Knowles of Galt (1868-1944)

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On my shelves in Edinburgh are five novels from Guelph area bought as curiosities, read with frank amusement, but now seeming more and more important not as literature (for they are poor enough) but as indicators of the complex state of Canadian-Scottish feeling at the turn of the century.

Robert Edward Knowles (1868-1946) was an Ontario man, a graduate of Manitoba College and Queen’s, who made his name for long and famous ministry at Knox Church in Galt. He also wrote for the Toronto press, and published seven successful novels, beginning with his biggest success, St. Cuthbert’s in 1905. There followed The Undertow (1906), The Dawn at Shanty Bay (1907), The Web of Time (1908), The Attic Guest (1909), The Handicap (1910), and The Singer of Kootenay (1911). My own collection is complete up to 1909, and I will be writing only of the first five of these.

Knowles was a prolific novelist, and also a successful one. We are not writing of a local minister whose books had a local sale, and were quickly forgotten. St. Cuthbert’s went through seven editions in 14 months, and by 1909 it had gone through ten. By 1909, too, The Undertow was in its third edition. These are substantial $1.50 novels, except for the slimmer (but most successful) Dawn at Shanty Bay, but for his dollar the purchaser received a highly decorated edition with drawings on every page.
Knowles’ reputation was good in his time. Since then, it vanished, as thoroughly as the name of the town in which he ministered. Yet we need to look at Galt, the novelist, as well as Knowles, to understand something of Knowles’ success, its virtues and its limitations. Through them, perhaps, we can see better something of the state of Scottish-Canadian relations at the turn of the present century.

Through a study of Knowles’ novels we gain some part knowledge of the attitudes and interest of a particular Scottish-Canadian minister, and also a general revelation of the attitudes of the generation he ministered to, both through his hard work, and through his widely-read fiction.

J.H. Millar, closing his pioneering *Literary History of Scotland* (1903), declined to look into his crystal ball to prophecy on the future of Scottish literature in the twentieth century. Yet he allowed himself a few brief remarks which look very interesting today, particularly the following:

... One circumstance, at all events, is of happy omen for the future. The conditions of Scottish life and society seem almost to preclude the possibility of the existence of a distinctive literary class or caste in Scotland. To foster the growth of such a class the environment of a huge capital appears to be essential. Edinburgh is fortunately too small to provide the requisite atmosphere and surroundings; nor is it easy to imagine that they will ever be found in the “second city of the Empire. . . .”

Neither Edinburgh nor Glasgow will give a Johnsonian London as a focus for Scottish Literary activity in Scotland, instead, the activity was diffused over the country, regionalised, localised. Burns’ and Galt’s Ayrshire, Scott’s and Hogg’s border country, the Aberdeenshire and Means which produced so many notable novelists, the Edinburgh of Ferguson and Ramsay form perhaps an incoherent, but a fertile source for creativity. Regional literature thrives in such activity: notably, Burns even rejects the possibility of switching from regional to metropolitan writing on his visit to Edinburgh, and apart from token gestures to the capital, continues to draw his inspiration from his native countryside. Galt is a noted member of Edinburgh literary cliques, and can write of Edinburgh when he wants to, in *The Gathering of the West* – but is happier in his native West of Scotland, or even in London. Marvellous passages of Hogg’s *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* are set in Edinburgh, but even more marvellous scenes find the Border country indespensable background – and the same comment could be made of Robert Louis Stevenson’s fiction.

Lacking a single metropolitan city focus for its action, Scottish fiction turns to regionalism, and to country settings. Hence arose the village fiction of Mrs. Oliphant and George MacDonald, and the wildly successful “Kailyard” of Barrie, Ian McLaren (John Watson) and S.R. Crockett, along with a host of imitators. Turning their backs on cities and slums, industrial development and poverty, such writers concentrate on the vanishing Scotland of the country villages, rather than the foreground of industrial development in the cities. The reasons for this are complex and not yet fully understood. Among them must be ranked the wish to cling to a rapidly vanishing Scotland, to shy away from the defacing of rural beauty, even at the expense of verisimilitude. With Scottish society rapidly changing, with population being resettled in the cities or (often forcibly) overseas, with the Church in the grip of Disruption and internal strife, with the new wealth of a successful industrial society causing strain at every point, Scottish fiction may be forgiven for seeking some prolongation of rural past. Yet to look at the situation coolly is to agree with George Blake that, in 1951, ...
servitude of Scotland for the struggling freedom of the Western World,” and their sociable fireside.

