

NELLIE McCLUNG AND THE FIGHT FOR THE

The Methodist Church played an important part in Nellie Mooney McClung's life from her earliest years. In her autobiography, Clearing in the West, she tells of the minister who struggled through the storm to bring them hope and practical advice when her sister was seriously ill. She speaks of the thrill she felt when a church was finally established in the small Manitoba town near their farm and she was able to attend Sunday School. She explains how the church became the centre of social life in the pioneer community. As a young teacher in other small towns she again sought fellowship and activity within church organizations. In Manitou and Treherne she lived with the minister's family and found in Mrs. McClung, the minister's wife, a model. In 1896 she married Wesley McClung, the eldest son of the family, who was at that time a druggist in Manitou. During the fifteen years of their life in Manitou the young couple actively participated in the life of the church and continued to do so when they moved to Winnipeg in 1911.

Despite her appreciation of the pioneer work of the church in the West, despite her activity in and love for the church, Nellie, like many other women, became dissatisfied with the role

delegated to women by the men of the church. In 1915 she put in satiric verse her version of what she titled "A Heart to Heart Talk with the Women of the Church by the Governing Bodies:"

Go, labor on, good sister Anne,
Abundant may thy labors be;
To magnify thy brother man
Is all the Lord requires of thee!

Go raise the mortgage, year by
year,
And Joyously thy way pursue,
And when you get the title clear,
We'll move a vote of thanks to
you!

Go, labor on, the night draws nigh
Go, build us churches - as you can.
The times are hard, but chicken pie
Will do the trick. Oh, rustle, Ann!

Go, labor on, good sister Sue,
To home and church your life de-
vote;

ORDINATION OF WOMEN IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

But never, never ask to vote,
Or we'll be very cross with you.

May no rebellion cloud your mind,
But joyous your race be run.
The conference is good and kind,
And knows God's will for every
one. (1)

McClung believed that women should be on equal footing with men within the church. She was impatient with theological arguments or the citing of traditions to oppose this goal of equality. Women had the right to a voice in the administration of the church and there could be no valid argument against this fundamental right. Nellie liked to point out that she did not blame God for women's in-

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ferior place in the church. As she said:

Men and women got off to a fair start. "God created man in His own image Male and female created He them, and he gave them domination. . . ," there were no special privileges. Whatever inequality has crept in since, has come without God's sanction.(2)

On occasion she would quote, or misquote, the Bible to defend her position, or stress the practical need for more ministers but fundamentally her argument was that of the right of equality for men and women.

At this point what women were seeking in the Methodist Church was merely the right to be voting members at all levels of church government and the right to be elected to all administrative bodies of the church. One argument advanced by the men who opposed women's entry into the full fellowship of the church was that women would then ask for the right to be ordained. McClung agreed that this demand would indeed follow but she saw this as a natural and inevitable outcome of the women's movement and she, and others, male and female, believed that the time had arrived when that forward step should be taken in the church.(3)

At the Canadian Methodist Assembly in 1918 a resolution was introduced that women should have equal rights with men in regard to all the privileges of

church membership. Surprisingly, the resolution passed unanimously; perhaps the delegates were influenced by the surge of women's gains in the political world at this time. As the Christian Guardian put it: "No one voted against it, and only a very few extra brave refused to vote for it." (4) But a second resolution, that the ministry be opened to women, met a different fate. A heated debate took place. Finally, it was decided to refer the whole matter to the Quarterly Official Boards. The Christian Guardian commented: "Probably the whole discussion was largely academic, as we have yet to hear of any sister who is desirous of entering the Methodist ministry."(5)

While the matter was under discussion at the Board level there seems to have been no active campaign to influence the decision. In fact throughout the whole period there was no attempt at organization by the proponents of ordination and McClung had little contact with others on the issue. However, in 1921 she got the opportunity to express her views on the role of women in the church to an international audience. She was chosen to attend the Methodist Ecumenical Conference in England, the only woman delegate from Canada. In today's terms she was a 'token woman.' As delegates were being appointed by the Special Committee of the General Conference one man suggested that there should be a woman among the twelve delegates. His re-



Nellie McClung (Public Archives of Canada)

mark was followed by silence but when he suggested Nellie McClung, who would bring back a good report, the committee approved the nomination. (6) Nellie accepted, thrilled at the opportunity to visit England. On the eighth day of the Conference she was asked to reply to an address or "essay," as they called it, entitled: "The Awakening of Women." According to the newspaper accounts it was the conference which awoke. One reporter said: "Mrs. McClung carried the conference by storm with her unconventional and daring sayings," and another called her "racy, delightfully frank and behind all reasonable." (8) All accounts of her speech mention that it was punctuated by applause and laughter.

