, Hitchcock lamented the memorialization of those killed in the Haymarket Riot. He believed that such hagiography was misplaced and that these rabble-rousers were the worst examples of anarchy, which threatened privileged life and private property of Chicagoans, and were thus anti-Christian. Furthermore, on addressing the expanding influence of socialism, Hitchcock stated that building churches in the suburbs worked to combat these enemies of capitalism and Protestantism. Because all of the “excellent citizens” were on the move out of the city, away from anarchist tendencies, and into the fertile Christian soil of the suburbs.<sup>28</sup>

P. H. Swift noticed the growing sentiment that the MEC was neglecting the working-class saying that religion was all too often seen as siding with capital and that, “the working man must be made to believe that the Church wants him and cares for him as Christ cares for him.”<sup>29</sup> While his acknowledgement of such divisions was admirable, the MEC continued to devalue working-class culture and set the standard of MEC identity as a middle-class identity.

Of the fourteen churches built between 1882 and 1885 (by the CHMCES’s predecessor, the Chicago District Missionary and Church Extension Society), only two were built within the city limits: the Erie Street Church at the intersection of Erie St. and Robey St., and Asbury Chapel at the intersection of Kossuth St. and Stewart Ave. The other twelve were built one to sixteen miles outside of the city limits. They were built strategically along the underdeveloped, but very promising lands made accessible by the growth of the railroads and establishments of railroad stations.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1888*, 6.

<sup>29</sup> P. H. Swift, “New Paths Through an Old Forest,” in *The Revival: a Symposium*, edited by J. H. MacDonald, (Cincinnati: Jennings and Graham, 1905), 132.

<sup>30</sup> *Articles of Incorporation of the CHMCES*, 10-11, 20.

The early understanding of mission had only to do with expanding into affluent neighborhoods, for it was the most effective ministry and the cheapest road to expansion. In comparison to the expensive enterprise of maintaining inner city missions, building in the suburbs was relatively inexpensive. Why waste money on expensive spaces to care for the poor who could in return give nothing when the people moving to the suburbs were able to afford not only homes but also charitable contributions to the MEC?<sup>31</sup> Said Hitchcock,

We have looked carefully into the subject of establishing a mission in some crowded and neglected portion of the city, where services could be held all day Sunday and every night during the week. It is very difficult to find suitable rooms for such a purpose without involving heavy expenses for rent, and fitting up and furnishing. To do this, and employ the necessary help to carry on the work, would require nearly as much money as we now expend for Sunday-schools and pastors' salaries for the twenty-two missions under our control. Under these circumstances, we have not been prepared to recommend any action on the subject.<sup>32</sup>

In 1878, 35% of MEC members in Chicago were of the working-class, with the vast majority of those being skilled non-factory workers (as opposed to skilled and unskilled factory workers). By 1890, only 13% of MEC churches were located in working-class neighborhoods.<sup>33</sup> This is astonishing owing to the fact that working-class neighborhoods were much more abundant than middle-class neighborhoods in the city. While bourgeois Methodists continued to discuss interacting with the poor and immigrant classes, it never became more than a perpetual afterthought until 1907. As shown above, many city congregations made strategic decisions in order to avoid contact with working-class and poor people.<sup>34</sup>

The fact that the Society had very little desire to sustain a presence in working-class neighborhoods and the slums of Chicago is partly due to their stress upon the importance of

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<sup>31</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1887*, 16-17.

<sup>32</sup> Hitchcock, *The CHM CES*, 12.

<sup>33</sup> Lenhart, "Methodist Piety in an Industrializing Society," table 1, 55; table 2, 57.