About this hospitable fire, strong men had gathered on many a wintry night, fellow fighters of the forest, the common peril and the mutual dependence making neighbours into friends, such friends as the pioneer alone can know. Here had they been wont to meet, the day’s hard conflict with heavy logs or stubborn stumps ending in merry song and genial chat, many a reminiscence of old Scotland, or the long sea voyage, or the first days of forest hardship, mingling with the cheery blaze. (U 24)

From this background comes the main character of the book, fulfilling his family’s destiny by escaping to the University and there winning high honours, passing on to a wider sphere than his parents’ necessarily restricted one. The ministers of Knowles’ novels understand their poorer parishioners from having themselves been upwardly mobile from poor homes: the gentler-born Southern lady who becomes a minister’s wife in The Attic Guest has to learn about this poor inheritance before she can function efficiently in such a community. (AG 208)

The attitudes implicit in the passage quoted from The Undertow are most significant. They are obviously inviting approval, approval above all for the warmth of community generated in the conditions described. Such a community is built by heroes, and produces men such as the hero of the novel fit not only for physical survival (Reuben Wishart, the hero’s brother, is a mighty figure of a man to symbolize that side of the inheritance) but also for intellectual eminence. Such a community sends out heroes but also beckons them back irresistibly: Stephen’s pride at the graduation ceremony at college is focused entirely on the presence of his parents, and thoughts of the absent Reuben who is minding the farm. And the reunion on his return home is one of total delight, summed up for his father in the grave approval of minister and elders, and for his mother in communal singing:

“Come awa’, my laddie,” she called gently,
“come awa’ wi’ the itheris. Let’s lilt Auld Lang Syne thegither.”
(U 35)

An interesting cultural value springs to attention: not only is the occasion one in which nostalgia for a vanished Scotland plays the prominent part, but the language levels are such that we cannot avoid seeing the clear cultural roots of each generation. To the mother, the primary emotions are communicated in spoken Scots, and encapsulated in the Scottish song which of all others links her to the country she will never see again (and from which she probably sang
"Auld Lang Syne" in farewell), and the song which ended parties on normal terms in her native Scotland. The choice of song may seem inappropriate (this party is not ending), but on a deeper level she cannot choose any other. It links her emotionally to her native soil with almost unbearable intensity, and the peak of emotional pleasure for her in Canada is to be signified by this emotional link to Scotland.

Postponing for a minute the consideration of the responses of her children to this kind of activity, we may note here the clear orientation of the older generation in Knowles' novels to a vanished Scotland. Equally clearly, it is not the orientation of temporary exiles who are merely keeping in shape for their return to the home and when they have the money for the passage: this is not intended in the novels, and only occasionally will a character (like Stephen Wishart) achieve this dream by superhuman effort, and in the sacred name of Education for the Ministry. His parents' pro-Scottish Values are permanently rooted in Canada, and as the extended quotation makes clear, the memories are forged from shared experiences of settling in communities against the common privations of early times. The friendships forged thus, such friends as "only pioneers can know," are already fellow-Scots: Scots band with Scots in Knowles' novels in a freely unchallenged ghetto mentality, to the extent that St. Cuthbert's could be set in any Scottish town, since the congregation the minister goes to serve there is solidly Scots among the older generation, and Caledonophile among the younger, Canadian one.

Let us be clear about Knowles' response to the survival of these Scottish immigrants. Not for them the convolutions of response to the act of survival which Miss Atwood sees as the thematic background to Canadian literature. For Knowles' Scots, the creation of a home away from home involves the clearing of primeval Canada, and the creation of something in the cleared space as close to Scotland as may conveniently be managed. This physical setting once achieved, a society will be set up in it as closely resembling the vanished Scottish one as may conveniently be managed. And who, walking in central Guelph even after the improvements of the 1970's, can deny that Knowles was describing fact, rather than fantasy? The urge to re-create the familiar among emigrants, many of whom were forced to leave Scotland, produces in stone a fantasy world which Knowles nourished in his novels.

Within this world, schemes of value operate which indicate a complex and quite implicit rank-ordering. Chief of these seems to be the crude test of length of residence in Canada. The major characters who occupy the foreground of Knowles' plots speak a strong, native Scots because this was the language of their childhood, and they still spoke it relatively recently in Scotland. To them it is no affectation: they are merely prolonging the speech-patterns of a lifetime. Such men are the Kirk Session of St. Cuthbert's.

