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DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

THE ACADIAN RENAISSANCE

Date June 10, 1975

AND THE

DEVELOPMENT OF ACADIEN-CANADIEN RELATIONS,

1864-1912

"des frères trop longtemps séparés"

by

Martin S. Spigelman

Department or School History

Degree Ph.D.

Convocation Fall

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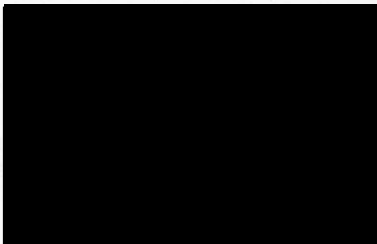
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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the re-emergence of the Acadian nation and the growth of Acadian nationalism through the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. Previous to this era and indeed in some ways through part of it, the Anglo-Protestant and Irish Catholic majority in the Maritime provinces treated the Acadians as an insignificant minority even though their numbers were in fact substantial. This was possible because of the isolation and poverty in which the Acadians lived. To rectify this situation the small "Français de France" and French Canadian clerical elite in l'Acadie sought to elevate the Acadian people by means of a responsive system of education and by the creation of an indigenous Acadian elite.

This new, largely secular elite was in existence by the 1870's and highly conscious of its responsibilities by the 1880's. Though personal gain was often foremost in the minds of its members, the elite did foster a strong sense of racial cohesiveness which permitted the Acadians to survive in an assimilative and often hostile milieu. The means by which this was accomplished were varied as well as in tune with the exigencies of the times. Some of

these means emphasized the spiritual - their devotion to their religion or to their highly romanticized histories; others emphasized the institutional - French-language newspapers, colleges and public schools, the church and finally the Société Nationale L'Assomption.

The Acadian choice of l'Assomption instead of Saint-Jean-Baptiste as a patronal holiday indicates their attitude toward the French Canadians in Quebec. Just as the Acadians wished to remain distinct from the Anglo-Protestants, they did not wish to lose their history, culture or traditions by becoming part of a larger French Canadian nationality. The differences between the Acadian and Canadien races, though denied by some, resulted in different responses to major political and social problems of the era such as English-Canadian nationalism or colonization.

The idea of or desire for an intimate Acadian-Canadien alliance which respected the individuality of both component parts, was always strong in l'Acadie. However interest in this proposed union was always substantially less in Quebec where the Acadians received little attention, aid or sympathy. Indeed the French Canadians often ridiculed the Acadians reinforcing their sense of inferiority. As a result of this attitude and of the environment in which the Acadians lived, the idea of a mutually beneficial union remained just that, an idea.

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Most graduate students when writing a dissertation encounter many people who deserve some of the credit but none of the blame for the end result. Archivists, librarians and colleagues are inevitably generous in their assistance and encouragement. None could be more so than Père Ansèlme Chiasson, Ronald LeBlanc and Régis Brun at the Centre d'Etudes acadiennes; all were extremely obliging and most helpful. I am also grateful for the assistance extended by the members of the History Department at Dalhousie University and especially to Peter B. Waite, the thesis supervisor. Through innumerable years he found time from his own pursuits to offer consistently useful criticisms and advice. Both the Canada Council and Dalhousie University deserve sincere gratitude for making it all possible financially. Finally thanks to Phyllis for doing more than she knows and to Aleina S. for providing those necessary diversions which, though delaying the thesis, made it all a pleasure.

INTRODUCTION

Before commencing this particular dissertation, one must come to grips with the term "Acadian", what it signifies and just whom it refers to. In its broadest sense "Acadian" may refer to those in the Maritime provinces who are French and Catholic; those who are descended from the admixture of ethnic groups which settled within the geographical entity of Acadia during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; those who for various reasons were persecuted, sought out and in many cases deported from Acadia in 1755; those who have since been able to preserve their language and their culture, in short their identity.

However, it is difficult to develop precise definitions of the term "Acadian" or to define rationally and objectively the very important concept of "identity". Identity is very much an element of subjective reality, formed in one's early life by familial influences and then maintained, or destroyed, by the nature of the surrounding society. Trying to ascribe concrete attributes to the Acadian identity becomes even more tenuous because of the proximity of the French Canadians, a group which the Acadians perceive as distinctly different. One cannot simply state that the Acadians are French and Catholic because that hardly distinguishes them from the French Canadians. The latter have equally strong roots in the 17th and 18th centuries and they too were subject to foreign armies

and governors.

Very often the definition of a minority ethnic group may develop from the concept which the cultural majority has of it. Outsiders may define the Acadian identity according to certain aspects of his conduct, perhaps according to the clothes he wears, the vocations he pursues or the values he is thought to have. On account of the French Canadians this method is also inadequate for defining an Acadian. To the majority in New Brunswick for example, the Acadians are merely the "French" just as the French Canadians are also the "French". There is little attempt to differentiate between the two.

Indeed the problem of defining an Acadian is compounded further by the Acadians themselves. They too employ the general, indiscriminate term "Français". They are rarely precise in their concept or in their use of terms - of course they do not have to be since inherently they understand what they are. The Acadian from Kent County simply knows that he is different from the Madawaskayen whose identity has been altered somewhat through close association with the French Canadians. The Acadian of Prince Edward Island is more different still, as isolated from the others intellectually as he is physically. The Acadians of the Island may identify with all other Acadians but they also identify with and reflect the priorities and biases of their particular milieu.

The imprecision with which the Acadians employ concepts creates another serious problem, this one having to do with

their use of the term "race". The Acadians of course are not a "race" by any anthropological or biological definition. Certainly there are no true racial differences between the Acadians, the French Canadians and the English Canadians. Yet the term is widely used by each of these cultural entities. Even certain stereotypes - attributed to "race" - have been developed which are then employed to bludgeon the other group. "Race" is a term which should not be applied yet general definitions of it, if considered in a cultural sense, would most decidedly be applicable to the Canadian context.

Viewed objectively and regardless of the consequences, it must be realized that notions of race do not depend upon the existence of race. It depends instead upon irrationality or the irrational belief in the supposed superiority of a given group. This is not to excuse the harm created by imprecise definitions but rather to appreciate various societies according to their own terms. One may not agree with the way Pierre Landry employs the term "race" but nevertheless he must be recognized as an important reflection of his society and era. A Valentin Landry, a Canon Lionel Groulx and a Rev. Charles Gordon, all of whom use the concept, are not aberrations. Instead they are articulating the feelings which exist in their respective societies.

The Acadian concept of "race" is extremely imprecise. They have redefined the word on cultural rather than biological grounds in order to achieve certain goals. Indeed one may draw analogies between this reidentification and the

reinterpretation of their histories. By creating and then maintaining their own subjective reality the Acadian elite hoped to achieve a national consciousness and a strong sense of group identification. With these goals being distinctly attainable, their own subjective reality became more important than objective reality and no attempt was made to rationalize the two. Within Acadian society there was a general understanding of and agreement on the term "race" as well as an acceptance of the consequences. For them, race, with its subjective, cultural basis, became "real" in the Maritime context. Reality was whatever those involved apprehended it to be and not what was institutionally defined.

The imprecision surrounding the discussion of race bothers not the Acadians but the outsider, the stranger who is unfamiliar with the socially accepted use of the term and who wishes to apply concepts and definitions employed in a larger society. Impressive arguments can be gathered to substantiate this insistence on particular definitions. Language should bridge different zones and have a certain degree of universality. Without general agreement confusion can reign and abuses perpetuated. Yet what the researcher must do, while keeping in mind true "objectivity", is to understand terms as the people involved understood them, to appreciate emotions and subjective reality as the people involved appreciated them.

This leads one back to the initial problem of defining an Acadian and his sense of identity. The Acadian does not

ordinarily trouble himself with precise definitions of what he is. He simply knows. The outsider therefore must remain vague. An Acadian is one who shares a sense of identity with the group. A group meanwhile is composed of persons with a shared sense of "peoplehood". The Acadian identity is what the Acadian people know they share. The Acadian "nation" is what the Acadian people know they are part of. The Acadian culture is a system of historically developed social norms and rites which are passed on from generation to generation because, emotionally, they are felt to be values. The key word here is "emotionally". The Acadian identity and indeed the Acadian nation is something that is felt, not defined. It is something which provides a framework for life and a degree of both belonging and security for the individual. Once the emotionalism of being an Acadian is understood, then one may begin to consider ancestry, history, venue, language and religion in trying to formulate objective definitions.

By the twentieth century, the Acadians were intimately involved with the world which surrounded them and hence they were obliged to speak of these distinctive attributes of their particular identity. But that attempt to define what they were for the benefit of others was a new phenomenon. As late as the 1850's, the chronological beginning for this dissertation, there was still no need to do so since the Acadian culture was secure as a result of its segregation in isolated, barely subsistent villages.

The mid nineteenth century was a period of rapid and important change for the Acadians. Their settlements were being approached and absorbed by the Anglo-Protestant world around them. As their degree of segregation diminished, their culture had either to adapt or else disappear. Culture, it can be argued, should evolve; a culture should serve a people not the converse. A cultural identity is useful only so long as it permits an individual to function meaningfully, to adapt to the social realities of a particular era. Once a culture becomes more of an obstacle than an aid, it probably should be permitted to fade.

Before mid century the Acadian culture was relevant because that society's focus was internal, because both the Acadian elite of that era and the Acadian people rarely aspired to positions or prestige in the larger world. Their horizons were limited and the consequence was a satisfactory existence. However with responsible government and confederation, with the economic and population growth evident in the Maritimes through the second half of the nineteenth century, the focus of the Acadian people shifted and their complacency waned. They now wished to profit from the patronage and promise of the new era. It was at this point that the nation's culture came into question and, in many cases, was discarded in order to satisfy more material desires.

Through the earliest years of this second period, through the 1860's and 1870's, an external elite, mostly clerical and from either Quebec or France, struggled to

perpetuate the group's identity and culture. Living among the Acadians, their task was to create and train a new, indigenous Acadian elite with "modern" priorities. The purely Acadian elite which was created had to cope with a rather frightening world while still appreciating and stressing the importance of culture. This new elite had to accept the traditional subjective reality as well as the traditional transmitters of culture - the French language and the Catholic religion.

The transitional French and French Canadian elite was remarkably successful. Their Acadian successors, while relatively free of narrow class interests and largely undistinguished in both their roots and wealth, were at the same time a product and a perpetuator of that sense of social reality which the Acadians of a simpler age had accepted as fact. In a paternalistic manner, the new elite established the rules of Acadian cultural life for the remaining decades of the 19th century and for the first decades of the twentieth. To a great extent, the subjective world of the elite became the real world of the masses. The elite dabbled in the political, in the journalistic, in the spiritual and in the economic spheres of the country in order to ensure that Acadians could partake while preserving their identity. However it was the preservation of this identity or culture which was of primary concern to the elite; material considerations, for the masses, were supposed to be of secondary importance. For most of the next century, probably

until the Second World War, the Acadian people remained content with this situation and their culture remained secure. The consequence, the unfortunate consequence, was that all the while the Acadian culture and the Acadian nation was not adapting to new exigencies and eventually the accommodation of culture and reality was no longer possible.

Thus dwell together in love these simple
Acadian farmers,-
Dwell in the love of God and of man.
Alike they were free men -
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and
envy, the vice of republics,
Neither locks had they to their doors,
nor bars to their windows;
But their dwellings were open as day and
the hearts of the swains;
There the richest was poor, and the
poorest loved in abundance.

Whatever the truth of this idyllic picture, it was abruptly terminated in the autumn of 1755 as the Lieutenant-Governor, Major Charles Lawrence and the British Government deported the Acadians from their homeland. The story of the deportation is well known, being first described, except for contemporary accounts, in 1870 when Richard Haliburton published his two volume work, An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia. Following Haliburton, there appeared approximately two hundred more histories of this tragic event, both incorporated and cited,

1. J. F. Herbin, ed., The Land of Evangeline with N. W. Longfellow's 'Evangeline' (Toronto, 1911), p. 25.

CHAPTER I

A Sense of History

Thus dwelt together in love these simple
Acadian farmers,-
Dwelt in the love of God and of man.
Alike they were free from
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and
envy, the vice of republics.
Neither locks had they to their doors,
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But their dwellings were open as day
and the hearts of the owners;
There the richest was poor, and the
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1. J. F. Herbin, ed., The Land of Evangeline with H. W. Longfellow's 'Evangeline' (Toronto, 1921), p. 25.

sympathetic and unsympathetic.²

No study of even contemporary Acadian life would be complete without mention of the expulsion since "le grand dérangement", an event known by every Acadian, gave a degree of security in the intimidating, Anglo-Protestant atmosphere of the Maritime provinces, of the new "l'Acadie".³ Having surmounted unparalleled adversity once, the Acadians were confident that their Protector, or protectors, would guard them equally well in the future.

The dispersion of 1755 had obliterated a content and relatively prosperous farming community.⁴ The first census undertaken in Acadia, that of 1671, enumerated seventy-five families or 441 people. A later census (1686) showed the area's remarkable growth, 151 families or 855 people.⁵ Though figures differ according to the politics of the author, most accounts place the French population of 18th

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2. For a detailed historiographical study of the deportation, see N.E.S. Griffiths, "The Acadian Deportation - A Study in Historiography and Nationalism" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1957) or her doctoral dissertation "The Acadian Deportation: Causes and Developments" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1970).
 3. For the purposes of this thesis, the new l'Acadie will refer to all the regions of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island where substantial numbers of Acadians live. See Appendix I for maps of l'Acadie and Appendix II for population according to counties.
 4. See G. I. Hynes, "Some Aspects of the Demography of Port Royal," Acadiensis, III, No. 1 (Autumn, 1973), p. 3.
 5. H. N. Gould, "The Acadian French in Canada And In Louisiana," American Journal of Physical Anthropology, XXVIII, No. 2 (Summer 1941), p. 289.

century Acadia at sixteen or eighteen thousand people.⁶

Since Britain acquired the area in 1713, successive colonial governors had considered the vexing problem of this stubborn people who adamantly maintained a foreign religion, a foreign language, and, it was feared, a loyalty to a foreign king. Even Paul Mascarene, generally viewed as one of the few governors genuinely sympathetic to the Acadians, had twice recommended their removal from Nova Scotia.⁷ In the mid 1750's, with the resumption of hostilities between Britain and France imminent, Major Lawrence in Halifax strove to expurgate the area of this troublesome and threatening race. Accordingly, the resolution was made, the ships ordered from Boston, and that infamous and legendary proclamation was read to the Acadians, already forcibly detained at Grand Pré. Though once again estimates vary greatly, approximately 7,000 Acadians⁸ were placed on board ships and dispersed along an

6. It is generally agreed that there were approximately 8,000 Acadians in Nova Scotia, 3,000 on Ile Royale (i.e. Cape Breton Island), 3,000 on Ile St. Jean (i.e. Prince Edward Island) and 4,300 in what later became New Brunswick. For competent discussions of these figures one should see Comité d'Ecrivains Catholiques, "Esquisse Historique Et Statistique Sur Les Acadiens," Le Foyer Domestique (Ottawa), VI (1879), p. 466. See also R. G. LeBlanc, "The Acadian Migrations," Canadian Geographic Journal, LXXXI, No. 1 (July 1970), p. 12.

7. Robert Rumilly, Histoire des Acadiens (Montréal, 1955), II, pp. 928-29.

8. Comité D'Ecrivains Catholiques, "Esquisse Historique Et Statistique Sur Les Acadiens," p. 466. See also N.E.S. Griffiths, The Acadian Deportation (Toronto, 1969), p. 1.

American coast ill-prepared to accept them while others still were transported to England and to France. Some Acadians gained temporary refuge in Ile St. Jean and Ile Royale. However when Louisbourg fell to the English in July of 1758, so too did the hopes of the nearly 5,000 refugees in these two sanctuaries. By the end of the year another 3,500 Acadians were expelled to England and France, of which 700 perished when two of the vessels sank in an Atlantic gale. In 1762 Governor Belcher attempted to deport another group of Acadians but these unfortunates were eventually permitted to remain in the Halifax region since Massachusetts refused to accept them. Nevertheless by 1763 the deportations, combined with over 12,000 American immigrants, had irrevocably altered the ethnographic complexion of l'Acadie.⁹

The Acadian community had seemingly been destroyed and its people transplanted to foreign environments.¹⁰ The

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9. It was generally believed that the Acadians had been effectively dispersed with approximately 1,050 in Massachusetts, 650 in Connecticut, 250 in New York, 800 in Maryland, 400 in Pennsylvania, 300 in South Carolina, 200 in Georgia, and 300 in Louisiana. There were another 850 in England and 3,400 in France. Remaining in "Canada" were 1,250 in Nova Scotia, 2,000 in Quebec, 300 in Prince Edward Island, 700 in the Baie des Chaleurs region of New Brunswick and almost 100 scattered along the shores of the Saint John River. See LeBlanc, "The Acadian Migrations," p. 15.
 10. The words "foreign environment" must also refer to France and its islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon as the Acadian refugees were not content in these regions either, with many returning from there to Canada.

Acadians were obviously too different to be easily assimilated and almost immediately, these refugees began to return "home". Thousands left the American colonies and the French possessions for a dozen different regions in Canada until, by 1800, 8,400 of them had resettled in the Maritime provinces.¹¹ They had returned to a transformed homeland however; their rich lands had been usurped by interlopers while they themselves, by government decree, were relegated to small, isolated and agriculturally less productive settlements. This rupture in their traditional life would affect not only the material being of future generations, as they were now primarily fishermen, but also their state of mind. Thankful to be back, terrified of "les Anglais", afraid of alarming the new majority, the Acadian people created their own self-sufficient and secure communities in which they could remain hidden from and oblivious to the outside world.

Through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Acadians exhibited a profound reverence for this earlier troubled period. Examples of fortitude, perseverance and Christian behaviour were drawn from these tribulations as a consolation and guide for the present and future. Underprivileged, oppressed, basically insecure minorities in Canada often develop certain myths which, being noble and

11. In addition 8,000 settled in Quebec, 4,000 in Louisiana, 1,000 in the rest of the United States of America and another 1,000 in France. LeBlanc, "The Acadian Migrations," p. 17.

← Start reading here

heroic, may sustain the people's pride.¹² The French Canadians¹³ had their own romantic notions of New France passed along from generation to generation and not subjected to critical analysis until very recently. The Quebec pseudo-history revolved around a succession of devoted clerics, dedicated intendants, resourceful governors, remarkable explorers and adventurous traders. Historians stressed the remarkable features of each and neglected the totality of that young society, a society which, like all others, had its warts and blemishes, its greed and its fools. These histories were to be instructive and exemplary, not necessarily factual.

The Acadians, less secure about their future than the French Canadians, insisted upon producing a history even more firmly embedded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, recent history being almost irrelevant. Their history became a cult, as sacred, as revered, as undeniable as Catholicism itself. Their faith was a two-fold one, with each part contributing to the other and absolutely inseparable. There was no need for their history to be "scientific" - it had a greater function to serve. Acadian

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12. This is not to say that the "majority" does not also create certain historic myths but they, being more secure, can more easily afford heresy and dissent.
 13. So as to avoid confusion in this thesis, the Acadians will always be referred to as just that while those speaking the French language in Quebec may be referred to as French Canadian, Québécois, or simply Canadian. The Acadians themselves would never refer to themselves as French Canadians although they often referred to themselves as "Français".

behaviour in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was to be explained by occurrences of a century previous, a central point around which all else revolved. As Abbé Henri-R. Casgrain wrote in 1875 about the Canadiens themselves:

... notre patriotisme, toujours en éveil, nous a accoutumés à envisager notre passé sous un aspect peut-être trop idéal et plutôt conforme à nos rêves qu'à la réalité. Trop souvent, on a fait des panygériques au lieu de l'histoire.¹⁴

Almost a century later, Michel Brunet has the same complaints although he ascribes different, more earthy motives for this poetic liberty:

Les Canadiens français constituaient une minorité continuellement menacée par un ordre économique et politique qu'ils ne contrôlaient pas. Ils demandèrent à l'histoire et aux historiens de leur fournir des raisons de survivre et d'espérer.¹⁵

For once Acadian and French Canadian could agree. Pascal Poirier, a leader in Acadian society, felt that "L'histoire est une fontaine de Jouvence, où les peuples vont puiser une éternelle jeunesse"¹⁶ or, as he should have added, a perpetual source of spiritual rejuvenation.

In his introductory chapter to Les Grandes Lignes de L'Histoire de La Société L'Assomption, Senator A.-J. Léger,

14. Abbé Casgrain, 1875, cited in Michel Brunet, Canadiens et Canadiens (Montreal, 1960), p. 40.
15. Ibid.
16. Pascal Poirier to the Royal Society of Canada, May 9, 1903. Reprinted in L'Évangéline (Moncton), May 19, 1904. See P. Poirier, "Mouvement intellectuel chez les Canadiens-français," Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, S. II, IX, 1903, Section I, p. 113.

dealing with the Acadian deportation, remarked that it was included "pour édifier tous les membres de La Société L'Assomption ... afin qu'ils conçoivent mieux ce qu'ils doivent être. Pour induire nos Assomptionnistes à soutenir toujours la lutte pour la conservation de notre foi et de notre langue."¹⁷ "Constructive" historical works could give the Acadians, as they did the French Canadians, a sense of pride. During the nineteenth century they had little else they could parade before the outside world. Through their history "un peuple de généreux martyrs sera vengé,"¹⁸ since it will show that they persevered where other nations may have faltered. The perseverance of their fathers was such a glorious tradition that even in modern Acadian circles, geneology becomes overpowering. The Acadians take great pride in being descended from those original martyrs. This popular history satisfied a need, giving a humiliated nation "des leçons de fierté, des exemples de courage, des mots d'ordre ... des arguments pour alimenter leur vouloir-vivre collectif et des motifs d'espérer en l'avenir."¹⁹

The Acadian histories were remarkably successful in

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17. A.-J. Léger, "Les Grandes Lignes de L'Histoire de La Société L'Assomption," (ms. in A.-J. Léger Collection, Box "L'Assomption, ms."), Centré d'Etudes Acadiennes (hereafter C.E.A.).
18. Father Camille Lefebvre to Pascal Poirier, Dec. 27, 1872. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-1.
19. Michel Brunet, Québec, Canada Anglais, Deux Itinéraires, Un Affrontement (Montréal, 1968), p. 36.

achieving these goals. Placide Gaudet for example, a young man totally uninterested in his cultural heritage, changed completely after reading Napoléon Bourassa's Jacques et Marie (1865), a simplistic but moving tale of the deportation.²⁰ Once inspired, Gaudet became one of the most important researchers of the Acadian past and a member of their elite. History had the important function of instilling this sense of self-esteem; consequently French Canadian and Acadian leaders worried constantly about the manner in which it was presented to their young. In Quebec where French Canadians controlled the school system there was little problem, but in the schools of the Maritime provinces, dominated as they were by English concepts and texts, it was feared that the young would mature "manquante de loyauté, de respect pour les institutions et lois du passé."²¹

Unfortunately, the purpose assigned to history provided more for "polemic virtuosity than for historical accuracy."²² Authors of French Canadian and Acadian histories stressed themes which in fact bore little resemblance to reality, as

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20. Note, n.d., in the Placide Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.43-20. For a brief treatment of Napoléon Bourassa (1827-1916), the father of Henri Bourassa, see Gerard Tougas, History of French-Canadian Literature, trans. by A. L. Cook (Toronto, 1966), p. 30.
 21. L'Évangéline, Oct. 30, 1895, p. 2, "L'Histoire Dans Nos Écoles".
 22. M. H. Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick, 1740-1960" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1964), p. 5.

well as taking many liberties with the available information. Though aware of the shortcomings of others,²³ the Abbé Casgrain often altered the "facts" to suit his or national purposes to such an extent as to embarrass some of his clerical patrons. Mgr. Henri Têtu (1849-1915), a noted ecclesiastical historian in Quebec, was sufficiently shocked by one of Casgrain's works that "je lui ai fait remarquer qu'il avait fait un usage trop fréquent de l'addition et de la soustraction."²⁴ Shortly afterwards and still aghast, Têtu added that "Ce cher abbé Casgrain n'a pas son pareil pour tronquer les documents."²⁵

Unrepentent, Casgrain continued this practice. Seven years later Placide Gaudet described Les Sulpiciens et les prêtres des missions étrangères as "un livre rempli d'erreurs historiques... L'addition et la soustraction sont pour cet homme [Casgrain] terrible" and, he continued, "une habitude".²⁶ Quebec historians were not of course the only offenders. On occasion Gaudet criticized both Rameau de Saint-Père, a French author enjoying great prestige in Acadia, and Edouard Richard, an Acadian, for the same practice.²⁷ Such practices,

23. See supra, p. 6, n. 14.

24. Mgr. H. Têtu, Quebec, to Placide Gaudet, Sept. 20, 1903. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.69-4.

25. Mgr. H. Têtu, Quebec, to Placide Gaudet, Oct. 1, 1903. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.69-5.

26. Placide Gaudet to Rev. Philéas Bourgeois, Oct. 7, 1910. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.71-28.

27. See Placide Gaudet to Pierre A. Landry, March 12, 1911. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-8.

however, were generally accepted, unless of course the author was "falsifying" history in order to paint a picture of ancient Acadia in hues less than rosy. Edouard Richard, himself chastized by Gaudet, severely castigated Francis Parkman, the anglophile American historian, for misleading the public.²⁸ There were sporadic attempts to portray l'Acadie objectively; Pascal Poirier believed that "Nous n'avons rien à gagner à fausser l'histoire, et l'exagération qui rend notre cause plus belle, l'affaiblit."²⁹ But these attempts were usually lost among the plethora of writings, all remarkably similar, which poured from l'Acadie through the second half of the nineteenth century.

Frenchmen, Québécois and the Acadians themselves all accepted without reservation the idyllic version of Acadia which may have been attractive but which only faintly resembled reality:

L'Acadie. Le mot ... oriente la pensée vers l'imagination, dans le jardin analogique des mythologies plus que vers ... l'histoire ... Alors que le Québec s'est fait tout l'histoire pour imposer au monde son existence objective et connaissance pour revendiquer et reprendre son droit le plus légitime à la vie, L'Acadie demeure légende, aux confins

28. See article by Edouard Richard in L'Évangéline, June 27, 1895.

29. Pascal Poirier to Valentin Landry, Dec. 28, 1901. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-7.

30. E. Martin, L'Évangéline de Longfellow et la suite merveilleuse d'un poème (Paris, 1936), p. 118. Cited in Griffiths, "The Acadian Deportation - A Study in Historiography and Nationalism," p. 42.

de l'histoire et du rêve ou de la révélation.³⁰
Exemplary of and indeed initiating this sort of history was
the poem Evangeline by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, "ce
Tolstoi de l'Amérique".³¹ Publicized widely by the first
Acadian newspaper, Le Moniteur Acadien,³² the poem was warmly
received since it gave the Acadians a new pride in themselves.
They liked to identify with the heroine, the "symbole de
candide jeunesse, de courage dans l'épreuve,, de longue
fidélité à la foi jurée"³³ The poem contributed
substantially to the romantic aura which surrounded that
black day in 1755, an aura which produced a wide coterie of
dramatic terms which the Acadian revealed in using: le Grand
Drame, le Grand Dérangement, La Tourmente, La Grande Tragédie,
le Démembrement, L'Expulsion, la Dispersion,, and la Déportation.

But Longfellow's imagination did more than rekindle
"la flamme presque éteinte de leur ancienne fierté française."³⁴

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30. J.-P. Hauteceur, "L'Acadie: Idéologies et Société"
(unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, L'Université Laval,
1972), p.1.
 31. Rev. Ph. F. Bourgeois, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
(Shediac, 1907), p.22.
 32. Le Moniteur Acadien began publishing the Léon Lemay
translation as a front page serial on Aug. 22, 1867, i.e.
within two months of the newspaper's appearance in
Shediac. It was followed by Napoléon Bourassa's
Jacques et Marie (Montreal, 1866).
 33. Father Antoine Bernard, "Henry Longfellow, Créateur
D'Evangeline," Feb. 10, 1932. Clipping in C.E.A., Box
"Longfellow - Evangeline".
 34. E. Martin, L'Evangeline de Longfellow et la suite
merveilleuse d'un poème (Paris, 1936), p.218. Cited
in Griffiths, "The Acadian Deportation - A Study in
Historiography and Nationalism," p.42.

It introduced Acadia to the world,³⁵ moving Americans to fret for "the heroes of a lost cause"³⁶ and Frenchmen, previously unaware and unconcerned, "étudier à fond la question acadienne."³⁷ By 1920 three and one half million copies of the poem had been sold in America alone,³⁸ leading to a 1934 movie starring Dolores del Rio as Evangeline. Predictably, Tory Toronto resented the lavishing of so much attention on a barely defensible event. In 1923, the Rev. Dr. Cody, Chairman of the Board of Governors at the University of Toronto, began a movement seeking the removal of Evangeline from Canadian schools since it created "a wrong impression of British justice, chivalry, and administration" in America. Many disagreed with the good doctor however, believing that "Anti-British sentiment has its chief citadel among Americans who have never heard of Longfellow and do not know and do not care whether 'Evangeline' is a chewing gum, a burlesque show, or a ladies' baseball team."³⁹

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35. Evangeline was translated into German and Polish (1851), French and Danish (1853), Swedish (1854), Dutch and Italian (1856), Portuguese (1874) and Czech (1877). Between 1846 and 1860 there were at least twenty editions printed in the various languages. Ibid., p. 51.
 36. J. A. Grant, Through Evangeline's Country (Boston, 1894), p. 3.
 37. Emile Lauvrière to P. Poirier, Feb. 19, 1919. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-9.
 38. Toronto Globe, n.d., "Longfellow and Evangeline". Clipping in Lauvrière Coll., C.E.A. 3.8-16.
 39. The Gaelic American (N.Y.), Nov. 24, 1923, p. 1, "Evangeline is Outlawed by Canadians". Clipping in Lauvrière Coll., C.E.A. 3.8-16.

Regardless of the debate, the myth of 'Evangeline', perpetuated by both the poem and the many histories of the period, contributed greatly to the Acadians' sense of self-respect, just as other myths had to the Québécois.⁴⁰

Eventually the Acadian people and their leaders would have to realistically come to terms with this myth. They would have to accurately assess their position in Maritime society before they could hope for improvements. Nineteenth century l'Acadie after all was more than warm hearts, outstretched arms and open doors. Visitors to the area, including the Bishop of Quebec, Mgr. J.-O. Plessis (1806-1825), saw a people who were some distance away from the idyllic picture portrayed by the historians:

... il n'y a peut-être pas de peuple dans tout le Canada, où l'on voie autant de mésintelligence, de querelles et de haines réciproques. Les frères, les soeurs, les neveux, les tantes, se reprochent mutuellement les plus grands désordres, se fuient les uns les autres, détournent les yeux pour ne se pas apercevoir, se décrient et se déchirent à belles dents, sans qu'on puisse les convaincre de l'obligation que la loi de Dieu leur impose de s'aimer et de se pardonner.

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40. There can be no denying that this self-respect, this pride in one's heritage, would be an important contributor to the "Acadian Renaissance". The strong sense of cultural identity and ethnic cohesion exhibited by the Acadians in this period was in large part due to their knowledge of a rather glamorous past. For a general discussion of this problem among ethnic minorities, see T. Shibusani & K. Kwan, Ethnic Stratification, A Comparative Approach (New York, 1965), pp. 217-23. See also N.E.S. Griffiths, The Acadians: Creation Of A People (Toronto, 1973), pp. 70-71.
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The Acadians were "en général assez mauvais cultivateurs", constantly in debt and hence servile to the local fish or lumber lords. Their dress often ignored the dictates of "la modestie chrétienne" and their language was composed of as many English as French expressions.⁴¹

The Acadian elite had to admit that these blemishes existed and, more seriously, they had to work toward changing the entire way of life which their people had developed since 1755. It was customary among government and English circles "to regard them [the Acadians] as a good-natured harmless community of people, permanently poor because of their improvidence, incapable of anything important because of their ignorance."⁴² Colonial authorities were only too willing to ignore the Acadians who had spread rapidly into the isolated regions of the Maritimes; the "North Shore" of New Brunswick, Cape Breton and Baie Ste.-Marie in Nova Scotia, and the north coast of Prince Edward Island.⁴³ One group of New Brunswick Acadians who had initially settled near the present site of Fredericton were forced by the government and by the antipathy of the Loyalists to relocate in the Madawaska region, a full 130

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41. Observations made by Mgr. J.-O. Plessis of Quebec during his 1811 pastoral visit to Acadia. L'Ordre Social (Moncton), "Journal de Mgr. J.-O. Plessis - Deux Voyages dans le Golfe Saint-Laurent et les Provinces d'en Bas, en 1811 et 1812", Jan. 9, 1938 to July 29, 1938. See no. 7, no. 11 and no. 13 in the series.

42. W. S. MacNutt, New Brunswick, A History 1784-1867 (Toronto, 1963), p. 280.

43. See Appendix I. Commentary on the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick, 1740-1860, p. 43.

miles from the nearest English-speaking settlement.⁴⁴ Here the Acadians created their own society, well hidden from British authority. Here they could ignore the outside world as well as be ignored by it.

The Colonial governments successfully sought to isolate the Acadians by refusing them any place in the administrations or the educational systems of the Maritime provinces. "An Act concerning Schools and Schoolmasters", passed in 1766, provided that "no popish person should be so presumptive as to set up any school in the province", a statute which remained in force until 1792.⁴⁵ Another Act, passed in 1785, excluded Catholics from voting or from holding public office unless they ascribed to an oath repudiating the secular powers of the Pope. This legislation, though not always rigidly enforced, remained on the statute books until 1830. But in spite of these instances of overt discrimination, the government generally neglected the Acadians altogether, a condition of affairs quite satisfactory to those involved:

Satisfaits qu'on nous laissât vivre sans nous enlever le peu que nous possédions, nous ne demandions qu'à être ignorés, et qu'on nous laissât cueillir en paix les

44. See Abbé Thomas Albert, Histoire du Madawaska (Quebec, 1920), pp. 76-83. Robert Rumilly poignantly writes that "Les Loyalistes appliquent la constante historique suivant laquelle les persécutés se transforment en persécuteurs s'ils viennent en contact avec une population plus faible." For his treatment of the foundation of Madawaska, see Histoire Des Acadiens, II, pp. 657-58.

45. Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick, 1740-1960," p. 93.

moissons que le bon Dieu nous donnait
comme à nos voisins, et jouir de la
lumière de son soleil qu'il ne nous
refusait pas.⁴⁶

Unfortunately the administrators of the Catholic religion in Canada also ignored the Acadians during this period. The Bishop of Quebec, despite his best intentions, had not a sufficient number of trained priests for Quebec itself and could not spare many for work in a predominantly English, covertly hostile environment. From 1755 to 1767 the Abbé Maillard served all of l'Acadie. When he died politics and practicality, the British Government and American puritanism, would not permit his replacement.⁴⁷ The situation improved only gradually. In 1860 the 80,000 Acadian-Catholics living in sixty-six parishes scattered throughout the three Maritime colonies were being served by only thirty-one priests. Of these, only fifteen were French speaking, the others being primarily Irish, unilingual and indifferent to Acadian needs, "absorbés par les soins qu'ils doivent donner à d'autres paroisses peuplées de leurs nationaux."⁴⁸

46. Pascal Poirier in an address to the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society, Montreal, June 1884. Reprinted in F.-J. Robidoux, ed. Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens (Shediac, 1907), pp. 192-93.

47. See Le Devoir (Montreal), April 11, 1925 "Le clergé canadien et l'Acadie" by Abbé Desranleau. See also Abbé l'isle-Dieu, vicar-general to Mgr. Riand (1766-1784), to Cardinal Castelli, Paris, Dec. 8, 1772. Archives de la Propagande (Rome), "Canada, Vol. 1, folio 302". Copy in Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.54-11.

48. Rameau de Saint-Père to a Quebec audience, Oct. 23, 1860. Copy of speech in Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.5-2. See Appendix II for population data.

In the absence of any effective leadership, either political or clerical, progress avoided the Acadian villages. One requisite of the nineteenth century, a basic education, was almost nonexistent in their settlements. The few schools which did exist were in "des conditions dédaigneuses" not having "aucun commodité et n'offre aucun encouragement aux élèves et aux maîtres".⁴⁹ The parents, being generally poor and unconvinced of the value of an education, refused to provide either decent facilities or the funds necessary to attract qualified instructors. Where schools did exist, attendance was irregular and of brief duration.⁵⁰ In fact the Acadian disdain for education was understandable considering the society in which they lived, a society which virtually excluded them from the government and from the priesthood, a society lacking, at this time, a collective conscience or a trained elite. The vocations into which the Acadians drifted, "la colonisation ... l'agriculture ... la pêche",⁵¹ hardly justified the expense or inconvenience of acquiring an education. The result of course was a

49. Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac), July 18, 1867, "L'Enseignement".

50. For a detailed description of the state of Acadian education, see L'Évangéline, Dec. 12, 1895, p. 2, "Les Ecoles Communes au N.-B. En 1860" by Father Philéas Bourgeois. See also G. A. Rawlyk & R. Hafter, Acadian Education in Nova Scotia, An Historical Survey to 1965 (Ottawa: Studies of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, no. 11, 1970), pp. 9-19 passim.

51. Father M.-F. Richard, "Mémoire", n.d. Cited in C.-D. Doucet, c.s.c., "Une Étoile S'Est Levée En Acadie - Mgr. Marcel-François Richard," (ms., 1973), Chapter 6, p. 1.

vicious circle which witnessed the Acadians rejecting education because of the lack of resultant opportunities and the larger Maritime society rejecting them because of their lack of education.⁵²

Isolated intellectually and vocationally from the larger world, the Acadians were an inward looking peasant people. Their communities were self-contained and self-sufficient, "in some respects like ... a large family."⁵³ Consequently even those Acadians who lived in settlements close to Halifax could retain their language, culture and customs since in fact they had "no more affiliation [with the English cities] than if they were on an island in the South Seas!"

The reason of that ... is because they stick to their own settlement; never see anything of the world except Halifax early in the morning; never marry out of their own set; never read - I do not believe one of them can read or write - and are in fact so slow [his emphasis], so destitute of enterprise, so much behind the age.⁵⁴

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52. See Rameau de Saint-Pierre to Le Moniteur Acadien, Jan. 8, 1868. Published in Le Moniteur Acadien, July 31, 1868.
53. Capt. William Moorsom, Letters from Nova Scotia: Sketches of a Young Country (London, 1830), p.259. Marc-A. Tremblay makes a similar point in two fairly recent articles on Acadian communities. He speaks of the Acadian communities as being in essence a "socio-cultural universe" in which extended family ties are of extreme importance for their cultural preservation. Both articles, "The Acadian Society of Tomorrow: The Impact of Technology on Global Social Structure" and "Profile of Acadian Sentiments at L'Anse-des-Lavallée," are reprinted in Communities and Culture in French Canada, ed. by G. L. Gold and M.-A. Tremblay (Toronto, 1973), pp. 62-74 and 280-300.
54. F. S. Cozzens, Acadia, A Month with the Blue Noses (New York, 1859), p.59.

The Acadians, having experienced one tragedy, viewed isolation as the only effective guarantee for their survival. On Prince Edward Island, the Acadians had settled in Rustico and Malpèque after the 1755 deportation. Isolated, Rustico flourished while Malpèque, closer to outside influences and hence subject to "les tracasseries et les persécutions"⁵⁵ eventually disappeared with its people "réduits à la vie nomade."⁵⁶ But even these persecutions were viewed and welcomed by a later generation of leaders as an object lesson:

... qui oserait dire que ces persécutions et ces misères n'ont pas été pour le plus grand bien des Acadiens? Si les Anglais, leurs voisins, les avaient traités comme des frères et des amis, peut-être se seraient-ils fondus parmi la race Anglo-Saxonne et protestante, et nous ne serions pas aujourd'hui dans l'île St.-Jean 13000 Acadiens français et catholiques.⁵⁷

Of course that was a generation which saw "le bras divin" in every onerous act including the deportation;⁵⁸ a concurrent generation of French Canadians saw a divine plan in the continued depopulation of their province for the

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55. H. Blanchard, Les Acadiens De L'île Saint-Jean (Pamphlet in possession of C.E.A., 1921), p.16.
56. A. Bernard, Histoire de la Survivance Acadienne, 1755-1935 (Montreal, 1935), p.311.
57. Blanchard, Les Acadiens De L'île Saint-Jean, p.16. According to Canada, Census of Canada, 1921, I, p.382, there were 11,971 Acadians remaining on P.E.I. by 1921.
58. See speech of Father F.-X. Cormier to l'Assomption, 1883. Reprinted in Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 23, 1883. Issues are all examined in succeeding chapters.

industrial centres of the United States. Nevertheless living as they did the Acadians could be free of the English and expect a future brighter than their past:

l'immigration [British] se porte fort peu dans ces régions froides et reculées [i.e. northern N. B.] tandis que le rapide accroissement de la population Française par elle-même, et la voisinage immédiat des population Franco-Canadiennes, lui assurent des puissantes garanties de développement et de conservation.⁵⁹

Through the second half of the nineteenth century however, the Acadian began to desire more than merely isolation, security and a meager subsistence. The opportunities offered by Confederation, the foundation of several Acadian colleges, the emergence of an energetic Acadian elite all contributed to an elevated level of aspirations.⁶⁰ As the Acadians sought to satisfy these desires they began to realize the degrading position of exclusion into which they had been forced. Isolation had indeed provided security but it had also bred an overwhelming sense of inferiority which was extremely slow to disappear and which may still exist:

We have become so accustomed to this idea of inferiority that down to this

59. Rameau de Saint-Père, "Lettre au Roi Concernant les Acadiens," June 6, 1863. Archives Nationales de France, Section Moderne, Serie F. 19 (Cultes), Vol. 6236. Copy in C.E.A., Box "Bouctouche, N. B.". For a discussion of colonization efforts in northeastern New Brunswick and immigration into New Brunswick, see infra, chapter IX.

60. These issues are all examined in succeeding chapters.

day [1883] we consider it necessary to surround the English ... with a deference that we might quite properly accord to our own countrymen. If an Englishman settled in the midst of a thoroughly French district ... he could at once by general consent become the ruling spirit of that district ... And if one of our own found his way into an English district, it was to become the servant, the menial of the English.⁶¹

Pierre Landry, with a great degree of accuracy, spoke of the "domination complète" of the various governments over the actions and even the spirit of the Acadian people. Though there was rarely overt discrimination, the authorities had become accustomed to ignoring Acadian needs yet at the same time taking "avantage de notre pauvreté et de nos misères pour servir les fins intéressés."⁶²

To improve their lot in a material sense, the Acadians had to realize that "Le plus grand malheur ... n'a pas été leur dispersion, mais l'abandon presque complet dans lequel ils ont été laissés durant près d'un siècle."⁶³ Indeed they also had to overcome this debilitating isolation which had been forced on them after the deportation. By 1881 the Acadian population was already substantial; 57,000 in New Brunswick, 41,000 in Nova Scotia, and 11,000 in Prince

61. P. A. Landry to l'Assomption Society, Aug. 15, 1883. Printed in the Moncton Daily Times. Clipping in Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.4-1.

62. P. A. Landry, speech delivered in Cap Pelé, n.d. but between 1901 and 1911. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.4-2.

63. Abbé H.-R. Casgrain, Un Pèlerinage au pays d'Évangéline (Quebec, 1887), p. 25.

Edward Island.⁶⁴ However numbers were largely meaningless because of the Acadians' narrow horizons. To the Acadian, his village was his "pays" while the known world ended "presque toujours à quelque milles de leurs paroisse."⁶⁵ This condition may have been adequate to satisfy eighteenth century needs but along with responsible government and Confederation in the nineteenth century came an increasing number of Anglo-Protestant and Irish-Catholic colonists, clerics, merchants and politicians. To acquire what was justly theirs, the Acadians of all the Maritime provinces had to unite, construct a proper educational system and produce an elite which could direct them in their struggles. . . . VIP

Traditionally the Acadians neither expected nor received aid in their struggles from either France or Quebec. In the seventeenth century the Acadians and French Canadians had emigrated from the same country, were governed by the same king and similar administrators, and had basically the same religious and material interests. Yet even then the two groups of Franco-Canadians had no intimate contacts with each other. The conquest of Acadia by the English caused scarcely an emotional tremor in France or Quebec. By the 1860's the Acadians, discouraged by a century of repression and isolation, did not possess the means of independently acquiring the colleges, the positions

64. Canada, Census of Canada, 1881 (Ottawa, 1882), I, p. 300.

65. Rameau de Saint-Père to a Quebec audience, Oct. 23, 1860. Copy in Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.5-2.

and the prestige which they now sought. They urgently required an external stimulus to revive their culture. J.P.

Initially this stimulus came from France as people there awakened to and took an interest in the existence of Frenchmen in North America. A French visitor to Halifax in 1861, Edouard du Hailly, was amazed to see, walking in the streets of that city, "une véritable paysanne normande" and was flattered that the customs and language of the old country "avait été religieusement conservé" in nearby Chezzetcook.⁶⁶ More gratifying still, he was immediately greeted as a compatriot. The Acadian concerns were evidently French in nature, as they excitedly enquired if a French priest was on his ship; until then "le curé chargé de desservir cette modeste paroisse est le plus souvent un Irlandais, qui s'y considère comme en exil et qui ne sait pas un mot de notre langue."⁶⁷

The new interest witnessed in France for the welfare of the Acadian people may have stemmed from a sense of guilt which the Acadians would not permit to lapse. Edouard Richard for example emphasized in a French journal that:

C'est pour leur attachement à la France que ces Acadiens ont subi ces malheurs [of the deportation] ... Combien sont coupables et combien grande est la responsabilité de ces potentats qui, ne se donnant pas le peine de rendre leurs colonies fortes et prospères, sacrifient

66. Edouard du Hailly, "Une Station Sur Les Côtes D'Amérique - Les Acadiens Et La Nouvelle-Ecosse," La Revue des Deux Mondes, XLII (Dec. 15, 1862), p. 878.
67. Ibid., pp. 883-84.

leurs sujets aux angoisses et aux humiliations de joug étranger!⁶⁸

Whether for this reason or from simple curiosity, Frenchmen began to take an active interest in North America, with a succession of authors making the voyage. The first was Xavier Marmier who, touring Canada in 1850, "ait signalé la survivance extraordinaire de cette ramification de la race français."⁶⁹ The second and by far the most important was Edmé Rameau de Saint-Père who became the leading European patron of the French race in North America, corresponding regularly with the leaders of French Canadian, Acadian, Franco-Manitoban and Franco-American society. While still in Algeria (1850), Rameau learned of and decided to publicize the cause of the French Canadians. His first book, La France aux Colonies (Paris, 1859), received an enthusiastic reception in Canada because it was

la première fois depuis la conquête que tout un livre, écrit par un authentique Français du France, était consacré non seulement au glorieux passé des anciennes colonies, mais à une étude détaillée de l'actualité canadienne ou acadienne.⁷⁰

Following publication, Rameau was invited to visit Canada and did so in the fall and winter of 1860, travelling extensively in Quebec and Acadia as well as in New England

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68. E. Richard, "Les Acadiens et la France," La Revue des Deux Frances, No. 8 (May, 1898), pp. 103-04.
 69. La Minerve (Montreal), Oct. 16, 1892. Reprinted in Le Moniteur Acadien, Nov. 11, 1892, p. 2.
 70. Jean Bruchesi, Rameau de Saint-Père et les Français D'Amérique (Montreal, 1950), p. 11.

and Louisiana.

Rameau was less sentimental about the Franco-Canadians than many of his contemporaries. He was less concerned with a romantic concept of a French North America than with extending concrete aid to the French Canadians and Acadians. Often he was requested to employ his "grande influence auprès des autorités ecclésiastiques et civiles" in order to obtain much needed succour - books for Abbé Belcourt's⁷¹ parish library, funds for the Catholic Academy at Arichat and for colonization.⁷² Inevitably Rameau would accept the task of sponsor, at one point going so far as to write to Napoleon III of France on their behalf.⁷³

The Acadians found Rameau's efforts extremely gratifying. He "semble s'identifier avec la race qu'il étudie" whereas previously what they had received from France largely "se réduisaient au souvenir banal et superficiel de quelques touristes desoeuvrés."⁷⁴ In addition, through his efforts in Quebec, through his La France aux Colonies, part of which was devoted to the

71. Abbé Belcourt (1803-1874) was an important figure serving the Acadians of Prince Edward Island. See infra, chapter II.
72. The various requests are contained in the Rameau Coll. at the C.E.A. See for example the letters from Louis Allain, March 28, 1863, and from Abbé Giroir, Jan. 24, 1863 both in File No. 2.1-5.
73. Rameau de Saint-Père, "Lettre au Roi Concernant les Acadiens," (Copy at C.E.A., "Bouctouche, N. B."), p. 1.
74. Du Hailly, "Une Station Sur Les Côtes D'Amérique - Les Acadiens Et La Nouvelle-Ecosse," p. 883.

75. Le Monde Canadien (Montreal), Dec. 14, 1882, "L'élément acadien dans la province de Québec".

Acadians, Rameau tried to lead "les Canadiens du Québec à prendre fait et cause pour les Français des provinces Maritimes."⁷⁵

A great deal of effort would be required to stimulate the French Canadians at this early stage however. In a vague way they knew that several thousand Acadians had sought refuge in Quebec after 1755 and were shocked when leading Acadians, Pascal Poirier for example, did not show any gratitude. Poirier, when he wished to be virulent, enjoyed quoting Francis Parkman: "The exiles found less pity (à Québec) from kindred and fellow Catholics than from the heretics of the English Colonies. Some of them wished to return to Boston."⁷⁶ For greater effect still, Poirier would quote from the journal of Bougainville, an aide-de-camp of Montcalm's:

Les Acadiens meurent ici (Québec) en foule. Leur misères passées et présente, jointe à la rapacité des Canadiens, qui cherchent à leur soutirer tout l'argent qu'ils peuvent, et ensuite leur refusent de l'aide si chèrement payée, est la cause de cette grande mortalité.⁷⁷

By 1880 there were approximately 100,000 Acadians, or Acadian descendants living in Quebec⁷⁸ leading a life quite distinct from that of the general population:

75. Bruchesi, Rameau de Saint-Père et les Français d'Amérique, p. 34.

76. L'Évangéline, Aug. 22, 1901, p. 2.

77. Ibid.

78. Le Monde Canadien (Montreal), Dec. 14, 1882, "L'élément acadien dans la province de Québec".

Franchement Canadiens, les Acadiens ont cependant su conserver leur physionomie particulière qui les distinguera encore longtemps des Canadiens proprement dits ... Ils se marient de préférence entre eux, ou finissent généralement par absorber ou rendre Acadien ceux qui contractent des alliances avec eux.⁷⁹

An Acadian had even attained an eminent position in the Quebec episcopacy - Mgr. Jean-Charles Prince of Saint Hyacinthe⁸⁰ - while the Quebec clerical hierarchy, until 1818,⁸¹ had been responsible for the Acadian Catholics of the Maritime provinces. After 1818 many Quebec priests continued to serve in Acadian parishes.

Yet in spite of all this, the French Canadians at mid-century were woefully unaware of any French speaking compatriots to the east of Quebec. In 1859 Rameau de Saint-Père had to ask "Qui se souvient aujourd'hui de l'Acadie?"⁸² In the preface to Jacques et Marie, a novel along the romantic lines of Longfellow's Evangeline, Napoléon Bourassa advised his Quebec audience that "La

79. Speech of L.-U. Fontaine on the Acadians of Quebec, June 24, 1880. Reprinted in Robidoux, Conventions Nationales des Acadiens, pp. XIV-XV.

80. Mgr. Prince (1804-1860) was born in Nicolet, P.Q., ordained in 1826, and made the first Bishop of Saint Hyacinthe in 1852. In a letter to Mgr. W. Walsh (1804-1858), Bishop of Halifax, dated Nov. 1, 1855, Prince pointed out that his grandparents were among the original Acadian refugees. Letter in Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.58-19.

81. For details on the establishment of distinct Maritime dioceses, see chapter XII.

82. Rameau de Saint-Père, La France aux Colonies (Paris, 1859), p. II.

Providence a laissé les Acadiens disparaître."⁸³

Regardless of French-Canadian ignorance, the Acadians of the Maritime provinces had not disappeared after the tragic persecutions of the mid-eighteenth century. Indeed through the second half of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century they made remarkable gains in Maritime society. Whereas before the 1860's they had been isolated in impoverished settlements, by 1920 the Acadians had won a measure of respect from their Anglo-Protestant neighbours. More important they had acquired some prestigious and remunerative positions in the local government, in the local business community, in literary circles and, equally important for the preservation of their culture, in the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. This thesis will deal with that progress, with what has become known as the "Acadian Renaissance." It will examine the traditional elite in l'Acadie and how it was supplanted by an indigenous, more ambitious Acadian elite composed of graduates of a distinctly Acadian educational system. Conscious of the race's heritage, desirous of stressing its uniqueness and wishing a brighter more prosperous future, this elite prodded its constituency in several directions which were essential if a position of equality in Canadian society was to be attained: ambitious politicians and devoted clerics demanded greater recognition from civil authorities; a national association was formed to foster a degree of unity;

83. Bourassa, Jacques et Marie, p.7.

Acadian colleges were founded to serve Acadian needs and to inculcate the cultural pride necessary to survive as a race distinct from all others including the French Canadian race.

Of necessity, this thesis must concentrate upon the Acadians of New Brunswick, although those of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island are by no means excluded. In New Brunswick the "Acadian Renaissance" took firm root before it was even a possibility in the other provinces. It was there that the Acadians were most numerous comprising 18% of the population as early as 1881⁸⁴ whereas by 1911 that figure had grown to 28%.⁸⁵ In Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island meanwhile, the Acadians made up less than 14% of the population in 1911.⁸⁶ Dominating the North Shore of the province, the Acadians of New Brunswick produced the political and intellectual leadership for their compatriots of both the other provinces, as well as leaving the material for future historians.

As its most important and recurring theme, this thesis examines the relationship between the two branches of the

84. Canada, Census of Canada, 1881, I, p. 24 and p. 300.

85. Ibid., 1911. There were 100,000 Acadians out of a total population of 352,000.

86. Ibid., 1911. The population of Nova Scotia in 1911 was 492,000 of which 52,000 were Acadian (i.e. 10%). The population of Prince Edward Island was 94,000 of which 13,000 were Acadian (i.e. 13.8%). In 1941 the Acadians numbered 163,934 (36%) in New Brunswick, 66,260 (11%) in Nova Scotia and 14,799 (16%) in Prince Edward Island. See ibid., 1941, I, p. 202.

French race in Canada, French Canadian and Acadian. Speaking the same language, professing the same religious faith, threatened by the same pressures from English majorities, one might initially expect their concerns and their behaviour to be similar if not identical. That assumption must be questioned in a number of ways. This thesis examines the aid given to the Acadians by their stronger brethren in the fields of education and politics and then deals with the Acadian reaction to this support as they tried to avoid assimilation with all other groups, be they Anglo-Protestant or French-Catholic. The thesis will discuss French Canadian and Acadian attitudes about such concerns as colonization, emigration and the use of the English language. Their reactions permit certain conclusions to be drawn about the fears of minorities in Canada. Finally the thesis compares the Acadian and French Canadian reactions to major national questions of the era such as the Manitoba School Question in the 1890's and the rise of aggressive English Canadian nationalism early in the twentieth century. The similarity or dissimilarity of their reactions can refute or sustain the Acadian claims of being a distinct race as well as revealing both groups to be products of their own particular environments.

Over the past century Canadian and Acadian historians have sorely abused Acadian history, permitting pious pronouncements and the maintenance of mythology and genealogy to replace critical analysis of the forces which permitted

this race to survive generations of persecution, discrimination and neglect. Hopefully this thesis will help redress the balance and open further fields of research.

CHAPTER II

The Creation of an Elite in P'Acadie

Through the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Quebec Catholic episcopacy was responsible for administering to the spiritual needs of the Acadians. For the most part, the Acadians were ill-served since the Bishop of Quebec rarely had sufficient priests to serve both Quebec and P'Acadie. Quebec's own interests were always paramount. "Il n'est pas possible d'avoir ... un évêque canadien" wrote one of the bishop's aides in 1790. "Le nombre de nos paroisses augmente considérablement; celui des prêtres diminue en proportion."¹ The Acadians were advised to be patient and to hope "que dans peu de temps ils [leur anglophone priests] sauraient assez de français pour

1. Mgr. Jean Franc, Quebec, to Father J. Jones, grand vicar of Halifax, Sept. 27, 1790. Copy in Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1:21-4. This inability of Quebec to provide priests for P'Acadie continued for many years. In the Archives of the Diocese of Saint John (hereafter A.D.S.J.), there are countless examples. See Rev. B. Liguori to Bishop Jean Sweeney, Oct. 10, 1864, No. 1232; Rev. F. Facile to Bishop J. Sweeney, July 8, 1867, No. 1235. In 1789 there was a ratio of one priest for every 350 Catholics in Quebec; in 1764 the ratio was 1:500 and in 1790 the ratio had increased dramatically to 1:1,000. This shortage of priests was still serious enough in the 1840's to drive Mgr. Bourget of Montreal to France in search of replacements. See Lucien Lévesque, L'Établissement De La Province Éclésiastique Au Canada, 1763-1812 (Montreal, 1967), pp. 15-19 and p. 118.

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confesser et instruire ceux d'entre vous qui n'entendraient pas l'anglais."²

Recognizing that the bishops of Ireland were interested in Nova Scotia,³ successive Quebec bishops, Mgr. Hubert in 1789, Mgr. Denaut in 1801, and Mgr. Plessis in 1806, petitioned Rome for a division of their too vast diocese.⁵ Each request was refused however. "Hic et nunc, agere non expedit"; the political exigencies of the era, namely the British Government, would not permit it.⁶ Gradually the attitude of the colonial authorities changed to one favouring the appointment of an Irish-Catholic bishop.⁷ In 1815 Father Edmund Burke, an Irish missionary serving in Halifax, visited Rome in order to gain the detachment of Nova Scotia from the diocese of Quebec. Gaining the

2. "Lettre Pastorale aux catholiques de la Nouvelle-Ecosse Donné à Québec [Mgr. Ls. P.-M. D'Esglis] octobre 19, 1787." Copy in Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.51-11.

3. See Mgr. Ls. D'Esglis, Quebec, to Rev. Bourg, Tracadie, Feb. 15, 1787. Copy in Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.54-15.

4. Mgr. J.-F. Hubert was Bishop of Quebec from 1788-1897, Mgr. P. Denaut from 1797-1806, and Mgr. J.-O. Plessis from 1806-1825 (named Archbishop in 1819).

5. See Mgr. D. Gosselin, "Acadiens et Canadiens," Le Canada Français, XII, No. 6 (Feb., 1925), pp. 419-27. For the legal position of the church in Canada through this period, see F. G. Morrisey, o.m.i., "La Situation juridique de l'Eglise catholique au Bas-Canada de 1791 à 1840," La Société Canadienne d'histoire de l'Eglise Catholique, 1972, pp. 65-89.

6. L'Evangéline (Moncton), March 5, 1925, pp. 5-6, "Acadiens et Canadiens".

7. See D. Brymmer, Rapport Sur Les Archives Canadiennes, 1896 (Ottawa, 1896). Note C "Eglise Catholique Romaine Dans Le Haut-Canada," pp. 76-87.

endorsement of the Congregation of the Propaganda, Burke wrote to Bishop Plessis and was relieved by the latter's affirmative response. "Je [Mgr. Plessis] consentirai volontiers au projet ... Je la trouve à mon avantage ... d'avoir une province de moins sur la conscience."⁸ Writing to the Congregation itself, Plessis renounced "purement et simplement et pour toujours à toute juridiction épiscopale sur la province de la Nouvelle-Ecosse."⁹ Thus in 1818, the Quebec Catholic hierarchy surrendered its responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the Acadian people.¹⁰

The influence of individual French Canadian clerics was not completely terminated however as there remained in l'Acadie a small number of Québécois who continued and would always continue to serve the French race there. As the only educated person in the parish, the Catholic priests assumed the leadership of the Acadian people, meeting temporal as well as spiritual needs. Many of the priests appreciated the deleterious effects of the Acadians' past isolation.

Relégués souvent dans les régions
excentriques, séparés du reste de la
population par une triple barrière
(ethnique, religieuse, et linguistique),
longtemps tenu à l'écart des postes de

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8. Mgr. J.-O. Plessis to Father E. Burke, Sept. 10, 1816. Cited in a ms. by Placide Gaudet, Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.58-2.
 9. Cited in Gosselin, "Acadiens et Canadiens," p. 422.
 10. For the ramifications of this transferal of power from French Canadian to Irish bishops, see *infra*, chapter XII. See also Lemieux, *L'Etablissement De La Première Province Ecclésiastique Au Canada, 1783-1844*, pp. 87-93.

commande et soumis à un système
d'éducation mal fait pour eux, un bon
nombre d'Acadiens ... se sont laissés
devancer par le progrès.¹¹

A sufficient number of people were beginning to emerge from their lethargy by the 1860's to enquire "Où sont nos hommes de lettre qui peuvent nous représenter comme peuple?" and to demand their own "prêtres acadiens, nos juges, nos magistrats, nos avocats, nos docteurs, nos instituteurs, nos marchands, etc., etc."¹² The people and their priests were realizing that the perpetuation of traditional patterns would quickly lead to "un vrai suicide national."¹³ The "nation" urgently required an educated and dedicated elite which could force its way into the larger Canadian society.

This elite had to create an Acadian "nation", conscious of itself and distinct from all others. The task could be readily accomplished since there already existed among the Acadians a common language and religion as well as a long history in which, as in French Canada, the people took great pride. There also existed a sense of fraternity between all Acadians, the basic ingredient of a nation.

... On ne crée pas une nation par un
acte du parlement ... il y faut une foi
collective, en quelque sorte une mystique

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11. Rev. R. Baudry, "Les Acadiens D'Aujourd'hui" (unpublished submission from the C.E.A. to the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, June 1966), p. 2.
 12. Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac), Sept. 10, 1869, p. 1.
 13. Ibid., July 24, 1868, "Discours prononcé par Monsieur F.-X. Cormier".

nationale. Cette mystique, le Canadien français, la puise, dans les images augustes de la patrie qui vivent au fond de sa mémoire et qui ont puissance de susciter l'enthousiasme, l'énergie, l'allant, la confiance, de donner l'essor à de grands desseins, de créer la foi collective, celle qui transporte et soulève.¹⁴

A dedicated elite, once in existence, could unite the Acadians into a purely Acadian "nation".

This elite could be formed only if there existed an educational system which met the needs of the Maritime French population. Until the mid-nineteenth century schools had developed only haphazardly. For example the first school conducted (1851) in Petit Rocher, N. B., was situated in a private home and had a certain M. Buteau from Quebec as its master. It lasted only until 1855 when Buteau returned to his native province. Other schools had a similar fate with the teachers, usually a Frenchman or a Québécois, conducting it merely as a passing phase in his own life. The calibre of these early instructors is also doubtful since in many cases they were in l'Acadie only because they could not succeed in their own homes. Even some of the early missionaries seemed less than conscientious:

... nous [the Acadians] ne voyons guère que ces bons missionnaires aient fait beaucoup d'efforts pour nous sortir de l'oubli ou pour nous instruire. Les deniers qu'ils amassaient chez nous étaient souvent employés pour faire

14. L.-D. Durand, "Les Canadiens Français et l'Esprit National," in Les Canadiens Français et la confédération canadienne (Montréal, 1927), pp. 100-01.

instruire leur compatriotes, sans trop
s'occuper des nôtres.¹⁵

Other priests attempted to have their parishioners establish a fund to send the village's most gifted boy to an academy in Quebec. The student, it was hoped, would afterwards return to the parish as a priest or teacher in order to elevate the other children "au niveau de la bonne civilisation." This arrangement was rarely successful because "malheureusement nos Acadiens tiennent singulièrement à leurs sous"¹⁶ and because, once having tasted the exotic life of Quebec or Montreal, many would not return to New Brunswick. By the late 1850's it had become patently clear that if the Acadians were to be educated, a system responsive to their needs would have to be constructed within the Maritime region itself.

The first memorable educator to serve in New Brunswick was a priest from Quebec, François-Xavier Lafrance. Born in Quebec City in 1814, Lafrance first studied medicine before turning to the priesthood in 1838. After studying at St. Andrew's College near Charlottetown he was ordained in 1841 in the island parish of Rustico.¹⁷ Soon transferred to Tracadie, N. B., Lafrance by 1845 had established a school for the Acadians. In 1852 he became responsible for the

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15. P. A. Landry, quoted in an unidentifiable Ottawa newspaper, August 24, 1901. Clipping in Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.4-11.
 16. Abbé F. Blanchet, Meteghan, N. B., to Rameau de Saint-Père, Aug. 17, 1860. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-2. One successful example is Isidore Bourque. See C. Bourque, Mémoire, C.E.A. "Provenances Diverses", Box 1.
 17. See map of Prince Edward Island in Appendix I.

large Acadian parish of Saint-Thomas de Memramcook and once again established a French-language academy.¹⁸

Lafrance was convinced of the value of an education and felt that his works in this regard should have been undertaken long ago:

Vous savez que le pauvre peuple acadien n'a jamais eu justice, jusqu'à présent, du côté de l'éducation; et si ceux qui prennent ... la douce appellation de Pères [his emphasis] ne mettent pas la main à l'oeuvre, ils en seront longtemps privés encore ... Ici ... je puis [do something which] ... aurait dû être commencé a long time ago [his emphasis].¹⁹

Lafrance, a determined man, would go to any length to ensure the success of his endeavour, including requesting funds from the New Brunswick Assembly. "Je n'attends rien de ce côté, mais ce sera une arme de plus dont je saurai me servir aux prochaines élections."²⁰

Construction of the two storey, forty-five by thirty foot school at Memramcook was completed by November of 1854 and the new "Séminaire Saint-Thomas" opened with Lafrance's brother Charles as the only teacher for the original thirty Acadian and twenty Irish students. Within one year, the enrolment had almost doubled, proving the need for such

18. T.-B. Roy, c.s.c., "L'Evolution De L'Enseignement Chez Les Acadiens Du Nouveau-Brunswick, 1755-1855" (unpublished M.Ed. thesis, Université de Moncton, 1972), p. 55.

19. Rev. F.-X. Lafrance to Louis Robichaud, April 2, 1854. Reprinted in Bernard, Histoire De La Survivance Acadienne, 1755-1935, p. 130.

20. Ibid., p. 131.

facilities, and two new teachers, one Acadian and one Irish, were employed. However the school collapsed in 1862 for a number of reasons - there developed an antipathy between Charles and François Lafrance and between the Irish and Acadian staff members. More important however was the lack of adequate financing. Compounding the problem were the antagonisms between Lafrance and successive bishops of Saint John, first Bishop Thomas Connolly (1852-1859)²¹ and then Bishop John Sweeny (1860-1901).

The basis of this animosity between bishop and priest is uncertain. Some later ascribed it to the bitter rivalry which already existed between Irish and Acadian Catholic, with the former firmly in control of the hierarchy.²² Pierre A. Landry, then a judge of the Supreme Court of New Brunswick, claimed in a 1901 letter to the Apostolic Delegate in Ottawa that Sweeny showed a lack of interest in the welfare of the Acadians. The bishop, he stated, personally financed the studies of many Irish students but never provided any financial assistance to Acadian boys, even those who aspired to the priesthood.²³ Landry also asserted that when Lafrance had sought the support of Bishop Connolly

21. Born in 1815 in Cork County, Ireland, Father Connolly came to Nova Scotia in 1842. In 1852 he became the second Bishop of Fredericton, N. B., and in 1859, the second Archbishop of Halifax, a post he held until his death in 1876.

22. See *infra*, chapter XII for an extensive discussion of factionalism within the New Brunswick Catholic church.

23. P. A. Landry to Mgr. D. Falconio, July 10, 1901. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-4.

for the Séminaire Saint-Thomas, the latter "trouva toujours des prétextes pour ne pas permettre ... un collègue au milieu d'une population française... qui avait pourtant tant besoin de s'instruire."²⁴

Landry's criticisms are valid vis-à-vis Bishop Connolly who on many occasions showed his lack of sympathy for, or strong hostility to the Acadian desire to maintain their language and culture. During his tenure as Bishop of Fredericton and later as Archbishop of Halifax, Connolly had prohibited the establishment of French language convents, preferring to see Acadian girls learn only English; had been partially responsible for the closure of not only the Memramcook college but also the "Académie d'Arichat" (N.S.); and had refused to consider the question of Acadian language rights during the discussions leading to Confederation.²⁵ Landry's accusations however are not as applicable to Bishop John Sweeny who, after his consecration in 1860, devoted much of his time, effort and money to see the college at Memramcook re-established. The antipathy between Lafrance and Sweeny stemmed more from personal differences revolving around contradictory goals

24. Ibid.

25. For discussions of Archbishop Connolly's prejudices as far as the Acadians saw it, see Rumilly, Histoire Des Acadiens, II, p. 719 and pp. 727-28. See also Bernard, Histoire de la Survivance Acadienne, p. 135 and pp. 299-300. Abbé H.-R. Casgrain ruthlessly deals with the problem in Dialogue Entre Un Acadien et Un Canadien-Français (Quebec, 1889). For Connolly and Confederation, see infra, chapter III.

for the school and around certain unsubstantiated blemishes on Lafrance's record.²⁶

In July of 1863 Lafrance, old, sick and without financial resources, agreed to transfer the seminary building and his 360 acres of land in the Memramcook area to Bishop Sweeny and the diocesan corporation. Sweeny promised to open a classical college in the old building²⁷ and then sought a religious order in Quebec to operate the proposed college "principally for the benefit of the Acadian French population."²⁸ In return for their services he was willing to give the order the parish of Memramcook, "one of the largest and most lucrative of my diocese" as well as Father Lafrance's extensive holdings in the area.²⁹

26. Lafrance's concerns were almost exclusively with the Acadians while Sweeny, understandably, was more concerned with diocesan affairs in general. In 1863 Sweeny suggested using the seminary facilities, half for a college and the other half for a reformatory for Catholic children. Lafrance publicly and vociferously denounced both the bishop's plans and the bishop personally, at one point appealing to Rome and threatening to take Sweeny before the civil courts. See Rev. F. H. Babinault, Cap Pelé, to Rev. M. Houlahan, May 1, 1865. Sweeny Coll., A.D.S.J. No. 1855. There was another aspect to Lafrance's character which must have aroused Sweeny's suspicions. Charles Lafrance, the priest's brother, complained to Sweeny that François had cheated him first of a piece of land and then of a substantial payment promised him in a contract. See Charles Lafrance to Bishop Sweeny, Feb. 7, 1862. Sweeny Coll., A.D.S.J. No. 1847. Rev. Lafrance did deny these charges in a letter to Sweeny dated April 25, 1862. Sweeny Coll., A.D.S.J. No. 1848.

27. Pascal Poirier, Le Père Lefebvre et L'Acadie (Montreal, 1898), pp. 101-02.

28. Bishop Sweeny to Abbé Moreau, Superior-General of the Order of the Holy Cross, Dec. 21, 1863. Sweeny Coll., A.D.S.J. No. 1850.

29. Ibid.

The Fathers of the Holy Cross, a French order resident in Montreal, were somewhat surprised by the request - according to Pascal Poirier

La nouvelle de l'existence d'un groupe d'Acadiens-Français au Nouveau-Brunswick avait été pour sa communauté toute une révélation, quelque chose comme la découverte d'une ville antique, retrouvée à cinquante pieds sous terre, et mise au jour par une fouille.³⁰

Nevertheless they undertook the task and dispatched their only Canadian priest, the thirty-three year old Camille Lefebvre to Memramcook. Lefebvre enjoyed an excellent relationship with Bishop Sweeny, his personal escort from Montreal to New Brunswick. The young priest was impressed with the region which he described as "très accidenté, mais fort pittoresque, offrant l'oeil du voyageur un aspect très agréable."³¹ The college itself however was in a "très mauvais état; des réparations étaient indispensables si nous voulons l'utiliser ... La propriété elle-même était dans un état d'abandon complet."³² Nevertheless Lefebvre opened it for classes almost immediately accepting fifty students and having a teaching staff of eight composed of two priests from France, one from Ireland, one from

30. Poirier, Le Père Lefebvre et L'Acadie, p.73.

31. Rev. Camille Lefebvre to T.R.P. Sorin, Paris, March 19, 1870. Sweeny Coll., A.D.S.J. No. 1861.

32. Rev. Camille Lefebvre to T.R.P. Sorin, March 17, 1870. Copy in C.E.A., Box "U.S.J. - Origines", file "Petite Chronique".

Quebec (Lefebvre himself) and four teaching Brothers.³³

It is questionable whether this college was much of an "Acadian institution" regardless of the incidental benefits which accrued to them.³⁴ Since 1863 it was Bishop Sweeny and the ecclesiastical authorities of the diocese of Saint John who held the title to the college and they wished it to serve the entire Catholic population, both Irish and Acadian. Lefebvre, while not wishing to see the Acadians assimilated, conducted the college on a strictly bilingual basis with absolute equality supposedly being shown to both French and Irish Catholics. Then as now however, a bilingual system generally resulted in both English and French students speaking English. Some Acadians even believed that the religious order preferred the English students since they were better able to afford the tuition fees and without them the school would not have had the funds to continue - Father Lefebvre was after all an eminently realistic and practical man. The fifty percent ratio of Irish students and the bilingual, assimilative nature of the school would later make Lefebvre the brunt of

33. Rev. C. Lefebvre to Abbé G.-A. Belcourt, Jan. 17, 1865. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-7.

34. Involved is a question of Catholic education versus French-Catholic education; of an education teaching Catholic dogma or one which inculcated the dual faith of the Acadians, namely their race and their religion. In the case of the Acadians with their very distinct culture, the universal church had to descend to the parish level and become primarily a "national" church. These issues are considered in successive chapters.

much nationalist criticism emanating primarily from Rev. M.-F. Richard who himself opened a school for the Acadians, and Abbé Biron, a disciple of Rameau de Saint-Père.³⁵

Nevertheless consistent with the Acadian tradition of ignoring blemishes on their heroes, Lefebvre was often described as "le meilleur et le plus fidèle ami, le libérateur de notre race, le bienfaiteur de tous les catholiques du pays"³⁶ and the subject of a rather handsome statue on the grounds of the college. Writers poured adulation upon him since his efforts seemingly sparked the Acadian renaissance.

il a été le plus grand éducateur de notre province. Pour la religion catholique il a été un apôtre dont le dévouement, l'influence et les oeuvres n'ont pas été surpassés par aucun de ses prédécesseurs ou contemporains. Et pour nous, peuple acadien, il a été notre régénérateur.³⁷

The new Collège St. Joseph, situated in a central position and thus able to serve all the Maritime provinces, was described as "un phare intellectuel qui rayonne sur toute l'Acadie et la dégage de l'ombre où elle était plongée depuis la dispersion de 1755."³⁸

35. See infra, chapter VII for details on this matter.

36. Rev. P. Belliveau, Quebec, to Rev. A. LeBlanc, Jan. 30, 1895. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-3.

37. P. A. Landry, A. D. Cormier, J. A. Doherty, "Appel en faveur du Monument Lefebvre". Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.5-4.

38. Gaston Du Boscq De Beaumont, Une France Oubliée, L'Acadie (Paris, 1902), p. 44.

39. Le Moniteur Acadien, Dec. 24, 1874.

Under Lefebvre's direction the college expanded rapidly. By 1869 it had eighty-nine students and fifteen teachers although it remained encumbered by serious debts. Nevertheless in 1875 the building was expanded and Lefebvre carried its financial plight to the Montreal elite and Montreal press. His appeals attracted some support, often in the form of donated books, but never enough to overcome the debts incurred. Lefebvre, disappointed by Quebec's parsimonious response, believed that he could raise more money simply by holding a church bazaar in Memramcook.³⁹ The only sizable donation came not from Quebec at all but from Rameau de Saint-Père in France.⁴⁰ Yet the college managed to survive, producing successive generations of an educated Acadian elite.

The Acadians perceived the college as an intellectual centre for all the Maritime provinces. In fact however, before the 1880's and 1890's, the Acadians of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island benefited little from it and indeed were almost totally isolated from their New Brunswick compatriots, enjoying little of the intellectual resurgence evident along the "North Shore". Being fewer in numbers and less concentrated, their position in the larger Anglo-Protestant society and their ability to maintain their cultural heritage was extremely tenuous.

39. For an account of Lefebvre's ventures as a fund raiser, see series of letters from him to Pascal Poirier, April 4, 20 and 23, 1875, Dec. 8, 1875, and Feb. 10, 1876. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-1.

40. Le Moniteur Acadien, Dec. 24, 1874.

By 1800 a substantial number of Acadians had returned to Nova Scotia: 1500 in the St. Mary's Bay region, 250 around Halifax, 350 in Cape Breton and more than 1500 at Canso, Arichat and Ile Madame.⁴¹ They faced many of the same problems as did those in New Brunswick, the most serious of which was a government which alternated between hostility and neglect. Before taking a seat in the House of Assembly, Catholics had to take an oath denying transubstantiation or the "présence réelle au sacrement de l'eucharistie."⁴² In 1823 the Nova Scotia Assembly began admitting Catholics providing they adhered to a state oath of allegiance and only in 1826, three years before England itself, did Catholics gain a full measure of equality.⁴³

Early in the nineteenth century, the Acadians of the St. Mary's Bay area seemed on the verge of extinction, lacking schools, lacking French-language priests and lacking any degree of organization. The fact that the Acadians of this area now thrive is largely due to the efforts of Abbé Sigogne (1763-1844), a young and zealous cleric who, fleeing from revolutionary France, came to Nova Scotia in April of 1799 at the behest of the vicar-general in Halifax.

41. Rumilly, Histoire Des Acadiens, II, p. 676. See also Appendix I.

42. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 31, 1897, p.2, "Le Serment du Test".

43. J. M. Beck, The Government of Nova Scotia (Toronto, 1957), pp. 51-52.

Previous to Sigogne's arrival, these Acadians had been served primarily by Irish-Catholic missionaries who, not understanding French, failed to win the confidence of the people. Sigogne found that his new flock viewed all clerics with suspicion and were ready to renounce even their Catholicism.⁴⁴

Sigogne worked to re-instill the faith and generally improve the material position of the Acadians. He had the people elect a councillor to control the parish's finances. By 1808 he had divided his domain into two distinct parishes and had erected two fine churches, one at Pointe-de-l'Eglise and the other at Meteghan. He opened a school in his presbytery for both children and adults and gradually overcame the lethargy of his flock toward education. He had Frédéric Robichaud, a local leader, elected to the House of Assembly while Sigogne personally made many contacts with the English establishment, gaining clear land titles for his parishioners, conducting their legal transactions, and eliciting the respect of society leaders such as Thomas Haliburton.⁴⁵ Sigogne died in 1844 but only after having re-established "la continuité de la tradition

44. Rev. P.-M. Dagnaud, Les Français du Sud-Ouest de la Nouvelle-Ecosse (Paris, 1905), p. 77.

45. Speaking to the House of Assembly (Feb. 29, 1827), Thomas Chandler Haliburton eloquently argued for the revocation of the oath which excluded Catholics from public office. In his speech, Haliburton generously praised Abbé Sigogne. See Beamish Murdoch, History of Nova Scotia (Halifax, 1867), III, pp. 573-77.

française et catholique ... Il avait assuré la survivance acadienne en jetant les bases nécessaires à sa réalisation."⁴⁶

The quality of Acadian education in Nova Scotia was, and always would be, inferior to that in New Brunswick.

Sigogne had found it necessary on several occasions to admonish his people:

Il y a longtemps, chrétiens, que je déplore l'ignorance qui règne ici et à laquelle j'ai inutilement cherché à remédier. Les moyens m'ont souvent fait défaut et les précautions prises par moi n'ont eu près de vous aucun succès. Est-ce indifférence de votre part, indocilité des enfants, ou conséquence des circonstances présentes? ...

