

THE ERECTION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF WINNIPEG

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PREFACE

The purpose of this thesis is to study the factors which led to the erection of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Winnipeg. It is difficult to make a full investigation of the problem because of the recentness of the events and the relative lack of sources. This thesis is meant to be but a guide through ecclesiastical policy in the division of St. Boniface diocese insofar as documents which illustrate this problem of the Church in the West are described. As the Church expands and grows it becomes necessary to divide, to form new dioceses, to make smaller administrative units. Division may be necessary for any number of reasons, but sometimes it is painful. This thesis will investigate the reasons for this particular division.

In writing the thesis there were several difficulties to be faced. The first and most important was the nearness in time of the events. Fifty years have not yet passed from the time of the division; only fifty-five years have elapsed since the first petition to request a division was drawn up and presented. Coupled with this difficulty was the almost total lack of personal sources. Although it was not to be expected that in a matter of ecclesiastical policy personal sources would be too important, nevertheless, such sources can give insights to motives, reactions to events, and an outline of strategy.

The nature of the evidence then is largely official; there is an almost total reliance on official documents, and then, only on those documents available in the Archives of Winnipeg and St. Boniface Dioceses. These, of course, are the most important, but in the Vatican

Archives, in the Archives of the Apostolic Delegation to Canada, in the Archives of various Quebec dioceses and in Western dioceses, will be found evidence which, in the future, will provide a much more complete view of the situation. The documents around which this thesis will revolve are to be found in the Archives of St. Boniface and Winnipeg Dioceses but they tell only part of the story, and only that part which the authors chose to tell. Newspapers, both secular and religious, reflect opinion, but are not themselves sources of information.

The different points of view of all concerned must be understood. The French-speaking Catholics and the English-speaking Catholics were agreed on one issue: both were Catholic. From this common point are many divergent paths, and perhaps no absolutely correct one. The attitude of the laity often differs from that of the official head of the Church in a particular diocese, but it is by no means certain that the wishes of the bishop in administration and related matters will always prevail in a given set of circumstances. The Church is, to an extent, a political organization with differences of opinion to reconcile; but all are Catholics and in the struggle which will be outlined there was never any question of the Catholicity of either side.

One other point must be made. Outside influences played an important part in the struggle for division and in the division itself. The flood of Orange, Protestant, immigrants to Manitoba from Ontario, after what has been improperly called the first Riel Rebellion, and their desire to make Manitoba another Ontario, resulted in racial and religious tensions, which found an outlet, for example, in the Manitoba Schools Question. A certain fear of the French - particularly the

suspicion that Quebec had an undue influence over the Federal Government - tended to isolate the French from the community and forced the Church into the rôle of a protector of French interests. A gulf opened between the two groups (they had never been too friendly under the best of conditions) which was widened by events such as the Manitoba School Question. The struggle over Regulation 17 in Ontario, the struggle for control of the University of Ottawa, the quarrel between Ontario and Quebec, and the struggle within the Canadian hierarchy itself, all had their effect on the Catholic parties, some more obviously than others. This thesis is concerned almost solely with the interplay of forces between two groups, the Irish Catholics of St. Mary's Church in Winnipeg, and the Archbishop of St. Boniface, Mgr. A. Langevin and his successor, Mgr. A. Bélieau, but both sides were profoundly influenced by developments outside of the Province.

The immediate cause of the division was the rather sudden influx of immigrants, speaking alien languages and with varied backgrounds, beginning about 1896. Many of these were Catholic, belonging to both the Latin and Greek Rites. Irish people also flocked to the new land and took their place within the Church. Immigration created new problems in the administration of the Church, which had been ministering to a small French population almost exclusively. Stresses and strains were created almost overnight; priests, churches, money, and means were required to attend to the needs of these people; rite problems were introduced.

The hostility which had existed between the Protestant, Orange, Ontario group and the French, remained and was reinforced by fresh immigration from Ontario; new immigrant groups from Europe found themselves identified

with the French through the Church, although they themselves (particularly the Irish) did not always sympathize with them. Some reorganization had to be carried out; new dioceses were created in 1903 (ecclesiastical province of British Columbia erected), in 1910, the Vicariate Apostolic of Keewatin and the Diocese of Regina were erected and in 1912 the ecclesiastical province of Edmonton was formed, along with the erection of the Diocese of Calgary. However, this was not sufficient and it became obvious that further reorganization would have to be carried out, or the faith would suffer.

