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signed.

Harvey Golden

THE FRENCH ELEMENT IN THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

-By-

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BEING A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE  
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## THE FRENCH ELEMENT IN THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

### PREFATORY NOTE.

The Province of Manitoba was born amidst the disorders of an Insurrection in 1870. The Constitution provided for the new member of the Canadian Confederation appeared to have all the permanence of a Federal Statute confirmed by an enactment of the Imperial Parliament: yet before twenty years had passed every important clause it embodied (with one exception -- the Public Lands clause which is as yet a standing subject for negotiations) was either radically changed or totally repealed. English speaking Protestants dwelt upon the lands reserved for the children of the French Metis, the Legislative Council was gone, the English language was supreme in the Legislature and the Courts, and the separate school system had received its death blow. It is the aim of the writer to indicate the circumstances under which the Manitoba Act came to be -- the conditions which led to its enactment--, allowing its antecedents to account for its futility.

This Thesis presupposes a working knowledge of the general history of the Red River Settlement. The origin of the French Metis and their activities prior to 1818 have been recounted in some detail in the first two chapters; but since upon the arrival of the Roman Catholic missionaries the political centre of gravity shifted from the mass of the Metis to their religious leaders, the latter are given consideration in the subsequent chapters. Owing to the delicate nature of certain phases of the discussion, care has been taken to quote all evidence in the original, and for this reason all French sources have been submitted without translation. The attention of the reader is directed to the foot-notes in which pertinent explanations and additions have been inserted, and also to the Appendices at the end of the thesis.

H. G.

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CHAPTER I  
THE CASUAL FRENCH ELEMENT.

(1) The "Coureurs de Bois".

An essay which purports to trace the influence of the French Canadian element in what is now Western Canada, would be incomplete without a reference, however brief, to the intrepid Frenchmen who first ventured out of the somnolent towns of New France, and into the great woods and open space of the West. True though it be that their activities left no permanent mark upon the land or its inhabitants, yet the very fact of their early presence subsequently gave rise to traditions and claims which exerted a powerful influence over the course of events.

The "Coureurs de bois", the first men of French blood to penetrate into the Upper Country, were as a rule young men of good family, who rebelled against the irksome tranquility of French colonial life, and, turning their backs upon comfortable homesteads and rustic plenty, directed their canoes along the lakes and streams leading to the unknown West (1). Many, too, were fugitive apprentices bent upon escaping from their hard masters (2). Armed with the love of adventure and a courage verging on rashness, the spirited youths entered with zest upon a life of hunting and trapping. From the first they established a tradition of friendship with the Red Man, with whom they soon vied in the fine arts of forest life. Their native temperament and the influence of their wild environment combined to develop in the nature of the "coureurs de bois" those extravagant traits which Masson so aptly describes (3).

Into the hands of these hard-eating and hard-drinking adventurers (4) fell the greater share of the Fur Trade of the West. It was they who destroyed the great colonial monopolies of the French regime. The forest runners covered the highways and the byways of the wilderness; and it was in the course of their trading expeditions that they came upon great unknown

(1). Burpee: "Pathfinders of the Great Plains" (Chronicles of Canada)

(2). Canada and its Provinces, Vol. 2, page 342.

(3). Masson: "Les Bourgeois de la Compagnie du Nord Ouest", Vol. I, p. 3. "...ces héros des plaines et de la forêt, singulier mélange de bien et du mal...natures extravagantes, à la fois légères et sérieuses, cruelles et compatissantes, crédules, superstitieuses, même et parfois impiées...Imprevoyant comme sont tous les enfants de la forêt, ce que le coureur de bois avait amassé par un travail..de douze à quinze jours, il le dépensait dans quelque jours de ~~jeu~~ joie criminelles, puis s'en allait redemander au désert cette liberté dont il était si fier, et lui apportait en échange les vices et les maux des populations civilisées".

(4). Cf. David Thompson's "Narrative", 1784-1812. Publications of the Champlain Society, Vol. XII, p. 207. Thompson's employees ate "full eight pounds of meat per day. They have told me that their greatest enjoyment of life was eating".

lakes and rivers, and heard from the Indians wonderful stories of an easy approach to the Western Sea. These tales, reported with due embellishment in the frontier posts and towns of Canada, left an indelible impression upon the eager mind of Pierre Gauthier de la Verendrye, who determined to seek the reputed great river which flowed into the mysterious spaces of the West.

### (2) The La Verendryes.

Much has been written on the work of the family de la Verendrye in the Canadian west; but the statue raised to the memory of Pierre Gauthier at one of the entrances to the Provincial Parliament Building at Winnipeg, constitutes a tardy recognition in a concrete way, of the courage of the first white man to set foot on the soil of what is now the Province of Manitoba. It is, indeed, one of the ironies of history that the unquestioned heroism and devotion of the entire family (5) should have gone unrewarded, not merely as regards personal emolument, but also from the point of view of lasting results to the country itself. The toil of la Verendrye and his kin left not a vestige of permanent influence over the inhabitants of the plains; and although as regards their geographical and scientific aspect their labors were not in vain, yet twenty years after the consummation of their discoveries, all their establishments were in ruins, and the French dominance in the West was but a memory.

### (3) The Effect of the Conquest.

Although in relation to Indian affairs British policy after 1760 tended to the continuation of the centralized system of the French, the Conquest nevertheless marked the end of an epoch in the West as well as in the East. The licensed British traders who began to make their way into the Indian country immediately after the surrender of Canada, were imbued with practical business principles, and operated under energetic business methods, unhampered by any tradition of amity with the natives. The easy-going "bonhomme" and self-merging familiarity which had gained for the French traders the friendship of Indian and voyageur alike, were now no longer in evidence. Many of the "coureurs de bois", therefore, estranged by the new atmosphere which now prevailed, abandoned entirely all intercourse with the trading posts of the Europeans, dispersed themselves among the numerous Indian tribes, took Indian wives; and whilst shedding whatever vestige of civilization still remained to them, they gave to the Canadian West the first representatives of the race that was later exploited as "the new nation". It is to be noted, however, that not to these early mixed marriages can we ascribe the origin of the French Metis of Western Canadian history. The offspring of the early "coureurs de bois" remained

(5). See portion of La Verendrye's Journall printed in the Report of the Canadian Archives, 1889.



almost entirely Indian in character and mode of life. Some rose to the rank of chief in their mother's tribe, and all were totally submerged by the native Indians (6) "Après quelques années il ne resta plus, <sup>dans</sup> le Nord-Ouest que de rares vestiges de l'influence civilisatrice de l'ancien régime". (7).

(6). Red River Settlement Papers, 1819-1858, Page 167, Even in Coltman's time the bulk of the Metis were "little removed from the savage state".

(7). Masson: Vol. I, p.9.

CHAPTER IITHE NEW NATION.1. REASONS FOR FRENCH SETTLEMENT IN THE WEST.

The British conquest of Canada turned the direction and monopoly of the Western Fur Trade out of the hands of the French, and into those of the British traders; but with equal force did it confirm to the voyageurs of French Canada the control, even, we may say, the monopoly, of the transportation and the lower range of services in the New British enterprises. As it is to these post-conquest voyageurs that we owe <sup>not</sup> the origin of the permanent French element in the West, it may be undesirable to consider their outstanding characteristics and the causes which conduced to their settlement west of the Great Lakes.

(a.) Character of the French Canadian Voyageurs.

The character of the Canadian boatman, remarkable for the facility with which it accomodated him to the hardships incident upon ~~his~~ his occupation, indeed constituted one great factor tending to French settlement in the West. In the very nature of things, the French Canadian population was, in the first years of British rule, the only source from which employees could be drawn on a large scale. Moreover, not only did the ancient amity between the French and the Indians serve as a protection to the early British traders from hostile natives (1), but the hardiness and experience for which the Canadian voyageur was celebrated, rendered him, in any event, the very best possible servant for an enterprise conducting operations almost two thousand miles from its nearest source of supply. In relentless toil through rapids and across portages from sun-up to sun-down, in perfect contentment with the repose of a few hours on the bare ground, in full and hearty enjoyment of the fried and mashed Indian corn which constituted the main article of subsistence along the route(2), and in unmarred cheerfulness when even this meagre food failed him(3).

(1). Alexander Henry (the elder): "Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, 1760-1776.", Pages 34, 34.

(2). A bushel of mashed corn and two pounds of fat constituted the sole ration of a man per month. "The difficulty which belongs to an attempt to reconcile any other men than Canadians to this fare, seems to secure to them and their employers the monopoly of the fur trade." A. Henry (the elder); "Travels and Adventures", Pages 54, 55.

(3).. Ibid, Page 323. "Mr. Joseph Frobrisher and myself were obliged to fish incessantly, and often notwithstanding every exertion, the men went supperless to bed. In a situation like this the Canadians are the best men in the world; they rarely murmur at their lot and their obedience is rendered cheerfully."

Cf. also the evidence of a very exacting employer, Alex. Henry, the Younger: "They have hard work of it but do not murmur or complain".--"Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry (the Younger)", Vol. 1, Page 233.

none could surpass the Canadian voyageur. His activity, moreover, was not accompanied by much initiative, and he was ever ready to do the bidding of any leader who could boast a certain amount of prowess. (4). This latter consideration— and the closely related fact that the excitable Gallic temperament of the Canadians rendered them, under the conditions which governed the Fur Trade in the days of the great competing Companies, excellent tools in the hands of their employers — turned out to be of paramount importance to the unscrupulous heads of the North-West Company. The light-hearted crews of the canoe brigades, once past the probationary period of being "pork-eaters" (5), abandoned themselves with remarkable willingness and facility to unquestioning obedience to their superiors, — an obedience which alone assured them of comparative ease in the life which they had chosen for themselves. What effect an attitude of this kind was likely to have upon the morals of the French Canadians who came West may be easily conjectured. The unscrupulous spirit prevailing the Fur Trade in the early days played havoc with all who came in contact with it; particularly disastrous was it to the light-headed and light-hearted voyageurs. "Les employés de la Compagnie (du Nord Ouest), "wrote Count Andreani in 1791, "sont généralement libretins, ivrognes, dépensiers, et la compagnie n'en veut que de cette espèce." Indeed, such was the premium placed upon their vices, that any employee who showed signs of possessing a disposition for economy or sobriety, was burdened with the most fatiguing labors, "jusqu'à ce que par une suite de mauvaises traitements, on ait pu les convertir à l'ivrognerie, et à l'amour des femmes qui font vendre le rhum, les couvertures et les ornements. En 1791 il y avait neuf cents des employés de la compagnie qui lui devaient plus que le produit de dix à quinze années de leur gages à venir." (6). Indeed, the influence exerted by the Bourgeois of the North-West Company over the plastic minds of their servants, made possible the development of the vaunted "Ancient North-West spirit" — silent, determined, even splendid in its sure-footed ruthlessness.

(b) The Economic Reason.

Ever since Marx enunciated the doctrine of the Materialistic or Economic Interpretation of History (7), the view has become prevalent that the various manifestations

- (4). Cf. David Thompson's "Narrative, 1784-1812", Publications of the Champlain Society, Vol. XII, Page 107.
- (5). For the origin of this sobriquet see G. Dugas: "L'Ouest Canadien" Page 203 (French edition).
- (6). "Voyage en Amérique", par La Rochefoucault-Liancourt, Vol. II Page 225. Quoted by Dugas, "L'Ouest Canadien". Page 191.
- (7). A lucid explanation of this conception is given in Seligman's "The Economic Interpretation of History", Page 130.

of social and political life are largely modified by economic conditions. The history of no society offers a more interesting illustration of the power of economic forces to give birth to a people endowed with characteristics distinctly its own, than the history of the settlement of French Canadians in the Middle-West, under the auspices of the North-West Company. In fact, it is the economic importance of the Red River territory to this Canadian organization that explains the acrimony and the ruthless disregard of life and property which characterized the struggle against Lord Selkirk's colonizing enterprise.

Looking somewhat ahead, it must be borne in mind that the idealism and philanthropic spirit which may be justly ascribed to Lord Selkirk himself, were in no wise shared by his colleagues on the Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company. In order to secure the necessary backing from them, Selkirk was put to the necessity of persuading them that material gains would result from the settlement. On these grounds, and on these grounds only, did the Hudson's Bay Company lend its support, (half-hearted though it was) to Selkirk's plans; and the expectation was that not only would retiring servants and officials settle at Red River instead of taking their savings out of the sphere of the Company (8), but that the colony would afford a market for the Company's trade goods, and would supply its posts with corn and lard, hitherto imported at great expense from the Old Country.

The water route to Hudson's Bay, which practically placed the trading posts of the Hudson's Bay Company on the threshold of their supply source, constituted a marked advantage in favor of that corporation. The head-quarters of the North-West Company, on the contrary, were far removed from their trading posts. Supplies in this case had to be transported in canoes, overland, hundred of leagues into the interior. A failure of one brigade might mean ruin for the trade, and starvation for the hundreds of North-West employees in the Indian Territories. A source of subsistence on the spot, therefore, was a primary necessity - a "sine qua non" of the very existence of the Company; and such a source was evolved to conform with the flora and fauna of the country. To the east of Kaministiquia lay the land of wild rice and Indian corn (9) which as we have said, formed the basis of the food of the voyageur en route. West of the lakes, and particularly in the valley of the Red River, roamed millions of buffalo, constituting an untold treasure of meat, fat and hides. In the nature of things buffalo meat was seized upon as the staple food throughout the Indian Country. For the preparation of the buffalo meat, or pemican, upon which its servants depended for their subsistence, the North West Company required a class of hunters who combined the hunting qualities of the natives with the discipline of the Canadians; and herein lies the explanation of the company's policy of encouraging its servants to intermarry with the natives, and of allowing discharged voyageurs to settle in the West. As a result there arose a class of men upon the plains who came to be known as "the Freemen". They were literally the good providers of the North-West Company. They became the most expert of hunters, but realizing their own importance as a class, they grew arrogant and turbulent as will be shown in later section.

(8). Alexander Ross: "The Red River Settlement. (1848), Page 17

(9). See Report of the Select Committee of 1857, passim.

These various causes operating under the motive power of the Fur Trade resulted in an influx of French Canadians into the West. With courage and endurance rarely glorified, they gave priceless assistance their English speaking leaders in the work geographical and scientific discovery. French Canadians were to be found in the canoe of every great explorer-Mackenzie, Fraser, Thompson, Franklin. Names of lakes and rivers, posts and points, were in their tongue. Indeed their language became to a extent the medium of intercourse in all the fur trading territory; and their children by Indian women were the metis with whose career we are concerned.

## 2. THE FRENCH HALF-BREEDS

### (a) Origin and Environment.

We are now in a position to consider the social aspect of the origin of the French Metis. The earliest definite record of inter-marriage appears about 1775. At that time the moral standards among the Indians in general and particularly among the Creeks West of Lake Superior, were such as to tempt the lust of men whose very occupation denoted hardihood and indifference to the conventions of civilization. The use of rum in great quantities, moreover, contributed to brutalizing both white man and red man, and aided in shattering the standards of decency, which in any case are always and inevitably low on the frontiers of civilization. In 1775 Alexander Henry found that an unlovely intercourse between the two races, semi-legalized by the degrading moral code of the Indians, of which the Canadians readily availed themselves, had been going on for years. "One of the chiefs assured me" he wrote "that the children borne by their women to Europeans were bolder warriors and better hunters than themselves" (10). Moreover all the evidence which pointed to revolting conditions in those early days was confirmed, as late as forty three years afterwards, by Mgr. Provencher. "La plupart des engagés" he wrote to his Bishop, "ont des femmes avec lesquelles ils ont des enfants, qu'ils laissent ensuite au premier occupant, ainsi que la mère". (11).

This aspect of the origin of the French Metis must be kept in mind because the conditions mentioned generally prevailed, and could not but have their effect upon the character of the first generations of half-breeds. But apart from this unpleasant phase, evidence is not wanting of stable, legitimate half-breed families in the West. In 1763, for instance, Alexander Henry found at Michilimackinac, that the majority of the French pensioners who had first garrisoned the fort, had taken Indian wives and brought up half-breed families. Many of these, such as the family of M. Cadotte, the interpreter maintained a considerable standard of culture. In 1778, too, the first British traders found a half-breed family established on Slave River - the parents of that patriarch Beaulieu, whom Bishop Tache was to take into the fold of Catholic Church, only in 1848. (12)

(10). From Rainy River, 1775. "Travels and Adventures", Page 248 see also Page 242.

(11). "Les Lettres de Mgr. J-N. Provencher", Publications of the Historical Society of St. Boniface, Vol. III, 1913.

(12). Rev. A. G. Morice: "History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada", Vol. I, Pages 311, 312.

As early as 1776 a small number of French Canadian voyageurs were granted permission to settle in the Red River valley (13), and they and their half-breed children became the first of the hunting Freemen of the Plains.

Upon the organization of the North-West Company into departments and the consequent building of permanent posts with more or less permanent employees, occurred an inevitable wave of inter-marriage, fostered and encouraged by the agents of the Company. Not only from the point of view of the food supply was it advantageous to have a half-breed hunting population on the plains; it also paid to a certain extent, from the point of view of trade. "C'est, diton", wrote Provencher, "la politique des bourgeois de faire prendre des femmes à leur engagés parce que là ils ont occasion de dépenser leur gages en prenant des effets à haut prix, pour habiller leur femmes et leur enfants." (14). As a result, every trading post became the centre of a little half-breed community. The report of the population of the North-West in 1805, given in the Younger Henry's journal (15) shows 1610 as the number of white men, and 406 as the number of white women (that is, Indian wives of white men). According to this rather conservative estimate, just over 25 per-cent of the white men had taken Indian wives. At the same time the number of half-breed children is estimated as 600. When the Melkirk settlers arrived in 1812, therefore, they found a considerable population of French Métis, spread, it is true, over a very wide area, but concentrated in their greatest numbers along the Assiniboine from the Quappelle to Red River, and along the Red to the Lembina.

The environment into which the first generation of Métis were thrown was of a nature to warp any of the finer qualities which they possessed. The system in which they occupied the lowest rank, undoubtedly placed a premium on evil.

In point of fact, the blame for the absence of decent moral standards in the West, attached almost wholly to the great trading Companies. Their officers and clerks certainly did not scruple in the interests of gain, to resort to means against which common decency revolts (16); is it then surprising that the men whose education was of necessity inferior, should in many instances have lost that sense of moral rectitude, which in a better environment they might have retained?

(13). A. Rees: "The Red River Settlement..." Page 107. See also Morice, Vol. 1, Pages 55-56

(14). To Bishop Plessis, Sept. 13th, 1818 "Lettres" Page 16.

(15). Vol. 1, Page 282.

(16). Cf. the following entry in the Journal of James McKenzie one of the North-West winter partners: Masson, Vol. II, pp. 384, 385 "April 9th, 1800--Saurarda brought his daughter who deserted in the course of the winter from Morin, at Slave Lake, in order to be returned to her husband. Mr. Forter wrote me, by Morin's orders, to sell her to the highest bidder and debit Morin for the amount. (Foot-note continued on the next page).

At all events the evidence of La Rouchefoucault appears incontrovertible. The degradation of the employees of the North West Company in particular was horribly patent. The circumstances under which the majority of marriages were contracted between white men and native women (17), as also the conditions under which their children grew up, were not calculated to produce a steady, thinking, moral race. In 1818 Mgr. Provencher found a sad state of affairs. "Tous les commis et bourgeois ont aussi des femmes, et ce qu'il y a de pis, c'est qu'on ne se met pas plus au plain des enfants issues de ces pretendues mariages que s'ils n'avaient pas d'ames." (18). The half-breeds were by no means lacking in intelligence, but they were totally ignorant (19), and were easily led into excesses. The sole optimistic phrase which the missionary allowed himself to use was, that as a result of the mission, "nous avons l'esperance qu'on ne trouvera plus la meme facilite a les induire en erreur que l'on a eu ci-devant."

(b) Mode of Life.

Such was the type produced by the conditions of the Fur Trade. The French Canadians and the half-breeds, indeed differed but little from the Indians of the plains. Those who were under contract with the companies carried on their vocations of clerks, voyageurs, interpreters, carpenters or mechanics. They lived with their families at the posts, and earned their living by obeying orders. Those who were not definitely in the service of the great fur trading Corporations were engaged as buffalo hunters. Living in frail bark cabins or tents, like their aborigine relatives, they and their families nomadically followed the herds over the plains; and such was the abundance of buffalo at that time that in the course of a few sallies, they earned for themselves, a whole year's livelihood. The bulk of the pemican and the buffalo robes they delivered to the trading posts, obtaining in return arms and ammunition, liquor, tobacco, blankets, tinsels of all kinds -

"Two advantages may be reaped from this affair; the first is that it will assist to discharge the debts of a man unable to do it by any other means, for he is neither a good middleman, foreman, steersman, interpreter or carpenter; the second is that it may be the means of tickling some lecherous miser to part with some of his hoard. I therefore kept the woman to be disposed of in the season when the Peace River bucks look out for women in the month of May..." James McKenzie was a typical Bourgeois.

(17). Cf. Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry (the Younger), Vol. I, p. 228 "October 24th, 1803 -- Livernois had exchanged his mare for a young wife eight (sic) years of age; it is common in the North West to give a horse for a woman".

(18). "Lettres", Pages 16, 17.

(19). Ibid. "... pas plus instruits que les autres sauvages.."

exactly like the Indians proper. The importance of their function, however, which they well realized, and the wild mode of life which was theirs, imbued them with a spirit of boisterous arrogance fully manifested by the title in which they gloried—"the Freemen of the Plains". Their independent attitude was a constant source of trouble to the North-West Bourgeois, to the extent that in time many made it their policy to keep them as far as possible under contract, as "engagés." (20). "These freemen," wrote one prominent Bourgeois, "are a nuisance in the country, and generally scoundrells. I never yet found one honest man among them." (21). But coming from the pen of a man whose own standards of business honesty in relation to the Fur Trade were on a very low level, these words carry little weight except to point out the fact that the ruthless moral and ethical corruption at the trading posts submerged the native honesty and amiability of the Freemen, while their free and roving prairie life accentuated their human vanity and intensified the stirring, restless, rowdy sides of their nature; making them as offensive to a man of Alexander Henry's stamp in the tranquility of 1805, as they were useful to his colleagues in the troubles and trials of 1814-1816.