L'ignorance, vous le savez, est un vice; elle vous place de plus dans un état d'infériorité vis-à-vis des personnes instruites ... Vous avez le même temps qu'eux, votre intelligence n'est point inférieure à la leur, il ne vous manque que le zèle et l'émulation.⁴⁷

A fitting example of parental concern for education, regardless of the efforts of Sigogne and others like him, was the construction in 1830 of two schoolhouses to meet the needs of Chéticamp - each was only 15 feet square!⁴⁸

Until 1841 this lamentable lack of proper facilities was by no means extraordinary since English-language schools

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46. M. A. Tremblay, "Les Acadiens De La Baie Française, L'Histoire d'une Survivance," Revue d'histoire de l'amérique française, XV, No. 4 (March, 1962), p. 533.
47. Dagnaud, Les Français du Sud-Ouest de la Nouvelle-Ecosse, pp. 167-68.
48. Rev. A. Chiasson, Cheticamp, Histoire et Traditions acadiennes (Moncton, 1961), p. 162.

were hardly better. It was only in that year that the Nova Scotia government introduced legislation providing for a scheme of compulsory assessment, a Central Board of Education and increased government grants to local schools.⁴⁹ Clause Fourteen of this Act recognized existing practices and extended financial assistance to all the schools in the province, including those conducted in French, Gaelic or German. The House paid no attention to this clause, concentrating instead on the more contentious issue of compulsory assessment. This latter section, the very heart of the government's proposals, was in fact defeated by a vote of 33 to 12.⁵⁰

The 1865 education Act promoted by Charles Tupper vastly improved the quality of education being offered to Nova Scotia children. However the Act was retrogressive as far as French-language instruction was concerned since the new Council of Public Instruction insisted upon the exclusive use of English. In order to acquire the necessary licence, teachers had to be proficient in English while their ability in French, even for those serving the exclusively Acadian districts, went unexamined.⁵¹ As a result of this

49. See Rawlyk and Hafter, Acadian Education in Nova Scotia, p. 9. See also Acts of the General Assembly of the Province of Nova Scotia, 1841, 4 Victoria, Cap. 43, 1865.

50. Nova Scotia, House of Assembly, Journal and Proceedings, 1841, p. 126.

51. Nova Scotia, Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1864, 27 Victoria, 1864, Cap. 13. See also 28 Victoria, Cap. 29, 1865, "An Act for the better Encouragement of Education".

legislation and the designs of the third Superintendent of Education, T. H. Rand, the "French language schools were left outside of the legal structure of the public school system."⁵²

Dr. Tupper's legislative plans collided with the fierce opposition of Archbishop Thomas Connolly who was determined to block the State's incursions into the realm of education. However it was non-sectarian schools which provoked Connolly; a firm assimilationist, he showed no concern for the Acadian desire to preserve the legal status of the province's French-language schools. Before entering federal politics, Tupper was able to placate Archbishop Connolly by permitting the local school boards to decide what privileges a specific religious denomination was to possess within the public school system. Theoretically part of the common, non-sectarian school system, the Catholic schools remained distinct, establishing a precedent which eventually was copied by the other Maritime provinces.⁵³

As in other regions of Canada where the French Canadian minority was concentrated into small sections of the province, the Nova Scotia government soon abandoned its unilingual policy. The French-language schools were unofficially permitted to operate as long as there were no

52. Rawlyk and Hafter, Acadian Education in Nova Scotia, p. 14.

53. For a discussion of the New Brunswick schools question, see infra, chapter IV.

complaints which could become politically embarrassing. The Acadian schools however benefited little from the new legislation since their teachers were often poorly qualified, since the books provided by the government, being in English, hardly met Acadian needs, and since the parents continued to exhibit an aversion to taxing themselves for the support of a system which seemed irrelevant and unnecessary.

Even people in Quebec recognized that Acadian education in Nova Scotia seemed to be in dire straits. Abbé Casgrain for example wrote a Maritime acquaintance, Valentin Landry, emphasizing the importance of a proper educational system. "Que serions-nous devenus, nous Canadiens," he wrote, "si le clergé n'avait pas multiplié parmi nous les moyens d'enseignements par la création de collèges, de couvents, d'écoles?" He stated, to a chorus of general agreement, that the Acadians of Nova Scotia had to duplicate the more advanced efforts of their New Brunswick compatriots by establishing

une ou deux bonnes maisons d'éducation le genre du collège de Memramcook, où l'on prépare les jeunes à toutes les carrières et où les deux langues sont également enseignées. Du jour où il y aura une pareille institution solidement fondée dans ... la Nouvelle Ecosse, l'avenir du groupe qui l'habite sera pour jamais assuré.⁵⁴

54. Abbé H.-R. Casgrain to V.-A. Landry, Feb. 25, 1888. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-4. Landry was the founder and editor-owner of L'Évangéline, a newspaper situated in Weymouth, N. S.

This "pareille institution" finally appeared in 1890 when France, not Quebec, provided a religious order (the Eudists) which constructed and operated a college at Church Point, a college dedicated to the memory of Abbé Sigogne.⁵⁵

It was not only in the field of education that the Acadians of Nova Scotia lagged behind their New Brunswick confrères. Fewer in numbers, scattered and isolated, more submissive to the majority, they never developed a powerful elite which could rival that of New Brunswick. In Cape Breton where the largest number of Acadians lived, there never was founded a newspaper to reflect their aspirations nor an important college to promote their advancement and unity. Unlike in New Brunswick, the Acadian population of Nova Scotia grew only slowly.⁵⁶ This lack of growth was not due to any failure to multiply. Instead it was because many, lacking the pride of their New Brunswick compatriots, had adopted the English language. "Hail Mary" replaced "Je vous salue Marie", a sacrilege which in New Brunswick was "une profanation, presque une apostasie."⁵⁷ The Acadians of Nova Scotia never breached the ranks of society and

55. See Dagnaud, *Les Français du Sud-Ouest de la Nouvelle-Ecosse*, pp. 217-33 *passim*. An Oblate order in Montreal had previously (1887) declined the task of establishing and operating the college.

56. See Appendix II. Between 1871 and 1911 the Acadian population of Nova Scotia increased by 58% while that of New Brunswick increased by 120%.

57. P. Poirier, "Les Acadiens Depuis la Confédération jusqu'à nos jours" (ms., 1922). Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.2-2.

government as they did elsewhere and thousands embarked upon a second dispersal to seek wealth and respectability in New England.

The situation of the Acadians on Prince Edward Island was even more tenuous than that of Nova Scotia's Acadians. In spite of their having French-language schools for most of the nineteenth century, they remained isolated from the rest of their race and seemed to slip through that century without enjoying the benefits of the renaissance so evident in the other provinces. By the twentieth century, the few leaders they had openly doubted the possibility of their survival as a distinct entity.

The island Acadians did have a clerical leader comparable to Father Lefebvre in New Brunswick or Abbé Sigogne in Nova Scotia. This was Father Georges-Antoine Belcourt, a Québécois by birth but a true and life-long Christian missionary by choice. Born in 1803 near Trois Rivières, the young priest travelled (1830) to the Canadian and American West to work among the Indians, eventually producing a dictionary of the Indian language which was reprinted by Rome and used for further missionary activities.⁵⁸ Returning to Quebec in the late 1850's, Belcourt was sent by Archbishop Turgeon⁵⁹ to serve, at the Bishop of Charlottetown's

58. As an aside, Father Belcourt performed many baptisms in Manitoba, one of which was for a young child named Louis Riel.

59. Mgr. Pierre-Flavien Turgeon (1787-1867) was ordained in 1810, secretary to Bishop Plessis from 1808-1820, and after holding other ecclesiastical positions, was named Archbishop of Quebec in 1850.

request, the Acadian parish of Rustico.

Though frantically busy because he was virtually the only French-language priest on the island,⁶⁰ Belcourt found time to conceive and implement schemes which substantially improved the lot of his parishioners. Probably the most important of these was the Farmers' Bank of Rustico (incorporated in 1863), a cooperative venture which in part served as an example for Alphonse Desjardins' highly successful Caisse Populaire system in Quebec.⁶¹ Belcourt attracted Israel J.-D. Landry from Quebec to serve as a teacher in the parish's new French-language high school, and founded the "Institut", a study club for adults designed to encourage temperance and self-education. He provided the parish with a well-stocked library built with a generous donation from Napoleon III which had been solicited by Belcourt through Rameau de Saint-Père.

But even Belcourt seemed to doubt the possibility of maintaining the French culture within the island's English milieu since he devoted much of his energy to colonization schemes. These involved, first in 1860, the resettlement of 45 families near Matapedia, Quebec. In later years, Belcourt

60. When he first arrived, there was another French priest, a Father Poirier (or Perry), but he was so severely incapacitated through sickness that Belcourt became responsible for the entire area.

61. See J. T. Croteau, "The Caisses Populaires Desjardins of Quebec," *Agricultural History*, XXIV (Oct., 1950), pp. 227-38. See also J. T. Croteau, "The Farmers' Bank of Rustico," *Dalhousie Review*, XXXVI, No. 2 (Summer, 1956), pp. 144-55.

62. See J. T. Croteau, "The Farmers' Bank of Rustico," *Dalhousie Review*, XXXVI, No. 2 (Summer, 1956), pp. 144-55. See also J. M. Reardon, *George Anthony Belcourt* (St. Paul, Minnesota, 1953).

tried to duplicate this venture, encouraging some of his flock to emigrate to Kent County, New Brunswick. Here, among other Acadians, their heritage could be more readily preserved.

In the early 1870's Father Belcourt retired to his farm in Shediac (N. B.) where, except for a brief stint as a missionary to the Acadians of Iles-de-la-Magdaleine, he lived peacefully until his death in 1874.⁶² The Acadians of Prince Edward Island never again had such a respected and admirable leader. Instead the men who led them were part of the province's political elite, as much English in character and language as French, seeking compromises and acceptance where rights and equality were due. The island Acadians had some success in political life, being accepted by the bulk of the population, but in return they had to sacrifice much of their culture and heritage.

Thus the impetus for the Acadian renaissance came not from Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island; nor did the renaissance have much initial effect in these two provinces. These Acadians were too overwhelmed by the Anglo-Protestant and Irish-Catholic majority to protest the discrimination facing them. The interests and ambitions of the Acadians in Clare were the interests and ambitions of Nova Scotians in general. J. M. Beck was correct when he wrote that the "one racial minority - the French Acadian - normally has no special

62. For information on Belcourt's career, see F.-J. Robidoux jr. to B. P. MacCafferty, May 25, 1955. Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.2-10. See also J. M. Reardon, George Anthony Belcourt (St. Paul, Minnesota, 1955).

viewpoint upon the major issues."⁶³ Rather it was in New Brunswick that the spark and the leadership for the Acadian resurgence developed. Dominating the North Shore of the province, the Acadians made use of the Collège St. Joseph, fulfilling the role which some had ascribed to the young institution, that of

le talisman, le mot d'ordre, le signe de ralliement, le drapeau, l'étendard, l'espoir dans la victoire, la consolation dans la victoire.⁶⁴

Many believed that with the arrival of Father Lefebvre, a new era of self-awareness and self-confidence commenced for the Acadians and they were never parsimonious in their gratitude:

L'heure de la Providence sonna enfin.
La province de Québec nous envoya de ses fils, les Lafrance, les Lefebvre, pour allumer le flambeau de l'éducation au milieu de cette population déshéritée.⁶⁵

Lefebvre introduced an educational system which met the most urgent needs of the Acadian race and produced a trained elite which could draw a reluctant people from a century of apathy. The first graduates of the Collège St. Joseph were aware of the duty which awaited them and were determined in their appeals to the Acadians of all three

63. Beck, The Government of Nova Scotia, p.165.

64. Father Frédéric Tessier to P. Poirier, 1897. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-4.

65. H.-P. LeBlanc, "La Fierté légitime du Catholique de langue française en Acadie" (ms., July 20, 1948). H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., Box No. 11, file "Fierté Nationale".

provinces. ✓ This elite proved to be a remarkable group with diverse talents: Pascal Poirier entered the public service in Ottawa and later became the first Acadian Senator; Pierre A. Landry, at one time almost English in character and language, became the first Acadian lawyer before successfully entering politics and eventually becoming a judge on the New Brunswick Supreme Court; Valentin Landry became a newspaper editor and the most fiery publicist for the new Acadian aggressiveness; Placide Gaudet, a failure in most endeavours, became the foremost historian of the Acadian "nation"; and Marcel-François Richard, one of the first Acadian priests though not a graduate of the Collège St. Joseph, became the undisputed spiritual leader of the Acadian people. ✓ By 1890 this small elite was highly visible in Maritime society, demanding that all impediments to Acadian progress be removed. They were aware of the respected position they held in Acadian society and worked diligently for Acadian goals, corresponding with each other, concerning themselves with all the problems facing their people, and presiding over the various "national" organizations. ✓ By the 1880's and 1890's this elite felt sufficiently confident to define the society toward which they should encourage their flock. It was without doubt a paternalistic approach and attitude but nevertheless one to which the bulk of the Acadian people, long accustomed

important subject for discussion. For such a discussion, though not which questions the motives of that elite, please see *infra*, chapter VI.

to the hierarchical, authoritarian nature of their church, were amenable.⁶⁶

CHAPTER III

Confederation and Hopes for a Brighter Future

Prior to the 1860's, the Acadians exhibited little interest in politics, ignoring the Assembly in Fredericton and being ignored by it in return. Before 1840 no Frenchman, Jehud Alexandre from the Isle of Jersey, had been elected in Gloucester but since he was a Protestant, "Cela suffirait pour lui dénier le titre de leur [Acadian] représentant."⁶⁷ The first Acadian to be elected was Armand Landry, "a man of good honest principles [France's emphasis] who speaks English better than he does French." Representing Westmorland County from 1846 to 1848, from 1853 to 1856, and then from 1861 to 1878, Landry's major accomplishment seems to have been the fathering of Pierre A. Landry. The Anglo-Protestant politicians of the era only began to actively solicit the Acadian-Catholic vote when Confederation became the momentous issue of the day. This issue convulsed New Brunswick for three years at the very least (1865-1867) and it was the Acadians who proved most resolute in their opposition to the measure. Still their

66. For the cited reasons, the elite in l'Acadie is a most important subject for discussion. For such a discussion, though one which questions the motives of that elite, please see infra, chapter VI.

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1. Onésiphore Turgeon to F.-J. Robidoux jr., Oct. 17, 1922. Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.1-6.
2. Abbé F.-X. Lafrance to Louis Robichaud, May 4, 1853. Copy in Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.46-6.

position on federation is difficult to assess on account of the absence of public spokesmen or newspapers which genuinely reflected their sentiments, fears, and biases. To acquire a picture of their views one must skirt the issue and glean the factors which likely were the important determinants.

In 1862 a French tourist in Nova Scotia, Edouard Du Hailly, wrote of the Acadians' great interest in Confederation:

Il est un rêve que caresse avec amour
l'habitant de la Nouvelle-Ecosse, celui
de la réunion en une confédération
unique des diverses colonies anglaises
de l'Amérique du Nord. Puisse ce rêve
se réaliser et rattacher par un lien
nouveau les Acadiens aux Canadiens!³

However Du Hailly's assessment was over-optimistic, reflecting more the opinion of Rameau de Saint-Père,⁴ a fellow Frenchman, than the Acadians of either Nova Scotia or New Brunswick. New Brunswick had many doubts about the value of Confederation and in this case, the Acadians reflected the broader provincial sentiment. During the two provincial elections⁵ fought on this contentious issue, the Acadians supported a solid phalanx of anti-confederates under the leadership of a Shediac lawyer, Albert Smith.

Born in 1824 in Shediac, Smith had been educated in Westmorland County and admitted to the Bar in 1847. An engaging, witty speaker, he entered politics in 1852 as a

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3. Du Hailly, "Une Station Sur Les Côtes D'Amérique - Les Acadiens Et La Nouvelle-Ecosse," p. 884.
 4. For M. Rameau's opinion on Confederation, see infra, n. 47.
 5. February-March, 1865 and May-June, 1866.

Reformer and immediately led the poll in his constituency (Westmorland), a practice which continued without interruption for thirty years. He strengthened his grip on the "North Shore" of the province while a member of the government from 1854 until 1862 and lost none of his prestige when he resigned from Leonard Tilley's administration in 1862 over its railway policy. The Acadians' initial opposition to Confederation was likely based as much on an implicit faith in the advice of Albert Smith as on the usual Maritime fears.

Those fears were manifold, especially in New Brunswick where elections were rarely waged upon anything more than parochial issues. How could New Brunswickers be expected to accept a broad Canadian outlook when they had difficulty acquiring even a provincial one. The M.L.A. for Charlotte, or any other constituency, was in practice the delegate and not the representative of his people. Consequently his concerns rarely extended beyond his immediate locality. In addition small "c" conservatives abounded in New Brunswick according to James Hannay, one of its early historians:

They are the persons who see in every new movement a thousand difficulties which cannot be surmounted. Their minds are constructed on the principle of rejecting all new ideas, and hanging on to all old forms and systems long after they have lost their vitality ... They seem to forget ... that the nineteenth century has as good a right to create precedents as any of its predecessors.⁶

6. James Hannay, The Life and Times of Sir Leonard Tilley (Saint John, 1897), p. 262.

This intellectual milieu would not readily accept dramatic alterations in the political system.

There existed other more concrete motives for opposing Confederation. The New Brunswick delegates to Charlottetown had been duped by the lavish Canadians while those to Quebec had possessed no mandate for selling the province's heritage. New Brunswick would lose its independence and importance in a larger union, and more important considering the context of this province's politics, the M.L.A.'s would lose, it was claimed, much of the financial resources they liked to spread so freely. The "crucial problem of hard cash"⁷ had not been resolved satisfactorily - the new scheme seemed prohibitively expensive and New Brunswick had to pay for not only two levels of government but also for Canadian canals and the acquisition of the barren North West Territories. Finally New Brunswick seemed to be flourishing at that time and had no need of the wily Canadians or their "inevitable" schemes of direct taxation and, possibly, compulsory military service.

Leonard Tilley, the Premier of New Brunswick, had been forced to call the election of 1865 before being fully prepared and the electorate's "votes were cast in accordance with prejudices hastily formed."⁸ The results were

7. A. G. Bailey, "The Basis and Persistence of Opposition to Confederation in New Brunswick," C.H.R., XXIII, No. 4 (Dec., 1942), p. 377.
8. James Hannay, History of New Brunswick (Saint John, 1909), p. 231.

gratifying to the Acadians as the "confederationists" were completely routed⁹ and as their own M.L.A., Albert Smith, became the new President of the Executive Council. The constituencies where the Acadian vote was important - Kent, Gloucester, Westmorland and Victoria - had returned a full slate of anti-confederates, ten out of the thirty M.L.A.'s adhering to this viewpoint.¹⁰

However the political climate of New Brunswick changed very rapidly. As Premier, Albert Smith had possessed "the merits of honesty of purpose"¹¹ though in patronage-ridden New Brunswick this was probably a liability. His government was composed of former antagonists who were politically irreconcilable: R. D. Wilmot, W. H. Odell, and John C. Allen were unrepentant Tories while A. J. Smith himself, A. H. Gillmor and G. L. Hatheway were staunch

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9. See Hannay, The Life and Times of Sir Leonard Tilley, pp. 293-94.
10. The Acadians composed 58% of the total population in Kent, 68% in Gloucester, 31% in Westmorland, and 58% in Victoria. They also made up 17% of the population in Restigouche and 5% in Northumberland both of which, to varying degrees supported the confederationists. Canada, Census of Canada, 1871, I, p. 222 and Appendix II. Only one Acadian was elected to the local Assembly and that was Armand Landry in Westmorland. For a constituency breakdown of the 1865 and 1866 elections, one could see P. B. Waite, "Ideas and Politics in British North America, 1864-1866" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1952), Appendix II, pp. 456-58.
11. Governor Arthur Gordon, N. B., to Edward Cardwell, Colonial Secretary, April 10, 1865. Cited in C. Wallace, "Albert Smith, Confederation and Reaction in New Brunswick, 1852-1882," C.H.R., XLIV, No. 4 (Dec., 1963), p. 290.

Liberals. The Surveyor-General, Bliss Botsford of Moncton, "hopelessly dull by nature ... [and] wholly unable to outline or even follow intelligently any distinct line of policy," was another discredit to the administration.¹²

Wilmot and Timothy Anglin soon resigned while Allen retired to the Bench. The government was divided even on the question of Confederation itself.¹³ Before long, Smith, unable to give his administration any definite direction, was being characterized as the "ablest and most eloquent apostle of the genus and generation stand-still."¹⁴ A second election fought on the same issue in the spring of 1866 dramatically reversed the results of the first; Saint John County and City, Kings, Queens, York, Victoria and Charlotte now returned confederates and Leonard Tilley again became Premier of the province.¹⁵

In 1865 the opposition of the province's Catholic population, thirty-five percent of the total, had been in large part responsible for Tilley's resounding defeat. In

12. Hannay, History of New Brunswick, p. 238.

13. For the difficulties of the Smith government, see Waite, "Ideas and Politics in British North America, 1864-1866," pp. 237-42. See also P. B. Waite, The Life and Times of Confederation, 1864-1867 (Toronto, 1967), pp. 247-62.

14. Morning Telegraph (Saint John), April 5, 1865. Cited in Wallace, "Albert Smith, Confederation, and Reaction in New Brunswick, 1852-1882," p. 291.

15. There were thirty-three supporters of Confederation returned and only eight anti-confederates, the latter being elected in Gloucester (2), Kent (2) and Westmorland (4).

the summer of that year Charles Fisher, a close colleague of Tilley's, still complained of their intransigence, fearing that in York he would receive only twenty of their 600 votes. "I find them," he confided to John A. Macdonald, "still in a solid phalanx united against confederation and I know that no argument but one from the church will reach them."¹⁶ By 1866, the "church" or at least members of it had entered the fray on behalf of the confederate forces and Catholic opposition was no longer uniform.

In 1865 the directives of the Quebec Catholic hierarchy were still of some importance in the Acadian districts of New Brunswick. Apparently a number of Quebec missionaries and priests in l'Acadie were misleading their flock, perhaps unintentionally, by claiming that the Quebec bishops were opposed to the Confederation scheme. In truth the bishops, though not unanimous, generally favoured the new federation. But there was no official endorsement of it until February of 1865 when Mgr. Charles-F. Baillargeon,¹⁷ the coadjutor of Quebec, wrote to Bishop Rogers (Chatham) of his own and his colleagues' approbation.¹⁸

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16. Charles Fisher to John A. Macdonald, Aug. 13, 1865. Cited in Bailey, "The Basis and Persistence of Opposition to Confederation in New Brunswick," p. 391.
 17. Mgr. C.-F. Baillargeon (1798-1870) was educated at the seminary of Nicolet and ordained in 1822. He was named coadjutor to Archbishop Turgeon of Quebec in 1850 and succeeded him in 1867.
 18. Mgr. C.-F. Baillargeon to Bishop J. Rogers, Feb. 15, 1865. Cited in P. M. Toner, "The New Brunswick Separate Schools Issue, 1864-1876" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1967), p. 15.

This letter came so late because of the lack of unanimity among the Quebec hierarchy. There were divisions of opinion which the Conservative press in that province interpreted as "approbation tacite."¹⁹ The majority of the bishops did indeed support Confederation since it was a platform of the Conservative Party, since it was a means of strengthening the British connection and defeating the Fenians whom they had previously condemned, and since it would create in certain important spheres of jurisdiction (most notably, education) a quasi-independent French and Catholic state over which they could have greater influence. But the Quebec episcopacy was in a state of flux at this time and a unanimous pronouncement was not forthcoming. The senior prelate in the province, Archbishop Pierre Turgeon of Quebec, was incapacitated through illness, dying in 1867, and could not use his prestige in favour of Confederation. Mgr. Langevin of Rimouski, whom one would expect to support Confederation for familial if for no other reason, ascended to the bishopric only two months before Confederation was finally achieved. Bishop Cooke of Trois Rivières was, like the Archbishop of Quebec, ill and unable to perform his ecclesiastical functions.

Louis-François Laflèche,²⁰ a rising star in the Quebec

19. For example see La Minerve (Montreal), Feb. 13, 1867.

20. Mgr. L.-F. Laflèche (1818-1898) had been a missionary with Father Alexandre Taché in Red River until 1848 and, a confirmed ultramontane, was along with Bishop Bourget of Montreal the inspiration for the 1871 Programme

church, was a brilliant realist who had foreseen the inevitable collapse of the existing political structure. Consequently he endorsed Confederation as the only remedy. But at this time he was simply the coadjutor of Trois Rivières, lacking the influence necessary to sway the other prelates. Meanwhile Laflèche's mentor, Bishop Bourget of Montreal²¹ remained the primary obstacle to any ecclesiastical endorsement of the scheme. Bourget, a bishop since 1840, had always been a vociferous defender of his flock in both religious and secular affairs. Highly zealous and dedicated, he enjoyed an almost unlimited appeal among his flock, in large part due to the host of charitable works he had established in his diocese. The Quebec hierarchy understandably did not wish to publicize its internal divisions. Therefore until Bourget consented, a pastoral on the question of Confederation could not be issued. Bourget meanwhile, in spite of all the supplications made by Laflèche and Bishop Laroque of St. Hyacinthe, remained unconvinced of the merits of union and withheld his blessings until it was a "fait accompli" sanctioned by the

Catholique. See André Labarrère-Paulé, ed., Louis-François Laflèche, Textes choisis et présentés (Montréal, 1970).

21. Mgr. Ignace Bourget (1799-1885) was ordained in 1822, made vicar-general of Montreal in 1836, coadjutor bishop in 1837, bishop of Montreal in 1840, and Archbishop of Martianopolis in partibus in 1876. See Léon Pouliot, s.j., Mgr. Bourget et son temps, L'évêque de Montréal (Montreal, 1972).

22. Archbishop T. Connolly to Bishop J. Sweeney, May 25, 1861. Sweeney Correspondence, A.B.S. I., No. 1425.

Imperial Government.²²

Consequently those Acadians who looked to Quebec for guidance on this contentious and confusing question found no clear answer there. The Maritime bishops provided much more definite guidance especially by 1866. However the advice of Irish prelates seemed to have only minimal effect upon the independent and isolated Acadian settlements.

In the past the leading Maritime ecclesiastic, Archbishop Thomas Connolly of Halifax, had been wary about clerical involvement in politics. He felt that politics "are a most dangerous game for Ecclesiastics in this country, and if I am to judge by the signs of the times we have not seen the worst of them in these Lower Provinces."²³ It would appear that by 1864 Connolly had discarded his own sage advice, becoming immersed at an early stage in the deliberations surrounding Confederation. After having received a letter from D'Arcy McGee in the summer of 1864, the Archbishop attempted to solicit an endorsement of the Canadian scheme from Bishop Sweeny of Saint John. Connolly was "deeply convinced that instead of being split up and isolated" the British North American provinces should join together in a strong union. Isolation bred weakness and weakness would have tempted "our Yankee friends to pay us a

22. For an excellent study of the attitudes of the Quebec bishops on this issue, see W. Ullman, "The Quebec Bishops and Confederation," C.H.R., XLIV, No. 3 (Sept., 1963), pp. 213-34.

23. Archbishop T. Connolly to Bishop J. Sweeny, May 25, 1861. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1425.

visit ... the day cannot be far distant when all the horrors of war will be at our own door." He had certain misgivings about the particulars of the proposed union but nevertheless decided to "go for it with my whole soul."²⁴

Trying to arrange a meeting of all the Maritime bishops for September of 1864, Connolly indicated why he endorsed federation in principle:

I am not yet prepared to go in for one only legislature for all the Provinces, but to avoid being gobbled up by the Yankees I go in heart and soul for such a confederation as will amalgamate us and make a military people of us so as to be ready when the day of wrath comes ... If we do not wish to have our country deluged with blood and overrun as the South now is we must have a common cause and a common means of defence ... The balance is now in Catholic hands to a large extent and we ought to be ... decided and emphatic in the policy we lay down.²⁵

Connolly knew however that his efforts had to be herculean if he was to sway the Catholics of the Maritime provinces. Tilley had already alienated this portion of the population in New Brunswick "when in choosing so many delegates [for the Quebec conference] he seemed to ignore their existence altogether."²⁶ To calm Catholic suspicions, Connolly had to offer some concrete measure such as guarantees for a

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24. Archbishop Connolly to Bishop Sweeny, July 30, 1864. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1430.
 25. Archbishop Connolly to Bishop Sweeny, Aug. 29, 1864. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1431.
 26. Archbishop Connolly to Bishop Sweeny, March 15, 1865. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1433.

denominational school system.

In October of 1866 the Maritime bishops met in Pictou, N. S., and delegated Archbishop Connolly to London to promote the interests of the Catholic minority in the Maritime provinces. The question of separate schools for this group had been overlooked at the Quebec conference because "We had no one [there] ... to interest himself about us." Connolly was determined not to allow that error to be repeated and once in London resolved "to see that Confederation was all right regarding Catholics."²⁷ He could not understand why "in this country of equal rights ... the Catholic minority in Ontario or the Protestant minority in Quebec should enjoy any legal privileges denied to us as citizens of the same Dominion."²⁸ Consequently he sought the inclusion in the British North America Act of a section which read:

Whereas the people of the Province of Nova Scotia are about entering into Confederation with the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada and where it is of the highest importance that all Protestant and Catholic minorities ... of Nova Scotia should enjoy the same rights and privileges regarding education as those enjoyed by their fellow subjects in the two Canadas ...

Therefore Resolved that the School law in Nova Scotia be assimilated to that now prevailing in Upper and Lower

27. Archbishop Connolly to Bishop Sweeny, July 7, 1866. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1434.

28. Pastoral Letter of the Archbishop and Bishops of the Archdiocese of Halifax, Nov. 25, 1873. Copy in the Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. I.

Canada on the subject of the education
of Religious minorities, whether
Protestant or Catholic.²⁹

The Maritime bishops fully expected to be successful in their quest even if their wishes could be met "only by transferring the question of education from the local legislatures to the General Parliament of the Dominion."³⁰ Archbishop Connolly, a very personable sort, expected the colonial and British delegates to be receptive to his wishes. The Canadians owed much to him since he had enthusiastically supported the principle of Confederation when it was decidedly unpopular to do so. In order to persuade the Maritime delegates, Connolly was willing to aid them politically, promising the support of

the whole Catholic population, French, Scotch and Irish ... I stake my character upon it that neither Howe nor any of his kind [the word is illegible in the original] will succeed ... in any Catholic constituency in either of the Maritime Provinces.³¹

In addition he promised to issue a pastoral letter on Confederation "which will utterly demolish him [Howe]" should Tupper and the other delegates prove generous.³²

Lobbying among the British officials as well as the

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29. Archbishop Connolly to Charles Tupper, n.d. Sir Charles Tupper Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 3, p. 981.
 30. Joint Pastoral Letter of the Ecclesiastical Province of Halifax, Jan. 6, 1874. Copy in Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. I.
 31. Archbishop Connolly to Charles Tupper, Oct. 25, 1866. Sir Charles Tupper Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 2, pp. 947-48.
 32. Ibid.

Maritime delegates in London, the Archbishop's hopes seemed on the verge of fulfillment and his vicar-general, Rev. Michael Hannon, reported to Bishop Rogers that they had received "the most satisfactory assurances from the late and present Colonial Secretaries ... The delegates from Nova Scotia have also promised that they would sustain His Grace's views on the subject."³³ Shortly after, Connolly returned to Halifax so as to concentrate on the Canadian delegates, primarily George Cartier and Hector Langevin, who were not to arrive in England until late in the fall.

These two figures should have been able to understand the fears of the Nova Scotia and New Brunswick minorities. Being themselves raised in a French-Catholic milieu, both basically conservative in philosophy, they too regarded the school as "le bastion suprême" of the faith and nationality. Following the Conquest in 1763, Quebec itself had been without an educational system, the result of a scarcity of teachers, capital and books. In 1768 even the Collège des Jesuites had been compelled to close. Until 1824 the religious hierarchy of Quebec had fought a continual battle against the attempts of the Anglo-Protestant establishment to impose a system ill-suited to the apparent needs of the populace. Only in 1824 were government funds designated for schools which remained under the authority of the parish priest and through him the church. Not until the 1850's did

33. Rev. M. Hannon to Bishop Rogers, Aug. 20, 1866. Cited in Toner, "The New Brunswick Separate Schools Issue, 1867-1876," p. 23.

a strong parish educational system finally take root.³⁴

Yet regardless of their backgrounds, Cartier and Langevin refused to countenance Connolly's suggestion that the B.N.A. Act be employed to amend the educational status of Catholic schools in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. If alterations were genuinely and universally desired, let the two Assemblies concerned amend the existing laws. "Tu peux être sûr," wrote Langevin

In que ce que je puis faire pour favoriser
les Ecoles Séparées des Provinces
Maritimes, je le ferai bien volontiers,
mais il faut que l'initiative vienne
des Délégués des Provinces elles-mêmes.
Autrement, on nous dirait: Mêlez-vous
de vos affaires.³⁵

The French Canadian delegates understood that if they tampered with the B.N.A. Act in this regard, the assurances of provincial autonomy in the field of education, so vital to Quebec's acceptance, would have been meaningless. The London Conference, if the Quebec delegates had their way as they in the end did, had the responsibility of ratifying the Quebec resolutions, not the revising of actual sections. In Quebec any federal interference in the field of education, which indeed made every other realm of provincial jurisdiction

34. For details on the evolution of education in Quebec, see L.-P. Audet, Le Centenaire du Système Scolaire de la Province de Québec (Québec, 1947) or his Histoire du Conseil de l'instruction publique de la province de Québec, 1856-1964 (Montréal, 1964).

35. Hector Langevin to Edmond Langevin, Dec. 1, 1866. Cited in A. Désilets, Hector-Louis Langevin (Québec, 1969), p. 161.

liable to similar treatment, would have brought the Catholic hierarchy down on Cartier's head, ending all hope for the new union. The Quebec delegates then did their duty:

... the two Delegates from the Province of Quebec objected ... This abruptly terminated all further consideration of the subject ... which greatly disappointed the Archbishop ... The gentlemen representing Quebec acted in the interest of their province.³⁶

In his thesis on the New Brunswick Schools Question, Peter Toner claimed that the responsibility for education "could have as easily [been] given to the central government as well as to the provinces."³⁷ This was clearly impossible considering the susceptibilities of not only Quebec but the other provinces as well. Ontario was endorsing Confederation in large part so as to liberate itself from "outside" (i.e. French) domination. The lengths to which the Canadian delegates went in providing the right of appeal and certain guarantees for existing Ontario statutes were as far as they could go either politically or morally while professing a federal structure.

36. Joint Pastoral Letter of the Ecclesiastical Province of Halifax, Jan. 6, 1874. Copy in Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1. It is interesting to note however that by 1869-70 the attitude of Cartier and Langevin had changed substantially and in the case of Manitoba they were willing to impose their own or the federal government's attitude regarding separate schools. It is possible that this change was the result of the brewing New Brunswick Schools Question.

37. Toner, "The New Brunswick Separate Schools Issue, 1864-1876," p. 25.

If Ontario wished to grant certain constitutional guarantees to its minority as "the price of its liberty from Quebec thralldom [sic]," that was very commendable:

But New Brunswick had no Quebec yoke on its neck. New Brunswick was master of its own education destinies. There was no necessity from a Union point of view requiring it to make sacrifices which nobody had a right to demand of it.³⁸

Connolly's proposal was politically impossible. A correspondent in Charlotte and King's counties warned Leonard Tilley for example that "Fear of taxation and being swamped [his emphasis] by Canada" were the primary sources of anti-confederate strength.³⁹ To add to this the separate schools issue, with its additional cost and taint of Canadianism, would have doomed unionist aspirations. Tupper for one appreciated what use the anti-confederates would make of this example of "Upper Canadian domination."⁴⁰ Archbishop Connolly then adopted Hector Langevin's suggestion, asking Tupper to have the local Assembly amend the law before Confederation came into being. Tupper also refused this, maintaining that he could never rally a majority in the House on this issue and the result would be a rekindling of religious animosities, thereby tainting all unionists with the disadvantageous pro-Catholic label.⁴¹

38. Saint John Daily News, Feb. 11, 1873. Cited in ibid., p. 62.

39. J. H. Gray to L. Tilley, Dec. 6, 1864. Tilley Papers, New Brunswick Museum, Box 5, packet 3, No. 57.

40. Charles Tupper to Archbishop Connolly, April 15, 1868. Sir Charles Tupper Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 3, pp. 1181-83.

41. Ibid.

Though disappointed that his ideas had been rejected, Connolly still supported Confederation and urged his ecclesiastical colleagues to do likewise. He succeeded with Bishop MacKinnon of Arichat who wrote Tupper that he was

... no admirer of Confederation on the basis of the Quebec scheme; yet owing to the present great emergency and the necessities of the times, the union of the Colonies, upon a new basis, we receive with pleasure.⁴²

Shortly after, MacKinnon published a circular endorsing Tupper's scheme.

In New Brunswick Archbishop Connolly had less success with Bishop Sweeny who only offered, and then only reluctantly, qualified support. Bishop Rogers in Chatham, a personal friend of Connolly's, proved more enthusiastic. In order to promote Confederation, Rogers attempted to discredit Timothy Anglin, the editor of the Saint John Freeman and the province's most vitriolic anti-Confederate. In a letter to J. M. Johnson, Rogers asserted that:

were it not that ... this gentleman's [i.e. Anglin] influence amongst our people is so great to lead them into a wrong course where he errs himself, I would not think it necessary to make these allusions to him. But when in addition to the influence he exerts in his paper, he now makes his first visit to Mirimichi to interfere with our elections, and by his personal presence and agitation diverts

42. Bishop C. F. MacKinnon to Charles Tupper, April 12, 1866. Sir Charles Tupper Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 2, pp. 745-46.

43. Bishop Rogers to Edward Williston, n.d. Published in the Morning Freeman, May 21, 1866, p. 2.

our Catholic people from the course advised them by their local friends and guides, I lose all patience with him.⁴³

Rogers also issued a public circular endorsing another confederate candidate in Northumberland, Edward Williston,⁴⁴ and urging acceptance of the union because it "is earnestly recommended to us by the British Government ... [and] it is our duty [his emphasis] to acquiesce."⁴⁵ The bishop then tried to sway the reluctant Acadian portion of his flock by releasing another letter which quoted part of a communication Rogers himself had received from "one of the higher dignitaries of the Catholic Church in Canada." This "higher dignitary" wrote that:

Je prends donc la liberté d'écrire aujourd'hui à votre Grandeur pour l'informer que dans notre Bas-Canada ... les Evêques, le clergé, et en général tous les hommes qui veulent sincèrement le bien du pays, sont pour cette grande mesure [Confederation] et souhaitent qu'elle puisse s'effectuer.⁴⁶

By making, however reluctantly, these pronouncements in favour of Confederation, the Irish bishops found themselves in the unusual position of seeking the same goals as did the French and Québécois leadership in l'Acadie. Rameau de

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43. Bishop James Rogers to J. M. Johnson, May 22, 1866. Published in the Saint John Morning Freeman, May 26, 1866, p. 2. See also W. M. Baker, "No Shillelagh: The Life, Journalism and Politics of Timothy Warren Anglin" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Western Ontario, 1972).
 44. Both Williston and Johnson were the successful candidates in Northumberland during the May 1866 election. Johnson had been defeated in the 1865 election.
 45. Bishop Rogers to Edward Williston, n.d. Published in the Morning Freeman, May 22, 1866, p. 2.

Saint-Père, highly respected by the Acadians, promoted the idea of federation as the only effective bulwark against American annexation. To him, America was a wretched country, composed of "des Européens dégénérés ..." and, although having great natural resources, had not "des hommes capables de les utiliser." Canadians, Rameau wrote, would be wise to support any program which would promote their independence from the American Republic even though such a course may leave Canada "moins riche et moins puissant."⁴⁷ Similarly Father Georges-Antoine Belcourt, another prestigious figure in l'Acadie, enthusiastically endorsed Confederation even though inherent in it were certain dangers to the French of both Quebec and the Maritime provinces. What was important was that

il est impossible au Bas Canada de former un gouvernement à part ... [which could] lui donner cette garantie infaillible de ses droits; je crois avec bien d'autres que l'Union Fédérale ... offre au Canada le plus de chance possible ... C'est un besoin dans l'enchaînement des événements providentiels et toutes les discussions à l'encontre n'aboutiront à rien.⁴⁸

Belcourt's letters to Rameau de Saint-Père never referred directly to the role which the Acadians might play in Confederation; instead he concerned himself with the challenges

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46. Bishop Rogers to L. P. W. DesBrisay, May 17, 1866. Published in ibid., May 26, 1866, p. 2.
47. Rameau de Saint-Père, quoted in Bruchési, Rameau de Saint-Père et les Française D'Amérique, pp. 20-21.
48. Abbé Belcourt to Rameau de Saint-Père, Feb. 27, 1865. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-7.

facing Quebec. He worried about unfulfilled promises and missing guarantees, yet he realized, as most of Quebec did, that Confederation "n'est pas un choix mais une nécessité."⁴⁹

The Acadians were obviously unconvinced however. While Quebec's leaders had been intimately involved in the drafting of the British North America Act, the Acadians and their concerns had been ignored or refused. Even Archbishop Connolly's efforts to obtain constitutional guarantees for denominational schools had been denied because of the political exigencies of the Maritime provinces. Though honesty at election time has never been a virtue in New Brunswick, unscrupulous anti-confederates wove tales for the Acadians of how Confederation would oblige them "de payer la farine \$18 le quart ... le tabac \$1 la livre" and so on:

On les avait si bien imbus de tous les préjugés imaginables contre la Confédération, qu'encore aujourd'hui un grand nombre parmi eux refusent de croire que la 'Confédération' est passée. 50

The "hommes savants" upon whom the illiterate Acadians relied

49. Abbé Belcourt to Rameau de Saint-Père, Nov. 2, 1865. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-7.

50. Article by Israel Landry of *Le Moniteur Acadien* discussing why the Acadians opposed Confederation. Published in *Le Journal de Québec* (Quebec) on Nov. 28, 1867 and in *Le Courrier de St.-Hyacinthe* on Dec. 3, 1867. It is reproduced in Mailhot, "La 'Renaissance Acadienne' (1864-1888); L'Interprétation Traditionnelle et 'Le Moniteur Acadien'" (Diplôme en Etudes Supérieures, Université de Montréal, 1968), Appendix, p. XVI.

51. See White, *The Life and Times of Confederation, 1864-1867*, p. 375.

had, it seems, misled them. Peter Mitchell, Tilley's important colleague and later a federal Cabinet Minister, asserted that had the Acadians been better informed about Confederation, they would never have opposed it. "We never ought to have failed" wrote Mitchell along with assurances that "twelve months would not elapse" before the results of the 1865 election would be reversed.⁵¹

In May and June of 1866, Mitchell's prophecy was validated as Tilley's forces won a resounding victory - thirty-three out of forty-one seats in the House of Assembly. The confederates had retained their seats in Restigouche, Northumberland, Albert, Sunbury and Carleton while dramatically reversing the 1865 results in Victoria, Kings, Saint John City and County, Charlotte, York and Queens.⁵²

However the Acadian constituencies of Gloucester, Kent and Westmorland had remained faithful to Albert Smith and returned the only successful anti-confederate candidates. Their determined opposition must have been somewhat surprising considering the position of their bishops and those of Quebec, considering the money that was likely flowing, considering the Fenian threat, and considering the apparent ineptitude of the Smith government.

These reasons may have affected the rest of the province

51. Peter Mitchell, cited in A. L. Burt, "Peter Mitchell on John A. Macdonald," C.H.R., XLII, No. 3 (Sept., 1961), pp. 211-12.

52. See Waite, The Life and Times of Confederation, 1864-1867, p. 275.

but they obviously had little effect upon the Acadians. Albert Smith, regardless of how others viewed him, was still the respected political leader of the north-east. He sought the support of and cooperated with the Catholics while Tilley's followers were conducting a decidedly anti-Catholic campaign, posing as the protectors of the Protestant faith and the Bible and the "only" opponents of the heinous and of course Catholic Fenians.⁵³ In an era when most New Brunswickers still lacked a provincial outlook, elections were decided more on the basis of local issues and personalities than on any sort of broad provincial policy. The Fenian issue therefore was less important in the north than in the south where the brunt of any invasion would be felt. Even confederate money and ecclesiastical endorsements could not overcome the conservatism and opposition of the local priests. A confederationist in Dorchester (Westmorland County) complained to Leonard Tilley that "We are beset by an enormous expenditure of money combined with all the priests interfering."⁵⁴ In Victoria, Tilley's candidate complained of the same influences:

53. Examples of this anti-Catholic posture may be found in Toner, "The New Brunswick Separate Schools Issue, 1864-1876" and in Wallace, "Albert Smith, Confederation and Reaction in New Brunswick, 1852-1882".

54. A. L. Palmer to Leonard Tilley, June 6, 1866. Sir Leonard Tilley Papers, New Brunswick Museum, Box 6, packet 1, No. 46.

55. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 13, 1867. See also Le Moniteur Acadien for July 8, 1867, "La Situation".

57. Interview with Father A. Chénisson, author of Chéticamp, Histoire et Traditions Acadiennes, Dec., 1971.

It is hard work to fight against four priests (Bishop Roger [sic] may be sincere but I doubt it) no attention was paid to his [Rogers'] letters in Victoria. Rice told me [Rev.] McGuirk told the people in Church on Sunday that Anglin had done more for the Catholic Church than all the Bishops in the Provinces and that they the people must vote the Anglin ticket.⁵⁵

In spite of Protestant fears to the contrary, the Roman Catholic Church was rarely united on any given issue.

Some candidates appealed to the Acadians to support Confederation on the basis of an alliance with Quebec.

Israel Landry, the Québécois editor of Le Moniteur Acadien and a candidate in the first federal election, claimed that the French Canadians would promote Acadian interests if both were part of the same country and political structure. Union therefore would be "la sauve-garde de notre nationalité."⁵⁶ This argument had little effect since the bulk of the Acadian people at this time knew and cared very little for Quebec. They had been unfamiliar with that region in both the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries and before 1876 when the Intercolonial Railway was completed, very few except for the occasional fisherman ever ventured to the acclaimed "foyer" of the French race in America. Even in the twentieth century, travel beyond one's immediate community was rare and indeed a rather intimidating affair.⁵⁷

55. B. Beveridge to Leonard Tilley, June 9, 1866. Sir Leonard Tilley Papers, N.B. Museum, Box 6, packet 1, No. 47.

56. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 15, 1867. See also Le Moniteur Acadien for July 8, 1867, "La Situation".

57. Interview with Father A. Chiasson, author of Cheticamp, Histoire et Traditions Acadiennes, Dec., 1972.

The few Québécois whom the Acadians had met, very often salesmen, usually did not endear themselves, being abrupt and loud as well as revealing a patronizing attitude toward their 'country cousins.'⁵⁸

Through both provincial elections and the ensuing federal election in the summer of 1867, the Acadians re-iterated their fear of and opposition to Confederation. Even proponents of the union recognized the futility of their efforts. Israel Landry for example confided to Rameau de Saint-Père that for Le Moniteur Acadien "il faudra prendre ... le parti anti-confédéré parce que tous les Acadiens sans exception sont de ce parti."⁵⁹ Nevertheless Landry contested the election of 1867 hoping to convince the Acadians to give Confederation, now a "fait accompli", a fair opportunity to prove its worth. This was the approach adopted in an equally suspicious Quebec - the religious hierarchy there advised Catholics to support only those candidates who favoured the new constitution:

... aujourd'hui la discussion n'est plus possible; la loi est promulguée; l'oeuvre de l'autorité doit être respectée; refuser de s'y soumettre, ce serait renverser l'ordre établi de Dieu, et résister à sa volonté, ce serait marcher à l'anarchie, à la trahison; à la révolte et à tous les maux qui en sont la suite ... Au reste, n'oublions pas, Nos Très Chers Frères, combien nous avons

58. Ibid.

59. I.-J. Landry to Rameau de Saint-Père, May 20, 1867. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-8.

à nous féliciter de vivre sous l'égide
de l'empire Britannique.⁶⁰

Comfortable in an authoritarian realm, the French Canadians acquiesced. The Irish-Catholic bishops of the Maritime provinces, never possessing such power because of the predominantly Protestant milieu in which they lived, could not deliver such ringing declarations even if their Acadian flock, isolated and accustomed to relative independence, would have complied.

Thus the Acadians reiterated their opposition once more during the first federal election. The Honourable Timothy Anglin was elected in Gloucester. Albert J. Smith, his prestige hardly diminished by the events of 1866, was returned in Westmorland. Two Catholics, one of whom was French, were elected in Victoria and Kent - John Costigan and Auguste Renaud respectively. Both however soon aligned themselves with the Conservative Party.⁶¹ But the scheme had indeed come into effect and before long the Acadians would accept and use it though in so doing they were again acknowledging the leadership of Albert Smith. In his first speech to the House of Commons (Nov. 11, 1867) Smith "having fought the battle ... was now willing to lay

60. Mgr. C.-F. Baillargeon, July, 1867. Cited in Brunet, Québec, Canada Anglais, Deux Itinéraires, Un Affrontement, pp. 116-17.

61. For the results of the 1867 election in New Brunswick, see J. K. Johnson, The Canadian Directory of Parliament, 1867 - 1967 (Ottawa, 1968), pp. 630-35.

down arms, accept the situation, and lend his assistance to make the new constitution successful."⁶²

Once Confederation was accepted, the emerging Acadian leadership, centered around the Collège St. Joseph, determined to profit from the opportunities it offered. Previously the Acadian position in Maritime society had been far from impressive having one member in the New Brunswick Assembly (A. Landry, Westmorland) and another in the Nova Scotia Assembly (Maturin Robichaud, Clare).⁶³ All the leading professional and commercial roles were in the hands of the English with the Acadians "ne comptaient dans leurs rangs ni avocat, ni médecin, ni aucun homme appartenant aux professions libérales." The impotence of the 80,000 Acadians was due in part to their history but more important, to their isolation:

Ils étaient disseminés par petits groupes, et n'avaient guère de relations les uns avec les autres, ceux de Nouvelle-Ecosse ignorant presque l'existence de leurs frères du Nouveau-Brunswick et de l'Île Saint-Jean.⁶⁴

In 1867 all these groups were drawn, however reluctantly, into a nation which they barely knew and which, in return, barely knew of them.

62. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1867-1868 (Ottawa, 1967), p. 28. A. J. Smith, Nov. 11, 1867.

63. For a complete list of Acadian M.L.A.'s in the three Maritime provinces, see Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.2-4.

64. Poirier, Les Acadiens Depuis la Confédération jusqu'à nos jours, p. 2.

65. Ibid., Aug. 15, 1867, "Ce Qu'il Nous Faut".

Nevertheless once they accepted Confederation, their hopes rose. They expected much from the new nation and from Quebec especially:

Une nouvelle phase de notre existence comme peuple acadien, apparait aujourd'hui, c'est celle de l'union intime qui devra exister entre le Canada-Français et l'Acadie-Français. Dorénavant notre sort sera le même que celui de nos compatriotes. Nous parlons la même langue, professons la même foi et tous deux cherchons à nous conserver au milieu des éléments hétérogènes qui nous entourent. Soyons donc unis et travaillons ensemble à notre propre préservation.⁶⁵

The British North America Act and by it the government of Canada had recognized the unique character of French Canada; perhaps with Quebec as its protectress, l'Acadie would also be recognized. Quebec had fought to protect its Catholic schools as well as those in Ontario; perhaps it would do the same for the Acadians. The federal government had officially recognized the French language in the House of Commons; perhaps, responding to pressure from Quebec, the Maritime Assemblies would do the same. Perhaps the Acadians would finally demand their rights by copying the French Canadian example; "il faut lutter" wrote Israel Landry, "ce n'est qu'après des luttes terribles que les Canadiens-Français ont pu maintenir, faire respecter et enfin assurer l'existence de leur nationalité. Nous ferons de même."⁶⁶

65. Le Moniteur Acadien, July 8, 1867, "La Situation".

66. Ibid., Aug. 15, 1867, "Ce Qu'Il Nous Faut".

With the Collège St. Joseph and Confederation coming so close together, expectations were indeed high even though the future remained uncertain. An Acadian elite could be formed and could advance under the benevolent eye of a sympathetic Quebec. Acadians might prosper from the patronage extended by the George Cartiers and the Hector Langevins in Ottawa. The Acadians might even achieve important positions in the Maritime Catholic church since they would find "dans la hiérarchie canadienne des protecteurs."⁶⁷ The Acadians, dispersed throughout the Maritime provinces, could now hope for a repeat of the Madawaska experience where there "arrivent continuellement des immigrants canadiens qui renforcent d'année en année la population française."⁶⁸

At this point the Acadians still believed that "outsiders" could fight their battles for them. They looked to Quebec for support in the inevitable struggles for equality. At times Quebec lived up to these expectations and indeed promoted the Acadian cause. However at these times the issue usually revolved around politics with only a Senate seat or some other appointment being at stake. For example in the early 1890's, La Minerve (Montreal) promoted Pierre A. Landry as successor to Sir Leonard Tilley for the Lieutenant Governorship of New Brunswick. On this occasion

67. L'Impartial (Tignish), Jan. 15, 1903, "Collèges et Couvents en Acadie" by Pascal Poirier.

68. Le Moniteur Acadien, July 31, 1868. Letter from Rameau de Saint-Père to Israel Landry, Jan. 8, 1868.

it wrote that his appointment "serait sans doute un grand acte de réparation qui ferait relever la tête à toute la race acadienne."⁶⁹ Other Quebec newspapers supported various Acadian aspirants to the Senate or civil service, but the Acadian people soon realized the truth:

ces turbulentes professions d'amour fraternel et de dévouement inaltérable qu'on réédite si souvent, surtout en temps d'élection, ne sont que du vent, des paroles en l'air, n'ayant aucune signification, du beurre et de la colle, en un mot, pour nous servir de la locution populaire.⁷⁰

When "gut" issues were in question, Acadian gains would of necessity depend upon Acadian initiatives and actions.

As in 1866, "The gentlemen representing Quebec acted in the interests of their province [alone]."⁷¹

New Brunswick had been the first colony in British North America to publicly subsidize education. In 1793 Governor Thomas Carleton tried to extract from a reluctant and hostile Assembly a grant in aid of a single provincial

69. La Minerve, n.d. Reprinted in *ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1892, p. 2, "Une réclamation acadienne".

70. Le Moniteur Acadien, Feb. 6, 1902, "Pas de place pour les Acadiens".

71. See *supra*, n. 36.

CHAPTER IV

A Discouraging Precedent - The New Brunswick

Schools Question

Quebec's apparent disinterest in the Acadians became patently clear almost before the ink on the British North America Act had dried, before the guarded optimism surrounding Confederation had waned. Late in 1870 the New Brunswick Government resolved to modernize the province's antiquated educational system and in the process alienated completely its substantial Catholic minority, both Acadian and Irish. The resultant controversy convulsed much of Canada for the next half decade and in the end provided the Acadians with an object lesson in the value of self-reliance since they received only minimal support of a concrete nature from their compatriots in Quebec.

New Brunswick had been the first colony in British North America to publicly subsidize education. In 1793 Governor Thomas Carleton tried to extract from a reluctant and hostile Assembly a grant in aid of a single provincial academy at Fredericton. Perfering a less centralized format, the Assembly refused his request, approving instead an educational grant of ten pounds for each parish.

Although their initiative was discarded by the Governor's

Council, a similar measure was instituted in 1802.¹ Over the next fifty years many improvements were introduced into the provincial educational system. Recognizing the mosaic nature of New Brunswick, the government even permitted denominational and French-language instruction based upon the Douay version of the Bible and Quebec texts.

In 1857 New Brunswick's reform party, the "Smashers" under Charles Fisher and Leonard Tilley, was elected. One of Tilley's primary concerns, once prohibition was no longer an issue, was the revision of the province's school system. Tilley contemplated introducing compulsory assessment but public outrage, based on the fear of taxation and the administration's own political acumen, quickly dispelled that proposal. Reflecting public sentiment, the Smashers were more aggressive on the question of denominational schools, both Catholic and Anglican. James Dunn, a Saint John businessman, influenced Tilley's thinking by writing repeatedly of the "unjust ... and unprofitable distribution" of government funds to sectarian schools. Dunn advised that the Anglican grip upon Kings College be terminated and that, in regard to the common schools, "everything denominational should be set aside ... All our common schools should be conducted on a similar system as ... in Massachusetts."² However both Dunn and

1. Hannay, History of New Brunswick, I, p. 282.

2. James Dunn to the Hon. L. Tilley, Feb. 9, 1858. Sir Leonard Tilley Papers, New Brunswick Museum, Box 4, folder 3, No. 21.

Tilley acknowledged that New Brunswick was not Massachusetts and neither wished the Bible to be excluded entirely; the Bible after all, wrote Dunn with uncritical enthusiasm, was largely responsible for the greatness of the British Empire.³

Not wishing to undermine the Empire, the government's 1858 Parish School Act⁴ permitted a simple recitation of the Bible without elaboration. Following the acceptance of an amendment introduced by Francis McPhelin,⁵ the Douay version was employed in the Catholic schools. However subsequent instructions to the province's teachers emphasized that broad Christian principles and not sectarian dogma were the basis of continued religious instruction:

Every teacher shall take diligent care and exert his best endeavours to impress on the minds of the children ... the principles of christianity, morality and justice and a sacred regard to truth and honesty, love of their country, loyalty, humanity and universal benevolence, sobriety, industry, chastity, modesty and temperance, order and cleanliness, and all the virtues which are the ornaments of human society; but no pupil shall be required to read or study in or from any religious book, or join in any act of devotion objected to by his parents ... and the Board of Education shall, by regulation, secure to all children whose parents ... do not object to it, the reading of the Bible in Parish Schools ... and the Bible when read ... by Roman

3. Ibid.

4. 21 Vic., Cap. IX, 1858.

5. Francis McPhelin, an Irish Catholic, was the M.L.A. for Kent.

Catholic children shall, if required by their parents ... be the Douay version, without note or comment.⁶

Thus contrary to later Catholic claims, the Parish School Act of 1858 did not recognize separate schools or even religious instruction of a sectarian nature. Instead it had merely affirmed the population's faith in the value of a broad Christian background.

The Catholic minority was generally pleased with the 1858 Act. By excusing Protestant children from religious activities, the teachers in predominantly Catholic regions were able to establish a de facto separate and denominational system. The French too found their aspirations largely fulfilled. Onésiphore Turgeon, a teacher at Petit-Rocher, claimed that he enjoyed "tous les privilèges au sujet de l'instruction religieuse et de l'enseignement du français à un aussi haut degré que j'aurais pu exercer dans la Province de Québec même."⁷

However by the late 1860's the professional educators with the Board of Education felt that the situation in the province's schools was becoming chaotic. Each religious denomination, as well as the government, controlled a distinct set of schools. In religiously mixed communities,

6. Canada, Sessional Papers, 1873, Vol. VI, No. 44, A1873, p. 24. 21 Vic., Cap. IX, 1858, Passed April 6, 1858, "An Act relating to Parish Schools."
7. O. Turgeon, Un Tribut à la race acadienne, Mémoires 1871-1927 (Montreal, 1928), p. 8.

13. Ibid., 1879, "Report on Schools", p. 26.

services were wastefully duplicated as was the cost.⁸ Since attendance was not compulsory, the number of children in school was pitifully low. New Brunswick was not unique in this regard - even with compulsory attendance laws, Canadian schools were irregularly attended - but still the inspectors were appalled by the situation.⁹ The Acadian regions, it was soon discovered, were the worst offenders - while the provincial rate of attendance was 61%, that of Gloucester and Victoria was only 25% and that of Kent 30%.¹⁰ Teachers for the Acadian schools were not obliged to attend the Normal School and consequently were considered to be of an inferior quality.¹¹ The Parish School Act had made no provision for compulsory assessment and the result was disgraceful schools in the Acadian settlements. The situation was considered scandalous. Employ better texts advised one inspector.¹² Another suggested that French teachers be obliged to attend the Normal School.¹³ Most important, the inspectors repeatedly urged one major

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8. New Brunswick, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1869. "Report of the Chief Superintendent of Schools, 1869", p. 7.
 9. See ibid., 1870, "Report of the Chief Superintendent of Schools, 1870", p. XII.
 10. Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick, 1740-1960," p. 114.
 11. New Brunswick, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1871. "Inspectors' Reports", p. 12.
 12. Ibid., "Report of the Chief Superintendent", p. 16.
 13. Ibid., 1870, "Report on Schools", p. 26.

revision of the school law:

Let ... [all] schools ... be put under a common management; let the local support equal at least the Provincial allowance and the funds for that support be raised by direct taxation; let the school fees be for ever [sic] abolished and the schools declared free [his emphasis]; then reasonable hope may be entertained that ... the schools will soon become places of really sound learning.¹⁴

The limited funds available had to be utilized efficiently which, in the minds of many, meant terminating the denominational system by which "the number of the schools and the cost of Education are unnecessarily increased."¹⁵

From its inception, Le Moniteur Acadien¹⁶ had concerned itself with improving the state of Acadian education. It deplored the apathy shown by many parents and urged a more conscientious treatment of teachers and students.¹⁷ Thus in 1869 and 1870, the newspaper welcomed the government's new determination "to make provision for the education of every child. The children of the poorest in our land should have free access to schools."¹⁸ During the 1870 provincial

14. Ibid., 1869, "Report of the Chief Superintendent," p. 19.

15. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

16. Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac), the first Acadian newspaper, commenced publication in July of 1867. For a comprehensive analysis of the French-language press in the Maritime provinces, see infra, chapter V.

17. See Le Moniteur Acadien, Nov. 27, 1868, p. 2.

18. New Brunswick, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1871. "Speech from the Throne", p. 13.

election, Le Moniteur Acadien endorsed Attorney General George E. King's measure as "une véritable amélioration sur le système actuellement en opération et un grand pas vers le progrès."¹⁹ This newspaper, placing much faith in the generosity of the Protestant majority, did not suspect that educational reforms might endanger the Catholic presence in the schools.²⁰

At this point the government's bill concerned itself with only the principle of a free school system supported by public taxation. On May 5, 1871 the measure became more sinister as far as Catholics were concerned since an amendment (Section 60) stipulated "That all schools conducted under the provisions of this Act shall be non-sectarian."²¹ The Act's final section removed all confusion as to its intentions by repealing all previous Acts (i.e. the Parish School Act of 1858) which were inconsistent with or repugnant to the new law.

In early May, the New Brunswick Assembly, "amidst bachanalian songs, slamming of desks, and other demonstrations of great intelligence and love of learning,"²² passed the

19. Le Moniteur Acadien, Dec. 3, 1869, p. 2.
20. Ibid., July 8, 1870, p. 2.
21. Canada, Sessional Papers, 1873, Vol. VI, No. 44, A1873, p. 17. A readily available copy may be found in Canada, Sessional Papers, 1873, Vol. VI, No. 44, A1873, "Returns and Message Relative ... to the Common Schools in New Brunswick," pp. 4-17.
22. The Morning Freeman (Saint John), May 2, 1871, p. 2.

Common Schools Act.²³ The government ignored the flood of critical Catholic petitions and on January 1, 1872 the Act went into effect. Its object was clearly

the establishment throughout New Brunswick of a well equipped system of Free Public Schools, in which the instruction given shall be open to the children of all, the poor and rich alike; the quality of instruction good enough for all; and the general character of the instruction non-sectarian and national - like the Legislature establishing the system and the Government administering it.²⁴

In order to anchor the non-sectarian character of the schools, the Board of Education soon issued regulations prohibiting the display of any religious symbol either in the classrooms or on the instructor's person. This final act served only to further antagonize an already aroused Catholic minority.

There was no division in New Brunswick, or in Canada, between Irish and French Catholic regarding education; both vehemently opposed any State incursions into this realm. To all Canadians the schools had a responsibility to train the children for future life. To Catholics the schools had an additional duty since they were viewed as an extension of the home. Catholic practice dictated that the parents were responsible for bringing out "au plein épanouissement des

23. 34th Vic., Cap. XXI, 1871. Passed May 17, 1871.

24. New Brunswick, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1873. "Annual Report of the Chief Superintendent of Education, 1872," p. XI.

forces dont le Créateur a déposé en lui le germe."²⁵ As the child grew older it was the parents' right, indeed their duty to choose "des personnes dignes de leur confiance qui se chargent du soin de l'éducation des enfants sous leur direction."²⁶ Invariably this responsibility then fell to the church which established a school system based upon religious principles. A "proper" education had to reveal to the young the means of leading a responsible and Christian life. Schools had to implant a love of God and inculcate a spirit of submission to and respect for all established authority. Religious and moral training, "la base de toute civilisation,"²⁷ were too important to exclude from the schools and consequently the school system itself became too important for the church to surrender its role to the State.

In New Brunswick the State was challenging the Roman Catholic Church's hitherto accepted influence. Though the Maritime religious hierarchy recognized the State's supremacy in most matters, it could not in the field of education:

Les hommes publics donc, lors même qu'ils ne partagent pas entièrement nos croyances, s'ils ont vraiment le sens de leurs responsabilités, s'ils veulent vraiment

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25. J.-A.-D. Sabourin, ptre., Les Parents, l'Eglise et l'Etat dans leurs rapports avec l'école (Montreal, 1921), p. 7.
26. Ibid., p. 10.
27. Le Moniteur Acadien, June 29, 1905, p. 1, "L'Education".

protéger les droits de leurs concitoyens et travailler à leurs véritables intérêts, loin de contrecarrer, devraient seconder l'action de l'Eglise dans toutes les sphères d'éducation, surtout quand il s'agit d'enfants nés de parents catholiques.²⁸

Schools "sans Dieu" were an abomination, hardly better than those which taught a different dogma. "Religion disappears where Catholics lose their schools and have to use those of the governments" wrote Bishop Sweeny of Saint John.²⁹ Once religion was gone, warned the Catholic clergy, chaos reigned:

The most perfect system of education which human wisdom can devise, if severed from the authority of God, or not based on it, will not save us from, but create and multiply fraud, rape, murder and all those domestic, social and civil disorders which are the terror of men and the scourge of nations.³⁰

This could not be permitted in peaceful, devout New Brunswick and the Catholic elite resolved to oppose this new damnable legislation until such time as the government relented.

The Common Schools Act was a harsh blow to all Catholics but it affected none more severely than the Acadian people who had just begun to show an interest in education. Their most promising facility, the Collège St. Joseph, immediately saw the government, whose primary feature was

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28. Sabourin, Les Parents, l'Eglise et l'Etat dans leurs rapports avec l'école, p. 12.
 29. Bishop Sweeny to John Costigan, April 2, 1874. Costigan Papers, Public Archives of Canada (hereafter P.A.C.), Vol. 1.
 30. Rev. James Quinn, A Sermon on Education (St. Stephen, 1875), p. 10.

"la bigoterie et le plus grossier fanatisme ...,"³¹ terminate the \$800 grant upon which the institution depended. The college managed to survive whereas many primary schools serving the mass of the population closed down. With very few exceptions, Acadian parents were neither able nor willing to provide additional funds to offset the government's policy.

If the new legislation was a shock to the Acadians, it was an even greater disappointment to the Irish-Catholic hierarchy. Bishop Sweeny had not anticipated the government's actions. Just three years previous he had concluded a mutually satisfactory arrangement with the Saint John Board of Education by which both the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Charity had been classified as "public school" teachers.³² At that time John Bennett, the chairman of the board, expressed his hope that "the day is near at hand when with your Lordship's good aid ... our Province may have brought to it a similar and equally comprehensive educational measure with that now enjoyed in Nova Scotia."³³ The New Brunswick hierarchy would likely have been amenable to a compromise along the line of the Nova Scotia system since shortly before the Act's implementation Archbishop Connolly

31. Rev. C. Lefebvre to Rameau de Saint-Père, Oct. 21, 1872. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-12.

32. Indeed Nova Scotia and especially Halifax had established a precedent for this system and had proved that it could be successfully employed.

33. J. Bennett to Bishop Sweeny, March 28, 1868. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1897.

of Halifax had sought such a rapprochement. He suggested that since the Saint John School Board had authority over all the city's schools, they might leave the "parents and children free to choose the school they prefer."³⁴ If all the Catholic students "preferred" to congregate in one school, the consequence could be Catholic schools in practice but public schools in theory, "conditions similar to those ... in the city of Halifax."³⁵

But the school trustees were not seeking compromises and soon rejected Connolly's advances.³⁶ Reconciliation being impossible, the two sides rallied their forces in both the province and the country in preparation for a long and acrimonious struggle. In the ensuing parliamentary and legal battles, the "New Brunswick Schools Question" was regarded purely as a religious issue. Just as they were ignored in 1866 by Archbishop Connolly,³⁷ the Acadian or linguistic problem was ignored completely in Fredericton, Montreal and Ottawa between 1870 and 1875 by the politicians and the press. Partially as a result of this and partially

34. Archbishop Connolly to the Chairman and Board of School Trustees, Dec. 8, 1871. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1900.

35. Archbishop Connolly to the editor of the Saint John Globe, Nov. 10, 1871. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1899.

36. See J. Boyd, C. A. Everett, A. Lockhart, School Trustees, to Bishop John Sweeny, Jan. 6, 1872. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1901. The entire exchange contained in footnotes 34 to 36 was also published in The Morning Freeman of Jan. 16, 1872.

37. See supra, chapter III.

due to their own lack of initiative and forcefulness, the small Acadian elite played only a minor role in the five year controversy. Unlike the English-language newspapers or those in Quebec, Le Moniteur Acadien adopted a moderate or cautious approach, rarely indulging in the vindictiveness so common to the era. The only Acadian M.P., Auguste Renaud from Kent, did not seem to make an impression on anyone and, in spite of the schools question, was defeated in the 1872 federal election by Robert Cutler. Instead it was Irish prelates, Irish priests and a solid phalanx of Irish politicians who confronted the government in Fredericton and carried the issue with messianic fervour to the House of Commons in Ottawa and the Privy Council in London. The Acadians were simply swept along in the currents stirred up by those whose interests only partially reflected Acadian concerns.

Shortly after the Common Schools Act was implemented, the Catholics of New Brunswick appealed to the Governor General and to Parliament for redress. They believed themselves protected by the British North America Act and, as Abbé Belcourt wrote, "les ministères de la Puissance interviendront et ne souffriront pas la législation d'un tel pillage de la part d'un fanatisme déhonté."³⁸ Their petitions inundated Ottawa. One, having over 500 signatures including that of Father Camille Lefebvre, admitted that in

38. Abbé Belcourt to Rameau de Saint-Père, June 7, 1872. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-12.

the past Catholics had enjoyed certain "privileges". Nevertheless, they felt the provincial Act should be disallowed since "if allowed to go into operation, [the Act] would destroy or greatly diminish the education privileges which the Catholics of this Province enjoyed at the time of the passing of the British North America Act." Most Catholic parents, it continued, could not afford to support two school systems and since contributions to the public one were mandatory, their children would be doomed "to grow up in ignorance."³⁹ In response, Sir John A. Macdonald enunciated a position which he maintained consistently throughout the debate, and one which later would be confirmed by the Law Officers of the Crown.⁴⁰ He sympathized with the New Brunswick Catholics but felt that their only recourse was through appeals to the local Assembly since education was exclusively within provincial jurisdiction.⁴¹

While the politicians were considering this contentious problem, the New Brunswick Catholics contested two court battles, one before the Supreme Court of New Brunswick and another before the Privy Council in London. In the first case, Ex parte Renaud et al., the court scrutinized the

39. Canada, Sessional Papers, 1873, Vol. VI, No. 44, A1873, pp. 18-19.

40. See infra, n. 44.

41. Canada, Sessional Papers, 1873, Vol. VI, No. 44, A1873, pp. 19-20. "Extract from the Report of the Minister of Justice [John A. Macdonald], dated January 20th, 1872".

Parish School Act of 1858 and concluded that

in nothing pertaining to organization, regulation or government of the schools ... had any class of persons or denomination, nor any individual, any right or privilege to have any particular religious doctrines or tenets exclusively taught, or taught at all in any such school.

If any particular dogma had been taught in the schools, it had been done without legal sanction. "Practice" was unimportant and Chief Justice Ritchie concluded in his 1873 decision that "We must look to the law as it was ... and by that, and that alone, be governed."⁴² A later case, Henry Maher vs. the Town Council of the Town of Portland (a suburb of Saint John), was appealed to the Privy Council but once again the Catholic supplications were rejected (July, 1874). Adhering to the Ritchie precedent, the Justices concluded that the 1858 law did not confer legal rights upon any denomination and it was those "alone ... [which were] intended to be protected by the Federation of the Dominion of Canada."⁴³ These two courts were in fact merely substantiating the caution advised by the Law Officers of the Crown late in 1872:

It is of course quite possible that the new Statute of the Province may work in practice unfavourably ... to the Roman Catholics, but we do not think that ...

42. Ibid., "Judgement of the Supreme Court of New Brunswick", pp. 66-84. See p. 72 and pp. 73-74.
43. D. Argue, "The Separate School Question in New Brunswick" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Carleton University, 1967), p. 156. There is also a transcript in the Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 303, Misc., 1874-1878.

[this] is enough to bring into operation the restraining powers or the powers of appeal to the Governor General in Council, ... [or] the powers of remedial legislation.⁴⁴

As the jurists pondered, the politicians prevaricated. In April of 1872 Auguste Renaud began the debate by calling for the correspondence relative to the Common Schools Act and by denouncing the new law for its denial of established Catholic rights. Since 1843, claimed Renaud, Catholic schools

étaient supportées par l'Etat au même degré que les écoles protestantes ou communes ... au Nouveau Brunswick, nous avons des écoles dissidentes, catholiques, supportées et subventionnées par l'Etat; seulement le mot dissidentes n'étaient pas écrit en toutes lettres dans les statuts.⁴⁵

During this preliminary clash, Timothy Anglin (Saint John), the fiery editor of The Morning Freeman and a Member of Parliament, concurred with Renaud while the Prime Minister and George Etienne Cartier disagreed, stressing instead the right of the provincial Assembly to be unfettered when dealing with education.⁴⁶

On May 20, 1872, John Costigan polarized the House by moving a resolution calling upon the Governor General to disallow the New Brunswick Act. His appeal was supported

44. Canada, Sessional Papers, 1873, Vol. VI, No. 44, A1873, p. 63. "The Law Officers of the Crown to the Earl of Kimberley, Nov. 29, 1872".

45. Le Moniteur Acadien, June 14, 1872. See Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1872, April 29, 1872, column 197.

46. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1872, April 29, 1872, columns 197-206.

by J.-H. Bellerose from Quebec (Laval) but dismissed unequivocally by Cartier who "deemed the motion imprudent and fallacious" although he "did not blame the mover."⁴⁷

As the debate progressed, and became more vindictive, various amendments enlivened the proceedings. The first of these, introduced by John Hamilton Gray (Saint John) on May 22, emphasized the importance of provincial autonomy in this matter and called upon the House of Commons to do nothing.⁴⁸ Shortly afterward, Pierre-J.-O. Chauveau (Quebec City) introduced another amendment asking the Queen to amend the British North America Act so as to protect denominational schools in the Maritime provinces just as they were in Ontario and Quebec.⁴⁹ Chauveau's initiative provoked a bitter debate. A. J. Smith, once the political leader of the Acadians, emphasized the dire consequences of such an amendment and asserted that Parliament could not for long "whip ... New Brunswick into submission." Other New Brunswick M.P.'s, John Wallace from Albert, John Bolton from Charlotte, the Hon. C. Connell from Carleton, generally concurred with Smith while Anglin and Costigan argued desperately for their co-religionists.⁵⁰

John Costigan, the parliamentary leader of the

47. See ibid., May 20, 1872, cols. 706-11.

48. Ibid., May 22, 1872, cols. 758-62.

49. Ibid., May 22, 1872, cols. 762-64.

50. Ibid., A. J. Smith, May 29, 1872, cols. 898-99; J. Bolton, cols. 901-02; C. Connell, cols. 902-03; J. Wallace, col. 906; T. Anglin, cols. 900-01.

Catholics was suspicious of Chauveau's initiative. It was not as definitive as his own motion for disallowance yet it apparently enjoyed the endorsement of the Macdonald government. However the Chauveau amendment was a tacit acceptance of the Prime Minister's premise that New Brunswick Catholics were not protected by existing constitutional guarantees. If the Imperial Government declined to comply with the motion and amend the B.N.A. Act, an entirely possible course, then the minority would be left with nothing.⁵¹ Nevertheless Costigan's supporters prepared to endorse the measure since "it may be better to adopt it than to stay put and get nothing."⁵²

In the interim, the Macdonald government, likely fearing a Protestant backlash, retreated from the aggressive posture of the Chauveau motion. In addition the New Brunswick Assembly proved absolutely intransigent, passing a resolution which flatly rejected Ottawa's initiatives and warned

of the danger involved in the passage of the said Resolution which ... must stand as a precedent of innovation ... fruitful of evil; and in the name of the people of New Brunswick, and invoking the protection of the Constitution, the Executive Council in Committee protest against the passage of such Resolution, and emphatically

51. These apprehensions were publicized by a Montreal ultramontane newspaper, Le Nouveau Monde, May 24, 1872, p. 2.
52. T. Anglin to Bishop Rogers, May 22, 1874. Rogers Correspondence, Archives of the Diocese of Chatham, N. B. Cited in Toner, "The New Brunswick Separate Schools Issue," p. 50.

assert the right of the Legislature of New Brunswick to legislate upon all questions affecting the Education of the country, free from interference by the Parliament of Canada.⁵³

Alarmed by the possible consequences of federal interference in a provincial realm of jurisdiction, the Macdonald government hastily retreated and Chauveau's amendment suffered an inglorious defeat.⁵⁴ Instead the Commons endorsed the Colby amendment which expressed regret at the actions of the New Brunswick Assembly⁵⁵ but which, as Timothy Anglin emphasized, offered only sympathy to the Catholic minority.⁵⁶ A subsequent amendment critical of the government was introduced by Antoine-A. Dorion (Hochelaga) but this was easily defeated, 117 votes to 38.⁵⁷ The House did adopt one further amendment, this one suggested by Alexander Mackenzie, which requested the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown and the Privy Council on the matter.⁵⁸

53. Canada, Sessional Papers, 1873, Vol. VI, No. 44, A1873, pp. 47-48. "Province of New Brunswick, 29 May 1872".
54. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1872, May 29, 1872, col. 903. Chauveau's amendment was defeated on a vote of 127 to 34. See Canada, Journal of the House of Commons, 1872, May 29, 1872, p. 176.
55. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1872, May 29, 1872, col. 906. Journals of the House of Commons, 1872, May 29, 1872, pp. 177-78.
56. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1872, May 29, 1872, cols. 900-01.
57. Ibid., May 29, 1872, col. 907. Journals of the House of Commons, 1872, May 29, 1872, pp. 178-79.
58. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1872, May 29, 1872, cols. 908-09. See *supra*, n. 44. For the motion as it finally passed, incorporating both the Mackenzie and Colby amendments, see Sessional Papers, 1873, Vol. VI, No. 44, A1873, p. 3.

The supporters of Catholic schools were soundly defeated during the 1872 session of Parliament although they remained optimistic. Firstly they expected, mistakenly, the Law Officers of the Crown and the various courts to render decisions favourable to their cause.⁵⁹ Secondly they hoped that the impending federal elections would make the government more amenable⁶⁰ providing the issue was not permitted to fade from public view. To accomplish this, newspapers in Quebec detailed every manoeuvre in New Brunswick and published sordid reports of the imprisoning of Catholic priests. Journalists such as L.-O. David of L'Opinion Publique appealed to the Québécois to support their Catholic compatriots:

Cet acte [the imprisonment of Father Michaud in Saint John] a provoqué des articles à sensation mais on ferait bien mieux de parler moins et d'agir plus. Les gens du Nouveau-Brunswick plus habiles que nous font moins de bruits, mais plus de besogne. Pourquoi n'a-t-on pas pris les moyens d'empêcher ce qui arrive?⁶¹

To maintain the pressure on the government and undeterred by the events of the previous year, the Maritime bishops issued a public circular which reaffirmed their intention to

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59. See Bishop MacKinnon to Bishop Sweeny, Nov. 4, 1872. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1436.2. See also supra, n. 42-44.
60. See infra.
61. L'Opinion Publique (Montreal), Aug. 14, 1873, p. 395, "Un Prêtre Emprisonné".

continue resistance.⁶² Petitions flowed into Ottawa from New Brunswick and Quebec urging Sir John A. Macdonald to "act truly as a Minister of Justice [his emphasis]" and advise the Governor General not to "sanction injustice."⁶³

The same petitioners wrote their Members of Parliament urging an aggressive stance. If the Government refused to alleviate Catholic grievances, "then they ought to be ousted by a vote of want of confidence."⁶⁴ John Costigan, the movement's parliamentary leader, was urged to "Go boldly to the front with your banners of civil and religious liberty and leave consequences to the God of Justice ... whose honour you are promoting." He was their only hope since the political climate in New Brunswick did not permit a solution there:

The Great majority of the inhabitants are for repeal of the law ... [but] the dissenting Ministers individually and collectively are so bigoted ... that they will persuade the people not to go for repeal at the next elections, the no Popery cry is now so furious and extensive as to scare ... the whole of them and to render them blind to truth ... They are as incapable of ... reason in matters

62. Circular signed by the Bishops of Halifax, Arichat, Saint John, Charlottetown, Chatham and Titopolis, Nov. 25, 1873. Copy at C.E.A., "Education Publique au Nouveau Brunswick et Maritimes", file "Question des écoles".