<sup>34</sup> Morriss, "To Provide for All Classes," 23. Lenhart, "Methodist Piety in an Industrializing Society," 55.

aesthetics. Not only did they trade outdoor spaces and preaching houses for Gothic architecture, but also they sought out the beauty of nature and of white Christian civilization as made manifest in the suburbs. They built in Auburn Park, as it was a “growing community that is building up one of the finest residence portions of the city,”<sup>35</sup> in Maywood because it was “one of our beautiful suburbs,”<sup>36</sup> and in Norwood Park because it was a “flourishing” suburb.<sup>37</sup> They were not looking to establish near the shanty, the tenement house, or the boarding house but rather the quaint homes in open fields.

The CHM CES was not without internal criticism for their tactics of focusing on suburban growth. There was a subversive, minority voice within the MEC that believed more attention ought to be paid to the lower class and specifically those suffering in the ghettoized poor neighborhoods and vice districts. The Society reacted by stating, “In the opinion of some we ought to confine our labors particularly to darkest Chicago, and allow the suburban portions of our city to take care of themselves, because they are measurably able to do so. To do this would be to infect the entire city with moral leprosy.”<sup>38</sup> Because their overarching project was to solidify the Christianization of America and her cities, they believed serving and proselytizing the poor was not in their best interest, thus they believed “the question of the hour is not so much a matter of Christian benevolence as it is of *self-defense*.” They wanted to save America from foreign influence and to contribute to the Christian hegemonic class.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, the Society believed they owed their allegiance to their fellow bourgeois Methodists who had contributed to the building of new churches and the rebuilding of city churches. They wanted to repay those

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<sup>35</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1889*, 11.

<sup>36</sup> Hitchcock, *A Statement of the Work of the CHM CES*, 9.

<sup>37</sup> *Annual Report for the CHM CES for 1894*, 9.

<sup>38</sup> *Annual Report for the CHM CES for 1890*, 14.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 15. Emphasis added.

who had made financial contributions and who were subsequently abandoning the city and moving to new suburbs.<sup>40</sup>

The Society continued to feel the pressure of subversive voices, challenging them to do more for the poor classes. However, they responded, “The evangelization of this city does not consist simply in rescuing paupers, we are equally responsible for all classes of society.”<sup>41</sup> As the growing dissension about the Society’s extension continued, some wanted to limit the number of churches being built and suggested they focus on making existing churches stronger. Still others wanted the work to focus in the slums. Yet the Society continued its plan of planting churches in the suburbs, thus neither dissenting faction saw their vision come to fruition.

Methodists who did attempt to reach the poor discussed their tactics in abstract notions, noting that the slums are “hungry for God, light and truth... Not dogmas and creeds.” When direct engagement with the poor was suggested, it was thought that slums could best benefit from kindergartens, sewing-schools, social and reading rooms, lecture halls, good citizenship clubs, libraries, and picture galleries. While such establishments would have certainly been a welcomed change in the slums, they were establishments that satisfied a bourgeois palate and certainly would not have met the basic needs of the poor.<sup>42</sup>

The conditions on which bourgeois Methodists would reach out to the lower class was predicated on their willingness to participate in an identity that enlivened middle-class values and aspirations. The few from the lower classes who joined the fold of bourgeois Methodism were socially required to adopt a middle-class identity. Such an identity was difficult to maintain as the abstractions of bourgeois values (sincerity, simplicity, and decorum) were substituted for the desire of a refined life with all the trappings of excessive materialism. Those that would not,

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<sup>40</sup> *Annual Report for the CHMCES for 1890*, 14.

<sup>41</sup> *Annual Report for the CHMCES for 1894*, 8.

<sup>42</sup> Swift, “New Paths through an Old Forest,” 135, 137.

or could not, adopt such an identity (either by choice or circumstance) were often excluded or segregated into “ethnic” churches.<sup>43</sup> Lower class communities and individuals participated in and accepted such middle-class identity with varying degrees. At the very least, those who were not quite middle-class but still desired to participate in bourgeois Methodist identity “did not work with their hands,” (an obvious sign of being lower class). Still, the MEC’s interaction with these communities was both limited and primarily chartered (through their mission system) as to avoid perpetual social contact with them.<sup>44</sup>