### 3. The French Metis and the Selkirk Settlement.

Throughout the maze of events which transpired in Assiniboia and the Indian Territories between 1811 and 1817, it is not difficult to trace the two leading factors which rendered the French element hostile to the Selkirk Settlement.

#### (a) The Influence of the North-West Company.

The struggle carried on by this concern was not a mere trade competition as such; it was an attempt to vindicate the policy of Fur Trade, as against that of settlement, espoused, it was believed, by the Hudson's Bay Company. The importance of the buffalo to the North-West trade has been stressed before, and it must now more than ever be kept in mind, for therein lies the key to the whole train of events. It was regarded as inevitable that the establishment of a considerable agricultural settlement in the very heart of the buffalo country would have the effect of driving away the great herds; and it was believed that this result (and therefore the destruction of the means of sustenance of the North-West employees), as well as the isolation of the famous Athabaska beaver region, were the prime desiderata of Selkirk and his colleagues of the Hudson's Bay Company.

(20). Cf. Alexander Henry (the Younger). Referring to the Freemen of the N.W. Company, he says they were "as great a nuisance, according to their capacities, as their former employe's. This quarter has hitherto been free from men of that description, as I made it a rule never to give a man his freedom in this country on any conditions whatever, and I have always found the benefit of such procedure." Manuscript Journals, Vol. I, pp. 268, 269.

(21). Ibid, p. 251.



From this viewpoint, and quite apart from the intention of Lord Selkirk to exercise proprietary rights over the lands granted to him, the North-West Company's very existence was jeopardized by the settlement project. The shrewd chiefs of the great concern realized this, and, immediately after their failure to prevent the ratification of the grant of Assiniboia to Selkirk; long before any notice "to quit the posts and premises you now occupy at the Forks of Red River" (22) was delivered to them; long before Hillier was sent to the Churchill River "not so much in the light of a trader as of a magistrate" (23); and long before Miles Macdonell issued the Proclamation of January 8th 1814; they flashed an order to the men on the spot "to prepare for a year of trial". Having failed to frighten the prospective settlers away from Selkirk's agents at home, the most obvious course open to the North-West Company was to inspire the inhabitants of the Red River country with an attitude hostile to the Colonists. Be it said that to the task of swaying a semi-barbarous population whose leading traits were carelessness and good-nature, vitiated however by profound ignorance and an instinctive love of adventure, the sternly aggressive organization of the North-West Company was admirably suited. The Company's hopes rested on the men of French blood, for of these the great majority, whether as servants actual or discharged, had at one time or another learned the nature of North-West discipline. Nearly all of them were dependent on the Company for the disposal of their harvests of meat and fish. Moreover, the half-breeds who showed a modicum of ability above their fellows, were astutely catered to by the Bourgeois, and were brought even more bindingly under North-West influence. Of the hundred odd men capable of bearing arms who were stated by Commissioner Coltman (24) to have inhabited the Red River valley on the eve of the troubles, at least one fourth were definitely attached under contract to the North-West Company (25).

Before the Company began its active campaign to antagonize the natives to the Settlement, the carefree plainsmen were little concerned with the legal aspect of their right to the soil which the Bourgeois now began to accord to them (26),

(22). F.H. Schofield: "History of Manitoba", Vol. I, p.119.

(23). Selkirk Papers, II, 407, quoted by Prof. C.B. Martin: "Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada", p. 47.

(24). "Report", Red River Settlement Papers, 1819-1858, p.162.

(25). Ibid, p.167.

(26) Cf. ibid, pp. 167, 168.

and which the new comers were alleged to have violated. Indeed the episode of their first meeting with the immigrants, as related Alexander Ross (27) serves a fairly true representation of the undisturbed attitude of the French Métis to the settlers. No doubt the ceremony of "seisin" by which Miles Macdonell assumed control of Assiniboia, did react to a certain extent, the "bois-brûlés" - the Freeman who had hitherto acknowledged no master (28). But "finding that no exercise of their exclusive rights was attempted (by the new comers), and experiencing the advantages to be derived from an amicable trade and intercourse with the settlers, (the Métis) appear to have become well-disposed towards the Colony." The first winter was passed by the settlers at Pembina, on very friendly terms with the Métis, and during the following year Governor Miles Macdonell so gained the confidence of the latter, that a half-breed settlement was formed at Fort Daer under his auspices. If, as it appears, the rank and file of the Métis were at first by no means willing to rush into a struggle on behalf of the North-West Company, we are faced with the question: what causes led them finally fall in with the plans of that concern, "to whom they have indeed attached themselves almost exclusively" (29). This leads us to the second factor.

(b) Miles Macdonell and his restrictive Ordinances.

On January 8th, 1814, appeared Miles Macdonnell's Proclamation prohibiting the export of food products from Lord Selkirk's territories. Much may be said in support of this measure as an effort to provide for the expected immigrants, but Macdonell doubtless took a good deal of pleasure in directing a blow at the North-West Company which was at that time in a precarious condition owing to the War with the United States. However, he showed little understanding of the tenacity of his opponents when he wrote to Selkirk, in reference to the effects of his measure, "the Bourgeois will bluster and strut a bit, and that will be all" (30). Even less discernment attended his ordinance which prohibited the running of buffalo on horse-back (31). Despite his sincerity and good intentions Macdonell failed to give due regard to the key position occupied by the buffalo in the life of the Métis, and allowed himself to be swept by innuendo and astute suggestions into a most unwise policy. The North-Westerners played upon his weakness, and led him with unscrupulous coolness into a line of action which could not but antagonize the Métis.

(27). "The Red River Settlement..." pp. 22, 23.

(28). Red River Settlement Papers, 1819-1858, p. 154.

(29). Ibid, p. 167.

(30). Selkirk Papers, IV, 1057. Quoted by Martin: "Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada", p. 69.

(31). Red River Settlement Papers, 1819-1858, p. 158.

"The North-West gentlemen who passed the summer in our vicinity" he wrote (32) "...encouraged me to give an order against this practice." He fell into their trap, with the result that immediately it was passed, the buffalo-running measure was made "a subject of accusation against himself, and represented to the free Canadians and half-breeds as an infringement of their liberty." (33).

The measure was intended to safeguard the interests of the settlers and others who possessed no horses, and could not follow the herds to a distance. But it was not always possible to ensure a supply of pemican when hunting on foot, in consequence of which, the prohibition was not merely a theoretical restraint, but an actual impediment to the most vital industry in the country. This ordinance, with the minor restrictions upon the use of the banks of trees and upon fishing areas (34) constituted "one of the principal causes which rendered the freemen and half-breeds (among whom it appears.... for some time to have excited great alarm) inimical towards the Colony," (35).

#### (4) The First Struggle of the New Nation.

The Metis who according to some evidence had previously to be "induced chiefly by threats...to take up arms(36), could now be led more easily to the active support of the North-West Company. Duncan Cameron, the North-wester at the Forks, left nothing undone to effect this purpose. To impress the untutored French element with his own importance he commandeered a red army coat. He made much of the buffalo-running ordinance, encouraging his partisans "to treat with contempt Macdonell's order respecting the running of buffalo on horse-back, ordering his own hunters to drive away the cattle from the Colonial hunters, and punishing when in his power any person appearing friendly towards the Colony." (37)

But the most potent means of rousing the Métis, to action proved to be the dexterous exploitation of the "new nation" idea. "He told them.... that the colonists were taking their lands, and that if they allowed them to, they would soon become stronger than themselves and drive them from the country". (38).

(32). Macdonell's Statement, *ibid*, p.30.

(33). *Ibid*, p.138.

(34). *Ibid*, p.159.

(35). *Ibid*, p.158.

(36). Red River Settlement Papers, 1819-1858, p.157.

(37). For a case of individual persecution see *ibid*, p.164.

(38). *Ibid*, p.163.

The North-Westerns consistently maintained that the Métis were fighting their own battle, and that only by chance were their interests and those of the Company identical (39). There is evidence that early in the summer of 1815 a petition was sent to the Governor-General of the Canadas on behalf of the Métis, maintaining their rights as against the new settlers and demanding compensation for the occupied lands. (40). The inspiration for this attitude is not far to seek. The leaders of the Métis, Cuthbert Grant and Bostonois Pangman, were both sons of ancient North-Westerns, and were completely under the influence of the Bourgeois. Moreover, one of the witnesses before Commissioner Coltman, stated as to the right of the Métis to the soil, "that Bostonois who first spoke of it to him, said it had been mentioned by persons better informed than either of themselves." (41).

(a) Events of 1815.

The result of innuendo playing upon a more or less legitimate grievance was first seen on February 9th 1815, when a number of half-breed servants of the North-West Company seized John McLeod of the Hudson's Bay service, avowedly because they had heard that Macdonell was coming to confiscate their hunting horses. This began a series of hostile movements, arrests on both sides, a shooting affray at Frog Plains, the killing of colony horses, and finally an attack upon the colony buildings, which intimidated all but a few of the settlers who had so far withstood the offers of Cameron, and led to the first destruction of the settlement, in June, 1815. The command issued by Cuthbert Grant and his lieutenants after this Métis "Victory" was curt and plain: "All settlers to retire immediately from Red River and no appearance of a colony to remain."

(b) Events of 1816.

The approach of a new lot of settlers under Robert Semple, and the general determination evinced by Lord Selkirk with regard to his colonization scheme, persuaded the Bourgeois assembled at Fort William in the summer of 1816, that the expulsion of that year was not to be the end of the struggle. Plans were therefore laid accordingly. After the banished settlers were brought back to the Forks by Colin Robertson, both sides began to work with might and main

(39). Cf. Ibid, p.171. Fidler's Journal as quoted by Coltman states that after the first attack on the settlement, in June, 1815, "although the North-West partners declared their readiness to give up everything their Canadian servants had, they professed to have no control over the half-breeds, and these later declared they would not allow the colonists to remain."

(40). Cuthbert Grant's evidence, Ibid, p.172.

(41). Desmarrais' evidence, Ibid, p.172

to gain ascendancy over the impressionable minds of the half-breeds. It was at this time that Alexander Macdonell of the North-West Company coined the phrase "the New Nation" (42), in a widespread and ominously systematic attempt to raise the whole half-breed Community against the settlement. The "most violent and hostile spirit" (43) expressed by the North-westerners was communicated to the Metis. A series of acrimonious encounters ensued which culminated in the destruction of the North-West post at the Forks, and the resulting disastrous encounter at Seven Oaks.

The half-breeds, according to Cuthbert Grant's admission, had determined in any case to expel the colonists once more "on the grounds that their pretensions were inconsistent with the right of natural justice, both in respect to themselves and the North-West Company." (44). An encounter was therefore inevitable; but its occurrence when it did, and its deplorable results were due, partly to the ill-advised actions of Governor Sample, and largely to the uncontrollable temper of the Metis under the influence of their North-West leaders.

Interesting in view of later events is the recommendation of Commissioner Coltman in 1819 that in dealing with the Metis, due allowance be made "for the disturbed and hostile state of the country, which the half-breeds at least appear sincerely to have attributed to the attacks of the opposite party" (45). Further, he declares, "in their proceeding against the settlers (however illegal and violent) they may probably have acted under a mistaken sense of right, inconsistent with the existence of a felonious intent." (46). This may appear, in a sense, an admission of the claims of the Metis in respect to the land of the Red River Valley. At any rate, it constituted the recognition of a very obvious fact: that the half-breed element had coalesced into a guild which realized its power and the influence it might exert on the affairs of the North West. The amalgamation of the hostile Companies (March 26th, 1821) and the arrival of the Catholic Missionaries (July 15th, 1818) somewhat modified the aggressive nature of the Metis; but the hunting Breemen who took up small allotments of land in the neighborhood of the Church of St. Boniface, provided material for directing the events of a later day.

(42). Selkirk Papers, 1468, quoted by Martin, "Lord Selkirk's Work in Canada", p.108.

(43). Red River Papers, 1819-1858, p.176.

(44). Ibid, p.181.

(45). Ibid, p.192.

(46). Ibid, p.173.

CHAPTER III.

The Provencher Period, 1818-1850

1. The Roman Catholic Mission.

The amalgamation of the rival fur trading Companies and the reorganization of the Hudsons's Bay Company in 1821 marked the close of an epoch of intimate commercial relationship between Lower Canada and the Red River valley. The "nabobs" of the North-West Company now lost their picturesque power, and voyageurs ceased to ply back and forth, carrying supplies to the distant West and the fur harvest to headquarters in the East. The new corporation retired into its shell. All business was conducted by way of the sea route and Hudsons Bay, and the Company, withdrawn from the public eye by its traditional "back-door" policy, looked forward to the obscure development of the trade, and a period of quiescence in regard to the Charter. (1). The Red River Settlement, however, was not destined to seclusion apart from the Canadas. The connection which would have been broken at the disappearance of the North-West Company, was infinitely strengthened by the arrival in July, 1818, of two French Canadian missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church, bringing with them several French Canadian families, whose numbers, in those early days of want, merely added to the scarcity of food among the older settlers - the "philosophers, proselytes of the Diogenes doctrine of Stoicism." (2). We are to notice at this point the circumstances which favored the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church upon the Red River.

(a) The attitude of Lord Selkirk.

As in the case of all his achievements, so also in this, the motive behind Selkirk's support of the Catholic mission was a mélange of liberal sentiment and practical considerations. If the altruistic activities of his youth are kept in mind, and particularly his interest in Catholic emancipation, it is not difficult to understand how easily his sympathies were roused for the rude Métis, whose moral and religious condition was even more to be deplored than that of the Indians. "I am fully persuaded", he wrote, "of the infinite good which might be effected by a zealous and intelligent ecclesiastic among

- (1). The Memorandum of Guidance sent by Lord Selkirk's Executors to Governor Alex Macdonell in 1821, after explaining the course to be followed with regard to the Settlement, states: "One benefit from this will be discouraging or putting an end to all desire among the freemen and Canadians for an intercourse with Canada, which is most desirable to put a total stop to."--Oliver: Documents of the North-West, Vol. I, p.207.
- (2). Ferdinand Wentzell of the North-West Company, to Lieut. John McKenzie, Aug. 4th, 1818, given in Masson, Vol. II, p.152.

these people, among whom the sense of religion is almost entirely lost." (3). These were the sentiments of Selkirk at his best.

On the other hand the extremities to which the half-breeds were led by the North-Westerners in the preceding years, showed the necessity of affording a new outlet for the emotional side of their nature. In so far as they could be said to profess any particular religion, the French Metis and the free Canadians were Roman Catholics; and Selkirk could not fail to grasp the possibilities of the Catholic Church as a force for disciplined obedience, order and stability. This consideration doubtless played an important part in his plans for the future of the Settlement. That his aim was not solely to confer the sweets of religion upon the turbulent French Catholic element on the Red River, but also to transplant thither the whole stabilizing ecclesiastical tradition of old Quebec, appears from his desire to prevent the mission from falling within the sphere of the contemplated Roman Catholic diocese of Upper Canada. "I have recently heard it stated", he wrote to Bishop Plessis of Quebec towards the end of 1818, "that there is some probability of Upper Canada being constituted a separate diocese. If this dismemberment should take place, I hope that Red River will still remain within the diocese of Quebec". (4).

Lord Selkirk's good-will towards the mission was intensified, moreover, by the whole-hearted concurrence of his Lieutenant on the spot. Miles Macdonell, who resumed his post as Governor of the Settlement soon after the affray at Seven Oaks, was a Catholic; and perhaps this fact explains the dispatch with which the plans for the establishment were carried out. "You know, Monseigneur", he wrote to Bishop Plessis, "that there can be no stability in the government of states or kingdoms, unless religion is made a corner-stone. The leading motive of my first undertaking the management of that arduous though laudable enterprise, was to have made the Catholic religion the prevailing faith of the Settlement". (5).

As a result of such religious zeal and the desire for stability, a petition was caused to be signed by some twenty French half-breeds in the fall of 1816, which was despatched to the Bishop of Quebec, the messenger being accompanied by Mr. Samuel Gage, who went to assure the Bishop of Lord Selkirk's concurrence. Within a year all details were settled. Selkirk granted to the mission a tract of land 4 miles by 5 miles at the Mouth of the Seine River, as well as a lot 15 chains square

(3). To Plessis, April 4th, 1816. Quoted by Morice, Vol. I, p. 81.

(4). Quoted by G. Dugas: "Mgr. Provencher", p. 83.

(5). April 4th, 1816. Quoted by Morice, Vol. I, p. 89.

on the west side of the Red. The Reverend Fathers Provencher and Dumoulin left Lower Canada under the protection of an officer of the Indian Department, and under the patronage of Governor Sherbrooke himself. On July 15th 1818 they arrived at Fort Douglas.

(b) The Attitude of Bishop Flessis.

The able Bishop Flessis of Quebec had just emerged victorious from a struggle to retain complete control of education in the hands of the Church; his victory being due to the War of 1812-1814. (6). The Catholic Church in Canada now entered upon a period of consolidation and expansion of which the establishment of the Red River Mission was but one phase. Bishop Flessis met the views of Lord Selkirk in every particular. Religion and good order, he promised, would go hand in hand "dans cette endroit abandonnée jusqu'à présent à tous les désordres qu'engendrent l'ignorance et l'irreligion". (7). He grasped the fact that the mission "peut devenir d'une importance incalculable au vaste territoire que l'environne" (8), and was from the first determined to take measures to establish a permanent clergy, "qui puisse se soutenir et se perpétuer lui même". (9). One of his first injunctions to the Missionaries was that they were to concentrate their efforts upon bringing back into the fold "les mauvaises chrétiens... qui vivent dans le license et dans l'oubli de leur devoirs". (10).

(c) The Attitude of the Fur Trade interests to the Roman Catholic Church.

The attitude of the North-West Company to the new Catholic Mission was not at all friendly. In the early stages of the negotiations, when it had been proposed to establish a mission at Lac la Pluie, the heads of the concern had been favorable to the project. But Lord Selkirk was making a strong bid for a mission at Red River, and to an establishment under the auspices of their inveterate rival, in his own settlement, the North-Westerners were totally opposed. Indeed, as the project was being consummated, there were not wanting some to accuse both Lord Selkirk and the Catholic Church of ulterior motives (11)

- (6). See the Catholic Encyclopedia, article "Canada", by A. Fournet.
- (7). To Gale, Feb. 11, 1818. Quoted by Dugas: "Mgr. Provencher", p.42
- (8). To Selkirk, March 1818. Quoted *ibid*, p.50.
- (9). To Father Tabeau, March 8th, 1818. Quoted *ibid* p.47.
- (10). The instructions to the missionaries are quoted in extense by Dugas, p.55.
- (11). Cf. Provencher to Flessis, Sept. 13, 1818: "Lettres", p.32: "Il paraît qu'un défenseur du Nord-Ouest voudrait donner à entendre que des vues d'intérêt nous avaient conduits dans ces régions lointaines."



As late as March 1821, it appears from the correspondence of Mgr. Provencher, the North-Westerners of Montreal were not entirely reconciled. (12).

On the spot, nevertheless, the relations between the mission and the two companies during the first few years were very pleasant. (13). The only break in the good understanding of those years occurred with the passage of John Halkett through the Settlement. This gruff but upright man could not get along with Roman Catholics, and his visit was felt by the missionaries as a chill wind. In accordance with the Hudson's Bay policy of concentrating the half-breeds at Red River (14), and more particularly because Pembina was found to be on American territory, Halkett peremptorily ordered the withdrawal of the Catholic Missionary from that place. The friendly Governor Bulger was commanded to cease supplying the mission with wine; and the reduction of the settlers' debts by 20 per cent in consequence of the "Grasshopper" Governor's maladministration, was not extended to the mission. So that in the summer of 1823 Provencher wrote, "notre position n'est pas des plus agréables. (15).

With the advent of George Simpson as Governor of the new Hudson's Bay Company, a distinct change occurred in the attitude to the Red River Settlement as well as to the Catholic Mission. The ridicule at first poured upon the primitive community by the Fur Trade officials gave place to more serious considerations. As the Settlement increased in population, and an ever increasing number of improvident French Métis began to take to the plains simultaneously with a relative contraction of the beaver market, dire poverty ensued among the hunting class, conducing the dissatisfaction and disorder (16). Their chief object being the peaceful prosecution of their trade, the conviction began to force itself upon the high officials of the Company that only by means of the good-will of the populace could the regulations laid down be peacefully maintained, and "substantial justice" (17) administered. The Roman Catholic Church appeared as the sole means of regulating the conduct of the uncontrollable hunters; and the idea was conceived in the astute brain of Governor Simpson, of a miniature Concordat between Church and State, between the Company and the Catholic mission - tacit but none the less effective - in the interests of stability.

(12). Cf. March 1st, 1821, "Lettres", p. 50.

(13). Cf. "Lettres", July and August, 1818, pp. 23, 25; also June, 1819. p. 35, etc.

(14). See "Minutes of the Council of Ruperts Land", Feb. 27, 1822 Oliver, "Documents", p. 636.

(15). "Lettres", p. 87.

(16). See Ross: "The Red River Settlement..." p. 166.

(17). See letter of Coleville to Halkett, May 31, 1822, Oliver: "Documents", p. 221.

Some such influence was indeed essential to the Company; for their monopoly was ever an object of attack by Free Traders at home, who would make great capital of any reported dissatisfaction among the people subject to the Company's sway. Nor was such dissatisfaction wanting. The misery prevalent in the settlement during the first decade of the new Company's existence led to many an attack upon the trade restrictions. In 1824 the economic discontent of the population was particularly marked. "Such is the feeling against the Company" wrote Simpson, "that I believe it would have been a satisfaction to the majority of the inhabitants had the evils we apprehended taken place". (18). The Governor was convinced that only by means of shrewd management could the Settlement be prevented from proving the ruin of the trade. The "management" took the form of a strong police force, and, later on, of massive fortresses; it also took the form of an attempt to monopolize and use to the Company's advantage the well-known influence of the Roman Catholic Church upon its adherents.