63. Rev. James Quinn, writing on behalf of Bishop Sweeny, to John Costigan, March 31, 1873. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

64. Rev. J. Quinn to J. Costigan, April 8, 1873. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

of religion (of which Education is an important part) as the dog, the ox, or the horse.⁶⁵

Thus John Costigan, various Quebec M.P.'s, and two successive administrations were subjected to two more years of debate on the question, punctuated by the decisions of the various courts. In 1873 the New Brunswick Assembly passed several Acts legalizing assessments for school purposes under the Common Schools Act.⁶⁶ In response Costigan submitted another resolution to the House of Commons urging disallowance. Generally the arguments employed in 1872 were repeated except this time, on May 14, the resolution was passed.⁶⁷ However the Macdonald government refused to advise the Governor General in accordance with the motion, suggesting an appeal to the Privy Council instead, and Costigan was unable to rally the same support on a vote of non-confidence. In the 1874 Session, the new government of Alexander Mackenzie was confronted with a similar motion but at the last moment, the Quebec and New Brunswick religious hierarchies decided to relent for the moment:

In view ... of the fact that the decision of the Judicial Committee of the Privy

65. Ibid.

66. See New Brunswick, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1873, Index II.

67. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1873, May 14, 1873, p. 179.

Council had not been given, His Lordship Bishop Sweeny of Saint John asked me [Costigan] to withdraw my motion which I did....68

The parliamentary aspect of the issue ended in March of 1875 when Costigan proposed yet another motion calling upon the Imperial Government to amend the B.N.A. Act. The manoeuvre at first looked successful. However on March 10 the motion was twice amended by Alexander Mackenzie and Joseph Cauchon, transforming it into an innocuous resolution affirming provincial jurisdiction yet appealing to the Queen to use her influence with the New Brunswick Assembly.⁶⁹ As Sir John A. Macdonald suggested four years previously, the New Brunswick Schools Question would have to be resolved within New Brunswick itself.

The entire controversy exacerbated the relationship between the Quebec and Maritime Catholic hierarchies as well as between the Maritime Catholics, including the Acadians, and their Quebec co-religionists or co-linguists. Throughout

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68. Three page review of the New Brunswick Schools Question written by John Costigan, n.d. Copy in Robidoux Papers, C.E.A. 4.3-13.
69. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1875, March 10, 1875, pp. 609-34. Mackenzie's amendment asserted that any change in the B.N.A. Act which encroached upon provincial jurisdiction "would be inexpedient and fraught with danger to the autonomy of each of the Provinces" Cauchon's amendment, seconded by Edward Blake, requested the Queen "to use her influence with the New Brunswick Assembly to gain changes in the school legislation which would satisfy the province's Catholics. See Canada, Journals of the House of Commons, 1875, Vol. IX, March 10-11, 1875, pp. 197-202.

71. See supra, Chapter III.

the struggle the Maritime bishops repeatedly posed the question as to why "in this country of equal rights ... the Catholic minority in Ontario or the Protestant minority in Quebec should enjoy any legal privileges denied to us as citizens of the same Dominion."⁷⁰ The answer however was clear - the governments in Quebec and Ontario had, prior to 1867, guaranteed their minorities denominational schools and these guarantees were then entrenched in the B.N.A. Act. The Maritime governments had been less generous. During the negotiations leading to Confederation, Archbishop Connolly of Halifax had attempted to gain these guarantees for his flock but the Quebec delegates had frustrated his efforts.⁷¹ In 1866 Quebec abrogated any responsibility it had for its Maritime brethren, preferring a secure Quebec to religious and linguistic equality in all of Canada. Consequently the Acadians and their bishops blamed Quebec for the troubles of 1871 to 1875. Expressing this resentment, Bishop Rogers at one point tersely wrote the Archbishop of Quebec:

Would your Grace and suffragan Bishops kindly take such action respecting [the] New Brunswick school law as you deem suitable ... on behalf of [the] Catholic minority here. We respectfully claim such fraternal sympathy from the Province of Quebec, because the objections of the

70. Pastoral Letter of the Archbishop and Bishops of the Archdiocese of Halifax, Jan. 6, 1874. Copy in the Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

71. See supra, chapter III.

Quebec delegates in London ... defeated the Archbishop of Halifax's efforts to have this question settled by that Act of Confederation.⁷²

At the beginning of the crisis in 1871 the Acadians expected Quebec to try to make amends for past neglect. Le Moniteur Acadien, edited by a Québécois and anxious to cement the ties between the two cultures, confidently anticipated the "appui actif de nos co-religionnaires de Québec" in the affair.⁷³ The Quebec press encouraged this optimism; La Minerve of Montreal for example, a Conservative newspaper, wrote that "nous ne sommes pas prêt à le laisser battre en brèche au Nouveau-Brunswick sans élever la voix et demander le redressement des griefs des catholiques."⁷⁴ Reprinting articles from La Minerve, Le Nouveau Monde (Montreal) and the Gazette des Campagnes (Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière, Kamouraska), Le Moniteur Acadien assured its readers that Quebec opinion "réprouvent unanimement l'iniquité et l'injustice dont leurs co-religionnaires d'en bas sont victimes."⁷⁵

But Ferdinand Robidoux and Le Moniteur Acadien, like La Minerve, were Conservative in politics, an encumbrance

72. Bishop Rogers to Archbishop Taschereau, May 1873. Rogers Correspondence, Archives of the Diocese of Chatham. Cited in Toner, "The New Brunswick Separate Schools Issue," p. 75.

73. Le Moniteur Acadien, July 21, 1871, p. 2.

74. La Minerve, n.d., "Les Droits Des Minorités". Reprinted in Le Moniteur Acadien, July 28, 1871, p. 2.

75. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 4, 1871, p. 2.

which restricted their approach to the question. When Timothy Anglin's Morning Freeman (Saint John) cited certain "authoritative sources" as saying that Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir George Cartier were not planning to disallow the Common Schools Act, Le Moniteur Acadien expressed scepticism:

Pour notre part nous ne croyons rien à ce bruit, surtout en tant que Sir George y est concerné, car il nous repugnera toujours d'imputer au chef bas-canadienne une telle intention de laisser opprimer des co-religionnaires en violation directe de la constitution du pays.⁷⁶

The Acadians were soon disappointed. The Prime Minister sincerely sympathized with the Catholic minority - Archbishop Connolly felt that his and Macdonald's views were "identical"⁷⁷ - but any tampering with the constitution at this time would have discredited the federal structure in the entire country and especially in volatile Quebec. Le Moniteur Acadien, echoing La Minerve, rationalized Macdonald's obstinacy and only mildly rebuked him for being more concerned with the law than with justice!⁷⁸

If the Acadians expected more of Sir George E. Cartier, also a Catholic and a French Canadian, they would be disappointed by his equally legalistic approach. Although

76. Ibid., Feb. 2, 1872, p. 2.

77. Archbishop Connolly to Sir John A. Macdonald, Sept. 30, 1873. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 345, pp. 158358-65.

78. La Minerve, n.d., "Les Catholiques du N.-B.". Reprinted in Le Moniteur Acadien, Feb. 16, 1871, p. 3.

Cartier probably sympathized with them, he was primarily a politician of the Macdonald style, seeking the possible where the ideal was unattainable. He was not independent of the church - no public figure in Quebec could be - but overriding this was his basic conservatism and firm belief in the law. The constitution had been promulgated and now was inalterable, almost sacrosanct.

During the successive debates on the schools question, Cartier's task was onerous. Macdonald, as during the Confederation debates, could rally his Protestant following readily. Cartier meanwhile had to keep in line the many Quebec M.P.'s who sympathized with the plight of the New Brunswick Catholics. In Parliament, Cartier spoke more to his own party than to the opposition, warning of the dangers of disallowance. With such a precedent established, the Protestant majority might try to amend the rights of the Catholic majority in Quebec. The House of Commons, he continued with impeccable logic, could not alter provincial legislation which was clearly intra vires. If it did, Quebec itself might feel the consequences:

... if the motion was right with regard to the Catholic minority of New Brunswick, the Protestant minority of Lower Canada might come and say 'Repeal the last education law passed in Quebec'.⁷⁹

In a legalistic sense, and Cartier was a lawyer, he was of course correct. Even Edward Blake, perhaps the keenest

79. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1872, May 20, 1872, cols. 706-07.

legal mind in the House, concurred in Cartier's fears:

the rights and interests of the Provinces would not be worth the paper on which the constitution was written if it could be said that all rights could, as a matter of course, be altered or changed on addresses alone ... no more dangerous error could be fallen into. The proper mode would be ... to ask the Local Government to take action.⁸⁰

But the Catholics of New Brunswick found no solace in these arguments, regardless of their validity. There remained for them and for large segments of the Quebec electorate only a deep feeling of disappointment in Cartier.

Quebec's second ranking Minister in Ottawa was Hector Langevin and it was to him that Bishop Sweeny, Father Lefebvre and others appealed for aid. Ask him, Lefebvre wrote Pascal Poirier, to use his "influence auprès du gouvernement de Frédéricton afin de l'éviter à traiter les catholiques de N.-B. avec plus de justice."⁸¹ Langevin was virtually born and bred a conservative, coming from a prominent "family which had begun to cooperate with the English almost before the ink on the treaty had dried."⁸² Quebec and Canadian society had been generous to Hector Langevin's generation; he was a Cabinet Minister, a brother was a bishop, another a vicar general, and a third a clerk in the Senate. By background as well as politics, Langevin

80. Ibid., May 29, 1872, cols. 904-06.

81. Rev. C. Lefebvre to P. Poirier, Feb. 15, 1873. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-1.

82. B. Fraser, "The Political Career of Sir Hector Louis Langevin," C.H.R., XLII, No. 2 (June, 1961), p. 93.

sought to maintain the status quo, valuing Quebec's security above all other concerns. Always in the shadow of other, more flamboyant French Canadian politicians, Langevin worked quietly but diligently to ensure the continued success of the Conservative Party in Quebec because it was under this banner that French Canada's future lay secure. Langevin would never permit the constitution to be tampered with because "c'est le palladium de nos libertés provinciales. Ceux qui par son vote y portera atteinte portera dans l'histoire une responsabilité que je n'entends pas assumer."⁸³

Langevin's image is that of a capable though uninspiring administrator, lacking the prestige of Cartier, the dynamism of Mercier, or the popular appeal of Chapleau. Langevin revealed his talents in the backroom, in caucus, and to him fell the task of keeping the Quebec M.P.'s in line on successive critical motions. In 1873 Cléophas Beausoleil, in Ottawa for the ultramontane Nouveau Monde, discovered that Langevin, while still enjoying the confidence of Bishop Sweeny, was working against "Catholic interests". He was successfully convincing those Quebec members who in 1872 had voted for disallowance, that the very future of the Party, of Canada, and of Quebec depended upon the defeat of the latest Costigan motion.⁸⁴ Langevin's effectiveness was undermining Quebec's resolve to support

83. H. Langevin to J. Langevin, June 22, 1873.
Cited in Désilets, Hector-Louis Langevin, p. 238.

84. See supra, n. 67.

the Acadian and Irish Catholic minority:

Il est évident que ... dans quinze jours des catholiques de Québec auront prouvé que pour eux il est beaucoup plus important de sauver le ministère ... que de sauvegarder les intérêts de leur coreligionnaires et le grand principe de la liberté de l'Eglise.⁸⁵

Langevin had managed to avoid a serious division in the party's ranks.

At particular moments the Quebec M.P.'s seemed ready to challenge the government's dominance. In May of 1873 for example, they ignored Macdonald's urgings and voted for disallowance. However the pro-minority M.P.'s suffered from an absence of effective leadership. John Costigan tried to direct them into a forceful course but his efforts were on occasion impeded by an indecisive Bishop Sweeny. In April of 1873, Costigan was bitter about Sweeny's having ignored him. He reminded the prelate that he "was to be advised [his emphasis] as to your final determination."

Costigan then added

I have seen Mr. Langevin who informed me that your Lordship did not desire me to proceed any further at present but in a question of such importance I do not feel justified upon any other than your [his emphasis] Lordship's advice and instructions.⁸⁶

85. C. Beausoleil to Alphonse Desjardins, April 14, 1873. For text of letter, see L. Groulx, ed., "Correspondance Autour De La Question Scolaire Du Nouveau Brunswick, 1873," *Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française* (hereafter R.H.A.F.), IV, No. 2 (September, 1950), p. 271.
86. John Costigan to Bishop Sweeny, April 28, 1874. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

During the 1874 session of Parliament, Costigan, intending to introduce another resolution, arranged for a Quebec M.P. to amend it so as to obtain an "act establishing separate schools in N. B. as in Quebec and Ontario."⁸⁷ Costigan's initiative depended upon another Quebec M.P., Alphonse Desjardins, the editor of Le Nouveau Monde. Desjardins wished to "come out pretty strong on the question" but would do nothing until he had conferred with Bishop Bourget and determined "with him on some line and policy to be pursued." Bourget meanwhile, Costigan assured Sweeny, "will be governed entirely on your Lordship's wishes." Costigan added that something dramatic had to be obtained during this session of Parliament because

a large number of Catholics, particularly among the French, will get discouraged if nothing is done ... I speak from what I hear ... and should any considerable portion of the Catholics accept the present law, I believe it would be almost impossible to obtain separate schools after.⁸⁸

Sweeny recognized the importance of French Canadian support⁸⁹ but nevertheless ignored Costigan's sage advice and, at the last moment, decided to await the judgement of the Privy Council before proceeding in Ottawa. Perhaps he expected the courts to see the justice of the Catholic cause but,

87. John Costigan to Bishop Sweeny, May 3, 1874. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.
88. Ibid.
89. Bishop Sweeny to John Costigan, May 7, 1874. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

employing hindsight, it was obvious that he made the wrong choice. Sweeny failed to force the issue at the most propitious time.

Even if Sweeny had been more decisive, the faithfulness of the French Canadian M.P.'s was doubtful. Louis-F.

Masson,⁹⁰ the deputy from Terrebonne who appeared steadfast in his support of denominational schools, had doubts about the efficacy of Parliament dealing with the issue. Sounding like John A. Macdonald himself, Masson wrote Sweeny that

it was in the interests of the Catholics of New Brunswick to be prudent, and not uselessly irritate the Protestant feeling of that Province by any further attempt to coerce the majority by means of the Federal Parliament until you had acquired the conviction that nothing could be expected from the local government.⁹¹

The bulk of the French Canadian M.P.'s were equally irresolute. First and foremost they were politicians aligned mainly with the Conservative Party to which they owed their support and, in many cases, their positions - party labels were indeed still important in Quebec. Claude Beausoleil of Le Nouveau Monde recognized this problem and added that in order to obtain "toutes les concessions que Langevin leur a refusées," most would have to desert the

90. L.-F.-R. Masson (1833-1903) had a distinguished public career in Quebec serving as an M.P. (1867-1882), a Cabinet Minister (1878-1880), a Senator (1882-1887 and 1890-1903) and Lieutenant-Governor of Quebec (1884-1887).

91. L.-F.-R. Masson to Bishop Sweeny, March 17, ? (probably 1873). Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1912.

Conservative Party.⁹² This they were not willing to do. In May of that year, Sweeny found himself stymied by the same reticence. After organizing a caucus of Conservative M.P.'s from Quebec, he presented a petition for their signature demanding disallowance of the most recent New Brunswick legislation affecting Catholic ratepayers.⁹³ If the government did not comply, the M.P.'s were to threaten to side with the Opposition on a vote of non-confidence. However Sweeny's manoeuver encountered unanticipated opposition - MM. Baby, Ross, Ryan, Fortin and even Masson,⁹⁴ all supposedly strong remedialists, announced that they did not intend to compromise their party's leadership. The result was a disillusioned Sweeny, who, as Beausoleil reported,

... quitta la ville disant qu'il était venu chercher du secours et non point semer la division parmi les Catholiques; que la province de Québec était le seul secours humain sur lequel il avait cru pouvoir compter et que si elle l'abandonnait il se confierait à lui seul.

Sweeny and Beausoleil were furious with the Quebec M.P.'s and especially their mentor, Hector Langevin:

Voilà donc les hommes à qui le clergé a eu confiance, qui ont vécu de la

92. C. Beausoleil to A. Desjardins, March 10, 1873. Published in Groulx, "Correspondance Autour De La Question Scolaire Du Nouveau Brunswick," p. 274.

93. See supra, n. 66.

94. Louis-F. Baby, M.P. for Joliette, 1872-1880; John J. Ross, M.P. for Champlain, 1867-1874; M.-P. Ryan, M.P. for Montreal West, 1868-1874; Pierre Fortin, M.P. for Gaspé, 1867-1874 and 1878-1887.

religion, qui ont exploité l'influence ecclésiastique et qui en retour de vingt ans de services et de pouvoir ne savent que reculer et trahir les intérêts dont ils se disaient les conservateurs; voilà des hommes que le clergé a élus et qu'il élira encore sans doute dans cinq ans en récompense de leur zèle et de leur dévouement religieux.⁹⁵

Political allegiance had proven to be the most powerful inspiration of all, something the Rev. James Quinn, a confidant of Sweeny's, recognized when Catholic educational rights were irrevocably lost on the political level in 1875; "some Catholic members would sooner see Catholics forever deprived of their rights ... than see governments embarrassed."⁹⁶

Since the party whips were so important, the Acadian and Irish Catholics attempted to apply political pressure, hoping to force a reconsideration of the problem. The Quebec press, largely sympathetic to the Catholic minority, could best exert this pressure. However the province's newspapers were divided according to the political or politico-religious philosophy of their owners. Most of the Quebec journals were affiliated with one of the major political parties and hence endorsed approaches consistent with that affiliation. Since both the Liberals and the Conservatives enjoyed power during the five-year history of

95. C. Beausoleil to A. Desjardins, May 12, 1873. Published in Groulx, "Correspondance Autour De La Question Scolaire Du Nouveau-Brunswick," pp. 569-70.

96. Rev. J. Quinn to John Costigan, March 19, 1875. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

the schools question, the editors, except during the election campaigns of 1872 and 1874, were basically conservative. They recognized the difficulties and dangers inherent in this sort of controversy and sought to remove the question from the realm of public passion. Any efficacious compromise was acceptable to them, hardly the support expected by the Acadians of their Canadian compatriots.

In contrast to the partizan press, Le Nouveau Monde, a Montreal weekly, was a fervent defender of Catholic rights. Edited by Alphonse Desjardins, a confidant of Mgr. Bourget, and by F.-X. Trudel, later a leading "Castor", this newspaper adhered to a rigidly ultramontane position in all religious and political matters. Appealing to a substantial audience in Quebec⁹⁷ it asserted that the Catholic Church, even in predominantly Protestant New Brunswick, had rights which transcended those of the State. These superior rights included the field of education and hence it became the most adamant of the Quebec journals on the schools question.

This self-proclaimed "Journal Catholique" concerned

97. Le Nouveau Monde (also known as Le Monde Canadien) had a circulation of over 14,000 by the end of the century. The circulation of L'Opinion Publique was 12,000 in 1874; of La Minerve was 4,500 in 1892; of Le Courrier was less than 1,000 in 1892. See J. Hamelin & A. Beaulieu, eds., Les Journaux Du Québec (Quebec, 1965), p. 118, p. 132, p. 116 and p. 185 respectively. For a study of the philosophy of Le Nouveau Monde, see Gérard Bouchard, "Apogée et déclin de l'idéologie à travers le journal le Nouveau Monde, 1867-1900," in Idéologies Au Canada Français, 1850-1900, ed. by F. Dumont, J.-P. Montminy, and J. Hamelin (Quebec, 1971), pp. 117-49.

itself with the schools "sans Dieu" issue earlier than the other Quebec newspapers, in April of 1871, and immediately assured the New Brunswick minority of "toutes les sympathies des catholiques du Canada entier."⁹⁸ It claimed that the Common Schools Act subjected Catholics to double taxation and was "une injustice monstrueuse." The Act was "une violation directe de la constitution" since, the editors asserted, Section 93 of the B.N.A. Act protected Roman Catholics in all parts of Canada. When Sir John A. Macdonald rejected this assertion in the House of Commons, Le Nouveau Monde responded angrily, claiming that he was hiding behind legal technicalities in order to appease Protestant fanaticism. The journal then expressed its astonishment that several Quebec ministers and M.P.'s could have supported the Prime Minister.⁹⁹

Regretting that this issue had become one of Party rather than of principle,¹⁰⁰ Le Nouveau Monde, by May of 1872, attacked Sir George Cartier for his fallacious position, dismissing his arguments as weak and inconsequential. Cartier was unfavourably compared with Bellerose and Masson and, at one point, Chauveau, the true defenders of the French faith in Canada. The latter were

les représentants des vrais principes
conservateurs et ils savent, quand les
principes sont en jeu, tout sacrifier

98. Le Nouveau Monde, April 18, 1871, p. 1.

99. Ibid., Feb. 6, 1872, p. 1.

100. Ibid., May 28, 1872, p. 1.

pour leur maintien, sachant qu'ils importent plus à la société que n'importe quel homme ou quel parti.¹⁰¹

Following the defeat of Costigan's efforts in May of 1872, the ultramontane press set out to punish those responsible in the coming elections.¹⁰² With some sadness, Le Nouveau Monde attacked Cartier, hoping that his defeat would frighten others:

Quand nous nous rappelons la longue carrière politique de Sir George Cartier ... nous regrettons d'envisager la triste fin vers laquelle il s'obstine à courir.

Si, fidèle au drapeau du parti conservateur, il eut marché droit dans la voie droite, s'il eut adhéré jusqu'au bout aux principes de la nationalité française et du catholicisme dont il s'était constitué le champion, il aurait pu continuer encore de longues années à conduire les affaires du pays et à jouir la considération et de la confiance de ses concitoyens.

Mais depuis dix ans, il était engagé dans les luttes dangereuses contre l'autorité épiscopale et son sort sera celui de tous ceux qui veulent nuire à la liberté du sacerdoce et mettre la main sur l'Eglise de Dieu

Admittedly the newspaper condemned Cartier for his alliance with the Sulpicians against Bishop Bourget but still his main fault had been that

Il a préféré nous sacrifier, nous catholiques, nous canadiens, à la popularité de Sir John; il a été entraîné par l'appât du pouvoir ... [By appeasing Protestant fanaticism] il s'est moqué des canadiens qu'il a crus

101. Ibid., May 23, 1872, p. 1.

102. See ibid., May 27, 1872, p. 2, "La Vraie Question".

106. Ibid., May 30, 1872, p. 201.

assez moutons pour le suivre, les yeux fermés, même après une trahison.¹⁰³

Le Nouveau Monde continued in this vein throughout the election campaign.

Situated between the messianic fervour of the ultramontane press and the dogmatic partizanship of other newspapers, there were several independent journals, the most important of which was a Montreal weekly, L'Opinion Publique. Edited by L.-O. David,¹⁰⁴ a liberal-nationalist, this journal remarked upon the schools question only after it had been raised in the House of Commons. Avoiding polemic, the journal dissected the differing approaches of Cartier and Bellerose, Macdonald and Costigan.¹⁰⁵ Though it supported Chauveau's initiative, L'Opinion Publique recognized its impracticability:

[The motion is] une belle diversion, un mouvement de flanc bien combiné pour échapper aux dangers de la motion Costigan. On satisferait par là à toutes les exigences. Les Catholiques du Nouveau-Brunswick compteraient obtenir justice; ceux du Bas-Canada auraient l'espoir de voir cette question réglée suivant leur conscience. Mais la majorité protestante du Nouveau-Brunswick, qui la forcera à rappeler son acte de la dernière session?¹⁰⁶

103. Ibid., June 1, 1872, p. 1, "La Liberté des Ecoles".

104. Laurent-O. David (1840-1926) was an important Quebec journalist who founded both L'Opinion Publique and Le Bien Publique. He was a Quebec Liberal M.L.A. from 1886-1890 and a Canadian Senator from 1903 until his death in 1926.

105. L'Opinion Publique, May 9, 1872, p. 225.

106. Ibid., May 30, 1872, p. 261.

L'Opinion Publique was refreshingly calm in its approach to the problem. It regretted that such a vital issue had become politicized. The law was "injuste, inique, athée et violente-t-elle la conscience catholique" and the journal condemned the "tyranneaux imbéciles" who had imposed it upon the New Brunswick minority. However most politicians in Quebec and in Ottawa agreed on this; the differences lay in the resolution of the problem. Other than requesting the Queen's intervention, the House of Commons had witnessed three different approaches - disallow the legislation (Costigan motion), revise the constitution (Chauveau amendment), or finally to seek a judicial interpretation of the Act and consequently postpone the issue (Mackenzie amendment). Similarly there were two types of solutions, the ideal and the possible, and it was the latter which L'Opinion Publique sought, giving up on the former since "En politique on compte avec les passions et les faiblesses des hommes."¹⁰⁷

Initially the Conservative press in Quebec, of which La Minerve (Montreal) was the leader, was able to assume a position which supported the Catholic minority in New Brunswick. Although uncertain of its facts - it claimed that the Parish School Law was passed in 1855 - La Minerve nevertheless maintained that Catholic schools had been legally recognized:

107. Ibid., June 6, 1872, pp. 273-74.

... on trouve ... des écoles catholiques romaines ou ... des écoles françaises en pleine activité, recevant des octrois du gouvernement, surveillées même par le gouvernement, mais n'existant pas néanmoins en vertu d'une loi, appuyées par le bon sens public et l'opinion libérale de peuple représenté par ses mandataires.

Even if they had not been legally sanctioned, Sir John A. Macdonald was still wrong to assume such an ungenerous approach to the problem.¹⁰⁸

However this independent position ended once the Liberal and ultramontane parties seemed to be profiting from the affair. Seeking to calm the mounting ultramontane pressure, Hector Langevin appealed to his brother, the Bishop of Rimouski,¹⁰⁹ for political support. The bishop responded vigourously, entering the fray against the bishops of Montreal and Trois-Rivières. Early in July the Conservative press publicized a strongly-worded circular which Mgr. Langevin had distributed to the priests in his diocese:

Aujourd'hui, à l'approche de nouvelles élections, les mêmes journaux, s'intitulant la presse catholique [his emphasis] à l'exclusion de tous autres, prétendent encore dicter aux catholiques du pays entier la conduite qu'ils auront à y tenir

....
Que la constitutionalité du dit [N.B.] Act, et l'à propos de provoquer

108. La Minerve, April 24, 1872, p. 2, "Correspondance parlementaire".

109. See Désilets, Hector-Louis Langevin, pp, 241-42.

l'intervention du Parlement Impérial ... sont du nombre des questions libres au point de vue de la conscience, et que nos Législateurs catholiques pouvaient, sans blesser les principes religieux, voter dans un sens ou dans l'autre.¹¹⁰

Shortly afterward, Le Nouveau Monde consulted a Catholic theologian in Rome, Mgr. De Angelis, on the issue and interpreted his nebulous opinion to mean that all those who had not supported the Costigan-Chauveau-Dorion motions "se trouvaient par le fait condamnés par l'église."¹¹¹ This provoked Archbishop Taschereau of Quebec into angrily issuing a circular of his own:

Je crois devoir protester contre une pareille exagération qui renverse toutes les notions de la hiérarchie ecclésiastique, en donnant à un théologien ... une autorité égale à celle du Souverain Pontife.¹¹²

Taschereau also confirmed that while all Catholics must condemn the New Brunswick legislation, each remained free to choose the means of reparation which to him seemed most efficacious, keeping in mind "la paix religieuse du pays."¹¹³

110. Le Courrier du Canada, July 17, 1872, "Circulaire au clergé".

111. Circular Letter of Bishop Jean Langevin, July 1, 1872. Printed in La Minerve, July 17, 1872, and then in Le Nouveau Monde and L'Opinion Publique, July 25, 1872, p. 349.

112. Mgr. E. Taschereau, "Circulaire au clergé", July 18, 1872. In H. Têtu et C.-O. Gagnon, Mandements, lettres pastorales, et circulaires des évêques de Québec, I, p. 118. Cited in Désilets, Hector-Louis Langevin, p. 243.

113. Le Nouveau Monde, July 24, 1872, p. 1, "La Circulaire de Mgr. L'Archévêque de Québec".

Faced with such opposition, the Bishop of Montreal, Ignace Bourget, and subsequently Le Nouveau Monde, retracted momentarily from their righteous rigidity. "Soyens prudent" advised Bourget,¹¹⁴ likely fearing the result of an untrammelled anti-Conservative swing in Quebec. The Liberals, still thought of as "Les Rouges", might be even less receptive to clerical opinion than the Macdonalds, Cartiers and Langevins of the Tory party. Nevertheless, in a more moderate tone, the ultramontane press continued to urge remedial action on the government. Their goal was not to alter the constitution, claimed Le Nouveau Monde, but to make it better conform to the generous spirit evident in 1866-67. In order to achieve this end, it urged the Quebec M.P.'s to be aggressive - "Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra, telle est la conseil de la sagesse".¹¹⁵

Meanwhile the Conservative press had become much more adamant in its defense of the government. Certain aspects of the Common Schools Act were indeed praiseworthy, wrote La Minerve.¹¹⁶ Those Quebec M.P.'s who had not deserted the government on various motions were to be praised; Quebec's status in Ottawa could be protected only "Si nous tirons ensemble" behind one party or one strong figure like Cartier. Without this sense of loyalty, "les organisations

114. L'Opinion Publique, Aug. 1, 1872, p. 361, "La Question des Ecoles".

115. Le Nouveau Monde, March 12, 1875, p. 1, "Lettres Parlementaires".

116. La Minerve, Oct. 31, 1872, p. 2, "Le Reglement des Ecoles"

politiques sont absolument impossible."¹¹⁷ Cartier and Langevin had been confronted with Protestant intransigence led by Leonard Tilley and could not be blamed for their actions:

Du moment où les députés protestants mettent de côté les intérêts de partis pour s'unir contre eux [Cartier and Langevin] il est évident qu'ils ne peuvent plus rien. Ils ne peuvent alors que songer à couvrir leur retraite.

Their only option would have been to resign, leaving Quebec leaderless and provoking "une agitation générale, des troubles par tout le pays, puis l'isolement de notre province."¹¹⁸

According to another Quebec newspaper, Le Journal de Québec (Quebec), the House of Commons could not legitimately interfere in the schools question and consequently "il fallait donc accepter le fait accompli ... les députés des Communes ne sont aucunement responsables de cette injustice et ... ne sont tenus de la réparer." Cartier's arguments for non-intervention, it continued, were absolutely correct since Quebec itself had

bien des institutions qui ne sont pas de goût de la majorité fédérale ... [French Canadians must be] assez sages pour respecter dans les autres provinces ce que nous ne voudrions pas voir attaquer chez nous. Notre situation particulier dans la confédération nous fait un devoir de pratiquer la non-intervention, afin qu'on la pratique à notre égard.¹¹⁹

117. Ibid., May 27, 1872, p.2, "Correspondance Parlementaire".

118. Ibid., June 3, 1872, p. 2, "Sont-Ils Traitres".

119. Le Journal de Québec, n.d. Reprinted in L'Opinion Publique, June 20, 1872, p. 297, "Les Ecoles Du N.-B."

As in 1866,¹²⁰ the Quebec representatives had to ensure the security of their own "patrie" even if that meant deserting the Acadian or Catholic minority in another province.

Quite obviously the Quebec newspapers, taken as a whole, had not pressured the government in any sustained manner, preferring political allegiance to the protection of a Catholic minority. This is confirmed by the results of the 1872 election even though several of the contests were fiercely waged and even though the Conservative Party did lose nine seats.¹²¹ Two favourites of Le Nouveau Monde, A. B. Routhier in Kamouraska and P. O. Trudel in Champlain were defeated. Chauveau swamped his opponent in Quebec City as did Joseph Cauchon and Thomas McGreevy. On the other side of the question, Hector Langevin, vilified by the ultramontane press and facing opposition for the first time since 1864, won Dorchester with a respectable majority of 328.¹²² The one major victim of the campaign, and his defeat was by no means due entirely to the schools question,

120. See supra, chapter III regarding Confederation itself.

121. One cannot underestimate the importance of other issues when considering the deterioration of Conservative support. Still the government won thirty-eight of sixty-five seats in 1872 as compared with forty-seven of sixty-four seats in 1867 (no election in Kamouraska). See J. M. Beck, Pendulum of Power, Canada's Federal Elections (Scarborough, 1968), pp. 12-21.

122. Le Courrier du Canada (Quebec), Aug. 2, 1872. For a complete list of election results, see Canada, Journals of the House of Commons, 1873, Vol. VI, "Return of the Members Chosen to serve in the House of Commons of Canada", pp. XII-XX.

was George Etienne Cartier. In all it was apparent that the Quebec public was somewhat less concerned than Le Nouveau Monde with New Brunswick's Acadian or Irish Catholic minority.

If the Quebec public proved irresolute, so too did another group which should have been more aloof from the government and more determined in its stand - the religious hierarchy of Quebec. The bishops consistently promised support; on behalf of Bishop Bourget, Rev. Lamarche wrote Bishop Sweeny that "Il nous semble impossible que Dieu ne bénisse point vos efforts. Un jour ou l'autre vous triompherez." He also placed Alphonse Desjardins and Le Nouveau Monde at the disposal of New Brunswick Catholics.¹²³ Acadian travellers such as Father Richard always seemed to find in the episcopal palaces of Quebec "beaucoup de sympathie".¹²⁴

But in truth, the New Brunswick Catholics got little from Quebec's bishops. During the election of 1872, the Ministerialists were in serious trouble owing to the interpretation given by Mgr. De Angelis to Le Nouveau Monde. They were saved by the timely intervention of Archbishop Taschereau and Bishop Jean Langevin.¹²⁵ In May of 1873, the House of Commons approved a motion calling for the disallowance of new "anti-Catholic" legislation passed by New Brunswick.

123. Rev. Lamarche to Bishop Sweeny, Feb. 25, 1875.
Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1380.

124. Rev. M.-F. Richard to Bishop James Rogers, May 8, 1875. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1875-76".

125. See supra, n. 110-113.

When the Macdonald government refused to recommend such a course to the Governor General, it almost invited denunciations from the Quebec M.P.'s and episcopacy. These never came however. The Quebec bishops could criticize the government but never to such an extent that a pliable Conservative administration might be replaced by a less sympathetic, Ontario-dominated Liberal administration. Bishop Rogers of Chatham later confirmed that his Quebec colleagues "while sympathizing with us and disposed to help us, were unwilling that the Government be overturned on that question." The Quebec bishops were also unwilling to intervene too openly in the affairs of another ecclesiastical and political province, fearing that "such action might excite a fanatical counteraction injurious to the peace and harmony among citizens especially in the Maritime Provinces" but also in Ontario where any backlash would affect Quebec itself.¹²⁶ Much like the politicians of the day, the bishops were unwilling to expand their realm of responsibility and the very close alliance, in sentiment and in blood, between the Macdonald Conservatives and the hierarchy of Quebec was reconfirmed, leaving the Catholics of New Brunswick with nothing other than pious pronouncements.

Yet the Quebec bishops cannot be severely censured for their inaction, prudence, and politicization since the

126. Bishop Rogers, Circular, March 19, 1891. Reprinted in Toner, "The New Brunswick Separate Schools Issue," p. 83.

130. See *supra*, chapter III.

Maritime bishops themselves proved inept when dealing with Ottawa. Sweeny was often ambivalent and unwilling to press his advantage.¹²⁷ Rogers, perhaps because of his "junior" status in the hierarchy, never seemed directly involved. The third important figure, Archbishop Connolly of Halifax, was too friendly with the administration to be forceful, urging only "Quiet and friendly and yet unremitting agitation."¹²⁸ His one complaint "against the Ottawa government is that you appointed such a brainless and raving bigot as [Lemuel A.] Wilmot to be Governor [of N.B.]."¹²⁹ Obviously this sort of pressure would not produce a settlement in Ottawa.

The Acadians, largely excluded from the intricate politics surrounding the affair, soon began to overlook Quebec's disappointing behaviour and placed the blame on selected Anglo-Protestant politicians such as Leonard Tilley or Albert Smith. Though Smith had once commanded a loyal Acadian vote,¹³⁰ during the schools question he lost this support by aligning himself with the Protestant majority and the Conservative government in Ottawa. Another culprit was T. H. Rand whom the provincial government had appointed

127. See supra, n. 68.

128. Archbishop Connolly to Bishop Sweeny, Sept. 30, 1873. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1438.

129. Archbishop Connolly to John A. Macdonald, Sept. 30, 1873. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 345, pp. 158358-65.

130. See supra, chapter III.

as the first Chief Superintendent of Education. Rand had held a similar position in Nova Scotia after 1864. Now having been expelled from there "pour son fanatisme antireligieux,"¹³¹ he was thought to be, along with Wilmot, the main obstacle to any compromise. "His bigotry and illiberality towards everything Catholic" had been tempered in Nova Scotia, wrote Bishop MacKinnon (Arichat), by the popularity of Archbishop Connolly but in New Brunswick his prejudices "have been allowed their full sway."¹³² The role of Quebec meanwhile, hardly memorable and never completely forgotten, was soon papered over by the Acadian elite in an attempt to solidify the ties between French Canadian and Acadian.

In spite of all the controversy, the New Brunswick government after 1871 was determined that the Common Schools Act be implemented in full. In fact the administration was quite satisfied with the operation of the Act - there was only a small decrease in the absolute number of schools operating (910 in 1871 and 887 in 1872) providing "a striking testimony of the general acceptability of our present Free School System considering the opposition of one of the province's major denominations."¹³³ Enrolment

131. Abbé Lionel Groulx, L'Enseignement Français Au Canada, II, Les Ecoles Des Minorités (Montréal, 1935), p. 29.

132. Bishop C. F. MacKinnon to Bishop Sweeny, March 6, 1872. Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 1436.1.

133. N. B., Journal of the House of Assembly, 1873. "Report of the Chief Superintendent of Education, 1872", p. XVIII.

had in fact increased from 34,000 to close to 40,000 and many expected Catholics to soon accept the Act, overcoming the prejudice which

has been created by very discreditable misrepresentations. Some of our prominent opponents of the law ... have persistently called the attention of their neighbours to certain sections ... while ... [saying] nothing whatever respecting the provisions so thoughtfully and kindly made by our legislators for the special benefit of poor districts ... Had they [these opponents] been fortunate enough to be educated in accordance with a law like this ... they might have been more disposed than they are to do [his emphasis] justice as well as to demand it, and to assist in improving the law rather than in disloyally denouncing and rejecting it.¹³⁴

The provincial election of 1874 dramatically reinforced the government's resolve. During the campaign Premier King lashed out at the interference of Ottawa, Quebec and Ontario although he saved his harshest diatribes for the supposedly ultramontane church of New Brunswick. According to Placide Gaudet, the central theme of the election became "le cri religieux d' 'à bas la papauté'."¹³⁵ Most of the electorate obviously found King's polemic appealing as only 5 of the 41 members elected (T. Blanchard, K. F. Burns, U. Johnson, H. O'Leary and L. Theriault) favoured denominational schools. At this time compromise seemed unnecessary.

134. Ibid., p. 13. Report of James Smith, Gloucester.

135. Placide Gaudet, "Notes on the School Law", n.d. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.34-10.

However the electoral campaign had stirred passions to such a frenzied pinnacle that "civil war was rife".¹³⁶ It was this tense atmosphere which produced an unfortunate riot at Caraquet which resulted in the deaths of two men, one Acadian, Philippe Mailloux, and one Englishman, John Gifford.¹³⁷

Eventually forty of the Caraquet protestors were arrested, ten of whom were charged with murder and brought to trial. Pierre A. Landry, the first Acadian lawyer, offered to defend them but was rejected by the defense committee on account of his inexperience. Instead the Acadian leaders sought a lawyer of great prestige and experience, finding both in Adolphe Chapleau, a rising political star in Quebec who had just enhanced his reputation by defending the Manitoba Métis leaders. Chapleau readily agreed to undertake the case and went so far as to obtain permission from the New Brunswick Bar to practice in that province. At the last moment however, Kennedy Burns and Father Joseph Pelletier, the curé of Caraquet, convinced the defense committee to reject Chapleau also. They feared that importing a French Canadian would needlessly arouse the prejudices of the English population to the detriment of the

136. Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1905, p. 742. Pascal Poirier, July 15, 1905 discussing the N. B. Schools Question.

137. For the most recent and competent account of the riots, see G.F.G. Stanley, "The Caraquet Riots of 1875," Acadiensis, II, No. 1 (Autumn, 1972), pp. 21-38. See also K.F.C. McNaughton, The Development of the Theory

prisoners' interests. Instead they retained the service of a successful Saint John lawyer, Samuel Thomson, Q.C.

As well as being an excellent criminal lawyer, Thomson proved, like so many of his vocation, to be very expensive and a public subscription was commenced. The response in the Catholic regions was predictable although Timothy Anglin, "le principal auteur de toute cette tragédie sanglante", gave only 25¢ which was summarily rejected by Pascal Poirier.¹³⁸ Quebec was able to soothe its conscience by responding generously - even the Assembly voted \$600 for the fund which finally totalled about \$4,000.¹³⁹

The Caraquet "murderers" were eventually found guilty but numerous irregularities obliged the New Brunswick Supreme Court to reject the verdict and the Attorney-General wisely permitted the case to be dropped, never scheduling a retrial. However the riots and the trial engendered an ominous spirit throughout the province:

and Practice of Education in New Brunswick (Fredericton, 1947), pp. 212-16.

138. Poirier, Les Acadiens Depuis la Confédération jusqu'à nos jours, p. 6. Though never specifically named, the lawyer retained may have been Samuel Thomson, Q.C. (1825-? but after 1900), a Presbyterian who was called to the N. B. Bar in 1848.
139. For details on the fund raising campaign in Ottawa, Montreal and Quebec, see F.-J. Robidoux jr. to Y. Doucet, Aug. 13, 1941. Robodoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.1-8. See also Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 26, 1901, "Merci aux Canadiens" and Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes, Feb. 26, 1891.

Belletier. Tous le Nouveau-Brunswick fut secoué par un frisson de haine religieuse. Protestants et catholiques allaient, pour l'amour de Dieu, en venir aux mains dans une lutte inégale où les Acadiens se serait fait massacrer.¹⁴⁰

In the Assembly the five Catholic members condemned the government, claiming that there had been no "necessity for the calling of the Prussian Army to Caraquet by the Bismarcks and Kaisers of Gloucester."¹⁴¹ Conversely Protestant M.L.A.'s insisted that "when any class set themselves up as above the laws they shall be taught their duty, even though wild anarchy may rear its head for a time."¹⁴² As the debate continued, and became more acrimonious, it became obvious to the government and to most moderate citizens that a compromise was urgently required to reunite the province.

The Acadian minority was shocked by the killings in Caraquet. Le Moniteur Acadien consistently had advised a cautious course urging only passive resistance since too often "les recours à la violence dans les revendications légitimes a toujours été suivi de conséquences désastreuses."¹⁴³ Even after the bloodshed, the curé in Caraquet, Joseph

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140. P. Poirier, "La Question des Ecoles," (ms., n.d.). Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.3-18.
141. New Brunswick, Synoptic Report of the Proceedings of the House of Assembly, p. 104. T. Blanchard, April 9, 1875.
142. Ibid., p. 38. Hon. J. J. Fraser, March 12, 1875.
143. Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 10, 1874, p. 2, "Resistance Passive".

Pelletier, maintained that:

Il vaut cent fois mieux pour nous de souffrir toutes les persécutions que d'exposer la vie d'un homme; cédez donc volontairement, et qu'il n'y ait plus de sang de répandu¹⁴⁴

The Caraquet affair, along with the other events, had by 1875 produced a noticeable weakening in the resolve of the Catholic hierarchy and people. They had been defeated on every front, in Ottawa, in Fredericton and in London. In Quebec even Le Nouveau Monde, normally rigid and dogmatic, found a new humility, expressing only in subdued tones the arguments of their 'confrères'. Its former moral certainty waned as did the strength of the ultramontane movement in Quebec.¹⁴⁵ In New Brunswick itself, the once solid Catholic front was collapsing. In 1872 the government found a French Catholic, F.-X. Bernier, who supported the Commons Schools Act and appointed him, according to Bishop Rogers, as their "Official Agent in working the Godless School Law".¹⁴⁶ In his report to the Superintendent of Education, Bernier encouraged the government to be firm, believing that Catholics would soon accept the law.¹⁴⁷ During the 1874

144. Ibid., Feb. 25, 1875, p. 2.

145. See Le Nouveau Monde for March 12, 1875, p. 2, or for April 9, 1875, p. 2 and compare the tone of these articles with any written in 1872 or 1873.

146. Bishop Rogers to John Costigan, Jan. 20, 1874. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

147. New Brunswick, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1873. "Annual Report of the ... Schools in New Brunswick, 1872", pp. 28-29.

federal election Bernier contravened his bishop's wishes by running against John Costigan in Victoria - the hierarchy feared that the Catholic vote might be split permitting a Protestant to win, an outcome which would suggest that Victoria supported the local government's position. More alarming still for Rogers and Sweeny was the fact that two Catholic priests had endorsed Dr. Bernier. One of Sweeny's confidants wrote that "It is frightful to think that any Catholic, French or Irish could vote for an advocate of Godless schools and particularly against one such as yourself [Costigan]."¹⁴⁸

In July of 1873 the hierarchy's uncompromising stance was also challenged by Father Dunphy in Carleton parish. He organized a school in which religious subjects were taught only outside of the regular school hours. This nominal compliance with the 1871 law permitted the school to receive the government grant and was a precursor of the final compromise. Government newspapers in Quebec saw Dunphy's initiative as a precedent believing, at this early date, that "cette grave question est bien près d'être résolue."¹⁴⁹ In addition, F.-X. Bernier in Victoria was reporting that "a great number of obstacles which the Common Schools Law had to combat at its outset have

148. Rev. James Quinn to John Costigan, Jan. 20, 1874. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

149. La Minerve, July 17, 1873, p. 2, "Question des Ecoles".

disappeared ... the future appears under a very promising aspect."¹⁵⁰ Similarly James Smith, the inspector in the solidly Acadian county of Gloucester, was reporting "far less opposition to it [the school law] now than there was at first."¹⁵¹

Faced with diminished interest in Quebec and disunity among New Brunswick's Catholic population, Sweeny in 1875 again sought a compromise with the administration. Fortunately for the Catholic minority, Premier King, alarmed by the events in Caraquet, also wished a mutually satisfactory end to the question. Negotiations commenced between Sweeny and Senator John Boyd, the chairman of the Saint John School Board, and a solution was agreed upon which sought "to have Catholics in charge of Catholic children."¹⁵² The government made several concessions to Catholic opinion. Catholic children might be grouped in the same school; Catholic clerics were not obliged to attend the Normal School although they did have to write the provincial examinations in order to be licensed; Catholic nuns could wear their religious garb or religious symbols while teaching; care would be taken to remove or edit books objectionable to Catholics; the regular school day would be

150. New Brunswick, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1874.
"Annual Report of the ... Schools in New Brunswick",
pp. 11-12.

151. Ibid., p. 31.

152. "New Brunswick School Act", an undated three-page report found in the Sweeny Correspondence, A.D.S.J. No. 1909.

shortened so as to permit religious instruction at the end of classes; and finally school trustees could rent a building owned by the church for use as a school while still permitting it to be used after regular school hours for clerical purposes. The compromise permitted Catholics to retain, in practice if not by law, separate schools while receiving public funds.

The Catholic hierarchy would have preferred more generous concessions but nevertheless "in the interests of peace ... we have no alternative but to cease the active opposition ... [and] simply tolerate what we cannot prevent." Bishop Rogers, like Sweeny, accepted the new offer, even with its liabilities, in the hope that

the promises of various influential persons - members of the government, officials of the School Department and others - which lead up to hope that due consideration will be had for our just wishes in the practical administration of the law without violating the letter thereof.¹⁵³

The New Brunswick minority had ceased its reliance on others and virtually settled the issue themselves.

Quebec accepted the compromise in an almost indecently brief period of time. Two weeks after the government's offer, Le Nouveau Monde published the details of the compromise and noted the reserved yet generally favourable response of the Saint John Freeman. It also reprinted the unrestrained approbation of Le Bien Publique (Montreal), a Liberal

153. Bishop Rogers to Rev. M.-F. Richard, Jan 7, 1876. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1875-76". Similar sentiments are expressed in a public Circular written by Bishop Rogers and released on Jan. 3, 1876.

newspaper which had supported the Mackenzie government's stand throughout the controversy. Le Nouveau Monde itself refrained from commenting on the subject until the Quebec and New Brunswick religious hierarchies had committed themselves.¹⁵⁴ Before it ever did offer an opinion, this newspaper, as well as many of the others in Quebec, became engulfed in the purely Quebec question of "Catholic Liberalism". Since Quebec issues, as always, took precedence, the Catholic acceptance of the government's offer went unnoticed. The Catholic minority paled in comparison to Liberal "heresy" and was put aside.

For some Acadians the issue was not settled quite so easily. They accepted the compromise¹⁵⁵ - the continued closure of their schools could be disastrous - but never fully trusted it and always hoped for further concessions.

Tous leurs efforts [i.e. that of the priests] ont été vains et, le fanatisme ayant prévalu, ils ont cessé l'opposition active, mais jamais ont-ils donné leur adhésion à cette loi, qui, aussi longtemps qu'elle restera écrite dans les statuts de cette province, fera le déshonneur de ses auteurs et de ses promoteurs.

The conduct of the priests, now teaching in accordance with the law, changed "mais non les opinions."¹⁵⁶ Nevertheless

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154. Le Nouveau Monde, Aug. 19, 1875, p. 2, "Les Ecoles du N.-B."
155. See New Brunswick, Journal of the House of Assembly, 1877. "Annual Report on Schools".
156. Le Moniteur Acadien, Dec. 9, 1880, p. 2, "La Question des Ecoles" by Rev. M.-F. Richard.

with a spirit of compromise evident on the part of both the government and the Catholics, the school system which evolved, though illegal in the strictest sense of the law, was satisfactory to most. By 1878 the schools question had become so much a matter of the past that Pierre Landry could declare: "Aujourd'hui la question est réglée et définitivement réglée et elle n'est pas plus sur le tapis."¹⁵⁷

By the early twentieth century the Acadian-Catholic schools in New Brunswick were "Aussi catholique, aussi française en pratique que la loi des écoles de la Province de Québec."¹⁵⁸

The Catholic minority had shown credible perseverance and had forced the government to accept the Nova Scotian precedent of skirting legalities in order to achieve a degree of harmony in the province. The New Brunswick Schools Question proved to be a momentous lesson for the Acadians. Since Confederation they had talked of steadfast Quebec support for their endeavours. This controversy clearly revealed that Quebec's interests lay within its own borders; that French Canadians would not aid them if in any way threatened Quebec's own interests; that the fate of the Acadian Catholics was not a driving issue in Quebec. The Acadians took heed of this lesson and in the future tempered their actions accordingly.

157. Ibid., June 13, 1878, p. 2.

158. O. Turgeon, Un Tribut à la race acadienne, Mémoires 1871-1927, p. 9.

CHAPTER V

The Role of the Acadian Press, 1867-1912

There were certain essential prerequisites if the Acadian people after Confederation were to cease relying upon Quebec for protection or support. The first of these had to be an educational institution capable of producing an Acadian elite. This institution, the Collège St. Joseph, had indeed appeared by 1867 and was in the process of producing that elite. However this emerging leadership required a vehicle by which their enthusiasm could be spread - a newspaper around which both the elite and the people could rally:

Un journal français, dans un pays comme l'Acadie est d'un intérêt supérieur, pour le maintien d'une race au milieu d'une terre déjà envahie par l'étranger. Avant 1850 les Acadiens, complètement dépourvus de ces périodiques indispensables à une nation, ne pouvaient progresser les chefs ne pouvant communiquer leur idées, leurs craintes parfois, ou leurs espérances.¹

French-language newspapers from Quebec never met this need. In fact until the appearance of Le Devoir (Montreal) in 1910,² Quebec newspapers seemed to have had little influence among

1. Jacques Brillant, "Les journaux acadiens" (ms., n.d.), C.E.A., Box "Journalisme acadien", file "J. Brillant", p. 1.
2. See infra, chapter XI.

the Acadian population.³ It is likely that the Quebec press was too expensive and, except for general articles on France or the church, irrelevant since at this time Quebec was a distant, unfamiliar, almost foreign country.

The Acadian elite envisaged the role of the press to be the creator of public opinion, not merely a reflection of that opinion. "C'est par la presse que les masses sont dirigées: la presse est une puissance."⁴ The function of the Acadian press was to lead the people, to remind them of "leur devoir dans la conservation de ce dépôt sacré dont nos pères ne voulurent point de départir."⁵ The press had to serve the race's urgent needs; it had to unify the diverse and scattered groups of Acadians; it had to lecture them about their duties toward the Catholic faith and the French race; it had to make them comprehend the dire consequences of emigration and assimilation, and convince them of the value of colonization and agriculture. The foremost duty of a "national" newspaper was to fight for the rights of the Acadians, to defend the race against the assimilationists, to publicize Acadian aspirations to the

3. None of the primary or secondary sources available make any reference to the role of Quebec newspapers in l'Acadie. In preparation for federal elections after 1867, one or both of the political parties may have distributed copies of a newspaper sympathetic to their cause but this was never undertaken, it appears, on a large scale.

4. L'Évangéline (Moncton), Sept. 19, 1907, p. 2, "Nous Vaincrons".

5. Brillant, "Les journaux acadiens," p. 4.

outside world and finally to stimulate a greater self-awareness among the people themselves.

Israel J.-D. Landry, attracted to Prince Edward Island from Quebec by Abbé Belcourt,⁷ established the first French language newspaper in New Brunswick. Encouraged by Belcourt and Mgr. Paquet, the vicar general in Caraquet, Landry hoped "d'élever la nationalité Acadienne au niveau des ses voisins,"⁸ a formidable task for him since, according to Belcourt, Landry himself was by no means outstanding:

[Landry is] un jeune homme modeste, pratiquant sa religion fidèlement et sincèrement chrétien ... sa diction ou son style sera peut-être médiocre ... mais ses principes seront sains ... il prendra chaudement le parti des acadiens dans toutes les circonstances où il reconnaîtra qu'on commit des injustices envers eux. En un mot ce ne sera pas un editeur brillant mais un défenseur sincère des Acadiens.⁹

In June of 1867 Landry, ready to commence publication, issued a Prospectus appealing for moral and financial support from "chaque famille depuis la Madawaska jusqu'au Cap Breton." He described his proposed newspaper, Le

6. See the speech of F.-J. Robidoux to the Fifth Commission of the First National Convention of Acadians in 1881. Printed in Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, pp. 133-39. Ferdinand Robidoux was the editor-owner of Le Moniteur Acadien.
7. See supra, chapter II.
8. Israel J.-D. Landry to Rameau de Saint-Père, March 19, 1867. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-8.
9. Abbé Belcourt to Rameau de Saint-Père, May 12, 1867. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-8.

Moniteur Acadien,

comme organe des populations francaises
des Provinces Maritimes, et devoue a
leurs interets generaux.

Reunir cette grande et genereuse
famille Acadienne par un meme lien,
et l'engager a conserver sa religion,
sa langue et ses coutumes est le but
que nous nous proposons

He promised that his journal would lead the struggle against
"les basses calomnies" of the English assimilators and by
so doing, protect the French culture in the Maritime
provinces.¹⁰

Though Landry himself was a Québécois, that province
gave little support to Le Moniteur Acadien. Its only
contribution was Napoleon Bourassa's Jacques et Marie which
was published in 1868 as a serial.¹¹ In stark contrast,
France's Rameau de Saint-Père became the newspaper's most
enthusiastic patron. He permitted Landry to publish
excerpts from La France aux Colonies after which he submitted,
at the editor's request, lengthy letters praising the
Acadians and instructing them on the means of national
redemption: Confederation, a fraternal alliance with Quebec,
colonization instead of emigration.¹²

Unfortunately Landry's endeavour never proved
successful. He commenced publication with the assurance of

10. Prospectus du Moniteur Acadien, March 5, 1867. The
prospectus was published by an English printer and
consequently contained no accent marks.

11. Le Moniteur Acadien, July 3, 1868 to Aug. 6, 1869.

12. Ibid., Sept. 19, 1867, p. 2.

500 subscriptions and the hope of soon increasing this number to a respectable, and profitable level.¹³ This hope was never fulfilled as the circulation of the newspaper remained low on account of, Landry believed, the opposition of the Irish and Scottish Catholic clergy.¹⁴ Bishop McIntyre of Charlottetown, a personal friend of Landry's, endorsed the venture only reluctantly, believing Le Moniteur Acadien to be redundant. There already existed several English-language newspapers serving the same area and the appearance of a purely Acadian newspaper, he feared, would divide English and French Catholics. Even Tignish, an Acadian parish on Prince Edward Island, provided no subscriptions since the Scottish priest there was vehement in his opposition. Though disappointed, Landry remained generous toward the Acadians. "La raison [for the low circulation] est simplement que nos braves Acadiens sont catholiques et qu'ils ne désirent rien faire qu'ils savent être contre le désir de leurs curés."¹⁵

Landry was even more disappointed when he discovered

13. Unfortunately, the financial records of Le Moniteur Acadien have not survived the years and hence it was impossible to ascertain just how many subscriptions Landry did begin with or how many were required to reap a profit. The Acadian newspapers rarely if ever publicized their circulation figures.

14. See I. J.-D. Landry to Rameau de Saint-Père, May 20, 1867. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-8.

15. Ibid.

16. Y.-A. Landry, "Mémoire Sur La Presse Acadienne" (ms., Aug. 17, 1868), p. 3. Copy in H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., Box "Monographies", file "La Presse Acadienne".

that it was not only the English-language priests who opposed his undertaking. He complained to M. Rameau that half of the French clergy were condemning his venture. He had expected a substantial amount of help from Quebec but "Nos confrères au Canada s'occupent fort peu de nous (à peine y ai-je 20 abonnés), ils ont assez à faire chez eux."¹⁶ As for the Acadians themselves, they too showed little interest. Even those in Shediac where Le Moniteur Acadien was situated, were reluctant to subscribe.

The apathy of the Acadians in this regard was and is somewhat puzzling. The French-Canadian and Acadian elite always emphasized the importance of this journal:

Nous avons besoin à toute nos forces pour travailler au progrès intellectuel et matériel de nos populations françaises dans nos provinces, et tout naturellement le Moniteur [Acadien] doit être notre porte-étendard à cette fin.¹⁷

But they were never able to transmit their enthusiasm to the bulk of the population which remained rather unmoved by the appeal of a French-language press. Some years later, Valentin Landry, the editor of L'Évangéline in Moncton, complained that "les trois quarts au moins des Acadiens qui sont abonnés à un journal le sont à un journal étranger!"¹⁸ In 1910, following a determined

16. I. J.-D. Landry to Rameau de Saint-Père, Sept. 20, 1867. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-8.
17. Rev. C. Lefebvre to P. Poirier, May 4, 1872. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-1.
18. V.-A. Landry, "Mémoire Sur La Presse Acadienne" (ms., Aug. 12, 1908), p. 9. Copy in H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., Box "Monographies", file "La Presse Acadienne".

campaign to increase circulation, L'Évangéline, the largest Acadian newspaper at that time, had only 3,200 subscribers.¹⁹ It is likely that the high illiteracy rate in the Acadian communities partially contributed to this disdain.²⁰ Cost may also have been a factor since the Acadians were generally poor.²¹ Perhaps too, Le Moniteur Acadien never had any great appeal to the Acadian people because its editors were always Québécois.

However throughout the second half of the nineteenth century the Acadians, in spite of their two important colleges, their newspapers, and their energetic leadership, were apathetic in many ways. At the Acadian National Convention of 1881, successive speakers criticized their lethargy. Reverend Bourgeois criticized their lack of interest in education; Rev. Ouellet criticized their lack of interest in colonization; Ferdinand Robidoux, then the editor of Le Moniteur Acadien, criticized their lack of interest in the press.²² Perhaps the trauma of 1755 made

19. L'Évangéline, Dec. 28, 1910.

20. For example see Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, IV, p. 399. The Acadian counties of Kent, Westmorland and Gloucester show a smaller ratio of both schools and pupils per capita.

21. For discussions of the economic history of the Acadians, see Baudry, Les Acadiens D'Aujourd'hui; C. Cormier and A. Young, Problèmes Économiques des Acadiens (Memramcook, 1960); Alain Even, "Le territoire pilote du Nouveau Brunswick, ou les blocages culturels au développement économique," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Université de Rennes, 1970).

22. See Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, pp. 113-40, passim.

the Acadians content with what little they had. Perhaps they had been oppressed for so long that their aspirations and ambitions became severely limited. Perhaps part of the reason lay with their religion which encouraged or at least tolerated deprivation in this world so as to better enjoy the next. Some undefinable combination of these made apathy an all too common tradition in l'Acadie.

The elite had to struggle in order to draw their following from this complacent state. As for Israel Landry, the task was beyond his financial resources. Unable to afford the venture,²³ he sold Le Moniteur Acadien to his editor, Norbert Lussier of Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec. Lussier's efforts were no more rewarding. In January of 1868 he temporarily suspended publication and returned to Quebec in order to acquire supplies and the services of a new editor, enticing Ferdinand Robidoux to assume that thankless position. Commencing publication once again in May, Le Moniteur Acadien appeared regularly until its demise in 1926, although in 1871 Lussier followed Landry's precedent, selling the newspaper to Robidoux and returning to Quebec.

The first editors promised that Le Moniteur Acadien would be apolitical, concerned only with protecting the interests of the Acadian race. This was not to be the

23. N. Lussier to Rameau de Saint-Père, Aug. 23, 1868. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-9. Lussier wrote that Landry had to give up the newspaper because he spent "trop d'argent durant les dernières [federal] élections."

case. It soon committed itself to Confederation²⁴ and then dogmatically supported the politics of Sir John A. Macdonald's Liberal-Conservative Party. Publication began on July 8, 1867 and immediately Le Moniteur Acadien and Israel Landry were immersed in the first federal election since Landry was contesting the Westmorland seat.²⁵ Landry was hoping to attract the solid support of the Acadians in that constituency since his opponent, Albert Smith,²⁶ was an Anglo-Protestant and since he could camouflage his own Quebec background by claiming to be of Acadian descent.²⁷

Not surprisingly, Le Moniteur Acadien endorsed Landry and attacked the liberalism of George Brown, "le chef des orangistes". Conscious of the Acadian opposition to Confederation,²⁸ it stressed that the new nation of Canada, now a "fait accompli", had to be permitted a fair chance:

24. Abbé Belcourt to Rameau de Saint-Père, May 12, 1867. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-8.
25. One other francophone, Auguste Renaud (1835-1897), ran successfully for election in Kent. The Acadians made up 56% of the electorate in Kent and only 32% in Westmorland. Renaud remained in the House of Commons for only one term, being defeated in 1872 and again in 1874.
26. Albert Smith (1822-1883) was born in Shediac, N. B. A lawyer, he sat in the N. B. Assembly from 1852 until his entry into federal politics in 1867. He was the M.P. for Westmorland from 1867 until 1882. For his political career in N. B., see supra, chapter III.
27. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 22, 1867, p. 3.
28. See supra, chapter III.

29. Ibid., Sept. 19, 1867, p. 1, "Revue Electorale".

La question n'est plus d'accepter ou de ne pas accepter la confédération; comme nous l'avons déjà dit, tout le monde est obligé de l'accepter, puisqu'elle a reçu la sanction royale et que par conséquent il n'y a plus de revenez-y [his emphasis]. Est-on prêt à accorder au gouvernement actuel un fair trial [his emphasis] pour lui permettre de remplir les promesses qu'il a faites.

Landry attempted to appeal to the Acadians by virtue of his nationality, though this practice could and would be disastrous in Westmorland, writing that "vous tous qui aimez votre nationalité, votre sang, alliez en masse pour votre homme [i.e. Landry]."29

The election results in Westmorland were a dramatic reversal of Landry's predictions as Albert Smith won handily, receiving 2,216 votes to Landry's 454. Le Moniteur Acadien rationalized this humiliating defeat by hinting at corrupt practices, a favourite pastime of New Brunswick politicians. The charges were unsubstantiated but nevertheless probably contained a kernel of truth:

Tout habitant de comté sait que l'injustice la plus criante et la corruption la plus abominable ont été cause d'un résultat ... M. Landry a reçu 454 voix, et il en est flaté car il a du moins l'honneur d'avoir de son côté la crème du comté.³⁰

Supported by only the incorruptibles, rejected by the Acadian electorate, Israel Landry disappeared from the area. Meanwhile the other francophone candidate, Auguste Renaud,

29. Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 5, 1867, "Les Interets Generaux et Particuliers".

30. Ibid., Sept. 19, 1867, p. 2, "Revue Electorale".

won his seat in Kent by a majority of 201³¹ and represented the Acadians in the House of Commons for one term.

Although Landry personally had little influence upon the Acadians, he established an important precedent for Ferdinand Robidoux, the editor-owner of Le Moniteur Acadien from 1871 until 1918. Robidoux continually assured his readers that

la question politique était une affaire secondaire ... 'Le Moniteur Acadien' était avant tout un journal français et catholique et sa mission était de rallier les groupes acadiens et de leur fournir un organe pour l'avancement de leur cause et la revendication de leurs droits.³²

However it was virtually impossible for a newspaper to maintain its political independence in the highly politicized atmosphere of nineteenth century Canada. In l'Acadie as in Quebec, the French-language newspapers became wedded to one of the major parties and rarely deviated from the party line. Issues became decidedly less important than allegiance and loyalty. Robidoux, a confirmed Conservative and regarded as such, adopted the politics of Macdonald and Cartier early, when the Liberal-Conservative alliance seemed the most secure home for all Franco-Canadians. However Robidoux remained faithful to this party when the interests of his race may have been better served by those opposing the Conservatives; during the Riel crisis, during

31. Ibid.

32. F.-J. Robidoux jr. to Clement Cormier, c.s.c., Dec. 7, 1951. C.E.A., "Journalisme acadien", file "F.-J. Robidoux".

successive school controversies, during the years of Conservative Party decay, and during the first decades of the twentieth century when that party seemed to be waving the imperial banner.

As Le Moniteur Acadien matured into rigid partizanship, so did opposition to it develop. Some Acadians became disenchanted with its tendency to favour political over national causes. Others were angered because of its particular brand of politics. This opposition coalesced after 1880 when it was apparent that large sections of the country were dissatisfied with Macdonald's old and perhaps senile regime. In 1885 Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes (1885-1903) was founded in Bathurst in order to oppose Robidoux and the "Shediac clique".³³ In its early years the politics of this journal was confused because of the different loyalties of its major shareholders. The priests (Rev. T. Allard, Rev. H. Doucet, Rev. Stanislas Doucet, Rev. A. A. Boucher, Rev. J. R. Doucet) on its Board of Directors gave it a neutral or conservative hue; its largest shareholder, Valentin Landry, was a committed Liberal, especially when Laurier was that party's leader; the second most prominent shareholder, Narcisse Landry, was the brother of the province's leading Acadian Conservative, Pierre Landry,³⁴ and on occasion promised the

33. Turgeon, Un Tribut à la race acadienne - Mémoires, 1871-1927, p. 64.

34. See R. Mailhot, "Sir Pierre-A. Landry, premier politicien acadien d'envergure au Nouveau Brunswick," La Société Historique Acadienne, IV, No. 6 (Summer, 1972), pp. 217-35.

newspaper's support to the Conservative Party in return for the appointment of Pierre Landry to the Cabinet.³⁵

In 1893 Peter J. Veniot purchased Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes and transformed it into an indisputably Liberal organ. Veniot had a history of Liberal politics although his ties to the Acadian race were more tenuous. Born in Richibucto, N. B., he was nevertheless educated in Nova Scotia at the Pictou Academy where a teacher, George Murray,³⁶ convinced him to change his name from Vigneau. Veniot operated Le Courrier until his election to the New Brunswick Assembly in 1899. Until then he had shared the editing duties first with Placide Gaudet, a Conservative, and then with Onésiphore Turgeon, an unprincipled politician who contested, unsuccessfully, several elections for the Conservatives before switching to the Liberal Party in 1896.³⁷

While Le Moniteur Acadien struggled along, its Bathurst rival enjoyed considerable success having 600 subscribers when it first appeared in 1885 and 1,800 by the

35. Narcisse Landry to Sir John A. Macdonald, Oct. 7, 1886. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 39B, pp. 15457-66.

36. George Murray (1861-1929) succeeded W. S. Fielding as Premier of Nova Scotia in 1896 and served in this capacity until his retirement in 1923.

37. Peter Veniot became Minister of Public Works, 1917-23, and Premier of New Brunswick, 1923-25. From 1926 to 1930 he served as Canada's Postmaster General and was responsible for the introduction of bilingual postage stamps. He remained an M.P. until his death in 1936. Notes on P. J. Veniot may be found in C.E.A., Box "Journalisme acadien", file "journalistes acadiens". For information on Onésiphore Turgeon, see infra, chapter VI.

end of the year.³⁸ Within the next year, this number increased to almost 3,000.³⁹ Its success, compared with the other's stagnation, was in part due to the fact that its owners, Valentin-A. Landry, Narcisse Landry, A. A. LeBlanc among others, were Acadians rather than French Canadians. It appealed to northern New Brunswick and especially Madawaska whereas Le Moniteur Acadien concerned itself with the southern, less strongly French portion of the province.⁴⁰ The Courrier attracted more interest by being a public company whereas the other was owned by Robidoux himself and operated in a dogmatic fashion.

Initially the largest shareholder (\$1,000) in Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes was Valentin Landry, a graduate of the Collège St. Joseph and a former school teacher in Nova Scotia who, in 1885, was serving as the school inspector for the Acadian parishes of New Brunswick. Landry, "le Parnell des Acadiens",⁴¹ was thoroughly dedicated to the Acadian cause. As a school inspector he repeatedly provoked the government's enmity by criticizing their policies:

38. Placide Gaudet to Abbé Biron, Dec. 17, 1885. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-24.

39. Mailhot, "La 'Renaissance Acadienne' (1864-1888); L'Interprétation Traditionnelle et 'Le Moniteur Acadien'," p. 152.

40. See map of New Brunswick, Appendix I.

41. Abbé Stanislas Doucet to V.-A. Landry, Dec. 31, 1886. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-2.

I [Valentin Landry] must again allude to the paucity of French text-books. Quite a large number of our French schools have classes advanced beyond standard IV while some have completed standard VI. Now considering that the Third is the most advanced Reader in French for use ... the great hindrance to progress ... will be readily seen ... We are always ready to admire progress in any nation and it is both unreasonable and unchristian to require any race of people to give up their own language and merge it into that of another.⁴²

In retaliation the Liberal government dismissed Landry, asserting that he devoted too much time to Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes and not enough to his official duties. His dismissal proved to be beneficial to the Acadian people since he then devoted himself totally to their interests, becoming their most vociferous proponent.

Intrigued by his experience in Bathurst, Valentin Landry decided to publish his own newspaper. He knew that his endeavour would meet considerable opposition. Some years previous he himself had dissuaded Pascal Poirier from establishing a journal in Richibucto, arguing that the Acadian population could ill afford three competing journals. Other notables such as Rameau de Saint-Père sought to discourage Landry in a similar way:

... quand parait un nouveau journal on se demande s'il y a aura de quoi l'alimenter? Si même l'existence d'un autre n'en sera pas compromis? Les

42. V.-A. Landry, "Report to the Dept. of Education," 1884. Copy in V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-21. The emphasis is not in the original.

Acadiens certainement sont appelés à devenir un grand peuple, comme les Canadiens qui n'étaient pas 80,000 il y a un siècle. Mais en attendant, ils ne sont que 100,000 et fort dispersés ... [is it possible] supporter 3 journaux?⁴³

Fearing that Rameau's caution was valid, the aspiring editor solicited other advice, some of which proved more encouraging:

Il y a dans le pays ample place pour trois journaux et pour quatre aussi publiés en langue française dans l'intérêt de la population acadienne. C'est l'île du Prince Edouard qui appelle le quatrième. Et pourquoi le Cap-Breton n'aurait-il pas aussi le sien? Le progrès appelle le progrès ... chaque nouveau journal, dirigé dans un bon esprit, remplira une mesure de bien, une large mesure peut-être ... Plus il y aura de journaux plus il y aura de lectures et plus rapide et général sera le progrès désiré.⁴⁴

But the optimistic author of these words, Father Stanislas Doucet, could not envisage the rivalries which soon existed between the three newspapers. He had expected the editors to work closely together for the "même noble cause" or the "cause commune", an impossible dream considering the personalities, temperaments and philosophies of the men involved. As in Quebec, where there also existed a common cause, the unifying forces of language and culture proved to be a weak rival to politics, political thought and personal ambition.

43. Rameau de Saint-Père to V.-A. Landry, Nov. 15, 1887. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-3.

44. Rev. Stanislas Doucet to V.-A. Landry, Nov. 29, 1887. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-3.

Disposing of his shares in Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes, Landry resolved "à tenter l'impossible en vue de la fondation d'un nouveau journal pour rendre justice aux Acadiens de la Province de la N.-Ecosse [his abbreviation]." ⁴⁵ He settled "sur un terrain aride dépourvu de sentiment patriotique" for several reasons: to avoid antagonizing Le Moniteur Acadien in Shediac, to bring his brand of nationalism to virgin soil, and to infuse Nova Scotia with the New Brunswick spirit of renaissance. ⁴⁶

By October of 1887 Valentin Landry had established his L'Évangéline in Digby although he would soon move it to Weymouth and later (1905) to Moncton, New Brunswick. Landry was an abrupt individual who often was intolerant of others. Before long, he had antagonized many people upon whom he had initially relied for support. By November he had offended the Archbishop of Halifax ⁴⁷ by denigrating the educational facilities available to the Acadians of Nova Scotia. Archbishop O'Brien replied curtly that the available schools were excellent. "No doubt," added the prelate, "in due time they [the Acadians] will appreciate them more." O'Brien,

45. V.-A. Landry to Abbé Biron, Sept. 14, 1887. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-3.

46. V.-A. Landry to P. Poirier, March 14, 1909. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-18.

47. Archbishop Cornelius O'Brien (1843-1906) was born in Prince Edward Island. He was ordained in 1871 after which he worked in several island parishes. In 1882 he was named Archbishop of Halifax, a post he filled until his death in 1906.

like most of the English-language clergy, suspected Landry's intentions and offered only hesitant support since L'Évangéline "may [not] be an instrument of good, ... [but] a source of discord."⁴⁸ O'Brien's fears proved prophetic as Landry later became the Irish hierarchy's most bitter antagonist.⁴⁹

Landry readily dismissed the opposition of the Irish clergy; they were not after all the constituency to which he sought to appeal. The antipathy of his New Brunswick compatriots was a more serious matter. Even before the appearance of L'Évangéline, Narcisse Landry, Valentin's former partner, wrote to Placide Gaudet, now the editor of Le Moniteur Acadien, suggesting "une ligne agressive contre L'Évangéline ... un pacte pour combattre Val et son future journal."⁵⁰ Gaudet rejected the idea for the moment, believing that L'Évangéline, "quoique libéral", may benefit the Acadians of Nova Scotia to some degree without endangering the economic viability of either New Brunswick newspaper. However should Valentin attack either of them, and this was expected to occur without too much delay, then Gaudet would be pleased to destroy him; "Tu sais," wrote Gaudet, "que Val est l'homme que je déteste le plus sur la terre ... car

48. Archbishop O'Brien to V.-A. Landry, Nov. 15, 1887. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-3.

49. See infra, chapter XII. Landry, Oct. 18, 1887. Gaudet Coll.

50. Narcisse-A. Landry to Placide Gaudet, Sept. 30, 1887. This letter has disappeared but is quoted by Gaudet in a return letter to Narcisse Landry dated Oct. 18, 1887. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.64-18.

51. V.-A. Landry to Placide Gaudet, March 14, 1887. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-18.

personne mieux que moi connaît la noirceur de coeur de cet hypocrite."⁵¹ Though Gaudet served as editor of L'Evangéline for several years, the experience only intensified the animosity he felt for Landry. According to Gaudet, he was a detestable person who wished others to see him as

l'O'Connol des Acadiens. Il n'a qu'un but, c'est de tâcher qu'il soit reconnu comme un grand patriote et une de nos gloires acadiennes. N'étant pas capable d'écrire deux phrases grammaticalement en français, il a jusqu'à présent réussi à avoir à son service des personnes qui ont rédigé son journal tant bien que mal, et fait également sa correspondance française.

However, as Gaudet admitted, the basis of the antipathy was because Landry was Liberal and Gaudet, "je suis conservateur."⁵²

When the fratricidal war began, as it inevitably did, Valentin Landry complained bitterly to Pascal Poirier about the "articles infâmes, acerbes, calomnieux, criminels, qui paraissaient de temps en temps dans les colonnes du Moniteur Acadien." In spite of all his efforts on their behalf, the Acadians of New Brunswick deserted him, his only supporters being "un prêtre ... Canadien!!" and another Québécois "dévoué à l'Acadie", Firmin Picard.⁵³ It is understandable

51. Pl. Gaudet to N.-A. Landry, Oct. 18, 1887. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.64-18.
52. Pl. Gaudet to Rameau de Saint-Père, March 27, 1892. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-31.
53. V.-A. Landry to P. Poirier, March 14, 1909. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-18.

that French Canadians and not Acadians sympathized with Valentin Landry. His pugilistic style as an editor and propagandist more closely resembled that of his Quebec colleagues than his Acadian ones - he was not afraid to challenge and discredit the other newspapers; he did not place unity above all else; he was never intimidated by the Anglo-Protestants nor did he refrain from criticizing the abuses heaped upon the Acadians by them. On racial issues he would likely cooperate with the other Acadian newspapers although his defense of those causes would inevitably be more strident than that of his cautious compatriots. Landry was aggressive where Robidoux and the others were defensive. Even the Irish hierarchy and clergy of the Catholic Church were not safe from Landry's diatribes and his aggressive stance in this regard eventually forced him to sell L'Évangéline.⁵⁴ In politics he chose the Liberal Party and openly promoted its cause much as the press of Quebec did. While Le Moniteur Acadien and Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes attempted to disguise their ever present and equally firm biases, Landry's aggressiveness equalled that of any French Canadian and provided a stark contrast to his retiring and timid compatriots.

When L'Évangéline adopted the Liberal Party, the Tory press attacked it with vehemence. This was to be expected, .

54. For Landry's difficulties with the Irish Catholic hierarchy in the Maritime provinces, see *infra*, chapter XII. Examples of the differences in approach between Landry and Robidoux may also be found in chapter XI.

wrote one of Landry's correspondents:

... ne vous laissez par décourager par les horions que vous pourrez recevoir. La presse bleue va sans doute vous lancer ces foudres; c'est la coutume d'excommunier ceux qui sont assez indépendants pour s'affranchir de sa tutelle. Si vous perdez quelques abonnés, vous en trouvez d'autres, et vous aurez l'approbation et l'appui des gens que le servilisme envers l'administration tory n'a pas encore abrutis.⁵⁵

At the end of the century, the Maritime Conservatives even paid for, Landry believed, the founding of a French-language newspaper, L'Impartial, in Tignish (P.E.I.) in an attempt to restrict the influence of L'Évangéline.⁵⁶

Valentin Landry felt that he was doing the Acadians a service by committing his newspaper to the Laurier Liberals. Because the other French-language newspapers were Conservative, the many Acadian Liberals had previously been voiceless and powerless:

'L'Évangéline' en aborant les couleurs libérales a été pour eux un moyen de ralliement pour se compter et se ranger en bataille bien décidés à lurer un combat acharné à leurs oppresseurs quand le temps viendra.⁵⁷

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55. Rev. A. Ouellet (Shediac) to V.-A. Landry, Feb. 25, 1891. V.-A. Landry Letterbook, C.E.A. 7.1-22.
 56. See V.-A. Landry to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Jan. 10, 1900. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 137, pp. 40991-93. L'Impartial was a French-language weekly published in Tignish, P.E.I., from 1893-1915.
 57. V.-A. Landry to Chas. A. Gauvreau, n.d. Copy in V.-A. Landry Letterbook, C.E.A. 7.1-22.