#### THE CHMCES AND IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

The CHMCES was focused on creating and expanding “American” congregations.<sup>45</sup> By “American,” they meant non-foreign born, English speaking, white Protestants. The Society was content in serving immigrant communities through giving minor aid to the foreign language missions of the MEC, which were primarily established by the Halsted Street Institutional Church. Yet even those missions focused on holding meetings and distributing religious literature as opposed to supplying social ministry.<sup>46</sup>

In helping foreign speaking missions, the CHMCES primarily sought to separate, or ghettoize, these communities in order to keep bourgeois Methodist churches American and respectable. They sought to help a Bohemian community in 1885, which was meeting in the Halsted Street Institutional Church. In urging the Society to make the Bohemian mission a

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<sup>43</sup> Morriss, “To Provide for All Classes,” 5-7, 17.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., abstract, 38.

<sup>45</sup> The CHMCES celebrated their many suburban church developments, but especially those that were home to the “real Americans.” The Garfield Park Mission was located in the midst of “prosperous Americans,” and was rapidly improving with “first-class residence” of Protestant Americans. They built in Park Manor because it was being “built up by enterprising, industrious citizens, mostly Americans.” And they built near the Montrose Mission because “the population is chiefly American.” *Annual Report for the CHMCES for 1890*, 9, 20; *Annual Report for the CHMCES for 1891*, 21; *Annual Report for the CHMCES for 1889*, 9.

<sup>46</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1896*, 9-10.

priority, the corresponding secretary of the CHM CES said, “We regard it very important that there should be provision made as early as possible for a separate place of worship for this people [Bohemians]. They cannot be accommodated permanently at Halsted Street, *without seriously interfering with the work of that church among the English population.*”<sup>47</sup> The desire to build a church in the Bohemian section of Chicago (near Ashland Ave. between 12<sup>th</sup> St. and 20<sup>th</sup> St.), was delayed as funds were diverted to suburban English congregational growth.<sup>48</sup> Two years later the Bohemian mission was moved to Desplaines St. and 12<sup>th</sup> St. because their presence at Halsted St. had been the cause of “greatly neglect[ing] the English work.”<sup>49</sup> Even with the “help” of the CHM CES, the mission for the Bohemians continually struggled and faced especially difficult circumstances in 1897.<sup>50</sup>

In other instances, the French Mission of the MEC was closed in 1887 due to the absence of a preacher fluent in French. Additionally, and more importantly, the cost of the mission was “too much” for the CHM CES to sustain it.<sup>51</sup> Likewise, an Italian mission was started in 1889 as part of the Halsted Street Institutional Church and had become semi-autonomous as it moved to Ewing St., just north of 12<sup>th</sup> St. But, as winter came and caused expenses to increase, the mission work was suspended.<sup>52</sup> The Italian mission was continually neglected into the twentieth century until finally a building was erected in 1909 for the sole purpose of converting the Italian mission

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<sup>47</sup> *Articles of Incorporation of the CHM CES*, 19. Emphasis added.

<sup>48</sup> Hitchcock, *The CHM CES*, 10.

<sup>49</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1887*, 6-7.

<sup>50</sup> *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1897* (Chicago: Cranston & Curts, 1898), 14-15.

<sup>51</sup> *Articles of Incorporation of the CHM CES*, 19-20. The French mission was later reestablished in 1891. *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1891* (Chicago: W. P. Dunn & Co., 1892), 19.

<sup>52</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1889*, 11.

into an Italian Church.<sup>53</sup> Unlike these foreign missions, at no point did an English mission have to wait twenty years for a building to be erected.