As early as 1823 Governor Simpson urged that the Catholic Bishop be made a Councillor (19), but although this recommendation was not acted upon for some time, other means of creating amity with the Church were used. A grant of \$50 to the Catholic Church; along with a supplementary grant of sugar, wine, tea, and other luxuries was made annually until 1835, when, with the assumption by the Company of full authority over the Settlement, the grant was doubled. (20). In the same year Bishop Provencher was "invited to attend" the meetings of the Council of Assiniboia, "and requested to assist with his advice and its deliberations". (21). Two years later Provencher was made a full-fledged Councillor, almost in the same breath as new arms were ordered for the police force guarding the Company's monopoly of the Fur Trade. (22).

These manifestations of good will as well as the use of the Company's transportation facilities freely accorded to the Catholic missionaries, and the pleasant personal relationships between Governor Simpson and Bishop Provencher, created an atmosphere of amity, between the Company and the Church. "Nous sommes assez bien dans l'esprit de ceux que nous connaissons ici", wrote Provencher (23). But the view is suggested that the

(18). To Coleville, May 31, 1824, Oliver, "Documents", p.258.

(19). To Coleville, Sept, 8th, 1823, Ibid, p. 257.

(20). Minutes of the Council of Rupertsland. Ibid. p.653.

(21) Minutes of the Council of Assiniboia, Feb. 12 1835, Ibid,p.266.

(22). Ibid, p.279

(23). June 12th, 1835. "Lettres", p.102.

high praise bestowed upon the work of the Mission by Governor Simpson as well as by certain Governors of Assiniboia (24), as also the money grants in aid given "de son propre mouvement" (25), while actuated largely by the concrete good done by the zealous Catholic Missionaries, were to a great extent the result of the paternal attitude adopted by the Company towards the Church; in the hope that the chafing of the turbulent Métis against the Monopoly would thereby be restrained and silenced.

What leads one to be convinced of this astute policy of the Company is the fact that while there was never a break in the benevolent attitude towards the Church at Red River proper not so with the rest of Rupertsland. On March 7th 1838 the London Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company issued an order that "neither the Protestant nor the Catholic missionaries would be encouraged or assisted in extending their labors beyond the limits of the Colony, without special consent" (26). This was but giving formal expression to a course of action already pursued for some years. In 1837 a Catholic missionary was refused permission to use the Company's boats to Athabasca (27). At the same time the Company declined to lend their support to the projected Catholic mission on the Columbia (28). Foreign priests began to be regarded with disfavor (29), and the order of the Committee in respect of the spread of missions was enforced "en propos terms". (30).

Apparently the Company was not in favor of fostering further missions and the settlements which missions involved. The evidence of Rev. G. O. Corbett in 1857 (31) was borne out by the policy in this respect. But at Red River Settlement, the centre of the Free-Trader half-breed community, where lay the greatest danger to the Company's chartered rights, the relations with the Church were uniformly cordial. Grants continued to be made as usual, and special grants were cheerfully donated in case of

(24). Cf. extract of letter from Governor Simpson "Lettres" pp. 102, 103. Cf. also, *ibid.*, pp. 117-118. Cf. also extract from Governor Kelly's letter, *ibid.*, p. 111.

(25). To panet, June 6, 1829 "Lettres" p. 126.

(26). "Quoted by Morice, Vol. I. p. 157.

(27). Provencher to Signay, July 4th, 1837. "Lettres", p. 157.

(28). Governor Simpson, however, took pains to assure Bishop Provencher that the refusal to co-operate was due not to ill will, but to the fear of trouble when two religions should clash. "Should such apprehension be hereafter removed through the reports of the Company's officers on the west side of the mountains, I feel myself at liberty to assure your lordship of our best support and assistance towards the accomplishment of your benevolent views". Quoted by Provencher (to Signay), April 17th, 1837) "Lettres", p. 164.

(29). Provencher to Signay, from London, January 19th, 1836, "Lettres", pp. 147, 148.

(30). To the same, June 24th, 1840. *Ibid.*, p. 187.

(31). Cf. Report of the Select Committee of 1857, answer to question

need, such as that occasioned by the destruction of the Bishop's industrial school in 1859. The attitude which dominated these relations could not be more concisely indicated than by the words of Sir George Simpson at the death of Bishop Provencher in 1852. His highest tribute to his friend of thirty years was this: "In his public career he has shown himself the friend of order and good government, the promoter of every object which seemed likely to contribute to the general good, and a pillar of strength for the establishment authorities". (32).

## 2. CHURCH Policy Under BISHOP PROVENCHER

### (a) The attitude of the Church to the Fur Trade Interests

The advisability of establishing a permanent mission at Red River in 1818 was hotly debated in Lower Canada; public opinion as swayed by the Nabobs of the North-West Company being in general much opposed to the project. (33). The missionaries, therefore, came west as the favored children of Lord Selkirk, and this fact in conjunction with the course of events in the Settlement, led to the development of a church policy that can be traced without difficulty. Well realizing that the favor of the powers that be was largely the result of commercial and political necessity, the Church proceeded quietly at first, and subsequently with considerable frankness, to lay the basis for what it considered was to the best interests of Roman Catholicism. As early as 1821 the leaders in the Church had grasped the fact of the potential importance of the mission to the Red River Settlement. "Lord Selkirk" wrote Provencher, "a senti lui même...qu'il fallait une mission catholique pour civilizer les gens entièrement sauvages. La politique l'a porté à la demander, et la même raison portera ses successeurs à la favoriser". (34). Under these circumstances the Church could proceed "faire ici Marthe et Marie....conduire le spirituel et le temporel". (35).

The benevolent personal influence of Lord Selkirk ended with his death, and from that moment the mission's chief relations were with the Hudson's Bay Company. The policy pursued throughout by Bishop Provencher was one of whole-hearted willingness to avail himself of the Company's favor and protection, at the same time using every legitimate means in his power to extend

2694: "We have heard them state that if the missionaries and missionary settlements increase, chief factors and fur trading posts must decrease".

(32). quoted by Dugas, "Mgr. Provencher", p.288..

(33). Cf. letter of Provencher to Lartigue, quoted in Dugas: "Mgr. Provencher", p.110.

(34). quoted, *ibid*, p.110.

(35). See Provencher to the Bishop of Saltes, Nov.24th, 1819. "Lettres", p.41.

the influence of the Catholic Church, whether or not the Company's interests were thereby affected. The course to be followed was indeed well indicated in one of the first of Provencher's letters to his Bishop. He was not at all impressed by the personnel of the Company at the Forks, and wrote in semi-disparaging terms of their apathy and unpleasant dispositions. "Malgré cela", he continued, "nous ne laissons pas d'en tirer des services. Quand ce ne serait que l'avantage de faire venir de Montreal des effets par leur canots qui montent, sans charge, c'est beaucoup. Votre Grandeur s'apercevoit bien que ce recit ne doit pas être mis au jour".(36).

In the early years, particularly was a guarded church policy in evidence. There was no knowing what would be the position assumed by the newly reorganized Company with regard to the Roman Catholic Mission, and anxiety on that score was often expressed (37). Nothing was done to antagonize either of the parties contending for the control of affairs at the Settlement. In the controversy between Governor Bulger and Chief Trader Clarke, for instance, Provencher while thoroughly in accord with the friendly Governor, "qui est un brave homme et très estimé de tout le monde" (38), nevertheless appears to have declined the risk of losing the good will of the aggressive Chief Trader, whose ruffled feelings he astutely smoothed (39). As time went on, moreover, and under Governor Simpson's influence a closer touch was established between the Company and the Church, the same trend towards a self regarding friendship between the two powers could be seen. A tacit agreement appears to have been entered into. Whilst the Church labored to introduce order into the nomadic and unregulated life of its flock, the Company with grants of money and with its transport facilities aided in the extension of the influence of the Catholic Church over the North West. Only rarely did the incoming missionaries travel great distances at the expense of the Church, and the latter realized the advantages it was deriving from the arrangement. Hence the cordiality between the heads of the Church and the Company. From

(36). To Flessis, January 15th, 1819. "Lettres", p.35.

(37). Cf. letter to same, November 29, 1822. "Lettres", p.81.

(38). To same, July 16th, 1823. "Lettres", p.67.

(39). Cf. the double reprimand contained in the following extract from a letter of the Committee at London to Governor Simpson: May 31st, 1823: "Further, Mr. Clarke had no right or authority to call upon the Catholic Bishop to issue any notice respecting the rights of the Company, and the Bishop ought not to have complied with his demand without the sanction of the Governor". Oliver Documents, p.241.

London the watchful Bishop Provencher sent his warning to a number of new missionaries, unacquainted with the conditions in the North West: "La Compagnie leur sera d'un grand secours; qu'ils donnent garde de se brouiller avec ses agents. Il faut quel-quefois fermer les yeux sur ce qu'on ne peut empêcher.... Ils pourront s'informer à la Rivière Rouge sur la conduite qu'on a tenue là envers les blancs et les noirs. Nous avons eu le bonheur de tomber de suite dans le chemin, et je n'ai jamais été obligé de changer le pratique, malgré les consultations et les réponses de Rome Ou ailleurs". (40).

Sentiments such as these suggest the opposite of a perfectly open and frank connection with the Company, indeed with the settlement at large. Who were the "blancs" and who the "noirs"? What was the aim of this Church policy, which taught the philosophical acceptance of what could not be prevented, and phases of which required discussion with Rome and other centres? The conclusion to be drawn seems to be that the Company was being used as a means to a certain end.

The time arrived, indeed, when the Church openly defied the Company's orders. We have seen that the later 30's witnesses a diminution in the Company's support of extensive missionary operations; and from this point there is to be noticed a stronger and more aggressive position assumed by the Church. The Company's positive prohibition of all missionary activities in the Rocky Mountain region, was disregarded. "Que va dire ce brave gouverneur en voyant que nous n'avons pas respecté ses défenses?" wrote Provencher to Bishop Signay. (41). The consciousness of power expressed in this query was justified. Not only were the Company's orders disregarded on occasion, but attempts were made to force the Company into granting certain concessions. "It is useless to remind your Committee", wrote the Canadian Bishops on behalf of Provencher early in 1851, after the Company had refused to sanction the establishment of a Catholic mission at York Factory, -- "It is useless to remind your Committee of the powerful motives which your honourable Company has to use its charter with such moderation that it may not result in complaints against the immense privileges which it enjoys". (42). This veiled threat following hard upon the practical destruction of the Company's Fur Trade monopoly, is a significant landmark, showing the change in the position of the Catholic Church at Red River backed by the whole Canadian hierarchy. It predicted the rejection of Provencher's earlier plea (43) in favor of more direct self assertion in the affairs of the North-West.

(40). June 19th, 1836. "Lettres", p.147.

(41). To Bishop Signay, Janx 2nd, 1843, "Lettres", p.212.

(42). Quoted by Morice, Vol. II, p.232.

(43). Cf. letter to Signay, June 25th, 1840, "Lettres", p.187: "... Ménages pourtant cette Compagnie qui aime plus sa gloire que celle de Dieu."

Nevertheless, the period of Bishop Provencher's rule, regarded as a whole, was one of consistent co-operation between the Church and the Company. In spite of occasional temporary misunderstandings, wrote Bishop Taché, "les membres de l'honorable Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, non seulement nous ont rendu service, mais même dans bien des circonstances, se sont montrés des amis sincères et dévoués". (44). The tradition has remained, and French Catholic scholars still write in retrospective praise of the period in which the Company's Council of Assinibolia "formed a patriarchal government wherein the requirements of morality, justice and good citizenship were not any more forgotten than the claims of the great Corporation to which it was due". (45).

(b) The Catholic Mission and the Protestants.

Evidence points to the fact that theoretically at least, the missionaries were expected to attempt proselytization among the Protestants of the Settlement. The desire was, of course, to maintain as far as possible a Catholic monopoly on the banks of the Red River. Thus, "pour retarder l'introduction des ministres protestants en ce pays", Provencher on January 15th, 1819 asked his bishop for authority to marry Catholics and Protestants. (46). Five months later he wrote to Quebec, "Voyez à ce que le missionnaire et l'ecclésiastique qui monteront ici le printemps prochain, sachent l'anglais, afin de pouvoir non seulement se rendre utiles aux catholiques qui ne parlent que cette langue, mais encore pour attirer de la part des protestants plus d'honneur à la religion et à ses ministres". (47). By 1829, however, Provencher has given up hope of making any extensive conquests among the Protestants. "Il n'ya point d'esperance de conversion de protestants par ici. Ils sont tous très attachés à leur croyance, et ils font même les devots". (48). The Catholic Church thereafter confined its attention to its French half-breed and Indian flocks.

(c). The Church and the Métis.

The finer phases of the life of the French Métis were undoubtedly the direct result of the work of the Roman Catholic missions; but in dealing with them, the Church of St. Boniface was burdened with a weighty problem. The deplorable condition in which the first missionaries found the bulk, of the bois-brûlés has been noticed on a former page, and the later additions to the Catholic population did but accentuate the difficulties. While the small groups of Canadian families

(44). "Vingt Annes de Missions", p.41.

(45). Morice, Vol. I. p.152.

(46). To Plessis, "Lettres", p.33.

(47). "Lettres". p.41

(48). To Panet, July 1st, 1829, "Lettres", p.129.

arriving in 1815 and 1818 were more or less agricultural, the rest of the newcomers were almost exclusively of the shiftless hunting and fishing class. The bulk of the increase in the Catholic population, in the first decade of the mission was, indeed, due not to external immigration, but to the Company's policy of concentrating all discharged servants and the numerous abandoned half-breed urchins, at the Forks of the Red River. (49). In these years the work of the missionaries was complicated by the diversity of race within the Catholic ranks, but with the departure of the Neurons the Catholic element was consolidated, and the influence of the French Canadian priests could be more easily exerted.

Considering their slender means, Bishop Provencher and his assistants applied themselves with admirable zeal to the work of infusing into the unsettled and improvident plainsmen a desire for a more civilized form of existence. They concentrated their efforts upon teaching the Métis to cultivate the soil; but the measure of their success was small indeed. The Métis were wedded to the life of the plains, and nothing that the priests could do had the power of bringing them to the land. Provencher's correspondence resounds with disappointment at being unable to effect his purpose. "The Métis families," he wrote "are at regular intervals in a starving condition, yet, this misery cannot overcome "leur paresse et fainéantise". (50). In 1845 after almost thirty years of preaching Bishop Provencher admitted the failure of his efforts in this respect. "Mais qui est-ce qui fera entendre a ces gens-la," he exclaims, "qu'il faut tirer sa vie de la terre! Il faut travailler pour cela, c'est ce qu'il n'aiment pas." (51). The census returns of Assiniboia illustrate the truth of the Bishop's complaint. That of 1838, for example, discloses the fact that in the Lower Settlement alone, while 1590 Protestants cultivated with much efficiency 2057 acres of land, 1566 Catholics made a half-hearted attempt at the cultivation of 937½ acres. (52).

This deplorable reluctance of the Plainsmen to turn to settled husbandry was so distasteful to the Company as it was contrary to the aims of the Church. On the one hand the freedom of prairie life fostered that turbulent attitude which made chronic attacks upon the Company's monopoly and finally destroyed it; while on the other hand the work of civilization which it was the primary object of the Church to effect, was hampered by the same mode of life. When it was seen that during the periods of the hunt, the Settlement was almost entirely emptied of its Catholic population, the priests began to follow their wandering flock out on the prairies. (53). But under these circumstances:

(49). See Minutes of the Council of Rupertsland, Feb. 27th, 1822. Oliver, Documents, p. 636.

(50.) Feb. 2nd, 1826. "Lettres", pp. 111, 112.

(51). To Signay, June 20th, 1845. Ibid, p. 240.

(52). See original Census of Assiniboia, 1838, Legislative Library, Winnipeg.

(53). Cf. Provencher to Flessis, Sept, 1, 1822. "Lettres", p. 78. Cf. also Provencher to Baldeu, Nov. 24, 1819, ibid, p. 43.



though in the ordinary affairs of conduct the influence of a strong-minded priest soon became paramount, "les moeurs et l'education chretienne souffrent beaucoup dans tous les voyages qu'ils font...pour subsister". (54). Moreover, not only were the hunters less amenable to the influence of the Church (55), but their mode of life rendered them the poorest and most inconsequent element in the Red River population

Although the Church failed to stabilize the French Catholic element along economic lines, it did succeed in drawing that element closely about itself. Being in thorough sympathy with the ever present thought in the minds of the French Metis that they were the rightful masters of the soil of the North West (56), the Church followed the example of the mother institution of Quebec, and constituted itself, as far as it was able, the protector and the leader of its flock. Strong attempts were made by the Church to emulate the Quebec policy of forming a native ecclesiastically trained intelligentsia of education, and creating a native clergy, by giving special instruction to certain promising boys, and later on by sending promising subjects East for a free course in one of the Catholic Seminaries. (57). The clergy have long been the natural leaders of the French Catholic population of Canada; and at Red River, too, more perhaps from the very nature of their social organization and tradition than from any excess of religious zeal, the French Metis rallied round their priests, forming a community distinct from that of the British inhabitants. All observers join in praise of the admirable relations of amity between the English and French-speaking communities, but we cannot help feeling that the state of affairs resembled more a condition of cordiality between two adjacent

(54). June 18th, 1828. Ibid, p.123.

(55). In his Report to the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, 184<sup>5</sup> Provencher deploras this fact. "Ce qui est plus malheureux encore pour l'avenir du pays", he states, "c'est que la jeunesse s'élève sans instruction, et est très disposée à se depraver". See "Lettres". p.258

(56). Of. Provencher's view of John Halkett's failure to make provision for the half-breeds whom he had forced to leave Pembina. "Il me semble pourtant que des gens accoutumés au pays, et qui y sont nés, devraient être encouragés de preference à des gens qu'on fait venir d'Europe". The allusion here is to the arrangements made for the welfare of the Selkirk Settlers. "Lettres", p.88.

(57). Note Provencher's efforts in this direction. Of his few chosen pupils he writes, "Je les pousse autant que je puis pour en tirer service" (June 1st, 1824, "Lettres", p.94)... "Dieu veuille qu'il ne m'échappent point.." (ibid). In spite of this however, not in the lifetime of Provencher, nor during that of his successor, was a half-breed or Indian elevated to the Catholic priesthood. See Morice, Vol. I. p.124.

countries, that the friendly intercourse between the inhabitants of one small and isolated settlement. "There is in general a great and decided want of political unity and among parties in Red River" wrote Alexander Ross of this period (58). The unifying influence of the Roman Catholic Church, operating upon the facts of race and creed, though apparently of no particular importance in time of quiescence, was fraught with possibilities in times of tumult.

(d). The Educational Work of the Church.

Three days after his arrival at the Forks, Rev. Mr. Provencher established a religious school, and within a year the schools at Pembina and St. Boniface were attended by more than one hundred children. These establishments were a blessing to the North West, being the first in which the ignorant *Mc'd's* were taught the rudiments of writing and reading; but it must be said that the missionaries placed more stress upon the formality of evangelization and the knowledge of the catechism, than upon education as we know it. Bishop Provencher never tired of complaining about Rev. Mr. Belcourt's mania for building schools and experimental stations. "Je crois qu'il aurait mieux fait de suivre ce que dit Jesus Christ: allez, prechez, etc., et non allez faire l'ecole" (59). Although in this particular instance the criticism was perhaps warranted, the statement shows an attitude towards education which the young Father Tache also evinced when he gloried in the fact that some of his Indian converts "ont appris toutes les prieres necessaires à la recitation du Chapelet, et cela en français quoiqu'ils ne sachent pas cette langue". (60).

But although the basic principles of enlightening education and conversion did not live up to the present standard, it must be said that within the bounds ~~of the bounds~~ of the Settlement, at any rate, the course of instruction offered in the later years of Bishop Provencher's rule was very creditable. Not only were the pupils, from the very first taught reading and writing as well as religion, but, as has been noted, advanced tuition was given by the Bishop and his assistants to students who gave signs of promise. As early as 1823 a good classics course was provided for these favored few. In July of the following year Provencher wrote to Quebec for copies of Sallust, Horace, Virgil and Cicero. (61). But the conclusion of Abbe Dugas (62) that this demand constitutes proof of a thoroughly adequate educational

(58). Red River Settlement, p.180.

(59). To Signay, Sept. 4th, 1834. "Lettres", p.142

(60). To his mother, July 31, 1846. Quoted by Benoit, "Vie de Mgr. Tache" Vol. I, p.113. Cf. also his letter of Jan. 20, 1848. "Tous les sauvages avaient déjà leur prières en français, quoiqu'ils ne comprissent pas un mot de cette langue". Ibid p.143.

(61). "Lettres", p.98.

(62). "Mgr. Provencher", p.133.

system throughout, may be questioned. The children were catechized again and again; the Bishop himself would show his zeal by stopping in his walks to hear prayers recited by any trampling urchin he might meet (63); but education as it is known to-day was much restricted; and perhaps under the circumstances it could not be otherwise. (64).

It was not until towards the end of Bishop Provencher's Episcopacy that Catholic education was firmly established in the West. The arrival of more priests and particularly the advent in 1844 of the Grey Nuns of Montreal began an era of zealous educational and charitable operations. In 1845 Provencher's plans for a religious order in his diocese were consummated by the arrival of the first two Oblate Fathers. By 1851 a prosperous girls' school was giving instruction not only in the ordinary school subjects, but also in Music and Art.

By far the most important contribution offered by the Catholic Church to its flock in the Settlement was industrial training. The Bishop himself led the way in the matter of agricultural experimentation, importing trees and plants and machines of various kinds. The school for girls in 1829 under the management of Mile. Molin, early began to give instruction in the art of weaving; while by arrangement with Sir George Simpson a separate school of weaving under Canadian experts was established in 1838. In 1838 Rev. Mr. Belcourt set up an experimental farm at Baie St. Paul with the object of promoting agriculture, which, unfortunately failed in its purpose. The efforts of the Bishop on behalf of industrial education were recognized by the Council of Assiniboia in 1845, when Provencher was made chairman of a Committee of Economy "to encourage by premiums and otherwise the improvement of manufactures and such branches of agriculture as might bear on such improvements, either by producing materials or by saving time". (65). When this committee submitted its report two years later, the secretary, John Britchard, made particular mention of the Bishop's zeal. (66).

(e). The Reaction of the French Metis.