The problem was taken up as a matter of policy and debated at the highest level in the Canadian hierarchy, including Rome and the Apostolic Delegate. The solution was division - painful but necessary. Special circumstances prevailed in St. Boniface diocese, for there, the mixture of races was the greatest. This thesis is concerned with an analysis of some of the documents involved in the working out of a solution. They tell only a part of the whole story, and, indeed, that part is often violently coloured.

The documents published in the appendixes are the only ones made public in the course of the struggle. As they are quite valuable and very interesting, but not readily available, they are being published with this thesis.

I would like to thank my supervisor, Rev. Fr. V. Jensen, who gave much of his valuable time to keep me on the right path. I would like to thank the Archbishop of St. Boniface, the Rt. Rev. M. Baudoux and the former Archbishop of Winnipeg, the Rt. Rev. P. Pocock, who

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ABBREVIATIONS

PAM Public Archives of Manitoba

ASB Archives of St. Boniface Archdiocese

AWSV Archives Western Sunday Visitor

ASM Archives of St. Mary's Cathedral; these are actually the archives of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg located at St. Mary's Cathedral rectory.

Mgr. An abbreviation of Monseigneur, a title given to a bishop.

Mons. Abbreviation of Monsignor, a dignitary below a bishop.

CCHAR Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report

CHR Canadian Historical Review

GLOSSARY OF TERMS¹

Archbishop: In the 4th and 5th centuries the title was applied to patriarchs and to holders of other outstanding sees.

Later its use was extended to Metropolitans having jurisdiction over an ecclesiastical province. In the Latin Rite it has now almost become a title of honour for a bishop of a distinguished see.

Apostolic Delegate: A person appointed by the Pope to keep the Vatican informed of ecclesiastical matters which the Holy See has assigned to him. He is not a diplomatic official, his duties being purely ecclesiastical.

Bishop: It means literally 'overseer'. They differ from priests chiefly by their power to confer Holy Orders and to administer the sacrament of Confirmation. They normally receive consecration at the hands of a Metropolitan and two other bishops, and are consecrated to rule a particular diocese or part of the Church within the Metropolitan's province. In addition to consecration two other things are necessary: election and mission. Election is the choosing of a particular person, which is normally performed by the Pope, who, in any case, has the final decision in the choice of a candidate. The chief duties of a Bishop consist in administering those sacraments which he is competent to confer and in the general supervision and administration of his diocese. The Diocesan Bishop may be assisted by other Bishops, subordinate to him, known as coadjutors, auxiliaries or assistants. The supreme authority in a diocese resides in the single personality of the Bishop.

Bull: A papal letter sealed with a bulla (a round leaden seal) or with a red-ink imprint of the device on the bulla, because of the significance of the subject matter. It is an edict and has the force of law within the Church.

Coadjutor: A Bishop assisting a Bishop; sometimes, but not at all times, the right of succession to the see is granted.

Diocese: The territorial unit of administration in the Church. It is governed by a Bishop with the aid of the inferior clergy and sometimes one or more other Bishops. It is usually divided into parishes. Dioceses are commonly associated to form an ecclesiastical province, over which one of the diocesan bishops presides with varying powers of intervention in the affairs of other dioceses. Traditionally, the bishop is supreme in his diocese and possesses ordinary jurisdiction.

Hierarchy: The word has been in use for the ordered body of the Christian clergy since early times. Catholic theologians distinguish between the hierarchy of order and that of jurisdiction. The former is subdivided into the three grades of Divine institution (bishops, priests, and deacons) on the one hand, and minor orders, instituted by the Church, on the other. In the hierarchy of jurisdiction only the Papacy and the episcopate are held to be of Divine institution. The others are divided

into two classes - those exercising an authority derived directly from the Pope, e.g. Cardinals, Legates and Vicars Apostolic, and those whose authority derives from the bishop, e.g. coadjutors, auxiliary bishops.

Metropolitan: The title of a Bishop exercising provincial, and not merely diocesan, powers. His chief duties are the summoning and presidency of provincial synods, the care of vacant sees; some share in the appointment and consecration of suffragans and have some disciplinary powers over them. Metropolitans have commonly the titles of Archbishop.

Ordinary Jurisdiction: Jurisdiction which belongs by right to an office and the occupant of that office. It is not delegated authority.

Province: A group of dioceses, territorially contiguous, forming an ecclesiastical unit.