As a consequence, the Conservatives considered the Acadian constituencies to be "safe seats" and did whatever they pleased. They ran Irishmen in Kent and ignored the large Acadian population when making appointments since the Conservative candidate would be elected regardless.⁵⁸ Landry's actions forced the two political parties to vie for Acadian support, outbidding one another with promises of appointments and largesse. With the appearance of an alternative, both the Conservative and the Liberal Party would take notice of and value this little enclave of votes. It was a trick that "la belle province" had learned long ago and effectively made use of.

The Acadian newspapers continued their bitter rivalry for as long as there was more than one serving l'Acadie. Landry himself, often subjected to harsh invective, learned to effectively direct it at other newcomers to the journalistic scene. For example when Charles Guerin began publishing La Justice in Newcastle⁵⁹ he found it necessary to defend himself from the merciless attacks of L'Evangéline where he had read that "je suis vendu aux Orangistes ... Et moi qui

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58. The Conservative Party held Victoria County, N. B. (J. Costigan) from 1867-1904, Gloucester (K. F. Burns, T. Blanchard) from 1882-1900, Kent (G.-A. Girouard, P. A. Landry, E.-H. Léger, G. V. McInerney) from 1878-1900, Restigouche (R. Moffatt, G. Moffatt, J. McAlister) from 1882-1900 and Westmorland (J. Wood, H. A. Powell) from 1882-1900.
59. La Justice (1906-1907) was published in Newcastle, N. B., first by Charles Guerin and then by Domitien Robichaud who later became head of the Bureau of Translations for the federal government in Ottawa.

suis si sincère dans cette entreprise, qui jouis d'une indépendance absolue pour tout ce qui à la direction de cette humble feuille."⁶⁰

Some members of the Acadian elite, Pascal Poirier for example, on occasion asked the editors to show more restraint and to regard each other with less hostility.

Nous nous affaiblissons en frappant sans motif grave sur les nôtres - qui frappent à leur tour sur nous - et pendant ce temps-là, nos ennemis, car malheureusement nous en avons et de vigilants, se réjouissent et profitent de nos divisions pour nous affaiblir.⁶¹

The Acadians had to be "unis et forts en face des nationalités qui nous entourent."⁶² Only rarely did they adhere to his advice however. Early in the twentieth century there arose a suggestion that the four Acadian newspapers amalgamate, forming an "Associated Acadian Press" situated in Moncton and appealing to the Acadians in all three Maritime provinces.⁶³ As one would expect, the idea remained just that, no more than an idea.

In spite of the internecine rivalries, the personal animosities and the divisive political partizanship, at

60. Charles Guerin to Placide Gaudet, July 1, 1906. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.70-14.
61. P. Poirier to V.-A. Landry, May 19, 1900. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-5.
62. Alex Braud, Church Point, N. S., to P. Poirier, May 20, 1900. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-5.
63. See L'Impartial for March 13, 1902 and Le Moniteur Acadien for Feb. 27, 1902.

least the Acadians had several newspapers by 1900 to reflect, to some degree, their aspirations and sentiments. Acadian demands could now be publicized. In all of Canada, the number of newspapers had increased dramatically since 1860⁶⁴ but the few Acadian journals were unlike most of the others. Not only did they serve a compact and homogeneous people but they were often viewed as being an essential ingredient of any Acadian progress. Hence the elite tried to support all the newspapers regardless of their political or philosophical stance. Just as Narcisse and Valentin Landry, political opposites, had been major shareholders in Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes, Pascal Poirier, a dogmatic Conservative, repeatedly provided funds for the Liberal Party's L'Évangéline. As late as 1900, Valentin Landry, its editor, informed Poirier that he had purchased a printing press for \$1,350, an amount which "doit être payé pas plus tard que la fin du mois. Je suis obligé, par conséquent, de venir encore à vous pour assistance, c-à-d endosser une note [his emphasis], comme par le passé."⁶⁵ As in the past,

64. In 1864 there were 286 newspapers in Canada of which 172 were in Ontario, 55 in Quebec, 25 in Nova Scotia, 22 in New Brunswick, 8 in Prince Edward Island, 3 in British Columbia, 1 in Manitoba and 1 in the North West Territories. By 1892 the number had increased to 1,033 of which 513 were in Ontario, 209 in Quebec, 80 in Nova Scotia, 50 in Manitoba, 48 in New Brunswick, 33 in British Columbia, 19 in the North West Territories and 14 in Prince Edward Island. See Le Moniteur Acadien, May 10, 1892, p. 2.

65. V.-A. Landry to P. Poirier, June 9, 1900. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-6. The word "encore" is not emphasized in the original.

Poirier complied out of a sense of national obligation. Similarly it was the same people who were subscribing not to the Acadian journal of their choice, but to all the Acadian journals available.

Unfortunately however too few Acadians felt this obligation. Journalism in l'Acadie remained a most unprofitable vocation: "Nos gens" wrote Ferdinand Robidoux, "semblent n'avoir aucun désire de lire."⁶⁶ The Acadians showed even more disregard for printed matter than did their French Canadian compatriots. Both emphasized verbal exchanges and produced Canada's most stirring orators. A Pierre Landry or a Father Marcel Richard could stir an Acadian audience just as an Honoré Mercier or a Wilfrid Laurier could arouse a Quebec audience. But none of them could convince their devoted followers to support newspapers working in their interests.

Consequently the two leading Acadian journalists, Ferdinand Robidoux and Valentin Landry, found that "Le journalisme est une carrière ingrate en Acadie. Celui qui l'embrasse doit attendre à des déboires!"⁶⁷ The circulation of their newspapers was always miniscule compared to the total Acadian population and even if it should reach three thousand, as it did for L'Évangéline in 1909, "nous pouvons

66. Speech of Ferdinand Robidoux, jr., n.d. Copy in Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.4-17.

67. F.-J. Robidoux, Pastels et Portraits, Sept. 9, 1897. Notebook in Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.6-16.

68. Ibid., March 8, 1925, p. 1, "Nos journaux français".

affirmer que les trois quarts [his emphasis] sont en retard [in paying]!"⁶⁸ In 1923, following an intensive campaign to attract subscribers, L'Évangéline had a circulation of only 4,000.⁶⁹ When Le Moniteur Acadien ceased publication in 1926, L'Évangéline profited only marginally - likely it was the same people who, through the many years of journalistic competition, had subscribed to both newspapers and hence the demise of one never appreciably benefited the other.

The Acadian newspapers passed through their existences without substantial change. They remained small and the editors far from affluent. Often their orientation was toward politics with each journal rigidly adhering to one party and not permitting political dissent to grace its columns. Acadian unity was a principle which always remained secondary to party allegiance. Meanwhile most editors never admitted that they were firmly aligned with a particular party and prematurely committed to a position. On "national", racial or religious issues which did not involve political gain, few as they were, the newspapers tried to present a cohesive front although they could not always achieve even this. Yet each newspaper claimed to represent the "Acadian position" on any given question.

Regardless of the difficulties however, the Acadian press had made its appearance and would prove its worth

68. L'Évangéline, April 22, 1909, p. 2, "A Nos Abonnés".

69. Ibid., March 8, 1923, p. 1, "Nos journaux français".

through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by doing battle with Acadian opponents and by encouraging its readers to be progressive vis-à-vis education, colonization, or the more basic issue of simple Acadian rights in a theoretically egalitarian society.⁷⁰ In spite of the criticisms which can justifiably be levelled against them, the Acadian press did serve as a force binding together the isolated Acadian communities and as a platform for the publicizing of national aspirations.

70. The opinions of L'Évangéline (Digby, Weymouth, Moncton, 1887-date) and Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac, 1867-1918, 1924-1926) are employed frequently through this thesis since these two journals accurately reflected the opinions of the small Acadian elite. There were other, less important French-language journals serving the Acadian population in this period: Le Courrier Des Provinces Maritimes, Bathurst, 1885-1903, Liberal, circulation of 1,500 in 1892; L'Ami, Dalhousie, 1906-1907, edited by Abbé A. A. Boucher; Le Madawaska, Edmunston, 1913-date, founded by Dr. Albert Sormany and Max Cormier; L'Acadien, Moncton, 1913-1926, Liberal; La Justice, Newcastle, 1906-1907, edited by Domitien Robichaud; L'Impartial, Tignish (P.E.I.), 1893-1915, founded and edited by Gilbert Buote until 1904 and then by his son, François-Joseph Buote.

CHAPTER VI

A Question of Responsible Leadership

Through the 1860's and 1870's the political impotence of the Acadian "nation" had been clearly illustrated. From 1864 until 1867 they had repeatedly expressed their opposition to Confederation but nevertheless were absorbed by it. Their unimportance, in spite of their numbers, was emphasized by the fact that the Canadian politicians did not deem it necessary to appoint an Acadian to the Senate or judiciary. From 1870 to 1875 the Acadian system of French language, Catholic education had been emasculated but once again, the Acadians went largely unnoticed in the rest of Canada. These events revealed the inadequacy of their political representation and made urgent the need for an indigenous, Acadian elite which would concern itself with their aspirations.

With time and great effort this leadership corps or power elite¹ did emerge. Unfortunately the concept of "elites" has unhappy connotations belonging "to a climate of opinion entirely hostile to our modern ideals of

1. A "power elite" does not rely exclusively upon wealth, or politics or inherited station to enforce its position at the apex of society. Instead its roots are found in all the social institutions which affect a society - in government, in the press, in the church, in the schools, etc.

liberalism and democracy"² since it suggests oligarchies and exclusive participation in the ruling of others. This need not be the case since the term "elite" may be employed in a more technical and broader sense to include all those who, for one reason or another - be it birth, wealth, intellect or accomplishments - are generally respected by the masses and almost called upon to rule.³ The masses are pre-occupied with keeping body and soul together; man's "energies and interests are absorbed primarily in his personal life" and consequently there arises a need for a smaller more cohesive group, or elite, to work at least on the political level in his interests.⁴

Indeed the mass cannot operate except through

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2. S. F. Nadel, "The Concept of Social Elites," International Social Science Bulletin, VIII, No. 3 (1956), p. 413.
 3. Marc-A. Tremblay effectively makes this point in "Les Acadiens de la Baie Française, L'Histoire d'une Survivance". For elaboration, see infra, n. 24.
 4. P. Bachrach, The Theory of Democratic Elitism (Boston, 1967), pp. 4-5. This of course is not unique to the Acadians though their case may be more apparent and hence more dramatic than others. John Porter writes that widespread "apathy, withdrawal and the absence of participation in the making of decisions and policy are the great failures of twentieth-century democracy." J. Porter, The Vertical Mosaic, An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada (Toronto, 1968), p. 27. Michael B. Katz makes a similar point about the poor in Hamilton. See his "Social Structure in Hamilton, Ontario," in Studies in Canadian Social History, ed. by M. Horn and R. Sabourin (Toronto, 1974), p. 178. For purposes of this chapter, one must keep in mind that the concerns and situation of the Acadian elite and people are really analogous to the case of other ethnic groups on a more universal scale, be it the Scots in Nova Scotia or the Irish in New York.

organization and this is the task of the elite. The full development of Acadian concerns depended upon a leadership which was capable of and willing to work for the benefit of its following. As a general rule the elite "performs all political functions, monopolizes power and enjoys the advantages that power brings."⁵ In the Acadian case the elite concentrated the means of power within its grasp; the political appointments and positions, the wealth, and the leadership of activist organizations, the press and, eventually, the clerical hierarchy. However while admitting the importance of the Acadian elite and acknowledging their accomplishments on behalf of the Acadian race, one must pose certain questions and at least examine their sense of purpose. To do otherwise would be to accept placidly and uncritically other "official" histories which may be only "the history of its ruling classes."⁶ One must demand how important was this indigenous elite in initiating change or were they the products of other changes in society or perhaps merely the representatives of more powerful interests. Previous to the appearance of this elite, outsiders in the sense of race, religion or birth had possessed that function

5. Gaetano Mosca, The Ruling Class (N.Y., 1939, translation by Arthur Livingston), p. 50. Cited in T. B. Bottomore, Elites and Society (London, 1968), p. 9.
6. J. H. Meisel, The Myth of the Ruling Class (Ann Arbor, 1962), p. 10. See also David Thomson, The Aims of History (London, 1969), p. 68. He writes that "History, traditionally, had been mainly about 'top people': kings and nobles, clergy and generals, gentry and rich merchants."

and had fulfilled it, as events revealed, most unsatisfactorily. Therefore the question is whether the appearance of an Acadian elite made any appreciable difference to the mass of the Acadian people or were the elite's allegiances and ambitions at variance with the wishes of the people?

The Acadians did not recoil from the idea of an elite guiding their destinities.⁷ Acadia, like Quebec, was almost exclusively Roman Catholic and that church encouraged a hierarchical, organized society. Individuals were theoretically equal and insignificant because it was God who provided the ultimate guidance. The greater one's individual success, the greater was his debt to society since it had been God, and not individual endeavours, who had been responsible for his personal achievements. Success simply obliged one "Travailler de toutes ses forces à la défense de cette même société qui l'a gâté." The elite, those who had achieved the pinnacle of their fields, owed the less amply rewarded all their aid, knowledge and generosity:

Notre société, marchant vers des horizons nouveaux et inconnus a besoin d'être dirigée ... Le dénouement sera fatal si la classe dirigeante continue à ne

7. This has of late broken down to a great extent by technological and economic change in the Acadian communities, by the declining secular influence of the church, and by the growth of class divisions based upon wealth. See M.-A. Tremblay, "The Acadian Society of Tomorrow: The Impact of Technology on Global Social Structure," in Communities and Culture in French Canada, ed. by G. L. Gold and M.-A. Tremblay (Toronto, 1973), pp. 62-74.

s'occuper du peuple que pour l'exploiter et lui faire verser des sous.⁸

The succour extended by the elite was not to be considered charity but rather a duty, "le devoir social". Both Acadian and French Canadian were compelled to accept this moral obligation by their religious faith. Thus Father Richard in 1880 admonished his Acadian flock:

... pour qu'un peuple soit heureux, il faut que les éléments divers qui le composent soient liés et agissent de telle sorte qu'il résulte de leur union et de leur action une commune jouissance, un commun bonheur. Les individus qui forment ces éléments divers, ont des intérêts communs et particuliers à faire avancer et à sauvegarder.⁹

Twenty-four years later, French Canadian leaders were still reaffirming this principle of "noblesse obligée".

"L'instruction a toujours été regardée comme un bien supérieur et ceux qui la possèdent constituent une catégorie privilégiée." However God had provided the education and therefore the educated "ne doit pas s'isoler", but rather re-enter public or political life for the greater benefit of the masses.¹⁰

In the nineteenth century the church provided the front rank of the French Canadian or Acadian elite.

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8. Le Progrès du Golfe (Rimouski), n.d., "Le Devoir Social et la classe dirigeante". Reprinted in L'Évangéline (Moncton), April 2, 1913, p. 4.
 9. Rev. M.-F. Richard addressing the Acadian National Convention, July 20, 1881. Printed in Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 22.
 10. Le Devoir (Montreal), July 1, 1914, p. 5, "Le Devoir Social Dans Les Professions Liberales".

According to one French Canadian author, the local priest was generally viewed as

le premier personnage de la paroisse, considéré par tous comme arbitre sans appel. Il n'est point l'homme de la sacristie mais un homme public [his emphasis]; son action s'étend à tout ce qui intéresse le bien-être de ses ouailles

Among fishermen, the priest had to be versed in the ways of the sea; among farmers, he had to be an agricultural advisor.

... il est l'ami de tous ceux qui ont recours à sa bienveillance ... C'est lui qui, au besoin, stimule les autorités civiles, trace les routes, faire construire les ponts, ériger les stations de chemin de fer ... En un mot le curé ... est l'animateur [his emphasis] de sa paroisse, le premier agent - et le plus actif - de tout ce qui est progrès.¹¹

The priest had a role in colonization, in the temperance movement, in education; indeed in every aspect of his parishioners' lives because that was "précisément la tâche du pasteur, le devoir du prêtre." His flock, both young and old, referred to him as "père" as that was his apparent function in society.¹²

In Quebec during this period the power of the church became extensive since it was around the local church, "les cloches de l'église", that the community revolved with clerical dogma providing the stimulus for the moral and

11. A. David, "L'évolution acadienne," Nova Francia, II (1926-27), pp. 54-55.

12. Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac), Sept. 20, 1895, p. 2.

intellectual development of the young. In 1864 Pope Pius IX, attempting to expand this power base, admitted in his "Syllabus Errorum" that he "ne peut pas se réconcilier avec la civilisation moderne",¹³ and challenged the growing pretensions of secular administrations. Led by Bishop Bourget of Montreal, one faction of the badly divided Quebec hierarchy aggressively sought to implement the Pope's dictum. The aggressiveness and intolerance of this powerful faction produced the Guibord affair, the proscribing of the Montreal Witness, the interdict on the "Institut Canadien", the "Programme Catholique", and the famous 1873 pronouncement of all the Quebec hierarchy which in part read:

We [the assembled bishops and archbishop] assert that the Church is a perfect Society, independent of the Civil power and Superior to it ... the latter is to the former not only negatively but also positively subordinate ... The Civil power can do nothing which tends to the injury of the Church and ought to abstain from such acts as would clash with the laws of the Church ... the Civil power has been instituted by God for the protection and care of the Church.¹⁴

13. Abbé J.-A. Gingras, Le Bas-Canada Entre Le Moyen-Age Et L'Age Moderne (Quebec, 1880), p. 41. Abbé Gingras himself condemned (p. 10) many libertarian concepts which were fundamental to most if not all Canadian legislatures: "... la liberté de la presse, la liberté de la tribune ... la liberté d'opinion ... la liberté des cultes"
14. Statement of the Fifth Provincial (Quebec) Council, 1873 which was endorsed by Pope Pius IX in September, 1874. Quoted in Sir A. T. Galt, Church and State (Montreal, 1876), p. 21.

Faced with such assertiveness in an almost exclusively Catholic province, the Quebec Assembly ceded to the clerical elite the responsibility for charities, reformatories, asylums, education and, after the Guibord affair, even burials. Though undoubtedly this was the high water mark of clerical unanimity and intolerance, the church in Quebec attempted to maintain its traditional role well into the twentieth century. Even then, parents, educators, journalists and politicians were still supposed to respect "des droits supérieur de l'Eglise" and adhere to the dictates of their priests and bishops.¹⁵

In New Brunswick the power of the Catholic Church could never be analagous to the Quebec situation because of the religious complexion of that first province. The Catholic hierarchy in the Maritime provinces consequently was much less aggressive, rarely challenging the authority of the Assemblies.¹⁶ Nevertheless the parish priests, seemingly unconcerned with the theories of ultramontanism and gallicanism, possessed substantial influence within the individual villages. They served as advisors to every association, as teachers, as arbitrators of disputes and as the moral and political leaders of the community. The priest himself never depreciated his prestige, stating that it was he who exercised "sur le peuple acadien une influence

15. Le Devoir, April 13, 1910, p. 3, "Lettre Pastorale des Pères du Premier Council Plénier de Québec".

16. One important exception was of course over the New Brunswick Schools question. See supra, chapter IV.

décisive et que ... [without him] le peuple acadien n'existerait pas."¹⁷

The priests in l'Acadie were rarely reticent about employing their power. For example, Father Camille Lefebvre of Memramcook as late as 1893 asked Pascal Poirier to warn the Conservatives in Ottawa that "il est en mon pouvoir" to control 200 votes, enough to swing the next election to the Liberals if Memramcook and the Collège St. Joseph did not obtain a railway station.¹⁸ Such threats of intervention were never idle ones - Onésiphore Turgeon, contesting an 1877 by-election against Timothy Anglin,¹⁹ was defeated only after several priests in the region described him as a "protestant de coeur" and endorsed his opponent. Following the advice of Israel Tarte, Turgeon complained to Bishop Conroy, then in Canada investigating the rivalries within the Quebec hierarchy. Turgeon however chose not to follow the Charlevoix precedent and contest his defeat in the civil courts.²⁰

By the mid-1870's, the Acadians were beginning to realize the inadequacy of their representation in the

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17. Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 6, 1895, p. 1.
 18. Rev. C. Lefebvre to P. Poirier, March 9, 1893. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-3.
 19. Anglin's Gloucester seat had been declared vacant by the House of Commons since he had illegally held contracts with the federal government between 1875 and 1876 worth almost \$30,000.
 20. Turgeon, Un Tribut à la race acadienne, Mémoires 1871-1927, pp. 37-45.

secular and political spheres and the need for a lay elite became apparent. Because "Le prêtre par définition était mandaté pour diriger la communauté acadienne de l'intérieur et dans des relations avec l'extérieur,"²¹ the task of preparing this new elite fell, as leadership itself formerly had, to the clergy. Various religious orders founded the Collège St. Joseph, the Collège St. Louis and later the Collège Ste. Anne for this purpose. To these institutions

appartient de crédit d'avoir fourni à l'Eglise et à l'Etat ... des hommes d'une instruction supérieure, qui devinrent dans leurs sphères respectives, ses collaborateurs les plus efficaces dans l'oeuvre de relèvement qui se poursuivait.²²

The Collège Ste. Anne (Church Point, N. S.) for example, founded in 1891 by the Eudist Order, had by 1949 contributed to Acadian society no fewer than 6 bishops, 180 priests, 75 doctors and dentists, 15 lawyers, 6 agronomists and 5 school inspectors.²³ As this emerging elite progressed in their respective pursuits, they were readily accepted by the masses who believed, as M.-A. Tremblay writes, that

24. A cette époque, diriger les autres n'était pas un moyen pour acquérir du prestige ou de 'bien de placer' dans le système social, mais une façon de

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21. Tremblay, "Les Acadiens de la Baie Française, L'Histoire d'une Survivance," p. 551.
 22. Le Progrès Acadien (Moncton), n.d., p. 3. Copy in C.E.A., Box "Journalisme acadien", file "Le Progrès Acadien".
 23. Tremblay, "Les Acadiens de la Baie Française, L'Histoire d'une Survivance," p. 534.

servir, de faire bénéficier les autres de ses talents, de ses connaissances.²⁴

The new Acadian elite was well prepared to assume a dominant position. Trained in the humanities at classical colleges, they could cultivate an audience, arouse it, and convert it to certain nebulous and perhaps irrelevant causes. For example at the 1881 and 1884 "Conventions Nationales", Father Marcel Richard, a superb orator, moved the delegates to simultaneous cheers and tears. "La structure superbe, la parole enflammée, les gestes nobles et majestueux du prédicateur [Richard]" convinced the crowd to adopt his preferences as symbols of nationhood.²⁵ These men acknowledged and seemed to thrive on the adulation of the people. They carried themselves as leaders should. In response, the masses looked to them for direction and for some improvement in their general situation.

Once in power however, the lay elite's driving concern no longer seemed to be the welfare of its constituency. Instead each member consolidated his own position and, with

24. Ibid., pp. 551-52. Tremblay's findings are supported by John Porter who has concluded that "A rural, agricultural, primary producing society is a much less differentiated society than one which has highly concentrated industries in large cities." See Porter, The Vertical Mosaic, p. 4. The class lines which did exist in Acadian society were not rigid since membership in the upper class was much more dependent upon education than birth or wealth. Though entry to the classical colleges was not universal, the aspiring and intelligent youth could gain access by seeking to become a priest.

25. Rev. M. Gildas, Mgr. M.-F. Richard (Moncton, 1940), p. 93. For details of the National Conventions, see infra, chapter VIII.

some exceptions, sought to reinforce, through mutual adulation, that of his colleagues. Thus while frequently attacking the policies which Pascal Poirier espoused, Valentin Landry, the Liberal editor of L'Évangéline, took care to praise his devotion to the Acadian cause:

Je connais trop votre dévouement à la grand cause acadienne, les sacrifices que vous vous êtes imposés ... Plût à Dieu que nous eussions en Acadie une dizaine de braves défenseurs de nos droits aussi courageux que vous!²⁶

Poirier responded in much the same manner, complimenting Landry on "votre courage, votre patriotisme, votre désintéressement."²⁷ In 1903 when Poirier was named to the French Legion of Honour he generously maintained that this recognition should have been extended to Pierre Landry, "notre premier champion. Je me sens gêne d'être chevalier, lui, qui le mérite mieux, ne l'étant pas."²⁸

The new leaders of l'Acadie all came from the same background and schools. They knew each other well and usually could work closely together. The first Acadian bishop in New Brunswick, Mgr. Edouard LeBlanc of Saint John,²⁹ said as much in a letter to the newly elected (1911)

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26. Valentin Landry to P. Poirier, March 14, 1909. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-18.
 27. P. Poirier to Valentin Landry, March 21, 1909. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-18.
 28. P. Poirier to Pl. Gaudet, Aug. 12, 1903. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.68-18.
 29. See *infra*, chapter XII for details of Mgr. LeBlanc's life and career.

Conservative M.P. from Kent, Ferdinand Robidoux jr. These two men had been colleagues at the Collège St. Joseph.³⁰ In many cases the relationship between members of the elite was even closer. Narcisse Landry, the editor of Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes (Bathurst), was the half-brother of Pierre A. Landry, the leading Acadian politician. It is not surprising then that Narcisse could write Sir John A. Macdonald that Le Courrier "[which is] supposed to be independent in politics" really had "a penchant [his emphasis] towards the Conservative side, particularly on account of Mr. [Pierre] Landry."³¹ The question immediately arises whether Landry's "penchant" for the Conservatives stems from Acadian or family interests. As if existing blood ties were not sufficient to ensure his intimacy with the Conservative Party, Narcisse Landry in 1882 married Henriette Poirier, the niece of Senator Poirier. One can readily comprehend why Landry, unlike many others, vociferously endorsed Poirier's candidature for the Senate in 1885.³²

The Acadian elite comprised a rather exclusive club, pointedly excluding some who, for one reason or another, did not quite fit. Placide Gaudet (1850-1930) was a case in

30. Mgr. E. LeBlanc to F.-J. Robidoux jr., Sept. 3, 1912. Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.1-4.

31. Narcisse Landry to Sir John A. Macdonald, Oct. 7, 1886. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 39B, pp. 15457-66.

32. See infra, n. 62 and 64. Poirier, Feb. 21, 1886. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-1.

point. More than anyone else in that era, he was responsible for tracing and recording Acadian history.³³

For this the elite praised Gaudet as

une de nos gloires nationales, une des figures les plus remarquables de son temps ... Patriote ardent, il a servi avec amour la cause nationale; esprit cultivé, doué d'une belle intelligence

....³⁴

In truth however the elite viewed Gaudet as somewhat of a misfit who, after graduating from the Collège St. Joseph and dropping out of the Séminaire de Montréal, showed a remarkable inability to remain for long in any one job³⁵ and who, much to the ire of his colleagues, imbibed too much liquor:

Mon cher Monsieur Poirier, ne pourriez-vous pas écrire un mot à M. Gaudet et l'engager à se réformer un peu. C'est une vraie guenille ecusez [sic] l'expression. Il est toujours ivre. Une honte ... Peut-être qu'un mot de votre part ... cesserait cette vie de désordres.³⁶

By 1902 Gaudet had ended his "vie de désordres" - he

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33. Though Gaudet never published his research, he left some ninety boxes of invaluable material which is now held by the Centre d'Etudes Acadiennes.
 34. Article written by F.-J. Robidoux jr. in Nov., 1935, five years after Gaudet's death. Copy in Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.3-19.
 35. Between 1874 and 1900 when he finally secured a permanent, though at times insecure position with the public archives in Ottawa, Gaudet had taught in nine different schools and colleges, spent a year searching parish registers, and spent a short time working for each of the Acadian newspapers.
 36. Rev. P. Arsenault to P. Poirier, Feb. 21, 1900. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-5.

even stopped drinking³⁷ but the elite continued to view him as "un ridicule complet".³⁸ Valentin Landry accused him of insincerity; "tu deviens plus patriote depuis la lumière te fait jouer."³⁹ Though Gaudet had contributed much to Acadian self-awareness, he was still excluded from the councils of the elite,⁴⁰ councils which seemingly were accessible only to politicians, jurists and clerics.

One can also criticize this new elite for being merely an extension of the old clerical elite. These men had been introduced to power and to each other by the traditional leadership and seemed too contented with their own position to criticize existing deficiencies in Acadian society or, if it were necessary, to introduce radical changes. The hierarchical nature of Catholic society had conditioned the masses to accept authority and these new leaders, subject to the same conditioning, profited by it.

In 1893 Honoré Mercier, the Liberal leader in Quebec, criticized the clergy of that province for failing to educate the young properly, for failing to insist upon

37. In 1902 Gaudet became an agent for the "Dixon Cure - A Vegetable Antidote for Alcoholism, Morphine and All Drug Habits." See J. G. Dixon to P. Gaudet, Feb. 22, 1902. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.68-2.

38. Abbé E. Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, March 16, 1880. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-19.

39. V.-A. Landry to P. Gaudet, n.d. See Gaudet to Landry, May 11, 1909. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.71-12.

40. P. Gaudet to Rev. P. Bourgeois, Dec. 8, 1903. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.69-7.

independent thought and action.⁴¹ Le Moniteur Acadien in Shediac soon challenged Mercier's "dangerous" claims, assuring its subscribers that the Canadian clergy, like Acadia's own, was "laborieux, entreprenant et fort intelligent ... modeste, sans prétention, et dépourvu de savoir-faire."⁴² It ignored the serious questions which Mercier had posed and dogmatically upheld the traditional hierarchy.

The Acadian editors, being part of the new elite, readily accepted existing shibboleths instead of serving as the social conscience of Acadia.⁴³ Self-interest dictated the acceptance of this conservative posture. Three priests were directors of Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes and could, if ever necessary, censor anti-clerical utterances.⁴⁴ It is likely however that the close ties between the elite in the media and the elite in the church made such

41. See Le Moniteur Acadien, March 17, 1893, p. 2.

42. Ibid., May 2, 1893, "Du Clergé Canadien".

43. Perhaps it is unreasonable to expect the Acadian journalistic elite to be imbued with reforming zeal since they derive their position from, since they have common origins with and since they share the common concerns of the other sections of the power elite. The Acadian press, as in the rest of Canada, was largely a business venture and this by itself is not subject to criticism. What is distasteful are the pretensions with which this elite disguises its true motives. See supra, chapter V. For a general study of this question concerning the media in all of Canada, see Porter, The Vertical Mosaic, pp. 462-81.

44. N.-A. Landry to Valentin Landry, March 13, 1885. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-2.

ensorship unnecessary. Even Valentin Landry, the most aggressive of Acadian editors, showed great caution when dealing with the French language clergy. Financial success depended upon them⁴⁵ and he counselled his writers that "des immondices contre le clergé" will not be permitted in L'Évangéline.⁴⁶ At roughly the same time in Quebec, French Canadian writers, equally Catholic, were throwing off the tutelage of the clergy. While remaining Catholics, they were more liberal in their thinking, evaluating advice and then accepting or rejecting it according to its merits. The lay elite in Quebec challenged the clerical one for as L.-O. David wrote,

[the] évêques et ses prêtres sont des hommes sujets à l'erreur et aux passions humaines.

Ils ont droit de compter sur l'Esprit-Saint quand ils parlent des hauteurs du monde spirituel, mais non pas lorsqu'ils descendent sur le terrain laissé aux disputes des hommes.

Ils perdent leur force lorsqu'ils touchent de trop près la terre.⁴⁷

The Acadian elite meanwhile, perhaps because of its relative inexperience, preferred to perpetuate the existing order, striving more for self-interest than for innovation.

The new Acadian elite also sought to expurgate the entrenched Irish, Anglo-Protestant, and Québécois politicians

45. See Rev. P. Bourgeois to Valentin Landry, May 16, 1892. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-6.

46. V.-A. Landry to Daniel Landry, March 26, 1891. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-1.

47. L.-O. David, Le Clergé Canadien, Sa Mission, Son Oeuvre (Montréal, 1896), p. 10.

from the Acadian constituencies, replacing them with Acadian ones who supposedly would better protect the race's interests. They were remarkably successful in this endeavour once the Acadians began to realize that Irish Catholic or Anglo-Protestant representatives were not working in their interests. In 1870 only one Acadian, Armand Landry, sat in the New Brunswick Assembly; after the 1871 election there were four Acadian M.L.A.'s and by 1896 there were eight.⁴⁸ The federal constituency of Gloucester, eighty percent Acadian,⁴⁹ had a history of being dominated by the Irish.⁵⁰ During an 1894 by-election, the Acadians elected Th  otime Blanchard. In 1900 the Acadians of Kent replaced George McInerney with Olivier-J. LeBlanc and in 1907, after John Costigan's retirement to the Senate, elected Pius Michaud in Victoria.

If the old political elite did not serve the Acadians well, neither unfortunately did the new one. The Acadian politicians, like their journalistic colleagues, did "not change the [dominant] ideology." Instead they merely conformed to and perpetuated "the old tradition. History is full of examples of revolutions ... which revolutionize

48. For a list of Acadian M.L.A.'s in the three Maritime provinces, see Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.2-4.

49. Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, p. 290.

50. P. Poirier to P  re A. Poirier, March 10, 1931. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.4-1. See also Johnson, The Canadian Directory of Parliament, 1867-1967, pp. 630-31. Timothy Anglin represented Gloucester from 1867-1882 and Kennedy Francis Burns from 1882-1894.

nothing."⁵¹ They concerned themselves with gaining positions for themselves or their friends and supporters. Their personal appointment to some position was somehow supposed to benefit the mass of the people.

The Acadian elite sought these public posts with a vengeance. In 1880 Pierre Landry, a Cabinet Minister in New Brunswick for only two years, wrote to Hector Langevin in Ottawa demanding that a Catholic be named to the provincial Supreme Court or, failing that, an Acadian to the Senate. When his supplications were ignored, Landry remained bouyant feeling that:

Il serait bon que nos vues sur l'appointment d'un Sénateur Acadien seraient bien connues de Sir Leonard [Tilley], afin qu'au futur il comprenne que nous demandions un Acadien pas nécessairement pour remplir une vacance dans Northumberland mais pour la première vacance au N. B.⁵²

Writing directly to Tilley, Landry served notice that the Acadians could no longer be ignored. They deserved and must "have a representative in the Senate and ... [it must] be given them at the very first opportunity."⁵³

The Acadian leaders demanded all sorts of positions, feeling that they deserved a full one-third of the patronage available in New Brunswick because they comprised one-third

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51. Nadel, "The Concept of Social Elites," p. 423. See also supra, n. 43.
52. P. A. Landry to G.-A. Girouard, M.P., Feb. 19, 1880. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-1, letterbook.
53. P. A. Landry to Sir L. Tilley, Feb. 19, 1880. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-1, letterbook.

of the population. This was a tactic long practiced by Quebec - for example in 1886 Senator Joseph H. Bellerose complained that "French Canadians had not received their share of the public patronage, that instead of holding one-third of the official positions, to which their numerical strength gave them a right, they had only one-sixth."⁵⁴ The Acadians claimed a plethora of posts ranging from Senatorships and judgeships to the less glamorous but still remunerative postmasterships and inspectorships. The minor posts were sufficient to keep one's constituents happy while the others could be employed to consolidate and aggrandize the elite's stature and prestige. Landry refused to be deterred when the Minister of Justice, James McDonald,⁵⁵ wrote that all appointments were made without regard to class or religion. Landry replied that such assertions, though commendable, were fallacious "when a 'class or creed' forming a large portion of a community is painfully conspicuous by its absence from positions." Landry insisted that past deficiencies be rectified:

I again urge that the French-Acadians
... are not recognized by existing
institutions in a fair proportion and

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54. Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1886, March 2, 1886, p. 47.
55. James McDonald (1828-1912) was born in Pictou County, Nova Scotia. McDonald was financial secretary in Tupper's Nova Scotia Government before 1867. He was elected to the House of Commons in 1872, defeated in 1874, re-elected in 1878 and served as Minister of Justice until 1881 when he was appointed Chief Justice of Nova Scotia.

I shall not cease urging it because I may be accused of speaking of 'class or creed'. It is well for the 'class or creed' that has no cause of complaint to depreciate that question being brought forward, but that rule cannot apply the other way.⁵⁶

In 1884 the death of Senator William Muirhead (1819-1884) made the appointment of a New Brunswick Acadian possible and the elite determined not to miss their opportunity. By this date, having had two "Conventions Nationales" to spark a national consciousness,⁵⁷ the Acadians proved more aggressive. Pierre Landry subtly threatened electoral reverses if again rebuked:

... [the] people are opening their eyes to the fact of their being excluded from all important appointments at the hands of our rulers ... the time is at hand when it [i.e. neglect] cannot longer be entertained without an expression of displeasure on the part of a people so persistently ignored.⁵⁸

Pascal Poirier, another Conservative, informed the Prime Minister that the Acadians might vote against the Tory incumbents in Gloucester, Kent, Victoria, Restigouche and Westmorland if ignored. Poirier added that meeting their wishes "would also affect favourably the Acadians of N. S. and P.E.I. who are now being worked quietly into the

56. P. A. Landry to Hon. James McDonald, Aug. 19, 1880. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-1, letterbook.

57. See infra, chapter VIII.

58. P. A. Landry to Sir John A. Macdonald, Jan. 6, 1885. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 411, pp. 198225-26.

Conservative Party."⁵⁹ To buttress their claims further, the elite organized assemblies in Shediac and the other Acadian centers. They then dispatched the resultant resolutions, all demanding an Acadian Senator, to Macdonald and Langevin.⁶⁰ Sensing impending victory, the members of the Acadian elite began vying for this remunerative and prestigious post, flooding Ottawa with letters extolling the virtues of various candidates. The competition was fierce.

Sir Leonard Tilley, the senior New Brunswick Minister in Ottawa, wished to appoint Pierre Landry, but he declined preferring a seat on the New Brunswick Supreme Court.

Instead Landry extolled the virtues of Pascal Poirier.⁶¹ Narcisse Landry, the editor of Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes and a Conservative candidate in 1878, was also mentioned as a possibility but his claim was not strong

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59. P. Poirier to Sir John A. Macdonald, Jan. 3, 1885. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 19, pp. 6935-38.
60. About forty copies of these resolutions were sent to Hector Langevin who was supposed to pass them along to interested parties. Langevin sent one copy to Macdonald although he did not express either support or even interest in it. Though he had just toured the Maritime provinces, there is no indication in the Langevin papers that he ever supported their causes. For copies of the resolution see Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 19, pp. 6960-63 and Sir H. Langevin to John A. Macdonald, Feb. 6, 1885. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 19, pp. 6958-59.
61. P. A. Landry to Sir John A. Macdonald, Feb. 13, 1885. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 19, pp. 6966-68. Pierre Landry was named a county court judge in 1890 and then elevated to the Supreme Court of New Brunswick in 1893. In 1913 he was made Chief Justice of New Brunswick, a position he held until his death in 1916.
64. N.-A. Landry to V.-A. Landry, Feb. 18, 1885. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.B.A. 7.1-2.

enough "cette fois" so he too endorsed Poirier.⁶² Other correspondents proposed a Dr. Gaudet, whom still others rejected as being too young and inexperienced. Valentin Landry, soon to found L'Évangéline, felt that Ferdinand Robidoux, the loyal Conservative editor of Le Moniteur Acadien, ought to be rewarded for his long service to l'Acadie:

J'étais porté à croire que M. Robidoux avait le premier droit à ce poste, en prenant en considération bien entendu les services qu'il a rendus à la nation et au parti conservateur, durant un séjour de 18 années parmi nous.⁶³

Others retorted that Robidoux's appointment would insult the Acadians because he was a Québécois by birth and not a true Acadian:

Sans tous les autres rapports il l'emporte, je crois sur bien d'autres; mais si on nous accorde un Acadien à ce titre, il ne faut pas que ça soit un Irlandais et le même raisonnement, sans autant de force peut-être, en exclueait un Canadien.⁶⁴

To this assertion, Valentin Landry responded that Pascal Poirier, Narcisse's choice, was no better:

Nous ne pouvons ignorer le fait que M. Robidoux est un Acadien pratique - qui n'a presque rien reçu pour les services incalculables qu'il a rendus

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62. N.-A. Landry to Valentin Landry, Feb. 10, 1885. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-2.
63. V.-A. Landry to N.-A. Landry, Feb. 24, 1885. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-2.
64. N.-A. Landry to V.-A. Landry, Feb. 10, 1885. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-2.

aux Acadiens. M. Poirier est un Canadien naturalisé, qui reçoit bonne récompense pour les services rendus aux Canadiens [his emphasis].⁶⁵

As the competition ended, the recipient of Macdonald's largesse was the young Pascal Poirier, a government employee since 1872. Initially apolitical, by 1878 Poirier was describing himself as a Conservative⁶⁶ and at one point considered entering active politics.⁶⁷ Poirier is often portrayed as the true Acadian nationalist, concerned only with the welfare of his race. In truth however, he was a staunch Conservative partizan who never deviated from the party platform. Even in 1880 as he was touring the Maritime provinces in pursuit of the elusive goal of Acadian unity, his real purpose was quite different. Onésiphore Turgeon, the perennial government candidate in Gloucester, had arranged for his absence from the post office in Ottawa so as to give Poirier

the opportunity of seeing some of his friends and relatives who would accept the explanations [of] a disinterested party [sic] ... relative to the policy of the present administration while they might not be prepared to accept mine.

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65. V.-A. Landry to N.-A. Landry, Feb. 24, 1885. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-2.
66. P. Poirier to Rameau de Saint-Père, May 13, 1878. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-17.
67. Rev. J.-A. Babineau, a close friend of Poirier's, wrote that "Poirier, qui va probablement se porter candidat à la prochain élection dans Kent" See Rev. J.-A. Babineau to Placide Gaudet, Sept. 8, 1878. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.64-4.

I consider the presence of Poirier in Gloucester ... [to] be of a valuable assistance to our cause.⁶⁸

Through successive contentious issues - the Riel affair, the Manitoba School Question, the conscription crisis⁶⁹ - Poirier religiously defended the Conservative cause even though Acadian interests may have been better served under the Liberal banner. Poirier, indicative of the elite in general, was a more ardent protector of party than of race because it was from the former that he derived his authority. While temporarily in charge of government patronage in Kent County, Poirier fired an Acadian, D.-D. Landry, and hired William Chase to serve as Harbour Master at Bouctouche. Needless to say, Landry, though a compatriot, was a Liberal and Chase a Conservative.⁷⁰ Unreservedly Poirier stated that "Je suis un partisan convaincu du gouvernement conservateur"⁷¹ and, wherever possible, he tried to ensure the political orthodoxy of the Acadians. This enforcement of dominant political views was pervasive in l'Acadie. Rev. Philéas Bourgeois found the atmosphere at the Collège St. Joseph, the breeding ground for a future elite, to be oppressively Conservative. "Je suis sûr" he

68. O. Turgeon to Sir John A. Macdonald, May 6, 1880. Madonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 368, pp. 170611-13.

69. See infra, chapters X and XI.

70. P. Poirier to C. H. Tupper, Aug. 9, 1890. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 287, pp. 131515-16.

71. Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1892, June 6, 1892, p. 296. Poirier's speech was reprinted in Le Moniteur Acadien, June 15 and 21, 1892, p. 2.

wrote to Valentin Landry, "que je ne pourrai retenir ma place ... [at the college] si je ne cesse de prendre part à la rédaction de l'Évangéline [a Liberal newspaper]."72

Even the Superior-General of his religious order made that patently clear.⁷³

This practice of putting party before people was neither new nor restricted to l'Acadie. In Quebec as in much of Canada, the political elite was inevitably consumed by the party "machine" and unable to refuse the personal advantages it offered. Jules Fournier, writing for Le Devoir in 1910, complained that three-quarters of the Quebec M.P.'s "n'hésitent pas à voter, en retour d'une 'passe', d'une boîte de cigares ou d'un verre de champagne, des bills d'intérêt privé, Qu'ils N'Ont Seulement Jamais Lus [his emphasis]."74 The politicians were mere puppets dominated more by the party whip than by public sentiment. Abbé Lionel Groulx felt that while

Nul de nos hommes public ne voudraient trahir ouvertement les intérêts de sa race, mais à trop d'entre eux, des ambitions politiques ont faits préférer lâchement la reculade à la bataille.⁷⁵

72. Rev. P. Bourgeois to V.-A. Landry, Feb. 25, 1898. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-10.

73. Rev. P. Bourgeois to V.-A. Landry, April 24, 1898. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-10.

74. Le Devoir, Feb. 25, 1910, p. 1, "La députation canadienne-française".

75. Ibid., Feb. 12, 1910, p. 4, "L'Âme De La Jeunesse Catholique Canadienne-Française".

76. J. Costigan to Sir John A. Macdonald, Feb. 18, 1884. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. I.

John Costigan, one of Macdonald's Cabinet Ministers, was on occasion driven to despair by the intransigence of his colleagues when it came

... to the placing of Irish Catholics on a footing of equality with the other elements of the Dominion ...

These Ministers seem to think that an Irish Catholic Minister should be content to know his salary and to be ready at all times to declare that his people have nothing to complain of.

To stress his dissatisfaction, Costigan considered resigning, surrendering his "Position, Salary and Comfort" but he, like other members of any elite, did not.⁷⁶

The Acadian elite, probably like other elites - and it is important to stress the universality of this problem - had conflicting loyalties. Their concern for their people, for gaining patronage, often interfered with their concern for their own personal welfare or for the fortunes of the political party which had permitted them to rise above the mass of the people in wealth, prestige and position. The improvement in the education of some, accompanied by a rise in social and economic status, had created different, though not rigid strata in Acadian society. The upper strata certainly had contact with the lower, at the National Conventions and through the press, but one is left with nagging suspicions. If the general situation of the masses were improved, the elite would enjoy greater influence in Ottawa or Fredericton since the constituency they claimed

76. J. Costigan to Sir John A. Macdonald, Feb. 18, 1884. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. I.

to represent would demand more respect. Perhaps this is why the elite tried to fashion a united "nation" at the convention of 1881. Since greater numbers brought greater power, perhaps this is why the elite condemned emigration so vociferously. Perhaps this is why the elite dreaded the adoption by their people of the English language. Many working class Acadians wanted their children to know English, and perhaps even become anglophones, so as to advance in a predominantly Anglo-Saxon milieu. However such anglicization would only weaken the elite's constituency.⁷⁷ Hence the members of the elite actively sought ideological (i.e. nationalism) and institutional (i.e. politics, the Société Nationale L'Assomption) frameworks which could promote their personal objectives while at the same time maintain group cohesion.⁷⁸

The conflict of loyalties between people, person and party seemed, because it was a new experience, to disturb members of the elite themselves. Pascal Poirier is one obvious example. He claimed to represent the Acadians and yet from 1872 until his death in 1933 he lived in Ottawa.

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77. The important problems of national unity, emigration and colonization are discussed in detail in succeeding chapters.
78. G. L. Gold, using Saint-Pascal in Quebec, has studied the ability of elites, in his case an entrepreneurial elite, to create a new framework which could then promote their own interests. See his article "Voluntary Associations and a New Economic Elite in a French-Canadian Town" in Community and Culture in French Canada, ed. by Gold and Tremblay, pp. 202-17.

Was he not their "representative" only because the Prime Minister had chosen to reward him for his dogmatic political support? Revealing the problems bothering him, Poirier on one occasion openly questioned his anomalous position as the sole Acadian Senator:

Are we in touch with the people? I fail to see it ... we are not in touch with the people.

...

... we do not derive our authority from the proper source. We should be in touch with the people. We are like Anteus deriving all his strength from mother earth. Separate us from the people ... and we become powerless.⁷⁹

Narcisse Landry too, though a member of the elite, had doubts about the system. When a Senator was appointed, he wrote to Valentin Landry, "il en profitera, le reste de la nation saura qu'il est au Sénat, en sera fier et l'appellera honorable; mais pour eux ça ne sera pas d'un grand profit."⁸⁰

Landry's fears are not entirely accurate; once in positions of power, members of the elite did strive to bring concrete benefits in the form of patronage to their following. The Acadian M.L.A.'s consistently showed less concern for the great issues of the day than with the belief "that the North Shore [of New Brunswick] has not received a fair share of consideration at the hands of the government."⁸¹ Yet

79. Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1890, April 23, 1890, p. 517.

80. Narcisse Landry to V.-A. Landry, Feb. 10, 1885. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-2.

81. New Brunswick, Synoptic Report ... of the House of Assembly, 1889, p. 29. C. H. LaBillois, March 11, 1889.

equally often, their primary concern was for themselves or their Party. When remunerative vacancies arose, in the Senate for example, the aspirants, never modest or subtle, did not disguise who would benefit from the appointment of an Acadian. In 1905 C. H. LaBillois, the Acadian Minister in the New Brunswick government, wrote Israel Tarte that

It is true that there are other aspirants for the office [of Senator] but none of them especially of our nationality can furnish such a long record, and no person applying is situated geographically as well as I ... I would be residing near the counties of Bonaventure and Gaspé [Quebec], in which counties I have always taken great interest as you know having hundreds of my relatives on the Electoral Lists ... All these matters ... would I think make my appointment a [politically] popular one.⁸²

The Acadian elite fought desperately to usurp positions held by their main rivals, the Irish Catholics, while at the same time jealously protecting anything they had already gained, such as the "Acadian Seat" of Pierre Landry on the provincial Supreme Court.⁸³

Pierre A. Landry was another important member of the Acadian elite. Along with Pascal Poirier, he was and is

82. C. H. LaBillois to J.-I. Tarte, Sept. 15, 1905. Tarte Correspondence, P.A.C., Vol. 17, No. 2185-86. It is interesting that LaBillois wrote Tarte in English, a common practice in letters between Acadians and French Canadians and one which exemplifies the embarrassment which the Acadians felt about their anglicized French. See also O.-J. LeBlanc, M.P., to J.-I. Tarte, Sept. 18, 1898. Tarte Correspondence, P.A.C., Vol. 17, No. 2161-62.
83. See "Pétition A Son Excellence Le Gouverneur Generale-En-Council", n.d. (approx. 1916). C.E.A., Box "Politique au N.-B.". See supra, n. 61.

generally credited with being the prime instigator of the Acadian renaissance. In truth however he was no different from the hoards of other ambitious politicians, Acadian and non-Acadian, bombarding Sir John A. Macdonald with an endless succession of self-aggrandizing letters. As early as 1882, after having served in the provincial Assembly for only four years, Landry sought a seat on the Supreme Court of New Brunswick:

The Acadian race ... will, I know, forever keep green in their memory the leader whose Government will be the first to recognize their existence by such a magnanimous act bestowed upon your humble servant [i.e. Landry] whose good fortune it has been to be their first lawyer and their first representative in a Department in the Government of the Maritime Provinces.⁸⁴

In 1883 he convinced G.-A. Girouard, the incumbent Conservative M.P. for Kent, to resign so he could contest and win the seat, bringing him closer yet to the centre of power.

His ambitions still unfulfilled, Landry continued to plague Macdonald for a loftier position. Although a seat on the Bench remained his ultimate goal,⁸⁵ in the late 1880's he announced that he would be satisfied with a seat in the federal Cabinet.⁸⁶ To acquire this, Landry enlisted the

84. P. A. Landry to Sir John A. Macdonald, Dec. 20, 1882. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 26, pp. 9941-42.
85. P. A. Landry to Sir John A. Macdonald, Sept. 5, 1885. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 39B, pp. 15407-09.
86. P. A. Landry to Sir John A. Macdonald, May 19, 1884. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 39B, pp. 15369-70.

support of several Acadian priests, of D.-A. Richard, a local Tory chieftain, and of his brother Narcisse Landry who promised Macdonald the endorsement of the Courrier des Provinces Maritimes, a "national" journal, in return for this appointment.⁸⁷ For Landry to enter the Ministry, it would have meant the displacement of a long time Acadian ally, John Costigan,⁸⁸ but that, though unfortunate, was nevertheless acceptable.

The Acadian journalists were as hypocritical as the politicians when it came to posing as the champions of the "national" interest. Each newspaper at its inception spoke of entering every Acadian home and "les [i.e. the Acadians] instruira sur ce qui est bon et propre pour eux [as Franco-Canadians] ... l'agriculture, la colonisation, la bonne entente, la langue française ... la morale et la religion."⁸⁹ In truth more prosaic forces were in effect. M.-D. Gaudet for example resigned from the Board of Directors of Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes because

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87. N.-A. Landry to Sir John A. Macdonald, Oct. 7, 1886. Macdonald Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 39B, pp. 15457-66.
88. In 1885 John Costigan promised "to use whatever influence I possess in securing for the Acadians of New Brunswick and the adjoining Provinces some recognition of their well established claims ... claims of the Acadian catholics was [sic] stronger than those of the Irish Catholics" See the Hon. J. Costigan to Father M.-F. Richard, Jan. 17, 1885. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1885".
89. Narcisse Landry of Le Courrier des Provinces Maritimes to Valentin Landry, later the editor of L'Évangéline, Feb. 10, 1885. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-2. See also supra, chapter V.

il [Gaudet] est bien désappointé au sujet de son paiement. Il dit qu'il n'a pas encore reçu une cent et que pour cette raison ... il a signifié ... qu'il donnait sa démission ... Les véritables hommes sont si rares!⁹⁰

Financial exigencies often tied the editors to one of the major political parties and the consequences were, at least part of the time, rewarding. In 1900, with the Liberals in power at Fredericton, the government refused to provide a grant to the Conservative Le Moniteur Acadien for translating and publishing the debates of the Assembly because, it claimed, "its reports were not impartial." Instead this grant went to the Liberal L'Évangéline even though at this time it was still situated in Weymouth, Nova Scotia.⁹¹

In 1910 Valentin Landry sold L'Évangéline, now in Moncton, to a group of Acadian businessmen⁹² who promised that the newspaper would be politically independent except

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90. Rev. Stanislas Doucet to V.-A. Landry, Feb. 8, 1887. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-3. The business aspect of the media in all of Canada is discussed in Porter, The Vertical Mosaic, pp. 462-81.
91. New Brunswick, Synoptic, N. B. Assembly, 1900, p. 75. C. H. LaBillois, Feb. 28, 1900. This practice continued as long as the Liberals were in power. See Synoptic, N. B. Assembly, 1902, pp. 102-03. O. M. Melanson, March 27, 1902.
92. The first Board of Directors included R.-A. Frechet (Gentleman), Dr. F. A. Richard, J. O. Gallant, several priests, C. H. Boudreau (Bank Manager), J. C. Landry (Lawyer), Dr. N. Doucet, Dr. A. Gaudet, W. D. Robichaud, J.-J. Bourgeois and Clement Cormier (Merchant). See Minutes for Board of Directors Meetings on May 25, June 10, Nov. 24, 1910. C.E.A., "Minutes des assemblées de la Compagnie de l'Évangéline".

when political questions "toucheront de près la nationalité ou la religion."⁹³ Political independence did not satisfy the Conservative elite however. Ferdinand Robidoux jr., A. D. Richard and the Hon. D. V. Landry, all important Acadian Tories,⁹⁴ travelled to Ottawa where they received \$3,000 from the Hon. John Douglas Hazen, a member of Borden's cabinet.⁹⁵ They used this money to purchase 300 of the 600 outstanding shares of L'Évangéline.⁹⁶ which, after soliciting the right of proxy from other shareholders,⁹⁷ they employed at the shareholders' meeting of June 19, 1917. The outcome was the appointment of several prominent Conservatives to the Board of Directors: Senator Thomas Bourque, a former M.L.A. and party organizer, the Hon. D. V. Landry and Ferdinand Robidoux jr.⁹⁸ However because of the efforts of the editor,⁹⁹ J.-O. Gallant, L'Évangéline

93. Ibid., meeting of Aug. 31, 1911. This independence was reaffirmed at the meeting of Dec. 26, 1911.

94. F.-J. Robidoux jr. was the son of the editor of Le Moniteur Acadien and a Conservative M.P. from 1911 until 1917; D. V. Landry was a Minister in the local Tory administration; A. D. Richard was an important organizer for the Acadian regions of New Brunswick.

95. See Clement Cormier to F.-J. Robidoux jr., Dec. 4, 1951. C.E.A., Box "Journalisme Acadien", file "Cormier".

96. Minutes for the Board of Directors meeting, March 26, 1914. C.E.A., "Minutes des assemblées".

97. See Senator T.-J. Bourque to F.-J. Robidoux jr., June 15, 1917; J.-C. Landry to F.-J. Robidoux jr., June 12, 1917. Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.1-5.

98. L'Acadien (Moncton), June 26, 1917, p. 1.

99. Ibid.

remained nominally independent and even quasi-Liberal during the war years.

The Liberal elite was similarly alarmed by the sale of L'Évangéline. Without Valentin Landry's rhetoric, the Liberal Party would have no instrument to offset the influence of the dogmatically Conservative Le Moniteur Acadien. The new L'Évangéline, it was feared, "Sans être officiellement un journal conservateur ... en pratique supportait la politique et les députés du parti au pouvoir."¹⁰⁰ Their response was at least more forthright and honest than that of the Conservatives. After obtaining a printing press and funds from Senator P.-A. Choquette¹⁰¹ and selling \$100 shares to a number of Liberal worthies,¹⁰² J.-O. Gallant (later the editor of L'Évangéline) and Clement Cormier founded (Nov., 1913) L'Acadien in Moncton as an "Organe du Parti Libéral".¹⁰³ Offering portraits of Sir

100. Clement Cormier to F.-J. Robidoux jr., Dec. 4, 1951. C.E.A., Box "Journalisme Acadien", file "Cormier".

101. See *ibid.* Senator Choquette (1854 - 1948) was an important Liberal in Quebec, being involved in Le Courrier de Montmagny and later Le Soleil and representing Montmagny in the House of Commons from 1887 until 1898.

102. These included Senator Choquette (1 share), O. Turgeon (M.P., 1 share), P. J. Veniot (M.L.A. and later M.P., 1 share), Pius Michaud (M.P., 2 shares), L.-A. Dugal (M.L.A., 2 shares), C.-M. Léger (M.L.A., 1 share), Dr. A. Sormany (M.L.A., 1 share), P.-P. Melanson (M.L.A., 1 share) as well as several non-Acadian Liberals such as the Hon. W. E. Foster, the Hon. William Pugsley, the Hon. C. W. Robinson and Senator Peter McSweeney. See C.E.A., Box "Journalisme Acadien", file "L'Acadien".

103. L'Acadien, Jan. 4, 1916, p. 2.

Wilfrid Laurier to its new subscribers,¹⁰⁴ L'Acadien claimed that it combined its Liberalism with "national" or racial interests:

[L'Acadien will be] libéral ... aussi longtemps que ce parti sera ce qu'il est aujourd'hui, c'est-à-dire le plus favorable aux Acadiens.

... Nous voulons défendre les droits du peuple; et dans ce but, nous ne saurions mieux faire que de nous ranger du côté libéral¹⁰⁵

The consequence of all this manoeuvring, be it by the Liberals or the Conservatives, was a press devoted not to the interests of the race but to the interests of the political elite, producing only a continuation of "le patriotisme intéressé" and "l'égoïsme mercenaire".¹⁰⁶

By the end of the nineteenth century the Acadian people had their own journalists, politicians, professionals; in short their own elite. Yet if the "foreign" elite had served them poorly, the new one introduced few substantial improvements to Acadian society. Certainly the Acadian elite taught the people to be more aggressive and unified but their motives for doing so remain questionable; "si nos gens avaient plus d'organisation, plus de confiance dans leurs compatriotes... nous, les quelques avocats acadiens ...

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid., Nov. 27, 1913, p. 1, "Ce Que Sera Notre Journal".

106. N. Robidoux to Pl. Gaudet, May 9, 1893. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.65-8.

pourrions faire de très bonnes affaires."¹⁰⁷ To teach the people to define, publicize, and demand their own priorities, if that were indeed possible, might have undermined the elite's continued influence. To teach the people to be suspicious and independent of the existing political order might similarly have undermined the elite's authority.

Under the old elite the Acadians "étaient presque tous endettés aux marchands ... qui les tenaient dans l'esclavage autant que possible."¹⁰⁸ This indebtedness, combined with "fraud, lying, perjury and swindling"¹⁰⁹ and an equal mixture "de l'argent et du whiskey"¹¹⁰ permitted the Irish and the Anglo-Protestants to dominate Acadian politics and parishes. With the coming of the "new order" the leaders were changed - competing elites may alternate quite frequently - but not the corruption as the Acadian elite depended upon and employed the same practices.

Onésiphore Turgeon provides an excellent example. Emigrating to l'Acadie from Quebec, he ran, unsuccessfully, as a Conservative in Gloucester during the elections of 1872

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107. Arthur T. LeBlanc to Pl. Gaudet, March 23, 1906. Gaudet Papers, C.E.A. 1.70-12.
108. Turgeon, Un Tribut à la race acadienne, Mémoires 1871-1927, p. 33.
109. Bishop Rogers to Father M.-F. Richard, Jan. 1, 1874. Richard Coll., C.E.A., File "1874".
110. P. Poirier to Rameau de Saint-Père, May 27, 1891. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-30.

and 1882 as well as in the by-elections of 1875 and 1877. The Tories refused him their endorsement for the election of 1896¹¹¹ and Turgeon ran as a Liberal but was again defeated. However in preparation for the next election, Israel Tarte gave Turgeon the control of patronage for Gloucester, eliciting anguished complaints from the stalwart Liberals.¹¹² Tarte was a shrewd strategist however and Turgeon employed the public purse with finesse.¹¹³ Between 1896 and 1900 he extracted over \$100,000 from Ottawa for "his" constituency¹¹⁴ becoming known as the one "qui nous donne tout l'eau qu'il nous faut [i.e. deeper harbours]."¹¹⁵ Turgeon promised even more for Gloucester if he was elected:

Quand vous m'aurez élu et donne de
l'influence auprès des autorités fédérales,
soyez certains que je verrai à vous donner
toutes les commodités possibles pour vos
travaux, qui profitent aussi bien au pays
tout entier qu'à vos familles.¹¹⁶

Though bringing undeniable benefits to his constituents, Turgeon, as part of the new Acadian elite, was employing the

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111. O. Turgeon to Sir Leonard Tilley, May 7, 1896. Tilley Correspondence, New Brunswick Museum, Box 9, packet No. 5, letter 13.
 112. See O.-J. LeBlanc to J.-I. Tarte, Aug. 18, 1898. Tarte Correspondence, P.A.C., Vol. 17, No. 2161-62.
 113. See for example, Turgeon's request to A. G. Blair, Minister of Railways and Canals, April 25, 1900. Tarte Correspondence, P.A.C., Vol. 12, No. 1738.
 114. Turgeon, Un Tribut à la race acadienne, Mémoires 1871-1927, p. 77.
 115. Ibid., p. 78.
 116. Ibid., p. 79.

same, barely defensible tactics of the old political elite. The people responded in a predictable fashion; they could not afford the nationalism of the elite, but rather remained content to elect anyone, Irish, English, Acadian or Greek, who brought employment and cash to the district.¹¹⁷ In 1896 Théotime Blanchard had defeated Turgeon by 800 votes; in 1900 Turgeon emerged with a majority of close to 1,000. From this point Turgeon never looked back, winning every election until his retirement to the Senate in 1925. The members of the elite had changed but the elite itself, in its habits and lack of conscience, remained the same.

The Acadian elite piously condemned the lack of sophistication evident among their following. The position of the elite itself was weakened by Acadian disunity and they urged an end to fratricidal rancour.¹¹⁸ They bemoaned the manner in which elections were contested; an article in L'Évangéline provided an apt description:

117. The distribution of patronage was (and is) an important factor in economically marginal communities regardless of the racial origin of the people. Vincent Lemieux, in studying the Ile d'Orléans, writes of the elector "who is poorly regarded and who can always profit from political patronage, no matter what party is in power. Quite often these voters are the most impoverished on the Island, so much so that patronage assures them just enough to lead a decent life without allowing them to contemplate using the means thus obtained to exercise political power." V. Lemieux, "Political Patronage on the Ile d'Orléans," in Communities and Culture in French Canada, ed. by Gold and Tremblay, p. 194.

118. L'Évangéline, April 1, 1909, p. 2, "L'Union Fait-Elle La Force?"

121. Brunet, Quebec, Canada Anglais, Deux Itinéraires, Un Affrontement, p. 171.

Jean Acadien et Acadian Jean ne sont que des chefs subalternes. Des plus gros bonnets de leur hiérarchie politique leur fournissent les armes. D'abord le whiskey, pour endormir ceux qu'ils veulent blaguer; deuxièmement les promesses de petites positions; troisièmement de gros paquets remplis de promesses non-tenues de leurs adversaires; quatrièmement les murmures et les invectives immondes des déçus, de ceux qui avaient voté aux dernières élections dans l'attente de quelques faveurs qu'ils n'ont pas obtenue ensuite. Enfin un lot de 'tu as menti' ... 'Laurier est un Français, vote pour lui' ... 'il y a des orangistes dans le parti conservateur', 'il y a des Franc-Maçons dans le parti libéral'.¹¹⁹

However it was the members of the elite who, in spite of their pious admonitions, were responsible for this behaviour since they provided the examples and the attitudes to which the masses responded:

The masses do not corrupt themselves; if they are corrupted, they have been corrupted ... The critical element [for this behaviour] ... consists in the beliefs, standards, and the competence of those who constitute the influentials, the opinion-leaders, the political activists in the order.¹²⁰

Throughout the nineteenth century the Acadian elite, "les définisseurs de situations" according to Michel Brunet,¹²¹ was torn between conflicting loyalties to and conflicting ambitions for themselves, their parties, and their people. The elite's acquisition of wealth, power and prestige had

119. Ibid., May 24, 1911, p. 4, "La Politique Chez Nous".

120. V. O. Key, jr., Public Opinion and American Democracy (New York, 1961). Cited in Bachrach, The Theory of Democratic Elitism, p. 48.

121. Brunet, Quebec, Canada Anglais, Deux Itinéraires, Un Affrontement, p. 171.

removed them from the mass of the people at the bottom of the social pyramid and consequently one must view their pronouncements with a great deal of suspicion. Before 1867 the elite promoted Confederation as a means of uniting French Canadians and Acadians; meanwhile the people worried about their economic future and accepted only reluctantly the new federation. Through the nineteenth century, the Canadien and Acadian elite, being financially secure, promoted the harsh life of a colonizer and farmer as an alternative to emigration; the people meanwhile preferred to seek their fortune in the industrial centres of New England.¹²² The leaders perpetually spoke of aggrandizement; the people of consolidation. Consequently while admitting the influence of the Acadian elite, while admitting the benefits they brought to Acadian society, one must be circumspect not to rely exclusively on, or at least to suspect, their interpretation of any situation.

122. See *infra*, chapter IX.

CHAPTER VII

Acadian Autonomy - An Acadian Educational System

One of the foremost priorities of the new Acadian elite was the development of an educational system in the Maritime provinces which conformed to the needs of the Acadian minority. The importance of a basic education in elevating the social and economic standards of l'Acadie was undeniable:

L'Education est le plus sublime de tous les arts parcequ'elle est l'art régulateur de tous les autres. C'est elle qui les dirige, qui les perfectionne, qui détermine la production des ses chefs - d'oeuvre où s'exerce le génie humain.¹

The classical colleges serving the Acadians had a vital function to fulfill in providing successive generations of an elite which could continue to draw the mass of the people from the poverty and isolation in which they once resided. However a small portion of the Acadian elite, and primarily Father Marcel Richard, felt that the educational institutions as they existed in the mid-1870's were not equal to the task assigned them. Richard directed his

1. Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac), June 29, 1905, p. 1. See also supra, chapter IV for an extensive discussion of the importance of the educational system.

animosity primarily at the Collège St. Joseph in Memramcook which, directed by the French Canadian Rev. Camille Lefebvre,² seemed more suited to French Canadian than Acadian requirements and aspirations. In an attempt to provide a more sympathetic environment, Rev. Richard in 1874 opened the Collège St. Louis in St. Louis de Kent and an intense rivalry between French Canadian and Acadian commenced. The ardent Acadian nationalists, once having expurgated the former Irish or Anglo-Protestant elite from their midst, now sought to do the same with the Québécois. Marcel-François Richard served as the moral conscience of the Acadian people and as a determined proponent of Acadian equality throughout their renaissance. A wide selection of adjectives may be used to describe this man: dedicated, determined, forceful, headstrong, unrelenting, pugnacious, self-righteous and confident. The youngest of ten children, Richard was born in 1847 and raised in the typically Acadian milieu of St. Louis de Kent, New Brunswick. In 1861 he enrolled at Saint Dunstan's College in Charlottetown, an institution that was conducted entirely in English. The ostracism which Richard and the other Acadians there felt and the manner in which his command of the French language suffered³ made him even more committed to providing facilities to serve Acadian needs. After a further three

2. For a biographical sketch of Father Camille Lefebvre, see supra, chapter II.

3. Gildas, Mgr. M.-F. Richard, pp. 34-35.

years at the Séminaire de Montréal, Richard, now (1870) an ordained priest, returned to serve his native parish. The young curé immediately became submerged in controversy because the former priest in St. Louis, a Rev. McQuirk, refused to retire. Stormy street demonstrations, rival mobs, the barring of and forcible entry into the local church culminated in an embarrassing court case which found Richard guilty of damages against McQuirk.⁴

This incident was only the first of many in Richard's tumultuous career. He dedicated himself to the dual cause of his church and his "patrie", arranging for the construction of at least fourteen churches, one college, two convents and over fifty schools.⁵ He was the spiritual leader of the Acadian renaissance, the promoter of a successful colonization movement at Rogersville, and the builder of grain, wool and timber mills for his Acadian flock. He went to great lengths to insulate and protect his flock from outside threats. When the Irish merchants in Rogersville attempted to foreclose on their Acadian debtors and seize their lands, Richard deflected their threat by acquiring the properties' titles and in effect became the largest landholder in the region. His intervention in this apparently secular concern earned Richard the unconcealed enmity of his bishop, Bishop James Rogers (1826-1903), and this hostility became even more glaring, and mutual, as

4. See the Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1870-72".

5. L'Évangéline (Moncton), June 30, 1915.

Richard led the Acadian struggle for a bishop of their own race.⁶

Father Richard, perhaps due to his own experience in Charlottetown, was the earliest Acadian nationalist to perceive that the Collège St. Joseph was not fulfilling Acadian needs adequately. Bishop Sweeny of Saint John, an Irish Catholic, inaugurated the institution in 1864⁷ as a bilingual college serving both Irish and Acadian Catholics. Rev. Camille Lefebvre, a French Canadian, worked zealously while director to maintain that dual nature. Though bilingual institutions may seem ideal for resolving the New Brunswick or Canadian dilemma, in reality "le bilinguisme intégral est une utopie, qui n'a produit ... que des personnalités écartées et des cultures hybrides."⁸ Abbé Biron, a Frenchman teaching at St. Joseph, poignantly described the real situation there. In fact he soon transferred to Richard's Collège St. Louis, "un établissement vraiment national"⁹ because the bilingualism of the first was a farce:

6. For details on the question of an Acadian bishop, see *infra*, chapter XII. For monographs on Mgr. Richard, see Bernard, *Histoire de la Survivance Acadienne, 1755-1935*, pp. 139-75; Gildas, *Mgr. M.-F. Richard*; or Doucet, "Une Etoile S'Est Levée En Acadie - Mgr. M.-F. Richard."

7. See *supra*, chapter II.

8. J.-B. Gingras, *L'Acadie Et Nous* (Montréal, 1945), p. 9.

9. Abbé Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, July 19, 1878. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-17.

Aujourd'hui l'anglais a une telle supériorité sur le français à Memramcook, où tous les Acadiens parlent l'anglais, tandis qu'on ne peut trouver 10 Irlandais sachant le français ... [and] on pourrait passer plusieurs journées au milieu des élèves sans entendre un seul mot de français ... Pauvre M. LaFrance! quelle déception cruelle, s'il pouvait apprendre ce qu'on a fait de sa volonté!¹⁰

The instructors at Memramcook, coming from Montreal, often were nationalists vis-à-vis Quebec concerns. In New Brunswick however they were willing to respect the existing order, deferring before the Anglo-Protestant majority, and concerning themselves more, as the Irish-Catholic bishops wished, with the needs of the Irish than of their own confrères.

From 1864 until 1874, when Richard founded his institution, the Collège St. Joseph had the exclusive opportunity of meeting the urgent needs of the Acadians since it was the only French-language college available to them. Yet the college continued "à s'écarter de sa noble mission".

Ces religieux purement canadiens et principalement le supérieur [Lefebvre], malgré ses bonnes qualités, travaillent surtout pour la Congrégation et très peu pour les Acadiens, encore faudrait-il avoir du temps de reste et l'espérance de quelques piastres. Malheureusement les Acadiens sont pauvres. Les Anglais, les Américains et les Irlandais sont

10. Abbé Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, April 8, 1880. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-9. The M. LaFrance to whom Biron refers was Rev. F.-X. LaFrance, the earliest educator of importance among the Acadian people. See supra, chapter II.

plus fortunés et c'est à eux qu'on s'adresse de préférence pour remplir le collège parce qu'ils peuvent mieux que les autres faire prospérer la caisse de Congrégation. Quant aux bons Acadiens on les accablera volontiers de dîme, de corvées, de reproches, de quêtes, d'emprunts, de souscriptions etc. etc. en faveur de la congrégation, des chapelles ... etc. mais dans tout cela on a en vue, il me semble, surtout le désir de se servir pour son propre profit¹¹

According to Abbé Biron, Acadian donations and toil had built the Collège St. Joseph, yet Lefebvre and the other Canadian instructors showed "des intérêts bien différents des intérêts Acadiens."¹²

The basic grievance was that this institution was not intrinsically Acadian. It mattered little to the nationalists that Bishop Sweeny had not intended it to be. Abbé Biron, the author of so much invective, was an impetuous though dedicated young man. He had been introduced to l'Acadie by the writings of Rameau de Saint-Père and after some initial correspondence with the famous author, he became determined to serve this people, the "plus infortunés de nos compatriotes d'Amérique."¹³ He was romantic enough to invent a l'Acadie, had one not already existed. It was a noble cause to which he devoted his bountiful energies. But Biron

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11. Abbé Biron to Rameau De Saint-Père, Aug. 17, 1876. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-15.
 12. Abbé Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, April 8, 1880. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-9.
 13. Abbé Biron to M. Deséglise, April 2, 1879. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-18.

was over/ antagonistic toward the anglophone majority, perceiving assimilationist plots where none may have existed. Even Father Richard, while appreciating Biron's capabilities and efforts, felt that he lacked prudence, a characteristic so necessary for the Acadians in the mixed racial milieu of New Brunswick. Writing to Rameau de Saint-Père, Richard stated that the social and political prerequisites of the province were determined by people of a different race and religion, and thus it was essential to avoid antagonizing them.¹⁴ Yet Biron, even more headstrong in his nationalism than Richard, did precisely that - he antagonized the Irish students at the Collège St. Louis by strongly promoting the use of French; he antagonized the anglophone merchants in the area by advising the Acadians to support only those of their own race; and he antagonized the Irish bishop of Chatham, James Rogers, by appearing more concerned with race than with religion. Consequently, wrote Richard, Biron's presence threatened the very existence of the institution he sought to promote.¹⁵ In return Biron accused Richard of being too meek and at one point suggested that responsibility for the college be transferred to the Jesuit order, a number of which had just arrived in Montreal from France.¹⁶

14. Rev. M.-F. Richard to Rameau de Saint-Père, Feb. 28, 1879. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-18.

15. Ibid.

16. Abbé Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, Feb. 12, 1880. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-19.

Pascal Poirier, Pierre Landry and much of the Acadian elite lavished praise upon the Collège St. Joseph. They were concerned with acceptability in a predominantly English society and the college served this purpose well; whether it catered primarily or exclusively to Acadian needs was, to them, irrelevant. Being concerned with practicability, they neglected the fact that between 1864 and 1880 only 293 of the 634 students enrolled had Acadian or French Canadian names. Apparently it mattered little that during the winter of 1887-1888 only 82 of the 206 students attending the college were Acadian with another 20 being Québécois and the rest English.¹⁷ It mattered little to these practical men when, in 1908, the new Canadian director, Père Guertin, chose an Irish rather than an Acadian student as the institution's nominee for the Rhodes Scholarship. When Valentin Landry criticized Guertin for this in L'Évangéline, Guertin reiterated that the institution was not an Acadian college but a bilingual one, regardless of the preferences of the extreme nationalists.¹⁸

The differing priorities between this college and the one in St. Louis de Kent were personified in their two founders, who, in spite of certain common interests, "ne se

17. Collège St. Joseph, Annuaire, 1879-1889, C.E.A. The archives of the college are held at the Centre d'Études acadiennes.

18. Père L. Guertin to the editors of L'Évangéline, March 23, 1908. See L'Évangéline, March 26, 1908.

vient point d'un bon oeil."¹⁹ Father Richard, very much of an empire-builder, was determined to see the Collège St. Louis succeed. Needing qualified instructors, he repeatedly annoyed Lefebvre by luring away some of the latter's staff.

... je [Lefebvre] crois devoir protester énergiquement contre un acte de nature à faire tort à ma maison et que se renouvelle pour la troisième fois. Nul plus que moi n'est mieux disposé à vous prêter main forte dans votre importante entreprise mais les moyens dont on use à l'égard de notre maison me paraissent si peu délicats et si opposés à la charité et aux convenances que ne me vois forcé d'en conclure qu'on ne s'était pas fâché de nous voir disparaître de la scène²⁰

Lefebvre's goals for his undertaking never irritated or alarmed the Irish hierarchy of New Brunswick and neither Bishop Sweeny nor Bishop Rogers ever felt compelled to interfere with his work. On the other hand, Richard aggressively attacked Irish hegemony in the New Brunswick Catholic church. The consequence was the closing of the Collège St. Louis in 1882 by Bishop Rogers as well as the ostracism of Richard himself from the bishop's "court".²¹

Lefebvre and Richard envisaged different futures for the Acadians. The latter wished them to be part of the

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19. P. Poirier to Rameau de Saint-Père, May 13, 1878. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-17.
 20. Rev. C. Lefebvre to Rev. M.-F. Richard, n.d. Another copy, dated Oct. 10, 1879, was sent to Bishop Rogers. Père C. Lefebvre Coll., C.E.A., file "R. P. Camille Lefebvre".
 21. The relationship between Richard and Rogers is discussed in greater detail in chapter XII.

French Canadian race while Richard sought to emphasize the difference between Acadian and Québécois. In 1881 Richard led the movement for l'Acadie to adopt l'Assomption instead of Quebec's Saint-Jean-Baptiste as a patronal holiday.²² Lefebvre meanwhile led the minority which supported the adoption of Quebec's symbols. Before 1881 he had always celebrated Saint-Jean-Baptiste; afterward, in the confines of his college, he continued to do so. The effect of

son obstination au choix de l'Assomption fut contagieux: tous ou à peu près tous les Canadiens imitèrent l'exemple du bon Père Lefebvre. Aujourd'hui encore [1908], bon nombre de curés canadiens à la tête de paroisses essentiellement acadiennes, se croient justifiés de ne pas célébrer avec nous notre fête nationale.²³

Lefebvre was a French Canadian priest who, knowing his nationality was secure in Quebec, devoted his efforts to the Catholic population of New Brunswick rather than exclusively to the Acadian population. Richard meanwhile was an ardent Acadian whose devotion and efforts proved to be more racial, or national, than religious.