The labors of the Church, therefore, directed so zealously at improving the standard of living among the Catholic half-breeds, never produced the results that one might have expected. Though thoroughly united about their priests, the Freemen did not during the period now under consideration, change their attitude with regard to the Company. Twice annually they elected their captains and left for the hunt, starving when the buffalo failed, dissipating when the harvest was good. Their chron

(63). Ibid, p.137.

(64). Cf. Bishop Provencher's admission, "Notre école n'est pas brillante". June 18, 1828. "Lettres", p.121.

(65). Minutes of the Council of Assiniboia, June 19, 1845, Oliver, "Documents", p.320.

(66). Minutes of the Council of Assiniboia, June 28, 1847, Ibid, p.337.

state of poverty was a constant cause of friction with the Company, against whose monopoly of the Fur Trade they turned again and again. Whether they were goaded by their misery or under the influence of interested parties, (67), there was no power in the Settlement to withstand them, and it is perhaps due to the Church alone that disorders were as rare as they were.

In 1834 the clannish unity of the Metis was evinced when a large mob of them demanded the head of Thomas Simpson, a Hudson's Bay clerk who had chastised one of their number for insolence. Only the influence of the popular Abbe Belcourt could pacify them. In 1847 a petition to the Queen against the Company was drafted in English and in French, the latter by the same Free-trade Pere Belcourt. "Nous sommes pres de la ligne territoriale", announced the Abbe, "nous pourrions nous ranger sur le territoire voisin; nous y sommes invites; mais nous admirons la sagesse de la Constitution Britannique, et nous en desirons les privileges". (68). For his activity in this connection Belcourt was forced to leave the North-west for a time.

In 1849 occurred the trial of the half-breed Sayer on the charge of infringing on the Fur Trade, which really marked the end of the Company's monopoly. By that time the concerted action of the Metis in forcing the hand of the Court, made it obvious that a distinct, unassimilable, united French element was in existence. The "nation" idea was given official expression: the half-breeds' demand for a lower import duty was granted, and the French language was admitted into the Courts on an equality with English.

The Church accommodated itself to these changes. While apparently inclined to favor the Company, and voting in favor of retaining the regular troops in the Settlement (69), the Bishop as well as his clergy nevertheless rejoiced in the rise of the power and influence of the Catholic element. And let it be suggested at this point that the realization of the power of the half-breeds in the middle of the 19th century set thinking the astute and far seeing heads of the Church, who first formulated the idea which was later carried out, establishing on the banks of the Red River a miniature Quebec with vested interests and Statute rights for the Catholic population.

(67). Rev. C-A. Belcourt was the only Roman Catholic priest who avowed Free Trade sympathies. He was much disliked by Bishop Provencher.

(68). Correspondence Relative to the Complaints of the Red River Settlers, p.5. (Blue Book, 1849).

(69). Minutes of the Council of Assiniboia, Nov. 18, 1847 and July 27th, 1848, Oliver, "Documents", pp.340 and 344.

(f) The Red River Church as a unit in the Catholic structure

The great distance which separated the Church at Red River from the mother diocese did not preclude its being a vital unit in the structure of Quebec Catholicism. The establishment of the Western mission was, in fact, one of the indirect results of the successful assertion of special privileges by the leaders of the Catholic Church in Quebec, and throughout the whole Red River period the connection between the two branches of the Church was the closest possible. That this should be so, was inevitable; for just as New France had depended upon Old France for its clergy, so did Red River and the West look to Lower Canada for their clergy. The work of instruction, the building of churches and schools, required large sums which could not be obtained from the inhabitants "qui a dire vrai sont très pauvres" (70), but had to be sought in the East. Moreover, apart from the financial reasons for close intercourse; there was the fact that the missionaries brought with them to the Red River the whole ecclesiastical tradition peculiar to Quebec. Provencher would have the Bishops of all the newly projected North Western dioceses drawn from the Diocese of Quebec "afin d'introduire sa discipline et ses usages dans toute l'immense étendue des possessions britanniques de l'Amérique du Nord" (71). "Nous sommes une branche bien éloignée du tronc", he wrote on another occasion, "nous n'y tenons pas moins par des fortes liens". (72).

The same sentiment prevailed even after 1844 when Provencher became Vicar Apostolic of the North West, and as such, entirely independent of the See of Quebec. The successive Bishops of that diocese followed the example set by Bishop Plessis, of sending to the distant mission detailed particulars of all events and negotiations affecting the Canadian Catholic Church; as a result of which, says Dugas, "l'évêque de la Rivière Rouge, quoique bien éloigné de Québec, fut toujours parfaitement au courant de tous les événements politiques et religieux qui eurent lieu à cette époque". (73).

Thus not only was Bishop Provencher such under the influence of the heads of the Church in Lower Canada, but he on his part was able to exert considerable influence over church affairs. As early as 1827 was he mentioned as successor to Bishop Panet of Quebec (74). On two occasions he went to Europe as envoy of the Canadian hierarchy, and both voyages were followed by important changes in the Canadian Catholic Church. In 1835

(70). To Signay, Sept. 4th, 1834, "Lettres", p.141.

(71). To Signay, quoted by Dugas, "Mgr. Provencher", p.198.

(72). To Plessis, July 31, 1818.

(73). Dugas, "Mgr. Provencher", p.144.

(74). cf. letter to Panet June 22nd, 1827, "Lettres" p.119.

Provencher brought to a successful conclusion the negotiations with London relative to the creation of a separate Bishopric of Montreal (75), the results of which, as seen in the attitude of the Catholic clergy to the Papineau rising in the following year, are hard to estimate correctly (76). In 1843 Provencher was once again in Europe, attempting to heal the breach between the Propagation of the Faith Council at Lyon, and the daughter Council at Quebec. The sharp disagreement between the two bodies relative to the control of funds was endangering the generous grant annually made by the Lyon Council to the Red River Church, and perhaps the difficulty attending the settlement of this disagreement hastened the erection of the North West into an independent Vicariate-apostolic.

The connection between Red River and the Church of France was almost as intimate as with that of Quebec. Indeed in attempting to act as intermediary between the different ecclesiastical traditions of Old France and New, Provencher was but entering upon the course which was to characterize the policy of his successor. The greater share of the funds for the Church of St. Boniface came from across the water (77), and as early as 1839 Bishop Provencher cast his eyes upon France as a clergy supply source. "Des Français" he wrote "seront plus stables et pourvoient plus facilement aux besoins des missions" (78). Indeed, in 1842 it had been decided "à Rome entre Mgr. de Montreal et le general des Jésuites que vous aurait bientôt des Jésuites pour auxiliaires". (79). But the legal difficulties attending the unwarranted return of the Jesuits to Canada prevented their spread to the West, and it was not until 1845 that the Church felt able to brave the Company's displeasure at admitting foreign priests into their domains. As the arrival of the French Oblate Pere Aubert in that year remained unnoticed by the authorities, "Mgr. Provencher

(75). See letter to Signay, from Rome, April 1st, 1836. "Lettres", p. 149.

(76). Notice the strong stand taken by Provencher in favor of Rev. Mr. Bourget as first Bishop of Montreal. Cf. letter to Signay, April 12th, 1837, in which he enumerates the qualifications of Bourget, "pour la nomination duquel j'insiste".

(77). Cf. Dugas, "Mgr. Provencher", p. 219.

(78). To Signay, July 8th, 1839, "Lettres", p. 183.

(79). Bishop of Quebec to Provencher, quoted by Dugas, p. 205.

ne regarda plus aux nationalités pour accepter des pretres dans son diocese". (80). The doors were flung wide open. Oblate after Oblate arrived from France, until the diocese came wholly under their control. The progress of the French Catholic diocese of St. Boniface under its Oblate Bishop Alexander Tache, will be traced in the following pages.

(80). Dugas Mgr. Provencher, p. 247.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE TACHE PERIOD.

After the death of Bishop Provencher in 1852 the stage of French Canadian politics in the North-West was for more than forty years, dominated by the figure of Alexander Taché, second Bishop of St. Boniface. Endowed with a splendid intellect and fortified by an unusual power of gaining the confidence of his flock, Taché was able to master with the hand of a statesman, the forces operating to bring about the existence of a strong Catholic Church organization in the West. His inclinations, his family connections, his traditions were all in favor of a distinct religious and political life for the French in Canada, and he mingled with his love of the Métis a greater love for his Church as established in his native province of Quebec. There the Church had early achieved a predominant influence in political affairs, and throughout the 19th century consistently availed itself of the need of the Government for support, to safeguard its own privileges and extend them. (1). Particularly after the publication of Lord Durham's prophecy that the French Canadian nationality was fated to disappear from the face of the earth, was there a noticeable tendency among the habitants to increase and multiply, and consolidate in an unassimilable mass about the curé as centre. Like a true French Canadian, Bishop Taché reacted to every event occurring in the East. "Le bruit de vos luttes électorales" he wrote to the titular Bishop of Tlca, "a retenté jusqu'ici.... Que Dieu protège notre chère patrie, et ne permette pas aux mauvaises passions d'y implanter de trop fortes racines". (2).

Whilst his brother was struggling in the political arena of Canada in behalf of special privileges for French Canadians in Quebec, Bishop Taché labored to lay a lasting foundation for similar privileges within his diocese. At Red River, as we have seen, the French language had been officially admitted into the courts; the French speaking community in a body, had again and again asserted its rights; the schools, where the child mind was early impressed with the exaltation of the clergy and the idea that "la vocation de la nation Canadienne - est d'être dans l'Amérique du Nord.... la fille aînée de l'Église soldat et missionnaire du Christ" (3), - these were entirely, under the control of the Church. It was Taché's destiny to try and impress upon "nos hommes d'état, de langue française.... aveugles sur nos intérêts, qui sont cependant ceux de la province de Québec..." (4), the fact that here in the West lay a new field for French Canadian enterprise, a region that might

- (1). Cf. the negotiations preceding the creation of the Diocese of Montreal, R. Sellar, "The Tragedy of Quebec", p.161.
- (2). March 7th, 1858, quoted by Benoit, "Vie de Mgr. Taché", Vol. I. p.378.
- (3). Ibid, Preface, p.16.
- (4). Letter to Archbishop Tascheran, June 22, 1871, quoted by Benoit, Vol. II. p.161.



be made as safe for Catholic French Canadians in a religious and political sense, as their old Province itself; a spot where his labors and those of his predecessor had succeeded in establishing a miniature structure of Catholic Quebec - a structure demanding for its continued existence the support of all true French Canadians.

Another and more elusive element entered into the character of Bishop Taché. Struggling in his mind with the politico-religious heritage of Quebec was his connection with the missionary Order of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. It was by the French founder of this Order that Taché was consecrated, and from him he received his episcopal inspiration. Obedience was to Taché, the acme of all Catholic virtues. "Le religieux s'en tient à l'ordre de ses supérieurs comme le soldat à la consigne de son général", he declared on one occasion.(5). Carried out in practice, what might be the effect on social and political, to say nothing of religious conditions, of strict obedience to a foreign prelate whose interests and influence were admittedly not limited by <sup>the</sup> religious horizon?

In the early years of his rule, at any rate, the influence of Old France upon Taché was very strong. At the feet of the Oblate Superior-general, Archbishop Mazenod of Marseilles, the youthful Taché spread his vast British diocese. "Je n'ai consenti à être évêque", he wrote in 1853, "qu'à la condition que je resterais dans la congrégation; aussi c'est au nom de la congrégation et pour elle que je veux administrer le diocèse... La Congrégation est évêque de St. Boniface".(6). Three years later he wrote a striking sentence expressing the same filial obedience to his Superior-general: "J'irai vous dire ce que nous sommes, ce que nous faisons, et votre Grandeur décidera ce que nous avons à faire, pour devenir ce que nous devons être". (7).

Yet it must be pointed out that in spite of the fact that during Bishop Taché's lifetime every new Bishop in what is now the North and West of Canada was consecrated in France; in spite of the fact that on the eve of the Riel Insurrection the fifty Oblates in the diocese, constituting more than ninety percent of the clergy, were almost without exception foreigners from France, the influence of the French clerics upon the political events of the West was negligible. With Bishop Taché himself, the enthusiasm and purely missionary zeal of the Oblate Order was always accompanied and finally superseded by the intimate knowledge of the French problem local to Canada, and the opportunity for French Catholics which he foresaw on the banks of Red River; but no such discernment could be expected on the

(5). quoted by Benoit, Vol. I, p. 209.

(6). To Archbishop Mazenod, July 21, 1853, quoted, *ibid*, Vol. I, p. 256.

(7). To same, Jan. 20, 1856. *Ibid*, Vol. I, p. 327.

part of priests newly arrived from a different environment. The nationalist clericalism of Quebec came into contact with the rather passive Catholicism of the new comers, and disagreement ensued, echoes of which sound faintly through Dom Benoit's careful volumes.(8). It will be noted that the clerical heroes of the Métis in 1869 were found not among the regular clergy from France, but among the secular curés of old Quebec.

1. Life at Red River and the growth of Church influence  
1849-1869.

The Sayer trial brought the conflict in the matter of Free Trade to a practical conclusion. Although they did not relinquish their claim to Monopoly, the Hudson's Bay Company no longer actively enforced it. The Settlement rested upon its laurels, and with more or less unrestricted trade entered upon a period of simple prosperity and rustic contentment which lasted more than seven years, and which constitutes the idyllic era of Red River history. This happy period was not brought to an end until the of the discussions involved in the operations of the Select Parliamentary Committee of 1857.

Freedom of trade gave added impetus to the commercial relations with Minnesota. Every year the Red River half-breeds crossed on horseback the wide expanse separating St. Paul from the last Settlement to the North of it (9), with trains of noisesome wooden carts to transport their trading goods. Among the French Métis the tendency to neglect agriculture was, if possible, accentuated. But the Company now had "little or no trouble with them"(10), they being apparently satisfied with their circumstances.

The conditions of government were extremely primitive. Claiming in theory unqualified and absolute power in all things the Company in reality exercised very little direct authority, except in matters affecting their trade. The theoretical proprietorship of the soil was never enforced, nor were the forbidding terms of the land grant/s adhered to.(11). In fact, given an opportunity to pursue the Fur Trade in peace, the Company was a most benevolent ruler, its autocracy being always much more serious affair on paper than it was in actual practice. Major Crime was almost unknown.

- (8). Cf. Benoit, Vol. I. p.295, where Tache' is defended by his biographer against the accusation "de partialité pour les missionnaires de nationalité canadienne", and the charge that he failed to make due provision for the worn out Oblates at the end of their services.
- (9). Sixteen days' journey according to John Ross' evidence. See Select Committee's Report, 1857, answer to question 52.
- (10). Sir George Simpson's evidence, *ibid*, answer to question 1627.
- (11). See *ibid*, Simpson's answer to questions 1204 and 1844.

"There really was no justice to administer. There was no crime", testified Col. Crofton in 1857. (12). Sir George Simpson could recall only nineteen major criminal cases in thirty seven years.

Yet, the uncertainty as to the Company's tenure of ownership, that very laxity which, though at no time seriously alarming to the inhabitants, could, on occasion, take such startling turns for severity, acted as a pall upon political development from within the Settlement, and material development from without. The absence of definite rights, be they of the sovereign or of the subjects, left room for an undercurrent of uncertainty which affected the very security of property (13). Hence, while multitudes were swarming into the territories south of the international boundary, the domains of the feudal lords of north-west British America were left severely alone.

The Red River Settlement was thus left almost entirely to its original English-speaking agricultural class and the French speaking hunting class. The opinions of all who knew the latter coincide in depicting the French half-breed as possessed of an essentially pleasant and sociable nature and a kindly disposition; but equally obvious were his improvidence and carelessness, both due to the nature of his occupations. Father Morice has attempted to invest the life of the plainsmen with a heroic atmosphere: "Trapping, hunting and chasing the buffalo had for them charms much superior to the cultivation of the few acres they had fenced in by their modest homes on the banks of the Red or the Assiniboine". (14). It was an attractive existence. But the true nature of the life of the French Metis cannot be conceived unless it is remembered that as often as not the hunter mortgaged all of his possible harvest even before setting out, in order to obtain from his more stable and less hilarious Scottish compatriot a horse, a cart, even a gun. (15).

During the hunting seasons authority was exercised over the free Metis by only two persons: the elected Captain of the Hunt, and the priest who went with them. As the representative of Divinity, the latter exerted a beneficent influence upon the lawless plains. He was a power for peace and order, and often prevented the shedding of blood when the

(12). Ibid, answer to question 3328.

(13). See evidence of Major Caldwell, ibid, answer to question 5528.

(14). History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada, Vol. I. p. 210.

(15). For a sketch of the typical half-breed huntsman see A. Ross, "The Red River Settlement", p. 94

buffalo hunters encountered hostile Indians. In some cases, indeed, strong-minded priests extended their sway over widespread Indian tribes as well. (16). Moreover, as time went on, and the Church gave up its efforts to induce the Métis to turn to agriculture, the half-breeds became increasingly susceptible to the influence of the wandering priests. Living from hand to mouth, making a mere apology for an attempt to cultivate their little plots, but depending for their subsistence on the meat of the gradually diminishing buffalo, supplemented by the returns from sporadic fishing trips and engagements as voyageurs in the summer time; credulous and rudely religious; ignorant of all forms of organization save that of which the priest was the oracle, they formed a mass upon which ecclesiastical influence could be used with great effect. True, the Church sometimes despaired of certain sections of its flock in relation to their ethics and morality (17), but in temporal matters the French half-breeds were "completely under the influence of priests, in most respects". (18). The Church did splendid work in keeping the French Metis within the pale of civilization; but their development as a body, was narrow, and never sufficed to raise them above dependence for their ideas upon the only educated man within their ken, the priest.

Before the arrival of the extreme type of Ontario Canadians in the 60's, there was perfect good-will between the English and the French-speaking inhabitants of Red River. Some French boys and girls even attended school across the river. (19). But as early as 1855 it was stated by Governor Caldwell, that only a few of the French half-breeds "associate on terms of equality with the pure white men". In fact, throughout the entire Red River period there was a noticeable tendency to segregation among the French in the Settlement, which conformed very well with the Quebec tradition of exclusive social, as well as political and religious, organization for Catholics. Archbishop Langevin has given definite expression to his own view, and therefore to the official Catholic view on this phenomenon, in a letter commending the work of Dom. Benoit, the biographer of his predecessor: "Si les catholiques veulent maintenir leur droits, s'ils ne veulent pas devenir des parias dans leur propre patrie, ils doivent non seulement s'unir à l'Eglise, autour de l'autel, mais ils doivent surtout s'organiser sans retard sur le terrain social. C'est une question de vie ou de mort". (20).

(16). Cf. Father Andre, Morice, Vol. II, p. 176.

(17). Cf. the *Portage la Pêche voyageurs*. J. J. Hargrave, "Red River", p. 107.

(18). Viscount Milton and Dr. Cheadle, "The North-West Passage by Land", p. 43.

(19). See the recollections of Miss Bonnerman and Mrs. Cowan in "Women of Red River", by W. J. Healy, pp. 86 and 160.

(20). This letter is incorporated as a Foreword in Benoit, Vol. I. See p. vii.

The object expressed in this excerpt had been accomplished in Quebec. What is more, on coming west Tache found that "les metis ont à peu pres les usages de nos vieux canadiens. Nous sommes parfaitement en famille" (21). Hence a similar policy would affect a similar result. The process of segregation was, of course, made much easier by the differences of race and religion, and by 1857 that process was quite complete. Across the River, stated former Governor Caldwell before the Select Committee in that year, "there is a Catholic cathedral and a bishop's house, and the priests are there. They keep the Catholics distinct on the opposite side of the River from Fort Garry. The Catholics are quite a distinct people among the half-breeds.... The great majority of them are unlearned". (22).

It has been pointed out that throughout the whole period under consideration, there was practically no immigration into the Red River Settlement. Bishop Tache's efforts at bringing Catholics westward, begun as early as 1856 (23), were not rewarded with success. Nevertheless, in 1857 the population of the settlement had risen to the neighborhood of 8000 souls (24). With the increase in population, the compact French element, led and directed by their faithful religious leaders, began to exert more and more influence; particularly as the Hudson's Bay Company, weary of strife about their charter, and conscious of their political weakness, realized with increasing force their dependence upon the good-will of the inhabitants of Red River. In the 50's, therefore, the Council of Assinibois became comparatively representative of the various classes in the community. The most influential French Metis were appointed Councillors; in 1855 Francois Bruneau, in 1857 Pascal Breland, Maximilien Centon and Solomon Hamelin. In 1858 Bishop Tache himself took his seat in the Council.

(21). Letter to his mother, Dec. 26, 1845, quoted by Benoit, Vol. I, p. 96.

(22). Select Committee's Report, 1857, answers to questions 5573 and 5581.

(23). Of Tache's defence of himself against the opponents of his immigration appeal in 1876: "En 1858 j'ai fait un chaleureux appel à nos compatriotes pour les inviter à venir ici..." Letter to Father Iacombe, April 25th, 1876, quoted by Benoit, Vol. II, p. 199.

(24). Evidence of Simpson, 1857, answer to questions 832 and 834.

At the same time under the direction of Bishop Tache the Church was spreading quickly across the continent, dotting the prairies and the snow fields with its churches and chapels. The success of Quebec Catholicism in maintaining its privileges acted as a stimulus to the operations of the Church in the West. Rebuked by his Oblate Superior for maintaining what were considered excessively high standards for the admission of savages into the Catholic fold, Tache "promit de recevoir plus facilement les neophytes à la participation de la chair et sang du Sauveur". (25). The expansion of Catholicism was not to be stopped by hostile individuals in the Hudson's Bay Company's service. By 1856 Tache was able to force Governor Simpson to consent to the admission of Father Farand to the Mackenzie Region, in spite of the efforts of Chief Factor Amerson to keep the territory Protestant (26).

In a former chapter it was pointed out that Bishop Provencher was earnest in his desire to keep the new diocese in conformity with the usages and discipline of Quebec. His successor transported the entire Quebec clerical policy to the Red River. Teaching Brothers arrived in 1854, and four years later Bishop Tache sent three promising young men to be educated in the ecclesiastical colleges of Quebec and Montreal. It is remarkable that of these three youths two later achieved fame in connection with the insurrection of 1869 - Louis Riel as President and Louis Schald as Secretary of the Provisional Government.