Today, reading the speech she made at that session, it is hard to understand why her remarks were considered "racy," "unconventional," or "daring," but there is still a breath of fresh air, a wit, a liveliness, that jumps out even from the printed page in contrast to the stodgy speeches which came before and after hers.

She began by expressing her distaste for the title, "The Awakening of women," which suggested that women had been asleep. "Women," she said,

. . . have always been awake.

The woman of fifty years ago who carded the wool, spun it, wove the cloth to clothe her family, made the clothes without any help from Mr. Butterick, or the

Ladies' Pictorial, brewed her own cordial, baked her own bread, washed, scrubbed, ironed, without any labour-saving devices, and besides that, always had dinner on time, and incidentally raised a family, and a few chickens and vegetables in her spare time, may be excused if she did not take much interest in politics. But her lack of interest was not any proof that she was asleep - she was only busy.

McClung went on to scold the church for not having supported women in their fight for women's suffrage:

It preached resignation when it should have sounded the note of rebellion. Many of the brightest women grew impatient and indignant and went out of church figuratively slamming the door behind them. Slamming an innocent door. . . .

she commented

. . . has always seemed to me a misdirection of energy. It is better to linger after the sermon to interview the minister.

But she emphasized that the church had not afforded women the means of self-expression. "On special occasions," she said,

. . . womanhood has been garlanded with roses and smothered with praises. The motives in all this have been the highest and best, but it does not appeal to the average woman to hear womanhood

spoken of in such condescending terms of sickly sentiment [as if were] a sort of glorified disease.

"It is no use blaming it on Paul," she admonishes her large and mainly clerical audience, "just because he once told a chattering group of women to stop their noise. Remember he also said 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, male nor female, bond nor free'--for all are free." She told them that in Canada there were needs to be met by the church. Only a third of the rural population of Western Canada had adequate preaching facilities and the answer to the problem did not lie in theology. As an ironic aside she added: "I have listened to a lot of theology in the last eight days - more than I ever knew existed in all the world." She was convinced that those who were working to interpret God's love to Canada's immigrants had little time for theology. She ended with a plea for doctors and ministers to come to Western Canada and for support for the desire of women to be admitted to full ordination. (9)

After a speaking tour in England and Scotland and a brief visit to France, McClung returned to her very busy life in Edmonton, taking the seat in the legislature to which she had been elected in June, 1921. Perhaps because of these duties she was not one of the delegates to the Methodist Assembly of 1922--the first assembly for which women were eligible. The Christian Guardian smugly commented:

The women delegates are on hand in full force and have been given an exceedingly cordial reception, and everything is being done that can be done to make them feel at home. Several of the women delegates happen to be the wives of ministers, the Annual conferences in this matter showing both their good taste and their good judgment. We note that in most instances the ministers themselves, though not delegates, have accompanied their better halves to see that nothing untoward happens to them in this, their first adventure out into the great world of ecclesiastical politics. (10)

The Assembly received a summary of the reports from the Quarterly Official Boards on the question of the ordination of women. The summary revealed that 509 Boards were in favor and 558 opposed, but only 54% of the Boards had voted at all. Seven conferences gave majorities against the proposal, and five majorities for it. The Committee which examined these reports recommended to the conference that the proposal for ordination of women be turned down. Women delegates, led by Mrs. Keeton and Louise McKinney moved for the appointment of a committee of twelve, including three women, to examine the question and report to the next General Conference. Although McKinney was, according to the Christian Guardian, one of the ablest debaters at the Conference the proponents

of women's ordination were not able to win even this limited victory. The opponents argued that a committee could accomplish nothing, the facts were clear and indisputable: women could not stand the hardships of the ministry, women's first Christian duty was motherhood and the family and, finally, ordination for women at this point might interfere with the negotiations for church union with the Presbyterians. This latter argument was convincing to many who might, in principle, have supported equality for women in the church. However, the Christian Guardian editor did not stress this point but ended his editorial with the words:

The debate was interesting, but back in the minds of most of the delegates was the unmistakable conviction, that we could not afford to allow our young women to face the hardships of our ordinary work upon terms of equality with men, and the problem of a married woman preaching while her husband cared for the family and provided the meals, is one that cannot be dismissed with a joke.(11)

For the next three years the question of church union overshadowed the matter of ordination but when union of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches was accomplished in 1925, the women returned eagerly to their efforts for the ordination of women. In 1922 the Presbyterian

Church, like the Methodist, had turned down a proposal for the ordination of women. The Congregationalists had always permitted the ordination of women but none had been ordained in Canada.(12) Now the women had renewed hope that a new church would be ready to respond to new ideas. And this time there was a candidate. As Nellie put it: "Whenever the matter of ordination was raised the answer came back: 'There is no woman asking for ordination. Hold your tongues. Leave well enough alone. When we get a request for ordination we will deal with it.'" McClung went on to say:

Now there is an overture from the Saskatchewan Conference [to the General Conference] requesting ordination for Miss Lydia Gruchy. Here now we have what you have always desired to see, a woman graduate in theology, asking for ordination. She has been two years preaching and carrying on very acceptably. What are you going to do with her? Dear. Dear. This is most embarrassing.(13)

No embarrassment could equal the inconvenience of non-ordination for Lydia Gruchy who, despite the fact that she served a three-point charge like any male clergyman, was unable to perform marriages or serve communion to the members of her three congregations.

Faced with this embarrassment the General Council of 1926 decided that

Lydia Gruchy could not be ordained without a change in the church laws. The laws could not be changed without the approval of the presbyteries. Therefore, a committee was established to prepare a statement for the information and guidance of the presbyteries--this statement to be circulated to all ministers with the remit asking the presbyteries for their opinion on the ordination of women.

The committee was all male, all ministerial and the one westerner appointed, Dr. E.H. Oliver of St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon, was apparently unable to attend the committee meetings which were held in Toronto. The statement circulated as required and the presbyteries made their replies. Few women were involved because few were members of presbytery. However, they obtained an indication of how the matter was being handled from an article written by the chairman of the committee, Dr. Ernest Thomas, and published in the church magazine, The New Outlook. The article entitled, "Shall we Ordain Women?" had a very definite answer: "NO." (14) Instead, a new order of the diaconate should be established so that women could be ordained to this lower order and, according to Thomas, would thus be satisfied. He argued as did the document circulated to the presbyteries that:

(a) the history of the church revealed that women had never been ordained,

- (b) the ordained woman would not be accepted by congregations, particularly by the women of the congregation and
- (c) ordination would provide an obstacle to further church union. (15)

Although Lydia Gruchy was a former Presbyterian as were some of her strongest supporters, there was a fear that opening the ministry to women might be a divisive issue in the rather insecure new church and might stand in the way of establishing communion with the Church of Scotland. (16) To supporters of ordination of women the arguments appeared trivial and one clergyman emphasized their triviality by summarizing them as follows:

- (a) we never heard of such a thing,
- (b) your sisters might not be pleased and
- (c) whatever would the Jones's say. (17)

Furthermore, the arguments completely ignored the need which was clearly expressed by the Saskatchewan Conference for a fully ordained minister. As a deaconess, Lydia Gruchy would be unable to do anything more than she was already doing.