They were stern men, and ruled the kirk with sternness; they had dealt faithfully with more than one who sought to restore the reign of the token against the expressed ruling of the session. They nipped contumacy in the bud. (ST 104)

And if they resisted change in the issuing of communion tokens in the church, they resisted change in the speech patterns they had brought with them.

My first meeting with the kirk session of St. Cuthbert's was an epoch-making incident. Twenty-eight there were who had sat about the session-room, every man but one an importation from Caledonia's rugged hills. (SC 43)

To native sternness they add "the stern consciousness of a religious trust" (SC 44). No scrap of dialogue attributed to the Session is in anything but Scots, though the Minister (who is Irish in origin, as the congregation gleefully will not let him forget) speaks pure English to them. Only in private, with the mysterious Mr. Blake, does he converse in English, though the parishioners speak to him throughout in Scots.

Now, is this a fair reflection of the circumstances of the congregation? Hardly.

The greater number of them had been born in bonnie Scotland, and all of them, even those who had never seen their ancestral home, spoke and lived and thought as though they had just come from the heathery hills. They were sprung from the loins of heroes, the stalwart pioneers from Roxburghshire and Ayrshire and Dumfries. . . . Seventy years before they had settled about New Jedboro, thinking of the well-loved Scottish town whose name they bore. (SC 38-39)

Well, this is complicated, for if they came 70 years earlier, the congregation are all native Canadians by now - yet most of them we are told are direct imports, and certainly they speak as such. And the session has 27 out of 28 direct immigrants - (which is likely), or the congregation has been formed entirely of recent immigrants to the exclusion of those who came 70 years previous (which is unlikely). What surely has happened is that in his haste to underline the Scottishness of New Jedboro, the community in which St. Cuthbert's
kirk is to be found, Knowles has overplayed his hand. The pioneers of seventy years previous are dead and gone, and their first-generation children mingle with later arrivals to form a composite first-generation Scottish core in the congregation. And such are the ruling spirits, the controlling men who set the tone of the parish. The native-born Canadians are almost entirely excluded: no doubt unconsciously, Knowles has created a two-tier society where only genuine immigrants rise to positions of eminence, retaining as they do some of the virtue of the old country they left only recently. Native-born Canadians meekly accept their superior wisdom, most important Church in the neighbourhood.

As if to underline this two-tier system, Knowles consistently applies Scots to children (and ministers!) English. This last device is really quite a clever one, for it allows the narrator figure to be distanced slightly from the claustrophobia of the St. Cuthbert’s community, and able in consequence to comment on their Scottish foibles to a wider audience. He is the first such minister, for his predecessors are a fearsome tally of direct immigrants: Rev. John Grant D.D. from Greenock, Rev. James Kay from Aberdeen, and Rev. Henry Alexander from Glasgow. Scottish clearly is best – Stephen Wishart believes so when he leaves his Canadian college in *The Undertow* to complete his religious studies in Edinburgh.

The innate conservatism of this situation is fiercely aided and abbetted by the congregation.

One of my first visits was to Mrs. Gavin Toshack, whom I found in a reminiscent mood. “Aye,” she said, “We’re a Scotch aboot these pairs; an’ God keep us sae. There’d been scarce a fly in the ointment, forby Sandy Trother’s wife, who gied him, an’ gied us a’, a heap o’ trouble’ but she was Irish, ye ken. An’ oor ministers hae a’ been frae Scotland; but we had ane for mebbe twa month or mair – nae oor ain minister, but only a kin’ o’ evangelist buddy. He was an Irish buddy tae, but there were seversals converted. That was nae Irish wark whatever, but the grace o’ God.”

These people had come in 1837, seeking freedom, “An’ we’re independent noo, wi’ eachen for a bite an’ a sup till we hunger nae mair no thirst ony mair. An’ oor barnies is a’ daein’ fine. . . .” Which is to say, they are successfully settled in a better style than their parents: one a doctor in Chicago, one the wife of the country Reeve, one owns an enormous farm in Alberta, and the fourth will inherit the farm in New Jedboro, with some money. (SC 55-6) In literary terms, this is naturalistic and vivid writing: the pride of the aged narrator figure is clearly conveyed, and the ease with which she tells her story in a native Scots which has not faded with the years – though we assume that the story is set not too late in the nineteenth century, since the date of immigration is fixed and the lady is still there to tell of what has happened since. *St. Cuthbert’s* was published in 1905, so the “now” of the story could be set then, if we take seriously the idea that the earlier settlers came some seventy years previous: but Mrs. Toshack would have to be a very old lady indeed to tell this story, and it seems more realistic to put the action of *St. Cuthbert’s* about half a generation prior to the date of publication – very much in keeping with the conventions of the kailyard in Scotland.