See: The official 'seat' (sedes) or throne (cathedra) of a Bishop. This seat normally stands in the cathedral of the Diocese; hence the town or place where the Cathedral is located is also itself known as the Bishop's see.

Suffragan Bishop: Any Bishop in relation to his Archbishop or Metropolitan, by whom he may be summoned to assist at synods and give his 'suffrage'.

Vicar Apostolic: The name given to a titular Bishop in Christian and missionary countries where a regular hierarchy is not established or where the ordinary jurisdiction of the Bishop is impeded. He performs the spiritual functions of a diocesan Bishop and has generally the same rights and delegated powers.

Vicar General: An official whom a Bishop deputes to represent him in the exercise of his jurisdiction. He may appoint more than one or none at all, according to circumstances.

Notes

- (1) These are not full definitions but merely outlines to facilitate understanding. For the fuller, proper definitions, see the Catholic Encyclopaedia.

PART I: PRELUDE TO DIVISION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Roman Catholic Church was firmly established in Rupert's Land 1 February 1820 when the Rev. Fr. J.N. Provencher was nominated titular Bishop of Juliopolis and coadjutor to the Bishop of Quebec for the Northwest.¹ As the civil authorities still objected to the creation of a regular hierarchy for Canada, with suffragans and metropolitans, it was not until 1844, when the ban was lifted, that Provencher was made Vicar Apostolic of the Northwest; his territory comprised the whole Northwest to the Pacific. On 4 June 1847, the See of St. Boniface was erected, with Provencher as first bishop; on 22 September 1871 it was elevated to the dignity of a Metropolitan,² with the See of Prince Albert, erected at the same time, as suffragan.³

As the Catholic population in the West grew, it became necessary to form new divisions. In 1862, the Vicariate Apostolic of Grouard had been erected. Later the Vicariate Apostolics of Athabaska and Mackenzie, as well as the Diocese of St. Albert were carved out of it. The Vicariate Apostolic of Prince Albert was created in 1890, being elevated to a diocese in 1907; the next step was the erection of the diocese of Regina and the Vicariate Apostolic of Keewatin in 1910. In 1912, the diocese of Calgary was created. By 1903, the growth of

the Church on the West Coast made necessary the creation of the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia; and in 1912, the Ecclesiastical Province of Alberta was created by transferring the See of St. Albert to Edmonton and erecting the Diocese of Calgary as suffragan. All these actions of course reduced St. Boniface's sphere of authority by removing dioceses from its metropolitan authority and territory from its ordinary jurisdiction. To 1915 they had all been logical divisions, that is, dioceses and vicariate apostolics had been formed whose borders corresponded to civil and natural divisions. It has always been the aim of the Church to make dioceses as small as possible so as to increase efficiency, both in religious supervision, the primary duty of a bishop, and secondly for administrative purposes. In passing it ought to be noted that to 1896, the Catholic population of the west was mostly French, Indian or Métis; the clergy was mainly French, coming from France and Quebec.

The Roman Catholic Church, in Canada, as elsewhere, has always had to adapt itself to changing conditions and, on more than one occasion, has suffered from political decisions. Bishop Taché, for instance, who became Bishop of St. Boniface in 1853, and Archbishop in 1871, had three such unfortunate experiences with Canadian politicians: in 1870, with Sir John A. Macdonald over the terms of Manitoba's entry into Confederation and over the amnesty for the 'insurgents' of 1869-70; in 1885, with Macdonald again over the Northwest Rebellion, and in 1890-95, with Premier Greenway, over the Manitoba School Question. Each time he had been promised something and each time the promise had been broken. Trust is not built up under such circumstances. The Church until 1896 (in the west) was still

mostly French and such actions naturally made Church leaders suspicious of their English-speaking compatriots.

Archbishop Taché, since 1889, had been quite sick⁴ and had worried over the succession to the see. His choice was Rev. Fr. Adélard Langevin, an Oblate Father, who had been sent west as Vicar General of the Oblates. Langevin was Taché's selection for Archbishop of St. Boniface; this was probably the strongest recommendation that could have been given and it was strong enough to insure his nomination and consecration over some opposition.⁵ Langevin became Archbishop at a time when Catholics were losing their right to schools in Manitoba, and just at the time when the depression, which had hung over the country since 1873, was lifting. A new age was beginning, the age of Canadian western expansion, built on the wheat boom, which would bring to the Church many new difficult problems.