In the two years between conferences the debate was carried on in the church paper, in magazines and on the platform. (18) McClung played an active part in this ongoing controversy and no doubt her forceful speech to the Al-

berta Conference helped produce the result headlined by The New Outlook as "Edmonton Presbytery Approves." (19) Not surprisingly McClung was one of the delegates from Calgary to the General Council held in Winnipeg in September, 1928. She was made a member of a committee to consider the replies from presbyteries on the ordination of women and to bring a recommendation to council. Within that committee a very heated debate took place with McClung and a Rev. Neal Campbell on one side of the issue, the Rev. J.R. Sclater steadfastly on the opposite side and other members on middle ground. There was basic disagreement as to the meaning of the responses from the presbyteries. According to Nellie McClung, only 12 presbyteries returned a definite "No," 33 said "let's do it right away," and 43 said "we believe in the principle." She interpreted this as 76 in favour and 12 opposed. Dr. Thomas interpreted the returns as 55 opposed, 33 in favour, and 21 who did not return the remit, "probably opposed." (20) Even he, however, had to admit that his idea of a diaconate had been completely turned down. The committee finally arrived at a compromise resolution. They agreed that McClung, as committee secretary, would present the report and speak to it, and that Dr. Sclater would also speak. They also decided that they would both vote for the committee's recommendation and urge the Council to accept it without amendment. The recommendation was: that "the General Council takes

no action in the matter of the ordination of women to the ministry, but puts itself on record as holding that there is no bar in religion or reason to such ordination." (21)

According to a Winnipeg paper McClung's speech on the report "brought excitement to its peak." She began by describing it as a not very heroic resolution but indicated that women could take hope from the fact that it was now admitted that there was no bar in religion or reason for ordination of women. She said that a member of the committee from an Ontario city had assured her that women of his church had come to him opposing the ordination of women. Knowing the problems in the West, Nellie was incensed. "What difference will it make to these women . . .? They would never have to listen to a woman preacher. But in some places it would make a difference. She told of the work being done by Lydia Gruchy and scoffed at the idea that women who could labour on homesteads could not stand the work of the pastorate. But, she assured her audience, even if ordination was granted it would be a long time before many women would be ready. "Some men," she said, "seem to be afraid that immediately they grant ordination the women will wash their hands at the kitchen sink and rush to them pleading 'Ordain me.' People," she added, "can be too careful. I heard of a man who would not buy a calendar because he was afraid he would not live the

year. I thought it was only a story until I sat on this committee. Now I am ready to believe anything." However, despite her disappointment she urged the council to support the resolution, ending her speech with the following words: "the bright spot in it all is 'there is no bar in religion or reason to such ordinations.' I like that. I love it. I have every reason to know that when the council sets its approval on that, it will do something."(22)

Dr. Sclater followed with a speech also urging the council's support for the resolution. He too earned a laugh from his audience when he said: "Once a Scottish preacher could pray, 'Lord we thank thee that God created women to make men comfortable.' He could not pray that way now." He tried to minimize the significance of the resolution by pointing out that there is no bar in religion or reason to republicanism in this country but nobody would think of taking steps to set it up. He urged the council to show the country that the United Church was truly united.(23) It was with considerable relief, one imagines, that the executive of council saw this resolution pass without amendment.

This, of course, was not the end of the controversy. As a member of the committee McClung felt that she should not speak in public or in print against the resolution but when Dr. Thomas published an article in

Chatelaine in which he attacked McClung's speech to Council(24) Nellie felt freed from any restraint and replied to him on the platform and in letters to Chatelaine and The New Outlook. She reminded the church members that the Home Missions had reported a shortage of 52 men. She said:

Districts are left without church services. Children are growing up without Christian teaching and the church is losing its opportunity of helping the brave pioneers. In the face of these conditions the church refuses to ordain the one woman who is qualified, and refuses to encourage any woman to study theology. Its attitude is brutally clear. It is this. "We can't supply men for all the districts of western Canada. Children are growing up in ignorance - and it is just too bad. But even that is easier for us to bear than to have to lay aside our prejudice against women. We won't say that of course. We'll say women could not stand the hard work. We'll say it might disrupt the church. We'll say there is no demand for women preachers. We'll be scriptural and quote Saint Paul."

McClung dismissed with apt sarcasm the pedantic forty-one page statement which had been circulated by Thomas's committee to the presbyteries. She said:

It raked the past and explained

the future. It gave the presbyteries a peep into the Canon of Hippolytus and the Ignation Epistles. It mentioned Pentadià, Silvina, Sabiniana, Olympias, and Philip's four daughters (excellent ladies, no doubt, but quite dead), yet not once did it ask the brethren what they thought should be done in the matter of ordination for Miss Lydia Gruchy.