The differences between the two colleges must largely stem from the personalities of the two directors because so much else was similar. For example, both institutions depended largely upon "foreign" financial and intellectual

22. See infra, chapter VIII.

23. L'Évangéline, Sept. 16, 1908, p. 2, "Canadiens et Acadiens".

support. France was often generous in this respect. In 1872 Rameau de Saint-Père solicited his acquaintances in Europe and Quebec for contributions to the Memramcook undertaking, "le seul centre, le seul foyer considérable de la nationalité français pour tous les éléments nombreux mais dispersés qui existent dans la Nouvelle-Ecosse et le Nouveau-Brunswick."²⁴ Similarly Abbé Biron, during an 1878 vacation in Paris, organized, in conjunction with M. Rameau, a committee called 'Oeuvres d'Acadie' to provide bursaries for the Collège St. Louis.²⁵

In addition, both Richard and Lefebvre competed in Quebec for contributions. In April of 1875 the Quebec press - the Quebec public was a different matter - responded sympathetically to appeals from Richard because his request signified to them a new era; the "first" time that "nos compatriotes des provinces maritimes s'adressent à nous." La Minerve asked its readers to respond generously, stating that the situation in New Brunswick was serious because of the schools question; remarkably, this newspaper, along with many others, had never or at least had rarely ever

24. La Minerve (Montreal), Oct. 14, 1872, p. 2, "M. Rameau et le Canada".

25. The members, including Mgr. de Ségun, Rameau de Saint-Père, Xavier Marmier and Victor Deséglise, generally viewed l'Acadie as a haven for pre-revolutionary French and clerical principles. See Rev. M. Gildas, "Un Ami et Bienfaiteur Des Acadiens - M. l'abbé E.-R. Biron," Le Canada Français, III (March-April, 1920), p. 104.

discussed the school's question in terms of the Acadians.²⁶ Repeating what no doubt were Richard's assertions, La Minerve wrote that the Collège St. Louis needed support in order to defeat the insidious plans of the New Brunswick legislators, plans which hoped "d'étouffer toute entreprise d'éducation parmi eux [the Acadians] et de les empêcher de sortir de leur infériorité. Le coup qui a été frappé était autant dirigé contre leur nationalité que contre leur religion."²⁷ This approach was precisely what Richard hoped for. Being constantly in debt had apparently sharpened his shrewdness for as he later wrote to Bishop Rogers, "La détermination du gouvernement à exclure l'enseignement de la langue Française des Ecoles Communes me servira beaucoup. Il faut tirer le bien du mal."²⁸

Whether Richard's efforts were financially rewarding is, unfortunately, impossible to ascertain. However his foray into Quebec handicapped, perhaps unintentionally, a similar effort undertaken by Father Lefebvre at the same time. Initially Lefebvre was optimistic - Pascal Poirier did arrange a loan from Adélard Sénécal for the Collège St.

26. As asserted in chapter IV, Quebec saw the problem strictly as a Catholic-Protestant and not as a French-English one. It is possible of course that the author's canvass of Quebec newspapers for this period was not adequately extensive to find these references but nevertheless, they must be rare.

27. La Minerve, April 16, 1875, p. 2.

28. Rev. M.-F. Richard to Bishop Rogers, Feb. 19, 1877. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1877".

Joseph but other than that, very little accrued to Lefebvre. Finally he resorted to his traditional sources, local church bazaars and "la Divine Providence".³⁰ Lefebvre blamed his failure on an article in La Minerve, possibly suggested by Richard, which praised the Collège St. Louis. According to Lefebvre this article was mistaken in some of the details it related and these "inexactitudes ne peuvent que ruine à la cause à laquelle nous nous devouons."³¹

As in Lefebvre's case, it is likely that Quebec did not respond generously to Richard's appeal. However, while in Quebec, Richard convinced several French Canadians to come work at the Collège St. Louis.³² These, in addition to the two Quebec professors already employed,³³ might have given St. Louis, like St. Joseph, a distinct Quebec air had it not been for Richard himself. While Lefebvre's institution was merely a transplanted, Quebec classical college, Richard's provided its Acadian students "L'avantage

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29. Rev. C. Lefebvre to P. Poirier, April 23, 1875. Lefebvre Coll., C.E.A., file "Poirier, Lettres du Lefebvre".
 30. Rev. C. Lefebvre to P. Poirier, Feb. 10, 1876. Lefebvre Coll., C.E.A., file "Poirier, Lettres du Lefebvre".
 31. Rev. C. Lefebvre to P. Poirier, April 20, 1875. Lefebvre Coll., C.E.A., file "Poirier, Lettres du Lefebvre".
 32. See Rev. M.-F. Richard to Bishop J. Rogers, Feb. 19, 1877 and April 12, 1877. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1877".
 33. The first two professors at the college were Paul Allaire from Saint-Ours and Onésime Fortier from Saint-Jean (Ile d'Orléans). Gildas, Mgr. M.-F. Richard, p. 50.

si rare de recevoir une éducation tant soit bien conformé à son origine et aux vrais besoins de son intelligence."

The students themselves recognized and appreciated the college's efforts:

Ici ... nous avons trouvé ce que d'autres établissements ne nous offriront pas ... une éducation conforme à notre caractère et aux nécessités présentes, un milieu qui nous convenait et nous offrait une grande facilité de rapprochement entre nous par le moyen des élèves déjà nombreux qui accouraient ici de toutes les parties de l'Acadie. Les relations qui se formaient [in St. Louis] ... auraient, avec le temps, détruit en partie cet isolement funeste dans lequel vivent les Acadiens de chaque province.³⁴

The atmosphere and purpose of the two institutions thus differed radically. The Collège St. Joseph sought to provide an education for the Catholic population of the Memramcook area.³⁵ The Collège St. Louis, while providing a similar education, sought to serve the Acadian population of all the Maritime provinces; on occasion Bishop Rogers complained about the large number of Acadian students from outside the diocese of Chatham being educated with diocesan funds in St. Louis de Kent.³⁶ Lefebvre, reflecting French Canadian concerns, sought to prepare his students for public life and was remarkably successful, producing a

34. Students of the Collège St. Louis to Rameau de Saint-Père, June 1882. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-21.

35. For confirmation of this geographical narrowness, see Collège St. Joseph, Annuaire 1879-1889.

36. Bishop J. Rogers to Rev. M.-F. Richard, Aug. 4, 1882. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1882".

succession of Senators, Members of Parliament, editors and lawyers. The creation of an Acadian elite seemed secondary. On the other hand, the Collège St. Louis, reflecting the priorities of Father Richard, was less concerned with success in the Anglo-Saxon milieu. Instead it sought to create devoted Acadian nationalists who might then, and only as a by-product, enter public life. Memramcook stressed individual success within the limits of Catholic doctrine; St. Louis de Kent emphasized collective duty and responsibility to one's people. The latter's raison d'être was the stimulation of an Acadian consciousness while the former was primarily a Catholic college established in a belief in the intrinsic value of a Catholic education.

The Collège St. Joseph posed no threat to the Irish hierarchy or their conception of the diocese and hence was permitted to continue unimpeded in its endeavours. However Father Richard's nationalism and dedication to the Acadian cause soon aroused the antipathy of Bishop Rogers of Chatham, his ecclesiastical superior. In retaliation, Rogers restrained the college at every opportunity. The institution was continually in need of additional personnel yet Rogers on several occasions threatened to transfer some of its staff to other parishes. When Richard protested, he was subjected to severe reprimands from his bishop who accused him of spreading "black calumny and misrepresentations

37. Bishop Rogers to Rev. W. Richard, March 1850.
38. Bishop Rogers to Rev. W. Richard, March 1850.
39. Bishop Rogers to Rev. W. Richard, March 1850.
40. Doucet, "Une Etalle S'Est Levée En Acadie - Mgr. W.-F. Richard," chapter VIII, p. 9.

of my words and acts."³⁷ Rogers had personally directed another college in Chatham for the Irish portion of his diocese and when it collapsed, the ensuing jealousy compounded the difficulties confronting Richard. The Acadians soon recognized that "Tant que le Collège St. Michel [Chatham] ne sera pas organisé, il est inutile de penser de St. Louis."³⁸ Finally in July of 1882 Rogers forced a confrontation. Claiming that "le français y [St. Louis] était trop enseigné"³⁹ and that it had become "un foyer de discorde"⁴⁰ between Acadian and Irish parishioners, he withdrew his support entirely and forced its closure. Richard's college, unlike Lefebvre's, had posed a threat to the continued Irish domination of the Maritime Catholic church by producing a sense of moral indignation among its graduates. Unless the Collège St. Louis committed itself to the status quo, it could not be permitted to continue.

Though this college disappeared from l'Acadie, the question of French-Canadian values being imposed upon the Acadian educational system remained. Throughout the

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37. Bishop J. Rogers to Rev. M.-F. Richard, March 17, 1882. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1882".
 38. Rev. M.-F. Richard to Abbé E. Biron, Feb. 1, 1884. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-23.
 39. Poirier, Les Acadiens Depuis la Confédération jusqu'à nos jours, p. 9.
 40. Doucet, "Une Etoile S'Est Levée En Acadie - Mgr. M.-F. Richard," chapter VIII, p. 9.

nineteenth century there continued a bitter controversy. Some, like Father Richard, wished a system which somehow conformed "aux vrais besoins" of the Acadian people. Others viewed l'Acadie as a microcosm of Quebec and sought to emulate that province in the nature of the educational system.

In Quebec French-English rivalries for control of the school curriculum produced a mentality which viewed the educational system as the primary bastion of the French Canadian nationality.⁴¹ In 1869 the Legislative Assembly of Quebec officially recognized the principle of confessionality, dividing the Council of Public Instruction into Catholic and Protestant committees.⁴² In 1875 the Boucherville government, tinged with "castorism" and acceding to pressure from that quarter, removed the government entirely from the field of education supposedly in order to protect it from political vicissitudes.⁴³ In reality however the government was abdicating its responsibility for the formation of a young intelligensia capable of coping with the emerging technocratic world.

41. For a discussion of this aspect of education in Quebec, see R. Chatel, Les parents et l'éducation de l'enfant (Quebec, 1947); L. Groulx, L'enseignement français du Canada - Québec (Montreal, 1931); Sabourin, Les Parents, l'Eglise et l'Etat dans leurs rapports avec l'école.

42. Audet, Histoire du Conseil de l'instruction publique de la province de Québec, 1856-1864, pp. 67-68.

43. Ibid., pp. 79-80.

As early as 1869, isolated voices in Quebec were critical of the humanities-dominated school curriculum.

La Lanterne for example, a Montreal weekly, suggested that:

La jeunesse sort des collèges, bouffie de prétensions, mais vide de science. Elle [the college] ignore les choses les plus élémentaires, sans parler du grand mouvement scientifique de notre époque, des découvertes de la géologie, du développement de la race humaine sur toutes les parties du monde, des études nombreuses et variées faites sur tant de sujets divers, qu'il n'est pas permis d'ignorer aujourd'hui.⁴⁴

Though La Lanterne soon disappeared from Quebec, its criticisms continued to haunt both clerical and secular authorities. As Quebec became more industrialized and urbanized, nationalists of all shades examined the school system seeking to merge social and material prerequisites. Some, such as Henri Bourassa, attempted to reconcile their traditionalism with their progressiveness by seeking a somewhat more materialistic system still guided however by the church - "sans le respect de notre système d'instruction publique au point de vue religieux [...] le peuple canadien-français déchoirait et disparaîtrait."⁴⁵ Others recommended greater government intervention especially with regard to financing. "If you get five millions out of the

44. La Lanterne, Nov. 12, 1869. Cited in J.-G. Genest, "La Lanterne, 1868-1869," in Idéologies au Canada Français, ed. by Dumont, Montminy, and Hamelin, p. 252.

45. H. Bourassa, "Speech at Montmagny", Sept. 6, 1908. Cited in J. Levitt, Henri Bourassa and the Golden Calf (Ottawa, 1969), p. 80.

public domain instead of one," wrote Olivar Asselin, "you will facilitate the solution of the school question."⁴⁶

French Canadian inferiority in the province's economic sector was an acknowledged fact in Quebec. However the cause of this was no longer viewed as being the result of some inherent character deficiency. Rather the blame was placed squarely upon the lack of a technical education. Yet the traditional role of the classical colleges and the general priority given to cultural preservation did not facilitate a ready and full acceptance of this twentieth century theology.

The controversy soon spilled over into l'Acadie; this was inevitable on account of the number of Acadian students residing temporarily in Quebec,⁴⁷ on account of the Quebec professors in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and on account of the numerous French Canadian students studying in l'Acadie so as "apprendre l'anglais en même temps que le français."⁴⁸

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46. O. Asselin, A Quebec View of Canadian Nationalism (Montreal, 1909), p. 57. Cited in Levitt, Henri Bourassa and the Golden Calf, p. 82.
47. Laval University, the University of Montreal, the Séminaire de Montréal and the junior colleges always attracted a number of Acadian students. See L'Évangéline, Sept. 8, 1921, p. 1, "Québec et Acadie". After 1918 some Acadian students attended the Agricultural School at Ste. Anne de la Pocatière since the government of Quebec generously offered them, as they did for their own residents, scholarships which defrayed the cost of attendance. This gesture was greatly appreciated in Acadia on account of both its practical and symbolic value. See L'Évangéline, Sept. 11, 1918, p. 1.
48. P. Poirier, "Collèges et couvents en Acadie". Article written for La Patrie (Montreal) on Dec. 13, 1902. Clipping in H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., Box 1, file "Poirier".

In 1902 Senator Poirier angered many of his colleagues by criticizing the general quality of education in French Canada. Poirier expressed the widely-held view that the future of all francophone minorities depended upon an intellectually energetic Quebec around which "nous devons nous grouper". However Poirier added that Quebec, hampered by an antiquated educational system which lacked relevant priorities, was not fulfilling its responsibilities. The Quebec colleges were not producing a scientific community which could lead French Canada into the twentieth century and which could compete with the intelligensia⁺ of Europe, the United States or even English Canada.⁴⁹

Poirier expected the storm which his surprisingly candid remarks aroused, knowing that in relation to the educational system, "Il faut se taire ou flatter lourdement."⁵⁰ Le Moniteur Acadien soon denied the Senator's assertions, claiming that his words were not only exaggerated but "pernicieuses dans leur résultat, surtout lorsqu'elle étaient repandues parmi les peuples."⁵¹ Another correspondent, a professor at the Collège St. Joseph, Father Philéas Bourgeois, defended the prominence given moral values in Acadian schools and asserted the necessity of inculcating "la soumission entière a l'Eglise [and] ... le

49. Le Moniteur Acadien, April 7, 1904, pp. 4-5.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid., April 14, 1904, p. 2.

profond respect envers ses représentants et ses chefs"⁵²
When Poirier refused to relent, the attacks became more personal; one priest later wrote to Father Richard that Poirier "s'agit de nous faire honte à l'étranger. Cet homme ne peut-être toléré plus longtemps à la gérance de nos choses nationales ... Il est grand temps de nous débarrasser de cet encombrant gibier dans nos affaires nationales."⁵³

In spite of this controversy, the question of a scientific versus classical education was never as serious in l'Acadie as in Quebec. In Quebec the church dominated the school system and indeed, some would say, the province. Its power was so pervasive that challenges were rare and usually inconsequential. In Acadia however, the Catholic colleges, facing both an Anglo-Protestant majority and example, had to provide a more relevant education in order to prepare their progeny for life in a racially and religiously varied milieu. Catholic parents could, and probably would, send their children to Protestant institutions if their own were failing to provide an adequate education. National and cultural propagation had to be blended with material needs. L'Acadie was not isolated from the larger world as Quebec was. As Poirier wrote on another occasion, the Quebec public was indifferent toward their colleges but the Acadian

52. Ibid., May 26, 1904, p. 2.

53. Rev. D.-F. Léger to Mgr. M.-F. Richard, April 19, 1915. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1915".

public was not because

Ils [i.e. the colleges] ne s'isolent pas du peuple ... nos collèges ne sont pas des Sinais enveloppés d'éclairs fulgurants, sur lesquels un laïque ne saurait lever les yeux sans les voiler d'abord. Ce sont tout simplement des endroits bénis, où les enfants vont étudier les lettres et les sciences, sous l'oeil de Dieu ... Il ne leur [i.e. the parents] défendu, sous peine de censure, de désirer pour leurs enfants l'enseignement de telles ou telles sciences.⁵⁴

The Acadian schools were not afraid to borrow from the Protestant system because the products of the Acadian schools had to compete in a Protestant world. Even Acadian priests recognized the efficacy of adding to the traditional curriculum, "les branches scientifiques et de commerce exigées par les besoins de notre époque."⁵⁵

However the real problem confronting Acadian education was not one of philosophical bent but rather one of basic quality. The New Brunswick majority in part prided itself on the Acadian progress, feeling that the Assembly's generosity in the field of education had permitted them to advance "faster than us descendants of the men of the British Isles."⁵⁶ But these sentiments were merely platitudes since the state of the Acadian education was in general dismally

54. Le Temps (Ottawa), July 8, 1895.

55. Le Moniteur Acadien, May 26, 1904, p. 2.

56. New Brunswick, Synoptic Report of the House of Assembly, 1906, p. 11. George Robertson, M.L.A. for Saint John, Feb. 9, 1906.

poor. The historical apathy of the Acadian people toward education was still evident. Largely rural, still somewhat excluded from the upper echelons of provincial society, Acadian parents remained unconcerned with educating their young and resentful of the taxes imposed for this purpose. They transmitted to successive generations a disdain for education and a belief that anything more than the most rudimentary of learning skills was unnecessary for their future vocations of farming or fishing.

Their leaders freely admitted,⁵⁷ even into the 1890's, that illiteracy was more widespread in the French counties of New Brunswick than elsewhere. In 1871, Carleton and Gloucester counties in New Brunswick had comparable populations (19,900 and 18,800 respectively) with the former being overwhelmingly English (97.5%) and the latter predominantly Acadian (67%). In Carleton however there were more than 2,100 children in school and only 793 adults over twenty years of age could not write as well as 539 who could not read. In Gloucester only 1,400 children attended school while 4,227 adults could not write and 3,107 could not read.⁵⁸ In 1911, after the Common Schools Act had been in effect for almost forty years, the discrepancy between English and Acadian districts was even more glaring. The

57. See L'Évangéline, Dec. 21, 1893, p. 3.

58. Canada, Census of Canada, 1871. See Vol. I, pp. 316-22 for population figures and racial origin. See Vol. IV, p. 210 for literacy rate data.

literacy rate in Carleton (98.6% English) was 93.7% while in Gloucester (81.3% Acadian) it was 65.4%. The overall literacy rate for New Brunswick was 85.1%; over that figure were the predominantly English counties of Charlotte (94.5%), King's and Albert (93%), St. John City and County (93%), Sunbury and Queens (91%), Westmorland (86%) and York (93%). Virtually equal to the average was one more English county, Northumberland (84%) while the French counties of Victoria and Madawaska (71%), Kent (72%) and Restigouche (77%) were all below the average.⁵⁹

In part the abnormally low literacy rate among the Acadians was due to the educational system of the province. Many Acadians had missed school entirely between 1870 and 1875 on account of the Common Schools Act and the effect of this loss was felt for many years. In addition the government had not made any provision for the training of francophone teachers at the Normal School in Fredericton until 1878 and even then the French department was weak. Finally Acadian students had to undergo all their examinations in a "foreign" language, English, which provided a serious handicap to their advancement.⁶⁰

Even in the twentieth century, the substantial Acadian population of New Brunswick had French language texts only for the first three years of school. Requests for another

59. Ibid., 1911. Vol. II, pp. 178-85 and p. 462.

60. See L'Évangéline, Jan. 25, 1894, p. 2.

series of books suitable for the higher grades were consistently rejected by a government more concerned with economy than equality. In 1903 Joseph Poirier, the M.L.A. from Gloucester, suggested that the three Maritime provinces could reduce the cost of such a venture by coordinating their efforts and devising a common text.⁶¹ This suggestion, like previous ones, was lost among the government bureaucracy until 1906 when C. H. LaBillois, the Acadian Minister of Public Works, announced that a French reader suitable for Grade Four students had been purchased in conjunction with Nova Scotia.⁶²

Through this period, politicians often portrayed the Nova Scotian educational system as being generous to its minority

The harmony and good feeling with respect to the education question which have prevailed in Halifax, are due chiefly, no doubt, to the wise spirit of tolerance which characterizes our citizens as a whole, and only in a less degree to the statutory provision [of the law] ...

... [since 1867, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island knowingly and deliberately adopted, as far as their circumstances would permit, the plan so long in successful operation in Halifax.]⁶³

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61. New Brunswick, Synoptic Report of the House of Assembly, 1903, pp. 108-09. April 24, 1903.
 62. Ibid., 1906, p. 139. March 7, 1906.
 63. Senator L. G. Power, Halifax Public Schools attended by Catholic Children (reprinted from the Halifax Evening Mail, Feb. 11, 1899). Copy at C.E.A., Pamphlet Coll.
 64. H. Bastien, "Le Bilinguisme Dans Les Provinces Maritimes," L'Action Française, XIII, No. 6 (June, 1925), p. 359.

Unfortunately the magnanimous nature of the Halifax legislators benefited only the Catholic minority. The small Acadian population never received much satisfaction, leading some Acadians to describe the province as the place "where fanaticism reigns supreme and where our public men are such egoists and time-servers!"⁶⁴ The Nova Scotia Schools Act of 1864 had not accommodated French language instruction leaving the Acadian minority subject to a serious handicap which continued, in spite of frequent complaints, until 1902. In that year the government acted upon the recommendations of a Committee of Enquiry⁶⁵ and officially permitted the use of French on a bilingual basis during the first six grades. In grade seven however, English was to be the sole medium of instruction. After 1902 the government provided French texts and a French school inspector although at the same time it reaffirmed that "no language except English shall be imperative on any pupil."⁶⁶ The effects of a poor public school system were felt throughout Acadian society even to the college level. Valentin Landry, never discreet in his remarks, felt that "Taken as a whole the course of study

64. "Sacerdos" (Abbé A.-E. Mombourquette) to Valentin Landry, Oct. 29, 1904. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-14.

65. This committee sat during April of 1902 and submitted a series of important suggestions for the Acadians of Nova Scotia. See Rawlyk and Hafter, Acadian Education in Nova Scotia, Appendix A, pp. 47-50.

66. H. Bastien, "Le Bilinguisme Dans Les Provinces Maritimes," L'Action Française, XIII, No. 6 (June, 1925), p. 359.

[at the Collège Ste. Anne] would seem to offer [only slightly] more than a high school training while falling somewhat short of an extended collegiate course."⁶⁷

The problem of governmental discrimination or neglect was similarly felt by the Acadians of Prince Edward Island. In 1877 their government, following the New Brunswick example, established a public, non-denominational school system. The federal government, adhering to established precedent, once again refused to intervene and before long a compromise was reached on the island itself.⁶⁸ After this agreement, the status of the French language in the schools gradually improved largely because its use never became a political or highly publicized issue. In 1891 a series of French texts, the Monpetit series from Quebec, was introduced to the "Acadian schools" while in 1892 the government appointed an Acadian school inspector to supervise the teaching of French. After 1893 the quality of French instruction improved greatly on account of the energetic work of the "Association Des Instituteurs Acadiens De L'Ile Du Prince Edouard", an organization funded largely

67. See Rev. P. Blanche to Valentin Landry, March 22, 1892. Sigogne Papers, C.E.A., Collection of letters regarding the Collège Ste. Anne.

68. For details, see Rumilly, *Histoire des Acadiens*, II, pp. 775-76; J. H. Blanchard, *The Acadians of Prince Edward Island, 1720-1964* (Charlottetown, 1964), pp. 90-91; Groulx, *L'Enseignement Français Au Canada*, II, pp. 54-58.

70. *L'Évangéliste*, Aug. 3, 1814, p. 4.

71. *Le Royal* (Montreal), Oct. 29, 1813, p. 1.

by France's L'Alliance Française.⁶⁹

However in Prince Edward Island, as in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, French language instruction, even for unilingual Acadian children, remained a definite concession or privilege rather than a legal right. Wherever an Acadian majority existed, French and English were taught equally.

Wherever the Acadian population did not constitute the majority and did not control the local school board "ils sont obligé de se soumettre à la volonté de la majorité et alors leurs enfants sont privés de l'instruction en français"⁷⁰ Nevertheless the Acadians of Prince Edward Island, uninspired by the nationalism brewing in New Brunswick, were generally satisfied with their sixteen bilingual schools and their token recognition in the provincial cabinet and bureaucracy:

Nous avons des écoles bilingues chez nous, où l'on enseigne le français comme l'anglais. Nous n'avons pas d'écoles séparées, mais nous avons, dans les écoles bilingues, fréquentées par la masse des enfants acadiens, des instituteurs ... de notre race, de notre langue, de notre religion. Le régime de tolérance le plus large existe⁷¹

In spite of this optimism, the Acadians of all three Maritime provinces were in fact subjected to a "double

69. L'Alliance Française had "pour but de protéger et de propager la langue française dans les pays autre que la France." See letter from Abbé Biron to Valentin Landry, July 25, 1895. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-7.

70. L'Évangéline, Aug. 5, 1914, p. 4.

71. Le Devoir (Montreal), Oct. 29, 1913, p. 1.

fardeau" of having to attain their education in a foreign language. Bilingual schools were a serious yet necessary evil in l'Acadie. The Acadian people, as distinct from their more affluent elite, had a choice to make between culture-retention and material gain. Many had grown weary of the myth that the Latin race had a sacred duty in North America, a myth which taught them that

Dieu nous a choisi pour contrebalancer le matérialisme qui semble en Amérique miner toutes les âmes, par l'influence dont la France nous a confié le dépôt sacré, c'est un rôle dont nous devons nous glorifier.⁷²

Their sense of moral superiority and their preoccupation with spiritual issues had excluded them from a fair share of society's riches leaving them only "comme petit commis ou comme propriétaire de l'épicerie du coin ... comme manoeuvres ou petits salaires."⁷³

If the Acadian wished to advance in an Anglo-Protestant world, fluency in English was essential⁷⁴ and many Acadian parents chose to ignore French in favour of English⁷⁵ hoping to improve their children's future. An illustrative case

72. L'Opinion Publique (Montreal), Jan. 8, 1870.

73. Cormier and Young, ed., Problèmes Economiques des Acadiens, p. 2.

74. This necessity was widely recognized among the Acadian elite and people. See L'Evangeline, Oct. 24, 1895, p. 2, "La Langue Française"; speech of Pierre A. Landry, n.d. Copy in Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.4-2; draft of article written by Rev. M.-F. Richard, n.d. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.2-9.

75. See L'Impartial (Tignish), Dec. 1, 1908.

arose in Moncton early in the twentieth century. In September of 1907 the Moncton school board permitted the segregation of Acadian students during the first five grades. These students would be taught in French only. Grades six, seven and eight were conducted on a bilingual basis while the high school remained a unilingual anglophone preserve.

The Acadian elite viewed this accommodation with general satisfaction; "C'est le mieux qui puisse être fait pour le présent."⁷⁶ Many parents were less satisfied however and in September of 1909, two hundred of them presented a petition to the school board requesting a return to the pre-1907 system under which their children learned English from grade one onward; they asserted that the children's academic future depended upon "a thorough knowledge" of English.⁷⁷

Although the parents were exhibiting a genuine concern for their children's future in a predominantly Anglo-Saxon and anglophone world, the elite was furious. Valentin Landry attacked the instigators of the petition ruthlessly, claiming that they were more English than French. He also dismissed those who had signed the petition, claiming that "Beaucoup ont donné leur nom pour le simple plaisir de voir

76. L'Evangéline, July 19, 1907, p. 2.

77. Petition to the Moncton School Board, Sept. 15, 1909. Cited in Hody, "The Development of the Bilingual Schools of New Brunswick, 1740-1960," pp. 140-41.

ce nom dans une liste quelconque."⁷⁸

Moncton continued to operate its schools on the basis of the 1907 accord. Nevertheless the elite worried and complained constantly that the pressures of the modern, material world were forcing even the "Acadian schools" to ignore the French language and culture.⁷⁹ The bilingual school system for which they had fought was becoming the most serious "agent de destruction nationale". Inspired by the schools to positions in the Anglo-Protestant world, the Acadian students were recognizing the value of a high school education conducted entirely in English. As a consequence the longer "que l'élève, né français, avance dans ses études, son équilibre culturel devient de plus en plus instable."⁸⁰ The schools and colleges, once so actively sought and once viewed by the elite as a panacea of national ills, had become a serious obstacle to the attainment of a conscious Acadian identity.

78. L'Évangéline, Sept. 23, 1909, p. 2. See also Sept. 2, 1909, p. 2.

79. Léopold Taillon, Au service de la Culture Française en Acadie, (Montréal, 1952), pp. 12-13.

80. Gingras, L'Acadie et Nous, p. 10.

1. See supra, chapter III.

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struggle for a separate personality, freed from the Quebec assimilative influence, came to centre primarily on the question of national symbols.

At an early stage in the development of Acadian-Canadian cooperation came to be June 24th, Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day. In Quebec it is a national holiday and it is suggested that this national holiday be celebrated in the Acadian community.

CHAPTER VIII

Acadian Autonomy - The Promotion of a

Distinct Identity

In spite of the differences between Acadien and Canadien on the regional scene, there always existed in l'Acadie an idealistic notion of an intimate Quebec-Acadian alliance. The idea began primarily with Confederation when the concept of a fraternal union was stressed for political expediency.¹ If amalgamated with Quebec, the Acadians might gain a powerful ally in the political realm as well as a religious hierarchy sympathetic to their cultural aspirations. The Acadians might also find in Quebec a cultural foyer to protect them from any further anglicization. The Acadians however were not willing to subjugate themselves to the French Canadians, to trade simply an anglophone master for a francophone one. In their minds, Quebec had to treat them as confrères, as equals, as another component of the French-Catholic mission in North America. The Acadians sought to prevent their culture and distinct identity from being submerged in the English milieu. They similarly wished to perpetuate the differences between them and the French Canadians. The

1. See supra, chapter III.

struggle for a separate personality, freed from the Quebec assimilative influence, came to centre primarily on the question of national symbols.

At an early stage the focal point of Acadian-Canadian cooperation came to be June 24th, Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day in Quebec. In 1859 Rameau de Saint-Père suggested that this national holiday be the "lien général entre tous les groupes français de l'Amérique,"² and through the 1860's many French Canadian priests serving in l'Acadie publicly celebrated June 24th in their own parishes. By 1865 Abbé Belcourt in Prince Edward Island could claim that the Saint-Jean-Baptiste celebrations were immensely popular and attracted large numbers of Acadians.³ During these optimistic years the adoption of Saint-Jean-Baptiste was widely discussed. Le Moniteur Acadien, after reporting on the celebrations in Quebec and Ottawa, expressed the hope that "l'an prochain toutes les populations françaises des Provinces Maritimes chômeront, eux aussi, la Saint-Jean-Baptiste."⁴

By 1870 this newspaper was suggesting that Saint-Jean-Baptiste, if adopted by the Acadians, would serve as a rallying point and as a symbol of their determination to progress as a people. Edited by Ferdinand Robidoux, a French Canadian, Le Moniteur Acadien believed that such a

2. Rameau de Saint-Père, La France Aux Colonies, p. 242.
3. Abbé Belcourt to Rameau de Saint-Père, June 24, 1865. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-7.
4. Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac), July 10, 1868, p. 2.

public alliance would bring incalculable benefits to the Acadians. "Nemo", a frequent contributor to this journal, similarly stressed that a national holiday could be beneficial. He too believed that the adoption of Saint-Jean-Baptiste could cement the Acadian alliance with the French Canadians, "nos frères aînés par le sang, la langue et la religion."⁵ Following the initiative of "Nemo", Pierre A. Landry in Dorchester also endorsed this choice,⁶ a course he faithfully maintained until that selection was irrevocably rejected in 1884.⁷ During the 1870's Saint-Jean-Baptiste seemed to be the unanimous choice, largely because it was already celebrated in several Acadian parishes. However Le Moniteur Acadien continued its campaign, repeatedly stressing that unity with French Canada was incumbent with its acceptance. Even the iniquitous school law of the New Brunswick government might be rejected, this newspaper claimed, if the Acadians showed by means of a national holiday their determination to remain French and Catholic.⁸

Quasi-religious holidays had always been important in French Canada. In New France, the people celebrated several

5. Ibid., April 22, 1870, p. 2.

6. Ibid., April 29, 1870, p. 2.

7. L'Assomption was chosen in preference to Saint-Jean-Baptiste by a "Convention Nationale" of Acadians in 1881 and confirmed in 1884. See infra, pp. 263-69.

8. Le Moniteur Acadien, June 16, 1871, p. 2.

feast days, a legacy from feudal France where such occasions were a welcome respite from daily tasks. In America, French Canadians celebrated both "notre fête patronale, la Saint-Joseph, et notre fête nationale, la Saint-Jean-Baptiste" with the latter soon gaining precedence.⁹ After being dormant for many years, the celebration of Saint-Jean-Baptiste was revived in 1835 when Ludger Duvernay, the editor of La Minerve, hastily organized a dinner for some sixty people from the Montreal area. Owing to the charged atmosphere of the period, June 24th soon assumed a political character and consequently was suspended in 1837. Reconvened in 1842, the holiday quickly became and has remained an important occasion for French Canadians, a day upon which they reaffirm their determination to survive as a distinct cultural entity.¹⁰

In 1874 the Montreal press and especially L'Opinion Publique,¹¹ invited international delegations to that year's celebrations in the hope of encouraging closer relations between the French Canadians and the Franco-Americans.¹²

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9. B. Sulte, "Les Origines De La Saint-Jean-Baptiste," in Fête Nationale Des Canadiens-Français, 1880, ed. by H.-J. Chouinard (Quebec, 1881), p. 4.
 10. See Chouinard, Fête Nationale Des Canadiens-Français, 1880, chapter I, passim.
 11. L'Opinion Publique was a Montreal weekly edited primarily by L.-O. David which ran from January of 1870 to December of 1883. In politics and sentiment, it was clearly nationalistic and liberal. It had a circulation of 12,000 in 1874. See Hamelin and Beaulieu, Les Journaux Du Québec De 1764 A 1964, p. 132.
 12. L'Opinion Publique, Sept. 18, 1873, p. 447.

The press hoped to establish "les bases d'un plan de rapatriement de nos compatriotes qui sont aux Etats-Unis."¹³ Quebec's interests were clearly directed toward the south.

Nevertheless the Montreal organizers invited the Acadians as one of the "groupes étrangers", making nonsense of the idea so often expressed that French Canadians and Acadians were "frères par le sang". In spite of the New Brunswick Schools Question which was then raging, the Quebec press seemed blissfully unaware of the Acadians' existence. Its foremost concern was the unremitting flow of Canadiens to the American republic and the 1874 celebrations were designed to reverse this trend. Seeking this goal, "c'est toute la province de Québec qui doit fêter les Canadiens Français des Etats-Unis."¹⁴ The Acadians meanwhile, desirous of adopting Saint-Jean-Baptiste, came and went largely unnoticed.

The Acadians, very few of whom actually attended the Montreal festivities,¹⁵ seemed unconcerned by the indifferent attitude of Quebec. Le Moniteur Acadien continued to

13. La Minerve (Montreal), May 16, 1874, p. 2.

14. L'Opinion Publique, March 26, 1874, p. 145.

15. The 1874 "fête nationale" received virtually no attention from Acadian contemporaries making the task of determining who attended impossible. L'Opinion Publique on July 2, 1874 (p. 318) spoke of three delegates representing Acadia, one of whom was a M. Landry, possibly Pierre A. Landry. None of the other Quebec newspapers, nor the Acadian one, gave any more details. This simply serves to emphasize how geographically narrow was the concern of this particular Montreal gathering.

promote Saint-Jean-Baptiste as "notre fête nationale",¹⁶ as "un pas immense vers le progrès et ... [an affirmation of] notre nationalité".¹⁷ French Canadian priests continued to honour Saint-Jean-Baptiste believing that it emphasized the racial characteristics of the Acadian as well as the Canadian people.¹⁸ The idea of a Quebec-Acadia alliance remained strong.

Gratified by the enthusiasm of the 1874 gathering, the Saint-Jean-Baptiste society of Quebec City was soon organizing another massive convention of the French race in North America to be held in their city during June of 1880. Again the organizers were primarily concerned with the "Canadiens-Français des Etats-Unis" although they specifically invited, at the very end of their manifesto, the Acadians, a "rameau plein de sève, violemment arraché d'un grand arbre."¹⁹

The President of the Quebec society, J.-P. Rhéaume, requested Pierre Landry to organize a delegation, striking a refrain which was to become familiar over the next forty years of Quebec-Acadian relations: "Soyez les bienvenus, nobles Acadiens, précieux tronçon d'un peuple martyr que nous avons

16. Le Moniteur Acadien, June 22, 1876, p. 2.

17. Ibid., June 29, 1876, p. 2.

18. Rev. C. Lefebvre to P. Poirier, June 18, 1877. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-1.

19. The original invitation was later reprinted in L'Évangéline (Moncton), May 19, 1921, p. 1.

trop oublié."²⁰ In return, Landry expressed optimism as to the objectives of the three-day (June 24-26) rally and wrote of his hope that by such a reunion "nous deviendrons mieux connus [in Quebec] que nous l'avons été par le passé." He saw little difference between the Acadian and French Canadian past or present and hoped that this assembly would align their two futures. Thus, on behalf of the Acadian people, Landry thanked Rhéaume for the opportunity to establish "une connaissance plus intime entre vous et nous afin que par ces moyens nous puissions relier en même famille des frères trop longtemps séparés et dont les intérêts soient les mêmes."²¹

The 1880 "Congrès National" was an important event for the French Canadians. June 24th was a day of union, a day upon which Hector Langevin and Wilfrid Laurier could exchange compliments in the full public gaze. It was a day upon which the French Canadians could repudiate any remaining vestiges of being a defeated race by gathering, ironically, upon the Plains of Abraham to celebrate a Pontifical Mass led by a French-Canadian archbishop. French Canadians at the convention were asserting their existence as a French and Catholic nation in English North America.

But the organizers wished more than flowery speeches

20. H.-P. LeBlanc, "Mémoire Sur La Société Nationale L'Assomption" (ms., H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., "Divers", file "L'Assomption Nationale"), p. 1.

21. P. A. Landry to J.-P. Rhéaume, May 17, 1880. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-1, letterbook.

and symbolic manifestations. They sought a racial cohesiveness which, in concrete form, could produce "des effets durables et soit le commencement de quelqu'oeuvre nationale."²²

The convention's first commission, composed of several Canadian notables,²³ studied the need for "des Canadiens Français de revendiquer incessamment leur part légitime d'influence et de patronage dans la distribution des travaux des emplois et des deniers publics." Another commission studied industrial and commercial development in Quebec while a third concerned itself with the perpetual problem of colonization.²⁴ These studies were essential for the future of Quebec because, in spite of the rhetoric, "Tout n'est pas couleur de rose dans notre situation, le ciel n'est pas sans nuages, les roses du chemin où elle marche, sans épines."²⁵ The entire convention was less than a resounding success in fact. Firstly only a fraction of the anticipated number of participants ever arrived in Quebec City.²⁶ Secondly, and of greater importance, "Les commissions n'ont presque rien fait." The speakers, though stirring, concentrated upon the ideal rather than the practical:

22. L'Opinion Publique, May 6, 1880, p. 217.

23. These included J.-Israel Tarte, François C.-S. Langelier, Honoré Mercier, A. Chauveau, Joseph Tassé and Joseph Xavier Perrault.

24. L'Opinion Publique, May 27, 1880, pp. 256-57.

25. Ibid., June 24, 1880, p. 302.

26. Ibid., July 1, 1880, p. 317.

27. Ibid., p. 33.

On a beaucoup parlé de ce que la providence avait fait et de ce qu'elle se proposait de faire pour nous, mais très peu de ce que nous devons faire nous-mêmes pour l'aider ... [These were] Théories dangereuses au milieu d'une population déjà portée à l'apathie, trop disposée à tout laisser au hasard et à la providence!²⁷

Instead of grappling with the problems of emigration, commerce, industrial development and colonization, the "Congrès National" produced only a litany of pious pronouncements on the value of the French-Canadian culture and homeland.

The Quebec organizers were trying to use the convention to lure Franco-Americans into some sort of closer relationship with "la patrie". The Franco-Americans were after all merely expatriated French Canadians and it was hoped that their "querelles de famille" could be put aside in favour of "un coeur et ... une âme devant l'image adorée de la patrie."²⁸ Unfortunately the Québécois perceived the Acadians in much the same way, as adjuncts of Quebec. They fully expected the 1880 gathering to result in

une adhésion depuis longtemps sollicitée ... une conquête ardemment désirée ... les délégués des Acadiens ... scellèrent avec nous un pacte d'alliance fraternelle, en acceptant comme nous, pour patron, le saint précurseur du Christ, et en s'enrôlant sous la bannière de la Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste.²⁹

27. Ibid.

28. "Manifeste de la Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste," in Chouinard, Fête Nationale Des Canadiens-Français, 1880, pp. 99-100.

29. Ibid., p. 33.

The French Canadians did not comprehend that the Acadians considered themselves a distinct race. Not understanding the reservations in the Acadian minds, they clearly felt that Quebec's own symbols, and what they symbolized, would be readily accepted in l'Acadie. Needless to say they were hardly surprised when the seventh commission,³⁰ concerned with Acadian problems and seemingly overwhelmed by the occasion, recommended Saint-Jean-Baptiste as the patronal holiday of the Acadian people.³¹ However the alliance of Acadian and French Canadian was not to be created quite so easily.

The Acadians were flattered by Quebec's apparent interest and initiative - it certainly was a great improvement from 1874. However they had to notice that their own status was definitely inferior to that of the Franco-Americans. In the parades, the Acadians marched near the end. In the speeches they hardly appeared. The

30. According to L'Opinion Publique of May 27, 1880, this commission included Pascal Poirier (whom the newspaper referred to as Pascal Poirier), Pierre Landry, Rev. M.-F. Richard, Rev. Philéas Bourgeois, F.-J. Robidoux, and Onésiphore Turgeon.

31. See ibid., July 8, 1880, p. 333. The commission's choice is hardly surprising considering not only its venue but also its composition. Turgeon was a Québécois resident in northern New Brunswick. Robidoux, also a Québécois, had long supported Saint-Jean-Baptiste in his role as editor of Le Moniteur Acadien. Pierre Landry and Rev. Bourgeois continued to endorse Quebec's patron saint at the Acadians' own convention in 1881. Only Poirier and Richard later argued for l'Assomption as a distinct symbol of the Acadian identity.

32. L'Opinion Publique, July 1, 1880, p. 231.

commissions studying industrialization, commercial development and even colonization did not include Acadian representatives.³² At the banquet the Acadians were included under "Nationalités étrangères"³³ and the banner saluting them was combined with one greeting France and hidden at the back of the hall. No Acadian sat at the head table along with the representatives of the Queen, of the Quebec and Ottawa governments and of the participating Franco-American societies. During the banquet there were toasts to everyone imaginable, the Queen, the bishops, the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society, the ladies and even the press. The toast to the Acadians was the eleventh, of sixteen, but by that time "Il se faisait tard ... [and] la plupart des convives avaient quitté la salle."³⁴

This treatment, though appreciably better than previously experienced by the Acadians in Quebec, was hardly conducive to an intimate Quebec-Acadian alliance. The Acadians considered themselves different from yet equal to the French Canadians and would not lightly repudiate their distinct origins, history, language and culture in order to affiliate with Quebec. Of most importance, by 1880 the Acadians understood that they must be self-reliant, that Quebec was primarily and justifiably concerned with its own

32. For the composition of each commission, see *ibid.*, May 27, 1880, pp. 256-57.

33. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. XX.

34. L'Opinion Publique, July 1, 1880, p. 231.

interests and would not, as in 1866 or 1871, risk its own security for its "confrères".

Of the Acadian lay elite, Pierre A. Landry was the most vociferous proponent of close ties with Quebec yet even he questioned the romantic aura of fraternity surrounding the 1880 convention. Addressing the assembled delegates he chastized the French Canadians for being overly introspective and for remaining "dans une ignorance presque absolue de l'existence de ses frères résident dans les autres parties ... ce pur fait d'existence ne nous unissait pas." Acadia had directed appeals toward Quebec in the past but had encountered only "cet oubli, ce manque de connaissance ... cette absence d'appui moral," all of which were prejudicial "à nos intérêts et à notre avancement matériels." Quebec's disinterest had partially contributed to both the Acadian sense of inferiority and to their absolute inferiority in Canada. Landry hoped however that this convention would terminate "cet oubli presque complet." In the future nous serons mieux connus, appréciés et mieux servis comme portion de la race française dans la grande Puissance du Canada ... les plus forts aident aux plus faibles, que les aînés tendent la main aux plus jeunes et leur aident à porter leurs fardeaux et à améliorer leur condition.³⁵

35. Pierre Landry's speech, coming at the end of a too-long banquet, went unreported in the Quebec press and consequently the Acadian press. Some years later, H.-P. LeBlanc managed to find a copy and published it in L'Évangéline, June 2, 1921, p. 2.

The Acadians considered the 1880 convention a great success because it brought together over 100 of them from all parts of the Maritime provinces.³⁶ This was "la première fois depuis le Grand-dérangement [his emphasis] qu'ils se trouveraient réunis, qu'ils pouvaient se connaître et se compter."³⁷ At the conference the newly united Acadians acquired a renewed sense of purpose and in order to implement their new goals, they resolved to convene again in 1881, this time in Memramcook.³⁸ Great expectations surrounded this proposed "Convention Nationale" and a strong contingent, including members of the elite from all three provinces, was selected to organize it.³⁹ In addition the executive requested each Acadian parish to send three official delegates in order to unite the "Acadiens des trois provinces Maritimes dans une même société, fondée dans

36. Virtually the entire Acadian elite was in attendance. This included the Hon. P. A. Landry, Pascal Poirier, Rev. Richard, Rev. Ph. Bourgeois, G.-A. Girouard (M.P.), L. Thériault (M.P.P.), F.-J. Robidoux, O. Turgeon, U. Johnson (M.P.P.), Father C. Lefebvre and Narcisse Landry from New Brunswick. The Prince Edward Island delegation included a Cabinet Minister, J.-O. Arsenault, while the Nova Scotia delegation included several important priests and politicians. See Le Moniteur Acadien, July 28, 1910, p. 2 or Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. XIII.

37. Poirier, Les Acadiens Depuis la Confédération jusqu'à nos jours, p. 7.

38. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. XII.

39. See L'Évangéline, May 19, 1921, p. 1, and F.-J. Robidoux, untitled ms. on the National Convention dated July 20, 1931. Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.3-4. This organizational committee eventually included twenty-five members.

le but provoquer [the original word is illegible] leurs intérêts religieux, nationaux, et matériels."⁴⁰ For this purpose the organizers established commissions to study a wide range of Acadian problems; education, agriculture, the press, and "colonisation et émigration et de la nécessité d'encourager l'une pour arrêter l'autre."⁴¹ But primarily they gathered to show the world that they still existed and to adopt, in the form of a national feast day, symbols which represented their unique identity.

The convention assumed an almost mystical air. The 5,000 delegates arrived from all parts of the Maritime provinces "comme autrefois leurs pères étaient revenus de tous les points de la terre, pauvres proscrits rapportant la patrie dans leur coeur."⁴² Meeting their compatriots for the first time, the delegates acquired a new sense of unity and fraternity. Individual Acadian parishes, it was felt, would no longer be isolated and distinct from the others; Pierre Landry, while visiting the Baie Ste.-Marie region of Nova Scotia, now felt that he was

dans ma paroisse natale. Même langage, même hospitalité, même moeurs, même usages, même noms et même aspirations. J'y rencontrer tout de qui peut réchauffer le patriotisme ... De cette sympathie morale qui existe maintenant chez nous, Acadiens, ne manquons pas de retirer un

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40. Robidoux, untitled ms. dated July 20, 1931. Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.3-4.
41. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 6.
42. Du Boscq De Beaumont, Une France Oubliée, L'Acadie, p. 48.

appui réel en nous tendant la main dans
l'exécution des oeuvres qui concernent
nos intérêts généraux.⁴³

The organizers did not wish to fracture the bonds established one year earlier in Quebec and also invited Hector Langevin, Wilfrid Laurier, A.-P. Caron, J.-O. Chauveau, Judge Routhier, L.-U. Fontaine, and J.-A. Chapleau as well as J.-P. Rhéaume and H.-J. Chouinard of the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society.⁴⁴ The last two figures responded warmly to the invitation;⁴⁵ the response of the others was less enthusiastic however. According to Le Courrier Du Canada, Laurier, Routhier and A.-P. Caron did not bother even to acknowledge the invitation.⁴⁶ As well the Quebec press seemed positively bored by the affair. Few newspapers covered the event - Le Courrier Du Canada in Quebec City devoted two columns each day for three days to the "Convention Nationale" while Montreal's Le Monde gave somewhat less coverage, two articles, and Le Quotidien of Lévis even less.⁴⁷ However even their

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43. Pierre A. Landry, July 20, 1881. Speech reprinted in Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 33.
 44. Ibid., p. 3.
 45. See ibid., p. 10, and Le Courrier Du Canada, July 23, 1881, p. 2.
 46. Le Courrier Du Canada, July 22, 1881. However Robidoux in Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 101, claimed that Laurier, Chaveau, Chapleau, Napoléon Bourassa (Jacques et Marie) and L.-P. Lemay (French translator of Longfellow's Evangeline) all did send their regrets.
 47. See Le Courrier Du Canada, July 22, 23 and 25, 1881; Le Monde, July 23 and 25; Le Quotidien, July 25, 1881.

"enthusiasm" is questionable. All three adhered to the Conservative Party⁴⁸ and it is likely that their correspondents were in the Maritime provinces not so much for the convention itself but rather to report on Sir Hector Langevin's tour of the region, a tour which Le Monde described as nothing less than a "marche triomphale."⁴⁹

Sir Hector was greeted warmly at the convention since he was the representative of both Ottawa and Quebec. In return he promised the sympathy of his compatriots for the Acadian revival and drew analogies between French Canadian and Acadian histories. Ignoring the New Brunswick Schools Question, he assured his audience that their culture, like that of the French Canadians, was well protected by the British North America Act and the federal government. Langevin obviously did not understand Acadian susceptibilities. They had assembled in Memramcook to emphasize their distinctive character and ambitions. Yet Langevin was telling them how the two groups shared "une origine et des aspirations communes."⁵⁰

The Acadians applauded Langevin's speech - to do otherwise would be impolite - although it was little more than a motley collection of political platitudes and as such indicative of Quebec's general attitude toward l'Acadie.

48. See Hamelin and Beaulieu, Les Journaux Du Québec De 1764 A 1964, passim.

49. Le Monde, July 15, 1881, p. 1.

50. Le Courrier Du Canada, July 23, 1881, p. 2.

While seats on the New Brunswick Supreme Court or in the federal cabinet were still denied the Acadians, Langevin was assuring them that "toutes les carrières vous sont ouvertes." While it was the memory of the past, of "L'Évangéline", which fortified the Acadian stoicism, he was asking them to "oubliez ... les injustices de ce passé." While the 1870-1875 crisis was still fresh in their memories, Langevin was assuring them that "Avec 100,000 Acadiens et 1,500,000 Canadiens la persécution n'est pas possible."⁵¹ Obviously the French Canadians, too long concerned only with themselves, did not and could not appreciate Acadian fears.

One of the most divisive questions discussed by the 1881 convention was the adoption of a "national" feast day, a day which could symbolize their concept of themselves as well as determine the direction of their future. Since Canada as a whole lacked racial or linguistic homogeneity, the Acadian delegates realized that the responsibility for maintaining their culture lay with themselves and not with any level of government. "Il faut ... des organisations spéciales maintenues aux frais des nationaux de ceux de moins qui ne sont pas encore assez lâches pour se résigner à mourir."⁵² The committee

51. For Langevin's speech, see Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, pp. 36-39.

52. Sermon of Abbé P.-A. Bourgeois to the Société Mutuelle L'Assomption. Copy in Léger, "Les Grandes Lignes de l'Histoire de la Société L'Assomption," p. 180.

examining the question reflected the range of Acadian sentiment; Rev. M.-F. Richard, Pascal Poirier, Pierre Landry, Urbaine Johnson, and Fathers Joseph Pelletier, Philéas Bourgeois, F.-X. Cormier and Jean Chiasson. Appearing before the full plenary session this committee, though not unanimous, recommended August 15th instead of June 24th, l'Assomption instead of Quebec's Saint-Jean-Baptiste as the Acadians' national feast day.

A furious and at times acrimonious debate ensued. Rev. S.-J. Doucet initiated the discussion by endorsing l'Assomption. If the delegates were concerned with their nationality, if they wished to be recognized as a distinct people - "et qui pourrait le nier?" - then they would be obliged, he stated, to select a day which belonged to them exclusively. Doucet asserted that the Acadians would be making a great mistake if they chose Saint-Jean-Baptiste:

L'objet que nous devons avoir en vue en nous choisissant une fête, ce n'est pas d'établir des relations plus intimes avec aucun autre peuple, mais c'est d'établir des relations plus étroites entre nous - entre nous-même, messieurs, entre les membres éparés de la grande famille acadienne. C'est pour nous connaître mieux

Voulons-nous messieurs, nous allier avec les Canadiens de manière à ne plus être reconnus comme peuple distinct, mais comme ne formant qu'un seul et même peuple avec lui? Choisissons la Saint-Jean-Baptiste ... Ce sera un grand pas vers ce but.⁵³

53. See Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 4, 1881, p. 2, or Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, pp. 45-50.

Those endorsing August 15th stressed that the Acadians constituted a unique "nation"; they did not wish to lose any of their identity or risk being assimilated by the French Canadians. They did not speak of political gains or of power but rather spoke from a deep reserve of sentiment, of romance and of history. Stated simply, the Acadians had to be faithful to their heritage and to their origins.

Father Philéas Bourgeois, though equally proud of his Acadian nationality, supported Saint-Jean-Baptiste. He feared the Anglo-Protestant majority more than he feared the French Canadians, and he believed that a closer alliance with Quebec would strengthen the Acadian cause. They had to rely "sur d'autres moyens que ceux dont nous intrinsèques, sur d'autres forces que sur celles d'une minorité acadienne qui ne fut jamais respectée et qu'on a toujours lésée impunément." L'Acadie could acquire the support of a politically potent Quebec if it adopted Saint-Jean-Baptiste continued Bourgeois, before lambasting those who supported l'Assomption out of a sentimental, nostalgic attachment to France - the France of the nineteenth century was not the same country of their memories but rather a foreign reserve of revolution.⁵⁴

Pascal Poirier, a resident of Ottawa for nine years, commenced his discourse calmly. He did not believe that by the adoption of Saint-Jean-Baptiste the Acadians would

54. See *Le Moniteur Acadien*, Aug. 11, 1881, p. 2, or Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, pp. 50-54.

actually be assimilated by the French Canadians but "vu du dehors, cela en aurait toutes les apparences." The English majority would find the two groups indistinguishable and, Poirier added, "n'est-ce pas que nous voulons non seulement rester ce que nous sommes, mais qu'on sache qui nous sommes?" Warming to his audience, Poirier appealed for l'Assomption, "une fête qui nous soit propre ... St. Jean Baptiste n'est pas et ne saurait être le patron du peuple acadien. Il n'y a presque rien dans la vie de ce grand saint qui se rapport à notre histoire." The Acadians needed a day which belonged to them alone, a day upon which they could speak of their ancestors, a day

où nous rappellerons les gloires et les malheurs du passé, où nous pleurerons ensemble sur ce grand holocauste de 1755; un jour où nous oserons regarder l'avenir en face, parce que nous serons ensemble, unis, nous tenant par la main.⁵⁵

Pierre Landry, easily equal to Poirier in influence, adopted the opposite course. A confirmed pragmatist, Landry preferred Quebec's patron saint in part because it "est déjà enracinée en Acadie. Elle est chômée depuis longtemps" in Prince Edward Island, Memramcook, Madawaska and other Acadian parishes. Landry was a politician, and an ambitious one, who readily acknowledged the personal and general gains which could result from an alliance with Quebec. "L'élément français ne peut que gagner à serrer

55. See Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 4, 1881, p. 2, or Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, pp. 54-57.

ses rangs, à s'entendre, à s'unir."⁵⁶

The two leading clerics in Acadia, Fathers Richard and Lefebvre, intervened actively in the debate with the sympathies of each being consonant with his background. Richard, an Acadian nationalist, dismissed Landry's contention that Saint-Jean-Baptiste was widely celebrated. He claimed that this was the case in only a few parishes and only where the resident Canadian priests stubbornly wished "conserver le souvenir de leur pays" in spite of their flock. Richard emphasized that the Acadians must learn to work by themselves, to rely upon only themselves, and as an example he referred to the New Brunswick Schools Question. In that instance the Acadians had appealed to the federal government and to Quebec.

Quel en a été le résultat? on nous a abandonnés à nos propres ressources et à subir le joug de l'injustice et de l'oppression. Donc, messieurs, nécessité pour nous de ne pas trop compter sur nos voisins qui, ayant leurs propres intérêts à sauvegarder, pourraient encore oublier l'existence des cent mille Acadiens ... nous ... avons besoin de réunir nos forces pour protéger nos intérêts particuliers, qui ne sont pas toujours, à cause des circonstances, les mêmes que ceux de nos frères du Canada.⁵⁷

Father Camille Lefebvre, the French Canadian director of the Collège St. Joseph, reacted strongly to Richard's

56. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 18, 1881, p. 2.

57. See Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 11, 1881, p. 2, or Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, pp. 57-64.

assertions. For many years Lefebvre had celebrated June 24th in Memramcook and he was not willing to accept placidly any criticism of his behaviour. "Dix-sept ans de sacrifices et de dévouement me donnent le droit d'affirmer la chose sans crainte d'être contredit." His concerns, he claimed, were Acadian concerns just as French Canadian priorities ought to be Acadian priorities. There was no shame in emulating the French Canadians:

En outre, vous tendez à imiter les Canadiens, comme le prouve le fait de la présente convention, qui n'est qu'une pâle copie de celle tenue à Québec l'an dernier; pourquoi alors n'auriez-vous pas le même saint pour votre fête nationale?⁵⁸

It seems that in spite of his seventeen years in l'Acadie, Lefebvre did not acknowledge or appreciate his parishioners' desire for a distinct existence.

The delegates expressed their preferences with great passion and, not surprisingly, bitter feelings were aroused as accusations and invective crossed the floor. On one hand the Canadian priests, including Lefebvre, were charged with insincerity and with attempting to intimidate their flock. Conversely Pierre Landry chastized the Acadian priests for claiming that August 15th was somehow holier than June 24th; that Saint-Jean-Baptiste was a "secular" patron best suited to temperance movements and chauvinistic associations.⁵⁹

58. See Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 18, 1881, p. 1, or Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, pp. 67-69.

59. See Landry's speech, Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 18, 1881, p. 2.

Eventually the delegates voted on the issue and although the precise division was never reported, l'Assomption narrowly carried the day.⁶⁰ However the supporters of Saint-Jean-Baptiste continued their lobbying efforts until the "Convention Nationale" of 1884 confirmed definitively the original choice.⁶¹ L'Assomption, having been celebrated in France itself since 1638,⁶² not only illustrated the Acadians' distinct heritage but served as a rallying point for their future:

C'est le digne couronnement d'une des plus généreuses idées qu'un peuple longtemps persécuté et dispersé puisse concevoir, la célébration annuelle de sa renaissance, son affirmation comme race distincte au milieu des autres races.⁶³

In Quebec, the rejection of Saint-Jean-Baptiste provoked hardly a ripple of comment, adverse or otherwise. Le Courrier du Canada, virtually the only Quebec newspaper to show any substantial interest in the Memramcook proceedings, announced the assembly's decision without elaborating. It simply stated that the delegates from those

60. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 80.

61. See infra, p. 277.

62. The feast of "Assumption of the blessed Virgin Mary" is a festival celebrated by the Christian Church on August 15th in commemoration of the miraculous ascent into heaven of the mother of Christ. See The New Catholic Encyclopedia (New York, 1967), pp. 971-75. In 1638 King Louis XIII, desiring to consecrate his empire to the Virgin Mary, chose this day as the kingdom's national holiday. See Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 18, 1881, p. 2.

63. L.-U. Fontaine, Cent Trente-Cinq Ans Après ou la Renaissance Acadienne (Montreal, 1890), p. 61.

parishes which traditionally celebrated June 24 had remained faithful although they had eventually acquiesced to the majority opinion.⁶⁴ Interestingly enough it realized that most of those supporting "independence" and l'Assomption came from New Brunswick but it failed to draw the obvious conclusions. The New Brunswick Acadians were much more conscious of their nationality than were those from Nova Scotia or Prince Edward Island. In New Brunswick the Acadian "Renaissance" was a fact before it was even a possibility in the other provinces. Already possessing their own colleges, schools, convents, newspapers, M.P.'s and M.L.A.'s, these Acadians displayed more confidence and could better afford to assert themselves. They had learned to be self-reliant and in the future as in the past, Quebec would play only a minor role in their development.

L'Opinion Publique, a Montreal newspaper, best reflected Quebec's feelings on the affair. Since 1870 this journal had been a vociferous proponent of closer ties between the French groups in all of North America. However its real concern in fact included only the Franco-Americans - it greeted the news of the Acadian choice without any editorial comment whatsoever. Buried on page four was a brief announcement comprising five lines of one column. Indicative of the priorities of L'Opinion Publique, it devoted sixteen lines in the same column to an impending

64. Le Courrier du Canada, July 23, 1881, p. 2.

convention of Franco-Americans in New York.⁶⁵

Though Quebec remained undisturbed, the Acadians continued to debate the efficacy of their delegates' choice. One anonymous correspondent of Le Moniteur Acadien, probably from Prince Edward Island or Nova Scotia, criticized the behaviour of the New Brunswick Acadians. A "fraction de la race français des provinces maritimes," he wrote, wished to establish themselves as

un peuple à part et n'avoir de commerce avec les Canadiens que les rapports extérieurs qui peuvent exister entre eux ... Pour eux, les Canadiens ne sont que des étrangers contre l'envahissement desquels il faut être en garde ... On se croit assez fort pour marcher seul. L'offre bienveillante de secours désintéressés ne semble être acceptée qu'avec défiance.⁶⁶

Pascal Poirier promptly refuted this critic by claiming, perhaps cynically, that "Nous avons pour les Canadiens tout autant d'amitié vraie [his emphasis] que les Canadiens en ont pour nous."⁶⁷ Nevertheless others continued to be critical of the choice.

For some years after 1881 Father Lefebvre and Pierre Landry agitated for a reversal of the original choice. The former was probably motivated by his nationality. However Landry's motives are more difficult to ascertain. Being an experienced politician, he may have recognized that the

65. L'Opinion Publique, Aug. 11, 1881, p. 4.

66. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 4, 1881, p. 2.

67. Ibid., Aug. 11, 1881, p. 2.

Acadians were an insignificant force in Canadian politics and urgently needed the support which an enthusiastic Quebec could give. Landry may have realized that this support would be forthcoming only if the French Canadians had a stake in l'Acadie, only if l'Acadie publicly aligned itself with Quebec. To give credit where it is due, Landry remained consistent in his urging of an Acadian-French Canadian alliance long after l'Assomption had become an irrevocable choice. Called upon in June of 1892 to address a Quebec audience, he continued to ask the French Canadians to show more concern for the Acadians, to encourage them, and to support them in their endeavours - to do more than just talk of intimate relations.⁶⁸

In 1901, a full twenty years after the fact,⁶⁹ Arthur Beausésne⁷⁰ belatedly criticized the Acadians for choosing l'Assomption instead of Saint-Jean-Baptiste. Beausésne claimed that the Acadian "abandonment" of the latter had constituted a declaration of "la guerre ouverte" upon the French Canadians.⁷¹ In another letter he asserted that the

68. Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 6, 1892, p. 2.

69. For a discussion of why Quebec's concern came in the 1900's rather than in the 1880's, see infra, chapter XI.

70. Arthur Beausésne (1876-1959) was a Quebec journalist and lawyer before becoming, in 1913, legal advisor to the Department of Justice in Ottawa and, in 1925, the clerk of the House of Commons, a post he held until 1949. Beausésne's Rules and forms of the House of Commons of Canada (Toronto, 1922), is a standard work on parliamentary procedure.

71. L'Evangéline, Aug. 22, 1901, p. 2, "Les Acadiens".

Acadian choice had compromised the French race in all of North America and that the Acadian actions were predicated upon false premises:

Il est vrai que l'influence du climat et du milieu, ainsi que la longue période d'infériorité où les a placés leur grande pauvreté ... en ont fait un groupe différent de nous même; mais cela se résume à la même chose que la distinction des Québécois avec les Montréalais ... Le sang n'a pas changé, les traits caractéristiques de la nation ne sont pas altérés.⁷²

Beauchesne undoubtedly grated Acadian nerves as he enunciated an attitude quite common in Quebec: "il est très ridicule de se dire fils d'un pays sans existence ... Vous êtes des Canadiens français tout aussi bien que si vous étiez nés à Saint Roch de Québec." According to him, the Acadians had been obliged to assume "le même nom et la même fête nationale que nous ... Nous sommes tous un même peuple."⁷³ As a parting shot, he left the impression with the Acadians that they had lost "tout titre aux sympathies des autres Français d'Amérique" because of this self-proclaimed independence.⁷⁴

For the most part, the French Canadians could not comprehend that the Acadians were different and that they wished to remain different. In truth the Québécois rarely considered the Acadians unless it suited Quebec's own

72. Le Pionnier (Montreal), June 27, 1901. Reprinted in Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 1, 1901, p. 4.

73. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 8, 1901, pp. 4-5.

74. Ibid.

interests as was the case early in the twentieth century.⁷⁵ Quebec's concern was with expatriate Québécois and since l'Acadie was simplistically viewed as an extension of Quebec, French Canadian preferences were expected to be Acadian preferences. Confusion reigned when the Acadians rejected this status.

The Acadians unanimously refuted Beauchesne's degrading assertions with a plethora of arguments, both mundane and profound. Le Moniteur Acadien felt that having distinct patronal holidays would facilitate greater intercourse between the two groups; Acadians could visit Quebec in June while the Québécois could visit l'Acadie in August.⁷⁶ Pascal Poirier informed his Quebec opponent that Saint-Jean-Baptiste had never been widely celebrated in l'Acadie⁷⁷ nor had it any great appeal there.⁷⁸

On a somewhat higher plane, Poirier wrote that the choice of l'Assomption signified not a rejection of French Canada but more an affirmation of French-Acadian survival:

L'une et l'autre fête sont sorties
d'une pensée française et catholique,
et c'est la nécessité de s'armer pour
l'existence nationale avec les armes
qui convenaient le mieux au tempérament
de chacun, qui seule a déterminé, chez
les Canadiens, le choix de la Saint-
Jean-Baptiste, et, chez les Acadiens,

75. See infra, chapter XI.

76. Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 12, 1901, p. 4.

77. L'Évangéline, Aug. 22, 1901, p. 2.

78. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. XI.

celui de l'Assomption.

... Chacun des deux groupes français, connaissant ses nécessités et sachant qu'il serait seul à combattre ses combats, a choisi l'armure qui convenait à sa taille.⁷⁹

Predictably the Acadians had objected to all of Beuchesne's claims. The Acadians and French Canadians constituted two distinct races and the choice of l'Assomption had evolved naturally from this. Of course it was hoped that a loose alliance based upon common interest could be created. But "Les esprits ne sont pas préparés, chez les Acadiens, à renoncer à leur existence distincte et indépendante comme race, corps religieux ou force politique."⁸⁰ Perhaps regrettably, the Acadians comprised a nationality distinct from all others and thus it was only proper that they chose a distinct feast day and one best suited to their particular needs. In a material sense it might have been wiser or more politic to have accepted Quebec's choice but this "n'est pas ... notre choix - c'est Dieu lui-même qui l'a décrété."⁸¹

Perhaps in an effort to dull Beuchesne's criticisms, the Acadian leaders in 1902 revealed another factor which made the choice of Saint-Jean-Baptiste impossible. The Acadian priests at the 1881 convention had warned "que nous

79. Ibid., p. IX. *La Patrie* (Montreal), Dec. 13, 1902. C.B.A. 6-3-3.

80. L'Évangéline, Sept. 25, 1901, p. 2.

81. Ibid., Oct. 3, 1895, p. 2, "Discours" by Rev. Philéas Bourgeois who, like Pierre Landry, had preferred Saint-Jean-Baptiste in 1881. Landry too now endorsed l'Assomption. See Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 5, 1901, p. 2.

84. Le Rituel de l'Église de Saint-Jean, July 27, 1884. *Montréal Coll.*, C.B.A. 7-1-23.

n'aurions aucune chance de faire confirmer par nos évêques le choix de Saint-Jean-Baptiste comme fête nationale."

According to Pascal Poirier, the bishops opposed any closer alliances with Quebec because they feared "que nous allions trouver dans la hiérarchie canadienne des protecteurs, voir des redresseurs de torts."⁸² One does not encounter correspondence of this kind during the early 1880's but nevertheless Poirier's assertion is probably true if one considers the absence of denials and the latent hostility which existed at the time between the Irish ecclesiastical hierarchy and their Acadian flock. By choosing l'Assomption instead of Saint-Jean-Baptiste, the five Maritime bishops could not legitimately refuse their approbation of the new Acadian symbol.⁸³ Yet as the racial hostility between Irish and Acadian Catholic increased, even l'Assomption and the nationalism it generated was detested by the hierarchy who then sought to handicap further conventions by trying to prevent the attendance of leading Acadian priests.⁸⁴

In spite of this opposition, l'Assomption became a focal point for Acadian aspirations as the elite sought to cement its existence in the minds, and hearts, of their

82. P. Poirier to *La Patrie* (Montreal), Dec. 13, 1902. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.3-3.

83. Rev. M.-F. Richard presented the Acadian request and received the bishops' approval. See Rev. Richard to the Archbishop and Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Halifax, Sept. 16, 1881. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1881".

84. See Abbé Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, July 27, 1884. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-23.

followers. The second convention held (Aug. 15, 1884) in Miscouche, Prince Edward Island, advanced this goal dramatically. The delegates confirmed l'Assomption as their national holiday, putting to rest the idea of an intimate Quebec-Acadian alliance in this respect. The national consciousness evident at this second gathering gave birth to other symbols of Acadian pride. Rev. M.-F. Richard suggested the adoption of a flag to symbolize Acadian sentiments - "le drapeau tricolore avec ... une étoile aux couleurs papales, l'étoile de Marie, Stella Maris."⁸⁵ Confident of his ability to influence the convention, Richard just "happened" to have such a flag with him and in those frenzied moments, the delegates also accepted his recommendation for a national anthem, L'Ave Maris Stella.

The moment was undeniably emotional. Richard "frémissant, comme inspiré, se leva, et de sa voix puissante entonne l'Ave Maris Stella. Un frisson secoua l'assemblée; tout le monde était debout chantant l'hymne glorieuse. Plusieurs pleuraient."⁸⁶ Another account of the convention was equally intense:

Une commotion électrique frappa toute l'assemblée. Un silence profond se fit pendant un instant; chacun retenait sa respiration; puis, tombant à genoux, tous reprirent en chœur au troisième

85. Gildas, Mgr. M.-F. Richard, pp. 101-02.

86. Poirier, Les Acadiens Depuis la Confédération jusqu'à nos jours, p. 8.

verset:

Atque semper Virgo

Felix Coeli Porta!

L'air national de l'Acadie était
trouvé et choisi.⁸⁷

This convention generated an enthusiasm, a unity, a sense of purpose which had not been evident for a century. The delegates were partaking in the rebirth of a nation and were unabashed in their joy.

The constitution of their new association, "La Société Nationale L'Assomption", publicized the goals of the Acadian elite and nation. The organization, to which all Acadians belonged "en vertu de leur origine", sought to encourage the preservation and love of the French language as well as "la foi de nos ancêtres". It sought to stimulate all aspects of the French culture in l'Acadie as well as to unite "les groupes dispersés dans les provinces maritimes."⁸⁸

In 1881, the Acadians of New Brunswick had been the most confident of their ability and generally dominated, in number as in energy, the proceedings of the convention. In 1884 the convention was held in Prince Edward Island in order to instill the seed of patriotism into the Acadians of that region and to prevent their anglicization. The island Acadians sorely needed this infusion of "renaissance" spirit for there, as Poirier related, "on parle l'anglais dans la

87. Gildas, Mgr. M.-F. Richard, p. 103.

88. Constitution of La Société Nationale L'Assomption, Article 7. Copy in C.E.A., Box "La Société Nationale L'Assomption".

famille, et tous les billets, les avis, les affiches de la convention étaient faits en Anglais!"⁸⁹ Some years later (1907), Poirier spoke with pride of the nationalism which the 1884 convention generated but re-iterated that the overwhelming presence of English virtually doomed those Acadians to extinction.⁹⁰ The second "Convention Nationale" had only retarded slightly their continuing anglicization.

In 1890 the third "Convention Nationale" was held, this time at Pointe-de-l'Eglise in the St. Mary's Bay region of Nova Scotia. With 6,000 people in attendance, including two hundred Acadians from Quebec and others from New England, the convention was a great social gathering with old friends and relatives renewing their ties.⁹¹ However the goal of the elite was more substantial. Valentin Landry had recently (1887) introduced the renaissance spirit to Nova Scotia by establishing L'Evangéline in Weymouth. Now the elite wished to expand his initiative by publicizing the existence of a substantial number of Acadians in that province and by resolving to bring

89. P. Poirier to Abbé Biron, Aug. 20, 1884. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-23.

90. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 273.

91. See Grant, Through Evangeline's Country, pp. 46-47.

92. For details of Père Sigogne's career in Nova Scotia, see supra, chapter II.

93. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 171.

French-language education to their compatriots.⁹² The Eudist Fathers from France would soon satisfy this desire by constructing, at Pointe-de-l'Eglise, the Collège Ste. Anne, a bilingual institution dedicated to the memory of Père Sigogne.⁹³

The adoption of national symbols, the gathering of the Acadians under a national banner, that of "La Société Nationale L'Assomption", had been tokens of the Acadian attempts to emerge from their stagnation and lethargy. They had adopted visible manifestations of their national identity and had organized themselves

pour nous défendre contre toute attaque
tentée contre notre autonomie nationale
... nous sommes décidés à démontrer que
l'Acadien ... a des droits ... et qu'il
est déterminé à les défendre contre
toute tentative d'invasion.⁹⁴

They were equally determined to resist assimilation by French Canada. Quebec had never recognized l'Acadie in the past; it had never responded to the appeals of the Acadians; it had refused to recognize the Acadian distinctiveness and it had refused to consider the Acadians as being any more than docile, slightly inferior, French Canadians. Recognizing Quebec's appalling apathy, the Acadian elite employed the national conventions and l'Assomption to bring

92. See Bernard, Histoire de la Survivance Acadienne, 1755-1955, p. 263.

93. For details of Père Sigogne's career in Nova Scotia, see supra, chapter II.

94. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 172.

together this scattered people, to unite them in a single society under a single banner, and to transmit an "esprit de corps". "La Société Nationale L'Assomption" would serve as a distinctive vehicle for realizing their self-conceived national aspirations.

Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century the Acadians had sought to emphasize their distinctiveness, to emphasize that they were not merely an integral part of the French Canadian race. They had a different history and different aspirations. They sought symbols which adequately reflected their own identity and traditions rather than assuming those of Quebec even though accepting the latter may have been more politic. These external trappings of "nationhood" buttressed the group's claims of distinctiveness.

Nevertheless the Acadians and the French Canadians shared many concerns, foremost of which was the desire of each to preserve its culture. Many of the Acadian and Canadian elite viewed agriculture, colonization or a continued attachment to the soil as the best means of cultural preservation.¹ Yet the security of these two societies was being threatened by the same foreign and foreboding world, a world of international companies and international unions; a world of increasing industrialization,

1. See *L'Evangéline* (Moncton), Sept. 9, 1918, p. 1. "Les Acadiens, Le Présent, l'Avenir" by Oscar Héroux.

CHAPTER IX

Acadien-Canadien Responses - Colonization

Throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century the Acadians had sought to emphasize their distinctiveness, to emphasize that they were not merely an integral part of the French Canadian race. They had a different history and different aspirations. They sought symbols which adequately reflected their own identity and traditions rather than assuming those of Quebec even though accepting the latter may have been more politic. These external trappings of "nationhood" buttressed the group's claims of distinctiveness.

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1. See *L'Évangéline* (Moncton), Sept. 9, 1910, p. 2. "Les Acadiens, Le Présent, l'Avenir" by Omer Héroux.

urbanization and, perhaps, anglicization; a world of increasing materialism and increasing desire. Both Acadians and French Canadians were falling prey to this new dogma, "le culte du veau d'or" as Henri Bourassa called it.² In Acadia and in Quebec, both the clerical and, to a lesser extent, the lay elite perceived the danger inherent in this new world and sought to postpone what may be seen, with hindsight, as the inevitable.

At an early stage the elite began pondering the most efficacious means of protecting the life-style of the French Canadian and Acadian people. In 1860, Rameau de Saint-Père urged greater unity between the two groups and suggested the foundation of a French "nation" in Canada stretching from the Ontario border to a point including much of New Brunswick. For the Acadians, "rien ne lui serait plus facile que d'occuper cette partie aujourd'hui vacant du Nouveau-Brunswick qui borde le Golfe St. Laurent."³ Rameau wished the Acadians to dominate the entire northern portion of the province - he dreamed of concentrating the 45,000 Acadians of New Brunswick, the 33,000 of Nova Scotia and the 11,000 of Prince Edward Island⁴ into one area contiguous with Quebec. The Anglo-Saxons could then be

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2. Le Devoir (Montreal), July 1, 1912, p. 5. See also Henri Bourassa, Le Patriotisme Canadien-Français, Ce qu'il est, ce qu'il doit être (Montreal, 1902).
 3. Rameau de Saint-Père to a Quebec audience, Oct. 23, 1860. Reprinted in L'Ordre (Montreal), Nov. 7, 1860.
 4. Canada, Census of Canada, 1871, I, p. 232. For Prince Edward Island, see Census of Canada, 1881, I, p. 208.

expelled and an expanded French patrie recreated.⁵

However since mid-century, the bulk of the Acadian people and the bulk of their elite had sought to extract themselves from isolation and take part in the political and social activities of the larger world. Yet this increased multi-racial contact had in many cases led to increased aspirations and this in turn led to a massive emigration from "la patrie". Approximately 500,000 French Canadians and an undetermined number of Acadians left their homes for a variety of reasons and resettled in the factory towns of New England during the second half of the nineteenth century. This incessant, pernicious flow of Canadian potential assumed such alarming proportions that it "polarise l'inquiétude des élites qui, faute de pouvoir y remédier, subliment leur impuissance et leur désarroi dans le myth de la vocation missionnaire du Canada Français."⁶

Initially the emigration of French Canadians was rationalized as a beneficial development; it was a divine plan to spread the Faith throughout North America, to reconquer Protestant America for the Church of Rome. This concept soon lapsed as the elite sought to strengthen the

5. Rameau de Saint-Père to Israel Landry, Jan. 8, 1868. Published in Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac), July 31, 1868, p. 1.

6. J. Hamelin & Y. Roby, Histoire Economique Du Québec, 1851-1896 (Montreal, 1971), p. 51.

"patrie" through both retention and repatriation.⁷

Immigration as well as emigration posed a serious threat to the future of French Canada. Initially French Canadians feared the "class" of people being attracted to Canada, "la mauvais qualité de ceux qui vont chez vous" as M. Rameau warned. "Beaucoup d'entre eux ... ne sont pas de première qualité."⁸ Rameau's concern was with a three year period (1867-1869) during which only 46,000 immigrants entered Canada. However as the country entered the twentieth century, this stream became a flood until in 1914 alone 385,000 immigrants settled in Canada.⁹ The political stature of French Canada was being eroded by the combined evils of emigration from Quebec and immigration to the rest of the country. In 1871 French Canadians accounted for approximately one-third of Canada's population whereas in 1911, forty years later, this figure was less than 29%.¹⁰

7. See *supra*, chapter VIII. Repatriation was one of the main themes of the Quebec "Congrès National" of 1880. See *infra*, chapter IX for various attempts to retain the French population of both Quebec and l'Acadie. One might also see G. Lanctot, *Les Canadiens Français et Leurs Voisins Du Sud* (Montreal, 1941); D. Chaput, "Some Repatriement Dilemmas," *C.H.R.*, XLIX, No. 4 (Dec., 1968), pp. 400-12; A. I. Silver, "French Canada and the Prairie Frontier," *C.H.R.*, XLIX, No. 2 (March, 1969), pp. 11-36.

8. *La Minerve* (Montreal), Oct. 14, 1872, p. 2.

9. Canada, Dept. of Trade and Commerce, *Canada Year Book*, 1918 (Ottawa, 1919), p. 30.

10. Canada, *Census of Canada, 1871*, pp. 332-33. Canada's total population was 3,020,000 of which 1,053,000 were of French origin. See also *ibid.*, 1911, pp. 340-41. Canada's total population was 7,185,000 of which 2,055,000 were of French origin.

Pascal Poirier, expressing more general fears, dreaded the day when immigration would reduce the French Canadians to the position of being an insignificant minority; he estimated that they would comprise only 20% of the entire population by 1940.¹¹

Equally alarming to the Quebec and Acadian French was the support given to the immigrants by the various governments. This aid was dispersed while the needs of Canadians were ignored. L'Évangéline, the other Acadian newspapers, and many of the Acadian people constantly and publicly criticized such practices¹² but often to no avail.