Archbishop Taché had held a unique position in Manitoba society. He had been universally respected and held in regard by all. The new Archbishop had a formidable place to fill. His rule began with the election of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the resulting Laurier-Greenway compromise of 1896; thus he began his duties with a heavy financial burden and the French language and culture severely attacked by those who wished to make another Ontario out of Manitoba.

II

Until 1870, the population of Manitoba had remained relatively stable, as regards French and English, the population being split almost equally between the two and divided racially on the same lines; the French-speaking

tended to be Catholic and the English-speaking, Protestant. After Manitoba entered Confederation, a wave of Orange, protestant immigrants from Ontario entered the province to exploit the land of promise. Shortly after their arrival, a depression settled over the province and country, broken for a short time only by a brief railway-building boom. In 1896, when Macdonald's National Policy began to bear fruit and world economic conditions improved, another, quite different, wave of immigrants entered the west. From 1890 to 1900, the population of Manitoba increased by 144.95% to 255,211, most of it coming in the last five years. By 1910, the population had risen to 455,614, an increase of 80.7%; in 1921, total population was 610,118.⁶ The following table illustrates the growth in population and the growth of some of the main religions.

Table I

(1) TOTAL AND RELIGIOUS (2) POPULATIONS OF MANITOBA 1871-1921

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Catholic</u>	<u>Anglican</u>	<u>Presbyterian</u>	<u>Methodist</u>
1871	12,228	5,452	4,841	(3)	
1881	62,260	12,246	14,297	14,292	9,470
1891	152,506	20,571	30,852	38,997	28,210
1901	255,211	35,672	44,922	65,348	49,936
1911	455,614	73,994	86,578	103,621	65,897
1921	610,118	105,394	121,309	138,207	71,200

(1) These include only the main religious groups to illustrate the growth of Catholic population in comparison with others.

(2) All material is from Census of Canada (1876 to 1924)

(3) Then Census of 1871 gives only a division of Catholic and Protestant; the Protestant total is listed under Anglican for convenience.

With the opening up of the west and the surge of westward immigration, the ethnic character of the population changed radically. The following table illustrates.

Table II

MAIN ETHNIC GROUPS OF MANITOBA 1871-1921⁽¹⁾

<u>Year</u>	<u>French</u> ⁽²⁾	<u>Irish</u>	<u>Scotch</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>German</u>	<u>Ruthenians</u>	<u>Poles</u>	<u>Russians</u>
1871		49	248	125				
1881	9,949	10,173	16,506	11,857	8,652			
1891 ⁽³⁾	16,021	47,418	51,365	64,542	27,265	8,981		4,976
1901	30,944	58,463	82,861	122,798	34,530	39,665	12,310	8,849
1922	40,638	64,542	42,418	170,418	19,444	44,129	16,594	14,009

(1) Information from Census of Canada, (1871-1924)

(2) French are listed as 11,298 for the whole Northwest in Statistics of Canada Vol. IV, (Ottawa 1876), p 380.

(3) For some reason, there are no available statistics for this period on this particular topic.

The two tables above demonstrate that this influx would have had a terrific impact on Church administration. More priests would be required (they are never too plentiful) as well as new parishes and churches. A great many Catholics settled in the city among Protestants, making it necessary that priests be able to speak a variety of languages. With the arrival of Greek Rite Catholics (the Ruthenians), Archbishop Langevin was presented with another set of difficulties. To illustrate but one of these problems, the need for, and the difficulty of obtaining Greek Rite priests, is a good example. Greek Rite priests were allowed to marry but on 12 April 1894, the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda ruled that married clergy of the Greek Rite would not be allowed outside of Europe.⁷ Only some three percent of the Greek clergy was unmarried; they formed the religious élite of the various Greek dioceses, and their bishops, quite naturally, were unwilling to let them go. From 1896 to 1902, Langevin was unable to obtain Greek Rite priests; he applied for and received permission to allow two priests to change their rite in order to have priests to serve these people.⁸ (This is a most unusual occurrence.) Finally in 1902, four priests, one brother

and four Religious arrived at Montreal, bound for St. Boniface diocese.⁹

One difficulty in ministering to these newcomers was the way in which they settled, amongst Protestants. While there tended to be certain racial divisions, they were not hard and fast, and, from the religious point of view, city parishes tended to be multi-racial and multi-lingual, as did, to a great extent, country areas. Consider the following report, written on 26 January 1905 at Yorkton, Saskatchewan, by Rev. Fr. Girard, C.Ss.R., to Mgr. Langevin:

The territory [he wrote] is settled by people who form a cross section of almost all the nations¹⁰ of Europe and who are adherents of practically every form of religion. Those who profess the Catholic faith comprise about 600 families of the following nationalities: Irish, German, Hungarians, Poles and Ruthenians. To serve this motley population, two rites are necessary: the Latin and the Ruthenian (Greek), and three languages must be spoken, English, Hungarian and Polish. At present we can use only the Latin rite and we can speak but two languages, English and Polish.¹⁰

The 1906 report of the Redemptorist mission at Yorkton showed 17 out-missions regularly visited, peopled mostly by Ruthenians and Poles, with a few Irish and Hungarians. There were about 319 families of the Latin Rite, and 689 of the Ruthenian.¹¹

To handle this problem, the Archbishop adopted the technique of language parishes. (Rather, it would seem, that this technique was forced on him by circumstances.) Each parish would serve a specific language group; thus, St. Mary's was English-speaking, Sacré Coeur was French-speaking, St. Nicholas was Ruthenian, St. Joseph's was German-speaking. It was very difficult to obtain the needed type of multi-lingual priests. Priests who spoke but one language had relatively little importance in the diocese for their effectiveness was severely limited. An example will perhaps illustrate this.

On 7 June 1914, the parish of St. Alphonsus in Elmwood, under the direction of the Redemptorist Fathers, was erected. No one knew how many Catholic families there were in that neighbourhood, but at the first census, it was found that there were 116 families of all nationalities for a total of 513 people. There were 297 English-speaking, 62 unknown, 50 Germans, 42 Dutch, 26 French, 19 Syrians and 17 Flemish.¹² A prominent Protestant businessman of Elmwood remarked: "If anyone had said that there were 50 Catholics on this side of the river, I would not have believed them."¹³ This also illustrates the difficulties of counting Catholics at this time; they appeared everywhere if a Church was convenient.

During the period 1895-1916, Winnipeg was the seat of much discontent. For it was here that the mingling of Protestant and Catholics was the greatest, in contrast to the country where ecclesiastical authorities had attempted to group peoples together by nationalities. In Winnipeg this could not be done, although there were natural tendencies in this direction. The biggest mixers were Irish Catholics, most of whom spoke English as their own language, and who appeared most sensitive with regard to national feelings.

The population of Winnipeg grew by leaps and bounds and the Catholic population grew likewise, while the population of St. Boniface grew much more slowly.

Table III

TOTAL AND CATHOLIC POPULATION OF THE CITIES OF WINNIPEG
AND ST. BONIFACE 1881-1921

<u>Year</u>	Winnipeg		St. Boniface	
	<u>Total</u> ⁽¹⁾	<u>Catholic</u> ⁽²⁾	<u>Total</u>	<u>Catholic</u>
1881	7,985	1,020	1,283	1,077
1891	25,639	2,470	1,553	1,488
1901	42,340	5,143	2,019	1,849
1911	136,035	19,095	7,483	4,541
1921	179,087	24,118	12,821	7,270

(1) Source for Total Population of Winnipeg and St. Boniface:
Canada Year Book 1921 (Ottawa 1922).

(2) Sources for Catholic Population of Winnipeg and St. Boniface:
Census of Canada 1881-1921.

In Winnipeg, the largest melting pot of the Canadian West, the difficulties over religion and nationality came to a head. There had been a time when French and Irish Catholics had worked harmoniously together, but that time, according to Rev. Fr. MacCarthy, the first pastor of St. Mary's Church, had been around the early 1870's.¹⁴ By 1895, grumbling was heard; some Irish claimed that they (the Irish) were paying for schools, churches, and the services of priests, while the French Catholics received the benefits. The accusation was that the French did "the bossing" and the Irish did "the paying."¹⁵

In any event, with the loss of Taché, who by his very presence could act as a moderating influence, these feelings began to come more to the fore, although nothing too serious developed. The French remained the dominant group in the Church. Immigration, beginning shortly after Langevin's consecration as Archbishop of St. Boniface, changed this situation. The numbers of English-speaking Catholics increased, but not as quickly as those of the new groups, some of which, particularly the Ruthenians, began to approach the French numbers.