Mrs. Toshack is articulating a view of progress which is fiercely Scottish; her children have “got on” by hard work or good marriages, even at the expense of splitting up the family. One has been educated, and has done well in a big city. All are in good financial circumstances. And it has all been done the old way – no Irish innovations for Mrs. Toshack, and she may even be following the tradition of the “bodies” in *The House with the Green Shutters* by “giving him a good one” with the sly references to Irish incompetence. In a community like New Jedboro the minister’s life would be public knowledge even before his induction.

The Kirk Session of St. Cuthbert’s church is composed of similar people, male versions of Mrs. Toshack with her imported Scottish conservatism. Animated by this, and by a fiercely concealed warm human feeling for suffering poor people, they work with the minister to make St. Cuthbert’s an attractive picture of active benevolent Christianity at work in a community. There are poor people in New Jedboro, as there were in Barrie’s Thrums: in both, they are quietly and unostentatiously relieved by Christian charity applied by grim-faced and unrelenting Scots of the most conservative and undemonstrative dye. Knowles is exploiting a most popular theme here from the Scottish kailyard: Scottish parsimony co-exists in kailyard folklore with Scottish generosity (particularly to fellow-Scots in distress), on the understanding that it is done quietly and without damaging the dour reputation of the giver. Realising this, the minister presides over many acts of genuine benevolence. He learns to exploit the Scottish social attitudes, to resist change for change’s sake, to fall in line with the Scottishness he discovers.

Accepting an inviolable Scottishness and co-operating with it on the tacit understanding that good will come from it, is the key to happiness and success for the characters in Knowles’ books. Ronald Robertson in *The Dawn at Shanty Bay* is basically a good character, but will not be rushed: he will not budge on the theological matters on
blindly conservative grounds.

"Na, na," he said finally, "I'll no gang till the Sacrament; I dinna believe in Sacraments at Christmas. . . ." (DSB 83)

But human nature and the loneliness of a man who wants to be in contact with fellow-Scots in a hostile climate brings him back to the community, though by decently slow degrees. There can be a genuine breakdown of communication in this effort to preserve facades—such as the panic-stricken breakdown of the children being catechised by the terrible old elders in *The Web of Time* (WT 78)—but the tension is resolved in comedy, and everything comes out well in the end. After all, the plot is about two poor children trying to save pennies to their dying mother attended to by a big city doctor before her eyesight fails altogether and she dies blind (Knowles is not too original in his plots): to have people yield to the human appeal of the situation too quickly would plunge an uneasy plot to mawkishness. Here the stubborn uncommunicativeness of the Scots is actually a virtue in redeeming the tenderness of the plot. Knowles, at times, could be self-critical, and could laugh at the stereotype Scots with whom he populated his books. The Southern Belle in *The Attic Guest*, on meeting a visiting Scots preacher, tries to guess his character from his face.

A strong Scottish face it was, serious, almost stern when in repose—all Scotsmen naturally think much about Eternity. . . . (AG 62-3)

By and large, he had no need to laugh at the image he had created, for it served him well, above all in his most popular *St. Cuthbert's*, where it is most uncritically used to populate the pages of the book.

But what of the children? Knowles' books are more and more about children after the first success of *St. Cuthbert's* which had a great deal to say about parents, but relatively little about children. We have already seen one major area in which children play an important role, and that is as reconcilers, and catalysts of human kindness expressed in Christian charity. Naturally innocent, springing thus from the warm protective communities they inhabit, they form a constant norm of human behaviour against which the more interesting older generation stand out in sharp relief.

Two important points really need to be made in relation to the role played by children here. One is their language. Children speak English, despite coming from homes where they must have heard nothing but Scots all their lives. Even in private, they speak English to one another, judging by the dialogues between Harvey and Jessie in

*The Web of Time*. Cut off from their parents' native inspiration, they are cut off from identification by imitation. For all that in *St. Cuthbert's* immigrant Scots and first-generation Canadians all spoke of Scotland as "home," they cannot speak of it in the same language, for Knowles has ranged the two generations firmly on either side of a language barrier. Knowles' Canada was bilingual in a special way, a way created for purely fictitious purposes. Naturalism is discarded in favour of clear generation-identification.