While the CHM CES aided foreign speaking missions, this further functioned as a means to discover individuals who were capable of climbing the social and financial ladder.<sup>54</sup> The MEC desired to funnel such rising stars into the established churches of Chicago Methodism, thereby increasing revenue, membership, and prestige of the old vanguard. The immigrants who were welcomed into the fold of bourgeois Methodism were the “deserving poor” who had proven their stock through one of the missions. Such people with possible social upside essentially graduated from one of the few Methodists missions in lower class neighborhoods and were able to take part in bourgeois Methodist identity.<sup>55</sup> At the Bohemian mission’s Christmas service in 1887, it was observed that the people in the church were “persons in the prime of life... Composed of men and women who can exert a commanding influence over their own people.”<sup>56</sup> Such people were ripe for embracing bourgeois values and transferring to an English Methodist congregation.

Methodists (along with Chicago society in general) eventually came to terms with the reality that the growth of their city was due to the influx of the foreign-born laboring and poor classes. They were not necessarily excited that such was the phenomenon, but knew they had to contend with the reality of swelling immigrant communities if they wanted to remain successful. Still, the influx of immigrants was “a cause of great anxiety” for them, as they believed such a surging population was dangerous. Their solution was to Americanize them by Christianizing them, thus they believed that “These [foreigners] must be Americanized and Christianized if we

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<sup>53</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1895*, 12; *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1902* (unknown city and publisher, 1903), 10; *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1909-1910* (Chicago: Jennings & Graham, 1910), 15.

<sup>54</sup> *Articles of Incorporation of the CHM CES*, 20.

<sup>55</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1889*, 7-8. Morriss, “To Provide for All Classes,” 2, 5, 178.

<sup>56</sup> Hitchcock, *The CHM CES*, 11.

would preserve the civilization of our country.” This stemmed from their overarching belief that in order to save the world, America had to remain and grow as a Christian nation. The way to make America a Christian nation and to increase national prosperity was to control the centers of power within the country, i.e. the cities.<sup>57</sup> Thus, to Americanize foreign city-dwellers was to secure the future of the nation and the world, especially since their children would become registered voters.<sup>58</sup>

Once Hitchcock retired as the corresponding secretary, there was a departure of rhetoric defending the neglect of poor neighborhoods. The new corresponding secretary, A. D. Traveller, who held the position from 1890 to 1902, believed the Society needed to pay more attention to “these seething caldrons of vice, these open gateways to death” (i.e. the foreign, dense, and poor parts of the city). Yet his motivation centered on the prospect of building a Christian America, “our immense and heterogeneous foreign immigration startles and alarms every patriot, philanthropist and Christian… They all vote; they may destroy our institutions; they, and especially their children, must be Americanized and Christianized.”<sup>59</sup>

While it served the upper-class well that the poor and immigrant kept to themselves, it became problematic when the hegemonic strata observed that the values of immigrants were not being changed to American values. Rather, their foreign values were strengthening because of their isolation. This was problematic for the Society and they increased their efforts to engage such immigrant communities as they understood that, “The constant influx of foreign population bringing with them their peculiar ideas of social, religious and governmental life, massing in

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<sup>57</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1895*, 10; Tilroe, “Chicago Methodism,” 106.

<sup>58</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1888*, 4-5; *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1889*, 7.

<sup>59</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1891*, 8-9.

neighborhoods by themselves, thereby render[s] the task of Americanizing, educating and [C]hristianizing them more and more difficult.”<sup>60</sup>

While the Society was worried about adult immigrants, they saw a willingness in immigrant children to assimilate, saying that these children “prefer to become Americanized as early as possible,” and that this could happen when they “unite with our English-speaking churches, and adopt our American customs.”<sup>61</sup> Such a practice created tension within immigrant communities and families. As the second and third generation of immigrants became more acculturated to American (middle-class Caucasian) culture, bourgeois Methodist churches became more inviting. Such acculturation set up intra-denominational and inter-ethnic competition between white Methodism and the various ethnic (German Methodist, Italian Methodist, etc.) churches and missions.