The result was a degree of xenophobia among French Canadians which equalled or exceeded that exhibited in English Canada. Henri Bourassa, representing a substantial following, criticized English Canadians for their desire to assimilate the French and for defining Canada as unilingual and unicultural. He spoke of cultural diversity as being a bulwark against American annexation. Yet at the same time he showed little sympathy, and even outright hostility toward other racial groups. Not aware of the irony of his own words, he showed little inclination to respect religious peculiarities among others. As Anglo-Canadians

11. L'Évangéline, May 19, 1904, p. 1. In actual fact French Canadians made up 30.3% of the Canadian population in 1941. See Canada, Census of Canada, 1941, I, p. 222.

12. See for example L'Évangéline, Nov. 30, 1911, p. 4 or Rev. A. Boucher to Rameau de Saint-Père, Sept. 3, 1888. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-27.

L'Évangéline, Sept. 23, 1906, Aug. 12, 1905 and Sept. 16, 1909.

described Canada as an "English country", Bourassa described it as a "Christian country" complaining of the strange tendency to make of them [the Jews] a specially privileged class ... They do not adapt themselves to the customs of the people among whom they live, but on the contrary they conduct themselves in such a way that they are vampires on the community instead of being contributors to the general welfare.¹³

The Acadian newspapers, often parroting Quebec feelings on this issue, also revealed an alarming degree of hostility. The Doukhobors, so it was claimed, chained their women to the ploughs and let their animals roam free; they were "infidels" without churches or priests; they refused to register births and marriages with the government because "tout est en commun, mêmes les femmes." Finally, as if there was any doubt, L'Évangéline concluded that the Doukhobors "sont une véritable plaie dans l'Ouest" whose "demi-civilisation jette déjà du malaise dans l'Ouest et pourrait bien préparer de graves mécomptes à notre pays."¹⁴ Few Franco-Canadians, whether Acadian or Québécois, appreciated the utility of these immigrants in repudiating the Anglo-Protestant majority's definition of a "Canadian".

The French race had to be fortified if it was to overcome the liabilities of emigration and immigration. Many

13. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1906, June 20, 1906, col. 5636-37.

14. L'Évangéline, Nov. 6, 1902, p. 2. For other examples of this attitude, see L'Évangéline, Sept. 13, 1906, Aug. 12, 1909 and Sept. 16, 1909.

of the elite believed that agriculture and colonization were the best means of creating an impregnable French Catholic milieu. "Emparons-nous du sol, si nous voulons conserver notre nationalité ... il faut coloniser, ouvrir de nouvelles terres ... si nous voulons rester acadiens français."¹⁵ Agriculture provided for a stable, basically conservative population which could preserve the essentials of the traditional Franco-Canadian culture. The elite's goal was a self-sufficient community which could be financially and morally independent of the "degenerative", assimilative effects of the rapidly industrializing cities of Quebec, New Brunswick and New England. The ultimate aim was a compact society whose axis was the church with its priests, convents, schools and obligatory guidance and morality. This could best be attained in the countryside and colonization became "la noble mission que la divine providence vous a confié."¹⁶ In this concept there was little difference between Québécois and Acadian.

In both Quebec and Acadia many priests, to whom the responsibility for colonization usually fell, could not comprehend why the young were leaving their "patrie". There seemed to be a sufficient amount of rich land for hardy

15. Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 3, 1869, p. 2.

16. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 185.

18. Le Moniteur Acadien, Nov. 13, 1873. See also Mandet Coll., U.S.A. 1.37-1.

souls such as Samuel Chapdelaine.¹⁷ The climate was not unduly harsh. Yet thousands were departing every year for the great American republic.

Many priests recognized the émigrés' motives although they certainly did not sympathize with them. Father Belcourt, leading an early (1873) agricultural organization, expressed his intense anger at meeting young men who preferred to work

à la journée sur les voies ferrées, et dans les manufactures que de se lever à la profession de leurs pères, que de cultiver la terre ... [By working as they do] ils renoncent volontairement à l'indépendance ... Il faut abandonner ce système ruineux et recourir à la colonisation, notre seule planche de salut.¹⁸

Father Richard, later to lead the movement, perceived even more clearly what was happening to his people. As the Acadians became more respectable and more acceptable in the Anglo-Saxon world, they became more complacent and more bourgeois in their outlook. Racial concerns had become secondary to personal concerns or material gain and Richard sought a return to the traditional life, a rejection of modern excesses:

Moins de luxe, moins d'extravagances
dans la vie, moins d'ivrognerie ...

-
17. Samuel was the father of Maria Chapdelaine in Louis Hémon's novel Maria Chapdelaine. Samuel's soul was in clearing, not tilling the land and he had undertaken a new homestead five times in his life.
18. Le Moniteur Acadien, Nov. 13, 1873. See also Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.57-3.

moins de politique folle, ridicule et insensée; plus de prudence et d'économie, plus de sobriété, plus de sens commun ... plus d'amour pour la famille, la paroisse, l'église, sa langue, ses traditions, et ses coutumes....¹⁹

The materialistic values of the young were causing widespread concern in all of French Canada. Editorials expressing thoughts similar to those of Rev. Richard were echoed in Quebec. La Gazette de Campagne (Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pocatière) for example spoke of this new mentality as being indicative of "un état de choses extrêmement regrettable, une véritable plaie sociale."²⁰ Twenty years later Henri Bourassa, addressing the Eucharist Council in Montreal (1910), emphasized these very same concerns; too often in his society "Au culte de l'argent, au culte du confort, au culte des honneurs, opposons le culte du devoir, le culte du sacrifice, le culte du dévouement."²¹

The increasing materialism of the young, their desire for a different life-style was producing serious, deleterious effects upon Quebec agriculture and, subsequently, Quebec traditions. In spite of its high birth rate, the rural population of Quebec²² grew only very slowly, from

19. Le Moniteur Acadien, Jan. 26, 1894, p. 2.

20. La Gazette de Campagnes, n.d., "Emigration". Reprinted in ibid., April 29, 1892, p. 1.

21. Henri Bourassa, Religion, Langue, Nationalité (Montreal, 1910), p. 10. See also A. Dugrè, s.j., La Désertion des Campagnes, Ses Causes, Ses Remèdes (Montréal, 1915).

22. "For the purposes of the census, the population residing in cities, towns and incorporated villages has been

988,000 in 1891 to 1,039,000 in 1911 and then showed a positive decline to 1,038,000 in 1921.²³ In 1891 over 66% of Quebec's population was found in the rural milieu, a figure which diminished steadily over the next three decades. In 1921 only 44% of the Quebec population remained on the land.²⁴ Montreal, Canada's leading metropolis, was like a magnet, incessantly attracting people to it. It expanded from 115,000 in 1871 to 490,000 in 1911 while Quebec City grew by 35% during the same period.²⁵ The rural population of New Brunswick decreased slightly between 1891 and 1911 (272,000 and 252,000 respectively) while its urban population mushroomed from 49,000 to 100,000. Both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island exhibited even more dramatically the same trends.²⁶

Since emotional appeals to one's sense of history or tradition were obviously not sufficient to discourage rural depopulation, more rational arguments were employed. The

defined as urban, and that outside of such localities as rural." Canada, Minister of Trade and Commerce, The Canada Year Book, 1921 (Ottawa, 1922), p. 99.

23. Ibid., p. 101.

24. Ibid., p. 102.

25. Ibid., p. 108. The population of Quebec City was 60,000 in 1871 and 80,000 in 1911.

26. Ibid., p. 101. Nova Scotia's rural population was 373,000 in 1891 and 306,000 in 1911 while its urban population grew from 77,000 to 186,000. Prince Edward Island's rural population decreased from 95,000 to 79,000 while its urban population grew slightly from 14,000 to 15,000.

cost of living was lower in rural areas. Country living was healthy whereas the city was debilitating to both spirit and body. Cities may have been a material Mecca but even as late as 1902, the elite advised French Canadians to seek more from life:

Let us not step down from the pedestal, where God has placed us, to walk commonly among those generations who thirst for gold and pleasure. We must leave to other nations, less inspired with the ideal, the kind of feverish mercantilism and vulgar bestiality that rivets them to material things.²⁷

The farmer was a free man, the industrial worker a slave to the factory or the "Boss". The farmer could, in his isolation and independence, protect his traditions while his urban counterpart was obliged to conform to surroundings which were often antipathetic to his own character. The family unit, so basic to French Canadian life, could be preserved in the country. Conversely, the city and its industries devoured children, wrenching them from parental guidance and enslaving them in unhealthy surroundings.²⁸

For most of the nineteenth century, rural depopulation was viewed as unavoidable, as part of God's mission for the

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27. Mgr. L.-A. Pâquet (1859-1942), "Sermon sur la vocation de la race française en Amérique," June 23, 1902, in French-Canadian Nationalism, trans. and ed. by G. R. Cook (Toronto, 1969), p. 158.
 28. For life of the working class in Quebec, see Herbert Brown Ames, The city below the hill, ed. by P.F.W. Rutherford (Toronto, 1972); Terry Copp, The Anatomy of Poverty: The Condition of the Working Class in Montreal, 1897-1929 (Toronto, 1974).

French-Catholic race in America. But as the nineteenth century closed, the pernicious effects of this draining of resources was too alarming to be further ignored. Between 1901 and 1911, claimed Le Devoir, some 150,000 people left Quebec.²⁹ In Parliament as well as in the press, Québécois bemoaned the disastrously high number of French Canadians in American cities: 30,000 in Chicago; 14,000 in Fall River; 12,500 in Lowell; 12,000 in Manchester, and so on.³⁰ Estimates of the total ranged from 750,000 to 1,200,000,³¹ a tremendous loss to "la patrie".

The problem of emigration was equally serious in the Maritime provinces although by no means confined to the Acadians. Countless Anglophone M.L.A.'s suggested means of stopping the flow and complained that "In the last decade we ... gained only one-third of our natural increase."³² The effect of this outward migration was especially devastating because those leaving were "The real aristocracy of our land, the young and the strong, the ambitious and energetic."³³ During the summer months a stream of people

29. Le Devoir, June 1, 1914, p. 1.

30. Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1887, col. 427-30. Hon. F.-X. Trudel, June 16, 1887.

31. See ibid. for the lower estimate while for the higher, see Hamelin & Roby, Histoire Economique Du Québec, 1851-1896, pp. 67-68.

32. New Brunswick, Synoptic, New Brunswick Assembly, 1903, p. 100. H. A. McKeown (Saint John City), May 20, 1908.

33. Rev. Frank Baird, Provincial Patriotism. An address to the Canadian Club of Moncton, May 1909 (C.E.A., Pamphlet Coll.), p. 6.

filled the so-called "Boston Train" to seek their fortunes in the industrial centres of New England. Bishop Timothy Casey of Saint John,³⁴ for once reflecting Acadian concerns, feared this rampant materialism:

Never, perhaps, was the spirit of wickedness more powerful ... than in the satanic doctrines and socialistic tendencies of the world today. Positive barbarism and brute materialism, is found intermingled with our boasted modern civilization. Far and wide is found satisfaction with the things of this world only; and, without God and the supernatural, avarice, voluptuousness and bloodthirstiness may grow apace until hell yawns for a Godless generation.³⁵

Rev. Frank Beard claimed in one speech that there were 35,000 New Brunswickers in Massachusetts or more than the population of Moncton and Fredericton combined.³⁶

While all Maritimers worried about depopulation, the Acadians were especially alarmed because, for them, emigration was a new phenomenon. Throughout their history they had exhibited a tenacious attachment to their "patrie". Before the English conquest in 1713, while the French Canadians explored half a continent, the Acadians remained

34. Bishop Timothy Casey (1862-1931) was born in Charlotte County, New Brunswick, educated at the Collège St. Joseph and ordained in 1886. In 1901 he was named Bishop of Saint John and in 1912, Archbishop of Vancouver.

35. Rt. Rev. T. Casey, Sermon Delivered At St. Patrick's Church, Montreal, December 13, 1908 (C.E.A., Pamphlet Coll.).

36. Baird, Provincial Patriotism, p. 6. The populations of Moncton and Fredericton (1918) were 11,300 and 7,200 respectively.

on their farms, reluctant to relocate even in Cape Breton when urged to do so by their government and their missionaries. They left their homes only when compelled to do so (1755) and then strained their physical and mental resources to return. This voluntary exile of the twentieth century seemed to constitute "une seconde diaspora".³⁷ What English armies could not succeed in achieving, "le culte du veau d'or" might.

The temptations of the new urbanized world threatened to destroy a culture so diligently preserved:

Cette vie urbaine est ... trop souvent le tombeau de la nationalité acadienne. Tout y est anglais: la langue, ses moeurs, les habitudes, les relations de société. Aussi voit-on les Acadiens subir peu à peu l'influence du milieu, se détacher de leurs compatriotes, et marcher vers une anglicisation prochaine. ... [Many] pour se faire mieux accueillir, commencent à renoncer à leur nationalité et à changer leur nom pour dissimuler leur origine.³⁸

The denationalization of the Acadians might have been avoided had this emigration led to Quebec but it rarely did. There simply was not and never had been any affiliation between the two peoples to serve as a magnet.

"L'Acadien est au Québécois ce que le Breton est au Français."³⁹ Only in Madawaska, or the "Republique de

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37. A. Hubert, "Aperçu démographique du peuple Acadien," L'Action Nationale, L, No. 8 (April, 1961), p. 699.
 38. George Demanche, "Les Acadiens Et Leur Avenir," Revue Française, XXX, No. 318 (June, 1905), p. 359.
 39. Pierre Bachelier, "Français d'Outre-Mer; Les Acadiens," Miroir de l'Histoire, No. 230 (Feb., 1969), p. 94.

Madawaska", did French Canadian and Acadian merge and the product was a "new man", the distinct "Madawaskayen".⁴⁰

The continuing flow of emigrants to the United States became even more insidious as the people, ignoring the elite's admonitions, came to accept this practice as normal. Parents of large families did not have the time to worry about a romantic version of the past and viewed the departure of some of their children not with anguish but with "la réjouissance". Emigration had become acceptable and the moanings of the elite would not stop it. It could be that "l'Acadie a besoin de tous ses enfants"⁴¹ but more important to these "children" were their own needs.

The Acadians, being less numerous than the French Canadians, could ill afford any illusions about the divine purpose of emigration or about the possibility of retaining one's culture in New England - "nous étions disposés à vous [i.e. Franco-Americans] considérer comme perdus pour la

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40. Albert, Histoire Du Madawaska, p. 281. Madawaska was a distinct, international community including the Acadian-French Canadian blend in both Maine and New Brunswick. Father Albert, writing of the 1908 "Convention Nationale" in Saint-Basile, notes (p. 292) that it was "une révélation pour les [Acadians of] les provinces maritimes qui connaissaient le Madawaska aussi peu que le Madawaska ne connaissait ces mêmes provinces." Antoine Bernard constructs the chapters of his Histoire de la Survivance Acadienne in an illustrative manner; he sets apart one section (chapter IX, pp. 176-225) to deal with "Le Madawaska - Restigouche" obviously viewing that region as distinct from the rest of the province.
41. L'Evangéline, July 9, 1913, p. 4, "O Jeunesse! Pourquoi T'En Vas-Tu?"

patrie."⁴² With this in mind, colonization schemes assumed a special urgency as only they could retard this continued draining of Acadian strength.

In Quebec this effort to prevent emigration historically involved "back to the land" movements led by priest-missionaries who, more than most, feared the morally corrupting world of industry, theatres, liquor, temptations and Protestants.⁴³ There appeared a generation of clerics devoted to this redemptive cause: the Curé Hébert in the Saguenay region, Abbé Calixte-Marquis in the Cantons of the East, Curé Boucher in Caron canton (also in the Saguenay), and the Trappist Order with their model farm in Langevin canton. Most famous of these men however had to be the Curé Labelle with his unceasing efforts in the region north of Montreal.⁴⁴

In Quebec, colonization was more than an emotional affair. Agriculture was not viewed as a panacea in itself and men such as L.-O. David in L'Opinion Publique (Montreal)

42. Ibid., Sept. 18, 1902, p. 1.

43. Emiles Piché, p.s.v., Comment Préserver Notre Jeunesse - Les Patronages (Montréal, 1911), p. 10.

44. Father François Xavier Antoine Labelle (1853-1891) was born in Laval County, Quebec, educated at the College of Ste. Thérèse and ordained in 1856. Having become known as the "Apostle of Colonization", he was appointed deputy-minister of agriculture and colonization in 1886; in 1889 he was elevated by the Pope to the title of apostolic prothonotary. See Abbé E.-J. Auclair, Le Curé Labelle, Sa Vie Et Son Oeuvre (Montréal, 1930) and Abbé J.-B. Proulx, Le Canada, le Curé Labelle, et la colonisation (Paris, 1885).

posed the rhetorical question: "Ces 700,000 Canadiens-français seraient-ils dispersés sur le sol américain si depuis vingt ans nous avons eu des manufactures?"⁴⁵ The movement's missionary leaders were too close to the people, too involved in their concerns to be idealistic traditionalists. They recognized that industries had to be established in rural areas as a source of either winter or permanent employment for those dissatisfied with farming. Thus the priest had to be as concerned with pulp mills, railroad lines, public works and colonization roads as he was with agriculture.⁴⁶ Sawmills became an integral component of colonization experiments. Railway links with the outside world were promoted in order to provide markets. In general, the organizer tried to enhance the attractiveness of the new community in order to prevent the people "from being compelled to abandon their native province,"⁴⁷ from fleeing to the morally emaciating atmosphere of the United States.

By 1900 and the return of economic prosperity to Canada and Quebec, the clergy serving these areas almost

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45. L'Opinion Publique, Dec. 21, 1871.
46. This is convincingly argued in two recent studies of economic growth in Quebec. See W. F. Ryan, The Clergy and Economic Growth in Quebec, 1896-1914 (Québec, 1966) and Hamelin and Roby, Histoire Economique Du Québec, 1851-1896.
47. Ryan, The Clergy and Economic Growth in Quebec, 1896-1914, p. 57.

appeared more concerned with industry than with agriculture. The former kept people in Quebec while the latter was more of an idyllic though antiquated vision. One always accorded due respect to agriculture but the emphasis and the future lay with industrial development. The missionary patrons of agriculture, as W. F. Ryan shows, suffered from and exhibited a very real ideological conflict:

Among these agricultural priests there is much rhetoric ... But they themselves are seldom men of narrow vision. A one-time colonization missionary, Curé Corbeil, can on occasion give a lecture in Quebec City calling the desertion of the land a "lèse-nationalité", while at the same time he himself is busy building a pulp-and-paper mill town at La Tuque, where the word "agriculture" scarcely enters his vocabulary. Curé Cimon of Saint-Alphonse (Bagotville) can, in 1900, plead the cause of agriculture ... at a "fête agricole" held in the new pulp mill at Jonquière and a few can equally revel in the success of the new all-French-Canadian mill at Chicoutimi⁴⁸

Even Curé Labelle, the apostle of agriculture and colonization in Quebec, recognized that "Pour développer notre pays, il nous faut des industries, il nous faut des chemins de fer. Qui veut la fin doit vouloir les moyens."⁴⁹ Labelle personified Quebec's concerns at the turn of the century. There was a past, imbedded firmly in agriculture which everyone wished to preserve. However there was also a future which depended upon industrial development. Agriculture was

48. Ibid., p. 252.

49. Auclair, Le Curé Labelle, Sa Vie Et Son Oeuvre, p. 113.

promoted not because of some traditional philosophy but only because and only when "there was nothing else to do [his emphasis]."⁵⁰

However the Acadians still treated the problems of agriculture, colonization and emigration on an emotional level. Early in 1873 Abbé Belcourt and Le Moniteur Acadien had tried to establish a committee to rationally study the settling of Acadian colonists on crown lands.⁵¹ However there was no response to this initiative from the population in general. By 1884 and the second "Convention Nationale", Father Marcel Richard had become the guiding force behind the colonization movement in l'Acadie. Like many others, he spoke of agriculture in romantic terms;⁵² however unlike many others, he did not profess the glories of colonization while personally ensconced in the sanctity of a city. Instead he was "le Monseignor Labelle de l'Acadie", the "grand apôtre de la colonisation".⁵³

Richard believed that no Catholic should be intimidated

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50. A. Faucher and M. Lamontagne, "History of Industrial Development" in Essays on Contemporary Quebec, ed. by J.-C. Falardeau (Québec, 1953), p. 28.
51. Printed invitation to a "General Meeting Concerning Colonization," Feb. 4, 1873. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.30-34.
52. See Rev. M.-F. Richard to Bishop J. Rogers, Jan. 6, 1889, and to Bishop J. Sweeny, Jan. 6, 1889. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1889".
53. Valentin-A. Landry, "Voix d'Acadie," La Revue Franco-Américaine, n.d. Copy in H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., Box 1 "Biographie", file "Poirier".

or deterred by the hardships incumbent upon a colonist:

La vie de l'homme sur la terre est un combat continuel ... En effet, dès son entrée dans la vie jusqu'au moment du départ fatale, depuis le berceau jusqu'à la tombe, tout mortel doit rencontrer sans cesse sur ses pas des contrariétés et des épreuves.⁵⁴

With this in mind, Richard devoted his life to colonization and was responsible for the establishment of several new settlements and missions, most notably Rogersville, Saint-Ignace and Acadieville.⁵⁵ In 1869 a "section gang" working on the Intercolonial Railway approached Richard with their plan for farming in the Carleton area. Richard soon devoted himself to their cause, unmindful of his already onerous tasks.

Life in this new parish was difficult for both the colonists and for Richard who shared, physically and otherwise, in their every endeavour. Though the colony survived, economic disaster was never far away. In 1881, following an almost total crop failure, Richard appealed on their behalf to the government, to friends, and to the public. The response was inadequate and Richard had to assume a large personal debt in order to save "his" colony. The settlement was redeemed. Afterwards Richard was extremely bitter about the reaction of many among the

54. Sermon of Father M.-F. Richard to the "Convention Nationale", 1881. Reprinted in Gildas, Mgr. M.-F. Richard, p. 139.

55. See Appendix I.

province's Catholic population:

J'ai reçu moi-même des reproches d'un personnage distingué [probably Bishop Rogers], parce que j'avais voulu encourager au-delà de ce qui paraissait raisonnable la colonisation. Un autre qui, cependant, doit tout aux Acadiens, ne disait que Rogersville et Acadieville n'auraient jamais dû être fondés en paroisses, qu'il aurait fallu laisser ces terrains aux exploiters de forêts. Ainsi on voudrait chasser les enfants du pays, les exiler une seconde fois afin de profiter de leurs terres pour enrichir des particuliers dont tout le patriotisme consiste à grossir leur bourse⁵⁶

In 1885 the colony again verged on extinction and Richard, in order to save the situation, borrowed \$3,000 from the bank. At the same time however he acquired "les titres de 80 à 100 lots en mon propre nom" in order to prevent them from escheating to the local merchants. Again he was subjected to vociferous criticism:

... j'ai été l'objet de beaucoup de critiques et même d'insultes grossières. On m'a accusé de spéculer aux dépens des colons, de vouloir devenir un seigneur foncier dans Rogersville, de trop m'occuper des affaires temporelles, et même d'avoir fait de faux rapports sur la situation, etc.⁵⁷

Nevertheless Richard remained undeterred considering only, he claimed, the welfare of his people. With this sort of unrelenting support, prosperity finally came to Rogersville as good harvests complemented the logging industry. Other

56. Gildas, Mgr. M.-F. Richard, pp. 80-81.

57. Bernard, Histoire de la Survivance Acadienne, 1755-1935, pp. 158-59.

smaller settlements were born in the vicinity and by 1914 it had become one of the major Acadian parishes in New Brunswick.⁵⁸

Rogersville had been fortunate to have Marcel Richard as its patron especially since there were not many like him. Certainly most Acadians paid lip-service to the ideal of agriculture. Ferdinand Robidoux, located sedately in Shediac and dirtying his hands only with printer's ink, as well as many priests, secure in the cleanliness of their presbytery, instructed "l'homme de champs" to be proud of his work because he was the freest and the noblest of all men.⁵⁹ Sitting securely in their Moncton, Fredericton or Ottawa offices, the elite romanticized about the honours inherent in farming conveniently ignoring the back-breaking chores, the unremitting, often tedious character of farm work, the isolation, the loneliness, and the poverty of a rural life. While the elite scrambled for remunerative positions in the political, judicial and social hierarchy of the country, the ordinary people were supposed to do without "les dépenses improductives ... les dépenses de luxe, d'amour propre."⁶⁰ It was very much a matter of "do as I say, not as I do!"

By 1913 Mgr. Richard, now over 70 years of age and

58. Ibid., p. 159.

59. Le Moniteur Acadien, Nov. 29, 1895, p. 1. See also L'Évangéline, Dec. 1, 1915, p. 1, "Colonisons".

60. L'Évangéline, Dec. 6, 1895, p. 1.

aware of his limitations, convinced a meeting of the "Société Nationale L'Assomption" to establish, as in Quebec, a compact organization devoted exclusively to the promotion of colonization.⁶¹ In this way he hoped to gain more than just pious pronouncements from the elite.⁶² It can be argued that Richard was probably deluding himself since the Acadian lay and clerical elites were seeking contradictory goals. Since 1867 the energy of the former had been directed toward acquiring a place for the Acadians within the larger Canadian society. They were seeking power and material wealth as well as remunerative posts in the government and judiciary. They had successfully whetted the appetite of the populace and from this there could be no retreat regardless of the clergy's illusions. The young had irretrievably lost their exclusive devotion to the soil.

Nevertheless the "Société Acadienne De Colonisation, D'Agriculture, De Rapatriement" was formed with its objective being the raising of funds for prospective colonists through public appeals. Following its first campaign the executive

61. Speech of Mgr. M.-F. Richard recorded in the Minutes (p. 2) of the November 18, 1913 meeting of the Société Nationale L'Assomption. C.E.A., "Société Nationale L'Assomption, 1913-1937".
62. Jean-Paul Hauteceur, in his Ph.D. dissertation entitled "L'Acadie: Idéologies et Société", has studied the themes repeatedly expressed at all the Acadian National Conventions and has concluded that while the political elite did endorse colonization, their primary interest was with distinctly material matters. It was the clerical elite, he finds, that was most concerned with colonization.

pronounced itself satisfied with the response.⁶³ However the single record of contributions (1914) totalled only \$1,200 which had been contributed by only eight people or organizations.⁶⁴ Before becoming fully operational, the committee's activities ceased on account of the first world war. When the war ended, the society's role consisted primarily of advising and encouraging prospective colonists, mostly veterans, to acquire land offered by the government.⁶⁵

This was not the first occasion that many Acadians looked to the provincial government to endorse and support their colonization schemes. In fact many blamed the government for the continued large-scale emigration; it should have been more generous in the distribution of crown lands since there certainly was enough available within the province. Yet for years successive administrations had seemed largely unconcerned with the problems of colonization, giving a low priority in yearly budgets to immigration and

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63. Dr. F.-A. Richard to Georges Demanche, Paris, Aug. 15, 1914. H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., Box 10 "Société L'Assomption", file "Société Acadienne de Colonisation".
64. The contributors were Mgr. M.-F. Richard (\$200), the Rev. F.-X. Cormier (\$100), Charles-D. Hébert (\$860), the "Comité Permanent de la Langue Française" (\$20), Dr. P.-C. Dagneau (\$10), F.-J. Robidoux (\$10), Senator Pascal Poirier (\$4) and G. Demanche (\$4). This information is taken from the Balance Sheet of the organization in the H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., Box 10, file "Société Acadienne de Colonisation".
65. Minutes of the Société Nationale L'Assomption, Aug. 25, 1914, p. 25. C.E.A., "Société Nationale L'Assomption, 1913-1937". See also Dr. F.-A. Sormany to G. Demanche, Aug. 15, 1914. H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., Box 10, file "Société Acadienne de Colonisation".

agriculture. In 1875 it appropriated \$12,000 for immigration purposes while in 1903 this figure decreased to only \$1,500.⁶⁶ Not until 1908 was this trend reversed. In that year the Hazen administration⁶⁷ concluded an agreement with the Salvation Army in Britain whereby the government paid the organization three dollars for each immigrant induced to the province.⁶⁸ In that year also the government appointed A. B. Wilmot as its first Superintendent of Immigration.

The Acadians were hardly satisfied by Wilmot's activities since the bulk of his efforts were directed toward the British Isles. The Acadians wished him to show more concern for New Brunswick's own population; to give them the same aid which British immigrants received.⁶⁹ In 1912 for example the administration allocated \$12,000 for immigration and only \$2,000 for internal migration, half for colonization roads and the rest for free land grants.⁷⁰ The Acadian

66. See New Brunswick, New Brunswick Assembly, Synoptic for March 12, 1875 and April 21, 1903.

67. Sir John D. Hazen (1860-1937) was born in Oromocto and educated at the University of New Brunswick. He served as an M.P. (Saint John) from 1891 to 1896, as an M.L.A. from 1899 to 1911, as Premier from 1908 to 1911, as Minister of Marine and Fisheries for Canada from 1911 to 1917 and as Chief Justice of New Brunswick from 1917 to 1935.

68. New Brunswick, Synoptic, New Brunswick Assembly, 1908, p. 99. See speech of the Hon. J. K. Flemming (Carleton), May 19, 1908.

69. Ibid., 1912, p. 199. Dr. A. Sormany (Gloucester), April 11, 1912.

70. Ibid.

M.L.A.'s also pressed Wilmot to encourage emigrants from Quebec to resettle in New Brunswick:

... instead of spending a lot of money to bring strangers in, they [i.e. the government] should take care of [the Quebec families] ... who wished to settle [here] ... They were people who were well acquainted with the conditions of life in this province and would probably make better settlers than strangers from outside.⁷¹

The Acadians strongly felt that "the door at the northern part of the Province should not be closed [to] the young men who wanted to come into the Province [of New Brunswick] from Quebec."⁷² Yet according to the Acadians, these prospective settlers from Quebec⁷³ were completely ignored by the government.⁷⁴ The predominantly Anglo-Protestant

71. Ibid., 1909, p. 38. Dr. A. Sormany, March 23, 1909.

72. Ibid., 1910, p. 33. C. H. LaBillois (Restigouche), Feb. 21, 1910.

73. Dr. Sormany referred to 100 Quebec families who wished to settle in New Brunswick during the speech cited in n. 71 as does C. H. LaBillois on Feb. 21, 1910 and Dr. T. J. Bourque (Kent) on March 27, 1912. However I suspect that these M.L.A.'s are misinterpreting the character of the small number of Québécois who were coming to New Brunswick in order to work on the Intercolonial Railway. No Acadian newspaper ever discusses this group of colonists, nor contemplates the importance of their migration. Instead there is a great blank in the public and private papers concerning this "migration". One hundred families, or approximately 600 people, could not settle as a group in any province and not be noticed. Le Devoir on Nov. 28, 1911 has an article about 22 families who emigrated to New Brunswick but even this is unsubstantiated and, I suspect, somewhat exaggerated. See infra, n. 86.

74. New Brunswick, Synoptic, New Brunswick Assembly, 1910, p. 33. C. H. LaBillois, Feb. 21, 1910.

administration in Fredericton appeared to show little concern for colonization, an issue of great importance for the Acadians.

Proponents of colonization in Quebec had similarly difficult problems with their own government even though both the governed and the governors were of the same race and heritage. Quebec governments, generally responsive to clerical and nationalist pressure, traditionally supported the idea of colonization. In February of 1868, the Quebec Assembly enacted legislation protecting the colonist's property from seizure;⁷⁵ in 1869 it allocated close to \$250,000 for colonization purposes;⁷⁶ in 1875, responding to the Montreal "Congrès National,"⁷⁷ it made funds available for paying the relocation expenses of Franco-Americans who wished to re-establish their roots in Quebec.⁷⁸

Early in the twentieth century however the Liberal administration in Quebec City adopted a decidedly different concept of colonization and of the province's future. The

75. Hamelin & Roby, Histoire Economique Du Québec, 1851-1896, p. 178.

76. Canada, Dept. of Agriculture, The Year Book and Almanac of Canada for 1871, p. 138.

77. See supra, chapter VIII.

78. Hamelin & Roby, Histoire Economique Du Québec, 1851-1896, p. 71.

Gouin government⁷⁹ still assisted colonists and tried to make the agricultural life more appealing.⁸⁰ However Gouin was committed to the rapid industrialization of Quebec and for this reason was often characterized as "l'homme des trusts et de la haute finance, le réactionnaire."⁸¹ At times Gouin sounded like Curé Labelle:

L'émigration aux Etats-Unis nous dévore. Nos ressources restent inertes dans les entrailles de la terre. Notre bois pourrit sur le sol. Allons-nous périr au milieu de l'abondance? Non, Messieurs. Pour développer notre pays, il nous faut des industries, il nous faut des chemins de fer. Qui veut la fin doit vouloir les moyens.⁸²

Instead of prostrating himself before the goddess "Tradition", Gouin himself wrote that "Les carrières commerciales et industrielles apparaissent ... comme les carrières de l'avenir, celles qui offrent le plus de champ aux initiatives hardies, aux énergies viriles."⁸³

Quebec governments, in their quest for development,

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79. Sir Jean Lomer Gouin (1861-1929) was first elected to the Quebec Assembly in 1897; from 1900 to 1904 he was Minister of Public Works and was Premier and Attorney General from 1905 to 1920. From 1921 to 1925 he served as Mackenzie King's Minister of Justice in the federal Parliament.
80. See B. Weilbrenner, "Les idées politiques de Lomer Gouin," C.H.A. Report, 1965, pp. 53-54; see also Québec, Ministère de la Colonisation, des Mines et des Pêcheries, Les Régions de Colonisation de la Province de Québec (Québec, 1920), p. 6.
81. Weilbrenner, "Les idées politiques de Lomer Gouin," p. 46.
82. Auclair, Le Curé Labelle, p. 101.
83. P.A.C., Gouin Papers, p. 2148. Cited in Weilbrenner, "Les idées politiques de Lomer Gouin," p. 51.

tended to cater to the interests of "les trusts" and often discouraged aspiring colonists by subjecting them to years of frustrating delay before they could gain clear title to their land.⁸⁴ The government did possess the power to grant clear title to any lot in the province regardless of whether it had already granted the area to a lumber company. Yet it rarely did so if the settler's claim conflicted with a company's interests.⁸⁵

Many colonists were sorely abused by the administration. J. E. Laforce, a correspondent of Le Devoir, wrote about one group of some twenty-two families which had chosen to settle in the Matapedia region. After much procrastination, during which time the settlers exhausted all their savings, the Gouin government finally sold them the land they had been cultivating. However they were then informed by "la Cie Fenderson", an American lumbering company, that they could not cut any of the trees as these had previously been surrendered to it. While the colonists appealed to a rather unsympathetic government, the Fenderson Company rushed in its workers and removed all the remaining timber. Consequently these twenty-two families "voyant que si elles restaient en notre province, elle crèveraient de faim avant d'avoir réussi à défricher une terre" left Quebec for "une province plus hospitalière que la nôtre pour les colons, au

84. Le Devoir, June 1, 1914, p. 1.

85. Levitt, Henri Bourassa and the Golden Calf, p. 61.

86. O. Arselin to Sir W. Laurier, Sept. 15, 1901; Laurier Papers, P.A.C. Vol. 230, letter No. 76219.

Many of the colonists cleared much of the land around them, built houses and established themselves without ever obtaining clear title. On occasion they were later confronted by government agents who ordered them off the land, undoubtedly in favour and at the request of one of the major lumbering companies.⁸⁷ Quebec's agricultural zealots and political reformers repeatedly condemned government policy claiming it

... forçait les colons à payer d'exorbitants droits de coupe pour les quelques arbres qu'ils coupaient sur leurs lots ... tandis que dans le même temps, par sa coupable négligence ... il laissait des étrangers venir nous voler des millions et des millions de pieds de bois.⁸⁷

But the government was either too much under the control of the lumbering companies or too firmly committed to its own conception of the twentieth century to relent.

Obviously something dramatic had to be done for the movement in Quebec and in l'Acadie or else, as Olivar Asselin warned, "la colonisation ... sera bientôt morte."⁸⁹

86. Le Devoir, Nov. 28, 1911, p. 1, "La Situation Faite aux Colons". This clipping is also part of a scrapbook at the A.P.Q. entitled "Colonisation 1910-1920" (A.P.Q., AP-C-30). The Acadians meanwhile would dispute the claim that their government showed more sympathy for the idea of colonization.

87. For additional occurrences of this sort, see Le Devoir, Dec. 5, 1911, p. 1, "La Colonisation dans Rimouski".

88. Ibid., Dec. 9, 1911, p. 1, "La Colonisation".

89. O. Asselin to Sir W. Laurier, Sept. 16, 1903. Laurier Papers, P.A.C. Vol. 280, letter No. 76819.

In Quebec the agriculturalists were impeded by a government allied with the large corporations. In Acadia the same situation existed, provoking harsh diatribes from a surprising source - Father Marcel Richard:

Il arrive souvent que nos gouvernements, oubliant les bien public, favorisent des spéculateurs ambitieux des sociétés ou corporations au delà du raisonnable, et au détriment de la classe pauvre et ouvrière. On favorise la classe opulente outre mesure, parcequ'elle domine et qu'elle tient souvent ses mercenaires dans une espèce d'esclavage civil et politique. On les favorisera davantage parce qu'ils sont de grands promoteurs d'élection, et que la classe ouvrière n'est que la machine qui doit tourner d'après la direction donnée par la force motrice ... Les corporations, les industriels, la classe commerciale ... ne manquent pas d'élire ou de faire élire à coup d'argent ... les hommes de leur choix sachant bien qu'ils seront remboursés par les législateurs qui leur seront favorables.⁹⁰

The situation was obviously serious in New Brunswick if a Catholic priest felt compelled to speak of class conflict. Richard condemned the "petits tyrans politiques" who cared little for the interests of the masses and indeed often sacrificed them "pour favoriser les millionnaires". The "people", Richard advised, should ignore the political elite and elect members of their own class in order to protect "les intérêts de leurs enfants et des générations futures."⁹¹

90. Le Moniteur Acadien, Jan. 26, 1894, p. 2.

91. Ibid.

Richard was not the only one to perceive an insidious connection between the government and various corporations. Indeed the problem was evident long before the turn of the century. Robert Rumilly, writing of the period immediately before Confederation, complained that the Acadians were unable "de secouer l'exploitation des compagnies jersiaises."⁹² Father Thomas Albert, concerned with the Madawaska region, was greatly alarmed by the construction of the Intercolonial and other railway lines through the Acadian areas because, he wrote, they were "un présent des Grecs". The government granted a vast amount of prime land (380,000 acres to the I.C.R.) to the companies and these reserves constituted "une barrière infranchissable à la colonisation ... Les colonies intérieures ... se trouvèrent immédiatement acculées aux intangibles limites de la toute puissante New Brunswick Land & Railway Co." Finally in 1902, after years of protests, the New Brunswick government reclaimed less than one-seventh of the acreage initially granted.⁹³ But this government, like that in Quebec, generally adhered to "leur politique désastreuse de cession en bloc du terrain colonisable à des syndicats industriels qui paralysent la colonisation."⁹⁴

More than any of the others interested in colonization,

92. Rumilly, Histoire des Acadiens, II p. 725.

93. Albert, Histoire Du Madawaska, pp. 273-74.

94. Ibid., p. 288.

Father Richard managed, as he always did, to blend the practical and the ideal - perhaps he viewed the ideal as being distinctly practical. In an early (1882) "Circulaire Sur La Colonisation" he expressed both Acadian and Canadien sentiments, describing colonization as an "oeuvre éminemment religieuse, catholique & patriotique ... Chaque peuple a sa mission à accomplir sur la terre ... il s'agit comme premier défricheurs de ce pays de continuer notre tâche." Yet he also recognized governmental responsibilities in this realm, asking it to designate lands exclusively for colonization, to restrict the speculators, to cease worrying about immigrants and to concern itself more with "les enfants du pays".⁹⁵ In spite of men like Richard however colonization in l'Acadie remained for the large part only a romantic vision. The elite, and primarily the clerical elite, wished to see it encouraged and would not permit its abandonment. Everyone believed the virtues it fostered were highly commendable. In this both Acadian and Québécois were one and the same. The elite of each spoke of the purgatorial nature of the American factories and towns. The newspapers of each lavishly publicized what befell unsuspecting emigrants. "Je crois mon père," wrote one forlorn and disappointed émigré, "que vous commétriez une folie en quittant votre

95. Father M.-F. Richard, "Circulaire Sur La Colonisation," Dec. 8, 1882. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1871-1891".

pays pour venir ici."⁹⁶

But the Acadian and French Canadian people, and especially the young, had different ideals from those of the elite. They too had an effect on rural communities:

Ceux qui avaient des parents ou des amis aux Etats [-Unis] en recevaient des lettres qui dépeignaient à leur façon la prospérité américaine sous les plus brillantes couleurs. Ces nouvelles étaient transmises aux voisins et colportées avec force détails amplifiés d'un bout de la paroisse à l'autre jusqu'aux 'concessions' les plus éloignées.⁹⁷

Euchariste Moisan's world was changing and there was no alternative as many would not return "au mode sain d'autrefois; renoncer aux mécaniques et vivre sur le trente arpents de terre en ne leur demandant que ce qu'ils pouvaient donner."⁹⁸ The world of his expatriate son, Ephrem Moisan, was clearly in the ascendancy for both Acadian and French Canadian. Though these two groups differed in history, culture and politics, the twentieth century would unite them in "the ceaseless work and bustle of the Mill or Factory."⁹⁹ The rural life was still highly

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96. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 29, 1893, p. 1. There are countless examples of this anti-urban bias. For example see this newspaper for Aug. 11, 1893, p. 2 or for Aug. 15, 1893, p. 2, "La pauvreté aux Etats-Unis".
97. A Belisle, Histoire de la presse franco-américaine (Worcester, 1911) p. 30. Cited in Hamelin & Roby, Histoire Economique Du Québec, p. 68.
98. Ringuet (Philippe Panneton), 30 Arpents (Paris, 1938), p. 287. Euchariste Moisan is the pathetic hero of this stirring novel.
99. L'Évangéline, Dec. 19, 1895, p. 3, "The Isolated Farm".

commendable; the only trouble was that everybody wanted somebody else to be the colonist.

CHAPTER I

Acadian-Canadian Response - The Hospitals

School Question

The Acadians and French Canadians shared many common concerns, one of which was the dual problem of emigration and colonization.¹ This concern for the French culture extended, in a general way, beyond their immediate borders - quite understandably they wished their language and religion to flourish in all regions of Canada. Unfortunately as the nineteenth century closed, a boisterous surge of English Canadian nationalism threatened the concept of the Canadian duality and both Canadian and Acadian felt obliged to respond to the challenge. However the reaction of each group was distinctly its own. The former were generally confident, believing firmly in the constitutional guarantees of the B.N.A. Act and willing to risk confrontations in order to maintain the status quo. The Acadians meanwhile were more cautious, believing that the best way of maintaining the status quo was to avoid antagonizing the anglophone majority.

The Treatment of Acadian Interests prior to Confederation, the New Brunswick Schools Question, the influence of Quebec

1. See supra, chapter II.

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CHAPTER X

Acadian-Canadien Responses - The Manitoba

School Question

The Acadians and French Canadians shared many common concerns, one of which was the dual problem of emigration and colonization.¹ This concern for the French culture extended, in a general way, beyond their immediate borders - quite understandably they wished their language and religion to flourish in all regions of Canada. Unfortunately as the nineteenth century closed, a boisterous surge of English Canadian nationalism threatened the concept of the Canadian duality and both Canadien and Acadian felt obliged to respond to the challenge. However the reaction of each group was distinctly its own. The former were generally confident, believing firmly in the constitutional guarantees of the B.N.A. Act and willing to risk confrontations in order to maintain the status quo. The Acadians meanwhile were more cautious, believing that the best way of maintaining the status quo was to avoid antagonizing the anglophone majority.

The treatment of Acadian interests prior to Confederation, the New Brunswick Schools Question, the influence of Quebec

1. See supra, chapter IX.

teachers in the Acadian colleges had all been responsible for making the Acadians realize that their future as a cultural entity depended exclusively upon their own initiatives. The "Conventions Nationales" of 1881, 1884 and 1890 solidified their sense of uniqueness with the result that the Acadian reaction to the great political issues of the day were very much a product of their own rather than of the Quebec environment and experience. Shortly after the second national convention, the Acadian elite served notice upon Quebec of their own political independence. As French Canadians rallied to the defence of Louis Riel in 1885, Pierre Landry sounded a refrain which became familiar in Acadian circles over the succeeding three decades:

Dans l'intérêt du bon ordre, de la tranquillité et de la paix, comme la prospérité de notre pays, je suis d'avis qu'il est inopportun de fomenter ou de stimuler par aucune démonstration politique, l'excitation dont paraissent épris les esprits qui dominent dans l'agitation qui se fait.²

Politically the Acadians remained tranquil, unwilling to indulge in harsh polemic when racial issues divided the country.

The Acadians adopted a more conciliatory approach because by 1885 they, unlike their Quebec compatriots, were

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2. P. A. Landry to George Duhamel and H.-J. Chiasson, Montreal, Nov. 30, 1885. The two Quebec gentlemen had written Landry asking that he organize demonstrations in New Brunswick to protest Riel's execution. Landry's reply was printed in Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac), Dec. 10, 1885, p. 2.

generally satisfied with the progress they had made since mid-century. They enjoyed their new social status and were fearful of resuscitating old antagonisms which threatened their position. Being a minority, they sincerely hoped that the era of racial antagonisms had passed in Canada. The racial and religious cry "has served its day and generation" asserted the Hon. C. H. LaBillois, the M.L.A. for Restigouche. Now it was the desire of "every community ... that every man and woman should drop race and sectional feelings and work together for the peace, happiness and prosperity ... of Canada."³ All Canadians regardless of race were to "unite in developing a great, free, prosperous, contented nation."⁴ Participating in political struggles which did not affect them directly⁵ might be a retrogressive course.

The new leader of the Liberal Party, Wilfrid Laurier, personified this air of confidence. Acceptable to English Canada because of his economic conservatism, Laurier also had "le sentiment national en sa faveur. Comment les Canadiens-Français pourraient - ils s'empêcher d'être

3. New Brunswick, *Synoptic*, New Brunswick Assembly, 1902, p. 95. C. H. LaBillois, March 25, 1902. See also Fontaine, *Cent Trente-Cinq Ans Après*, p. 62.

4. *L'Évangéline* (Moncton), Sept. 9, 1909.

5. Few Acadians seemed to realize that what happened to the French minority in Manitoba, for example, was indeed of direct concern to them since it might be only the first phase of a more general confrontation.

fiers de lui, eux les vaincus, traités comme tels depuis un siècle et demi"⁶ Laurier followed in the footsteps of Cartier, Langevin and Chapleau, powerful Canadian chieftains behind whom French Canadians could unite so as to protect their political interests. But Laurier, always the conciliator, could also be a Sir John A. Macdonald, something his supporters enjoyed emphasizing.⁷

In 1890 this general satisfaction with Confederation was checked as the Manitoba School Question appeared on the horizon. This controversy has already received extensive attention elsewhere⁸ and further discussion is unnecessary except to recognize that it was one of those irreconcilable problems that politicians, and especially Canadian ones, detest. On one side was French-Canadian Catholicism, struggling for a future outside of Quebec

6. Abbé H.-R. Casgrain to Madame Rameau de Saint-Père, Sept. 20, 1897. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 52, pp. 16586-89.
7. See L'Évangéline, Feb. 14, 1895, p. 2, "Correspondance". Letter from Simon P. LeBlanc in West Arichat, Nova Scotia.
8. One might see L. C. Clark, The Manitoba School Question: Majority Rule or Minority Rights (Toronto, 1968); P. B. Waite, Canada 1874-1896, Arduous Destiny (Toronto, 1971); P. E. Crunican, "The Manitoba School Question and Canadian federal politics: a study in church-state relations" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1968); K. M. McLaughlin, "The Canadian General Election of 1896 in Nova Scotia" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1967).
10. Le Moniteur Canadien, Sept. 3, 1895, p. 2, "La question des écoles".

and led by Archbishop Adélarde Langevin,⁹ the fiery, uncompromising prelate of Saint Boniface. He viewed all questions of this sort in absolutes, at one time stating that there are three types of schools - (1) neutral schools (2) schools in which religion is taught for one hour per day and (3) truly Christian schools. Regarding the first, "nous n'en voulons pas." As to the second

elles sont au détriment de la religion. Si Dieu a le droit d'entrer à l'école pendant la dernière heure, il a aussi le droit d'y entrer à n'importe quelle heure du jour. Vous ne pouvez pas dire à Dieu "N'entrez pas, il n'est pas encore 3 h. 30 m."

Langevin of course would settle for nothing less than "des écoles purement chrétiennes."¹⁰ However the Manitoba government was committed to its policy of national schools and would tolerate, for political and other reasons, no interference from the Catholic church or from central Canada. In a prophetic manner, it rejected all of Ottawa's initiatives:

It will be obvious that the establishment of a set of Roman Catholic schools, followed by a set of Anglican schools, and possibly Mennonite, Icelandic and other schools, would so impair our present system that any approach to even our

9. Louis-Philippe Adélarde Langevin (1855-1915) was born in St. Isidore, Quebec, educated at the Jesuit College in Montreal, joined the Oblate Order in 1881 and was ordained in 1882. In 1893 he responded to an invitation from Archbishop Taché of Manitoba and went to Saint Boniface where he became Taché's successor in 1895.
10. Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 3, 1895, p. 2, "La question des écoles".

present general standard of efficiency would be quite impossible.¹¹

With all the participants resolute, and nobody except the hapless Conservative government in Ottawa seeking a compromise, the stage was set for an election on this issue.¹²

The righteous Conservatives once more courted the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Canada. John Costigan appealed to the English-language bishops for support while flaunting a letter from Archbishop Langevin which described him as "un chevalier sans peur et sans reproche."¹³ Sir Charles Tupper, though Prime Minister, was no less blunt: "when we are taking our political lives in our hands to do justice to the Catholics of Manitoba, we are justified in counting upon the aid and confidence of their co-religionists in all parts of Canada."¹⁴

Not unexpectedly, the Conservative government received the endorsement of Archbishop Langevin who in February of

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11. Canada, Sessional Papers, Vol. 28, No. 10, 1895. "Memorial of the Legislative Assembly of the province of Manitoba in answer to the Remedial Order of the 21st of March, 1895," No. 20E, p. 353.
 12. Although this thesis deals with the 1896 election in terms of the school question, one must remember that other, equally important issues were at stake. For example see L'Évangéline, Dec. 5, 1895 and Le Moniteur Acadien, May 15, 1896. See also supra, n. 8.
 13. Mgr. Langevin to John Costigan, June 4, 1896. See also J. Costigan to Archbishop John Walsh, Toronto, Dec. 20, 1895. Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. I.
 14. Sir Charles Tupper to Rev. W. McPherson, April 25, 1896. Tupper Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 19, p. 439. Cited in McLaughlin, "The Canadian General Election of 1896 in Nova Scotia," p. IX.

1896 defined the duty of French-Catholic voters in unequivocal terms. According to the Archbishop "Tous ceux qui ne suivent pas la hiérarchie ne sont pas catholiques. Quand la hiérarchie a parlé, il est inutile de dire le contraire, car s'il agit ainsi, il cesse d'être catholique ..."¹⁵ In order to solidify this warning, the Conservative ministers from Quebec¹⁶ approached the Quebec Catholic hierarchy but these prelates, far from being united on this or any question, were less firm. The appeals generated only an ambiguous statement:

... tous les catholiques ne devront accorder leur suffrage qu'aux candidates [i.e. Conservative or Liberal] qui s'engageront formellement et solennellement à voter ... en faveur d'une législation rendant à la minorité catholique du Manitoba des droits scolaires ... Ce grave devoir s'impose à tout bon catholique.¹⁷

Given this latitude, Quebec voters considered their interests as important as those of their Manitoba 'confrères'. They sought a strong French Canadian leader - the Liberals offered

15. See David, Le Clergé Canadien, Sa Mission, Son Oeuvre, p. 75.
16. According to Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1896, p. III, the Cabinet after Jan. 5, 1896 consisted of three French Canadian Ministers; Sir Adolphe P. Caron, Postmaster General, the Hon. J.-A. Ouimet, Minister of Public Works, and the Hon. Alphonse Desjardins, Minister of Militia and Defence.
17. Mandement signed by the Archbishops of Montreal, Ottawa and Quebec as well as the Bishops of Trois Rivières, St.-Hyacinthe, Rimouski, Nicolet, Chicoutimi, Valleyfield, Sherbrooke and the vicar apostolic of Pontiac, May 6, 1896. Reprinted in L'Évangéline, June 4, 1896, p. 2.

Laurier while the Conservatives had not any formidable figure.¹⁸ This, combined with Laurier's innate appeal and Israel Tarte's organizational skills,¹⁹ made for a Liberal sweep of Quebec.²⁰

The Manitoba question proved to be as contentious an issue in l'Acadie as in Quebec especially since so many parallels could be drawn to the Acadians' own experiences between 1871 and 1875.²¹ The earlier school question, at least according to Lionel Groulx,²² had established a precedent for 1890:

Il n'est pas excessif d'écrire qu'entre ces années de 1871 et 1875, il s'était commis au Canada l'une des plus lourdes, l'une des plus fatales erreurs politiques. Dès lors, en effet, ce rêve absurde

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18. Adolphe Chapleau had retired from active politics in 1892 and was now the Lieutenant Governor of Quebec. Hector Langevin, though still a Member of Parliament, was not only old but had been tarnished by the McGreevy scandal. None of the remaining ministers enjoyed widespread support in Quebec.
 19. See L. LaPierre, "Politics, race and religion in French Canada: Joseph Israel Tarte," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, McGill University, 1962). For the political climate of the era in Quebec see H. B. Neatby, "Laurier and a Liberal Quebec," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1956) or H. B. Neatby and J. T. Saywell, "Chapleau and the Conservative Party in Quebec," C.H.R., XXXVII, No. 1 (March, 1956), pp. 1-22.
 20. The Liberal Party won 49 of Quebec's 65 seats. Beck, Pendulum of Power, p. 86.
 21. See supra, chapter IV.
 22. Canon Lionel Groulx (1878-1967) was one of Quebec's most prolific and energetic nationalists. See M. Brunet, "Lionel Groulx, Historien National," C.H.R., XLVIII, No. 3 (Sept., 1967), pp. 299-305.

s'est formé de fonder une nation canadienne sur l'inégalité juridique et politique des races, autant dire sur la discorde perpétuelle.²³

It is equally plausible that Sir George Cartier, while drafting the Manitoba Act in 1870, included the words "by Law or practice" in regard to the existing denominational schools²⁴ because of the brewing New Brunswick troubles. When the Barrett case reached the Supreme Court of Canada, it was heard by two men who had intimate experience with the New Brunswick precedent; Chief Justice Sir William Ritchie who had been a member of the New Brunswick Supreme Court in 1870 and Mr. Justice George E. King, the former Premier of that province who had first introduced the Common Schools Act of 1871.²⁵

Somewhat surprisingly however the Acadians never drew any analogies between the two cases. In the Senate, the two Acadian representatives, Pascal Poirier and Joseph O. Arsenault (Prince, P.E.I.), ignored the issue entirely, denying the chamber their own experience in such cases.²⁶ The sole

23. Groulx, L'enseignement français du Canada, II, p. 43.

24. Manitoba Act, 1870, Section 22 (1). Cited in Clark, The Manitoba School Question: Majority Rule or Minority Rights, p. 102.

25. For excerpts and analysis of the arguments before the Supreme Court of Canada, see ibid., pp. 98-117.

26. See Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1890-1896. A thorough examination of the indices for these years and the Debates themselves confirm this assertion.

29. Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, p. 144.

Acadian M.P., Edouard-N. Léger from Kent (1890-1892), was no better.²⁷ In addition throughout the entire controversy neither Le Moniteur Acadien in New Brunswick nor L'Évangéline in Nova Scotia drew these obvious analogies. Both of course devoted many columns to the issue itself, though their stands varied according to political allegiance. However they never reflected upon their own past or what the Manitoba affair signified for their future. In 1912 La Patrie (Montreal) asked Ferdinand Robidoux jr., the new Acadian M.P. from Kent county, to compare the New Brunswick and Manitoba school systems. Revealing a blissful degree of ignorance, he replied simply that "Je n'en sais rien, je n'ai pas été à même d'étudier sur les lieux le système en vogue au Manitoba."²⁸

Canada's two political parties had an opportunity to test their handling of the Manitoba School Question on the Acadians prior to the general election of 1896. The elevation of Josiah Wood to the Senate in 1895 made a by-election in Westmorland county (N.B.) necessary. Since the Acadians comprised thirty-five percent of the population in this constituency,²⁹ the Liberal Party, now led by a French Canadian, saw an opportunity to gain a seat from the

27. See Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1890-1892. Théotime Blanchard, elected for Gloucester in 1894, similarly said nothing on this issue.

28. La Patrie, n.d. Reprinted in L'Évangéline, March 13, 1912, p. 4.

29. Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, p. 294.

Conservatives. J.-Israel Tarte, W. S. Fielding, P. J. Veniot and Peter Mitchell³⁰ all campaigned for A. E. Killam while the Conservative Party imported John Costigan, Pascal Poirier, George Foster and Arthur Dickey³¹ to aid their candidate, H. A. Powell.

Le Moniteur Acadien, always true to the Conservative banner, found itself in an enviable position promoting a candidate and a government which appeared to favour remedial legislation. In its campaign Le Moniteur Acadien attempted to discredit Israel Tarte, describing him as part of the problem facing the Manitoba minority: "A Ottawa M. Tarte et M. Martin,³² l'auteur de ces troubles, couchent dans le même lit politique, mangent dans la même assiette, boivent dans le même verre."³³ It also utilized Tarte's writings of a decade previous in which he, then a staunch Conservative partizan, attacked Wilfrid Laurier.³⁴

30. J.-I. Tarte was Laurier's lieutenant and chief strategist in Quebec; W. S. Fielding was the popular Premier of N. S.; Peter Veniot was a rising Liberal star in N. B.; Peter Mitchell, now a Liberal, had a history in N. B. politics dating back to 1856.

31. The Hon. John Costigan, M.P. for Victoria, was the federal Minister of Marine and Fisheries; Pascal Poirier was, since 1885, an influential Senator; the Hon. G. E. Foster, M.P. for King's, was the Minister of Finance; the Hon. A. R. Dickey, M.P. for Cumberland in N. S., was Minister of Justice.

32. Joseph Martin was the Attorney General of Manitoba in 1890 who, along with D'Alton McCarthy, publicly condemned the denominational schools. In 1893 Martin was elected, as a Liberal, to the House of Commons.

33. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 23, 1895, p. 2.

34. Ibid., p. 3.

Dealing with the issue itself, Le Moniteur Acadien urged the federal government to disallow the provincial legislation in order "protéger les minorités opprimés." Indeed such action was essential "si l'on veut que la Confédération soit assurée d'un avenir." Should any other course be adopted the "pact" of Confederation, a pact formalized by English and French, would be only "un papier qui a été fait pour être déchiré."³⁵ This newspaper, considering its political allegiance, could readily endorse firm remedial legislation:

Cette demande d'une législation
rémédiatrice est absolument raisonnable
et juste et n'est d'ailleurs que le
résultat d'une entente et d'un compromis.
Les catholiques de Manitoba y ont
droit et elle ne peut leur être refusé.³⁶

Le Moniteur Acadien assured its readers that the Conservative Government "ne permettra pas l'injustice règne dans quelque partie ... du Canada. C'est là son devoir. Qu'il y soit fidèle."³⁷ The blame for the entire affair lay, of course, with the Liberal Party and, by association, with its candidate in Westmorland:

La politique des libéraux sur la question
des écoles présente un singulier spectacle.
Ce sont eux qui ont passé les lois
scolaires ... qui défient les autorités
fédérales ...

M. Martin, l'auteur de la loi, est le
lieutenant de M. Laurier à Ottawa. S'ils

35. Ibid., March 6, 1894, p. 2.

36. Ibid., March 9, 1894, p. 2.

37. Ibid., Aug. 10, 1894, p. 2.

le voulaient les députés libéraux
pourraient assurément faire voir à M.
Martin tout le mal qu'il a fait, et le
convaincre qu'il doit une réparation.
Pas un seul libéral n'a encore abordé M.
Martin dans ce sens. Au contraire, ils
l'encouragent à braver les jugements
des tribunaux, à violenter les consciences. 38

The Liberal candidate, A. E. Killam, defended his party as best he could. Ironically he, though an Anglo-Protestant, drew analogies with the earlier school question in New Brunswick:

The [1875] elections resulted in establishing the non-sectarian schools. In 1875, after that great contest, the people got together and said 'Come let us reason together.' They came together and while the Roman Catholics did not get all they asked, a compromise was expected and everything is now satisfactory. Did the Dominion Government do this? ... Manitoba would not be taken by the throat and they would not make any concession ... As soon as the Liberals come in power they will meet and a settlement will be effected satisfactory to every person in the country as near as possible for any law to be. 39

Would he vote for or against remedial legislation? Killam avoided that question saying that he would vote against the Government on all issues so as to remove them from power and allow the Liberals to solve the problem as only they could do. Laurier's position on the question should have been clear to all voters, Killam added. "Etant catholique, il est sans aucun doute partisan des écoles séparées. Mon adversaire

38. Ibid., Feb. 15, 1895, p. 2.

39. Ibid., Supplemental Edition on the campaign, Aug. 16, 1895.

[H. A. Powell] prétend qu'il n' a pas dit. A-t-il besoin de le dire."⁴⁰

Killam did not win the election but nevertheless the Liberals were heartened. Powell's majority had been only 700 votes, a substantial reduction in support from the 1891 election when Josiah Wood, the incumbent, won by 2,100 votes. Describing the campaign for Le Cultivateur (Montreal), Israel Tarte claimed that the brevity of the campaign (8 days), the size of the constituency, and, most important, the well-lubricated Conservative "machine" had been responsible for Killam's defeat. He asserted, though without substantiating it, that the Acadians had been compelled to vote Conservative since they were held "dans le sujétion, dans l'esclavage" by the Tory merchants.

Presque de temps immémorial, les élections se sont faites à coup de piastres. Ça n'est pas en huit jours que vous pouvez opérer la délivrance de tous les captifs du régime abominable qui existe.

... La lutte actuelle de fructueux résultats. Les exploitteurs vont l'emporter cette fois encore. Vous verrez que ce sera la dernière

Nous avons fait une campagne d'éducation.⁴¹

The ramifications of the campaign continued for some time after as Le Moniteur Acadien and L'Évangéline tried to determine just how the Acadians voted - for Laurier or for the Conservatives. Moncton City, Shediac, Botsford and Westmorland parishes, Sackville and Dorchester all opted

40. Ibid., Aug. 23, 1895, p. 1.

41. Le Cultivateur, n.d. Reprinted in L'Évangéline, Oct. 12, 1895, p. 2, "De Westmorland".

for Powell while only Moncton parish and Salisbury had gone Liberal.⁴² The debate ceased when the Maritimes as a whole was called upon to decide between Laurier and its own native son, Sir Charles Tupper.

Since 1891 at least, Valentin Landry, the editor of L'Évangéline, had committed his newspaper to the Liberal and Laurier cause.⁴³ By 1896 L'Évangéline reached some three thousand Acadian homes and although "la moitié ... ne nous paie pas ou très irrégulièrement", Landry continued (with Party support) to send them copies in order to propagate the political gospel.⁴⁴ However his task of selling the Liberal Party to the Acadian Catholics would be a most difficult one in this election.

Like most Catholics, Landry undoubtedly wished to see the Manitoba question satisfactorily resolved but at the same time he believed that the Conservative government could not achieve this goal. The Conservatives had considered the problem for five years. Since the 1895

42. See Le Moniteur Acadien for Aug. 30 and Dec. 13, 1895. The population of Salisbury was almost exclusively Anglo-Protestant while Shediac was predominantly Acadian (80%). As for the others, Botsford was 37% Acadian, Moncton City was 22%, Westmorland was 70%, Sackville 10% and Dorchester 69%. The Liberal area of Moncton parish had an Acadian population comprising 30% of the total. See Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, p. 294.

43. See Valentin Landry to the Abbé Biron, Paris, July 23, 1891. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-5.

44. Valentin Landry to Wilfrid Laurier, Sept. 23, 1896. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 21, pp. 7427-31.

decision of the Privy Council in the Brophy case, the government had vacillated terribly, perhaps the inevitable consequence of having a Cabinet composed of so many conflicting views. There were French Canadian ministers who insisted upon remedial legislation as well as one similarly determined Irish Catholic, John Costigan.⁴⁵ Conversely there was Clark Wallace who adamantly refused to support coercive measures and Mackenzie Bowell who, in spite of his affirmations, was untrustworthy because of his own "coloured" background as Grand Master of the Orange Lodge in Ontario. Instead of proceeding forcefully, the Ministerialists had merely concocted "des prétextes spécieux, des détours savants, [and] des excuses plausibles."⁴⁶

L'Évangéline welcomed Liberal support from any quarter. While Sir John Thompson, a convert to Catholicism, was still Prime Minister, this newspaper recognized that the Conservative Party would be attacked during the impending election by groups of Protestant "fanatics". Landry did not relish the prospect of political battles being waged on the grounds of religious bigotry but nevertheless felt that some benefits might result:

... les fanatiques seront peut-être les instruments du travail de la démolition

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45. However at least one correspondent of L'Évangéline felt that with age, Costigan had mellowed. "Petit à petit, on l'accoutuma à plier et aujourd'hui il fait la plus belle des courbettes." L'Évangéline, March 21, 1895, p. 3.
46. Ibid., Jan. 31, 1894, p. 2, "P.-Québec".

des combines et par suite ceux par qui nous sera donné l'honneur d'un régime plus sage au point de vue des intérêts généraux du pays.⁴⁷

Welcoming the machinations of the Protestant Protective Association was a remarkable stance for an Acadian-Catholic newspaper but L'Evangéline was not alone in its approach. As early as January of 1894, much to the consternation of Oliver Mowat, Wilfrid Laurier himself employed Richard Cartwright to appease that same ultra-Protestant sector of southwestern Ontario.⁴⁸ These political intrigues meanwhile never deterred Landry from attempting to discredit the Conservative Party by publicizing its links, through Mackenzie Bowell, to the Orange Order in Canada. On one occasion the newspaper published the vows of that association and emphasized for its readers that Bowell had pledged himself to uphold them.⁴⁹

As Conservative journals accused Laurier of duplicity, L'Evangéline did the same to Sir Charles Tupper, asserting that he had one policy for French Canada and another for English Canada. Reprinting an article from the Toronto Globe, L'Evangéline claimed that Tupper had told a Winnipeg audience:

47. Ibid., June 21, 1894, p. 2.

48. See Carman Miller, "Mowat, Laurier and the Federal Liberal Party, 1887-1897," in Oliver Mowat's Ontario, ed. by D. Swainson (Toronto, 1972), pp. 83-84.

49. L'Evangéline, Jan. 10, 1895, p. 3.

Mes amis conservateurs qui êtes opposés au rétablissement des écoles séparées, croyez-vous que vous obtiendrez plus de garantie en me mettant de côté, moi, un protestant, pour placer à la tête du pays un français et un catholique romain? ... Qu'allez-vous gagner à me remplacer, moi anglais protestant, par un français ...? 50

Whether Tupper did indeed state this is irrelevant since Landry's readers would believe he did. It is however entirely possible, even likely, that the report was accurate.

It was not difficult to suspect Tupper's sincerity. Senator L. G. Power, a leading Nova Scotia Liberal, advised Laurier that "if Manitoba refused to legislate, the [federal] government if returned to power will not proceed any further in the matter."⁵¹ John Costigan, an ardent proponent of remedial legislation, was equally suspicious of Tupper. Costigan feared that the Toronto Tory newspaper, the Mail and Empire, reflected official party policy in its hesitancy to endorse coercion. This anxiety existed in spite of Tupper's personal assurances and was heightened by the speeches of an important Conservative candidate in Winnipeg, Hugh John Macdonald.⁵² Indeed Tupper's

50. Ibid., June 11, 1896, p. 2.

51. L. G. Power to Wilfrid Laurier, March 4, 1895. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 9, pp. 3643-46.

52. Costigan publicized his feelings on Tupper and the Manitoba School Question in a speech to the House of Commons delivered on May 26, 1899 (Debates, col. 3647-60). Handwritten notes for this indictment are in the Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

correspondence with Hugh John validates Costigan's fears⁵³ and following the election all suspicions were confirmed as

Sir Charles ... washed his hands altogether of remedial legislation. In the debate on the Address (Debates, 1897, p. 37) he declared he had been defeated by the votes of the Catholic electors of Quebec and, under these circumstances, felt he had been relieved of the responsibility of continuing to defend the rights of the minority in Manitoba.⁵⁴

The Liberal strategy for 1896 vis-à-vis the Acadians was discreetly camouflaged behind the ideal of Acadian unity. According to L'Évangéline, Party allegiance should be less important than racial loyalties. The Acadians should support only French-Catholic candidates and in this way become "inexpugnables dans leur domaines et puissants contre les efforts de leurs ennemis."⁵⁵ This renewed concern for the Acadian unity so carefully forged since 1881, developed after the loss of two "Acadian seats" to Irish Catholics. On July 31, 1890, Dr. E.-N. Léger managed only narrowly to win the Kent seat⁵⁶ after "le curé Michaud

53. Tupper wrote Macdonald that, after the election, the course of the government might follow new lines and indeed the eventual settlement might be concluded "without the matter coming before Parliament at all." Charles Tupper to H. J. Macdonald, April 15, 1896. Tupper Papers Additional, P.A.C. Cited in Waite, Canada 1874-1896, p. 272.

54. John Costigan, "Notes on Sir Charles Tupper". Costigan Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1.

55. L'Évangéline, March 28, 1895, p. 2.

56. Pierre Landry had resigned this federal seat in order to become a county court judge in New Brunswick.

[Bouctouche] avec une ardeur qui tient de la rage, s'est prononcé en faveur de ... M. McInerney."⁵⁷ In December of 1892 a further by-election in Kent, precipitated by Léger's death, saw the Acadian vote split between two Acadians⁵⁸ thus permitting the election of an anglophone, G. V. McInerney.⁵⁹ In the same year a provincial seat in Westmorland constituency, previously held by O. M. Melanson, was lost to another anglophone, W. Woodbury Wells.

Initially the Acadian nationalists and Acadian Conservatives, the latter represented by Le Moniteur Acadien, were alarmed by this trend towards partyism, sectionalism and Liberalism:

Si les Acadiens de Kent sont assez lâches, assez mal dirigés pour laisser échapper leurs droits acquis et qu'ils se détruisent mutuellement pour satisfaire de petites vengeances personnelles, ce sera humiliant à l'extrême; mais ils ont besoin de l'esclavage pour leur faire regretter les pains d'Egypte.

Divisions dans Gloucester, divisions dans Westmorland, divisions dans Kent
Quel scandale. Malheur à ceux par qui le scandale arrive.⁶⁰

The Acadians were sacrificing "les intérêts communs pour servir les intérêts particuliers" and showing "trop

57. Pascal Poirier to Rameau de Saint-Père, July 10, 1890. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-29.

58. Basile Johnson, Conservative, and Olivier-J. LeBlanc, Liberal.

59. The successful candidate was G. V. McInerney who received 1,317 votes as compared to Johnson's 954 and LeBlanc's 859. Le Moniteur Acadien, Dec. 9, 1892, p. 2.

60. Ibid., Dec. 6, 1892, p. 2, "Une Tragédie Dans Kent".

d'ambition personnelle ... et pas assez de vrai patriotisme."⁶¹
Living in the mixed racial environment of New Brunswick,
the Acadians could not afford the luxury of political
partizanship:

... ceux qui veulent introduire en Acadie
l'esprit de parti et en faire la base
première de la politique parmi les
Acadiens, en éliminant la cause nationale,
ne sont pas les vrais amis des Acadiens
et méconnaissent et oublient le fait
... qu'il y a un [anglophone or Irish
Catholic] élément actif et ennemi qui
profitera de nos divisions pour nous
engloutir.

To emphasize "L'esprit de parti au degré où il est arrivé
dans le bas-Canada, c'est une erreur et désastreux pour
nous."⁶² Le Moniteur Acadien, and many of its readers,
felt that Valentin Landry and L'Evangéline were to blame
for this development:

Cette feuille hypocrite semble avoir été
créée et mise au monde pour semer la
discorde parmi nous. Inspirée par la
noire envie et incapable de juger les
événements avec désintéressement, elle
... a préféré ... exciter les jalousies,
encourager les dissensions, et assurer
la division dans nos rangs.⁶³

In truth however, Le Moniteur Acadien, the "Shediac
clique", Pascal Poirier and Pierre Landry were equally guilty
of political partizanship and L'Evangéline rejected their
criticisms outright - without a strong Liberal presence in

61. Ibid., Dec. 13, 1892, p. 2.

62. Ibid., Jan. 20, 1893, p. 2, "Les 'Partis' En Acadie".

63. Ibid., Dec. 13, 1892, p. 2.

L'Acadie, the Conservatives would merely ignore Acadian representations. But as a result of the earlier by-elections, L'Evangéline in the mid-1890's temporarily adopted the theme of unity.⁶⁴ During an 1894 federal by-election this newspaper

quoique libérale en politique, approuve
du choix des conservateurs de Gloucester
[Théotime Blanchard], et, pour cette
raison, elle ne fera point la guerre ...
La lutte ... n'est pas pour le triomphe
du parti ... C'est le patriotisme s'impose
aujourd'hui.⁶⁵

The conversion of this newspaper was largely insincere and indeed made relatively easy since Blanchard's opponent was not a Laurier Liberal or a Liberal at all.⁶⁶

Valentin Landry, the editor of L'Evangéline, had devised a deceptive strategy to aid the Liberals in the election of 1896. He realized that with the exception of Blanchard in Gloucester, all the federal "Acadian" constituencies in New Brunswick⁶⁷ as well as two of four Acadian constituencies in Nova Scotia were held by anglophone and Conservative incumbents.⁶⁸ If the Acadians heeded the

64. L'Evangéline, March 28, 1895, p. 2, "Le Devoir Du Moment".

65. Ibid., April 26, 1894, p. 2.

66. See ibid., for May 10 and June 7, 1894, p. 2.

67. George McInerney in Kent, Michael Adams in Northumberland, John McAlister in Restigouche, John Costigan in Victoria and Henry A. Powell in Westmorland.

68. Hugh Cameron in Inverness and Joseph A. Gillies in Richmond were the two Conservatives. Digby and Yarmouth, the other two constituencies where the Acadian vote was important, were considered "safe" Liberal seats; with

advice of this newspaper and replaced the incumbents with Acadian Catholics, the Liberal Party could capture several seats since it was unlikely that the Conservative Party would fail to nominate the sitting member. Consequently after 1895, the Liberal candidate, Olivier-J. LeBlanc in Kent for example, became the "candidat acadien" or "Le candidat Français et indépendant".⁶⁹

L'Évangéline had a difficult task; it had to persuade the Acadians to abandon traditional alliances, to reject those presently controlling the flow of patronage, and to support a party with a nebulous position on the Manitoba School Question. Israel Tarte claimed that they did indeed have a solution; however they were keeping it a secret:

Bien, comme les conservateurs se sont jetés dans le pétrin, nous ne sommes pas assez simples d'aller leur montrer comment en sortir, mais quand je dis que si nous étions mis au pouvoir, nous nous emparions immédiatement de la difficulté et la réglerions d'une manière satisfaisante pour tous, je veux dire que nous nous sommes positivement préparés à cet événement.⁷⁰

When Le Moniteur Acadien pressed L'Évangéline for its position on remedial legislation, Valentin Landry responded smugly. He had never opposed intervention, but another

one exception (1917), Yarmouth voted Liberal from 1887 until 1958 while Digby was strongly Liberal from 1891 until 1908.

69. L'Évangéline, April 11, 1895, p. 3.

70. Ibid., July 25, 1895, p. 2, "M. Tarte, M.P., sur la situation".

Conservative Government, like the last, would prove incapable of settling the issue to the satisfaction of all the combatants. A fresh Liberal administration would achieve through reason what the Conservatives could not through coercion.⁷¹ "M. Laurier qui va droit son chemin, qui veut la paix et l'harmonie ... demande de régler l'imbroglio scolaire par la diplomatie et non par la violence"⁷² Only Laurier, claimed Landry, could restore peace and tranquillity to Canada.⁷³

Le Moniteur Acadien was clearly supporting the more popular party and policy. However at times Ferdinand Robidoux, its editor, had serious difficulties of his own. For one thing, he was obliged to discredit the most prestigious French Canadian to emerge in years - Wilfrid Laurier. He reprinted one article by a well-known Liberal, L.-O. David, which compared Laurier, Chapleau and Mercier ("les trois hommes les plus populaires de notre temps"). By doing so he publicized David's belief that Laurier was "le plus grand de trois ...

ses sentiments, ses pensées sont nobles,
élevés comme sa tête, comme son regard
... Son langage est correct, élégant,

71. Ibid., Jan. 16, 1896, p. 2.

72. Ibid., March 26, 1896, p. 2, "Ottawa".

73. See Valentin Landry to Rev. Antoine Ouellet, Shediac, Dec. 21, 1895. V.-A. Landry Coll.; C.E.A. 7.1-8. In this letter Landry also points out that the economic policies of the Liberal Party are necessary to protect the working class. "Il faut que nous protégiions le travail, le capital peut se garder par lui-même."

gracieux comme ses manières, sa voix douce, sonore, harmonieuse.⁷⁴

Yet as if to compensate for this lavish praise, Le Moniteur Acadien reprinted another article critical of Laurier for speaking only English to a large Edmonton crowd, a few of whom were insisting "en français, en français".⁷⁵

Throughout the 1890's, Robidoux's strategy involved differentiating between the leader and the party. Laurier was indeed attractive; however "c'est un cabinet libéral qui ... fait tout son possible pour écraser là-bas [i.e. Manitoba] ceux qui parlent notre langue et professent notre religion!"⁷⁶

Le Moniteur Acadien also had the onerous burden of flattering Mackenzie Bowell! Robidoux's best was hardly inspiring:

M. Bowell ne brille ni par des talents transcendants ni par une éloquence parlementaire ou de husting. C'est tout simplement un honnête homme, aimant à rendre justice à tous et traitent ses concitoyens comme il désire lui-même être traité par eux.⁷⁷

Even the most biased press had difficulty comparing Bowell favourably with Laurier. Le Moniteur Acadien was clearly relieved when he resigned in favour of Sir Charles Tupper. A native son, a colleague of Sir John A. Macdonald, an

74. Le Moniteur Acadien, Oct. 30, 1894, p. 1.

75. Ibid., p. 2.

76. Ibid., March 22, 1892, p. 2.

77. Ibid., Dec. 21, 1894, p. 2. "L'Hon. M. Bowell".
Reprinted in English in Ibid., Nov. 17, 1895, p. 1.

experienced administrator and an adept politician, Tupper's return was warmly welcomed:

On verra, par le lecture des courageuses paroles qu'il vient d'écrire [on the Manitoba question], comme son langage franc, énergique et sans aucune ambiguïté, contraste singulièrement avec les paroles dernièrement encore par l'honorable M. Laurier.⁷⁸

Le Moniteur Acadien was fortunate in that it endorsed a party which, on this issue, posed as the defender of both the constitution and Catholic rights. All Conservatives, be they English, French Canadian or Acadian, supposedly believed in the sanctity of the British North America Act and Robidoux likely took pleasure in printing the speeches of the Minister of Finance, the Hon. G. E. Foster:

The constitution has been made, the constitution is the bond of this country's permanence and stability, and the liberal-conservative party proposes to abide by the constitution ... and to keep the compact that the constitution imposes ... it is only by mutual conciliation, and by compromise and a broad toleration that we can hope to remain a confederation.⁷⁹

Robidoux clearly had the support of the Acadian clergy and Irish hierarchy in his battle with Valentin Landry, L'Evangéline and the Liberal Party. In fact Rev. Philéas Bourgeois, a professor at the Collège St. Joseph, warned Landry of the clergy's increasing anger. Show "prudence et de soin dans vos reproductions" Bourgeois wrote; "il y a

78. Ibid., Nov. 8, 1895, p. 2, "La question des écoles".

79. Speech of the Hon. G. E. Foster, Nov. 1, 1895.
Reprinted in English in ibid., Nov. 12, 1895, p. 1.

tout à gagner en restant indifférent et beaucoup à perdre si L'Évangéline s'en mêle d'aucune manière."⁸⁰ This was no idle threat since the lack of clerical support at this time could still mean financial ruin for any newspaper. Exaggerated criticisms of L'Évangéline were already being expressed "par membres du clergé et des membres influents et haut placés."⁸¹

Internal divisions among the Quebec religious hierarchy had produced a diplomatic approach to the 1896 election. The compromise concluded permitted Quebec Catholics to vote for any candidate "qui s'engageront formellement ... à voter ... en faveur d'une législation rendant à la minorité catholique du Manitoba les droits scolaires."⁸² The hierarchy of the Maritime provinces was substantially less coy. Writing from Rome, Archbishop O'Brien of Halifax⁸³ felt that the Canadian electorate had "Une question bien simple": were constitutional guarantees to be protected, "oui ou non?" O'Brien obviously had little patience with the Liberals:

80. Rev. Ph. Bourgeois to Valentin Landry, Jan. 5, 1897. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-10.

81. Ibid.

82. Mandement of the Archbishops and Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Quebec, Montreal and Ottawa. Reprinted in Le Moniteur Acadien, May 22, 1896, p. 2. See also supra, n. 17.