There is little record of struggle among the groups, although every so often an unsigned letter would appear in the secular press (sometimes in the Northwest Review) stating the grievances of St. Mary's Church in Winnipeg. In any event, the French-speaking Catholics of St. Mary's complained to the Archbishop that they were being unfairly treated, and requested a parish of their own.¹⁶ The Archbishop accepted the French argument, and on 1 January 1905, the pastor of St. Mary's Church announced that the congregation of St. Mary's was to be divided into two groups, French-speaking and English-speaking, pending the erection of a church for the former.¹⁷

An unsigned letter appeared in the Manitoba Free Press shortly after, which claimed that the writer, a member of the parish had no objection to the division, as long as the French and English were both satisfied. The French, who composed about one-fifth of the parish were getting a new parish and

. . . the Archbishop is to be congratulated on his zeal in supplying [them] . . . with a French pastor. Let us hope that he will show equal zeal in providing . . . St. Mary's with an English-speaking pastor and priests . . .¹⁸

With the exception of two short periods, the Catholics of St. Mary's had been served by French-speaking priests. English-speaking Catholics had submitted, not wanting to offend the French-speaking Catholics, but since the Archbishop had divided St. Mary's on racial lines

. . . it is surely not asking too much . . . to see that we are provided with a pastor of our own race and in full sympathy with our national aspirations.¹⁹

St. Mary's parish had been in a state of stagnation for some time. It would not be in this state had it been under the direction of a pastor

. . . not hampered by a number of bosses who know nothing of their [Irish] needs and care less for the sentiments of the [Irish] people . . .²⁰

Shortly after, Dr. J. K. Barrett, a leader of English-speaking Catholics since the events, called commonly "The Manitoba School Question",²¹ expressed himself in opposition with Archbishop Langevin's policy. The reason is not clear; the Barrett Papers in St. Mary's Archives, are not full and detailed, but the immediate reason would seem to have been the erection of the French parish. In a letter to Archbishop Langevin, 23 January 1905, Barrett claimed that there were more pressing needs in Winnipeg than a French-Canadian Church, and suggested that two English-speaking parishes should be erected immediately. He also claimed that revenue was being drained from St. Mary's.²²

The next outburst comes in early December, 1906, when the parishioners of St. Mary's were so disturbed as to present a petition to the Archbishop, requesting much more than an English-speaking pastor for St. Mary's and the erection of two new English-speaking parishes. The fact that they found it necessary to take such a step is not an unimportant one. For this petition is the beginning of a sequence of events that culminated in the erection of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg some nine years later.

Notes

- 1 A.C. Morice, The History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada Vol. I, (Montreal 1910), p 114.
- 2 ibid., p 217.
- 3 cf Chapter VII for a brief sketch of Church administrative development.
- 4 Maurice Prud'homme, "The Life and Times of Archbishop Taché", Papers Read Before the Historic and Scientific Society of Manitoba, (Winnipeg, 1956), pp 16-17.
- 5 Morice, History, II, p 273.
- 6 These figures and percentages are taken from Census of Canada 1921 Vol. I, (Ottawa 1924).
- 7 Joseph Joan, "S.E. Mgr. Adélard Langevin, Archévêque de St. Boniface, et Les Ukrainiens," CCHAR, 1944-45, p 102.
- 8 ibid., p 101.
- 9 ibid., p 103: Langevin's diocese included most of Saskatchewan, and this little group had to serve a wide-spread population. There were at that time some 5,000 Ruthenian children in the diocese.
- 10 A. McBriarty, "The History of the Redemptorists in Western Canada," CCHAR 1946-47, p 76. Rev. Fr. Girard was French-speaking.
- 11 ibid., p 78.
- 12 ibid., p 79.
- 13 ibid.
- 14 MacCarthy, letter in Northwest Review, 10 April 1895.
- 15 of Manitoba Free Press 9 April, 1895, PAM; Northwest Review 10 April 1895.
- 16 Speech of Dr. J. K. Barrett, Sunday, 25 November 1906, to a meeting of parishioners of St. Mary's Church, Barrett Papers, Manitoba School File, ASM.
- 17 Unsigned letter, Manitoba Free Press, 5 January, 1905, PAM. A clipping of the letter is among the Barrett papers. I assume that it might have been written by him. Quite probably it was.
- 18 ibid.
- 19 ibid.
- 20 ibid.
- 21 Barrett was the one who contested the Government's Education Act in the courts.
- 22 Barrett to Langevin, 23 January 1905, Barrett Papers, ASB.