The Minutes of the Council of Assiniboia during this period reflect the success achieved by the Church in raising the Catholic religion and the French tongue to a position of recognized legal equality with the Protestant faiths and the English language. They also indicate a latent sectionalism which marked the French Catholic element as a people apart. From the management of the ferry, to the distribution of relief funds in 1868, Catholics and Protestants acted in complete and equal independence. (27). When in February 1860 the Council consented to refrain from sitting, and to prohibit the courts to sit on Catholic religious holidays (28), the Catholic faith was practically recognized by the State. When in July 1852, a motion was submitted granting \$15 to the Presbyterian Congregation, Rev. Mr. Lafleche seconded it, and then demanded, and was accorded an equal additional sum for the Catholics

(25). Bishop Grandin, "quelques Notes sur Mgr. A. Tache", quoted by Benoit, Vol. I. p.334.

(26). See Benoit, Vol. I. p.315.

(27). References in this paragraph are to the Minutes of the Council of Assiniboia, Oliver, "Documents of the North-West".

(28). Morice enumerates nine. Vol. I. p.299.

"in consideration of the additional fifteen pounds now granted for education to the English population". Again at the Council meeting of February 27th 1856, "the Reverend Mr. Lafleche reported that the population was dissatisfied with the present surveyor, that they could not understand him....The reverend gentlemen then proposed that...measures might be adopted to have two surveyors, one for the Canadians and one for the Europeans". What is more, "the clerk of the Council was therefore instructed to give warning to Mr. W. Inkster that his services under his present agreement will cease on the last day of May 1856". Thus in so far as a "State" could be said to exist on the Red River, State Catholicism and French as an official language have practically been established there under the auspices of the religious leaders.

During the 60's of the 19th century, the Roman Catholic corporation whose temporal and even spiritual powers were in Europe tottering under the combined attack of rationalism and Italian nationalism, brought "the New World to redress the balance of the Old". In Quebec the process of establishing ecclesiastical power was by that time practically complete, and in the distant West, a similar process, on a smaller scale, needed but the official sanction of a stable government to render it permanent. The Red River Church was already feeling the dignity of its power. It was because of his conviction that his new cathedral should be a symbol of that dignity and power - that - it should be "quelque chose qui atteste la puissance du catholicisme" (29), that Tache went East to solicit alms in 1861. The number of clergymen increased by leaps and bounds - 25 in 1858, 33 in 1860, 37 in 1862, 50 Oblates alone in 1865 (30). In 1860 Tache finally reorganized the St. Boniface College, and in 1869 the Catholic Church established its first school on the West side of the Red River.

The growth in the power of the Catholic Church during this period was indeed out of all proportion to the increase in the Catholic population. In 1864 Father Vandenberghe came to Red River as the personal representative of the Superior-general of the Oblate Order. Of him Tache later wrote: "Il voulut bien s'etonner de voir quelle est la position des missionnaires catholiques de la petite colonie d'Assiniboia. L'ascendant qu'ils y exercent le frappa surtout". (31).

(29). Tache to Bourget, October 20, 1861, quoted by Benoit, Vol. I, p.484.

(30). These figures are taken from Benoit, Vol. I. *passim*.

(31). "Vingt Annees de Missions", p.171.

By 1869 there seems to have existed an identical condition of clerical control on the banks of the Saint Lawrence and on those of the Red River of the North. (32).

## 2. The Two Corporations.

Between the Red River Country and development along modern lines stood two great Corporations, one depending upon a contested charter granted by a King, the other claiming even higher authority. In the one case there was the fear that immigration and civilization would drive out the wild beasts whose furs and meat were the sinews of a great trade; in the other there was the dread of a flood of Protestant newcomers who would not only endanger the Catholic Church with their antagonistic religious views, but would bring about a changed economic atmosphere which would inevitably root out the Métis hunting class, the bulwark of Catholicism in the West. The similarity in the attitude of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Roman Catholic Church is all the more marked inasmuch as open-minded consideration led in both cases to the conclusion that a change of conditions would have improved the circumstances and increased the amenities of life of the inhabitants at large. Yet both Corporations were reluctant to relinquish their position.

How essentially similar were the attitudes of these two powers is strikingly indicated by the tenor of the correspondence of the chiefs of both. In 1862 Governor Dallas of the Hudson's Bay Company replied in the following terms to a request for co-operation with Canada in establishing a transcontinental telegraph line: "A chain of settlements through the valleys would not only deprive the Company of the above vital resource (pemmican), but would indirectly in many other ways so interfere with their northern trade, as to render it not longer worth prosecuting on an extended scale. It would necessarily be diverted into various channels, possibly to the public benefit, but the Company could no longer exist on its present basis". (33)

(32). Cf. in this respect the address of welcome to the newly created Archbishop of St. Boniface, delivered by M. Joseph Roy, President of the Society of St. John the Baptist, June 24, 1872. "L'attachement de nos frères du Bas Canada à leur langue, à leurs lois, à leurs coutumes, et par dessus tout la conservation de leur foi, leur union à leur pasteurs, leur docilité à écouter leur voix benie, voilà ce qui a sauvé la nationalité française du Canada; nos pères de la Rivière Rouge, et l'Ouest, leurs fils et nous-mêmes, venus hier, n'avons jamais fait et ne ferons jamais autrement". Printed in the "Le Métis" newspaper

(33). To Charles Alleyn, Secretary of the Governor-general, April 16, 1862. See Hudson's Bay Papers, 1859-1870, Return no. 191 to an address of the House of Lords dated July 12, 1863.



Besides this frank avowal we may place extracts from the correspondence of Mgr. Taché. In them, too, we see an appreciation of the value of civilization as increasing the power of man over nature; but there is also the fear that "en gagnant beaucoup nous perdrons, peut-être aussi beaucoup" (34). To his dearly beloved mother Taché wrote of the approach of the American rail and steamboat lines to the Forks: "Ces changements", he declared, "sont consolants au point de vue de l'affection si vive que je vous porte et que me fait désirer de voir diminuer le plus possible la distance qui nous sépare; mais comme à toutes les jouissances de la terre il faut une compensation, je la trouve dans la crainte que m'inspire l'arrivée possible d'une foule d'étrangers qui nous apporteront tous les vices de la civilisation". (35). There is the ever present fear of the effect of a commercial and industrial revolution upon the Métis. "Nous redoutons beaucoup pour notre population quelques uns des changements qu'on lui promet". (36).

The object common to both the Company and the Church was therefore to maintain the status quo; and the identity of their aims explains the cordiality which was consistently maintained between them. While the Company continued its grants in aid and the use of its facilities for transporting mission workers, the Church reciprocated with a solid backing of the Company's Settlement policy. At the same time that Red River stalwarts like John McLaughlin and Alex. Isbister were disclosing alleged unscrupulous tactics of, and fathering petitions against the Company, on behalf of the Free Trade Métis; (37), and while all the wide-awake pioneering elements were clamoring against the repression which made for political sterility, Bishop Taché wrote with zest. "Il n'y a pas sous le soleil un pays où l'on jouisse de plus de liberté, et cela malgré l'impression répandue à loin que la Compagnie tient le pays dans un demi-état d'esclavage". (38).

Only one difference existed between the attitude of the Company and that of the Church to any possible change. The Company being a prosaic business organization could be bought at a price; but no amount of compensation would re-imburse the

(34). Letter to J.S. Dawson, Feb. 7th, 1859, quoted by Benoit, Vol. I, p. 527.

(35). Sept. 21, 1858, quoted *ibid*, Vol. I, p. 416.

(36). Taché, "Esquisse sur le Nord Ouest de l'Amérique", pp. 123, 124

(37). See evidence of A. Isbister and J. McLaughlin, Select Committee's Report, 1857, answers to question 2406 et sequa and question 4733 et sequa.

(38). "Esquisse...", quoted by Benoit, Vol. I, p. 523.

Church for the ruin of its flock and therefore of itself. True, it was possible that John McLaughlin's opinion might have been borne out, that after joining Canada, far from becoming extinct, the Metis "would leave the others in the shade; they would have preponderance, they would intermix." (39). But anything which would destroy the compact solidarity of the French element was a blow at the Church. The Metis might be improved by a change, but in the eyes of the Church leaders, it would be merely "improving them off the face of the earth". (40).

### 3. The Economic Conflict: the "Nor'-Wester".

The agitation for ousting the Hudson's Bay Company from their territorial possessions in favor of Canada, began in 1856, when Vancouver's demand for a trans-continental Dominion was "echoed throughout the Province by public men of all degrees". (41). The motive of the agitation, which was simply eagerness to develop the untold natural resources of Rupertsland, found a counterpart in the Red River Settlement itself. In the initial stages, indeed, union with Canada was generally favored (42). As early as 1846 the Scotch settlers were insistent upon increased communication with Canada (43), and in 1857 it was a Red River man, Alexander Isbister, who most strongly favored the union of Rupertsland with Canada. The official Canadian viewpoint at that time, as expressed by Chief Justice Draper (44) was that since Canada desired the territory for the purpose of commercial and industrial development, the security of Canadian capital demanded that it be forthwith transferred to Canada.

The troubles of 1869-70 have sometimes been ascribed to race animosity, sometimes to religious hatred. At present it is submitted that while religion and race certainly played a most prominent part in the drama, the basic "motif" was an economic one. On the one hand lay the primitive economic system of the buffalo hunters, on the other the throbbing mercantile spirit of a new-born nation. The Metis subconsciously felt themselves unprepared to struggle with the sharp, business-like Ontarians in a new commercial atmosphere, and therefore recoiled before the imminent change which would swamp their country

(39). Evidence of John McLaughlin, 1857, answer to question 4996.

(40). See evidence of R. Blanchard, 1857, answer to question 5843.

(41). Evidence of A. R. Roche, 1857, answer to question 4472.

(42). Cf. evidence of Archbishop Tache, "Report of the Select Committee on the Causes of the Difficulties in the North West Territories in 1869", Journals of the House of Commons (Ottawa), 1874, Appendix vi, p. 8.

(43). Evidence of Col. Crofton, 1857, answer to question 3296.

(44). Evidence of Chief Justice Draper, 1857, answer to question 4073.

with assertive English-speaking people, rendering their means of sustenance, the buffalo hunt, an extinct phenomenon, a memory of a dead age. They naturally experienced a cosmic urge to defend their own mode of life. Hence, an irresistible force met a determined mass upon the banks of the Red River, and friction of some kind was inevitable. Left to themselves, the Métis would in all probability have acted with the sullen but passive pride of a people that feels itself conquered by an over-powering force. But they were not left to themselves. The economic phase of their misfortunes was bound up with a very real danger to the continued official recognition of their faith and their tongue; the Church, therefore, as guardian of French interests, stepped forward to influence and direct the resistance of the Métis along the most advantageous lines. Since the race of buffalo hunters was in any case doomed to disintegration, it can only be concluded that the concessions demanded and obtained by means of the insurrection were so many safeguards for the future interests of a new class of French and Catholic immigrants whom it was astutely planned to settle on the western plains. The "Nor'-wester" newspaper, the cause of much bitterness at Red River during the decade or so of its existence, was in its essential nature a concrete embodiment of a new economic tendency. Its reckless attitude during its later years and the lawless actions of its proprietors during the 60's have been condemned by cool minds on both sides of the controversy. But when we realize how fundamentally opposed were the principles of change avowed by the journal and those of continuity held by its enemies, we cannot wonder that words and means of doubtful moral rectitude were employed in the one case to hasten an impending change, in the other to resist the inevitable.

The activities of the "Nor'-wester" may be classified as of two kinds: firstly, the discerning and legitimate activity of a pioneer of change and progress, and secondly, the petty and unrestrained activity dominated by prejudice and lamentable want of wisdom.

The journal made its bow to the public on December 28th, 1859 (45), with a dignified editorial disavowing any desire to precipitate political strife, but at the same time announcing that it would be its aim to act "as a medium for communicating facts calculated to enlighten the non-resident reader with regard to the resources, geography, the life and sentiment of the district, in which it will be published". Its object being to attract English-speaking immigrants, is it any wonder that the "Nor'-wester" was anathema to both the Hudson's Bay Company and the Roman Catholic Church?

Moreover, as time went on, the newspaper became increasingly aggressive. It began to quote with approbation the attacks of Ontario papers against the Lower Canadian influences

(45). Reference in the following paragraphs is made to the files of the "Nor'-wester", in the Legislative Library, Winnipeg.

which prevented the annexation of Rupertsland to Canada in 1857 (46). It commenced to criticize the Council of Assiniboia, the tool of the Hudson's Bay Company, for sitting behind closed doors and prohibiting the attendance of a Nor'-wester reporter. Further, it began to warn the natives that "they must be more cautious in their dealings, and act more in a business-like manner, that they must be more energetic and industrious, or they must fall behind; and that generally speaking they must not be singular or antiquated." (47). The effects of such subtle contempt was more galling than the outspoken opinion of Charles Mair (48).

With the advent of the irascible Dr. John Schultz as editor, began the stormy period of the Nor'-wester's existence. Veiled hints were now replaced by open threats against "the Humbug Bay Company....the rotten fabric that Prince Rupert built", (49), and against the buffalo hunters who "must give way before a superior intelligence". The firebrand activity of Dr. Schultz and his party played into the hands of the leaders of the French Métis, who pictured to their followers an Ontario full of men as uncompromising as John Schultz (50). Without materially affecting the fundamental economic causes of the inevitable conflict, the activities of the Schultz party reacted upon the English-speaking agricultural element in the settlement, which otherwise might have actively welcomed a change promising to expand their market. The actions of the Canadian party rendered the Scotch settlers a passive though interested entity, and enabled the leaders of the French Métis to assume full control of the settlement, and act in a high handed manner without fear of let or hindrance.

(46). Cf. the Toronto "Globe" excerpt in the issue of March 28, 1860.

(47). Issue of April 14, 1860.

(48). Cf. the following line from a letter written by Charles Mair to Hon. Wm. McDougall, July 15, 1869, which somehow fell into the hands of the Insurgents, and was published in "The New Nation" issue of April 22nd, 1870, (taken from the files in the Legislative Library, Winnipeg): "Bishop Tache's swarthy proteges are likely to be lifted from their places by the coming men. This is the nightmare that troubles him, and to banish which he would 'excommunicate' the soil, if it were possible"....

(49). Issue of Jan. 22, 1869.

(50). Cf. the Report of Commissioner Donald A. Smith, 1870. Oliver "Documents", p. 935.

CHAPTER V

THE INSURRECTION.

1. The Lay attitude to the Insurrection.

The negotiations between the Canadian and Imperial Governments and the Hudson's Bay Company relative to the transfer of Rupertsland to Canada were practically concluded in September, 1869, and the Hon. William McDougall, the Governor-to-be of the new Territory, was then sent by the Ottawa Government to make arrangements for assuming control when the Transfer should be actually effected. The outbreak in October of active resistance to union of Rupertsland with Canada found Assiniboia divided into several distinct classes of opinion.

(a). The native British element.

The English-speaking settlers at Red River were by no means indifferent to the passing events. They were in fact vitally interested in the coming changes, and could not but feel a certain degree of displeasure at the total disregard suffered by them during the Transfer negotiations. They were living in a state of traditional friendship with their French compatriots, whose natural aversion to a sudden revolutionary change they were in a position to understand. Moreover, the reckless inuendo of the Canadian Party had antagonized them almost as much as their French neighbors. In the first List of Rights issued by Riel on December 5th(1) they saw nothing very unreasonable (2), and although as Governor McLavish wrote, "the great majority of the inhabitants have not authorized either Bruce or Riel to act for them, and in point of fact the great bulk of them object to the means used to enforce their rights"(3), they nevertheless felt that matters would quickly right themselves, and that it was not their place to interfere.

The agents of Hon. William McDougall dubbed the English-speaking settlers "cowards one and all of them" (4), and McDougall himself, in his impatience, launched broadsides against "the weakness and imbecility of the Governor (McLavish) and the complicity of some members of his Council with the Insurrection".(5). But the fact of the matter was that neither

- (1). See Appendix "A" at the end of the thesis.
- (2). Correspondence Relative to the Recent Disturbances in Red River Settlement (Blue Book, 1870), p.74.
- (3). To W. G. Smith, Dec. 11, 1869, 'Recent Disturbances', p.191.
- (4). Recent Disturbances, p.74.
- (5). To Howe, Nov.13, 1869, 'Recent Disturbances', p.31.

cowardice nor active connivance entered into the stand taken by the British element. The officials of the Hudson's Bay Company in Rupertsland were no doubt displeased with the terms of the transfer, but their quarrel was with the Committee in London, and "had nothing... to do with political affairs".(6). Their attitude as well as that of all the old settlers was well summed up by Col. J. S. Dennis, as follows: "The character of the new Government has been settled in Canada, without our being consulted. We are prepared to accept it respectfully, to obey the laws, and to become good subjects; but when you present to us the issue of a conflict with the French party with whom we have hitherto lived in friendship.... we feel disinclined to enter upon it, and think that the Dominion should assume the responsibility of establishing among us, which (sic) it, and it alone has decided upon".(7).

Fortified by the dread of bloodshed and the possibility of an Indian war, this attitude remained unchanged even during the most high-handed days of Riel's regime; and the fact that the English population had "no enthusiasm" for the new Government, and were therefore never likely to take up arms against the French, played a prominent role in the calculations and decisions of the Insurrectionary party.

(b). The American element.

The proximity of populous American States and Territories, and Assiniboia's economic dependence upon those regions, in the first place for buffalo and latterly for the ordinary comforts of life, made the United States always a powerful factor in Red River life and politics. It will be remembered that Père Belcourt's petition for freedom of Trade in 1847 pointed out with reference to the United States, that "nous y sommes invités".(8). Moreover in 1862, Hargrave tells us (9), when Thomas Spence began to be active in behalf of the expansion of Canada to the Pacific, "it was rendered evident that an undercurrent of opinion hostile to the spread of British interests existed in the Colony". Commercial relations with Minnesota and the Missouri Valley early brought Americans into Assiniboia; and as the settlement about Upper Fort Garry began to grow in size and importance, enterprising American traders came to establish their business there, so that in 1869 Winnipeg contained about two dozens of prominent men, sharp, active, business-like and thoroughly pro-American. (10).

- (6). Report of the Committee of 1874, evidence of Archbishop Tache, p.13.
- (7). Dennis to McDougall, Oct. 26, 1869. 'Recent Disturbances', p.8.
- (8). Correspondence Relative to the Complaints of the Red River Settlers, p.5. See above, p.30, foot-note 68.
- (9). 'Red River', p.402.
- (10). See the Nor'-wester of April 3rd, 1869 for a petition signed by twenty-one of them.

The potential importance of this little group was all the greater since it was the opinion of persons high in authority North of the line that ultimately the Red River Country would go to the United States. "The natural affinities of the Red River Settlement are with the valley of the Missouri and.... We shall be going against nature if we try to force it into the Valley of the St. Lawrence", declared Col. Lefroy before the Committee, of 1857.(11). Governor McTavish held a similar conviction with regard to annexation of the Red River country to the United States. "Though I doubt not this will be its ultimate destiny" he wrote "there would probably be some objections to it at present"(12).

Officially the United States found tremendous interest in the affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories. Particularly after the acquisition of Alaska in 1867 was there an open desire to occupy all the territory intervening between the North-western States and the new possession, and Minnesota was especially forward in the propaganda towards this end.(13). The public press during the 60's engaged in all forms of attack upon Great Britain and Canada, verging from the jocular St. Paul "Pioneer" which named the "pseudo-Governor", Hon. William McDougall, "the first United States Senator from Selkirk"(14), to the offensively warlike articles of the St. Paul "Press" urging the forcible annexation of the North-West to the United States.(15).

During the Insurrection, according to Governor McTavish, "the United States alone had the power of making its wishes felt by the malcontents here"(16); and throughout the first six months of the Insurrection, Americans, whether as official emissaries or as private adventurers, played an important though silent role - a role which might perhaps have been less silent and much more prominent but for the influence of the Roman Catholic clergy. Fombina was the French Metic headquarters on American soil. Almost without exception the American Government officials in the town worked hand in glove with the half-breeds, to the annoyance and inconvenience of McDougall. From Fombina, too, the American Col. Angus Stuttsman

(11). Report of the Select Committee, 1857, answer to question 238.

(12). To W. G. Smith, Dec. 25, 1869, 'Recent Disturbances', p.201.

(13). Cf. the Resolution passed by the Minnesota Legislature, March 18, 1868, asking the Federal Government to interfere in the projected agreement between the Hudson's Bay Co. and the Ottawa Government.

(14). Quoted in 'Recent Disturbances', p.28.

(15). The attacks were most bitter during the years of the Civil War. Cf. the article quoted in "Hudson's Bay Papers, 1859-1870, Return (no. 401) to an address of the House of Commons, dated May 6th, 1864, p.10.

(16). To W. G. Smith, Dec. 25, 1869, 'Recent Disturbances', p.201.

issued passes through the lines of the "Patriot Army" of the River Sale (17). At Winnipeg the compact American group urged the erratic Riel to annexationist views, succeeding for a time in making a pro-American sheet of the "New Nation"; raising American flags in the settlement (though with the Hudson's Bay Company's flag in the background to diminish the reaction). (18). From unknown sources came offers of men and money, arms and ammunition (19) the magnitude of which would seem to point to a concerted effort on the part of powerful interests in the United States to effect a change of allegiance at Red River.

(C). The French Metis.

The reaction of the French Metis, as much, to the proposed changes has already been indicated. At this point we need only emphasize a dominating element in their social structure, which may best be summed up in the words of Bishop Tache - namely, that they were "un peuple exceptionnel" (20). The "nation" idea so zealously promulgated among the Metis by the Bourgeois of the North-West Company in the early years of the 19th century, had by no means died out. Although never since 1816 had they occasion openly to announce it, the Metis retained and were incited to retain the belief that in them lay an inherent right to the soil of the West (21). The feeling of national existence, moreover, was fostered by their life on the plains, where they showed and admirable aptitude for self-organisation and for maintaining self-imposed discipline (22), as well as by their segregation in separate Communities within the Settlement. This largely accounts for the unanimity with which the vast majority of the French Metis rallied round a leader so difficult to work with as Louis Riel undoubtedly was. The same spirit of nationalism animated Riel in all his actions. His Proclamation of December 8th was published "Après avoir invoqué le Dieu de nations" (23); the advent of Hon. Wm. McDougall was regarded as "l'envahissement de notre pays" -- indeed as an "invasion étrangère", which the Metis firmly resolved to repel.