Much of the perceived degradation of Christian societal virtue was attributed to immigrant culture. There were many voices, loathing the Sunday afternoon beer gardens and excursions, dance halls, and recreational games, as it was perceived that these activities were causing people to slip away from the church, even those people who came from “the respectable circles of society.”<sup>62</sup> As bourgeois Methodism continued to seek relevance in wider society, they softened some of their long-standing anti-societal rules. Yet, those vices associated with immigrant communities continued to draw the ire of the MEC.<sup>63</sup>

The majority of immigrants found employment as unskilled laborers and less than 4% of church members in the MEC were designated as such in their directory. The culture and financial means of unskilled laborers simply did not fit with the changing bourgeois Methodist value

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<sup>60</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1893*, 7.

<sup>61</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1889*, 6.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>63</sup> Morriss, “To Provide for All Classes,” 212, 215.

system. Therefore, when the denomination began relaxing its stance on worldly amusements, they were making room for a style of life that included bourgeois leisure: activities which poor immigrants could not participate.<sup>64</sup>

Unskilled laborers often worked six days a week, with their lone day for rest being Sunday. However, due to the strictness of Sabbath Laws (and additional expected normative behavior brought about by bourgeois Methodism), unskilled laborers were not able to take part in their own cultural ideas of leisure (e.g. going to Sunday beer gardens). Likewise, they were unable to take part in the leisure activities of laborer culture. Specifically, the MEC denounced activities such as ice-skating and attending dance halls and theaters. Their reasoning for condemning these activities were shrouded in theology but were based on the fact that the working poor were often at such places and that the places themselves were in lower class neighborhoods – away from the protective eye of the church.<sup>65</sup>

#### TROUBLESOME TIMES AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY

The failure to reach the immigrant population and the overall inability (or the purposeful neglect) to adapt to the demographically shifting Chicago landscape proved to be troublesome for the MEC. As early as 1901, Traveller lamented suburban white flight. He stated that it was natural for people to start in the city, and then move to the suburbs as they became more industrious. However, such a phenomenon was destroying the old churches that had once been the pride of Chicago Methodism. He wanted to continue planting churches in the suburbs, but it

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<sup>64</sup> John Williamson of Wabash Ave. MEC specifically targeted German cultural amusements, stating that drinking, “unchaste” music, and smoking were unfit activities for a Methodist. Instead, he emphasized that leisure time should contribute to knowledge, virtue, and middle-class recreation. This has additional consequences for how Methodist involvement in the temperance movement can be interpreted. If it was merely abstinence for the sake of acquiring middle-class virtue and the reaffirmation of disapproving immigrant culture, then it becomes a different narrative than the typical “alcohol destroys the soul” narrative. Morriss, “To Provide for All Classes,” 91-93, 95.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 2, 36.

was evident that attention, time, and money needed to be redirected back to the city, as those churches that had once supplied the financial backbone for suburban church growth were themselves in dire need of financial assistance. The churches, once great, needed to “fulfill their mission to the changing communities about them.”<sup>66</sup> These churches were not located in population deserts, but rather neighborhoods of significant demographic shifts. In 1910, Traveller commented that of the fifty “weak churches” in the city, none were in a position to fail: they were capable of succeeding because of their location and the vast population around them. This include the majority of the “Great Eight” Chicago Methodist Churches.<sup>67</sup>

This was precisely the problem that Isabelle Horton, who was the superintendent of social and education work in the Halsted St. Institutional Church, foresaw: those that did not change tactics to suit the needs of the changing community were doomed to fail. When the neighborhoods changed, the wealthy members moved away. Even though the “best talented” ministers were brought in to retain such members, no effort was made to attract the new neighbors. Each church then had the option to either sell their property or adjust to their reality.<sup>68</sup> Most often, where the once great bourgeois Methodist churches sat, the congregations were ill equipped to serve the changing community at best, and arrogant enough to believe they were socially superior to such people at worst. Traveller’s desperate attempt to spurn these communities to reach the lower class centered on old notions that the best of the poor become good members of better congregations. It seemed the days of solely embracing the poor with an upside had passed, and the failure to reach the majority of new neighbors doomed many congregations.

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<sup>66</sup> *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1901* (Chicago: Jennings & Pye, 1902), 8.