83. Archbishop Cornelius O'Brien (1843-1906), was born in P.E.I., educated in Charlottetown and Rome and ordained in 1871. In 1882 he succeeded Archbishop Hannan as Archbishop of Halifax and served until his death on March 9, 1906.

Pas un homme le moindrement au courant des affaires publiques ne peut ignorer l'injustice faite à la minorité de Manitoba. C'est un sujet de peine et d'humiliation que l'on [i.e. the Liberals] puisse ignorer cette injustice; c'est un faux prétexte que de parler d'enquête; c'est trahir sa conscience que de plaider cette excuse pour justifier son opposition à la réparation de l'injustice

More important for Tory fortunes, O'Brien openly endorsed that party because they at least had tried to resolve the controversy:

[Catholics] se rangeront sûrement du côté de la justice; même s'ils doutaient la sincérité du gouvernement. Il nous faut juger par les actes et non pas par les motifs. Nous pouvons prendre connaissance des actes; les motifs ne sont vus et jugés que de Dieu.⁸⁴

Bishop Cameron of Antigonish was even more determined to ensure a Conservative victory, warning his flock that "To vote for a Liberal in the present crisis is in reality to vote against the justice which must be rendered to the Manitoba minority."⁸⁵

Unwilling to depend exclusively upon the Irish hierarchy, Le Moniteur Acadien also publicized Father Marcel Richard's

84. Archbishop O'Brien to the Antigonish Casket, May 6, 1896, where it was printed on May 21, 1896. Translated and reprinted in L'Évangéline, June 11, 1896, p. 2, "Mgr. L'Archêvêque de Halifax" (the translation is accurate and fair).

85. Pastoral Letter of Bishop Cameron, published in the New Glasgow Evening Chronicle, June 18, 1896. Cited in McLaughlin, "The Canadian General Election of 1896 in Nova Scotia," p. 144. See also pp. 164-69 of McLaughlin's thesis for Cameron's overall political attitude.

views. The spiritual leader of the Acadian Catholics was characteristically blunt. To him all other issues were "des questions secondaires qui tendent à écarter l'électeur de la seule grande question au jeu." Richard described himself as a loyal British subject who respected the Queen's wishes and, therefore, the Conservative Party:

J'appuierai le gouvernement fédéral actuel ... Je ne puis concevoir qu'un loyal sujet de Sa Majesté ... puisse agir autrement ... Par amour des principes et par respect pour la loi et la constitution les évêques demandent à leurs diocésains de suivre Tupper, un protestant, plutôt que Laurier, un catholique ... parceque le premier soutient les droits garantis aux minorités ... et que le dernier, Laurier, s'oppose à cette politique patriotique.⁸⁶

It was clearly no coincidence that this interview was published on election day itself.

Finally Le Moniteur Acadien warned its readers to be suspicious of the unity appeal emanating from the offices of its Weymouth rival, L'Évangéline.⁸⁷ In Kent County, Robidoux endorsed the Conservative candidate, George McInerney, instead of the "independent", Olivier-J. LeBlanc,⁸⁸ claiming that the latter had never concerned himself with

86. Le Moniteur Acadien, June 23, 1896, p. 2, "L'opinion du Père Richard".

87. See supra, pp. 338-39.

88. When finally elected in 1900, LeBlanc advertised himself as a Liberal. He had been a Liberal four years earlier and the fact that he tried to hide his politics behind the independent label was probably a good indicator of the unpopularity of the Liberal Party among the Acadians.

the interests of his own race. As an example, Le Moniteur Acadien referred to the 1892 Kent by-election in which LeBlanc ran against Basile Johnson, splitting the Acadian vote and permitting George McInerney to be elected.⁸⁹ Robidoux refuted the charge that he was a traitor to the Acadian cause by maintaining that

en soutenant la cause de justice, sous la direction de nos évêques ... nous servons la plus sainte, la plus sublime cause, et en même temps la cause française ... M. LeBlanc est le candidat des adversaires de la loi réparatrice
.....⁹⁰

In stark contrast, McInerney strongly endorsed "la loi réparatrice ... [which was] la garantie constitutionnelle des minorités provinciales - protestantes aussi bien que catholiques."⁹¹

Wilfrid Laurier of course won a clear majority in the 1896 election, in large part due to the enthusiastic support of Quebec.⁹² Le Moniteur Acadien, distressed by the outcome on the national level, described the results as a "désastre" and hoped that "M. Laurier règlera promptement la question des écoles; il leur en a donné l'assurance."⁹³ However the

89. Le Moniteur Acadien, June 12, 1896, p. 2, "Comté de Kent". See supra, n. 59.

90. Ibid., June 16, 1896, p. 2.

91. Ibid., May 15, 1896, p. 3, "Adresse Aux Electeurs du Comté de Kent" by G. V. McInerney.

92. The Liberals won 49 of 65 seats in Quebec, 43 of 86 in Ontario, 9 of 16 in western Canada and 17 of 39 in the Maritime provinces. Beck, Pendulum of Power, p. 86.

93. Le Moniteur Acadien, June 26, 1896, p. 2.

newspaper could garner some satisfaction from the Maritime returns. New Brunswick had elected nine Conservatives and five Liberals, a slight Conservative decline from 1891⁹⁴ but nevertheless a respectable showing. In the four "Acadian" constituencies, Victoria, Westmorland, Kent and Gloucester,⁹⁵ the Conservatives emerged unscathed. In Victoria John Costigan, receiving support in both French and English districts, defeated Ferdinand LaForest by close to six hundred votes.⁹⁶ H. A. Powell captured Westmorland with a majority of only fifty votes and here it was the Acadian regions (Shediac, Dorchester, Botsford) which saved him.⁹⁷ In Kent George McInerney, the favourite of Le

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94. In 1891 when sixteen instead of fourteen seats were at stake, the Conservatives won 13 and the Liberals 3. See Beck, Pendulum of Power, p. 71 and p. 86. In 1896 the Conservatives won in Victoria, Carleton, Charlotte, York, Westmorland, Kent, Northumberland, Gloucester and Restigouche. See Le Moniteur Acadien June 26 and July 7, 1896.
95. The Acadians comprised 83% of the population in Gloucester, 69% in Kent, 64% in Victoria and 35% in Westmorland. Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, pp. 290-97.
96. John Costigan received 1,600 votes to LaForest's 1,000. Andover, Perth, Gordon and Grand Falls, all predominantly English, gave a majority to Costigan as did the French towns of St. Leonard, Madawaska, St. Jacques and Ste. Anne. See Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, p. 294, and Le Moniteur Acadien, June 26 and July 7, 1896.
97. These three parishes had a population of 16,903 of which 10,331 were Acadian. They gave 1,561 votes to Powell and only 1,223 to his opponent, C. W. Robinson. Conversely the English locales of Salisbury (3,667 English and no Acadians), Westmorland (2,038 English and 130 Acadians) and Moncton city (7,488 English and 1,274 Acadians) gave Robinson 1,334 votes and Powell only 978 votes. See Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, p. 294 and Le Moniteur Acadien, June 26 and July 7, 1896.

Moniteur Acadien, again defeated his Acadian opponent, O.-J. LeBlanc, by a substantial majority (532 votes). His support came primarily from the English regions (Molus River, Carleton, Kingston, Smith Branch) although he did win the Acadian areas of Richibucto, Acadieville and St. Paul.⁹⁸ In Gloucester the incumbent, Théotime Blanchard, once again trounced that perennial candidate, Onésiphore Turgeon, this time by over 800 votes.⁹⁹ The Acadians dominated Gloucester (22,600 of a total population of 27,300) as well as all the electoral districts, making that constituency impossible to divide between exclusively French and English regions.¹⁰⁰ However even if the Independent, Robert Young, had not existed and had his votes all gone to Turgeon, Blanchard would have still won fifteen of these districts and Turgeon only nine.¹⁰¹

In Nova Scotia the Liberal Party fared much better, doubling the number of seats they had after the 1891 election.¹⁰²

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98. LeBlanc won the other Acadian settlements of St. Louis, Bouctouche, Ste.-Marie and Dundas. See *ibid.* LeBlanc did win this seat in 1900 and held it for the Liberals until 1911.
99. There was also an Independent, Robert Young, running. Blanchard ended up with 1,968 votes, Turgeon with 1,156 and Young with 836. See *ibid.*, July 7, 1896, p. 2.
100. See Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, pp. 290-91.
101. Le Moniteur Acadien, June 26 and July 7, 1896.
102. The Liberals won 5 of 21 seats in 1891 and 10 of 20 in 1896. Beck, Pendulum of Power, p. 71 and p. 86 respectively. In 1896 the Liberals won Antigonish, Cumberland, Digby, one of the two Halifax seats, Hants, Inverness, King's, Shelburne-Queens, and Yarmouth. See McLaughlin, "The Canadian General Election of 1896 in Nova Scotia," Appendix III, pp. 200-02.

Of the four constituencies where the Acadian vote was important, the Liberal candidates won in three.¹⁰³ However one must be cautious when assessing Nova Scotia's response. Here the Liberal organization of W. S. Fielding and the trade policy of the two parties were the most important determining factors. According to K. M. McLaughlin's study of this election, "The school question ... [was] relegated to a position of secondary importance."¹⁰⁴ Even L'Évangéline, on the numerous occasions it published the Liberal Party platform, ignored the Manitoba issue, stressing instead "Liberté du commerce - Réduction des taxes", "Stricte économie" and "La Prohibition - Plébiscite nationale".¹⁰⁵

In Digby constituency the successful Liberal candidate, A.J.S. Copp, captured the Acadian regions¹⁰⁶ of Salmon River, Meteghan, Meteghan River, and Church Point as well as the English regions of Hillsburg, Freeport, Sandy

103. A.J.S. Copp won in Digby (41% Acadian), T. B. Flint won in Yarmouth (37% Acadian) and A. McLennan won in Inverness (18% Acadian). A Conservative, J. A. Gillies, won in Richmond (50% Acadian). See Census of Canada, 1901, I, pp. 296-312 and L'Évangéline, June 25 and July 2, 1896. Figures for the election results may also be found in McLaughlin, "The Canadian General Election of 1896 in Nova Scotia," Appendix III, pp. 200-02.

104. McLaughlin, "The Canadian General Election of 1896 in Nova Scotia," p. 107.

105. L'Évangéline, April 25, 1896, p. 3, "Le programme du Parti Libéral".

106. To be considered as an "Acadian region" the French population, for my purposes, has to comprise at least 40% of the total.

Cove, Twerton, Culloden and Little River. Support for J. E. Jones, his Conservative opponent, was equally widespread and divided between Acadian and English districts.¹⁰⁷ In the constituency of Yarmouth, the Conservative candidate, Joseph Bingay, evidently gained little from a tour of the Acadian areas made by Pascal Poirier.¹⁰⁸ Of the five regions with Acadian majorities, three (Tusket, Tusket Wedge and Pubnico West) voted Liberal. The rest of the constituency, concerned mainly with the question of trade, overwhelmingly¹⁰⁹ supported the successful Liberal candidate, T. B. Flint. The Acadian vote was also important in two Cape Breton constituencies, Inverness and Richmond,¹¹⁰ and here the same was true: no pattern of Acadian preferences emerged. Like the English regions, some Acadians voted for Laurier, "sunny ways" and freer trade while others opted for the "old party", remedial legislation and economic security. The school question was only one of many questions confronting the Acadians.

107. Jones won the Acadian areas of Comeauville, Grosses Coques, St. Bernard, New Tusket, and Valentin Landry's own Weymouth Bridge as well as the English areas of Plymton, Barton, Marshaltown and Rossway.

108. McLaughlin, "The Canadian General Election of 1896 in Nova Scotia," p. 172.

109. See L'Évangéline for June 25 and July 2, 1896 for the election results.

110. The Acadians comprised 18% of the population in Inverness and 50% in Richmond. See Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, p. 304 and pp. 308-09.

"On Wilfrid Laurier et Monseigneur Bruchési," Royal Society of Canada, Proceedings and Transactions, XI, S. 3, Sect. 1 (1946), p. 6.

In large part, the enthusiastic response of Quebec in favour of the Liberal Party had determined the outcome of the 1896 election. Archbishop Langevin was demoralized by this response. Like the Acadians twenty years previous, he and the Manitoba Catholics had relied upon the support of their French Canadian compatriots yet once again the Québécois had acted solely in their own interests. "Quel désastre" wrote the Archbishop,

Au mains de quel forban sommes-nous tombés.
Et ce sont des Canadiens français de
Québec qui vont nous empêcher d'avoir
une loi fédérale rémédiate; nous
serons réduits à accepter bon gré mal
quelques miettes que Greenway va nous
jeter avec dédain.¹¹¹

Meanwhile the Acadians, and especially those in New Brunswick, had not exhibited any greater degree of filial responsibility - but of course they were a different race, a distinct culture which never pretended to be overly concerned with racial matters outside of their "patrie". The New Brunswick Acadians showed themselves to be more conservative, and indeed more Conservative than the French Canadians. Laurier was undeniably attractive but compensating for this was their loyalty to the Conservative Party and to the admonitions of their clergy. Distinct from Quebec and separated from the English world, these Acadians adhered to traditional patterns. Those of Nova Scotia, assimilated

111. Mgr. A. Langevin to Mgr. Louis-J.-P.-N. Bruchési, Montreal, June 29, 1896. Cited in Jean Bruchési, "Sir Wilfrid Laurier et Monseigneur Bruchési," Royal Society of Canada, Proceedings and Transactions, XL, S. 3, Sect. 1 (1946), p. 6.

to a greater degree, showed greater concern for the issues relevant in the rest of the province and country. Their vote more accurately reflected the general Canadian pattern. On the whole the Acadians, unlike the French Canadians, would wait, take a closer look at Laurier and what he would do for them, and then, perhaps, commit themselves to his cause. As always the Acadian response would be more conservative. Their response to national controversies was to be strictly their own, based on their own experiences, and not adhering to any pattern established in Quebec.

The aggressive onslaught which commenced in Manitoba continued at the turn of the century with the South African war and became more heated in 1905 over the issue of separate schools in the newly created provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The increasing tension then erupted in the middle of the century's second decade with the Ontario schools issue and the "Great War". Quebec reacted

1. The Manitoba question of course was not an exclusively French-Canadian problem since it basically revolved around denominational schools. Hence all of Canada's Roman Catholics, 40% of the entire population, were supposedly involved. However both French and Irish Catholics believed that the antipathy of the Manitoba government was directed primarily against the French; in fact the Irish bishops believed that the controversy would never have taken place "had there been a Bishop of English nationality in the diocese at the time." Letter from the Irish Catholics of Canada to Mgr. Morry Del Val, Rome, June 17, 1905. Reprinted in *Réponse Aux Préjugés Grièfs Des Catholiques Irlandais Du Canada Contre Les Catholiques Français du Même Pays*, May 30, 1909 (C.E.A., Pamphlet Coll.), p. 11. For a discussion of the intense animosity between Irish and French Catholic, see *infra*, chapter XII.

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CHAPTER XI

Acadien-Canadien Responses - The English

Onslaught, 1900-1915

The Manitoba School Question had not been an isolated event in Canadian history but rather an early manifestation of an invigorated English-Canadian nationalism which challenged, denied and confronted the French-Canadian concept of a binational or bicultural state.¹ The aggressive onslaught which commenced in Manitoba continued at the turn of the century with the South African war and became more heated in 1905 over the issue of separate schools in the newly created provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The increasing tension then erupted in the middle of the century's second decade with the Ontario schools issue and the "Great War". Quebec reacted

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energetically to this onslaught - it was obliged to defend Franco-Manitobans or Franco-Ontarioans if its own special status in Confederation was to be preserved. The reaction of l'Acadie to these same events was less obdurate however. The Acadians were the products of a different environment and a different set of circumstances and experiences; in these as in other issues they could ill afford to indulge in the inflammatory diatribes which Quebec repeatedly produced.

The degree of moderation and caution exhibited by the Acadians was largely due to their minority status in the Maritime provinces. To antagonize the majority would serve to endanger the status they had acquired by the twentieth century. Indeed the Acadians had progressed remarkably since 1867 when they were still "peu instruit, craintif, méfiant, découragé, impuissant et plongé dans le désespoir ..." and when "La langue française ... avait perdu son influence et ... devenait rapidement une source de faiblesse, sinon de honte pour les nôtres."² For example the Catholic church in New Brunswick recognized that the milieu was primarily Protestant and always proceeded with caution. In 1881 Father Richard wrote to Bishop Rogers expressing his anger at a Catholic couple who had been married before a Protestant minister. While Richard wished to make an example of them, Rogers urged him not to be overly rash:

2. Le Moniteur Acadien (Shediac), Dec. 30, 1896.

I would not think it prudent to excommunicate them ... [I do] not deem it wise in our circumstances [his emphasis] mixed up as we are in all civil, and often in social matters, with our Protestant Neighbours. The reaction on their part against us would it is feared produce still greater evils than the evile [sic] which we would try to correct ... The [Protestant] Ministers and their friends would not fail to retaliate ad nauseum [his emphasis].³

Similarly Acadian nationalists took care not to alarm the anglophone majority. At the National Convention of 1881, Pierre Landry deemed it necessary to assure, in English, the few Irish or Scots present "that we have met for no disloyal purpose ... Nothing has been uttered or even thought that did not breathe a spirit of loyalty and of fellowship."⁴

By proceeding in this conciliatory manner the Acadians had acquired a certain degree of social respectability. By 1910, eight Acadians held seats in the New Brunswick Assembly, a number which rose to ten in 1917.⁵ Positions in the civil service were now attainable⁶ and even the French

3. Bishop J. Rogers to Rev. M.-F. Richard, Jan. 27, 1881. Richard Coll., C.E.A., "1881".
4. Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 92.
5. After the 1908 elections the Acadians held two Gloucester seats, two Kent seats and one in Madawaska, Northumberland, Restigouche and Westmorland. In 1917 they added a third seat from Gloucester and a second from Madawaska. For a complete list of Acadian M.L.A.'s, see Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.2-4.
6. See Dr. D. V. Landry to Pl. Gaudet, March 5, 1908. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.71-2.

language, once a sign of inferiority, was, the Acadians thought, "en honneur tout comme l'anglais." The Acadians now had "nos médecins et nos avocats" as well as French newspapers and "Une banque française, sous la direction d'un Acadien."⁷ In spite of being a minority, the Acadians were sufficiently at ease to believe that the Anglo-Protestant majority "ont assez d'esprit de justice et de sens pour comprendre ... [that we wish] conserver ces choses [language and culture] et ils nous en admireront que plus."⁸

However the Acadian gains, being relatively new, were far from secure especially if the politics of confrontation were adopted. The tenuousness of their position became patently clear between 1891 and 1896 when the Manitoba school issue focused Protestant attention upon the de facto Acadian-Catholic schools existing in New Brunswick. The delicate structure of the denominational schools depended, as in Manitoba after 1897, upon the absence of complaints. As long as the character of the schools offended no one, the government was willing to permit the law⁹ to be interpreted as broadly as possible. In the early 1890's however the "separate" schools in Bathurst, New Brunswick, did become a political issue.

7. L'Évangéline (Moncton), Sept. 7, 1910, p. 5.

8. Ibid., Nov. 21, 1895, p. 2.

9. For details on the New Brunswick education legislation, see supra, chapter IV.

Between 1873 and 1890 the Roman Catholic parents of Bathurst had maintained, at their own expense, two private schools and employed Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame (Montreal) as teachers. By 1890, 180 Catholic children attended these schools while Bathurst's 262 Protestant children attended the public schools.¹⁰ Throughout this entire period the Catholic ratepayers paid a dual set of taxes, one for their private schools and one for the public schools. In 1890 the sisters insisted upon a higher rate of remuneration and the parents responded by dismissing them and seeking another teaching order which would agree to work within the terms of the Common Schools Act.

The Sisters of Charity, an American order, proved amenable and the two Catholic schools were soon under the authority of the Public Board of Trustees. This provoked the local Protestant Minister, Rev. A. F. Thomson, into bringing the issue into full public light. He charged that the schools were still Catholic schools and as such had no right to public funds; that the two schools were being used, albeit after regular hours, for denominational teaching; that the sisters were not properly accredited; and that the school trustees, influenced by the Catholic church, were attempting to compel Protestant children to attend the

10. Hon. John J. Fraser, Report upon charges relating to The Bathurst Schools (Presented to the N. B. Assembly on Nov. 23, 1893, C.E.A., Pamphlet Coll.), p. 7. For all correspondence surrounding the Bathurst school controversy, see New Brunswick, Journals of the House of Assembly, 1893, No. 26.

"convent" schools.¹¹ The Hon. Charles H. LaBillois, an Acadian minister in the A. G. Blair administration, intensified the difficulties by indiscreetly referring to the question during an 1891 by-election rally. The opposition press and M.L.A.'s claimed LaBillois had told an Acadian audience that

The enemy is at your gate; they [the Anglo-Conservatives] are plotting to destroy your religion and your language ... they are endeavoring to drive your language from the schools, to allow only English to be taught, and to strike a blow in this way at your religion and your nationality ... look to the attempt to drive the sisters from the schools in Bathurst. This is but one point of their dastardly scheme.¹²

The compromise of 1875¹³ then became a major issue of the 1893 Legislative Session with petitions from all parts of the province, and having a total of ten thousand signatures, being submitted. The complainants objected to the fact that in spite of the supposedly non-sectarian school laws, public funds were distributed to what were essentially sectarian schools taught by nuns and often located on church property. They objected to Catholic children being transported, at public expense, to schools outside of their own district so as to keep certain schools

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11. Fraser, Report upon charges relating to The Bathurst Schools, *passim*.
 12. New Brunswick, Synoptic, N. B. Assembly, 1892, p. 13. Dr. Alward (M.L.A., Saint John City), March 4, 1892.
 13. See supra, chapter IV.

entirely Catholic in nature. They objected to nuns being licensed without a proper public examination. They objected to the fact that Catholic teachers could be examined in either Saint John or Chatham while Protestants had to incur the cost of a trip to Fredericton. It cannot be denied, claimed Herman H. Pitts, the M.L.A. for York, "that special privileges have ... been granted the Roman Catholics of this Province."¹⁴ This was unforgivable in a country of "equal rights for all, special privileges for none."¹⁵

A torrid debate followed. A. G. Blair dismissed the claim of some M.L.A.'s that the "Rome-cursed minority" was being protected by a government composed of the "minions of the Roman hierarchy" as well as "weak kneed, limberjointed Protestant[s]."¹⁶ While the Acadian M.L.A's remained discreetly silent, the Premier defended at length the existing system which, he said, had been implemented initially so as to calm the enraged passions of the province. The Opposition, Blair added, was not trying to grant "equal rights to all ... [but to] absolutely proscribe a particular class, and create deep-seated discontent."¹⁷

The best any government can do is to
adopt what methods of conciliation are

14. New Brunswick, Synoptic, N. B. Assembly, 1893, p. 58.
H. H. Pitts, March 27, 1893.

15. This was the slogan of D'Alton McCarthy's "Protestant Protective Association".

16. New Brunswick, Synoptic, N. B. Assembly, 1893, p. 62.
A. G. Blair, March 27, 1893.

17. Ibid., p. 66.

21. Ibid., pp. 52-53. H. H. Pitts, Feb. 11, 1893.

available for the purpose of restoring amicable feeling and getting the people to abate some of their extreme contentions on either side ... I think that if the Bathurst people are left to themselves ... they will be able to solve these problems.¹⁸

Blair, and indeed the majority of the legislators, were trying to calm Protestant apprehensions of a "Papist plot". However a few irreconcilables continued to vent their rage, reminding one Cabinet Minister of a sea captain's tale: "De wind she blows from nor, eass, wess; De sou wind she blows too."¹⁹ In this case the wind was being provided by Herman H. Pitts, the longtime M.L.A. for York.

Herman Pitts likely saw himself as an eastern version of D'Alton McCarthy, fighting the Catholic menace on all fronts.²⁰ Though many considered him a bigot, Pitts of course did not view himself as such, but rather as a citizen concerned with the province's future:

He [Pitts] has been fighting for the child of his Roman Catholic neighbour ... that it might have an equal chance and have as good an education and all the opportunity of his own child in a free, non-sectarian public school ... he was laboring for the best good, the true interest not only of the country generally but of the Roman Catholics as well.²¹

18. Ibid., p. 71.

19. Ibid., p. 87. The Hon. H. R. Emmerson (Albert), March 29, 1893.

20. Continuing his battle, Pitts in 1896 introduced a motion into the N. B. Assembly expressing "the hope that the federal government will abandon its present coercive course [against Manitoba]." New Brunswick, Synoptic, N. B. Assembly, 1896, p. 55.

21. Ibid., pp. 52-53. H. H. Pitts, Feb. 12, 1897.

But in 1893 his speeches were so demagogic and inflammatory that the Conservative Party tried to dissociate itself from him. A. C. Smith, the Tory M.L.A. for Saint John, reminded the Assembly that the views of Herman Pitts were not necessarily those of his Conservative colleagues since "No understanding existed ... as to the course they should take as a party."²²

On April 6, 1893, the government established a one-man commission to

inquire into and fully and thoroughly investigate any alleged infractions of the law or regulations on the part of the teachers or trustees in each of the said [Bathurst] school districts, and generally to inquire into all matters of complaint.²³

The choice of the Hon. Mr. Justice John J. Fraser as commissioner evoked widespread support. Fraser had been a member of the King Government when it first introduced the Common Schools Act²⁴ as well as "a most enthusiastic advocate of the law at the time of its adoption."²⁵ Yet he still appealed to Catholics since he had been involved in the negotiations which led to the 1875 compromise.

22. Ibid., p. 103. A. C. Smith, March 29, 1893.

23. Ibid., p. 121. The Hon. A. G. Blair, April 6, 1893.

24. John J. Fraser (1829-1896) had been the Premier of New Brunswick from 1878 until 1882 when he was named to the Supreme Court of that province. In 1893 he became the Lieutenant-Governor of New Brunswick, a post he held until his death in November of 1896.

25. New Brunswick, Synoptic, N. B. Assembly, 1894, p. 132. Hon. A. S. White (Kings), April 11, 1894.

After investigating the situation Judge Fraser rejected the charges leveled by the Rev. Thomson and the Protestant parents. He stated that the actions of the Catholics had been entirely legal and that many of the complaints were "the production of some one who could not see any good in his neighbour if that neighbour was a priest of the Roman Catholic church."²⁶ There had been some errors on the part of the Catholic teachers - giving catechism lessons at noon hour for example - but these, wrote Judge Fraser, could be and indeed were rectified without altering the entire system.²⁷

Some Bathurst parents were dissatisfied with Fraser's decision and appeared before the Supreme Court of New Brunswick charging that the district's schools were being conducted

in the interests of the Roman Catholic Church, and for the purpose and with a view and intention to promote and secure the prosperity of the said Roman Catholic Church, and assist in the spreading, maintaining, inculcating and securing the supremacy of the teachings of the religion and doctrines of said church ... and to bring the children of such Protestant parents under the influence of the religion, doctrines and modes of

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26. Fraser, Report upon charges relating to the Bathurst Schools, pp. 26-27. The N. B. Assembly accepted Judge Fraser's report on April 11, 1894. See Synoptic, 1894, p. 135.
27. In Nov. of 1893 the Department of Education clarified just what constituted regular school hours and ruled that religious instruction could not be given during recess or noon hour. See Le Moniteur Acadien, Nov. 21, 1893, p. 2.

belief taught by the religious teachers, priests, bishops and ecclesiastics of the said church.²⁸

Being more specific, the Protestant plaintiffs emphasized that they were unwilling to see their children attend what appeared to be a Catholic school. Therefore they were forced to maintain, in addition to the public school, a private school which ironically was situated in the local Orange Order lodge. They complained that the sisters, teaching in their religious garb and addressed by their religious names, were in fact dominated and guided by the Bishop of Chatham; even their salaries, paid by Protestant parents, went to the Catholic church. Finally the plaintiffs argued that the Common Schools Act notwithstanding, the schools were dominated not by trustees but by priests who continued to give religious instruction.

The Supreme Court judge, Mr. Justice Frederick Barker, showed little sympathy for the complainants. Quoting Ex parte Renaud, Barker defined a sectarian school as one "under the exclusive government of some one denomination of Christians and where the tenets of that denomination are taught."²⁹ This was not the situation in Bathurst. It mattered little, he felt, where the school was located or who taught in it; the question was whether the

28. Mr. Justice F. Barker, Bathurst School Case, the Judgement Delivered in the Supreme Court of New Brunswick, 17 March 1896 (Saint John, 1896), p. 4.

29. Ibid., p. 11.

instructors taught Catholic dogma during regular school hours and this he found not to be the case. The court questioned Dr. Inch of the Board of Education who admitted that the government was fully aware of what was taking place. Moreover the Board of Education had no objections since present practices did not contravene the 1875 compromises which "were made to meet individual views, and for what was supposed to be the general good."³⁰ Barker, again citing Ex parte Renaud, felt that the will of the Board was final since "It, on behalf of the inhabitants of the Province at large, is responsible for the general working of the system."³¹

Mr. Justice Barker also dealt with the problem of the private school established by the Protestant parents. He considered their actions legally unnecessary. The parents were "deprived of no right because of locality, a building and a teacher to their exact liking was never guaranteed them."³² For a precedent he turned ironically to the case of The City of Winnipeg v. Barrett (App. Cases, 1892, p. 458) in which the Privy Council stated:

But what right or privilege is violated or prejudicially affected by the law? It is not the law that is in fault. It is owing to religious convictions ... and to the teachings of their Church that Roman Catholics ... find themselves

30. Ibid., p. 20.

31. Ibid., p. 21.

32. Ibid., p. 30.

unable to partake of advantages which the law offers to all alike.³³

The Protestants of Bathurst had established of their own volition rather than of necessity their private school and hence their case was dismissed.

As the issue faded, the Acadians and Le Moniteur Acadien heaved a great sigh of relief. The controversy had clearly revealed how easily the Protestants of the province could be stirred by religious fanaticism. A misunderstanding in Bathurst had threatened "de raviver les anciennes et déplorables animosités dont tout le monde fut si heureux d'accueillir la fin il y a une quinzaine d'années." A school system beneficial to the Acadian Catholics had once again been on the brink of extinction and for its part, Le Moniteur Acadien hoped that similar issues would never again be raised "à provoquer une rupture entre les différents éléments de notre population et à donner prise aux ressentiments du fanatisme et de la bigoterie."³⁴ In the future this newspaper and its contributors, most notably Pascal Poirier, tried to avoid becoming immersed in any racial questions, regardless of where they occurred, which might destroy the New Brunswick equilibrium. Caution and conciliation became its unspoken motto.

This approach contrasted starkly with that generally employed in Quebec where both the journalists and the people

33. Ibid.

34. Le Moniteur Acadien, March 14, 1893, p. 2.

were more secure and confident. Indeed during the first years of Wilfrid Laurier's tenure as Prime Minister, Quebec almost became "Trop confiants dans la sécurité apparente,"³⁵ forgetting that racial antagonisms were almost endemic to Canada. Quebec realized that Anglo-Canadian pretensions were threatening its concept of a binational state but for the most part, these attacks were not on Quebec itself. However in the early twentieth century, the Anglo-Canadian onslaught became more aggressive and frontal; Archbishop Bourne of Westminster attacked the nationalism inherent in the French Canadian church³⁶ and Canadian imperialists sought to drag the French Canadian nation into an entangling alliance with Britain. "L'ennemi avait changé de tactique et nous attaquait de front ... La lutte recommença donc ouvertement."³⁷

For years the French Canadians had accepted "de coeur gai compromissions et sacrifices d'une partie de nos droits." The consequence had been a "renaissance du fanatisme"³⁸ which had confronted French-Catholic minorities in a succession of provinces - New Brunswick (1875), Manitoba (1897), Saskatchewan (1905) and Alberta (1905).

35. Gustave Baudouin, "Autour De La Renaissance Canadienne-Française," Le Petit Canadien, XV, No. 2 (Feb., 1918), p. 33.

36. See infra, chapter XII.

37. Baudouin, "Autour De La Renaissance Canadienne-Française," p. 34.

38. Le Devoir (Montreal), July 1, 1914, p. 1.

Now (1914) Quebec's compatriots were under siege in Ontario and if they too were defeated "Les trouées qu'il [the assimilationists] ferait dans nos rangs lui permettraient d'attaquer le centre de l'armée, Québec."³⁹ The threat reinvigorated Quebec's profound instinct for survival and there developed a new determination to consolidate French Canadian forces, be they in Ontario or New Brunswick, so as to combat this onslaught.

Quebec had always shown interest in French Canadian expatriates⁴⁰ especially those in New England,⁴¹ Ontario and Manitoba; unlike the Acadians, they were, after all, merely displaced Québécois! However in preparation for the confrontations of the post-1910 era, the new consolidation of forces had to include not only the 200,000 Franco-Ontarioans and the 30,000 Franco-Manitobans, but also the 160,000 Acadians.⁴²

39. H.-P. LeBlanc, speech delivered in Rumford, Connecticut, 1924. H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A. Box No. 11, "Divers", file "Conférence".

40. See Chaput, "Some Repatriement Dilemmas"; Silver, "French Canada and the Prairie Frontier, 1870-1890"; and Lanctot, Les Canadiens Français et Leurs Voisins Du Sud.

41. In Oct. of 1871, L'Opinion Publique (Montreal) began publishing a weekly supplement concerning the Franco-Americans in the hope of establishing "un courant d'idées sympathique entre les Canadiens d'ici et ceux de là-bas." See L'Opinion Publique, Oct. 26, 1871, p. 1. See also supra, chapter VIII.

42. Le Devoir on April 2, 1913 cites these figures for Ontario and Manitoba. The Census of Canada, 1911, II, enumerates 31,000 French Canadians in Manitoba (p. 172), 202,000 in Ontario (p. 204), as well as 98,611 Acadians in N. B. (p. 178), 51,746 in N. S. (p. 186), and 13,117 in P.E.I. (p. 254).

We would succeed in securing a recognition of our rights if we were only united throughout the whole Dominion. Being a people numbering 1,500,000 we might maintain our ground as our forefathers had when they were only 60,000 strong against all the power of Great Britain.⁴³

Leading Acadians hoped that the Québécois would appreciate their value. Pascal Poirier for example recognized that the existence of a French-Canadian state was essential for Acadian survival. "Le torse abattu, les membres le seraient bientôt à leur tour." However it was a reciprocal affair; Poirier continued that Quebec also "a besoin, a un besoin essentiel, des groupes français qui l'entourent ...

A l'est, ce sont les Acadiens; et chaque fois que l'ennemi a voulu prendre et humilier les Canadiens, il a trouvé, lui barrant le passage, la poignée de nos compatriotes, qu'il a fallu terrasser d'abord. Nous sommes le boulevard de la province de Québec ... Ne l'oubliez jamais, ô vous de Québec!⁴⁴

By 1910 Quebec seemed ready to recognize the existence of l'Acadie and to look to it for support. In fact some Quebec journalists eagerly anticipated the day when New Brunswick would become the Dominion's second French province; the Acadian birthrate, higher than that of the Anglo-Protestant, permitted one "espérer voir bientôt poindre le jour où elle [the Acadians] aura reconquis le première place dans ces terres fertiles qu'elle a la première ensemencées."⁴⁵ This

43. Canada, Debates of the Senate of Canada, 1886, p. 881. Senator J.-H. Bellerose (Quebec), May 29, 1886.

44. L'Evangéline, Sept. 4, 1902, p. 3.

45. René Chalout, "Les Acadiens Et Nous," L'Action Française, XII, No. 1 (July, 1924), p. 40.

development could greatly enhance Quebec's ability to withstand assimilationist pressures.

In January of 1910 there appeared in Montreal a new daily, Le Devoir⁴⁶, which dedicated itself to the task of enunciating French-Canadian nationalism. Because of the immense popularity of its editor, Henri Bourassa, the newspaper's influence was immediate and widespread⁴⁷ as it promised to defend all Franco-Canadians:

La province de Québec étant le berceau et le foyer naturel de la race, la Publicité [i.e. Le Devoir] y exercera son action principale; mais elle étendra ses opérations et sa propagande au milieu des groupes français des autres provinces canadiennes et des Etats-Unis [his emphasis]. Elle tiendra ces colonies éparses en contact plus intime avec la province-mère et contribuera à donner à la population française d'Amérique toute l'unité d'action et la force coopérative compatibles avec la diversité de situation politique de chacun de ces groupes.⁴⁸

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46. Le Devoir along with Le Nationaliste was published by a company called "La Publicité". The directors of this company were J.-A. Vaillancourt, Manager of the Bank of Hochelaga; S.-D. Vallières, former President of the financial committee of the City of Montreal; L.-A. Delorme, Secretary of the 'Maison Laporte, Martin et Cie'; Joseph Lamoureux, a retired manufacturer; Edouard Gothier, a real estate agent; G.-N. Ducharme, President of La Sauvegarde and former President of the Banque Provinciale; and Joseph Girard, another real estate agent. They claimed that the two journals were "en fait, la propriété du public. Ils traduisent sa pensée, ils défendent ses intérêts." See Le Devoir, Oct. 26, 1910, p. 1.
47. After one week Le Devoir reached at least 25,000 subscribers and, it was alleged, four times that number who never bought an issue but probably did read someone else's. See ibid., Jan. 11, 1910, p. 4.
48. Ibid., Jan. 10, 1910, p. 4.

By this time the French fact in Canada stretched from "l'isthme de Shédiac jusqu'au centre d'Ontario"⁴⁹ and Le Devoir devoted itself enthusiastically to the problems facing Franco-Americans and Franco-Ontarioans.

Following a tour of the Maritime provinces (August, 1910) by Henri Bourassa, Le Devoir considered the situation of the Acadians. It regretted that the relationship between the Acadians and the French Canadians "n'aient pas ... plus fréquent et plus intimes" and committed itself

travailler à cette entente, que d'aider les divers groupes français à se mieux connaître, à se donner mutuellement un plus efficace appui

Entre Acadiens et Canadiens-Français il n'est qu'une différence de nom: nos coeurs battent pour les mêmes amours et les mêmes espérances.

Le Devoir believed that the Acadians, after having struggled in isolation for so long, "seraient heureux de sentir dans leur main une main fraternelle."⁵⁰ Speaking in Nova Scotia, Bourassa appealed for greater Canadian-Acadian cooperation. They were, he claimed, "deux rameaux de la belle race française"⁵¹ each having its own history and traditions but still "frères par le sang, par la langue et par la foi."⁵² He called for a fraternal union "car l'union fait la force

49. Benjamin Sulte, introduction to Le Pays d'Évangéline Depuis son origin jusqu'à nos jours by E.-D. Aucoin (Montreal, 1917), p. 8.

50. Le Devoir, Aug. 5, 1910, p. 1, "Les Acadiens".

51. L'Évangéline, Aug. 24, 1910, p. 11.

52. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 25, 1910, p. 1.

... Il est nécessaire de s'unir pour protéger notre existence et sauvegarder nos intérêts communs.⁵³ Through flattery and his own personal magnetism, Bourassa captured his Acadian audiences, though his hold on them would be fleeting.

Having returned to Quebec, Bourassa told his readers that there still existed "quelques traces de l'ancienne méfiance des Acadiens à l'endroit des Canadiens-français. Ce sentiment remonte à des causes lointaines." The Acadians resented having been ignored for so many years and, he added, resented the French Canadian attempts at assimilation:

Le Devoir, Ils veulent conserver leurs institutions et leurs traditions locales; mais ils comprennent et proclament qu'ils doivent s'appuyer sur la province de Québec, qui est, à leurs yeux, le centre d'action de tous les Franco-Canadiens comme le foyer le plus intense de la foi catholique.⁵⁴

Throughout the tumultuous years that followed, Le Devoir returned periodically to this theme, stressing the need for greater mutual understanding. Quebec had to avoid "l'impérialisme de race" which would reduce the Acadians "au type franco-canadien" but still convince them that only through union could the Anglo-Protestant offensive be deflected.⁵⁵

However in spite of its best intentions, it is unlikely

53. Ibid.

54. Le Devoir, Sept. 7, 1910, p. 1, "Les Acadiens".

55. Ibid., Aug. 14, 1915, p. 1, "Acadiens et Canadiens-Français".

that Le Devoir succeeded in winning for Quebec the Acadians' love. Like the other Quebec newspapers, its interest in this "rameau de la belle race française" was too transitory and self-seeking to be genuine. Le Devoir began publication in January of 1910 yet it was not until Bourassa was invited to the Acadian national convention in August that an article on this people appeared. After a short succession of articles, there followed another period of profound neglect.⁵⁶ There appeared no mention of the Acadians' work, accomplishments or struggles. The question of an Acadian bishop was convulsing New Brunswick,⁵⁷ but Le Devoir, perhaps heeding the Catholic hierarchy's desire for secrecy,⁵⁸ offered no support or even publicity. While frequent issues dealt with the Franco-Americans, the Franco-Ontarioans or the Franco-Manitobans, it was not until July of 1911 that another article focused attention on the Acadians.⁵⁹

At various times the Acadians had desired closer contacts with the French Canadians but they wished to be

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56. A comprehensive canvass of Le Devoir reveals no articles on the Acadians until Aug. 15, 1910. Then there were articles on Aug. 17, 18 and 20th although this sudden interest soon stopped until July of 1911.
57. See infra, chapter XII.
58. In New Brunswick the desire of the hierarchy was to keep the issue out of public view. Valentin Landry was eventually censured by the Apostolic Delegate because he refused to accede to this demand. See infra, chapter XII.
59. Le Devoir, July 27, 1911, p. 1, "Premier Congrès Pédagogique Français en Acadie".

regarded as equals and not subjected to patronizing airs of superiority. Quebec meanwhile appeared too disinterested to meet these terms. For too long Quebec had considered "la race acadienne comme une chose du passé, complètement éteinte."⁶⁰ For too long the French Canadians had denied the Acadians "cet encouragement, cet appui que la minorité a droit de recevoir des plus forts ... toujours vous faites passer vos intérêts politiques avant les nôtres."⁶¹ By the twentieth century the Acadians were sufficiently resentful to greet any new Quebec attempts at rapprochement with suspicion and often disdain. In 1903 H.-J. Chouinard⁶³ asked his Quebec compatriots to recognize the Acadian sense of distinctiveness and to respect their "susceptibilités et leur préférences." Yet even this well-intentioned article aroused L'Évangéline:

Ces susceptibilités portent en soi
une certaine qualité de justification.
Il ne nous semble pas bien nécessaire
que l'on nous en absolue dans les
gazettes.

On est, au surplus, assez bon de

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60. Du Boscq De Beaumont, Une France Oubliée, L'Acadie, p. 46.
61. Le Moniteur Acadien, July 4, 1901, pp. 2-3.
62. Ibid. For other articles elaborating on the Acadian resentment, see L'Évangéline for Sept. 18, 1902, p. 1 and for April 24, 1902, p. 1, "L'Isolement des Acadiens".
63. H.-J. Chouinard (1850-1928) was the former secretary of the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society in Quebec as well as an author, lawyer and, for two years, a Member of Parliament (Dorchester, 1888-1890).

69. L'Évangéline, Nov. 4, 1900, p. 7; "Le Réveil au Canada".

pardonner de rester acadienne ... Merci
Merci.⁶⁴

By 1907 the Quebec press still had to realize that "cette malheureuse tension d'esprit" was as strong as ever.⁶⁵

The Acadians, quite correctly, were suspicious of any new Quebec courting feeling that "On nous trouve quand on a besoin de nous ... on semble nous oublier quand à notre tour, nous sollicitons une assistance pratique et constante."⁶⁶

Any renewed Quebec interest was the consequence of "une réelle nécessité pour sa propre sauvegarde."⁶⁷ By 1910 Quebec was exhibiting this renewed interest⁶⁸ and, as the Acadians suspected, its motive was self-preservation:

En province de Québec, l'ennemi s'avancait à la sourdine, mais il gagnait chaque jour du terrain. Nous avons ... signalé souvent ... le danger que ne voyaient pas encore nos confrères de Québec. Nos confrères regardent autour d'eux, suivirent les mouvements, quoique cachés, de l'assimilateur: ils furent stupéfaits de voir si près d'eux les tranchées d'approche de l'ennemi.⁶⁹

The anglophone assimilators in New England and Ontario were again virulent and the Quebec press asked "Sommes-nous bien

64. L'Évangéline, May 21, 1903, p. 2, "Susceptibilités Acadiens".

65. Ibid., Sept. 19, 1907, p. 2, "Notre Nationalité".

66. Le Moniteur Acadien, July 4, 1901, p. 2.

67. V.-A. Landry, "Voix d'Acadie - Isolement de certains groupes," La Revue Franco-Américaine, IX, No. 1 (May, 1912), p. 53.

68. See L'Évangéline, Jan. 6, 1910, p. 1, "Petit Carnet" and Aug. 28, 1912, p. 4, "Acadiens et Canadiens-Français". See also supra, n. 50-55.

69. L'Évangéline, Nov. 4, 1909, p. 2, "Le Rêveil au Canada".

sûrs ... que nous n'aurions bientôt à nous défendre contre les mêmes tentatives?". L'Événement continued that "le temps est venu de veiller à la défense de nos positions et chercher même à reprendre le terrain perdu."⁷⁰

The latest confrontation between French and English was taking place upon the frontier of Quebec itself, in Ontario and around, once again, the question of French language schools. In August of 1913 the Ontario government, supported by the Irish-Catholic hierarchy of that province,⁷¹ accepted the Merchant Report⁷² and amended its education regulations (Instruction No. 17), virtually proscribing the French language from its schools.

Quebec's reaction was immediate and predictable. Henri Bourassa, Omer Héroux, Olivar Asselin were virulent in their attacks upon Regulation 17 since it contravened

70. L'Événement (Quebec), Oct. 15, 1909, "En Garde".

71. The Irish Catholics were in a difficult position in that they supported Catholic schools but opposed, vehemently, French schools. They believed that the Anglo-Protestants in Manitoba, Ontario and New Brunswick were opposed not to the Catholic faith but to the French language and if the latter could be removed, the former would be safe. For a fuller discussion of the Irish-French antipathy, see *infra*, chapter XII. John Costigan, one of the few Irishmen respected by French Canadians, recognized that "the friction is not between the Ontario Government and the French people so much as it is between my countrymen and the French people and that is what I regret so much, because ... if the French Catholics and Irish Catholics were united ... no Government would be powerful enough to put them down." Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1915, March 18, 1915, p. 126.

72. See The Globe (Toronto), March 7, 1912, p. 1 & 8, "Dr. Merchant on Bilingual Schools".

a philosophy concerning confederation which they had enunciated in Le Devoir since its conception:

Par sa constitution politique, par sa composition ethnique, comme par le droit naturel, le Canada est une confédération anglo-française, le produit de l'union féconde de deux grandes et nobles races. Il doit rester, sous l'égide de la Couronne d'Angleterre, le patrimoine d'un peuple bilingue.⁷³

The future of 200,000 Franco-Ontarioans depended upon the school system and Quebec responded energetically to the new assimilative threat. Quebec financial aid provided for the foundation of a French-language newspaper in Ottawa, Le Droit. The French cause was adopted by "L'Action catholique de la Jeunesse Canadienne", an energetic youth group which sought "à développer ... la coopération que nous pouvons au développement de la race latine dans l'Amérique du nord."⁷⁴

"National assemblies" were staged throughout Quebec to denounce the actions of the Ontario Government and to recruit financial and moral support for the "blessés d'Ontario".⁷⁵ As the European war gripped Canada, the ever volatile Bourassa asked his compatriots to evaluate their priorities:

Au nom de la religion, de la liberté,
de la fidélité au drapeau britannique,

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73. Le Devoir, July 26, 1910, p. 1, "Le Canada, Doit-Il Être Français Ou Anglais" by Henri Bourassa.
74. Ibid., Aug. 26, 1916, p. 2, "L'A.C.J.C. à Montréal".
75. Robert Rumilly, Histoire de la Province de Québec (Montréal, 1948), XIX, pp. 87-92.

on adjure les Canadiens français d'aller combattre les Prussiens d'Europe. Laisserons-nous les Prussiens de l'Ontario imposer en maîtres leur domination en plein coeur de la Confédération canadienne, à l'abri du drapeau et des institutions britanniques?⁷⁶

Les ennemis de la langue française, de la civilisation française, au Canada, ce ne sont pas les Boches des bords de la Sprée; ce sont les anglicisateurs anglo-canadiens, meneurs orangistes ou prêtres irlandais

Qu'on ne s'y méprenne pas: si nous laissons écraser la minorité ontarienne, ce sera bientôt le tour des autres groupes français du Canada anglais.

....
... les ennemis de l'intérieur [are] plus dangereux pour nous que toutes les armées du Kaiser.⁷⁷

Bourassa's appeals had great effect in Quebec as events were to reveal.

As the Acadians debated the Ontario school question, two widely divergent philosophies became apparent. One approach, paralleling that evident in Quebec, was adhered to by Valentin Landry and L'Évangéline. The second, and more popular, was cautious almost to the point of timidity⁷⁸ and found its major proponents in Senator Pascal Poirier and

76. Ibid., p. 102.

77. Le Devoir, April 20, 1915, p. 1.

78. See supra, p. 365. In chapter X, it was asserted, quite correctly, that the Acadians showed little interest in racial matters which occurred outside of the Maritime provinces. At that time Poirier, working as always for Conservative Party interests, generally supported an interventionist position vis-à-vis Manitoba; by 1915 he had returned to his basic position and, in spite of claims to the contrary, generally reflected Acadian opinion.

the contributors to Le Moniteur Acadien.

At one stage Poirier felt that the controversy had divided Canada in two with the Acadians and French Canadians on one side and "dans l'autre, le reste de la Confédération, y compris la presque totalité des Irlandais et des Ecosseis catholiques."⁷⁹ Nevertheless throughout the controversy he adhered to a policy which he had formulated long before, a policy of quiet conciliation.⁸⁰ With regard to the Manitoba School Question he had felt that there was "Too much politics about it [his emphasis]."⁸¹ When the same question was being debated in relation to Saskatchewan and Alberta, he again had hoped to avoid the issue.⁸² In relation to Ontario, Poirier, while sympathizing with the minority, now criticized Quebec for heightening the tension surrounding the issue. "Pourquoi tout ce bruit intempestif pour faire de petits héros locaux, de petits saints avec des niches particuliers; pourquoi tout ce bruit qui recule votre cause et recule la nôtre." He blamed "la presse intolérante" for all the troubles and recommended

79. P. Poirier, letter to the editor of the Revue Moderne, n.d. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.3-18.

80. See Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1892, June 6, 1892, p. 294.

81. P. Poirier to Valentin Landry, May 3, 1895. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-7.

82. See Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1905, pp. 743-44. Pascal Poirier, July 15, 1905.

de faire une trêve de douze mois; une trêve entre les organes anti-français de la province d'Ontario et les organes anti-orangistes de la province de Québec ... Je crois qu'après douze mois de ces bons procédés la question bilingue sera réglée, qu'un nouvel esprit aura été créé.⁸³

The Acadians feared that the agitation in Ontario would "nous fit perdre le terrain gagné et ajourna pour longtemps, peut-être indéfiniment, la mise de notre langue sur un niveau de quasi-égalité avec la langue anglaise dans la province [of New Brunswick]."⁸⁴ Nurtured on a forty-year diet of moderation and conciliation, much of the Acadian elite believed that the French Canadian approach in Ontario was clearly inappropriate. Aubin E. Arsenault, the Acadian Premier of Prince Edward Island,⁸⁵ felt that because of the war, "ce n'est pas le moment opportun de faire valoir ces griefs."⁸⁶ Quebec's interference in the affair had seriously impaired the cause of the Franco-Ontarioans "en même temps au Français des autres provinces."⁸⁷

There was a widespread feeling that the Acadians should

83. Le Moniteur Acadien, April 1 and April 8, 1915. Senate speech of Pascal Poirier. See also ibid., March 17, 1915, pp. 121-25.

84. Poirier, Les Acadiens Depuis la Confédération jusqu'à nos jours, p. 14.

85. Aubin E. Arsenault, after serving as Minister without Portfolio since 1911, became the Premier of P.E.I. in June of 1917 and remained in that position until his Conservative government was defeated in Sept. of 1917.

86. Le Moniteur Acadien, Oct. 4, 1917, p. 1.

87. Ibid., July 1, 1915, p. 1.

not concern themselves with "tout les mouvements qui nous viennent du dehors ... cet engouement stupide est accordé trop souvent de nos institutions et de nous-mêmes." Let the Franco-Ontarioans wage their own battles; "La jeunesse acadienne a un beau travail à faire chez-nous."⁸⁸ Why contribute funds "aux appels qui nous viennent du dehors ... La charité ... commence chez soi."⁸⁹ Many Acadians repudiated the aggressive style of the Quebec nationalists believing that their own accommodating manner was much more productive; even La Patrie in Montreal respected them for this:

Les Acadiens vivent en paix avec leurs concitoyens anglais dont ils ont su se gagner l'estime et le respect par leur zèle et leur dévouement à servir les meilleurs intérêts du Canada. Les Acadiens n'ont jamais insulté l'élément anglais au milieu duquel ils sont appelés à vivre. Ils se sont contentés de faire appel à leur équité et à leur esprit de justice!⁹⁰

The conciliatory approach advised by Pope Benoit XV in 1916 was warmly welcomed by the Acadians.⁹¹

The conservatism of Pascal Poirier and Le Moniteur Acadien was not well received by the Quebec nationalists. Le Devoir dismissed Poirier's Senate speech as "un discours

88. Ibid., July 1, 1915, p. 2, "La jeunesse et l'A.C.J.C."

89. Ibid., March 25, 1915, p. 1, "Encourageons les Nôtres".

90. La Patrie, n.d., "Les Acadiens". Reprinted in ibid., July 8, 1915, p. 2.

91. L'Évangéline, Nov. 2, 1916, p. 1, "Lettre de Sa Sainteté Benoit XV" (to Cardinal Louis Bégin, Quebec).

dont la forme académique n'a pas réussi entièrement à cacher l'étrange argumentation." Poirier, it claimed, had expounded "assez longuement la panacée miraculeuse qu'il a trouvé pour remédier à tous les maux actuels."⁹² However Le Devoir did find a certain solace in the attitude of L'Évangéline and, contrary to usual practice, began reprinting the latter's editorials:

... la grande majorité des ses [Poirier's] compatriotes regrettent ces idées, et [believe] qu'elles ne sont nullement l'écho fidèle de l'opinion des Acadiens sur cette question.

'L'Évangéline' a toujours été en pleine sympathie avec l'attitude ferme de nos frères de l'Ontario ... l'application du principe de la conciliation telle que entendue par M. Poirier, entraînerait les conséquences les plus funestes.⁹³

L'Évangéline, less conservative than Le Moniteur Acadien in both politics and mentality, represented the other side of Acadian opinion on this matter. Like much of the press in Quebec, it was willing to battle the anglicizers of Ontario,⁹⁴ repudiating the "idées malsaines et humiliantes" of Pascal Poirier, "notre incongru représentant au Sénat."⁹⁵ Poirier and others like him had grown lethargic with age and no longer understood the needs and aspirations of their own people.⁹⁶ L'Évangéline had little faith in the

92. Le Devoir, March 18, 1915, pp. 1 and 7.

93. Ibid., April 10, 1915, p. 5, "Voix D'Acadie".

94. See L'Évangéline, Jan. 20, 1915, p. 1.

95. Ibid., April 7, 1915, p. 1.

96. Ibid., July 7, 1915, p. 1, "La Jeunesse Acadien".

efficacy of a moderate, conciliatory approach. Certainly the Acadians had made substantial progress since the mid-nineteenth century but they had done so only after long and arduous struggles; "il est important de lutter si nous voulons rester ce que le Bon Dieu nous a fait, des Catholiques de langue française."⁹⁷

Much to the consternation of the "Shediac clique" Valentin Landry and his successors at L'Évangéline always promoted the idea of a fraternal union with Quebec. "L'union fait la force", the journal's motto, assumed greater potency as the Anglo-Protestants and Irish Catholics of Ontario challenged the French "fact" in Canada. Landry sought a new "pacte de fraternité entre les Canadiens Français et les Acadiens"⁹⁸ now that Quebec seemed genuinely interested. Landry admitted that Quebec's sudden awareness was motivated by self-interest but the magnitude of the anglophone threat in Canada and in New Brunswick⁹⁹ made that irrelevant.

However while admitting the importance of self-interest, L'Évangéline still hoped that the Québécois would adopt Acadian problems and goals as their own.¹⁰⁰ This was merely

97. H.-P. LeBlanc, "Démarches pour obtenir un Evêque acadien, Documents originaux" (ms., H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A.), Section 3, p. 57.

98. L'Évangéline, Sept. 16, 1909, p. 2.

99. Ibid., Oct. 21, 1909, p. 2. About the French Canadians, Landry asked "Ont-ils eu l'intuition qu'on veut détruire l'élément française dans toute l'Amérique du Nord?"

100. Ibid., Aug. 28, 1912, p. 4, "Acadiens et Canadiens Français".

self-delusion; Quebec defended Acadian interests neither in the 1870's nor in the 1900's. The French Canadians were always willing to defend their concept of a bicultural Canada in Ontario and in Ottawa but not in l'Acadie. The majority of Acadians seemed to recognize this, concentrating on their own problems and ignoring what took place 1,000 miles away in Ontario. The Acadians were not fervent nationalists like Bourassa in Quebec. They felt no compulsion to constantly demand liberty; "ils la prennent largement et s'appliquent à jouir de tous leurs droits."¹⁰¹ Their conciliatory approach had brought them substantial gains¹⁰² and now, while Quebec nationalists assaulted the Ontario government, they were afraid of disturbing the New Brunswick equilibrium. In 1916 Henri Bourassa again toured l'Acadie but this time, in contrast to 1910, the Acadian press virtually ignored his visit.¹⁰³ Le Moniteur Acadien, reprinting an article from La Patrie, expressed the general fear that his presence could ignite the racial tensions which the era harboured:

101. David, "L'évolution acadienne," p. 52.

102. See supra, p. 355-56.

103. In 1910, several articles and pictures in Le Moniteur Acadien (July 28, Aug. 4, Aug. 11) preceded Bourassa's appearance in Memramcook. After his speech, it wrote that "Tout le monde attendait de grandes choses de M. Bourassa, mais il se révéla supérieur encore à la réputation qui l'avait précédé ici. C'est un tribun accompli ... [his style and speech] pénètrent le plus froid de ses auditeurs ... Bourassa est l'homme de l'avenir, un avenir prochain." See Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 18, 1910, p. 3.

Pauvres Acadiens! la malchance les poursuit toujours.

En faisant le moins de bruit possible ... ils avaient réussi, nonobstant les lois contraires, à introduire l'enseignement du français et même du catéchisme, dans les écoles, l'autorité fermant complaisamment les yeux.

...

... Mais tout semble aujourd'hui compromis.

Voici ce qui est arrivé: M. Henri Bourassa est aller porter au Nouveau-Brunswick la torche incendiaire qu'il a promené en Ontario, et l'on en appréhende les suites les plus funestes.

The newspaper chastized Bourassa severely. Unsatisfied by the turmoil he had "fomented" in Manitoba and Ontario, he now went "chez les Acadiens, qui pourtant ne se mêlent guère de nos affaires, rendre vain le fruit de quarante années d'une lutte conduite avec une fermeté et une prudence que nous ne pouvons ne pas admirer."¹⁰⁴

By this period it was still Sir Wilfrid Laurier and not Henri Bourassa who best personified Acadian nationalism. By this time, the Quebec nationalists had rejected Laurier who had, they claimed, lost contact with the masses "et les courtisans ... qui l'entourent, les afflamés qui mangent dans sa main, le renseignement mal sur les courants populaires."¹⁰⁵ Yet in l'Acadie, Laurier remained popular. As much as any man, Laurier wished to preserve the bicultural nature of Canada but he had little sympathy for those

104. La Patrie, n.d. Reprinted in Le Moniteur Acadien, Sept. 7, 1916, p. 3, "Les écoles bilingue en Acadie".

105. Le Devoir, Feb. 7, 1911, p. 1.

qui regardent l'apaisement, la concorde, et l'union comme oeuvre de faiblesse, qui ne veulent pas reconnaître que dans un pays comme le nôtre, composé d'éléments divers, dans lequel les catholiques sont en minorité, aucune classe ne saurait prétendre à des droits absolus à l'égard des autres classes.

Laurier believed that "l'apaisement, la concorde et l'union sont le levier le plus puissant par lequel on peut faire respecter les droits de toutes les classes, surtout les droits des minorités."¹⁰⁶ Though he was not, Laurier could have been speaking for the Acadian leadership which repeatedly tried to avoid confrontations and passionate debates on racial or religious issues. "When religious passions are raised," said Senator Poirier, "people go mad. In the name of religion ... they will pray to God that they may cut the throat of their neighbour."¹⁰⁷ Laurier always advised that one should appeal to all men. "If you speak French you reach a limited audience; if you speak English, you are talking to all of Canada."¹⁰⁸ The Acadians prided themselves on their facility in both languages.¹⁰⁹

The Acadians simply could not be as aggressive in

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106. Sir W. Laurier to Cardinal Rampolla, Rome, Oct. 30, 1897. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 55, pp. 17593-6.
107. Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1905, July 15, 1905, p. 743.
108. Wilfrid Laurier to Rodolphe Lemieux (M.P. 1896-1930, Cabinet Minister 1904-1911, Senator 1930-1937), n.d. Recounted in a speech by Lemieux and quoted in an unidentified and undated newspaper clipping, Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.5-14.
109. See speech by P. A. Landry, Oct., 1904. Clipping in the Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.4-11.

their nationalism as the French Canadians. The former were, after all, a minority in their province and lacked both the power and prestige of the latter. They could not afford to antagonize the majority, something the French Canadians never refrained from doing. For example, the higher Acadian birthrate raised the possibility of a French-Catholic majority in New Brunswick but the Acadian leaders, for the sake of peace, never flaunted that spectre before the Anglo-Protestants. Quebec journalists, subject to no similar restraints, gleefully predicted "la plus éclatante revanche de l'histoire ... Les vaincus d'hier seront demain les vainqueurs."¹¹⁰ If that were not sufficiently alarming to the majority, this particular journalist, René Chalout, added "Mais souhaitons voir bientôt poindre le jour où les Acadiens complèteront la revanche de l'histoire, en reprenant aux usurpateurs leurs terres si fécondes"¹¹¹

The Acadians rarely demanded their rights, relying instead upon the generosity of the majority. They had made gains although

Il faut admettre que les Acadiens ne jouissent pas encore de la plénitude de leurs droits, mais ils réussissent à obtenir petit à petit de la majorité une reconnaissance plus large des libertés ... l'émancipation s'opère presque imperceptiblement ... mais elle se fait tout de même.

110. R. Chalout, "Impressions D'Acadie," Le Canada Français, XV, No. 3 (Nov., 1927), pp. 195-96.

111. Ibid., p. 198.

Since conditions were steadily improving, "pourquoi vouloir brusquer les choses?"¹¹² A close alliance with Quebec would only imperil past accomplishments by threatening the majority who, fearing Quebec aggrandizement, "deviendront forcément plus 'british' dans la lutte ... il auront ... pour motto 'What we have we'll hold'. Et la lutte sera terrible."¹¹³ The Acadians generally abstained from the Ontario issue because involvement would suggest that such an alliance had been concluded.

In 1915 L'Évangéline tried to convert the Acadians to a more activist role in the French-English struggle. If the Acadians did not align themselves with the French Canadians, they would be overrun by the "orangistes" and the journal "substantiated" its assertion by quoting from the Sentinel, the publication of the Orange Order in Canada:

The Province of New Brunswick is badly in need of some person to begin an agitation to remedy the conditions in the bilingual schools ... the school conditions there are as bad as anywhere ... New Brunswick submits to the establishment of separate schools, and not only to separate schools, but to separate racial schools.

.... This bilingual menace threatens the integrity of New Brunswick as an English-speaking Province. Strange to say, the people of that Province have not yet aroused themselves to the danger that confronts them ... They seem to be

112. L'Évangéline, March 20, 1912, p. 5, "Les Relations Devant Exister Entre Les Canadiens-Français Et Les Acadiens".

113. Ibid.

satisfied to submit to the dictation of the Roman Catholic bishops.¹¹⁴

However the Orange threat was utilized by each segment of Acadian opinion as "une leçon très instructive", as a rationale for its own aggressiveness or lack thereof. To L'Évangéline, it indicated the hostility which the Acadian race faced. Acadians must never underrate it but must fight, united with the French Canadians, every instance of Anglo-Protestant aggression be it in Ontario or New Brunswick. Their right to their schools, religion and language must be guaranteed and not dependent upon good will.¹¹⁵ All "ces vieilles et oiseuses querelles ... qui n'ont d'autre résultat que de nous diviser et de nous affaiblir" must be ended so as "couvrir le pays tout entier d'un indestructible rempart, devant lequel viendraient de briser tous les efforts des ennemis de notre race."¹¹⁶ Meanwhile the conservative faction in l'Acadie stressed that, as the Sentinel itself recognized, "the people of that province have not yet aroused themselves to the danger ... they seem to be satisfied."¹¹⁷ Therefore the Acadians must continue to appeal "à la bonne volonté de nos amis de langue anglaise" in order to obtain greater equality, "autant qu'il

114. Sentinel, n.d. Cited in ibid., Oct. 6, 1915, p. 1, "L'Activité Orangiste".

115. Ibid.

116. Ibid., Oct. 20, 1915, p. 1.

117. See supra, n. 114.

se pourra faire."¹¹⁸

The philosophic difference between these two elites was basically the difference between a demand and a request, between a right and a concession. Quebec had rights and demanded that the majority respect them. For the most part however, the Acadians, remembering the strife of 1870 to 1875 and remembering the Bathurst schools difficulties, always requested equal rights and were grateful for the concessions accorded them. The tenuous nature of their gains made them reluctant to risk everything in defense of certain principles in Ontario.

The difference between the French Canadian and the Acadian was that, for ample reason, the latter "est timide, peu sûr de lui. Habitué à se contenter de demi-mesures, de compromis, habitué à n'être jamais maître chez lui, il ose rarement se prononcer. Le Québécois est plus catégorique."¹¹⁹ The idea of a fraternal union between Acadian and French Canadian would remain just that, an idea, until the Acadians gained a greater degree of security in New Brunswick itself.

felt, "entre notre influence temporelle sans cesse grandissante, et notre influence religieuse, nulle!"¹²⁰ With great bitterness they acknowledged that "Les anglais protestants sont mieux disposés à nous accorder nos droits.

118. L'Évangéline, April 27, 1916, p. 4.

119. G. Bergeron, Le Canada-Français Après Deux Siècles De Patience (Paris, 1967), p. 109.

CHAPTER XII

The Struggle for an Acadian Bishop

The Acadians, always fearful of losing the little they possessed, generally adhered to a policy of conciliation and moderation. Their limited desires were always expressed in subdued rather than strident tones. Consequently the racial majority in the Maritime provinces, perceiving no threat to their own position, rarely displayed signs of overt discrimination. The Acadians believed that the various levels of government, though dominated by Anglo-Protestants, "would do justice at the proper time"¹ and indeed through the late nineteenth century, the legendary Acadian patience was rewarded with a host of public positions. However the prestigious offices available in one important institution, the Roman Catholic Church, remained inaccessible to the aspiring Acadian. "Quelle différence" the Acadians felt, "entre notre influence temporelle sans cesse grandissante, et notre influence religieuse, nulle!"² With great bitterness they acknowledged that "Les anglais protestants sont mieux disposés à nous accorder nos droits,

1. New Brunswick, Synoptic, New Brunswick Assembly, 1897, p. 29. P. J. Veniot (Gloucester), Feb. 5, 1897.

2. Valentin Landry, untitled ms. dated May, 1911. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.2-10.

que nos coreligionnaires irlandais."³ To rectify this situation, the Acadian elite at first tried to be moderate but, recognizing the futility of this approach, soon adopted the inflammatory, pugnacious position of L'Evangéline - "pour recevoir le secret est de demander et de demander encore."⁴ The racial composition of the Catholic hierarchy, the exclusion of Acadians from this distinguished body, became the elite's primary concern between 1890 and 1912.

Ideally there should not have been Irish Catholics, Scottish Catholics or Acadian Catholics but instead, simply unqualified Roman Catholics. This attitude however was unsatisfactory for the Acadians, or French Canadians, because their faith strongly reinforced their unique cultures while the converse was similarly true. Visitors to l'Acadie were invariably impressed by the dual catechism of the people, "Dieu et la France ... Catholique et Français sont synonymes et que lorsqu'un Acadien change de confession ... il renonce par cela même, en fait, à sa langue et à sa race."⁵ The Catholic hierarchy of the region rejected that reasoning and claimed that ecclesiastical offices should be filled according to an aspirant's qualities, not his racial origins. Yet the succession of bishops in the Maritime

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3. Pascal Poirier to Rameau de Saint-Père, April 10, 1892. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-31.
 4. L'Evangéline (Moncton), Jan. 24, 1917, p. 1.
 5. Du Boscq De Beaumont, Une France Oubliée, L'Acadie, pp. 32-33.

dioceses⁶ betrayed that assertion since deserving Acadians or French Canadians were never selected though personal qualities as well as the region's racial composition would have, seemingly, dictated such a choice.⁷ The Acadians refused to accept this blatant discrimination; they refused to permit their long devotion to the church to result in "their exclusion from the governing body, their being found fault with for noticing it."⁸

Possibly the Acadians would have accepted this exclusion had not the role of the Catholic church in the French parishes been so important. The bishops themselves recognized that

the Church is no mere abstraction; she is a living active society, or body, divine in her origin ... but human in her members and her sympathies. Hence while seeking the spiritual good of man, she is not unmindful of his temporal needs.⁹

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6. See Appendix III for list of bishops in the five Maritime dioceses.
 7. By 1899 the Acadians made up 70% of the Catholic population in the diocese of Chatham, almost 40% in the diocese of Saint John, 47% in the archdiocese of Halifax, nearly 25% in the diocese of Antigonish and 23% in the diocese of Charlottetown. See P. A. Landry and P. Poirier to Mgr. Dom Jacobini, Rome, Oct. 13, 1899. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-9. See also Canada, Census of Canada, 1901, I, pp. 290-96 (New Brunswick), pp. 296-312 (Nova Scotia), and pp. 350-52 (Prince Edward Island).
 8. P. A. Landry to Father Gaymor, editor of the Saint John Freeman, Dec. 12, 1901. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-4.
 9. L'Évangéline, Dec. 7, 1893, p. 3, "Joint Letter of the Archbishop and Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Halifax".

The temporal needs of the Acadian race necessitated leaders who offered sympathy and encouragement, not antipathy and hostility. They needed bishops who would not attempt, as Bishop Sweeney did, to transform the Collège St. Joseph into a reformatory, who would defend the presence of French in public schools, who would encourage the use of French, and who would not prevent the Acadian priests from attending the "Conventions Nationales".

The most serious bishop-priest, Irish-Acadian conflict arose between Bishop Rogers of Chatham and Father Marcel Richard, the spiritual and national mentor of the Acadian people. Their relationship had commenced amicably enough but had deteriorated largely because of irreconcilable differences of personality. Richard had created a little empire for himself in Saint-Louis de Kent and in l'Acadie through his efforts on behalf of the Acadians. His own personal self-esteem¹⁰ allowed him to tolerate no criticism even on petty matters. It "is not right or wise" wrote Bishop Rogers after one confrontation, "to be so extremely sensitive when circumstances require the Bishop, in his opinion, to say a simple, kind, true word of admonition to a

10. At one point Abbé Biron wrote that "M. Richard s'adjuge toujours un besoin complet d'infailibilité et il aime bien à se décharger sur les autres." Abbé E. Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, Sept. 5, 1882. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-21. Rev. Camille Doucet of the Trappist Monastery in Rogersville, N. B., and the author of a forthcoming biography of Richard, agreed in a personal interview that Richard was a vain person who brooked no opposition.

Priest."¹¹

Their most serious confrontation arose over the existence of the Collège St. Louis. Rogers was understandably more concerned with the needs of the entire diocese than of the college and in 1882 he attempted to transfer a professor from St. Louis to Caraquet. Richard complained bitterly, provoking an angry response from the bishop:

No part of my diocese has received from me ... so much earnest, cordial and efficient encouragement as St. Louis. If in return I am to receive as its gratitude, black calumny and misrepresentations of my words and acts - well I shall not be the first or only one so rewarded; but be assured that I shall not shrink from the duty ... of dealing with the culprit.¹²

In a state of pique, Richard asked to be relieved of the responsibility for certain parishes in order to devote more time to the college.¹³ Rogers abruptly rejected this request and the feud continued to rage until it had reached such a depth that Rogers was writing of Richard's "unjust and unfair if not positively untruthful" statements about himself. "I could not [previously] believe you capable of such unjust misrepresentations of the words and acts of a Bishop who had never failed [his emphasis] to show you the

11. Bishop Rogers to Rev. M.-F. Richard, Dec. 9, 1880. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1880".
12. Bishop Rogers to Rev. M.-F. Richard, March 17, 1882. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1882".
13. Rev. M.-F. Richard to Bishop Rogers, March 21, 1882. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1882".

greatest consideration and kindness."¹⁴

It would be grossly unfair to suggest that Richard, headstrong as he was, was totally responsible for this antipathy. Rogers resented the apparent success of the Collège St. Louis while his own institution, St. Michael's College in Chatham, floundered and finally closed in 1880 on account of financial exigencies. Rogers at one point suggested an amalgamation of the two colleges with Richard serving as the director of both; Richard refused¹⁵ even though he realized that "Tant que le Collège St. Michel ne sera pas organisé, il est inutile de penser de St. Louis."¹⁶ While attending the convocation exercises at Richard's college in July of 1882, Bishop Rogers announced that the institution would be closed because, in essence, it was too concerned with promoting Acadian nationalism rather than Catholic devotion.¹⁷

Indeed it was. Richard wished the Collège St. Louis to be an Acadian institution producing a succession of

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14. Bishop Rogers to Rev. M.-F. Richard, July 29, 1882. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1882".
 15. Abbé Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, Jan. 18, 1881. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-23.
 16. Rev. M.-F. Richard to Abbé Biron, Feb. 1, 1884. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-23.
 17. See Bishop James Rogers, "The Bishop of Chatham's Reply to the Statement of Complaint (Feb. 2, 1885) of the Rev. M. F. Richard" (handwritten copy in Richard Coll., C.E.A., Box 2), part 2, p. 32. See also Poirier, Les Acadiens Depuis la Confédération jusqu'à nos jours, p. 9, or Doucet, "Une Etoile S'Est Levée En Acadie - Mgr. M.-F. Richard," chapter VIII.

nationalistic priests and professionals.¹⁸ He sought this goal largely unmindful of the Irish students in attendance. Rogers meanwhile wanted it to serve the entire mixed population of the diocese and produce simply devoted Catholics or Catholic priests. Others suspected however, and with ample cause, that Rogers did not want Acadian priests at all since that would strengthen the Acadian element of the diocese to the detriment of the Irish element.¹⁹ The college was closed because it was threatening the status quo as defined by the bishop. Over succeeding years the impotence of the Acadian majority in the diocese became increasingly clear as Richard appealed for aid to Archbishop O'Brien in Halifax and then to Rome itself where the influential Irish faction had him censured for "insubordination and conceit."²⁰ Rogers meanwhile terminated all correspondence and relations with Richard.²¹

The closing of the Collège St. Louis was not the only manifestation of the rivalry between the Acadians and the

18. See supra, chapter VII.

19. "Affidavit" of Pascal Poirier regarding the closing of the Collège St. Louis, Feb. 4, 1885. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.3-5.

20. Archbishop E. J. McCarthy, Halifax, to Mgr. D. Sbaretti, Apostolic Delegate to Canada, Jan. 17, 1908. See "The Archbishop of Halifax to the Most Rev. D. Sbaretti, Jan. 17, 1908 ("Secret")." Copy at C.E.A. See also Rev. M.-F. Richard to Archbishop C. O'Brien, Jan. 12, 1885. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1885".

21. Bishop Rogers to Rev. M.-F. Richard, Jan. 1, 1883. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1882".

Irish Catholics in New Brunswick. Irish Catholic bishops often neglected to provide sufficient francophone clerics to the Acadians of their diocese and when faced with complaints over this situation, threatened the appellants with "peines publiques" and even excommunication.²² Bitterness existed between Irish and Acadian nuns in the same order.²³ Newspapers edited by Irish Catholics derided the Acadian community by openly doubting whether that race

could really [sic] produce a candidate fitted for the high and IMPARTIAL [his emphasis] duties of the episcopacy ... We should be justified in expressing, not our doubts, but our certainty of the lack of episcopal timber among our Acadian friends.²⁴

Antagonisms existed between Irish priests and their predominantly Acadian flock, in Moncton before 1912 for example, which resulted in sometimes foolish, sometimes serious confrontations.²⁵

These antagonisms were rooted in differing conceptions of the church and its functions in a secular society. The Acadians believed that the church was an intimate part of their "national" identity and consequently it had to be

22. See L. Allain to Rameau de Saint-Père, March 28, 1863. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-5. See also "Petition envoyée en Mars 1864 à Mgr. Sweeny" or Abbé Berthe to Rameau de Saint-Père, May 5, 1864. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-6.

23. See Father Camille Lefebvre to Père E. Sorin, c.s.c., May 20, 1875. Lefebvre Coll., C.E.A. "Père Lefebvre au Père Sorin".

24. The Freeman, n.d. Cited by L'Évangéline, Jan. 30, 1902.

25. See Rev. E. Savage, Thirty Years in Moncton (C.E.A., "Ville de Moncton"), p. 6.

sympathetic to linguistic as well as to religious needs. The Irish were more concerned with the religious aspect and opposed any efforts to create a distinctly French church in Canada. Father Savage, an anglophone priest in Moncton, vehemently opposed the proposed division of his parish into Acadian and Irish sections for precisely this reason:

[It would be] In effect, an attempt to divide the seamless garment of our Lord ... [and as such] un-Catholic, un-Canadian, un-Christian ... I solemnly protest against any attempt to make the Catholic Church a weapon to enforce a purely human ambition [i.e. preservation of the French culture] no matter how good or pure, patriotic or sentimental.²⁶

In 1908 the Archbishop of Halifax enunciated more concrete objections. The role of the church, he claimed, was to attract converts. However the existence of a French church would only alienate the Protestant majority and make this function more difficult:

The plea of nationality by the Acadians is not the plea of a whole country but merely that of a small group in a very large country; and consequently when they bring the Church into their narrow feeling of national bigotry they serve to alienate the sympathy of their fellow-catholics as also to antagonize [sic] the large Protestant element. The latter will cease to enquire into our holy doctrines.²⁷

This contention was held by anglophone prelates throughout Canada; indeed both the Acadians and the French Canadians

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26. Rev. E. Savage to Bishop E. LeBlanc, Sept. 18, 1913. Printed in ibid., p. 12.
27. Archbishop E. J. McCarthy to Mgr. D. Sbaretto, Jan. 17, 1908. Copy held at C.E.A.

had to fight their Irish coreligionists on this issue. Archbishop Bourne of Westminster, addressing the Montreal Eucharist Council in 1910, eloquently enunciated his belief that the French church should be restricted to Quebec. Canada was predominantly an English country and destined to become, through immigration, even more so. Therefore if it

is to be won for and held to the Catholic Church, this can only be done by making known to the great part of the Canadian people ... the mysteries of our faith through the medium of the English speech ... the future of the Church ... will depend to an enormous degree upon the extent to which the power, influence and prestige of the English language and literature can be definitely placed upon the side of the Catholic Church.²⁸

The church had to identify with the majority if it was to expand and prosper.