The other point also identifies generations. It concerns the value the younger generation applied to life, and in particular the fact that these values are taken over from the parents' generation—which in effect means Scottish values. St. Cuthbert's Kirk is run by a tight caucus of older people from an alien cultural milieu, and there is no breath of protest, such as that which comes clearly in Galt's *Annals of the Parish* when Rev. Balwhidder is getting old and set in his old ways. A rapidly developing industrial community needs something more than he can offer, and he has no interest in change: the result is an inrush of evangelical preaching (which he resists on purely conservative grounds) and the formation of other Churches (which he resents in a bewildered way without really doing anything about it). Scotland is as it has always been: by the end of Galt's novel, Balwhidder's kirk is painfully emptying, the people going elsewhere or (worse still) nowhere. Balwhidder serenely refuses to be upset by the change in circumstances in his Scotland, and is gratified when his retirement is marked by a once-only return of so many who have left his Church. But *Annals of the Parish* was published in 1821. Knowles' work is almost a century later, and matters have moved very little. The young still want to "get on"—their parents' example surely urges them to this irresistibly—but their parents have done next to nothing to give them a focus for their development. Instead they have inexorably preserved the status quo. And the children (Knowles would have us believe) accept the status quo even when it reflects a status they have never experienced at first hand. It is hard to accept, particularly through the eyes of a narrator who is not himself part of the process, yet feels no compulsion to liberate the young from this trap of ideas.

An interesting contrast can be found between Knowles' practice and the preface by Dr. Daniel Clark to his *Selections from Scottish Canadian Poets*, subtitled to make it clear that this is poetry by Scottish emigrants and their descendants. Clark sees that the second-hand will inevitably affect the quality of the poetry.

... It would be affectation not to acknowledge that a number of the selections are not far removed from the commonplace... In closely examining the within poems it will be seen how many of
them have a general similitude to the standard Scottish lyrics. It does not follow that the writers were mere imitators of the songs of their forefathers, but rather that the national traits, characteristics, and bent of mind were likely to conjure up in the imagination of the son or daughter of the same race ideas based upon psychological and mental heredity. . . .

This is obvious special pleading, in the face of manifest derivativeness in the poetry he anthologizes. The position of his authors is almost exactly antithetical to that of the short-story writers in Canada in the 1960s and 1970s characterized by Donald Stephens as follows:

The story in Canada still had the tradition of Canada behind it, of writers who had tried to record their time; but it also had the tradition of the novel and poetry of the 'thirties and 'forties behind it, of writers who had worked out the focus of the Canadian identity into the framework of their own writing. . . .

And that, in a sentence, is what Knowles' younger generation lacked, and what Knowles lacked in his fiction.

It is easy to join the "academic critics" who "scorned" Knowles, along with the work of Marian Keith and William Fraser at much the same period — and easy to overlook the role these writers played in supplying fiction to an undemanding audience and fulfilling a need for writing for newspapers and circulating libraries. Yet it causes a wry reflection to compare the success (in publishing terms) of a novel like St. Cuthbert's with the prolonged unavailability of Bogle Corbet, now thankfully returned to print. John Galt had the energy and the diversity to be personally the sort of restless emigrant intellect that peoples the pages of Knowles. Yet he himself took part in the heroic pioneering effort which cleared the virgin forests, and established Guelph a community for immigrant Scots and English. At the same time, he had a sharp critical awareness of changes to see how even the very balance of Annals of the Parish, immensely readable as it is and valuable an an indicator of social change at local level, must be made self-destructive before the end of the novel. Balwhidder must not retire to a comfortable old age honoured by all, and be succeeded by a carbon copy of himself. Even as an apprentice author Galt did not let this happen to Dr. Pringle in The Ayrshire Legatees, for Pringle's successor was plainly out to change things in the parish to bring it up to date. Balwhidder's Dalmatian has ceased to exist long before Balwhidder retires. Galt's novels are full of the sort of bustling and challenging change which the kailyard denies: it is terribly wrong to write of him as "... a weaker exponent of Scotticism, John Galt ... producing cosy novels, and the tradition declined from him."

Galt's novels have the external appearance of placid reflection, but they generate and mirror turbulent change.