CHAPTER II

THE PETITION OF 1906

On November 27, 1906, two very different letters were written to His Grace, Archbishop Langevin. One was from a curé at St. Mary's Church who reported that some Irlandais had approached him to arrange an interview with the Archbishop. The Irish, he wrote, had held several mass meetings, well attended, and after having presented some demands to the Apostolic Delegate two years before, would probably be asking for more concessions.¹ Rev. Fr. Guillet, apologizing for his parishioners, warned the Archbishop that they were a little excitable and pointed out that they did not know the significance of what they were asking. He mentioned that the root of dissatisfaction was a pamphlet called The Searchlight.² The letter ended in the hope that the little storm would quickly blow over.

The second letter was signed by Frank W. Russell, as secretary to a committee appointed by a mass meeting of St. Mary's parishioners, held Sunday, November 24. A petition had been drawn up, embodying several resolutions passed, affecting the English-speaking Catholics³ of Winnipeg. He suggested Sunday, 2 December 1906, as a possible day on which to meet.⁴

This date was accepted⁵ and that Sunday afternoon, eleven Irish Catholics crossed the Red River to present the petition to their Arch-

bishop. They were escorted into the salon where they were met by the Archbishop, accompanied by his Vicar General, Mgr. Dugas. The petition was read and presented to Archbishop Langevin.⁶

The petition began by noting that St. Mary's Parish was composed of English and French Catholics, with the English having been the majority for the past twenty years. Yet, with the exception of a short period of time, when Rev. Frs. Fox and Cahill had been pastors, St. Mary's had had French priests.⁷ In 1904 the French Canadians of Winnipeg had asked for and received a French language parish in Winnipeg, as they had claimed to be unfairly treated at St. Mary's.⁸ Moreover, out of the six parishes in Winnipeg, four were directed by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) or French priests. No new churches had been built in Winnipeg although Winnipeg's Catholic population had doubled in the past five years.⁹ Facilities were strained; new parishes, churches and English-speaking priests were needed. This was the first request: the creation of new English-speaking parishes in Winnipeg, with English-speaking diocesan priests.

The second section dealt with higher education. The petitioners claimed that the existing facilities for Catholic higher education in the Archdiocese did not meet the needs of a large and increasing English-speaking population. The time had come for the establishment of an exclusively English-speaking Catholic College in Winnipeg.

The third section dealt with a much more delicate matter, the request for an English-speaking Bishop in Winnipeg. The petitioners argued that of the three or four English-speaking priests engaged in parochial work, two were Oblates.¹⁰ Noting that Winnipeg had a population of 100,000 which was ever increasing as was its English-speaking Catholic

population, they claimed

. . . that there was no other city in the Dominion of Canada of the size and importance of Winnipeg and with the like Catholic population which was not the See of a Catholic Bishop.¹¹

Further,

. . . that owing to the vast territory included within the Archdiocese of St. Boniface and the large increase in population thereof, your petitioners submit that the time is opportune for the erection and establishment of a Diocese to be presided over by a Suffragan Bishop with his See fixed in Winnipeg and thereby lighten the labours of the Archbishop . . .¹²

Observing that within the Archdiocese of St. Boniface a large population of foreign-born Catholics existed - Germans, Poles, Galicians, Ruthenians" . . . whose children would in the future speak the English language and probably¹³ no other . . .¹⁴ and who would, in the future, heavily augment the numbers of English-speaking Catholics, the petitioners requested:

- (1) the erection of a diocese for a Suffragan Bishop, whose See would be fixed at Winnipeg;
- (2) " . . . that in this matter due consideration should be given and due regard be had to the fact that this is an English-speaking country;"¹⁵
- (3) that a College be established in Winnipeg for the education of English-speaking Catholic young men of Manitoba, conducted in the English language by English-speaking teachers to provide " . . . for the higher education of such young men and for the education of such . . . as may have a vocation for the priesthood;"¹⁶
- (4) that adequate church accommodation be provided for the English-speaking Catholics of Winnipeg;
- (5) that English-speaking priests be appointed to take charge of St. Mary's

Church and of any other parishes established in which English-speaking Catholics predominate.¹⁷

After the petition had been read, a general discussion of its requests followed. The eleven members of the Committee¹⁸ took part, presenting their case in the strongest of terms, although respectfully. A record¹⁹ was made by F.W. Russell as secretary²⁰ which is in the Archives of St. Mary's Church. In addition, there is an outline of the petition's contents and a Memoire of the discussion²¹ by Archbishop Langevin, deposited in St. Boniface Archives.