(17). McDougall to Howe, Nov. 5th, 1869, 'Recent Disturbances', p.15.

(18). See the "New Nation" of Jan. 14, 1870.

(19). See Report of the Committee of 1874, evidence of Archbishop Tache, p.41.

(20). Letter to J. S. Dawson, quoted by Benoit, Vol.I. p.532.

(21). Cf. evidence of Sir John Richardson, 1857, answer to question 2942.---q. 'While you were there (1819, 1825, 1848) did you hear any complaints of the rule of the Company being oppressive?--- A. 'I heard no complaints of that. I had conversations with some of the half-castes from Red River that we employed; and they told me that they had a right to the country in virtue of their parentage, and wished, if they could, to get possession of it'.

(22). Cf. Youle Hind, Journal of explorations, Vol. I, p.181.

(23). French original quoted by Benoit, Vol.II, p.37.



The Church, acting in the capacity of guardian of French interests, thoroughly approved the idea of nationality thus evinced, and, as we shall see, even expanded it. In his letter to J. S. Dawson above referred to, Bishop Tache made the standard plea for special consideration in view of the fact that the French were the first to discover and settle the Western plains. "On doit laisser .... la plus ample liberte a la religion catholique et a la race francaise dans ces territoires, puis que c'est une maxime du droit des gens chretiens que le premier peuple civilize qui s'etablit en un pays nouveau y acquiert comme un droit de premier occupant".

(24). This double claim to peculiar privileges, one on the basis of Indian descent, the other on the basis of French discoveries, is echoed throughout all the negotiations for settling the troubles, particularly in relation to the control of lands. The surveys which roused the ire of the natives in 1868 and 1869 were conducted upon lands "which were known as the property of the half-breeds", as Bishop Tache said (25), but which, according to the other evidence, were merely claimed by the half-breeds under an Indian title (26). Similarly, in the Manitoba Act negotiations for land reserves for the Metis, there was advanced on behalf of the latter the double claims of civilized men and of native aborigines (27). The rights of either were stressed as the occasion was deemed fit.

(6) Louis Riel.

The spokesman of the French party throughout the unsettled period was Louis Riel, son of the half-breed L. J. Riel who had led the armed Metis into the Court House on the morning of the Sayer trial in 1849. Riel was born in 1844 and as a child gave evidence of a very vivid intelligence. At the age of fourteen Bishop Tache sent him to Montreal to study for the priest-hood, but his temperament proved too unruly to endure the even tenor of ecclesiastical life, and his escapades finally put an end to his clerical training. He returned to his native land without completing his course, - a layman, yet destined to earn well at the hands of his Church.

(24). quoted by Bessit, Vol. I, p. 527. Apart from the fact that liberty of religion is the heritage of all men, the fallacy of basing any claim for special privileges upon the prior establishment of a civilized French community in the West, is sufficiently clear.

(25). Report of the Committee of 1874, p. 12.

(26). Cf. *ibid.*, p. 113, evidence of W. R. Bown.

(27). See Father Ritchot's report to the Legislative Assembly of the Provisional Government, 'New Nation', June 24, 1870.

The predominant features of Riel's character were two: his Catholic training and his profound egoism. As a Catholic Riel labored during 1869-1870 to create a break-water to save his tongue and faith from going under. He was never in accord with his colleague O'Donoghue, whose ranting about the wrongs of Ireland and the imminent destruction of the British Empire (28) he could not understand. He was the means of safeguarding the interests of the Catholic Church in the West, and on the whole, worked consistently with the clergy. The Fenians, for example, were not aided, "for they are condemned by the Church....and I will have nothing to do with them" (29). That the annexationist spirit did not seize a firmer hold over the Insurrection party was largely due to the fact that under the influence of his Church training, Riel's feelings "were those of a Frenchman and a Catholic..... who could see a chance for his race and creed in the Dominion where a large part of the population is French"....(30).

The consistency of this attitude was, however, vitiated by the inflated ego from which Riel suffered. His flashing personality, his handsome figure and the prestige of his travels and studies rendered him in the eyes of his rude compatriots a 'young Napoleon', destined to be the saviour of his country. He returned to Red River on the eve of the rising, eager to distinguish himself, and the open adulation of the masses turned his head. In the course of political events Riel saw an opportunity to place himself in the lime light. His "inordinate ambition" and "unquenchable thirst for power" led him frequently to descend to undignified dissimulation (31), while his unreasonable pride often made him as disagreeable a leader for his partisans as he was a difficult subject for the clergy.

And yet, with all his erratic vagaries, Riel at his best was the real mouthpiece of the French Metis. On occasion we lose sight of Riel the outcast, of Riel the puppet of men behind the scenes, and we see Riel, the embodiment of a dying

(28). See 'Recent Disturbances', p.39.

(29). Evidence of Tache, 1874, p.53.

(30). Evidence of former Governor Archibald, 1874, p.140.

(31). Cf. Evidence of Col. J.S. Dennis, 1874, p.186. Riel called on Col. Dennis to inquire about the Canadian Government's intentions with regard to the surveys. On being informed that the Metis were not to be disturbed in the possession of their lands, "he expressed himself pleased and satisfied and said it would be his duty and pleasure to make it known to his people". Yet the very next Sunday, on the word of J. H. McTavish of the H. B. Co., "he harrangued the people at the Church door in St. Beniface,...inciting them to organize and to prevent the Canadian Government coming in until their just claims were recognised and settled".

community. His statement before the Council of Assiniboia is full of demands undeniably inculcated from above; but it also resounds with the pathetic plaint of the Plainsmen. They were, he said, "uneducated and only half civilized, and felt that if a large migration were to take place, they would probably be crowded out of a country which they claimed as their own;.... they knew they were in a sense poor and insignificant, but.... it was just because they were aware of this that they felt so much at being treated as if they were even more insignificant than they in reality were". (32). In these words we see no ulterior motives, but only the attempt at self-preservation on the part of a community whose existence as a class was endangered.

Nevertheless these purple patches in Riel's actions were few. The Riel who has stamped himself on the page of history was an entirely different character. Before his advent to the presidency of the Provisional Government, the Insurrection was a shrewd and well-thought-out movement in favor of a principle and a cause; as soon as Bruce retired, "on account of ill health", as was alleged, (33), it became largely the instrument of a petty and worthless attempt to maintain the power of one man.

A review of his actions during the Insurrection would confirm this conclusion. From the first, while "the men generally were quiet and orderly and evidently unwilling to give offence, Riel himself was not inclined to be so civil" (34). As the days passed, moreover, he became overbearing and unbearable to his subordinates, and even his close friends were not safe from his insults. (35) He became violently anti-Canadian and anti-Hudson's Bay Company, (36) and although it is not probable that he ever departed so far from his ecclesiastical training as to be anti-British, he nevertheless played the game of allowing his organ the "New Nation" to become for a time a thoroughly annexationist sheet. Its very first issue contained

(32). Minutes of the Council of Assiniboia, Oct. 25, 1869, Oliver, Documents, p. 617.

(33). See Orders of the Provisional Government, Jan. 8th, 1870, *ibid* p. 913.

(34). Governor McTavish to W.G. Smith, Nov. 16, 1869, 'Recent Disturbances' p. 185.

(35). For a concise account of Riel's actions towards Governor McTavish, Dr. Cowan, 'Chief Justice' James Ross, A.C.B. Mannatyne, Donald A. Smith and others, see Prof. C.B. Martin's section on the Red River Settlement, Canada and its Provinces, Vol. 19.

(36). The Company "must be struck down" declared Riel on Jan. 22, 1870. See 'Recent Disturbances', p. 206.

a French account of the expulsion of the Acadians, giving an edifying account of the cruelty of the British troops, of broken families and last embraces (37); and this was followed in the succeeding issues by editorials expatiating upon the righteousness of the American Revolution and the wisdom of the American Constitution (38). With much solemnity a new flag was hoisted in which the French and Fenian emblems defied the loyal British element (39). Even the Church was defied. The venerable Grand Vicar Thibault, one of the Commissioners sent by the Canadian Government to pacify the West, "obtained permission, but not without difficulty to sleep at the house of the cure of St. Herbert." (40); and when Bishop Tache arrived from Rome on March 11, 1870, Riel made a vainglorious and empty display of power by stationing guards at the door of the Bishop's residence, because, as he said "it is not the Bishop of St. Boniface, it is Canada who passes". (41).

Particularly at the Convention called in January, 1870, at the instance of Donald A. Smith did Riel show the worst side of his nature. At this gathering he was guilty of more than mere "cottises" (42); and one wonders on perusing the minutes (43) at the forbearance which kept the bulk of the representatives peaceful. At times Riel acted "altogether like a madman", raving up and down the Council chamber, threatening war within fifteen days unless he were confirmed as President. "If the prejudices of your people are to prevail", he told the English delegates passionately, "they may do so, but it will be in my blood". Over the French delegates he ruled with an iron hand. Refusing the risk of losing an iota of his influence over them, he saw to it that the proposal making him interpreter from English to French should be turned down; and he interpreted, instead, from French to English, thus securing the final word in what purported to be the expression of the French opinion. When a number of delegates belonging to his party voted against his resolution invalidating the agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company, he threatened the "traitors" with political death; and what is more, he carried out

(37). Issue of Jan. 14, 1870.

(38). Cf. issue of Feb. 4th, 1870.

(39). Notice the attempt to explain away this flag, evidence of Tache 1874, p. 31.

(40). Thibault to Howe, March 17, 1870, 'Recent Disturbances', p. 124

(41). Morice, Vol. II, p. 56.

(42). Cf. Cartier to Ritchot, evidence of Ritchot, 1874, p. 77.

(43). The New Nation Files in the Legislative Library, Winnipeg, contain full reports of the Convention sessions, from which the following material is drawn.

his throat.(44). About British Constitutional usage he declared "he did not suppose they were under very great obligations to respect her (England's) laws". With regard to the constitution of a proposed military force, he asserted, "For my part I want to be no more British than I can help", - a frank avowal of a policy pursued since 1774 in the province of Quebec.

From such harmless ranting Riel advanced to a more unperdonable offence. The Settlement was entirely within his power, yet on the insane ground that "we must make Canada respect us" (45) he ruined his own future by permitting Thomas Scott to be sacrificed. He apparently believed that he was within his rights; that his Government would last a long time - witness the clause in the Constitution of the Provisional Government providing for the erection of a Senate "when deemed necessary by the Legislature".(46). But as will be seen in a subsequent section, the arrival of Bishop Tache greatly modified Riel's attitude. "Whatever may happen" he wrote to Tache after the work of the delegates was completed, "the soldiers and the governor will be received with enthusiasm"(47). However, the approach of the troops found him with not more than a corporal's guard at Fort Garry, and fearing the consequences of his enormity he, too, fled to continue that restless, erratic, passionate career which was fated to end upon the gallows.

### 3. The Clerical Attitude to the Insurrection

In speaking of the participation of the Roman Catholic Clergy in the Riel Insurrection of 1869, Morice frankly states: "Catholics were the mainspring of the whole movement, and we admit without difficulty, that in this they had the sympathy of the clergy"(48). But all evidence points to the fact that it was more than sympathy, it was advice and direction that the clergy brought to bear upon the rising of the Metis. The proposed government of which Mr. McDougall was to be the head, contained only one French Canadian, and he a young man without experience; what, under these circumstances, would be the future of the vested interests and established privileges of the Catholic Church and the French tongue on the banks of the Red River? The fear that these interests and privileges would not

(44). Cf. the case of Charles Nolin who was subsequently arrested on a trumped up charge, and released by Riel after promising to withdraw from politics for two years. See the New Nation, March 11, 1870.

(45). See report of D. A. Smith, Cliver, Documents, p.962.

(46). Cf. the New Nation, April 8th, 1870. On May 7th Riel actually suggested a Senate of ten men appointed for two years.

(47). Tache's evidence, 1874, p.37.

(48). Hist. of the Catholic Church. Vol.II, p.2.

survive the change led to the active participation of the Church in the Insurrection. The camp of the Malcontents was "daily attended by one or more of the Roman Catholic clergy" (49); the oath of abstinence taken by the Métis and the wonderful discipline generally maintained by them gave the outbreak an atmosphere of religious zeal; (50), and throughout the whole period, the figure of the priest was always visible in the back ground.

The Church workers at the scene of the troubles were merely carrying out a carefully planned general policy. In the eyes of the Church the critical situation upon the Red River, constituted by no means an isolated problem. The far-seeing leaders of the Church saw in Assiniboia the foundations of that which in the fullness of time would become the central arch supporting the Catholic French Canadian structure. In fighting for special privileges at Red River, therefore, the Métis were at once safeguarding the privileges possessed by Quebec, and vindicating those to be demanded for the Saskatchewan valley. "Ce que vient se faire en faveur des Métis, de la Rivière Rouge", wrote Tache to Bishop Grandin (51), "est un principe imposé en faveur de la Saskatchewan, en sorte que nos gens aurent combattu pour les votres". And to Sir George Cartier he wrote (52) "C'est vraiment pour le Bas Canada autant que pour eux-mêmes que nos pauvres Métis se sont armés".

The Catholic Church was fortunate in having as able a commander as Bishop Tache at a post of such strategic importance as Assiniboia. The more timid Grandin was allotted a diocese further West, "ou l'on pouvait esperer de rester sauvage plus longtemps" (53), and as it was considered inadvisable to place St. Boniface under the jurisdiction of the English-speaking Catholic Sees of Ontario, it was proposed at the Provincial Council of 1868 to erect an independent ecclesiastical province with St. Boniface at the Metropolitan See. During the same year, moreover, French journals in Quebec began to advocate the rights of the inhabitants of Red River (54), and Bishop Tache himself came forward with the suggestion that an English and a French Commissioner be sent to Assiniboia to discover the wishes of the people. The suggestion was made with discretion. "I made no

(49). Private Correspondence, Nov. 2, 1870, quoted in 'Recent Disturbances' p. 27.

(50). See *ibid.*, p. 27.

(51). June 13, 1870, quoted by Benoit, Vol. II, p. 98.

(52). April 7th, 1870, *ibid.*, p. 77.

(53). Grandin, 'Quelques Notes sur Mgr. Tache', quoted by Benoit Vol. I. p. 564.

(54). Morice, Vol. II, p. 5.

further statement as to what I thought should be the details of government". (55).

The nationalism of the half-breed race, as we have seen, was based largely upon their descent from the native aborigines. While tacitly fostering this idea, the Church moreover expanded it, and claimed not only for the half-breeds, but for French Canadians of all sorts the privileges of "prior possession". As early as 1858 the wary Bishop commenced his efforts to encourage French Canadian emigration to the West in order to maintain the strength of numbers against the expected English immigration. His plea, based upon the fallacy that "personne n'a plus le droit de l'occupation de la Rivière Rouge, et même de la Rivière Misiskitchewan, que les Canadiens d'origine française". (56), was extended even to the French Canadians who had emigrated to the United States. These he summons to his diocese, for "ici, du moins, leur foi ne sera pas exposée". In the light of the complete freedom of religion in the United States, this can have only one interpretation: "Here they will enjoy special privileges which Catholics enjoy nowhere else".

The results of the Insurrection were greatly influenced by these claims on the basis of national right. Riél had bitterly exclaimed that the Métis were "uneducated and only, half civilized" and therefore needed protection; but Tache declared that his people "considered themselves civilized and were civilized", (57), and that in disregarding their wishes, Canada "oublie où ignore qu'il légifère pour un peuple qui a ses droits, ses lois, ses habitudes et ses aspirations, pour les établissements habités par des sujets anglais, fiers de leurs privilèges et jaloux de leur indépendance". (58). The trend of the Insurrection was to show that <sup>the</sup> Bishop's view was the more influential.

(a) Bishop Tache.

The Bishop of St. Boniface, the man in whose power it lay to make or break the Insurrection was not at the scene of the out-break when it occurred. He was away at the capital of the Catholic world, defending the power of the Pope against his foes within the hierarchy and without. He departed from Canada in disappointment having failed to persuade Sir George Cartier to safeguard Catholic interests by placing more French Canadians on the proposed government of Hon. W. McDougall.

(55). Evidence of Tache, 1874, p.14.

(56). Letter to Dawson, Benoit, Vol. I. p.532.

(57). Evidence, 1874, p.9.

(58). Tache, "L'Amnistie", pp.30,31. Quoted by Benoit, Vol.II, p.10.

Bishop Tache was in a position to know that Canada intended no rough-shod disregard of the rights of the people of Red River; just as Father Ritchot was in an even better position to know that the surveys were not intended as a means of expatriating the Métis. Yet not a word of enlightenment on these matters was ever given to the Métis, and the question that forces itself to the forefront is, To what end was the danger of disorder and possible bloodshed thus allowed to approach unhindered?

The idea dominating Catholic Church politics throughout the British period of Canadian history has been to strive for special privileges within the British Empire. At Red River, too, keen observers realized that barring the destruction of Church influence, there was no danger of annexation to the United States becoming a desideratum of the French element. "The Catholic Clergy by whom they are influenced" wrote a correspondent from Red River at the end of November, 1869, "will do everything in their power to prevent any such result, and we do not doubt that any attempt on the part of the Fenian sympathizers to reach the territory would be met with stern resistance by the present insurgents". (59). But within the British Empire there must be actual pledges safeguarding Catholic interests on the Quebec model. As far as the Red River country was concerned, all efforts to secure official recognition by means of parley had failed. In a strong and frank letter to Sir George Cartier, written on the eve of his departure for Europe, Bishop of St. Boniface expressed his true feelings upon the situation. "J'ai toujours redouté l'entrée du nord-ouest dans la Confédération, parce que j'ai toujours cru que l'élément Français catholique serait sacrifié. Mais je vous avoue franchement qu'il ne m'était jamais venue à la pensée que nos droits seront si vite et si complètement méconnus. Le nouveau système me semble de nature à amener à la ruine de ce qui nous a coûté si cher..." (60). Under these circumstances the directors of Church policy could not be averse to availing themselves of the discontent of the French metis; to doing nothing to allay that discontent; to allowing the insurrection to proceed, committing no deed to reckless, but merely exerting an influence over Ottawa, until the Government there should be intimidated into expressing its theoretically benevolent attitude in black and white, on the statute books of the realm. As Tache wrote, any new set of conditions "ne vaudra pas notre vieux système (en egard aux étrangers)"; but "puis qu'il nous fallait changer de régime", that change must be made to the greatest advantage.

(59). 'Recent Disturbances', p. 29.

(60). Quoted by Benoit, Vol. II, pp. 16, 17. This was a confidential letter, and was not included in the Blue Book of 1870. No document can furnish better proof of how popular fallacies may master the minds of intelligent men.



The great Vatican Council of 1869 was one of the most important Roman Catholic assemblies in the 19th century, and had far reaching results upon the Catholic world; yet, when we consider how inflammable was the material left by the Bishop at Red River, how imminent was the danger of rebellion and bloodshed, we cannot but wonder at his going. Governor McTavish wrote to him that he had "never seen the people in the restless, excited state they are now", and that "it would be of the utmost importance....that you should be here when the new order of things is instituted"(61). The Canadian Government, too, pressed him to remain at his post. But Tache's reply was a blank refusal. His attitude was; grant me my demands or suffer the consequences. "As they had not thought proper to give me any answer with which to satisfy the people of Red River, I did not see that my presence at Red River would be productive of any good."(62).

"Notre cher gouvernement du Canada veut aller au pas de charge", wrote Bishop Tache from Europe to his friend Grandin of St. Albert. "Je crois qu'il se prepare bien de m'écouter". (63). It was apparently in anticipation of these "m'écouter" that he promised to return from Rome if the Canadian Government should require his presence at Red River later on. There appears to have been no particular hurry about departing, since he reached Europe "precisément un mois et demi avant le reunion des grandes assises de l'episcopat" (64). His early departure and his offer to return when he should be given means of settling the difficulty, point to the conclusion that the Bishop of St. Boniface seized the opportunity afforded by the call to Rome, to dissociate his name from the actual outbreak at Red River, and to bring to bear with increased effect the monopoly of his influence over the Metis.

(b) Father Ritchot and Father Lestanc.

The men at the head of the Catholic Church in the West during the Insurrection were the Rev. Father Lestanc, administrator of the diocese in the absence of Bishop Tache, and Father Noel Joseph Ritchot, curé of St. Norbert. The former was an Oblate from France, who had come to Red River in 1855; the latter, a secular priest, came from his native province of Quebec in 1862. It is significant of the difference in sentiment between the Quebec and the Old French clergy in the West, that the real hero of the Metis, the man who had the most influence over them, was not the administrator Lestanc, but the simple curé, Ritchot. In 1868 the latter had been in Quebec as representative of the diocese of St. Boniface at the Provincial Council of the

(61). Report of the Committee of 1874, p.10.

(62). Ibid, evidence of Tache, p.11.

(63). October 25, 1869, quoted by Benoit, Vol.II. p.25.

(64). Benoit, Vol.II, p.26.

Catholic Church. He had returned from there imbued with the spirit of Church policy on a comprehensive scale, and ready to use his influence over the half-breeds in the interests of Catholicism as established in Quebec. Father Lestane certainly favored the malcontents with his counsel and exhortations; but he appears to have done so undiscerningly, without grasping the ultimate politico-religious objects at stake. Ritchot, on the other hand, was in the very heart of the movement. His house at St. Norbert was the centre of all activity - the headquarters of the "Patriot Army", and the council chambers where the secret plans of the movement were expounded.