The document, she argued, did not provide information to help the presbyteries make an informed judgment. Instead it tried to influence the decision with biased information about the committee's views. Moreover, by introducing the diaconate they clouded the issue which should have been clearly and simply: "Are you in favour of ordaining women, yes or no?" (25) She particularly resented Dr. Thomas's reference to the woman preacher's sex appeal.

He sees in the woman preacher not the theologian, not the exhorter, not the prophetess. No, no, he sees only this--the "Woman Temptress"--and with that thought in his mind he sounds a solemn warning to the Church. 'Beware of women! Do not flaunt the age old prejudice against women preachers. Prejudice is a good thing in this case.' . . . Dr. Thomas, the great expositor of doctrine, the encyclopedia of church history who can dash off a brilliant essay while another man would be thinking of the

opening sentence. Dr. Thomas, whom we think of as a great mind, not subject to human frailties, thinks of even a woman preacher as a "temptress" stirring up mixed emotions in her audience. Dear me. How surprising. (26)

In December 1928, two months after Conference, a public debate was held in Central Church, Calgary and later repeated in Macdougall Church, Edmonton, on the subject: "Resolved that the United Church of Canada should grant ordination to women on the same terms as men." The affirmative was upheld by McClung and the negative by the Rev. W.A. Lewis, of Calgary. On both occasions large crowds attended. (27) Mark McClung, Nellie McClung's youngest son, remembers this debate as the first time he really saw his mother in action on the platform. He vividly recalls how she dominated the debate and captivated the audience--speaking with her hands, her body, her eyes, moving up and down the platform--pointing an accusing finger at her innocent opponent. He says: "I knew she'd prepared herself as she prepared me for debates. But not a note, not a hesitation in speech and the flow of words and the gestures and her eyes going around all the time. She really was a magnetic speaker." (28) As usual there was wit and humour in such remarks as, "It is about time we got rid of this old-fashioned idea that we are a sort of glorified Ladies Aid with the great work in life of pushing

some man up the ladder." Reverend Lewis brought forth the well-worn argument of women's inability to face the hardships and difficulties of a rural charge with an attempt at a humorous picture of a woman preacher in her Sunday best trying to free her horse from a slough. Nellie demolished this picture with the observation that a woman would have sense enough to be carrying her "Sunday best" in a bag and be wearing suitable clothes for a dirty ride across the prairies. Lewis was no match for McClung in argument or witty rebuttal. The judges awarded her victory on both occasions.

When the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council declared, in 1929, that women were eligible for Senate seats, Nellie used the occasion in a radio speech to point out the hurdles still to be taken, among others, the right to be ordained. "It is a matter of humiliation," she stated,

. . . that the church has been the last to yield to women full rights, and I believe the women themselves are to blame for that. One of the leaders in the women's work of the church defended her position that women must not be ordained by saying that women must first "prove their place in the church." That shows how poverty-stricken she was for an argument. (29)

Throughout the controversy McClung was more indignant with the women who opposed ordination than she was with the

men. She was particularly disappointed with the lack of support from the Women's Missionary Society whose president had betrayed the women with her comment at the 1928 Conference: "You have not asked us what we [the W.M.S.] think of the ordination of women--and it is just as well. You will find us very conservative." On hearing these words Nellie looked with consternation at one of the older ministers who supported ordination and he drew his finger across his throat. "How the men who opposed ordination loved her for her few words," wrote Nellie later. "The man who reported that day's proceedings for The New Outlook spoke glowingly of her--how feminine and attractive she was, and how becomingly dressed." Her idle words, Nellie believed, set ordination back ten years. (30)

The controversy continued. In the years after the disappointing 1928 resolution McClung never missed an opportunity to prod the United Church for failure to act. In an article in The Country Guide she wrote:

We cannot understand the mentality of men who dare to set the boundaries of women's work. We object to barriers, just as the range horses despise fences. For this reason we protested the action of the Alberta Hotelmen's Association when they decided that women must not enter their beer parlours. Not but what we knew it was better to be out than in, but we believe in equality.