<sup>67</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1909-10*, 17; Thompson, *The Soul of Chicago*, 15.

<sup>68</sup> Isabelle Horton, *The Burden of the City*, 4th ed. (Chicago: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1904), 21, 87.

The downturn only continued as the CHM CES failed to finance the establishment of a single church in 1906 and 1910.<sup>69</sup> 1912 was an especially tumultuous year as churches began closing with regularity. Worried about the shifting tides in downtown Chicago, Centenary Church foresaw its demise and ultimately choose to be taken off the appointment circuit (so that no minister would officially be appointed there) and the congregation was dissolved. The once “palatial homes” surrounding Centenary were replaced by countless low-rate hotels, tenement houses, pawnshops, and saloons. Railroad stations in close proximity brought in a wide class of people. The neighborhood became a hotbed of socialist activity as the Industrial Workers of the World (commonly known as Wobblies) set up their headquarters nearby and the Bricklayer’s Hall, which was famous for its labor controversies, was close to the church. In all, the wealthy neighborhood had transformed into a neighborhood of “unfortunate derelicts” and the congregation at Centenary was unable or unwilling to reach them.<sup>70</sup>

Another of the Great Eight, Wabash MEC also closed in 1912. The church had been running on a paralyzing deficit when the CHM CES stepped in and decided to dissolve the congregation and sell the property in order to recoup expenses. At one point, they had a buyer for the church property willing to pay \$1,000,000. However, the buyer backed out of the arrangement because the local conditions were depreciating radically.<sup>71</sup>

Additionally, the CHM CES had to assume financial responsibilities for the properties of South Park Ave. Church and St. John’s Church because the congregations could no longer pay for their churches to function. This was yet another phenomenon of old congregants fleeing to the suburbs while the poor moved in at increasing rates. The central hub of respectability and

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<sup>69</sup> *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1906-1907* (Chicago: Hack & Anderson, 1907), 18; *Annual Report of the Chicago Home Missionary and Church Extension Society for 1911-1912* (Chicago: The Methodist Book Concern, 1912), 15.

<sup>70</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1912-13*, 16-17; Thompson, *The Soul of Chicago*, 35-40.

<sup>71</sup> *Annual Report of the CHM CES for 1912-13*, 16-17.

financial security was weakening. Combined with the fact that a new English church had not been founded between 1910 and the summer of 1913, Traveller saw the tide of failure looming and lamented, “Down-town churches [are] getting weaker and weaker every year.”<sup>72</sup>

In 1913, closures continued as Marie Chapel,<sup>73</sup> St. John’s Church, Erie St. Church, and Willard Memorial Church officially closed. The challenging voices who had called for the CHMCES to focus on more social ministries did not stop. Traveller responded stating that more social-mission work was becoming a necessity but that it should not cause the cessation of extension work. The real problem was again that downtown Methodist congregations had, “not yet learned how to handle our large properties when the people move away and the congregation decreases.”<sup>74</sup>

Between 1871 and 1914, the MEC largely failed to address the spiritual needs of the poor and immigrant in Chicago. This was the unfortunate manifestation of Methodist embourgeoisement. It altered Methodist theology by encompassing nationalistic concerns, which in turn alienated the immigrant population and cast them as a threat to the American way of life. It also altered their basic ministerial practice as Wesley’s preferential option for the poor was supplanted with a preferential option for the middle-class suburbanite.

#### SUBVERSIVE PRESENCE AND GENERAL CHANGES IN THE WWI ERA

There were challengers to bourgeois Methodism within the MEC, who were more aligned with Wesley’s social ethic. The Halsted St. Institutional Church was the best example of this. As

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>73</sup> Marie Chapel had been embroiled in controversy and legal action against its financially supporting church, Trinity Church since 1900. The congregation at Marie had brought legal action against Trinity in hopes of gaining control of its own land and title. The suit was taken to the state supreme court but was ultimately ruled in favor of Trinity. The controversy was extremely embarrassing for the conference and resulted in the failure of the congregation in Marie neighborhood. J. H. MacDonald, *A Statement of Facts in Regard to the Trinity-Marie Church Controversy Presented to the Chicago Methodist Preachers’ Meeting* (Chicago, 1907).