Bogle Corbet is about Scottish settlers encountering Ontario, forming a community, developing, having children, responding to second waves of immigrants, adjusting, evolving an identity, discovering the freedom which had been the lure to bring them from their native country. It is "about" all these things, but is also most importantly about the struggle for an emergent Canadian response to problems. And this struggle is expressed not only in survival against the elements, but against the less tangible threat of cultural absorption by the more powerful country to the South.

Certain it is, that in the course of my early observations, I saw an obvious tendency in the state of things in Canada to favour a relapse into barbarity. And nothing is less disputable than that the backwoodsmen of the United States have declined from the civilization of their progenitors.

Definitions of freedom take place against the battle between monarchy and republic. Economic advantages of sinking allegiance to Canada in residence in a larger successful country to the South are hotly contested by those advocating a "Canadian" identity - or indeed preserving the imported identity of the native country. The process is in being almost as soon as settlement starts.

It is this which is missing in Knowles. Seventy years of New Jedboro have produced no such feelings - or have not produced such feelings to be transmitted to the pages of fiction. Pleasant, undemanding, St. Cuthbert's achieves its success at the cost of closing its eyes. No community so smug, and so reactionary could survive several generations, particularly when the seeds of change are so obvious in the difference between parents and children. Knowles' readers were not of the generation they read about; theirs was the world of children, of their children. The hoary Scots heads of Knowles' first generations were contemporaries to Galt's Bogle Corbet, and yet they seem untouched by the radical arguments which the freedom of a new start in a new world inevitably provoked. The arguments have no place in Knowles. Trade Unions are explicitly attacked and ridiculed as harbingers of unnecessary change. Personal benevolence and Christian charity are the only forces Knowles' society requires, and their operation is seen, in the long run, to be perfectly satisfactory. Of course it is not real: to accuse Knowles of being bad because of his unreality would be to break a butterfly upon the wheel. But it is not challenging, and that really is what is wrong. Knowles had inherited enough decades of emerging Canadian identity to see how fiction could question preconception, could promote discussion and even...
initiate changes of attitude. Instead, he turned his back on this function and deliberately created a fantasy world akin to that which was enjoying enormous commercial success in Britain. And he found success.

Mordecai Richler wrote in 1970 of the Canadians as "the English-speaking world's elected squares."

To the British, we are the nicest, whitest Americans. To Americans, we symbolize a nostalgia for the unhurried horse and buggy age.11

Times have changed, fortunately, not least because Canada looks at the critical literature of countries with similar problems. Parallel problems exist on both sides of the Atlantic, between a Scotland and a Canada striving to achieve identity, and to achieve in literature a way of refining consciousness of that identity, and of developing mechanisms for coping with the world. In Galt and in Knowles, we see two Canadian responses. Knowles found success, and his formula reads pleasantly even today. Galt was sent home from Guelph in disgrace, Bogle Corbet was soon forgotten, and now Galt disappears from maps of Ontario even as a place name. But would life be more comfortable in New Jedboro, or in Bogle Corbet's intellectually intoxicating Guelph?

**NOTES**

4Attributions will be by abbreviation SC, U, DSB, WT and AG, followed by a page number.
6Published under the auspices of the Caledonian Society of Toronto, Toronto, 1900, xvi-xvii.
8See E. Waterston, _Survey_ (Toronto, 1973), p. 103.
11In _Canadian Writing Today_ (Harmondsworth, 1970), p. 15.

**John Buchan (1875-1940)**

**JANET FYFE**

"I am a passionate Canadian in my love for the country and the people."

Coincidentally with the news of John Buchan's appointment to the Governor Generalship of Canada, Victor Gollancz gave a party at Claridge's at which some of Buchan's friends were present. "What do you think of John's new job?" asked James Bone of Donald Carswell. Carswell replied that it was splendid. "Yes," said Bone, "but difficult. All that democracy, you know!"

The job was indeed difficult, since the Statute of Westminster had been in effect for a mere four years and its practical implications for the conduct of the King's representative in Canada had yet to be fully understood and experienced. John Buchan, however, would scarcely have seen Canadian democracy as a source of difficulty since he himself was, if not a doctrinaire democrat, at least a believer in the essential consonance of democracy with western civilization. That he was "democratic" in his social relations, too, has been well attested by those who knew him and by biographers and critics. His friendships, wrote David Daniell, ranged "from the scruffiest tramp to His Majesty King George the Fifth." An office which required of its holders both dignity and accessibility could hardly have been better filled than by such a man as John Buchan.

Although the Governor Generalship was not exactly the type of