And now with the Senate doors open there are only the two great institutions that will not accept women on equal terms--the church, and the beer parlours. (31)

McClung, of course, was not alone in her fight for the right for women's ordination. The Saskatchewan conference steadfastly continued to sing the praises of Lydia Gruchy and to put forward her name for ordination. In 1934, Rev. J.L. Nicol reporting to General Council for Northern Saskatchewan singled out Gruchy for special mention. He told of her six regular preaching appointments and her four Sunday schools. He described his visit to her charge and of their fifty mile drive over muddy roads with Gruchy at the wheel. She was appreciated by young and old alike and "her field was the only one in the superintendency this year that returned the last quarter's grant to the Home Mission Board," but, he added,

Notwithstanding all this, when a marriage has to be performed or the sacraments are to be administered our "Little Minister" has to send out for a man. . . to perform these rites. Why? Because our Church, welded to the tradition of the Fathers says in substance, "We can accept her services. We realize that she is fully trained, that she is giving people fine spiritual leadership. She can reveal Christ to men and women, youths and maidens. But she is a woman, therefore, we will

not ordain her." I feel that if some of these antis had the privilege of spending a few days on Miss Gruchy's charge, or better still, undertook to do her work for a year, their theological ideas regarding the ordination of women, or the propriety of ordaining Miss Lydia Gruchy, B.A. would suffer a violent change. (32)

In addition, the Secretary of Saskatchewan Conference was instructed to notify the General Council that it intended to ordain Lydia Gruchy at the next Conference in 1935 "unless at its meeting in September 1934 objection thereto is made by the General Council." This bold stand was strengthened by an assertion of the Conference's "rights of determining whom it should ordain" and a request that "no obstacle" be placed in the way of her ordination. (33) As a result of this a new attempt was made by Council to obtain the opinion of the church as a whole, this time using the method which McClung had suggested in 1926. The Presbyteries were simply asked whether they approved of the ordination of women and were instructed to answer yes or no, without qualification. Significantly the resolution that the question be remitted to Presbyteries was moved by the Rev. H.E. Oliver, principal of St. Andrew's College where Lydia Gruchy--gold medalist for the University when she received her B.A. in 1920--had received high honours in her theology studies in 1923. (34)

At this time the economic picture had greatly changed from 1928. Many of the old charges in Western Canada were now unable to support themselves; to establish new ones seemed almost impossible. The employment of women in the field was seen as a threat to men as they were thought to be taking men's jobs. While recognizing the economic difficulties faced by the church, McClung felt that this should not affect the equality of men and women.(35) The majority of presbyteries agreed with her. When the remits came back, the vote was 79 for ordination of women, 26 against.(36) Appropriately, Lydia Gruchy became the first ordained woman minister in the United Church of Canada in 1936.(37)

Dr. Ernest Thomas took to print again in an article smugly entitled "Ladies - We Give you the Pulpit."(38) He grudgingly accepted the accomplished fact but still saw difficulties. With a certain condescension he pointed out the areas of the ministry which would be best suited to women which he listed as: "the guiding power in training schools for women workers in the church, in Christian education, missionary work or girls' work, home visitations and the care and oversight of children." He found it sarcastically amusing to contemplate that the Pension Fund might have to be amended to read minister's widower instead of minister's widow and facetiously wondered whether the woman minister would give the wedding fees to her

husband.

McClung, by this time a resident of Victoria, summed up her feelings on the matter in an article entitled "The Long Road to Freedom:"

It is a long time since Erasmus in a burst of enthusiasm said he would wish that even women might read the gospels, but it has taken the full 500 years to convince the brethren and fathers of the church that women have the same ability to understand the scripture as men, and the end is not yet. The United Church of Canada took ten years to make up its mind whether or not it could allow a woman to be ordained in its ministry. Only one application for ordination has been before the Council all these ten years. Miss Lydia Gruchy has a perfect record of eleven years in country service. Now she is to be ordained. So the United Church has at last endorsed what Saint Paul said more than eighteen hundred years ago, that there is no male or female, bond or free, but all are one in the service of God.(39)