<sup>74</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1913-14*, 26, 28-29.

early as 1875, they were determined to adapt with the tide of immigration and the subsequent changes of the neighborhood in which they were established. They provided many social services for the population, including a free dispensary.<sup>75</sup> Ernest A. Bell, a Methodist minister, was very active in the anti-prostitution campaign and founded the Midnight Mission in 1904, where he preached in the streets and served the poor in the Levee district.<sup>76</sup> Two Methodist settlement houses were established and the grassroots efforts of Methodist Deaconesses provided direct and intentional contact with immigrant and poor communities and individuals. Even these efforts were limited as the former was an exercise in cultural assimilation and social control while the latter was largely unsupported by the denomination in its early years. Finally, at the beckoning of the Deaconesses, an orphanage was founded in 1894 in Lake Bluff and an “Old People’s Home” was founded in Edgewater in 1898.<sup>77</sup>

General attitudes toward the suburbs also changed. Whereas suburbs were seen as the ripe fields of opportunity in the early years of the CHMCES, they had become the unthankful recipients of financial assistance and preferential treatment and were viewed as partially responsible for much of urban decay. John Thompson, a longtime leader in the CHMCES stated:

Such suburbs as Evanston, Wilmette, and other North Shore suburbs; Oak Park, River Forest, Maywood, Lombard, Wheaton, etc., must come more and more to realize their responsibility for the redemption of the city. Business men who make their wealth in the heart of the city in the daytime and then ride out to comfortable and well furnished homes, situated in the midst of beautiful and safe surroundings, should not forget the debt they owe to those who are compelled to stay in the midst of the city’s depressing atmosphere and exposed to its fierce temptations. To forget this would be criminal. These suburbs must be saved from the danger of a hermit suburban life... Our Church must

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<sup>75</sup> *Annual Report of the CHMCES for 1887*, 16; Lenhart, “Methodist Piety in an Industrializing Society,” 36-37; Morriss, “To Provide for All Classes,” 32, 40.

<sup>76</sup> Bell became a nationally recognized figure for his rescue work and his crusade against prostitution, evening meeting with President Taft in urging him to pass national laws against “white slavery.” His work on the subject includes *Fighting the Traffic in Young Girls, or the War on White Slave Trade: a Complete and Detailed Account of the Shameless Traffic in Young Girls* (Chicago: Southern Bible House, 1910).

<sup>77</sup> Almer M. Pennewell, *The Methodist Movement in Northern Illinois* (Sycamore, IL: Sycamore Tribune, 1942), 184-189, 192-198.

function in both slum and suburb if we are to do our full duty in helping to make Chicago a City of God.<sup>78</sup>

Yet Thompson was only echoing what was said decades before concerning the overt focus on suburban expansion and, consequently, the systemic neglect of the poor in the city. Isabelle Horton, who was perpetually engaged in city mission work for the poor, early on had stated:

This struggle [of urban mission work] will not end until the suburban and other churches realize what is mean by the words, ‘Ye are the Body of Christ’... The suburban church can no more fulfill its mission without the down-town church than the down-town church without the other... Can the hand deck itself with jewels while the feet are clothed in rags, and the whole body be not shamed?... From the standpoint of mere worldly honor the suburbanite may not shirk responsibility for the ‘submerged masses.’ The well-to-do citizen betakes himself to the suburbs to escape the dust and smoke and noise of the city, but he still retains his business relations there. His wife goes to the city for her shopping and he to his office. He is content to glean his wealth from the city’s heart; does he owe nothing to the sweating, low-browed toilers that he leaves behind when he takes the ‘five o’clock suburban’ [train out of town] for his pretty cottage with its green lawns and embowering shade trees?<sup>79</sup>