Bishop Michael F. Fallon of London, Ontario, a prominent figure in the Ontario school issue, soon elaborated upon Archbishop Bourne's sentiments. He denied the interdependence of language and faith and asserted, as others had before him, that a

French Canadian Bishop will never exercise the influence for Church welfare as one of English or Irish birth. The list of converts in a diocese of French Canadian clergy will always be small, as our separated brethren do not find there the

28. Henri Bourassa, Religion, Langue, Nationalité - Discours prononcé ... par Sa Grandeur Mgr. Bourne, p. 20.
See also Le Devoir (Montreal), Sept. 14, 1910, p. 1.

intimate friendships which grow from
association with English-speaking clergy.²⁹

Fallon and the others believed that the Anglo-Protestant majority did not fear the Roman Catholic Church per se but it did fear and react against the French Catholic church. The Manitoba school question for example, "would never have occurred had there been a Bishop of English-speaking nationality in the diocese at the time." Separate schools had been attacked in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta not "so much on account of their catholicity as to the domination of French-Canadian episcopacy in an English country."³⁰ Let the French retain control in Quebec, the Irish generously conceded, but not in provinces "where it is apparent that English ideas are to predominate."³¹ Irish clerics in all parts of Canada feared that the majority would not tolerate a French Catholic church and therefore for the sake of the faith, the French language had to be sacrificed. Father Savage felt compelled to remind the Bishop of Saint John, who needed no reminding, that separate schools had no legal existence in New Brunswick:

29. Letter from the representative of the Irish Catholics of Canada to Mgr. Merry Del Val, Rome, June 17, 1905. Reprinted in Réponse Aux Prétendus Grieffs Des Catholiques Irlandais Du Canada Contre Les Catholiques Français Du Même Pays, May 30, 1909 (copy at C.E.A., pamphlet collection), p. II.

30. Ibid.

31. Ibid., p. IV.

All that we have is by the toleration and good-will of our separated brethren, which good-will is not always to be depended on; and the language question would introduce a new and most explosive element in the arrangement that we have with the Board of Trustees and the Government whereby we are practically assured Catholic schools.³²

The attitude of the Irish clerics resulted, or so it seemed to the French, in an alliance between "les anglicisants catholiques" and those Anglo-Protestants who sought, in Henri Bourassa's words, "La Destruction De L'Idéal Canadien."³³

The French Canadians attempted to repudiate with a number of arguments the "false" assumptions upon which the Irish offensive was based. The French were historically imbued with evangelical spirit. There were more French Catholics than Irish Catholics in Canada as well as in three particular dioceses (Alexandria, Sault Ste-Marie and Chatham) with anglophone bishops. The Roman Catholic Church had no official language other than Latin and therefore Catholic prelates were behaving in an un-Christian manner when trying to assimilate the French Canadians.

"Faire de l'Eglise un instrument d'assimilation anglo-saxonne serait également absurde et odieux."³⁴ The future of

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32. Rev. E. Savage to Mgr. E. LeBlanc, Sept. 18, 1913. Printed in Savage, Thirty Years in Moncton, p. 12.
33. Le Devoir, July 28, 1910, p. 1.
34. Ibid., July 20, 1910, p. 1. See also June 22, 1912, p. 1. For statements of the French-Canadian position, see Mgr. A. Racine, Bishop of Sherbrooke, Mémoire Sur La Situation Des Canadiens-Français aux États-Unis (Paris, 1892); Bourassa, Religion, Langue, Nationalité.

Catholicism did not lay with any particular race or language; instead each group had to have the opportunity to flourish. Inevitably Bourassa and his compatriots emphasized that for the French Canadian "la prospérité de la religion est attachée... à la conservation de leur langue." They would remain "catholiques qu'à condition de rester Français et nous ne resterons Français qu'à condition de rester catholiques."³⁵

The Acadian elite was pleased to see the concern evoked in Quebec by Archbishop Bourne's speech since it would probably aid their own struggles with the Irish. In 1890 Pierre Landry and Pascal Poirier began petitioning Rome for the appointment of an Acadian bishop who, unlike the existing prelates, would be sympathetic to their race's aspirations. They requested "la même protection que Sa Sainteté Leon XIII elle-même a réclamé pour les italiens émigrés aux Etats-Unis."³⁶ This protection involved, as a later petition emphasized, the "droit ... d'être représentés ... par quelqu'un des leurs. Sans ce droit, la nationalité, que Dieu a faite, est un non-sens."³⁷

35. Le Devoir, Feb. 20, 1915, p. 1.

36. Mémoire to Mgr. Dom Jacobini, Archbishop of Tyr, Secretary to the Sacred Congregation for the Propaganda, 1890. Signed by P. A. Landry, P. Poirier, Stanislas-F. Perry, Olivier-J. LeBlanc, Urbaine Johnson and Ferdinand Robidoux. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.3-11.

37. Appeal sent to the French Canadian and Acadian priests of the Maritime provinces by Pascal Poirier and Pierre Landry, Oct. 1893. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-8.

The responsibility for this campaign fell to the lay elite in l'Acadie and primarily to Senator Poirier and Mr. Justice Pierre A. Landry - the Acadian clergy did not believe it prudent "prendre eux-mêmes l'initiative"³⁸ and played only a passive though supporting role.³⁹ Though usually conciliatory in political matters, both Poirier and Landry proved to be pugnacious characters on this issue, scoring the hierarchy at every opportunity. Poirier on one occasion wrote to La Patrie in Montreal complaining that

... nous sommes encore opprimés par les évêques de notre propre église. ... je dois dire que notre hiérarchie met beaucoup d'obstacles dans le chemin des Acadien-français pour les empêcher de se faire prêtres.

Cet ostracisme ... est devenu un véritable scandale⁴⁰

On another occasion Poirier nearly assaulted the Papal Delegate to Canada⁴¹ while later still he delivered a provocative speech entitled "L'Anarchie Règne dans l'Eglise Catholique des Provinces Maritimes. Les Anarchistes sont en Haut".⁴²

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38. Petition to Cardinal Merry Del Val, Rome, 1899. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-10. See also petitions to Cardinals Ledochowski and Jacobini in Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-9.
39. See Rev. P. Arsenault, P.E.I. to P. Poirier, Feb. 21, 1900. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-5; Rev. P.-L. Belliveau to Pl. Gaudet, Dec. 6, 1903. Gaudet Coll., C.E.A. 1.69-7.
40. Clipping from La Patrie, n.d. H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., Box 1 "Biographies", file "Sénateur Poirier".
41. See P. Poirier to Rev. A. Poirier, March 10, 1931. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.4-1.
42. LeBlanc, "Démarches pour obtenir un Evêque acadien, Documents originaux," p. 21.

Pierre Landry, though a member of the New Brunswick Bench, was no more discreet. Writing to Father Gaymor, the editor of the Saint John Freeman, his animosity was unrestrained as he asked for "the names of any of our people who have benefited by the large expenditures of diocesan monies collected from them." Landry's criticisms drove to the heart of the matter as far as the Acadians saw it: "Everything is done in secret, as though they [the bishops] were the Church, and the faithful were no part of it."⁴³ His forthright manner and cutting invective soon gained Landry an unenviable reputation among the province's bishops.

These two men showed remarkable audacity by challenging their bishops. Others in the Acadian movement, less courageous but no more devout as Roman Catholics, merely advised their fellow Acadians to "Souffrez, endurez, tout plutôt." At times Poirier himself had doubts. How could he, "qui suis si peu de chose, et dans l'Eglise catholique, nul" criticize the administrators of his faith?⁴⁴ It was known that Rome "n'aime pas que les laics se mêlent de cette question: elle veut tout régler sans bruit"⁴⁵

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43. P. A. Landry to Father Gaymor, Dec. 12, 1901. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-4.
 44. P. Poirier to Rameau de Saint-Père, Nov. 5, 1889. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-28.
 45. Rev. P. Rochmontaix to Rameau de Saint-Père, July 16, 1891. Cited in Doucet, "Une Etoile S'Est Levée En Acadie - Mgr. M.-F. Richard," chapter XIV, p. 1.

and that Papal Encyclicals advised acceptance of trials:

the Christian is absolutely obliged to be firm and patient in suffering, if he wishes to lead a Christian life ... to bear and to suffer is the ordinary condition of man ... It is reasonable therefore not to expect an end to troubles in this world, but rather to steel one's soul to bear troubles.

Bishop Rogers personally sent a copy of this Encyclical to both Pierre Landry and Pascal Poirier.⁴⁶

But Landry and Poirier persisted and were ostracized by the hierarchy for their efforts. The bishops were unaccustomed to being criticized by their own flock and they responded with equal measure. Complaints were dismissed as "slanderous and calumnious"⁴⁷ and as "an evil work ... [which] must in time impress a good innocent people with some sentiments of rebellion against the authority of ... the Church."⁴⁸ One of the bishops' tactics for discrediting the agitation was to differentiate between the Acadian people and their leaders. The former were good Catholics "although we [Archbishop McCarthy] may say that they were less exposed [than Irish Catholics] to contaminating influences being less associated with Protestants." It was only "a few Acadians, prominent in

46. Pope Leo XIII, "Jesus Christ Our Redeemer", Nov. 1, 1900. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.5-8.

47. Bishop Rogers to Rev. M.-F. Richard, July 6, 1890. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1890".

48. Bishop T. Casey to Sister Mary Leonie, St. Joseph, N.B., Oct. 19, 1902. Copy in Lefebvre Coll., C.E.A. "Mère Leonie".

civil and political circles" who caused all the problems and unrest.⁴⁹ The inference was that the leaders had no following.

The bishops then attempted to discredit the leaders personally, portraying them as revolutionaries who sought to destroy the hierarchical nature of the church. Bishop Casey of Saint John pointedly excluded Pierre Landry from his presence⁵⁰ while Pascal Poirier, a devout Catholic, was vilified as being an "ennemi de l'Eglise, un athée."⁵¹ Two priests, one Acadian and one French Canadian, began an investigation of Poirier among the New Brunswick clergy. No doubt, the two priests stated, Poirier was an ardent nationalist;

mais au point de vue de la Foi, il serait prudent de s'en méfier. Il y a du sectaire en lui; on le soupçonne même d'être franc-maçon. Ceci [i.e. the investigation] dans l'intérêt de la religion et pour mettre en garde.⁵²

Poirier and Landry's prestige permitted them to emerge untarnished from such slander.

The bishops' offensive had some effect however,

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49. Archbishop McCarthy to Mgr. D. Sbaretta, Jan. 17, 1908. Copy of letter at C.E.A. See also Rev. E. Savage to Bishop Casey, Jan. 20, 1908. Printed in Savage, Thirty Years in Moncton, p. 6.
50. See Bishop T. Casey to Father Cormier, Nov. 4, 1905. Copy in P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-6.
51. Le Moniteur Acadien, July 21, 1904, p. 1.
52. LeBlanc, "Démarches pour obtenir un Evêque Acadien," p. 20.

especially among the French Canadian priests in l'Acadie who were viewed by Pierre Landry, by Father Richard, by Rev. J.-A. Babineau and by others as having aligned themselves "avec nos oppresseurs".⁵³ The Acadian priests were more disappointed in some of their Acadian colleagues who also advised the quiet, conciliatory approach and especially in Father Philéas Bourgeois. On one occasion this particular cleric wrote Landry that "Tous les prêtres condamnent la conduite du Sénateur Poirier ... Le ligne de conduite est simple à tenir, conforme à la prudence et à l'ordre établi."⁵⁴

The intensity of the animosity as well as the power of the hierarchy became evident in the case of Valentin Landry, the fiery editor of L'Évangéline. Between 1905 and 1910 Landry heaped scorn upon the Irish-Catholic hierarchy:

Le fusionnement entre les Orangistes et le clergé irlandais ne s'est point encore opéré ici comme il l'a fait en Ontario. Par conséquent, ils [the 'Orangistes'] sont plus civilisés, moins féroces qu'en Ontario, puis qu'ils ne sont pas venus en contact avec l'Irlandais catholique.⁵⁵

He wrote that the legendary Acadian patience "a servi contre nous" and that the time had come to "les [the Irish] chasser

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53. P. A. Landry to Rev. J.-A. Babineau, Jan. 30, 1900. See also Babineau to Landry, Jan. 25, 1900 and Rev. M.-F. Richard to Landry, Jan. 11, 1900. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-3.
54. Father P. Bourgeois to P. A. Landry, Sept. 7, 1905. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-6.
55. Valentin Landry, untitled ms., dated May, 1911. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.2-10.

à coups de bâton [his emphasis]."⁵⁶ He was absolutely uncompromising:

Il faut que l'Acadie nous soit rendus!
... fut-ce même au prix du sang ... Il faut que l'Irlandais ... abandonne notre domaine qu'il terrorise depuis des années. Il faut qu'il tombe et que l'Acadien, encore une fois, gouverne son pays, ses enfants.

L'assimilateur - je veux dire le clergé irlandais - voilà l'ennemi!⁵⁷

At one point he went so far as to suggest a boycott of unsympathetic priests⁵⁸ and demanded that the hierarchy respect the racial aspirations of the flock rather than the reverse:

Le clergé est-il pour le peuple ou les peuples pour le clergé? Ces confusions étaient bonne pour le temps où l'on ne distinguait rien ... [In an earlier age] Résister au pouvoir établi semblait criminel ... mais les temps sont changés.⁵⁹

However Landry was soon disappointed and deserted. The Irish could not themselves discredit him and instead found "ces démolisseurs parmi les Acadiens ... On trouve des Acadiens pour faire l'affaire."⁶⁰ In August, 1908, the Apostolic Delegate to Canada, Mgr. Donatus Sbaretti, insisted

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56. Valentin Landry to Mgr. D. Sbaretti, July 25, 1908. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-17.
57. Valentin Landry to P. Poirier, March 14, 1909. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-18.
58. L'Évangéline, Sept. 23, 1909, p. 2.
59. Ibid., March 24, 1910, p. 2.
60. Valentin Landry to P. Poirier, March 14, 1909. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-18.

that Landry cease his attacks and threatened "des mesures plus rigoureuses" if he did not.⁶¹ Landry, though moderating his writings somewhat, ignored Sbarette's admonitions until one year later when Le Moniteur Acadien publicized the Delegate's warning.⁶² This apparent alliance of the Shediac newspaper, long a foe of Valentin Landry's, with the hierarchy sparked a furious storm in l'Acadie. Landry described Ferdinand Robidoux, its editor, as a "patriote comme un chien" who "n'aurait jamais osé en ouvrir la bouche" against the Irish oppressors.⁶³ Other Acadians felt that Le Moniteur Acadien "tremble de peur seulement à la pensée de dire un mot en notre faveur."⁶⁴

However the general lack of public support made Landry feel that "je me suis fixé au milieu d'un peuple égoïste, ingrat, envieux, haineux, et traître."⁶⁵ Unwilling to compromise his principles, Landry, in 1910, faced the prospect of having his newspaper placed under an interdict by the Apostolic Delegate. Rather than seeing it cease publication altogether, he left the editor's chair and sold

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61. See Mgr. D. Sbarette to Valentin Landry, Aug. 30, 1909. Published in L'Évangéline, Dec. 2, 1909, p. 2.
 62. Le Moniteur Acadien, Nov. 25, 1909, p. 2.
 63. Valentin Landry to P. Poirier, March 14, 1909. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-18.
 64. Rev. D.-F. Léger to Valentin Landry, Dec. 4, 1909. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-19.
 65. Valentin Landry to Rev. D.-F. Léger, March 21, 1909. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-18.

L'Évangéline to a more moderate group of Acadian businessmen. Like these public machinations, the "behind the scenes" manoeuvres continued relentlessly. In 1899 the Acadian efforts had intensified as successors were being chosen for Bishops Sweeny and Rogers. At this point, still believing the hierarchy to be reasonably cognizant of their needs,⁶⁶ Landry and Poirier even submitted their own list of nominees.⁶⁷ All this was to no avail. The incumbent bishops generally ignored the Acadian petitions while the Apostolic Delegate in Ottawa, Mgr. Merry Del Val, did not even inform Rome of the widespread Acadian disenchantment.⁶⁸ In October of 1899 the Acadians sent one final, rather hasty appeal directly to the Vatican⁶⁹ but their request arrived "trop tard, c'est-à-dire alors que tout était déjà réglé [his emphasis]."⁷⁰ Rev. T. F. Barry was offered the

66. Pierre Landry and Pascal Poirier withdrew from circulation the appeal mentioned in n. 37 after having received some vague assurance from Archbishop O'Brien. See P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-8.
67. For the diocese of Saint John they suggested the Rev. A. Roy, director of the Collège St. Joseph, and the Rev. Philippe Belliveau, the curé of Grandique. For Chatham they nominated Rev. M.-F. Richard of Rogersville, Rev. Stanislas Doucet of Grand-Anse, and Rev. J.-A. Babineau of Tracadie. See P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-10.
68. Rev. J.-A. Babineau to P. A. Landry, Dec. 21, 1899. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-2.
69. See P. Poirier and P. A. Landry to Mgr. Dom Jacobini, Rome, Oct. 13, 1899. Copies also sent to Cardinal Ledochowski, Rome, and Mgr. D. Falconio, Apostolic Delegate to Canada. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-9.
70. Mgr. D. Falconio to P. A. Landry, Dec. 6, 1899. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-2.

diocese of Chatham, Rev. Timothy Casey the diocese of Saint John.

The Acadians were bitterly disappointed by the outcome of their efforts. Certainly the two nominees were eminently qualified for the post; however individual qualities, Landry wrote, "should not outweigh equal merits on the part of the 'faithful' of the diocese. 'Les fidèles' should be considered as well as the clergy."⁷¹ The spirit of submission was no longer in the Acadians as their political leaders and the Acadian priests, though not the French Canadian ones, boycotted the consecration ceremonies. Protesting the selection of Casey and Barry, the Acadian press printed an inflammatory obituary notice:

Dimanche, le 11 de ce mois [Feb. 1900], avaient lieu, à Saint-Jean, N. B., les obsèques des dernières espérances humaines de l'Acadie d'avoir un évêque de nationalité française.

Pas un Acadien, ni prêtre, ni laïque, ne suivait (volontairement) le cortège funèbre. Les Acadiens des trois provinces étaient restés chez eux à pleurer toutes les larmes de leurs yeux.

Au premier rang des porteurs, on remarquait plusieurs évêques et Monsignors canadiens, venus tout exprès de la province soeur pour voir la funèbre cérémonie.

Celle-ci eut un éclat extraordinaire et c'est l'opinion des âmes bien pensantes que l'Acadie a enfin reçu pour toujours son coup de grâce.

71. P. A. Landry to Archbishop C. O'Brien, March 9, 1900. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-3.

75. Speech of Pascal Poirier, Aug. 15, 1907. Reprinted in Robidoux, *Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens*, p. 209.

Priez pour la pauvre morte, "vous
au moins qui êtes ses amis".⁷²

In spite of this pessimism, the Acadian leaders continued their efforts. However they no longer expected anything from the Maritime hierarchy and instead directed their attention exclusively toward the Vatican and its Apostolic Delegate in Canada.⁷³ There was some difference of opinion among the elite over the best approach. Father Marcel Richard felt that "Au lieu de protester contre les nominations déjà faites ... je demanderais humblement au St. Siège par le Délégué Apostolique une division, ou dèmembrément des diocèses de St. Jean et de Chatham" and the creation of a new Acadian see.⁷⁴ Pascal Poirier preferred further confrontations: "Demandez et vous recevrez, a dit le Maître. Si l'on tarde à vous accorder votre prière, demandez avec instance, avec violence, même. Les violents obtiendront ce qui sera refusé aux nous."⁷⁵ Others were moved by the advice of the Apostolic Delegate

72. "Obituaire" by "Un Acadien". Robidoux Coll., C.E.A. 4.3-15. Pascal Poirier claimed that he wrote this piece. See P. Poirier to Valentin Landry, Feb. 20, 1900. V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-2. This was printed in Le Moniteur Acadien on March 1, 1900, p. 5. For several illustrative articles concerning the consecration, see Le Moniteur Acadien, Feb. 15, 1900.

73. See Dr. L.-J. Belliveau to P. A. Landry, Feb. 22, 1905. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-6.

74. Rev. M.-F. Richard to P. A. Landry, Jan. 6, 1900. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-3.

75. Speech of Pascal Poirier, Aug. 15, 1907. Reprinted in Robidoux, Conventions Nationales Des Acadiens, p. 269.

who wished to keep the affair private and confidential since "public discussion ... could have regrettable consequences for religion."⁷⁶

A mixture of all these strategies resulted. Valentin Landry, at this point still editing L'Evangéline, continued to abuse the Irish clergy and hierarchy. The Acadian elite continued to publicize the issue in the press and at the "Conventions Nationales". They sought the intervention of successive Apostolic Delegates and at the same time dispatched several petitions to Rome complaining that their present situation "est devenue, pour dire le moins, humiliante et très pénible."⁷⁷ They were determined to make their grievances known and to accomplish this, they sought support from every conceivable quarter.

By 1912 however, the Acadians had few debts since their struggle had progressed largely without concrete aid from external sources. France for example always exhibited a degree of sympathy for them; as early as 1863 a French priest in Bouctouche, Father H.-L. Berthe, condemned the preponderance of Irish priests in l'Acadie. "Il faut que nos Acadiens s'anglifient pour être compris de leurs pasteurs ... c'est une nationalité qui va se mourir, si le secours et le remède ne nous viennent d'outremer [sic]."⁷⁸

76. Mgr. Sbaretto to Bishop T. Casey, Jan. 3, 1906. Bishop T. Casey Correspondence, A.D.S.J., No. 2161.

77. Memorial "Au Souverain Pontiff Pie X", Nov. 6, 1908. Copy in V.-A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 7.1-17.

78. Abbé H.-L. Berthe to Rameau de Saint-Père, April 12, 1863. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-5.

In 1883 Rameau de Saint-Père and Abbé Biron wrote an appeal on behalf of the Acadians for presentation in Rome but nothing came of it.⁷⁹ After the death of M. Rameau in 1899, few Frenchmen even seemed aware of the Acadian difficulties.

If France was too distant to contribute in any meaningful way, the same was not true for Quebec. However French Canadian interest was neither enthusiastic nor constant. In 1882 Adolphe Chapleau promised to plead the Acadian case in Rome if Abbé Biron prepared a text for him. Unfortunately this statement was not prepared and Chapleau departed Rome without making any representations.⁸⁰ In 1890 Honoré Mercier had an audience with the Pope but his concern was with the situation of non-anglophone immigrant Catholics, both French and Italian, in the United States.⁸¹ The discussions concerning Canada focused on the rivalry within the Quebec hierarchy itself while the Acadians were totally ignored.⁸² While touring l'Acadie in 1910, Henri Bourassa, the hero of Canadian nationalists, chastized the

79. Abbé Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, April 24, 1883. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-22.

80. Abbé Biron to Rameau de Saint-Père, Oct. 12, 1882. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-21.

81. See *La Nation* (Québec), Oct. 28, 1937, p. 6, "Mercier" by M. Hamel. Clipping in Mercier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 1, file "Journaux". See also Père de Rochemontaix to Rameau de Saint-Père, July 1891. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-30.

82. O. Reclus to Rameau de Saint-Père, Oct. 13, 1890. Rameau Coll., C.E.A. 2.1-19.

Irish for being "alliés aux orangistes contre les acadiens et canadiens-français."⁸³ After his return to Montreal however he never employed the columns of Le Devoir to argue the Acadian case for a bishop.⁸⁴ Later in 1910 Bourassa toured Rome and met with numerous high ecclesiastical authorities but again the Acadian issue was not discussed.⁸⁵ An excellent opportunity had been neglected.

In 1900 the Acadian elite convened another "Convention Nationale" to discuss primarily the question of an Acadian bishop. Seeking support in Quebec for their struggle, they invited several important French Canadian politicians to this gathering⁸⁶ but once again they were to be disappointed. Frederick Monk, an important Quebec Conservative who had attended, afterward claimed ignorance of the entire issue: "Je ne suis pas en mesure de parler de la prétention qu'ils ont émise d'avoir un des leurs comme évêque, car les renseignements me manquent; je ne connais pas la question."⁸⁷

83. Père Grêgoire, "Histoire des Acadiens" (ms., C.E.A., Collection "Provenances Diverses", Box 3, file "Grêgoire"), pp. 2-3.

84. An extensive survey of Le Devoir for these years confirms this assertion. See supra, chapter XI, pp. 370-72.

85. See Le Devoir, Jan. 28, 1911, p. 1, "Le Nationalisme et Le Clergé".

86. See article written by Pierre Landry for an unidentified Quebec newspaper, n.d. (Summer 1900). P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-6.

87. Le Journal (Montreal), Aug. 19, 1901, p. 1.

The Acadians deeply resented this sort of apathy.⁸⁸

The most prominent figure at this convention had been Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The question was not new to Laurier; in 1899 Pascal Poirier, Pierre Landry, and even Father Richard had solicited his support and informed him of all developments.⁸⁹ In return Laurier appeared to show a genuine interest in their plight, suggesting various strategies⁹⁰ and being generally sympathetic: "Vous [Richard] connaissez ma manière de voir sur le sujet ... Il nous faut réussir et je serai heureux d'aider à l'obtention de notre succès dans toute la mesure de nos forces."⁹¹ Throughout his entire career Laurier had exhibited a strong sense of justice; almost inherently he would have opposed the machinations of the Maritime hierarchy, agreeing with the assertion that "le persécution de 1755 ... continue."⁹² At this juncture Laurier attended the Arichat convention, possibly to demonstrate his support.

88. See *Le Moniteur Acadien*, July 4, 1901, pp. 2-3, "Le Saint-Jean Baptiste".

89. See P. Poirier and P. A. Landry to Sir W. Laurier, Aug. 4, 1899. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 121, pp. 36279-80; P. Poirier to Sir W. Laurier, Oct. 17, 1899. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 121, p. 36281; Rev. M.-F. Richard to Sir W. Laurier, Aug. 18, 1899. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 122, pp. 36601-02.

90. Sir W. Laurier to P. Poirier, Sept. 14, 1899. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 121, pp. 36279-80.

91. Sir W. Laurier to Rev. M.-F. Richard, Aug. 24, 1899. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 122, p. 36603.

92. P. A. Landry to Sir W. Laurier, Dec. 27, 1899. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-2.

However when Laurier addressed the assembly he assumed a politician's stance and spoke only in vague generalities of liberty, justice and tolerance.⁹³ By 1901, having already won re-election, Laurier's early enthusiasm dissipated even more. When Pascal Poirier sent him a memorandum which was to be presented to the Apostolic Delegate,⁹⁴ Laurier replied that he had not the time to read it carefully. Now instead of support, he advised caution: "vous feriez peut-être bien d'y regarder à deux fois."⁹⁵ Laurier seemed to vacillate in the encouragement he offered. On occasion he wrote warm letters of introduction to Papal authorities for Pierre Landry or Father Richard;⁹⁶ yet when Richard requested Laurier's direct intervention,⁹⁷ the Prime Minister had his secretary respond coolly that the matter was "under consideration".⁹⁸ One almost suspects that after 1900 Laurier was too busy with politico-racial questions in Manitoba, the Northwest Territories and Quebec

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93. Le Moniteur Acadien, Aug. 30, 1900, p. 2.
94. P. Poirier to Sir W. Laurier, May 6, 1901. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 196, pp. 55927-28 and pp. 55930-40.
95. Sir W. Laurier to P. Poirier, May 11, 1901. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 196, p. 55929.
96. See Sir W. Laurier to P. A. Landry, Aug. 30, 1909. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-8. See also Sir W. Laurier to Cardinal Merry Del Val, Rome, n.d. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 471, p. 127428.
97. Rev. M.-F. Richard, Rome, to Sir W. Laurier, Nov. 15, 1907. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 489, pp. 132053-54.
98. Sir W. Laurier to Rev. M.-F. Richard, Nov. 30, 1907. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 489, p. 132055.

to give much attention to l'Acadie. He would not have wished to place too much pressure on the Apostolic Delegate and in the final analysis his priorities were French Canadian and not Acadian ones.⁹⁹

Laurier had judiciously avoided giving offence by keeping his efforts discreet. In full public view, the French Canadians proved to be equally cautious. When an editor of L'Evangéline appealed for support to "La Ligue de la Presse Catholique" in Quebec, it responded with meaningless words of sympathy while affirming that a Catholic newspaper must be "digne charitable et respectueuse de l'autorité ecclésiastique."¹⁰⁰ In 1899 two Irish Catholics had been named to episcopal sees in New Brunswick yet few Quebec newspapers mentioned this serious affront. In 1910 a similar confrontation arose in the archdiocese of Ottawa over the nomination of Mgr. Gauthier (Archbishop of Kingston). The Quebec press, unlike a decade earlier, vigorously opposed this nomination, viewing it as a precursor of Irish domination in that archdiocese.¹⁰¹ When

99. The Laurier Papers at the Public Archives of Canada show an endless correspondence between Laurier and successive Apostolic Delegates. Yet their concern was almost totally with Western Canada and Quebec in spite of the fact that both Laurier and the Delegates were cognizant of the Acadian grievances.

100. Minutes des assemblées de la Compagnie de l'Evangéline, 1910-1928 (C.E.A., 2 Vols., Micro-No. F. 1060). Report of Rev. J. Gaudet, Nov. 11, 1910.

101. Le Devoir, July 19, 1910, p. 1. Le Devoir believed that Mgr. Gauthier's appointment would be extremely "regrettable". It admitted that he was "un saint

Mgr. Gauthier's selection was confirmed, Le Devoir almost sacrilegiously accused Rome of making a poor choice.¹⁰²

It appears that French Canadian journalists would go to any length to protect what were in essence displaced Québécois; they would however do little for the Acadians.

Abandoned by the press, the Acadians received only a slightly more support from the Quebec Catholic hierarchy. The Acadians recognized that appeals to the French Canadian episcopacy were not entirely legitimate:

... d'aller demander l'intervention active de l'épiscopat de la Province de Québec, nous nous y sommes refusé, par un sentiment de délicatesse.

Les évêques de la Province de Québec n'étant pas, hiérarchiquement, les supérieurs de nos évêques ... nous voulions tenir nos droits de nos propres pasteurs¹⁰³

In fact at one point the Acadians assured Archbishop O'Brien of Halifax that they would reject "les conseils qui nous étaient fait de nous adresser à l'épiscopat d'une province-soeur pour mettre notre cause effacement en cour romaine."¹⁰⁴ Nevertheless the existence of a sympathetic

prélat, un homme distingué" but "en dépit de son nom français, il est irlando-écossais de sang et anglais d'éducation. Il comprend et parle difficilement le français." The Archdiocese of Ottawa meanwhile was 80% French Canadian and these would be unable to relate to a spiritual leader such as Gauthier.

102. Ibid., Sept. 24, 1910, p. 1.

103. Le Moniteur Acadien, July 21, 1904, pp. 1, 3 and 8, "Aux Acadiens, mes compatriotes".

104. "A Sa Grâce Mgr. C. O'Brien, Archevêque de Halifax, A La Nouvelle Ecosse", n.d. Copy in LeBlanc, "Démarches pour obtenir un Eveque acadien, Documents originaux".

hierarchy in Quebec could serve as a useful threat with which to confront the Maritime bishops.

However for the most part the Quebec prelates recognized their inability to interfere in the internal affairs of another diocese. Cardinal Taschereau of Quebec for one faithfully respected this dictum. Responding to an appeal from Father Richard, Taschereau maintained a non-committal approach: "il ne faut pas vous laisser décourager ... Peu à peu, tranquillement, mais sûrement, la restauration s'opère et finira par se compléter."¹⁰⁵

Mgr. L.-N. Bégin, Taschereau's successor,¹⁰⁶ showed greater concern for the Acadians and indeed proved to be a remarkably faithful ally. In 1893 Bégin's assistant, Abbé H.-R. Casgrain, wrote Pascal Poirier of the archbishop's interest:

Il vous demande quelques exemplaires de votre Mémoire ... afin d'en adresser lui-même au cardinal Ledochowski, au cardinal Persico qui est très influent à la Propagande, et à quelques autres Prélats capables de vous aider.¹⁰⁷

105. Cardinal Taschereau to Rev. M.-F. Richard, July 18, 1886. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1886".

106. Cardinal Elzéar Taschereau (1820-1898) had been ordained a priest in 1842 while in 1871 he was named Archbishop of Quebec. In 1886 he became Canada's first Cardinal. He retired from the diocese in 1894 and was succeeded by Cardinal Louis-N. Bégin (1840-1925) who previously had been bishop of Chicoutimi. In 1898 Bégin was named Archbishop of Quebec and in 1914 appointed to the College of Cardinals.

107. Abbé H.-R. Casgrain to P. Poirier, Dec. 11, 1893. C.E.A. Microfilm F1047.

Poirier, always suspicious of Quebec's intentions, was perceptibly cool since he still hoped to resolve the matter "en famille".¹⁰⁸ Nevertheless Bégoin continued to offer advice and Poirier continued to reject it, believing that such intervention might provoke the Maritime bishops into an even more reactionary course.¹⁰⁹

After the discouraging events of 1899-1900 however, the Acadians were desperate. Their own bishops had rejected their requests and even the Apostolic Delegates proved unsympathetic. Mgr. Falconio, wrote Pierre Landry, had proved to be "plus Anglais que Français"¹¹⁰ while Mgr. Sbaretti was seen as "the Bishop's man".¹¹¹ The Acadians now realized that "Dans notre faiblesse ... nous avons besoin d'aide ... nous ne devons pas être trop fier."¹¹² Consequently they cultivated their links with the episcopal palace in Quebec and kept Archbishop Bégoin informed of all developments. In addition they now openly proclaimed, in Rome if not in Halifax, that the Quebec hierarchy endorsed

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108. P. Poirier to Abbé H.-R. Casgrain, Jan. 5, 1894. C.E.A. Microfilm F1047.
 109. See the exchange of letters between Poirier and Casgrain, June 6, 1894, June 11, 1894 and Jan. 19, 1895. C.E.A. Microfilm F1047.
 110. P. A. Landry to P. Poirier, Oct. 23, 1899. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-4.
 111. Rev. P. Corcoran to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Sept. 20, 1906. Laurier Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 427, pp. 113912-15.
 112. Rev. Ph.-L. Belliveau to P. Poirier, April 21, 1900. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-5.

their efforts.¹¹³ The Acadians urgently required the influence and respect which the Quebec bishops commanded.¹¹⁴

In spite of the original rebukes, Bégin responded generously. He intervened with the Apostolic Delegate and advised the Acadians as to their proper course. In Rome he was identified with the Acadian cause and on occasion was employed as an intermediary. In 1907 the archbishop obtained a Papal audience for Father Richard¹¹⁵ and in that year also, he personally pleaded the Acadian cause before the Pope.¹¹⁶ Unfortunately however, in spite of the Acadian claim that all "les archévêques de ... Québec sont sympathiques à nos vœux",¹¹⁷ it appears that only Archbishop Bégin intervened directly on their behalf.¹¹⁸

113. "Les prêtres acadiens-français de la province ecclésiastique d'Halifax à le Très Saint Père, Pape Léon XIII", n.d. (1900). Copy in LeBlanc, "Démarches pour obtenir un Evêque acadien, Documents originaux". See also L'Évangéline, Sept. 4, 1902, p. 3.

114. See P. A. Landry to P. Poirier, Oct. 23, 1899. Poirier Coll., C.E.A. 6.1-4.

115. Mgr. L.-N. Bégin to the "Prefet de la Sacre Congregation de la Propagande", July 11, 1907. Copy in Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1907". For the results of his intervention, see infra, n. 127.

116. See Rev. G. Clapin, Rome, to Mgr. M.-F. Richard, May 31, 1908. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1908".

117. "Les prêtre acadiens-français ... à le Très Saint Père, Pape Léon XIII". Copy in LeBlanc, "Démarches pour obtenir un Evêque acadien, Documents originaux".

118. There are no letters from any Quebec prelate other than Mgr. Bégin and Mgr. Taschereau to an Acadian in any of the files at the Centre D'Etudes acadienne and the issue is too "recent" and too controversial to permit a thorough canvass of the various episcopal archives

In l'Acadie itself, the French Canadian priests serving in Acadian parishes proved to be dubious allies, totally unreliable in their support.¹¹⁹ Before the agitation for an Acadian bishop began in earnest, the Acadians appreciated the efforts of the French Canadian clerics. However this comradeship deteriorated in 1900 when the incumbent bishops nominated three of these Quebec priests, Father L.-N. Dugal of St.-Basile, Father F.-X.-J. Michaud of Bouctouche, and Father Pelletier of Chatham, as vicars-general for Chatham and Saint John. The bishops' motives seemed obvious to the Acadians; they sought "la conciliation des Canadiens de nos provinces et de la province de Québec ... on veut isoler les acadiens et les abattre ensuite." More distressing yet to the Acadians was the fact that a large number of the Quebec clerics welcomed the selection and afterwards seemed to ally themselves with the Irish hierarchy, deserting their own "confrères".¹²⁰

The French Canadians further incensed the Acadians by placidly accepting or even supporting the nomination of Fathers Casey and Barry for the episcopal sees at Saint John

in Quebec. The evidence of Bégin's efforts however is extensive. As just one example, see Abbé Biron to Rev. M.-F. Richard, Jan. 22, 1908. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1908".

119. See Rev. M.-F. Richard to P. A. Landry, Jan. 11, 1900. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-3.

120. Rev. J.-A. Babineau to P. A. Landry, Jan. 25, 1900. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-3. See also P. A. Landry, "Notes on the role of the Canadian clergy in l'Acadie," n.d. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-13. See also Le Moniteur Acadien, Feb. 15, 1900, p. 5.

and Chatham. In 1900 the Acadians registered their opposition to this affront by boycotting en masse the consecration ceremonies. However the dramatic effect of their absence was ameliorated by the attendance of the French Canadians, an act which simply enraged the Acadians:

Les Canadiens ... qui se plaisent à nous dénigrer, qui sont indifférent à toute action qui nous isole ... qui sont prêts à se ranger contre nous dans la lutte ... pour mieux arriver eux-mêmes, etc. ne sont pas plus nos amis que les nationalités qui nous dominèrent.... La sanglante épreuve où nous passons maintenant est peut-être destinée à nous désigner ... nos amis et nos exploités.¹²¹

There existed a fear among the Acadians that Father Dugal or some other French Canadian priest might some day be made the bishop of a Maritime diocese. This would have been humiliating for the Acadians who wished an Acadian bishop, not merely a francophone one.

En nommant un Evêque Irlandais pour Chatham, les Evêques ignorent les droits des Acadiens; mais aux yeux des autres nationalités cela n'est pas attribué à l'incapacité ou à l'infériorité des Acadiens mais à l'esprit de nationalité de ceux qui occupent les positions [his emphasis]. Si un Evêque Canadien était nommé la question changerait: L'esprit de nationalité disparaîtrait d'un côté, et l'idée de la supériorité des Canadiens sur nous se présenterait, selon moi it would be adding insult to injury [his emphasis].¹²²

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121. P. A. Landry to the editor of an unidentified newspaper, 1900. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.2-13.
122. Rev. J.-A. Babineau to P. A. Landry, Feb. 3, 1900. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-3.

The Acadians were adamant about this, strongly preferring "un pouilleux d'Irlandais qu'un véreux de Canadien."¹²³ Culturally and intellectually they were different from the French Canadians and consequently only an Acadian bishop could fully understand their needs and encourage their aspirations.

Years before the Acadians had learned that only through their own efforts, only when they were sufficiently conscious "d'eux-mêmes, [would] leur victoire fut assuré."¹²⁴ This was again to be the case. The efforts of the Acadian elite were greatly stimulated after 1906¹²⁵ by the active participation of Father Marcel Richard in the struggle. In 1907, with help from Archbishop Bégin of Quebec,¹²⁶ Richard gained an audience with the Pope who, impressed with the plight of the Acadians, "donna ordre à la Propagande de proposer un nouveau diocèse ... avec siège épiscopal à Moncton."¹²⁷

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123. Rev. D.-F. Léger to P. A. Landry, March 3, 1902. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-5.
124. Bruchési, Rameau de Saint-Père et les Français D'Amérique, p. 35.
125. Previously Richard had felt himself constrained by his priestly vows of obedience. The cause of his shift in attitude is uncertain. See Rev. M.-F. Richard to P. A. Landry, Jan. 11, 1900 and March 3, 1906. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-3 and 5.1-7 respectively.
126. See supra, n. 115.
127. LeBlanc, "Démarches pour obtenir un Evêque acadien, Documents originaux," p. 23. See also Mgr. M.-F. Richard, "Mémorandum lu au Pape en 1907". Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1901-1915".

The Maritime bishops reacted with alarm to Richard's apparent success and their brutal condemnations of the project¹²⁸ had great effect in Rome.¹²⁹ In 1910 Richard sought to visit the Vatican once more to present the Acadian case but found his departure momentarily impeded by Bishop Barry of Chatham who wished to know his intentions. By this time, Richard felt no compulsion to be discreet: "J'ai supposé que Votre Grandeur comprendrait les raisons qui exigent ma présence à Rome comme Elle a compris l'importance d'envoyer un délégué¹³⁰ à Rome pour combattre un projet émané de la propagande dont j'étais le promoteur."¹³¹ After receiving a perceptibly cool reception from both Mgr. Sbarette and Cardinal Merry Del Val,¹³² Richard again met with the Pope who assured him that "Les Acadiens auront leur récompense bientôt, bientôt!"¹³³ With these assurances,

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128. See Archbishop and Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Halifax to Mgr. Donatus Sbarette, Apostolic Delegate, Jan. 17, 1908 and Sept. 15, 1908. Copies in Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1901-1915".
129. See Rev. G. Clapin, Superior of the Canadian College in Rome, to Mgr. M.-F. Richard, June 20, 1908. Richard Coll., C.E.A., file "1908".
130. Though not identified by name, the envoy was from Toronto. See Rev. Henry O'Leary, vicar-general of Chatham, to Archbishop E. J. McCarthy of Halifax, May 10, 1910. Reprinted in LeBlanc, "Démarches pour obtenir un Evêque acadien, Documents originaux," p. 28.
131. Mgr. M.-F. Richard to Bishop T. F. Barry, May 6, 1910. Reprinted in *ibid.*, p. 25.
132. See LeBlanc, "Démarches pour obtenir un Evêque acadien, Documents originaux," p. 30.
133. *Ibid.*

the Acadian elite became distinctly more moderate while awaiting the inevitable.

In 1912 the Acadians' own efforts - their petitions, their protests, their demonstrations - finally came to fruition. In the summer of that year, the Vatican transferred Bishop Casey of Saint John to the archdiocese of Vancouver. At the same time it announced that his successor in New Brunswick would be Rev. Edouard LeBlanc (1870-1935), an Acadian who had been educated at the Collège St. Joseph in Memramcook and the Collège Ste. Anne in Church Point, Nova Scotia.

Rev. LeBlanc had never been active in the Acadian nationalist movement and many Acadians, surprised by his selection, had never heard of him.¹³⁴ Nevertheless they responded to his nomination with "une joie inaccoutumée" and a "nouvelle confiance dans l'efficacité de la persévérance."¹³⁵

134. Rome probably selected him on account of this obscurity. The Acadian elite in January of 1912 had suggested five priests (Mgr. Richard, Rev. P.-L. Belliveau, Rev. S.-J. Doucet, Rev. Thomas Albert and Rev. C. Gauthier) as possible nominees for bishop (Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-9). However the incumbent bishops condemned each of these men as being "too French" and as such detrimental to the church's interest in the Maritime provinces. The bishops objected least to Rev. LeBlanc because he was accustomed to cooperating with Anglo-Catholics, having served in the anglophone parish of Shelburne, N. S. from 1898 until 1906. From 1906 until 1912 LeBlanc served in the Acadian parish of St. Bernard, N. S.

135. P. A. Landry to Mgr. P. F. Stagni, Aug. 10, 1912. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-9.

136. *L'Évangéliste*, Dec. 18, 1912, p. 3, "Un Petit Consulant".

In turn Mgr. LeBlanc's tenure (1912-1935) resulted in many gains for the Acadians: the favourable settlement of a long-simmering Irish-Acadian feud in Moncton;¹³⁶ the paving of the way for an Acadian, Mgr. Patrice Chiasson, to become the bishop of Chatham in 1920; the establishment, in 1924, under the auspices of the two Acadian bishops, of an order of Acadian nuns, "Les petites Soeurs de l'Assomption"; and finally (1936) the erection of an archdiocese in New Brunswick having Moncton as its episcopal see and an Acadian, Mgr. Arthur Mélançon, as its first archbishop.

In 1912 when the Acadians acquired their first position in the Catholic hierarchy, Pierre Landry dutifully wrote letters thanking "nos bienfaiteurs ... le clerge Canadien-Francais qui nous appuye d'une maniere tangible [no accent marks in original]."¹³⁷ When some Quebec bishops travelled to Saint John to attend the consecration ceremony, the Acadians appreciated the gesture and once more spoke of "Le pacte d'amitié entre Canadiens-français et Acadiens ... plus que jamais nous sommes disposés à oublier le passé pour ne penser qu'aux succès futurs, succès qui seront remportés en union avec nos frères les Canadiens-français!"¹³⁸

One must be cynical about these warm profusions.

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136. See Savage, Thirty Years in Moncton, passim; Rumilly, Histoire Des Acadiens, II, pp. 891-94.
137. P. A. Landry to Mgr. Bruchési, Archbishop of Montreal, Aug. 26, 1912. P. A. Landry Coll., C.E.A. 5.1-9.
138. L'Evangéline, Dec. 18, 1912, p. 4, "Un Fait Consolant".

Certainly Quebec newspapers on occasion appealed to the Irish to give "la même justice à nos compatriotes d'origine française, dans les diocèses où nous sommes en minorité" as Quebec gave to its minorities.¹³⁹ Certainly the Quebec clergy and hierarchy were concerned with the difficulties confronting French-Catholic minorities situated in an Anglo-Protestant milieu. However their focus was not on l'Acadie but on Manitoba, Ontario and New England; with the exception of Archbishop Bégin, their focus was not on the Acadians but on expatriate French Canadians.¹⁴⁰

In 1912 the Acadians came of age, having expanded their influence and their elite until it included not only politicians, journalists and jurists, but also prelates of their church. They now composed a separate, self-enclosed and self-guided community. The Acadians had achieved this largely on their own and were not encumbered by a debt of gratitude to anyone or any other race. The intense struggle

139. La Patrie, n.d. Reprinted in L'Évangéline, Feb. 14, 1901, p. 2, "Nous Voulons La Même Justice".

140. For example see Mgr. A. Racine, Bishop of Sherbrooke, Mémoire Sur La Situation Des Canadiens-Français aux États-Unis or C. F. St. Laurent (pseudonym), Language and Nationality in the Light of Revelation and History (Montreal, 1896). A canvass of Quebec newspapers for the period from 1900-1912 confirms this conclusion as does Jean Bruchési in Rameau de Saint-Père et les Français D'Amérique. See also Appendix IV for reproductions from a Montreal publication, La Bêche ou les Assimilateurs en action (Montreal, 1911). This collection of cartoons illustrates the intensity of the animosity between French and Irish Catholic.

for an Acadian bishop served to confirm that sense of distinctiveness and independence which had been exhibited previously during numerous political issues.

Conclusion

With the appointment of Mgr. Edouard LeBlanc as Bishop of Saint John, the Acadians as a whole felt a degree of pride and indeed vindication. They had persevered in an unequal confrontation; they had been persistent, even importunate in their demands; they had overcome tremendous obstacles in gaining recognition of their demands in the ecclesiastical realm. The appointment of an Acadian bishop completed the formation of a competent Acadian elite in all spheres, an elite which served to publicize Acadian aspirations.

The appearance of this elite through the 1860's and 1870's had been largely responsible for the resurgence of the Acadian culture in this period, for the "Acadian Renaissance". Undoubtedly elites had existed before then but the concern of this earlier generation was always internally directed. Their realm of interest rarely extended beyond the immediate and isolated Acadian community. Responsible government, Confederation, and increasing materialism rendered this leadership inadequate; there had to be a new group of men who could protect and indeed promote Acadian interests in the larger world, which could ensure that the nineteenth century did not end as it

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begun for the Acadians. A remarkably dedicated group of figures, mostly clerical - Fathers Lafrance, Lefebvre and Richard in New Brunswick, Father Sigogne in Nova Scotia, Abbé Belcourt in Prince Edward Island - clearly perceived this need and successfully founded the institutions capable of fostering such an elite. Most important of these, at least because of its longevity, was the Collège St. Joseph in Memramcook which in only two decades produced the politicians, the publicists and the propagandists who utilized the hierarchical nature of Acadian society to recreate the Acadian nation.

It is true that this elite had its shortcomings and can be roundly criticized for confusing "Acadian concerns" with personal ones. Le Moniteur Acadien, the first Acadian newspaper, was only incidently a reflection of Acadian opinion; by its own admission it was "un journal franchement conservateur" although it claimed that it was this "dans l'intérêt de notre race."¹ However Ferdinand Robidoux, its editor, remained an apologist for the Conservative Party when the interests of the Acadians, or of all Franco-Canadians, might have been better served under the Liberal or perhaps the independent banner. This problem or this apparent lack of sincere responsibility existed among the other factions of the elite, be they in the political, professional or civil realm. Nevertheless one may raise

1. Le Moniteur Acadien, March 29, 1917, p. 2.

this question of sincerity about all elites in Canadian society or among Canadian ethnic groups. The fact does remain however that the Acadian elite was responsible for substantial improvements in Acadian society. Most importantly,

... c'est la nouvelle atmosphère que l'élite des Acadiens a créée, une atmosphère de confiance en l'avenir, de sécurité du lendemain, et de fierté de la race.

... Morte en 1713, l'Acadie ressuscite comme une nation autonome, de race et de langue françaises; c'est la "Nouvelle-Acadie".²

"La Nouvelle-Acadie" did not simply appear; it had to be fashioned. Certainly there always existed, as Naomi Griffiths has effectively shown for the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,³ a strong sense of group identification among the Acadians. Strong emotional bonds to the past, to the family, and to the faith, reinforced by the isolation in which the Acadians existed, preserved this cohesiveness until the mid-nineteenth century. These means however were insufficient as Anglo-Protestant and Irish Catholic politicians entered Acadian society and as "le culte du veau d'or"⁴ threatened the spiritual element so important to Acadian

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2. Le Temps (Paris), n.d. (probably 1935), "La Renaissance acadienne". Clipping in Lauvrière Coll., C.E.A. 3.8-5.
 3. See N.E.S. Griffiths, The Acadians: Creation of a People or her "Acadians in Exile: the Experiences of the Acadian in British seaports," Acadiensis, IV, No. 1 (Autumn, 1974), pp. 67-84.
 4. Le Devoir, July 1, 1912, p. 5.

preservation.

To prevent the destruction or absorption of the Acadian nation, the elite had to fashion new means, new institutions which could facilitate entry into the mainstream of Maritime and Canadian society while reinforcing the unique identity of the people. They were astonishingly successful in doing so. The Société Nationale L'Assomption, itself a measure of Acadian distinctiveness, was the most evident manifestation of this renewed awareness. But there were others. French-language newspapers, Le Moniteur Acadien or L'Évangéline for example, promoted both specific and ideological goals. French-language classical colleges, Le Collège St. Louis for example, appeared more concerned with national considerations than with educational or religious goals. Bishop Rogers' opposition to this institution was itself a measure of Richard's success. The French language being introduced into the public school system, in Moncton as well as along the North Shore of New Brunswick, is another indication of both the Acadian desire to survive and of their growing political power. Cooperative ventures such as grain banks, mutual aid societies and colonization schemes were an obvious attempt to reconcile racial concerns with economic ones, to reconcile the traditional with the new.

Finally the Roman Catholic Church, the embodiment of that spiritual element which was so important in the Acadian culture, had to be transformed and reformed to meet the

exigencies of the renaissance era. The Acadians had a dual catechism - God and France, Catholic and Acadian were synonyms. The Acadians' religious devotion and their national consciousness were mutually dependent and inextricably entwined; the Holy Virgin Mary became their patron saint, the day of Her Assumption their national holiday, the 'Ave Maris Stella' their national anthem. Their flag, symbolically, was the tricolour with the Papal star to one side. For the Acadian nation to survive or to prosper in the twentieth century, the church had to be localized or "nationalized" so that it recognized, endorsed and encouraged the dominant features of Acadian society. To achieve this, the elite became involved in its most difficult and most acrimonious campaign to date. Yet by 1912 they were successful. For the first time in their history the Acadians controlled the hierarchy of their church in New Brunswick and hence could utilize it to perpetuate their national existence.

In spite of their gains, both spiritual and secular, within the Maritime provinces and within the federal political structure, by 1912 the Acadians had still not made any great impression upon the French Canadians in Quebec. Basically the Acadian elite wished to align themselves more closely with Quebec for the substantial benefits which might result. If the Québécois had shown some degree of concern or of interest, this marriage of races might easily have been consummated. However Quebec's concerns were

internally directed or at best directed toward Ontario or New England. The French Canadians offered support, though usually only moral support, to the Acadians when it served their own interests to do so as was the case after 1910. If serving Acadian interests meant some sacrifice of Quebec's own security, then the former was totally ignored.

This was made patently clear to the Acadians time and time again. Though over 2,000 miles away, France, in the person of Rameau de Saint-Père, seemed to show more consistent and more genuine concern for the Acadians than did their Quebec "compatriots". In the discussions preceding Confederation it was the Canadian delegates and not the Anglo-Protestant ones who vetoed Archbishop Connolly's scheme for extending constitutional guarantees for denominational schools to the Maritime provinces. Meanwhile neither he nor the French Canadians concerned themselves with the status of the French language in those schools. Unbridled by the B.N.A. Act, the New Brunswick government in 1871 ceased its support of denominational schools. Though in part responsible for the five years of controversy which ensued, Quebec again ignored its responsibility for protecting its co-religionists and co-linguists to the east. In spite of Acadian hopes to the contrary, Quebec would not intervene because such intervention might, at some future date, compromise its own special status within Confederation. This lack of concern for others, this blissful ignorance, this lack of awareness of Acadian needs was equally evident

later. In the "Acadian colleges", French Canadian professors and priests showed as much or, according to some, more concern for Irish Catholics than for Acadian Catholics. It was apparent later still, in the early twentieth century, when the Acadians, now seeking an Acadian bishop, sorely needed the prestige and power which the Quebec political, ecclesiastical and journalistic hierarchy could have thrown their way. Such support however, with few exceptions, was simply not forthcoming.

The Acadians could learn to live without external support - indeed they did so. They could never accept however the air of disdain and superiority which the Québécois exhibited toward them. In the first place the Acadians repeatedly had to ask themselves if "Les Canadiens, songent-ils quelquefois à nous, leurs frères de l'Acadie."⁵ The answer was inevitably "no". The Québécois were a proud race, masters of their own destiny, or so they thought. In contrast they viewed the Acadians as meek and inconsequential, a quaint peasant folk or poor country-cousins. F. D. Monk exhibited this attitude following a tour of l'Acadie in 1901. Much as the British imperial traveller relished describing the inhabitants of "darkest Africa", Monk described the Acadians as a virtuous though simple people.⁶ Much as English Canadians ridiculed French Canadians on account of

5. L'Evangéline, Dec. 7, 1893, p. 2.

6. Le Journal (Montreal), Aug. 19, 1901, p. 1.

their "patois", the Québécois ridiculed the Acadians for the same reason. They considered the Acadian dialect "comme un mauvais français anglicisé; ils appellent les gens du Madawaska les 'brèyons' parce qu'ils leur est reproché de 'breyer' (écorcher) le français."⁷ The Acadian language, which in fact reflected the distinct entity which they were, was described as "un jargon barbare" or "un charabia qui, d'ailleurs, ne manque pas de comique!"⁸

The French Canadians, in both their style and their criticisms, imposed a sense of inferiority upon the Acadians or at least reinforced the inferiority they already felt.

In 1898 an Acadian politician wrote Israel Tarte a long letter almost entirely in English. At one point he resorted to French but after seven words ("que cette race acadienne ne fut maltraité") apologized and resumed in English.⁹

C.-H. LaBillois, an Acadian cabinet minister in New Brunswick, followed the same practice seven years later.¹⁰ The Acadians were made to feel embarrassed about their own language and this embarrassment continues to the present.

French Canadians also alienated the Acadians by

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7. G. Massignon, Les Parlers français d'Acadie (Paris, 1962), II, p. 731, n. 2.
 8. E. Robert, Canada Français et Acadie (Paris, 1924), pp. 153-54. See also infra, n. 20 for the Acadian rebuttal of these assertions.
 9. O.-J. LeBlanc to J.-I. Tarte, Aug. 18, 1898. Tarte Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 17, No. 2161-62.
 10. C.-H. LaBillois to J.-I. Tarte, Sept. 15, 1905. Tarte Papers, P.A.C., Vol. 17, No. 2185-86.

Yet Godin, like Le Devoir before him, claimed to recognize patronizing them. Though in fact they offered little aid, the Québécois seemed to feel that the Acadians owed them a debt of gratitude; that it was the French Canadians who elevated the impoverished and ignorant Acadians. Even Le Devoir, possibly the least imperialist of Quebec journals, wrote that the glory due Fathers Lafrance and Lefebvre fell to the French Canadians as a whole. "Cette fête du cinquantenaire de la renaissance acadienne est un peu la nôtre et par droit de contribution et par sentiment de sympathie."¹¹ Working from this assumption the Québécois felt no aversion to offering gems of wisdom and advice to the lowly Acadians - it seemed to matter little that the Québécois were totally ignorant of the situation in the Maritime provinces. Quebec standards and Quebec practices were somehow supposed to be equally applicable in l'Acadie. Even today this cockiness and proffering of unsolicited advice antagonizes the Acadians. In 1971 Pierre Godin, a Quebec journalist, spent all of fifteen days in New Brunswick after which he wrote Les Révoltés D'Acadie. Though well-intentioned, he hardly endeared himself to the Acadians by writing of "Les dociles Acadiens ... réduits au servage" and by condemning the actions of their elite. The policies of this elite, he wrote, have produced gains but at heavy expense: "Une assimilation galopante ... et une langue qui s'est altérée en profondeur au contact de l'anglais."¹²

11. Le Devoir, June 16, 1914, p. 1. See also the credit given Québec by Rumilly, Histoire Des Acadiens, II, p. 731.

12. Pierre Godin, Les Révoltés D'Acadie (Quebec, 1971), pp. 119-20.

Yet Godin, like Le Devoir before him, claimed to recognize that

Les Québécois et les Acadiens forment deux peuples différents. Chacun a sa spécificité culturelle propre et quoiqu'en pensent certains Québécois par trop impérialistes qui n'ont encore pris conscience de ce phénomène, ces deux peuples ne sont pas du pareil au même.¹³

To some extent the French Canadians were correct in their assessment of the Acadians although the latter, understandably, did not like hearing it. The Acadians were indeed much more reserved and exhibited infinitely less "joie de vivre". By tradition, the Acadians never embraced each other wrote H.-P. LeBlanc in 1927: "The French Canadians of Quebec are just the opposite! They over-kiss and kiss-over again, for nothing and about nothing!"¹⁴ The Acadians, unlike the French Canadians, were a minority in their part of the country and as such could not exhibit the same degree of aggressiveness that the Québécois could. Of necessity they learned to be more restrained and appeared almost timid, tranquil, introspective and sad. While enjoying only a tenuous existence in the Maritime provinces and especially in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, they could not afford the rabid politics of confrontation which Quebec indulged in.

13. Ibid., p. 155.

14. H.-P. LeBlanc to an unidentified nun in Sydney, N. S., Dec. 11, 1927. H.-P. LeBlanc Coll., C.E.A., Box 6, File "Lettre à une religieuse".

15. Le Moniteur Acadien, Dec. 10, 1880, p. 1.

The Québécois rallied to the defense of Louis Riel, of the Franco-Manitobans, and of the Franco-Ontarioans. They wrote of the Anglo-Protestant "Prussians" in Ontario, they collected funds for the "blessés" of that same province, they heaped venom upon those who did not accept their notion of a bicultural Canada. The Acadians, because of the circumstances under which they lived, could not conduct themselves in this manner. To have done so would have been folly, possibly resulting in the revocation of the few rights and privileges they enjoyed. Instead they cautiously adhered to a policy of conciliation and moderation, believing that

Ce qu'il est impossible d'obtenir en bloc, et tout d'un coup ... contentons nous de tâcher de l'obtenir graduellement, un lambeau ici, un lambeau là, ce sera toujours autant, et de la sorte nous finirons par avoir la majeure partie de ce qu'il est inutile de chercher autrement.¹⁵

They profited from this policy gaining in social prestige what they lost in self-respect. On the Acadian side of the St. Lawrence, it was this caution which would have prevented, even had Quebec been willing, any intimate Canadian-Acadian alliance.

The militant French Canadian often scorned the Acadians for being so docile. Yet it was this very attitude that the English of the Maritime provinces appreciated:

... in Nova Scotia the strongly marked distinction between the two races has

15. Le Moniteur Acadien, Dec. 16, 1880, p. 2.

not been kept up as in other Provinces. I think that fact is to the credit of Nova Scotia. The people of French origin ... mix up with their English-speaking neighbours. As a rule they learn and speak the English language and they are Nova Scotians rather than French or Acadians.¹⁶

The consequences were serious especially in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. Their language did indeed, as the French Canadians suggested, become inundated with anglicisms¹⁷ leading to the story told by Père Ansèlme Chiasson of the Acadian woman complaining about the name given to a neighbour's new baby: "Clifford! un nom anglais! Pourquoi ne pas lui avoir donné un nom français comme Charlie!"¹⁸

The Acadians of New Brunswick, providing the substance for the renaissance, would tolerate neither the condescending air of the French Canadians nor their unsolicited advice. L'Acadie was important in its own right, having existed as a distinct nation "en Amérique avant que Québec fut fondé."¹⁹ Their language was more than a bastardized jargon; indeed its roots lay in seventeenth century France.²⁰ Most

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16. Canada, Debates of the Senate, 1886, Senator L. G. Power, May 29, 1886, pp. 881-82.
 17. La Minerve (Montreal), n.d., "Les Français du Cap Breton". Reprinted in Le Moniteur Acadien, Nov. 15, 1892, p. 1.
 18. Chiasson, Cheticamp, p. 218.
 19. L'Évangéline, Aug. 22, 1901, p. 2.
 20. See Pascal Poirier, Le Parler Franco-Acadien Et Ses Origines (Montreal, 1928). Poirier describes his book as "un essai de réhabilitation du parler franco-acadien" (p. 7), an attempt to end the cruel and humiliating jokes made at Acadian expense by the

importantly, the Acadians owed nothing to Quebec. Pierre Landry questioned the motives of the early French Canadian missionaries in l'Acadie suggesting that they were more interested in the tithes than in those being tithed. While respecting the common image of Fathers Lafrance and Lefebvre, he placed their work into a proper perspective - they had not received

un seul denier du Canada pour fonder ou pour maintenir l'oeuvre de notre régénération.

Encore une fois, les Canadiens étaient trop occupés de leurs grands intérêts publics et privés, trop intéressés dans les grandes luttes ... pour s'occuper sérieusement de nous.²¹

The Québécois had no right to be critical of the Acadian deference to the English majority when the French majority in Montreal themselves invariably deferred before the English minority in that city.²²

Canadiens and the "Français de France" (p. 7). The Acadian language, he claims (p. 9) "n'est pas un dialecte ... c'est moins encore un patois: c'est le français même qui se parlait dans la Touraine et le nord-ouest du Berry, au milieu de XVII^e siècle." The Acadian language remained pure because, after 1713, it was isolated from the rest of the world "et n'étant venu en contact avec celui des Canadiens qu'après le pacte de 1867 ..." (p. 55). Poirier also reiterates (p. 7) a point made earlier in this dissertation that the Acadians are too embarrassed to use their own language in front of strangers or any "educated" person. This was, he writes, a "chose dangereuse ... au point de vue national" because it forced them to speak English instead of their native tongue.

21. P. A. Landry, "Les Acadiens" (ms. dated Aug. 24, 1901), Landry Coll., C.E.A. 4.4-11.
22. See Le Devoir, March 13 and 14, 1914, p. 1, "The French Language" and "The French in English Canada" by Henri Bourassa.

Certainly throughout this period and throughout their history. Both the French Canadian and Acadian were products of their physical environment. The former was tied to the land. In the eighteenth century he was an explorer; in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries he was a colonist or a farmer. Yet like the early coureurs de bois he was undaunted by his physical surroundings. The life was harsh but it had meaning. Knowing that he was part of a greater design, the Canadien developed a philosophy of life which induced a strong power of endurance and a sense of absolute security. He could never be the absolute master of his environment but within certain bounds he could alter it to his liking. In the same way and with the same sense of security the French Canadian could alter his political and economic environment. The Acadian meanwhile was profoundly attached to the sea and cognizant of its power.²³ He was awed by its superior strength, its potential destructiveness and its lack of mercy. It had carried oppressors to Acadia and had carried Acadians to their deaths. In comparison with the sea the Acadian was insignificant and transitory, definitely inferior and of minimal importance. He could not deny or even challenge its superiority but merely trust his God to protect and save him as He had done once before after 1755. In the same way the Acadians could not and did not deny the dominance of the anglophone majority which, like the sea, surrounded them and controlled their destinies.

23. Chiasson, Cheticamp, pp. 282-83; Robert, Canada Français et Acadie, p. 149.

Certainly throughout this period and throughout their history, the Acadians admitted the profound affinities which existed between themselves and the French Canadians. But at the same time they insisted that the latter recognize the differing circumstances, history and environment of the two nations. The Acadians had "un caractère particulier, distinct, personnel, et différent de celui qui existe chez nos frères, les Canadiens-français."²⁴ After generations of trials, they were not willing at this point to sacrifice their heritage. It is possible, perhaps likely, that the Acadian culture will be lost in certain parts of the Maritime provinces, in those areas which are totally isolated from the mainstream of the Acadian culture on the North Shore of New Brunswick. But it is just as likely, especially in New Brunswick, that the Acadians will remain a distinct entity, employing their own resources and abilities to resist assimilation as they had in the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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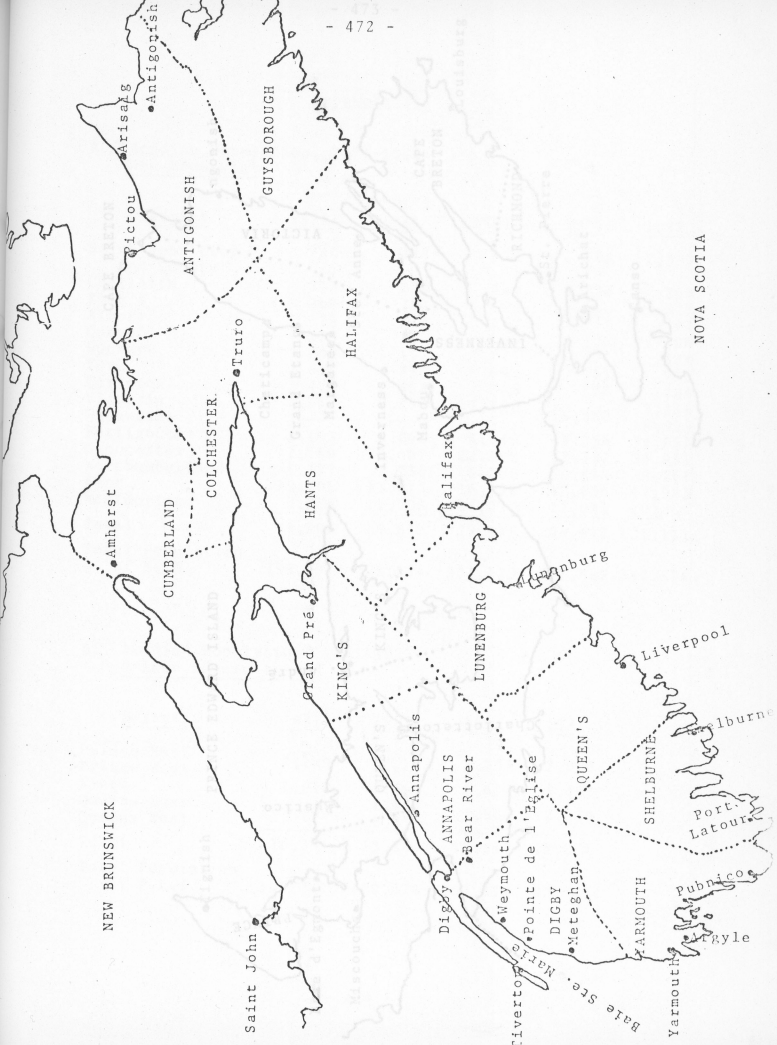
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APPENDIX I

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NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John

Amherst

CUMBERLAND

COLCHESTER

ANTIGONISH

Truro

HANTS

Grand Pré

KING'S

HALIFAX

Digby

ANNAPOLIS

Rear River

Weymouth

Pointe de l'Ecluse

DIGBY

Meteshap

QUEEN'S

YARMOUTH

SHELburnE

Yarmouth

Pubnico

Port Latour

Shelburne

Halifax

LUNENBURG

Antigonish

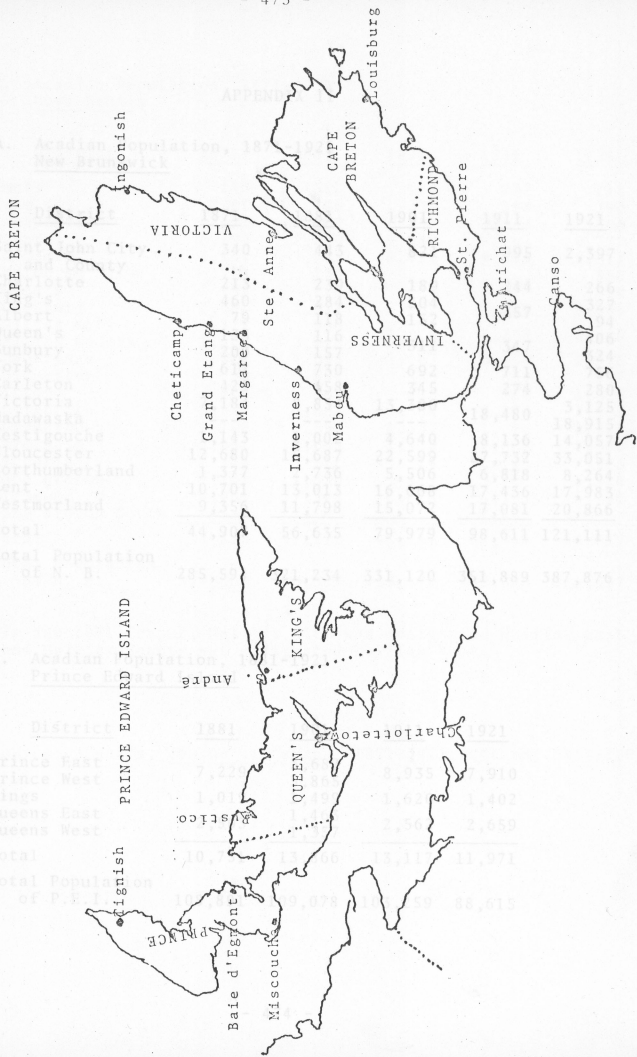
GUYSBOROUGH

Victou

Arisaig

Antigonish

NOVA SCOTIA



A. Acadian Population, 1881

District	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
Acadia	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Antigonish	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Cheticamp	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Grand Etang	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Margaree	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Inverness	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Mabou	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
St. Anne	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
St. Pierre	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Parichat	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Canso	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total	44,971	56,635	79,978	98,611	121,111

B. Acadian Population of P. E. I.

District	1881	1891	1901	1911	1921
Prince East	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Prince West	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Kings	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Queens East	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Queens West	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Total	10,701	13,735	16,509	17,455	17,583

APPENDIX II

A. Acadian Population, 1871-1921
New Brunswick

<u>District</u>	<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1921</u>
Saint John City and County	340	443	821	995	2,397
Charlotte	213	239	189	244	266
King's	460	284	204	357	327
Albert	79	118	152		94
Queen's	133	116			406
Sunbury	200	157	311	347	324
York	612	730	692	711	756
Carleton	429	458	345	274	280
Victoria	7,184	8,854	13,380		3,125
Madawaska	---	---	---	18,480	18,915
Restigouche	1,143	2,002	4,640	8,136	14,057
Gloucester	12,680	15,687	22,599	27,732	33,051
Northumberland	1,377	2,736	5,506	6,818	8,264
Kent	10,701	13,013	16,068	17,436	17,983
Westmorland	9,356	11,798	15,072	17,081	20,866
Total	44,907	56,635	79,979	98,611	121,111
Total Population of N. B.	285,594	321,234	331,120	351,889	387,876

B. Acadian Population, 1881-1921
Prince Edward Island

<u>District</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1901</u>	<u>1911</u>	<u>1921</u>
Prince East		3,682		
Prince West	7,229	5,865	8,935	7,910
Kings	1,019	1,499	1,620	1,402
Queens East		1,463		
Queens West	2,503	1,357	2,562	2,659
Total	10,751	13,866	13,117	11,971
Total Population of P.E.I.	108,891	109,078	103,259	88,615

C. Acadian Population, 1871-1921
Nova Scotia

District	1871	1881	1901	1911	1921
Hants	186	310	174	237	211
King's	281	496	279	188	390
Annapolis	173	432	231	259	363
Digby	6,460	7,889	8,049	9,591	9,727
Yarmouth	4,852	7,491	8,411	9,543	9,311
Shelburne	111	170			350
Queen's	151	279	391	239	419
Lunenburg	1,684	1,911	2,131	1,880	2,026
Halifax City	*1,377	936			
Halifax County	1,667	2,916	4,229	4,800	5,995
Cumberland	822	1,043	2,467	3,466	3,975
Colchester	80	394	535	574	457
Pictou	206	284	426	969	1,555
Antigonish	2,729	2,882	2,364	2,304	2,452
Guysborough	1,190	1,356	1,537	1,710	1,727
Inverness	2,682	3,635	4,328	4,860	5,166
Victoria	76	111	114	1,498	173
Cape Breton	1,141	1,336	2,817		5,526
Richmond	6,965	7,348	6,678	6,999	6,796
Cape Breton South	---	---	---	2,629	---
Total	32,833	41,219	45,161	51,746	56,619
Total Population of N. S.	387,800	440,582	459,574	492,388	523,837

*In the 1871 Census, Halifax City was designated Halifax East and Halifax County was designated Halifax West.

Source: Canada, Census of Canada, 1871-1921 (Ottawa, 1872-1922).

APPENDIX III

Suffragan Dioceses, Archdiocese of Halifax

A. Archdiocese of Halifax

Vicariat Apostolic of Nova Scotia, 1818-1842

Diocese of Halifax, 1842-1852

Archdiocese of Halifax, May 4, 1852

Most Rev. Edmund Burke, vicar-apostolic, 1818-1820

Most Rev. William Fraser, vicar-apostolic, 1827-1842
first Bishop of Halifax, 1842-1844

Most Rev. William Walsh, Bishop of Halifax, 1844-1852
first Archbishop of Halifax, 1852-1858

Most Rev. Thomas L. Connolly, 1859-1876

Most Rev. Michael Hannan, 1877-1882

Most Rev. Cornelius O'Brien, 1883-1906

Most Rev. Edward J. McCarthy, 1906-1931

B. Diocese of Antigonish

Diocese of Arichat, Sept. 1844-Aug. 1886

Transferred to Antigonish, Aug. 1886-to date

Most Rev. William Fraser, 1844-1851

Most Rev. Colin Francis MacKinnon, 1852-1877

Most Rev. John Cameron, 1877-1910

Most Rev. James Morrison, 1912-1950

C. Diocese of Charlottetown, Aug. 1829-to date

Most Rev. Bernard Angus McEachern, 1829-1835

Most Rev. Bernard Donald McDonald, 1837-1859

Most Rev. Peter McIntyre, 1860-1891

Most Rev. James Charles McDonald, 1891-1912

Most Rev. Henry Joseph O'Leary, 1913-1920

Most Rev. Louis James O'Leary, 1920-1930

D. Diocese of Saint John

Diocese of New Brunswick (Fredericton), 1842-1859
Diocese of Saint John, 1860-to date

Most Rev. William Dollard, 1843-1851
Most Rev. Thomas L. Connolly, 1852-1859
Most Rev. John Sweeny, 1860-1901
Most Rev. Timothy Casey, 1901-1912
Most Rev. Edouard-A. LeBlanc, 1912-1935
Most Rev. P. A. Bray, 1936-1953

E. Diocese of Chatham, May 1860-to date

Transferred to Bathurst, May 1938

Most Rev. James Rogers, 1860-1902
Most Rev. Thomas F. Barry, 1902-1920
Most Rev. Patrice Chiasson, 1920-1942

F. Subsequent Dioceses

Archdiocese of Moncton, 1937

Mgr. L.-J. Arthur Melanson, 1937-1941

Diocese of Edmunston, 1944

Mgr. Marie-Antoine Roy, 1945-1948

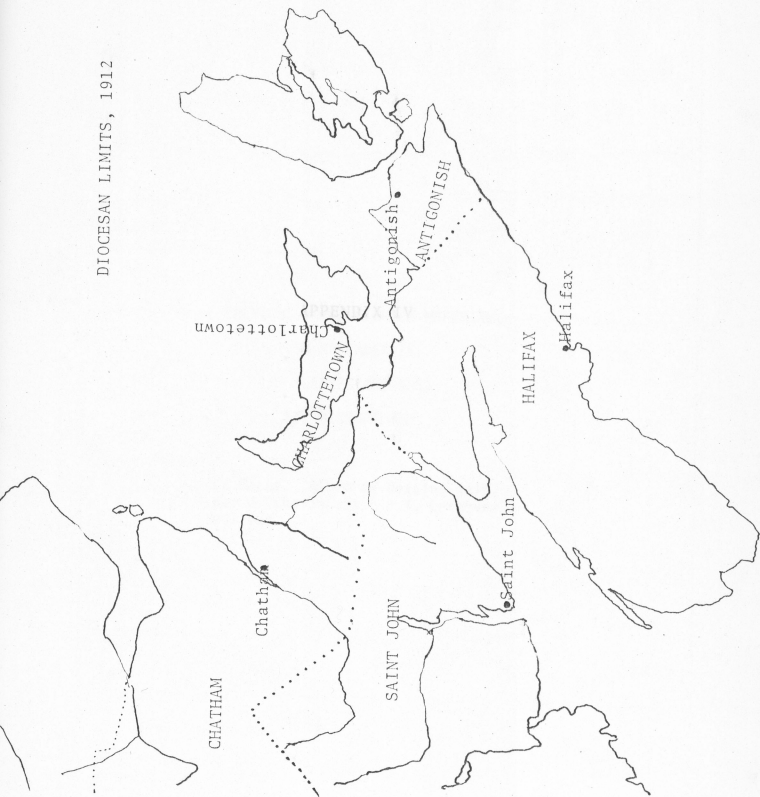
Diocese of Yarmouth, 1953

Mgr. Albert Leménager, 1953-1968

Source: Le Canada Ecclésiastique (Montreal, 1975).

J. J. Delany and J. E. Tobin, Dictionary of Catholic Biography (New York, 1961).

DIOCESAN LIMITS, 1912



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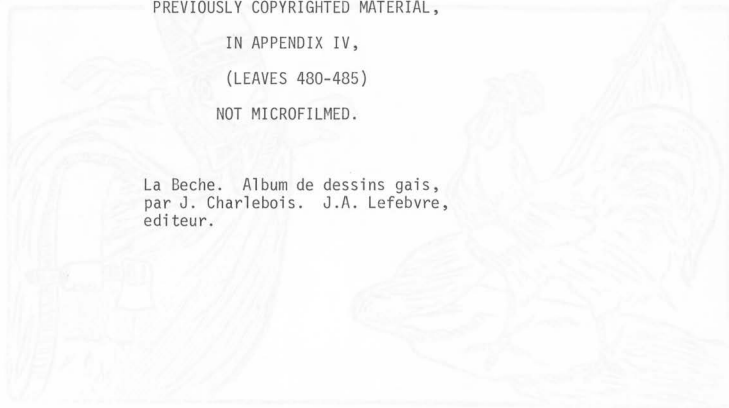
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