Officially, both Father Lestane and Father Ritchot were neutral onlookers. When called upon to do so, both declined to sway the Métis towards peace, alleging that any attempt on their part to interfere "would have a tendency to impress them with the idea that the Church was also in sympathy with the Government, and so might lead to weakening their influence over their people in a religious point of view". (65). But all evidence points to the conviction that behind the scenes they were much more than mere onlookers. It must be remembered that although the vast majority of the French population of Red River belonged to the hunting class, there was also a small group who devoted themselves to agriculture. Since their economic existence was not threatened by the projected changes, their sympathies were not wholly with the insurrection; and this fact, coupled with the desineering nature of Riel, on more than one occasion caused serious breaks in the ranks of the French party. Upon the Reverend gentlemen mentioned devolved the duty of keeping the malcontents united and showing a bold and solid front. This duty they carried out with zeal. From the first there seems to have been uncertainty in the minds of the rank and file of the French Métis as to the wisdom of the drastic course they were pursuing. "All the subordinates in the party" wrote Col. J. S. Dennis to Hon. Wm. McDougall, "say that if you have a commission from Her Majesty to enter as Governor, they will lay down their arms". (66). Moreover, on October 27th, 1869, a considerable party of well-disposed French people under William Dease went, under the auspices of the Council of Assiniboia, to parley with the Riel party. But Father Ritchot was there and made a vehement speech "in favor of the stand taken, and called upon the insurgents to maintain their ground"; (67); the result being that some of Dease's party went over to the other side. The day following this incident Governor McFevish for three hours importuned Father Ritchot to use his influence in favor of peace, but in vain (68). The shrewd priest, in fact, taking advantage of

(65). 'Recent Disturbances', p.6. See also Ritchot's evidence, 1874, p.69

(66). 'Recent Disturbances', p.22.

(67). Ibid, p.8.

(68). Ibid, pp.18,19.

the words of sympathy used by the Governor in relation to the legitimate grievances of the Metis, "went to the meeting of the French party, and told them that Governor McTavish coincided with them. He told them not to give way". (69).

When the faith of the Metis in their leaders wavered, when their fear of treason asserted itself, the clerical gentlemen always seem to have been on the spot to reassure them. Thus when early in December, on the Hudson's Bay Company's officials being forced to distribute rations to Riel's men, some of the latter began to give expression to their fears of the consequences, it was Father Ritchot who confirmed their weakening spirits, and "urged them to hold out, alleging that their case was already before the Canadians, that the ministry would fall, and that the demands of the Red River people would be granted and their rights secured". (70). So reassured were the men, indeed, that they thereupon commenced to loot the Hudson's Bay Stores.

The occasion of bringing Donald A. Smith's papers from Pembina developed the most serious break in the French party. Riel's manoeuvres with regard to the Commissioner roused doubts in the minds of many of his partisans as to the sincerity of his intentions. They therefore determined to escort Smith's messenger from Pembina. In the vicinity of St. Norbert Riel attempted to seize the papers; but his authority was openly flouted, and even his life threatened. Riel dramatically pointed a revolver at his own head, threatening suicide. The ubiquitous Ritchot on interposing to save Riel was "unceremoniously told to stand aside, and not to interfere any further with matters unconnected with his spiritual duties" (71). Father Lestanc also tried to heal the breach in the French party, speaking "warmly in favor of the President, who, he said, had acted so as to merit the gratitude of his countrymen; but in vain. The break seemed complete. Yet "late that evening (72) Père Lestanc paid them (the opponents of Riel) another visit, which was prolonged for several hours beyond midnight, and next morning it was found that a majority of those who had seceded from Riel were again on friendly terms with him". (73).

It would appear, then, that the clergy at Red River did their utmost to keep the Metis united in an armed demonstration until the Ottawa Government should be sufficiently impressed to allow of negotiating the conditions under which the Red River country would be joined to Canada. To this end they watched with all wariness lest any influence should reach the Insurgents

(69). Evidence of Dr. Cowan, 1874, p. 128.

(70). See Gov. McTavish to W. G. Smith, Dec. 11, 1869. 'Recent Disturbances' p. 19.

(71). See report of Donald A. Smith, Oliver, Documents, p. 922.

(72). Jan. 18, 1870; the evening preceding the day of the great mass meeting.

(73). Report of Donald A. Smith, Oliver, Documents, p. 932.

which might weaken their resolve. Characteristic of Father Ritchot was his attempt to persuade the emissaries of the Council of Assiniboia, Messrs. Fraser and Sutherland, that an interview with Riel would be fruitless. When finally they succeeded in reaching Riel's presence, the voice of the Reverend Father could be heard from the bottom of the staircase demanding 'why the emissaries did not speak in French?' (74). In the same spirit both Ritchot and Lestane winked at the seizure and suppression of the Governor-general's Proclamation of December 6th, which announced the liberal intentions of the Queen with regard to Rupertsland, and promised pardon for all past irregularities on condition that the insurgents lay down their arms and disperse forthwith. (75). Whether it was "directing the actions of the insurgents at the arrest of prisoners at Dr. Schultz's house" (76), or whether it was solemnizing the new flag of the Provisional Government (77), the clergy on the spot were ever in the background, urging, uniting, directing. (78).

### 3. Events at Red River.

The Government at Ottawa did not realize in the early stages what a revolution was to be effected in the lives of the French half-breeds by the proposed changes, nor how powerful were the resources of the "Status quo" party, nor how combustible were the elements upon which they were operating. The indefinable rumblings which natives knew to portend danger, meant nothing to the Canadian Government. "Those gentlemen", wrote Governor McTavish, "are of the opinion that they know a great deal more about the country than we do" (79). Even Cartier expected no serious trouble. "We know all about it", he declared to Bishop Taché, "and we have made provision respecting matters". (80).

(74). 'Recent Disturbances', p.66.

(75). See 'Recent Disturbances', p.170.

(76). Evidence of Charles Garret against Father Ritchot at the trial of the latter at Ottawa. 'Recent Disturbances', p.119.

(77). Cf. McTavish to Smith, Dec.11, 1869, *ibid*, p.91. The flag "was saluted with much formality. About sixty of the scholars of the Roman Catholic Seminary here, conducted by a Roman Catholic priest, assisted at the ceremony".

(78). Notice how easily the Rev. Mr. Thibault, one of the Commissioners sent by the Canadian Government, was put out of the way by Riel. He "was politely bowed out and lost sight of", said Commissioner Smith, and made no further effort to fulfill his mission. "I have not seen Mr. Thibault", wrote Governor McTavish, "who appears to keep close in his quarters".

(79). Report of the Committee of 1874, p.14.

(80). *Ibid*, p.11.

This apparent self-assurance was in a sense justified by all accounts. On the surface everything seemed quiet. Dr. Lynch, whose activities in conjunction with the Canadian Party render his evidence perhaps too partisan, nevertheless asserted that on the very eve of the outbreak, he found, as well in the French as in the English parishes, "almost universal satisfaction existing with reference to the proposed change of government, and the acquisition of the country by Canada". (81). Joseph Howe, who paid a flying visit to Red River just at this time, also believed the Settlement well disposed. Even Governor McTavish who knew that there would be difficulties, had no fear of anything more discerning than a popular riot carried out by the French Métis. "None of them I have spoken with can give a clear account of what they wish", he wrote towards the end of September, 1869. (82). But the quick, strategic moves made by the leaders of the Insurrection during October and November showed what delusions Ottawa had been laboring under, and lend countenance to the belief expressed by Thomas Bunn in 1874: "I believe the French were guided by intelligent men. From their mode of action, I believe they were influenced by an intelligence superior to that of the general body of actors who appeared on the scene....Otherwise the mass of the people would have taken no action". (83).

A few days after Hon. Joseph Howe found the Settlement "well disposed", the incoming Governor McDougall was stopped on the road to Fort Garry. A 'National Committee' formed on the model of the relief organization of the previous year, immediately assumed full control. The inactivity of the native British element was taken for granted, and added strength to the position assumed by the insurgent leaders. Governor McTavish was immediately cut off from practically all contact with the outer world. A thorough though vain attempt was made to prevent the publication of McTavish's Proclamation of November 16th, and all efforts at pacification were repudiated. The Métis whom Governor McTavish had one month earlier found in ignorance as to what they really wanted, were in a position to tell Mr. Provencher, the envoy of McDougall "that it was too late, that the insurrectionary movement had taken such precautions as to prevent any peaceful settlement at present.... that a new Government was already organized, that a new constitution had been drafted, that elections had taken place", and that they were already negotiating as to "all matters relating to language, nationality, religion". (84). Moreover,

(81). Evidence of Dr. Lynch, *ibid.*, p.131.

(82). *Ibid.*, p.10.

(83). Evidence of Thomas Bunn, *ibid.*, p.116. It is to be noted that Bunn was Secretary of State in the Provisional Government.

(84). Provencher's Report, Nov.3rd, 1869. 'Recent Disturbances', p.20.

although the men with whom Provencher talked "did not know anything about what had been done either by the Canadian or Imperial Parliaments relating to the North-West Territory, but only know that Canada had paid the Hudson's Bay Company \$300,000 for their rights", they were much better informed along other lines. For instance, they "understood perfectly that I (85) have no legal authority to act or to command obedience till the Queen's Proclamation is issued".

The premature Proclamations issued by McDougall at the beginning of December throw additional light on the manner in which the actions of the Métis were directed. McDougall acted in full good faith. The Hon. Joseph Howe, Secretary of State for the Provinces, had informed him that December 2nd would be the probable date of the Order-in-Council authorizing the Transfer (86). So also a letter from Sir Curtis Lampson of the Hudson's Bay Company in London which reached McDougall through Governor McLavish, announced "the date of the Transfer agreed to by the Imperial Government to be December 1st next" (87). The assumption of power by a wholly French Provisional Government on November 24th required immediate redress, and when the day came on which he was assured that the assumption of authority by him would be legal, McDougall acted upon the insistent advice of his friends, and put his name to the Proclamation. (88). He had no means of knowing that only three days earlier Governor-general Young had written Lord Granville that "Canada cannot accept transfer unless quiet possession can be given". (89). The English-speaking inhabitants accepted the Proclamation without question, Governor McLavish immediately surrendering his powers.

How was it, then, that the Riel party "had their doubts concerning the genuineness of that document"? (90). Unless a secret source of information were open to him, how could Riel suspect that McDougall was not within his powers? The speed with which McDougall's faux pas was exploited, was remarkable. The meeting called for November 23rd had been adjourned until December 1st because "it was thought that the Royal Proclamation would have been here, and the Governor and Council of Assiniboia superseded", leaving the Provisional Government in authority. (91).

(85). Hon. Wm. McDougall to Hon. J. Howe, Nov. 14, 1869, *ibid*, p. 31.

(86). See Howe to McDougall, Nov. 19, 1869, 'Recent Disturbances,' p. 10.

(87). *Ibid*, p. 47.

(88). See letter to Howe, Nov. 15, 1869, *ibid*, p. 31.

(89). 'Recent Disturbances', p. 12.

(90). *Morice*, Vol. II, p. 35.

(91). Gov. McLavish to W. G. Smith, Nov. 30, 1869, 'Recent Disturbances' p. 189.

Immediately upon the publication of McDougall's Proclamation, the Insurgent leaders, fortified now by the fact that their opponents were in the wrong, assumed an aggressive attitude. A List of Rights was issued on December 5th (92), the net unreasonable clauses of which were calculated to allay the uneasiness of the English-speaking settlers. Two days later the Canadian Party was captured at one stroke and lodged in the cheerless cells of Fort Garry. The next day (December 6th) appeared the Proclamation of the Provisional Government — a virtual declaration of independence, subject only to negotiation for entry into the Dominion of Canada. Be it noted that this Proclamation was framed on November 24th, but was left unpublished until the mistakes of the opposing party presented a more ostensibly just cause for such a departure.

There were in all four Lists of Rights prepared in the course of the Insurrection (93). The first of these, already referred to, was drawn up by the French party exclusively, and on that score was refused consideration by Commissioner Smith. The second (Territorial) List was prepared by a committee of the Convention of January - February, 1870, and was ratified in an atmosphere of violent disagreement roused by the unreasoning attitude of Louis Riel.

The game was drawing to a close for this man. The liberal intentions of Canada were not to be denied; and Riel therefore applied himself at the Convention, to obtain the best possible terms for his people. Since Canada had been brought to the point of inviting delegates from Red River to come to Ottawa, the leaders of the Insurrection were determined to follow up the advantage. The spirit of the Convention, so far as the French party were concerned, was just this: "We must not by our own act allow ourselves to be swamped". (94).

Hence the stern controversy in respect of many of the clauses of the second List of Rights. The two-thirds veto clause was passed in spite of the fact that the principle expressed was foreign to the British Constitution. The voting qualifications counted immigrant Englishmen, Scotsmen or Irishmen as foreigners for at least three years. Particularly significant was Riel's attempt, which nearly proved the destruction of the Convention, to compel the ratification of the alternative List prepared by the Committee, providing for the entry of Rupertsland into Confederation not as a Territory but as a Province,

(92). See Appendix 'A' at the end of this thesis.

(93). The four Lists are given in extenso in Appendix 'A'.

(94). Riel at the Convention on Feb. 3rd. See the New Nation report.

with all the rights and privileges of a Province. The Metis spirit was noticeable in the stress laid by Riel upon the advantage of controlling the Crown lands, which would be involved in provincial status. "This is one of the most important powers as far as we are concerned", he declared. (95). But the proposal failed amidst scenes of uproar, and the threat - "I have friends enough who are determined to add it to our list on their own responsibility". (96).

#### 4. The Manitoba Act.

##### (a) The genesis of the Measure.

The treatment accorded to the Hon. Wm. McDougall, the seizure of Fort Garry, the proclamation of the Provisional Government, awakened the Ottawa Government to the fact that they were faced with a very real difficulty at Red River. The desire to acquire the country was ardent, yet strong measures were impossible by reason of the distance between Canada and the Settlement - "Anarchy would follow", declared Governor-general Young (97). The Colonial Office, moreover, disclaimed the responsibility of restoring peace in the North-west prior to the Transfer (98). There was only one man who had the power to effect a peaceable settlement, and at the beginning of January, 1870, the Hon H. L. Langevin through his brother the Bishop of Rimouski, broached to Bishop Tache at Rome the subject of returning to his diocese. The Bishop of St. Boniface maintained his original stand, declaring that he would return only "if the Government.... will give me the means of regulating the difficulty". An exchange of telegraphs followed (99), as a result of which the Bishop left Rome on January 12th and reached Ottawa February 9th. It was during his eight-day stay at the Canadian capital that the most important clauses of the Manitoba Act were agreed upon. Tache was able to leave for the

(95). Feb. 4th, See New Nation of Feb. 11, 1869.

(96). Feb. 5th. The sentence quoted refers in particular to the clause in the List of Rights, sponsored by Riel, invalidating the agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company.

(97). To Granville, 'Recent Disturbances', p. 12.

(98). For the views of the Colonial Office on this matter see Despatch from Granville to Young, Nov. 30, 1869, 'Recent Disturbances', p. 170.

(99). See evidence of Tache, 1874, pp. 15, 16. Notice the care taken by Bishop Tache to point out that he was according a favor to Canada. To Langevin's telegram thanking him for his "patriotic offer" to return, Tache replied that it was "at the request of the Government of Canada" that he was about to return.



West on the 17th (100) bearing the glad tidings to the Insurgents: "Many friends you have in Canada, both in the Government and outside, so be assured that no one is desirous to enslave you". Delegates might be sent to negotiate the minor details; but the chief points relating to Catholic privileges were already established. Long before the negotiations with the Red River delegates began, the Governor-general wrote to the Colonial Secretary, stating that his Cabinet "have complied with the condition of giving fair terms to the Roman Catholics inasmuch as Bishop Tache has stated his contentment therewith". (101).

Bishop Tache reached Winnipeg on March 9th, five days after the execution of Thomas Scott. In fact it was thought that the deed had been perpetrated in order to compromise the Metis before the arrival of the Bishop. The latter spent a few days in bringing Riel to reason, and after many meetings, matters were arranged, whereby the three delegates who had been appointed at the Convention two months before were to leave for Ottawa on the 23rd of March, bearing with them a List of Rights and the conditions upon which the people of Red River would enter the Canadian Confederation. (102).

Father Ritchot at one time swore that he and his colleagues were appointed by the President of the Provisional Government of Assiniboia "to bear to Ottawa the List of Rights claimed by the people of Assiniboia and there negotiate the conditions in accordance with which the same people consented to enter the Canadian Confederation". (103). But the truth was that the List which formed the basis of the negotiations was not the embodiment of the wishes of all the people as expressed through their representatives in Convention assembled; it was indeed diametrically opposed to the wishes thus expressed. The story of the secret List of Rights constitutes the most unlamentable phase of the history of Manitoba. It was drawn up in secret, and handed to Father Ritchot. Its ecclesiastical inspiration is self-evident. His negotiations at Ottawa having

(100). Cf. the Bishop's hurried departure. "The Government pressed me to remain until the arrival of the delegates, but my anxiety of mind was such that I could not delay". (Tache's address before the Assembly of the Provisional Government, March 15, 1870, reported in the 'New Nation' of March 18th.).

(101). April 14, 1870, 'Recent Disturbances', p. 116

(102). The delegates were Father Ritchot, Alfred H. Scott and Judge Black.

(103). Report of the Committee of 1874, p. 83.

been successful, Bishop Tache was determined to make a definitely advantageous settlement on a permanent basis. Hence he threw the weight of his influence in favor of Provincial status, because, as he wrote "il y aurait un nouveau danger a courir au moment d'un nouveau changement; il est mieux de faire immediatement un arrangement definitif" (104). The secret List of Rights (105) rode rough-shod over the wishes of the Convention in every important particular: it demanded Provincial status, it contained the much-debated clause against the Hudson's Bay Company's agreement, and most important of all, it embodied a demand for separate denominational schools. When Riel told the Convention that he had friends who were prepared to change the List of Rights on their own responsibility; when he declared that "the fact of our entering as a Province does not deprive us of the right to lay down any restrictions" (106), he was but forecasting the actual event.

What renders the transaction even more sinister are the pains taken by those responsible to keep the existence of the List secret. Judge Black consented to go as a delegate at the earnest request of Bishop Tache, before the secret List was drawn up; and since entry as a Province had already been decided upon at Ottawa, he was constrained to submit the Provincial List prepared by the Committee of the Convention as an alternative to the Territorial List. (107). That alternative List of Rights had been published in French on the day the delegates left, in order to give the impression that this was to be the basis of negotiations. Even the Governor-general believed that this List of Rights "formed the subject of conference" (108). But the actual basis of negotiations, the secret List of Rights which was discussed between Father Ritchot and Sir George Cartier, never saw the light of day until Bishop Tache, in self defence, published it in the Manitoba Free Press of December 27th, 1889.

Having thus taken command of the situation, Bishop Tache proceeded to effect a real pacification. With his arrival the "New Nation" at once changed its tone in favor of British connection. Riel and his associates dropped their assumed anti-British attitude. The 'fleur de lys' went down and the Union Jack was hoisted in its place. "They told me repeatedly", declared Bishop Tache regarding Riel and his friends, "that they

(104). To Cartier, April 7th, 1870, quoted by Benoit, Vol. II, p. 65.

(105). See Appendix 'A' for the terms in extenso.

(106). Feb. 4th, See the 'New Nation' of Feb. 11, 1870.

(107). Cf. evidence of Sir John A. Macdonald, 1874, p. 103: "Judge Black desired to be spoken of as coming from the Convention, and not from the Provisional Government...."

(108). See the official Despatch from Gov.-gen. Young to Lord Granville April 29, 1870, enclosing a copy of this List. 'Recent Disturbances', p. 129.

never intended to rise against the Crown, but their intention was to come to an understanding with the Canadian authorities". (109). The Hudson's Bay Company was restored to its commercial operations - at a price (110); and under the rule of Riel the Settlement remained quiet and expectant.

(b) The actual Achievements.

The Manitoba Act became law on May 12th 1870. On the 31st of the same month the Archbishop of Quebec issued a syllabus which well reflected the spirit behind the enactment. "The Church", ran the declaration, "must have admission to the schools not only by simple tolerance, but by virtue of its divine mission.... They stigmatize as a sacrilegious usurpation all civil laws concerning the education of youths; they say that by its divine institution the Church must have to itself alone the direction of schools, even in what concerns letters and natural sciences". (111). From this point of view the Act was a splendid victory for the Church. Bishop Tache exulted. "Le resultat obtenu est magnifique, bien superieur a tout ce que l'on pouvait attendre ou esperer. Avec les concessions obtenus, la position de notre peuple est assuree contre les empietements du protestantisme". (112). Monce has dubbed the Manitoba Act "the greatest monument to the wisdom which prompted the resistance of 1869". (113).

The Act which created the Province of Manitoba was concise and to the point. (114). It established on the banks of the Red River a system strikingly similar to that of Quebec, even to the extent of instituting a Provincial Legislative Council. The clauses of importance from the point of view of the present chapter are only five in number:

Clause 16 provided for the creation of twenty four constituencies having regard to the divisions among the population. This was in effect the provision of twenty four water-tight compartments for legislative purposes, twelve English and twelve French.

Clause 22 provided for a system of separate denominational schools, safeguarded by the power of appeal to the Governor-general-in-Council, and by powers of remedial legislation vested in the Dominion Parliament.

(109). Evidence of Tache, 1874, p.24.

(110). March 28th. For terms of settlement see 'Recent Disturbances', p.217.

(111). Quoted by R. Sellar, 'The Tragedy of Quebec', p.371.

(112). To Grandin, June 13, 1870, quoted by Benoit, Vol. II, p.98.

(113). History of the Catholic Church... Vol. II, p.103.

(114). See Appendix 'B'. at the end of this Thesis.

Clause 23 made the French language the equal of English in the Legislature and in all the Courts.

Clause 30 vested the control of Crown lands in the Dominion Government. After the strong stand taken by Riel at the Convention on the question of the control of the Provincial Domain(115), this clause comes as a surprise. The interests of the Metis having been safeguarded as was supposed, by a grant of 1,400,000 acres of land (in clause 31), the remainder of the public lands were bartered away in return for concessions in other directions. (116).

The biographer of Bishop Taché remarks that the Bishops of old France had built up their country even as a bee builds up its hive, and that Alexander Taché carried on the glorious tradition at Red River (117). A glance at the period immediately following the Manitoba Act reveals the fact that while even in Protestant circles the weight of Bishop Taché's influence was great, among the French Roman Catholic population the Bishop was supreme in all matters. The Act of the Legislature establishing the separate school system "fut préparé sous la direction, presque sous la dictée de Mgr. Taché". (118). To his views public men deferred in the matter of political appointments. (119). The Bishop, indeed, made it his chief work, after that of obtaining an amnesty, to see that there was a sufficient Catholic representation in Government offices. (120). The most

(115). See above, p. 66 foot-note 95.