Even in the United Church the fight for women's rights was not over, as in 1946 another controversy arose when the first married woman sought ordination. But after the debate she was accepted. (40) In recent years McClung's spirit must have been cheering on the women

in the Lutheran, Anglican and Roman Catholic churches as they carried on her fight and we may say today as she said in 1929:

We may yet live to see the day when women will no longer be news! And it cannot come too soon. I want to be a peaceful, happy, normal human being, pursuing my unimpeded way through life, never having to explain, defend or apologize for my sex. (41)

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NOTES

1. N. McClung, In Times Like These (Toronto, 1915), p. 2.
2. Ibid., p. 103.
3. Ibid., p. 115.
4. The Christian Guardian, October 16, 1918.
5. Ibid. Reference to the Quarterly Official Boards meant seeking opinion at the local level. There were 2082 Quarterly Official Boards.
6. McClung, The Stream Runs Fast (Toronto, 1945), p. 218. The committee went one step further and named Mrs. W. E. Sandford of Hamilton as an alternative but she did not get an opportunity to attend. I assume she would have been asked had McClung refused, although this was not specifically stated. T. Albert Moore, Secretary General Conference, to McClung, June 3, 1920.
7. McClung Papers, Vol. 17, unidentified clipping, no date.
8. Methodist Record, September 16, 1921.
9. Proceedings of the Fifth Ecumenical Methodist Conference, September 6-16, 1921, pp. 257-260.
10. The Christian Guardian, October 18, 1922.
11. Ibid.
12. Report of the Committee on the Ordination of Women. Prepared by order of the General Council for submission to the Presbyteries, 1927, p. 3. In the Presbyterian Church women had equal rights with men in congregational meetings but they were not regarded as eligible for the eldership and did not have a place on the Session. Not being members of the Session they were not elected as representatives to Presbytery and therefore had no place in the membership of Synod or Assembly. In 1923 an overture from Saskatchewan Presbytery proposing that steps be taken to permit the ordination of women under the same conditions as men was sent down to all Presbyteries for consideration and report. Less than half the Presbyteries responded and only seven approved ordination of women at that time. Acts and Proceedings of

- the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1922, pp. 26, 279, 1923, pp. 99, 629; 1924, p. 194.
13. McClung Papers, Vol. 1029, manuscript, undated, no title.
 14. The New Outlook, January 18, 1928.
 15. Report of the Committee on the Ordination of Women.
 16. The minority report of Principal H.A. Kent of Queen's Theological College supported this view. He opposed any change in the 'Presbyterian practice
 17. K. Edin Fairbairn, "Well! Why not Ordain Women?," The New Outlook, April 11, 1928.
 18. L.M. England, "The Ordination of Women," The New Outlook, February 22, 1928; P. Fairbairn, "Well! Why Not Ordain Women?," The New Outlook, April 11, 1928. McClung, report to Alberta Conference on behalf of W.M.S., typescript n.d. but internal evidence suggests 1928. Various letters to the editor, The New Outlook.
 19. The New Outlook, March 7, 1928.
 20. There are no minutes for committee meetings but the controversy was revealed later in the exchange between Dr. Ernest Thomas and McClung and in a letter, Campbell to McClung, November 28, 1928, McClung Papers, Vol. 11(6).
 21. The United Church of Canada: Year Book and Record of Proceedings, 1928. Report of the Sessional Committee on Ordination of Women, Thursday, September 13, 1928, p. 120.
 22. Free Press Prairie Farmer, September 19, 1928.
 23. Ibid.
 24. Dr. E. Thomas, "Women in the Pulpit," Chatelaine, October 1928.
 25. McClung, letter to the editor, The New Outlook, December 19, 1928; McClung letter to the editor, Chatelaine, December 1928; McClung, "Shall Women Preach?," Chatelaine, September 1934.
 26. McClung Papers, Vol. 5(16), undated, untitled, incomplete manuscript.
 27. Edmonton Bulletin, January 31, 1929; The New Outlook, December 19, 1928; The Beaver, Canada First, February 21, 1929.
 28. Mark McClung, "Portrait of My Mother," text of a talk given at the Nellie McClung Conference, University of Guelph, September 26-28, 1975, p. 15.
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