Isabella Horton perhaps best epitomized the greatest of social efforts of the MEC in Chicago during the Progressive Era. Her continued work with the Halsted St. Institutional Church gave her intimate insight into the plight of the poor and immigrant as well as the untold neglect by Chicago Methodist churches. In reflecting on the Methodist presence in Chicago, she had categorized Methodist Churches into four types. First were the suburban churches, which were composed of rich and refined congregants. Second were the downtown churches, which drew in city visitors and residents (but none from the lowest class) drawn to the church because of the fame and personality of the preacher. Third were the churches in the “boarding house” districts who were faced with either adapting to their surroundings or moving from the location.

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<sup>78</sup> Thompson, *The Soul of Chicago*, 89.

<sup>79</sup> Horton, *The Burden of the City*, 113-114.

Finally, there were the institutional churches, such as the one at Halsted St. Horton claimed the other three did not know what to do with institutional work.<sup>80</sup>

### CONCLUSION

The MEC in Chicago is a prime example of Nathan Hatch's assessment that, "The allure of respectability dampened the original fire of the religious populists."<sup>81</sup> The wider phenomenon of social embourgeoisement deterred the MEC from authentically carrying out Wesley's social ethics. This was true on a macro level and, as is shown above in the example of bourgeois Methodists in Chicago, a micro level. The internal battles for Methodist social identity, as related to socioeconomic status, continued throughout the nineteenth century in both the United States and in England. For this reason, those within Methodism who were committed to carrying the mantle of Wesley's preferential ministry to the poor were often either suppressed or dismissed from the primary body of Methodism (the MEC). This was the case in 1843 when the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion split over issues of slaveholding and the suppression of radical abolitionism; in 1860 when the Free Methodist Church viewed the practice of pew renting as the last straw of systemic oppression of the poor and working-classes; and in 1870 when William Booth (founder of the Salvation Army) witnessed the systematic neglect of "Darkest England" and the poor within such places.

Such systematic neglect of the poor on behalf of Methodism in Chicago created a vacuum in which various independent missions came to fill. While their presence was not as dominant numerically, the kenotic presence they maintained in the neighborhoods neglected by bourgeois Methodism created powerful and lasting influence for the poor and immigrant residents.

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 85-86.

<sup>81</sup> Nathan O. Hatch, *Democratization of American Christianity*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 195.

Bourgeois Methodists were aware of this presence in Chicago, especially those missions with ties to the Holiness movement. As the denomination-wide suppression of holiness thought spread throughout the MEC, relationships between holiness communities and Mainline Methodists as a whole continued contentiously.<sup>82</sup> In defending the mission of the CHMCES, Hitchcock dismissed “undenominational missions” (i.e. holiness missions as well as other nondenominational missions) stating that their success among the lower class was little more than mere perception and that they were composed of narrow-minded people.<sup>83</sup> Even Thompson, who was more aware of the systemic problems of the MEC in 1920, lamented the tactics of the Salvation Army. He wondered how any person could maintain a rational thought while Salvationist street demonstrations created “roaring bands and swirl of noise reverberating through the ears, crashing against the walls and bombarding the soul.” Yet he admits that countless people who were the “back wash” of the city responded to them and their “altruistic efforts.”<sup>84</sup>

As Thompson came to realize – and what Horton had stated long before – it was the altruistic efforts and the kenotic presence of these missions that best reached the poor. They were the ones who more fully embodied Wesley’s social ethic.

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<sup>82</sup> William Kostlevy, *Holy Jumpers: Evangelicals and Radicals in Progressive Era America*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>83</sup> Hitchcock, *A Statement of the Work of the CHMCES*, 14-15. Furthermore, he stated that denominations, specifically the MEC had the “best minds in the Nation” in charge of their work. He said this was a much better model for Christianizing America.

<sup>84</sup> Thompson, *The Soul of Chicago*, 12.

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