(116). Father Ritchot was practically the sole negotiator. Alfred H. Scott was ill during the greater part of his sojourn at Ottawa, while Judge Black who acted as delegate much against his own will, left for Scotland before the negotiations were completed.

(117). Benoit, Vol. II, p. 83.

(118). Benoit, Vol. II, p. 130.

(119). Cf. letter from Sir George Cartier, Report of the Committee of 1874, p. 46. "I am writing a line to friend Girard in relation to the choice of two Senators for Manitoba.... I should like to know your views, my Lord, in this matter if you would be so good as to make them known to me".

(120). His correspondence is filled with reference to this matter. Cf. letter of Jan. 15, 1873 to Sir John A. McDonald, strongly criticising the appointment of Dr. Schultz as Councillor of the North West. (Report of 1874, p. 49). Cf. also the exceedingly strong letter of Jan. 27, to Hon. Hector Langevin, in which Archbishop not only attacks the Government's tendency to disregard the claims of French Canadians to official appointments, but also definitely threatens to effect the overthrow of the Government unless an amnesty were granted.

obvious indication of the influence of the Church over the French community is to be found in the attitude of the latter during the Fenian danger in 1871. In 1869 the Metis had been disturbed more by innuendo and threats than by any definite wrongs, yet they "rose as one man". In 1871 on the contrary they had just passed through a year of "affronts and privations", a period <sup>in which</sup> ~~which~~ "many of them actually have been so beaten and outraged that they feel as if they were living in a state of slavery". (121); yet when the opportunity was offered them to avenge their wrongs, they remained quiet and loyal. It appears that since the special privileges for which the guardians of French interests had been contending were now accorded, the clergy set their faces like adamant against any disturbance which might endanger those privileges. There was never any likelihood, therefore, of the Metis joining the Fenians. "I knew long ago there was no doubt about their course" declared Father Ritchot when the danger was passed. (122).

By far the greatest interest of Archbishop Tache in the years succeeding the victory of the Manitoba Act was that of settling his "little Quebec" with a large French and Catholic population. Realizing that the backbone of his flock, the hunting Metis, would inevitably disappear, he was haunted by the fear lest all his labors should in the end be proven futile. When the French representation in the Legislature fell from twelve to ten in 1875, and the Bureau of Education contained only nine Catholics out of a total of twenty-one, Archbishop Tache redoubled his efforts at securing a flow of French Catholic immigrants (123). In fact Catholic immigration became for him an all-absorbing topic. In the summer of 1870 he and Father Ritchot had persuaded several young French Canadians of great ability to come West and consecrate themselves to the cause of French Catholicism. "Messieurs Girard, Dubuc, Royal.... nous sont venus du Canada", wrote Tache, "et nous ne sommes pas dans une position inferieure; et pendant les quatre ans de la premiere session du Parlement, nous pouvons obtenir des lois -avantageuses". (124).

(121). Archibald to Sir John A. Macdonald (confidential), Report of the Committee of 1874, p.156.

(122). Evidence of Tache, *ibid.*, p.53. Cf. de Tramudan's article in *The Canadian Historical Review* of June, 1923.

(123). Cf. *Horice*, Vol. II, Chapter 27.

(124). To Grandin, Dec. 9th, 1870, quoted by Benoit, Vol. II, p.159.

P. Gaudet in his book "Le Grand Derangement" (125) declares of the French in Nova Scotia in their relation to the British element, "Les berceaux sont et seront, notre force, et c'est là ou nous avons l'avantage sur eux". As English-speaking Protestants continued to pour into the new province, the Archbishop began to be animated by a similar conviction. "Sous notre systeme constitutionel", he wrote to Pere Aubert, "les nombres sont la force", and failing immigration, "nous allons nous trouver a la merci de ceux qui nous n'aiment pas". (126).

"Que faire encore?" he demanded of his old colleague, Bishop Fleche of Three Rivers. "Opposer autant qu'il est possible, le sauvegarde d'une immigration catholique aux menaces de l'immigration protestante...." (127). "Envoyez-moi du monde", he begged in another letter (128). Fache despatched circular letters to the clergy of Quebec; he sent emissaries east and south; he called for aid upon laymen and churchmen in both France, "Travaillez pour notre colonization, autrement nous sommes perdus". (129). That was the burden of his refrain for twenty-five years.

Such efforts could not but be successful. Beginning with the large party of French Canadians who arrived in September 1871, a steady stream began to flow westward from Quebec and even from the United States. The details of this French immigration belong rather to a history of Manitoba than to an account of the Red River Settlement. But, in the words of the scholarly biographer, of Archbishop Fache, in the face of dependence upon "une nation rivale et heretique", the French Catholic population increased and multiplied even as the Hebrews under the domination of the Egyptians. New parishes were incorporated year after year, and the "little Quebec" began to grow into a great Catholic Manitoba. But it was written that it should not be for long.

(125). Foreword, p.vi.

(126). July 17, 1872, quoted by Benoit, Vol.II, p.198.

(127). Dec. 1st, 1871, quoted by Benoit, Vol.II, pp.195,196.

(128). To the same, April 4th, 1872, quoted by Benoit, Vol II, p.196.

(129). To Father Lacombe, April 4th, 1872, quoted by Benoit, Vol. II, p.197.

## A P P E N D I X . A .

Following are the four Lists of Rights issued during the Insurrection of 1869.

### 1. The List of Rights of Dec. 2nd 1869

This was drawn up by the French leaders "without any concurrence from the English speaking portion of the Council", "who nevertheless saw "nothing very unreasonable" in it. (See 'Recent Disturbances', p.65).

#### RESOLUTIONS.

1. The right to elect our own Legislature.
2. The Legislature to have the power to pass all laws local to the Territory, over the veto of the Executive, by a two-third vote.
3. No Act of the Dominion Parliament (local to the Territory) to be binding on the people until sanctioned by their Representatives.
4. All Sheriffs, Magistrates, Constables, and School Trustees to be elected by the people.
5. A Free Homestead and Freehold Law.
6. A portion of the public lands to be appropriated for the benefit of Schools, the building of Roads and Parish Buildings.
7. A guarantee to connect Winnipeg by Rail with the nearest line of Railroad; -the Land Grant for such Road or Roads to be subject to the Legislature of the Territory.
8. For a given number of years all public Expenses of the Territory, Civil, Military, and Municipal, to be paid out of the Dominion Treasury.
9. The Military to be composed of the people now existing in the Territory.
10. That the French and English languages be common in the Legislature and Courts; and all public Documents and Acts of Legislature be printed in both languages.
11. That the Judge of the Supreme Court speak French and English.
12. Treaties to be concluded and ratified between the Government and the several Tribes of Indians of the Territory, calculated to insure peace on the Frontier.
13. That these Rights be granted to us by Mr. McDougall, before he be admitted into the country. If he have not the power himself to grant them, then he must get an Act of Parliament passed, expressly securing us those Rights; and, until such Act be obtained, stay outside the Boundary Line of the Territory.

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II. The Territorial List of Rights ratified by the Convention of January - February 1870, and submitted to Donald A. Smith on Feb. 7th 1870. (See 'Recent Disturbances', pp.157, 158).

"LIST OF RIGHTS."

1. That in view of the present exceptional position of the North-West, duties upon goods imported into the country shall continue as at present (except in the case of spirituous liquors) for three years, and for such further time as may elapse until there be uninterrupted railroad communication between Red River Settlement and St. Paul, and also steam communication between Red River Settlement and Lake Superior.
2. As long as this country remains a Territory in the Dominion of Canada, there shall be no direct taxation except such as may be imposed by the Local Legislature for Municipal or other Local purposes.
3. During the time this country remains a Territory in the Dominion of Canada all military, civil, and other public expenses in connection with the general government of the country, -or that have hitherto been borne by the public funds of the Settlement beyond the receipt of the above mentioned duties, shall be met by the Dominion of Canada.
4. That while the burden of public expense in this country is borne by Canada, the country be governed under a Lieutenant-Governor from Canada, and a Legislature, three members of whom being heads of departments of the Government, shall be nominated by the Governor-General of Canada.
5. That, after the expiration of this exceptional period, the country shall be governed, as regards its local affairs, as the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec are now governed, by a Legislature elected by the people, and a Ministry responsible to it, under a Lieutenant-Governor appointed by the Governor-General of Canada.
6. That there shall be no interference by the Dominion Parliament in the local affairs of this Territory other than is allowed in any of the Provinces in the Confederation; and that this Territory shall have and enjoy in all respects, the same privileges, advantages, and aids in meeting the public expenses of this Territory as the Confederated Provinces have and enjoy.
7. That while the North-West remains a Territory the Legislature have a right to pass all laws local to the Territory, over the veto of the Lieutenant-Governor, by a two-third vote.
8. A Homestead and Pre-emption law.
9. That while the North-West remains a Territory, the sum of 25,000 dols. (twenty-five thousand dollars) a year be appropriated for schools, roads, and bridges.
10. That all public buildings be at the cost of the Dominion Treasury.
11. That there shall be guaranteed uninterrupted steam communication to Lake Superior within five years, and also the establishment by rail of a connection with the American railway as soon as it reaches the International line.
12. That the English and French languages be common in the Legislature and Courts, and that all public documents and Acts of the Legislature be published in both languages.
13. That the Judge of the Supreme Court speak the French and English languages.



14. That treaties be concluded between the Dominion and the several Indian tribes of the country, as soon as possible.
15. That until the population of the country entitles us to more, we have four representatives in the Canadian Parliament - one in the Senate, and three in the Legislative Assembly.
16. That all properties, rights, and privileges, as hitherto enjoyed by us, be respected; and the recognition and arrangement of local customs, usages and privileges, be made under the control of the local Legislature.
17. That the local Legislature of this Territory have full control of all the public land inside a circumference, having Upper Fort Garry as the centre, and that the radii of this circumference be the number of miles that the American line is distant from Fort Garry.
18. That every man in this country (except uncivilized and unsettled Indians) who has attained the age of twenty-one years, and every British subject, a stranger to this Territory, who has resided three years in the country, and is a householder, shall have a right to vote at the election of a member to serve in the Legislature of the country and in the Dominion Parliament; and every foreign subject, other than a British subject, who has resided the same length of time in the country, and is a householder, shall have the same right to vote, on condition of his taking the oath of allegiance-it being understood that this article be subject to amendment exclusively by the local Legislature.
19. That the North-west Territory shall never be held liable for any portion of the 300,000l. paid to the Hudson Bay Company, or for any portion of the public debt of Canada, as it stands at the time of our entering the Confederation; and if, thereafter, we be called upon to assume our share of the said public debt, we consent only on condition that we first be allowed the amount for which we shall be held liable.

III The alternative Provincial List of Rights, drafted by the Committee at the same time as the Territorial List, but rejected by the Convention in spite of Riel's furious demands for its ratification. This was the List published at the time the delegates left for Ottawa, in order to conceal the existence of the secret List in the possession of Father Ritchot. Even the Governor-general believed that this List "formed the subject of conference". (See 'Recent Disturbances' p. 129 for Sir John Young's despatch to Earl Granville, April 29, 1870, stating this belief.)

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS.

1. That the Territories, heretofore known as Rupert's Land and North-west, shall not enter into the Confederation of the Dominion of Canada, except as a Province, to be styled and known as the Province of Assiniboia, and with all the rights and privileges common to the different Provinces of the Dominion.

2. That we have two Representatives in the Senate, and four in the House of Commons of Canada, until such time as an increase of population entitle the Province to a greater representation.
3. That the Province of Assiniboia shall not be held liable, at any time, for any portion of the public debt of the Dominion contracted before the date of said Province shall have entered the Confederation, unless the said Province shall have first received from the Dominion the full amount for which the said Province is to be held liable.
4. That the sum of eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000) be paid annually by the Dominion Government to the Local Legislature of this Province.
5. That all properties, rights, and privileges enjoyed by the people of this Province, up to the date of our entering into the Confederation, be respected, and that the arrangement and confirmation of all customs, usages, and privileges be left exclusively to the Local Legislature.
6. That during the term of five years, the Province of Assiniboia shall not be subjected to any direct taxation except such as may be imposed by the Local Legislature for municipal or local purposes.
7. That a sum of money equal to eighty cents. per head of the population of this Province be paid annually by the Canadian Government to the Local Legislature of the said Province, until such time as the said population shall have increased to six hundred thousand (600,000).
8. That the Local Legislature shall have the right to determine the qualifications of members to represent this Province in the Parliament of Canada, and the Local Legislature.
9. That, in this Province, with the exception of uncivilised and unsettled Indians, every made native citizen who has attained the age of twenty-one years, and every foreigner, being a British subject, who has attained the same age, and has resided three years in the Province, and is a householder; and every foreigner other than a British subject who has resided here during the same period, being a householder, and having taken the oath of allegiance, shall be entitled to vote at the election of members for the Local Legislature and for the Canadian Parliament. It being understood that this Article be subject to amendment exclusively by the Local Legislature.
10. That the bargain of the Hudson Bay Company with respect to the transfer of the Government of this country to the Dominion of Canada be annulled, so far as it interferes with the rights of the people of Assiniboia, and so far as it would affect our future relations with Canada.
11. That the Local Legislature of the Province of Assiniboia shall have full control over all the public lands of the Province, and the right to amend all acts or arrangements made or entered into with reference to the public lands of Rupert's Land and the North-West, now called the Province of Assiniboia.
12. That the Government of Canada appoint a Commission of Engineers to explore the various districts of the Province of Assiniboia, and to lay before the Local Legislature a report of the mineral wealth of the Province within five years from the date of our entering into Confederation.

13. That treaties be concluded between Canada and the different Indian tribes of the Province of Assiniboia, by and with the advice and co-operation of the Local Legislature of this Province.
14. That an uninterrupted steam communication from Lake Superior to Fort Garry be guaranteed to be completed within the space of five years.
15. That all public buildings, bridges, roads, and other public works be at the cost of the Dominion Treasury.
16. That the English and French languages be common in the Legislature and in the Courts, and that all public documents, as well as all acts of the Legislature, be published in both languages.
17. That whereas the French and English speaking people of Assiniboia are so equally divided as to number, yet so united in their interests and so connected by commerce, family connections, and other political and social relations, that it has happily been found impossible to bring them into hostile collision, although repeated attempts have been made by designing strangers, for reasons known to themselves, to bring about so ruinous and disastrous an event.  
And whereas after all the troubles and apparent dissension of the past, the result of misunderstanding among themselves, they have, as soon as the evil agencies referred to above were removed, become as united and friendly as ever.  
Therefore as a means to strengthen this union and friendly feeling among all classes we deem it expedient and advisable-  
That the Lieutenant-Governor who may be appointed for the Province of Assiniboia should be familiar with both the French and English languages.
18. That the Judge of the Supreme Court speak the English and French languages.
19. That all debts contracted by the Provisional Government of the Territory of the North-west, now called Assiniboia, in consequence of the illegal and inconsiderate measures adopted by Canadian officials to bring about a civil war in our midst, be paid out of the Dominion Treasury; and that none of the members of the Provisional Government, or any of those acting under them, be in any way held liable or responsible with regard to the movement or any of the actions which led to the present negotiations.
20. That in view of the present exceptional position of Assiniboia, duties upon goods imported into the Province shall, except in the case of spirituous liquors, continue as at present for at least three years from the date of our entering the Confederation, and for such further time as may elapse until there be uninterrupted railroad communication between Winnipeg and Saint Paul; and also steam communication between Winnipeg and Lake Superior.

IV. The List of Rights which was drawn up in secret after the return of Bishop Tache to Red River from Rome, and given to Father Ritchot who made it the basis of negotiation for the terms upon which Red River would enter the Canadian Confederation. The present draft is taken from the Manitoba Free Press of December 27, 1889, in which issue appeared Bishop Tache's letter referred to in the thesis.

#### The List of Rights.

1. That the Territory of the North West enter into the Confederation of the Dominion of Canada as a province, with all the privileges common with all the different provinces in the Dominion.

That this province be governed

- (1) by a Lieutenant-governor appointed by the Governor-general of Canada.
- (2) By a Senate.
- (3) By a Legislature chosen by the people with a responsible ministry.

2. That until such time as the increase of the population in this country entitles us to a greater number, we have two representatives in the Senate and four in the Commons of Canada.

3. That in entering the Confederation the Province of the North West be completely free from the public debt of Canada; and if called upon to assume a part of the said debt of Canada, that it be only after having received from Canada the same amount for which the said province of the North West should be held responsible.

4. That the annual sum of \$80,000 be allowed by the Dominion of Canada to the Legislature of the Province of the North West.

5. That all properties, rights and privileges enjoyed by us up to this day be respected, and that the recognition and settlement of customs, usages and privileges be left exclusively to the decision of the local Legislature.

6. That this country be submitted to no direct taxation except such as may be imposed by the local Legislature for municipal or local purposes.

7. That the schools be separate, and that the public money for schools be distributed among the different religious denominations in proportion to their respective populations, according to the system of the Province of Quebec.

8. That the determination of qualifications of members for the parliament of the Province or for the parliament of Canada, be left to the local legislature.

9. That in the province, with the exception of the Indians who are neither civilized nor settled, every man having attained the age of twenty one years, and every foreigner being a British subject, after having resided three years in this country and being possessed of a house, be entitled to vote at the elections for members of the local Legislature and the Canadian Parliament, and that every foreigner other than a British subject, having resided here during the same period, and being proprietor of a house, be likewise entitled to vote on condition of taking the oath of allegiance.

It is understood that this article is subject to amendment by the Local Legislature exclusively.

That

10. The bargain of the Hudson Bay Company with respect to the transfer of the government of this country to the Dominion of Canada never have in any case an effect prejudicial to the rights of the North West.

11. That the local Legislature of this Province have full control over all the lands of the Northwest.

12. That a commission of engineers, appointed by Canada, explore the various districts of the Northwest, and lay before the local Legislature within the space of five years a report of the mineral wealth of the country,

13. That treaties be concluded between Canada and the different Indian tribes of the Northwest, at the request and with the co-operation of the Local Legislature.

14. That an uninterrupted steam communication from Lake Superior to Fort Garry be guaranteed to be completed within the space of five years, as well as the construction of a railroad connecting the American railway as soon as the latter reaches the international boundary.

15. That all public buildings and constructions be at the cost of the Canadian Exchequer.

16. That both the English and the French languages be common in the Legislature and in the courts; and that all public documents, as well as the Acts of the Legislature be published in both languages.

17. That the Lieutenant-Governor to be appointed for the Province of the Northwest be familiar with both the English and the French languages.

18. That the Judge of the supreme court speak the English and the French languages.

19. That all debts contracted by the Provisional Government of the Territory of the Northwest, now called Assiniboia, in consequence of the illegal and inconsiderate measures adopted by Canadian officials to bring about a civil war in our midst, be paid out of the Dominion treasury, and that none of the Provisional Government or any of those acting under them be in any way held liable or responsible with regard to the movement or any of the actions which led to the present negotiations.

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End of Appendix 'A'.

A P P E N D I X 'B'.

Some clauses of the Manitoba Act, pertinent from the point of view of the present thesis. (See W. F. M. Kennedy, "Documents of the Canadian Constitution"; p. 689.)

Clause 9. There shall be a Legislature for the Province consisting of the Lieutenant-Governor, and of two Houses, styled respectively the Legislative Council of Manitoba, and the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

Clause 16. The Lieutenant-Governor shall (within six months of the date of the Order of Her Majesty in Council, admitting Rupert's Land and the North-Western Territory into the Union) by Proclamation under the Great Seal, divide the said Province into twenty four electoral divisions, due regard being had to existing local Divisions and population.

Clause 22. In and for the Province, the said Legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education, subject and according to the following provisions:-

(1). Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law or practice in the Province at the Union.

(2). An appeal shall lie to the Governor-General in Council from any act or decision of the Legislature of the Province, or of any Provincial authority, affecting any right or privilege of the Protestant or Roman Catholic minority of the Queen's subjects in relation to education.

(3). In case any such Provisional Law as from time to time seems to the Governor-General in Council requisite for the due execution of the provisions of this section is not made, or in case any decision of the Governor-General in Council or any appeal under this section is not duly executed by the proper Provincial authority in that behalf, then, and in every such case, and as far only as the circumstances of each case require, the

Parliament of Canada may make remedial laws for the due execution of the provisions of this section, and of any decision of the Governor-general in Council under this section.

Clause 23. Either the English or the French language may be used by any person in the debates of the Houses of the Legislature, and both those languages shall be used in the respective Records and Journals of those Houses, and either of those languages may be used by any person, or in Pleading or Process, in or issuing from any court in Canada established under the "British North America Act, 1867", or in or from all or any of the courts of the Province. The Acts of the Legislature shall be printed and published in both those languages.

Clause 30. All ungranted or waste lands in the Province shall be, from and after the date of the said transfer, vested in the Crown, and administered by the Government of Canada for the purposes of the Dominion, subject to, and except in so far as the same may be affected by, the conditions and stipulations contained in the agreement for the surrender of Rupert's Land by the Hudson Bay Company, to Her Majesty.

Clause 31. And whereas it is expedient, towards the extinguishment of the Indian Title to the lands in the Province, to appropriate a portion of such ungranted lands to the extent of one million four hundred thousand acres thereof, for the benefit of the families of the half-breed residents, it is hereby enacted, that under regulations to be from time to time made by the Governor-General in Council, the Lieutenant-Governor shall select such lots or tracts in such parts of the Province as he may deem expedient, to the extent aforesaid, and divide the same among the children of the half-breed heads of families, residing in the Province at the time of the said transfer to Canada, and the same shall be granted to the said children respectively, in such mode and on such condition as to settlement and otherwise, as the Governor-General in Council shall from time to time determine.

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End of Appendix 'B'.

THE FRENCH ELEMENT IN THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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NOTE.

With two, minor exceptions the writer has had recourse to all of the following works and journals. The material which is either documentary or written by contemporaries of the period under consideration, is indicated by an asterik.



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