Archbishop Langevin, in replying to the demands of the petition, acknowledged the petitioner's right to ask for English-speaking priests at St. Mary's Church. This would be settled at once.²² In the Memoire, Langevin noted that already St. Mary's had an English priest as pastor²³ and ever since the erection of Sacré-Coeur (the French Parish) it had been exclusively English in practice, as had been Immaculate Conception Parish.²⁴ However, he said nothing about the request for more English-speaking parishes in Winnipeg. One of the committee, Dr. Barrett, stated that there were enough English-speaking Catholics unprovided for in St. Mary's parish to build another church as large as St. Mary's. Hundreds did not go to Mass because they could not be accommodated. When the Vicar General, Mgr. Dugas, asked the petitioners to name one place where English-speaking Catholics were unprovided for, Russell immediately named Winnipeg, which he called ". . . a standing answer to the Vicar General's question."²⁵

In addition to complaints concerning education outlined in the petition, there were others which appeared not in Russell's Report, nor in Langevin's Memoire, but in the Winnipeg Tribune of 17 December 1906.

According to the article, which was a remarkably accurate report of the meeting, Winnipeg Catholics were discriminated against by the St. Boniface authorities.²⁶ For example, an expensive addition to St. Boniface College was being built and the article stated that the petitioners wanted instead

... a Roman Catholic College . . . built in Winnipeg, in which the teaching would be in English . . . There was no reason why Winnipeg should be passed over in favor of St. Boniface.²⁷

If higher education was desired, English students had to be sent East as " . . . the teaching at St. Boniface College [was] in French, by nearly all French Professors . . ."²⁸ Thus, according to Langevin,

... ils ont insisté pour avoir un collège exclusive-
ment anglais, à Winnipeg, afin de donner à leur enfants ...
une formation anglais plus en rapport avec les besoins
de pays et le caractère de leur nation²⁹

Two further attempts were made by the delegates to convince the Archbishop of the need for an English-speaking college in Winnipeg. St. Boniface College was too distant; the action of St. John's College³⁰ in moving nearer to its students,³¹ was cited. Russell then emphatically reiterated the charge that St. Boniface College was unable to give what they (the Irish Catholics of Winnipeg) considered a proper education.³²

The Archbishop approved, in principle, of an English-speaking Catholic College: " . . . a college in Winnipeg is not out of the question - but where are the means, money, and the men to come from?"³³ Until that question was answered, the conditions met, St. Boniface College " . . . an institution that is not exclusively French . . ."³⁴ could satisfy both populations. He was not against the principle, but he lacked the means to bring it about. He disagreed with them on the timing of the establishment; but he would assent to an English College being

organized only if there were assurances that it would be permanent.³⁵

He outlined the position of St. Boniface College; it was one of the four religious colleges forming the University of Manitoba, which demonstrated that St. Boniface's standards were as high, if not higher, than the other colleges.³⁶ That same year, 1906, a classical course in English, parallel to the French, had been introduced to provide for the needs of English-speaking students.³⁷ Indeed, the Jesuit priests who taught, spoke French and English fluently.³⁸ Some 300 students of all nationalities attended St. Boniface College; they came from the four Western Canadian Provinces as well as from several neighbouring states of the United States.³⁹

With regard to the statement that the Jesuits could easily found a college in Winnipeg, Archbishop Langevin claimed to have already investigated this. The Canadian Provincial of the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) had informed him that, at the present time, it was not possible.⁴⁰

The language question, the claim that the West was destined to be English-speaking and consequently the necessity for English-speaking bishops, priests and settlers, was discussed next by the Archbishop. Pointing out that the Germans, Poles, Ruthenians and others were not of that opinion,⁴¹ Langevin told the delegation: ". . . if you say it is an English-speaking country, I will tell you that it is not an English-speaking diocese."⁴² From this he went to illustrate the language and rite problems he faced with the influx of settlers from many lands. He had attempted partially to solve this problem by settling colonies of these new groups, which made it easier to supply them with priests. It was difficult to obtain the proper men because of his special needs:

"I must have priests who can hear confessions and speak to the people in different languages . . . If you knew how many times I have had men, who offered themselves to come, and when they heard how things were, they said 'no'."⁴³

These circumstances made it difficult for him to start new parishes.

The Irish were scattered among Germans, Poles and other races and most were living among Protestants. In the country, sixty families were sufficient for a parish, but in the city, sixty was not enough. "If all English-speaking Catholics were brought together, I would have ten parishes."⁴⁴ But, they were scattered about the country-side. He had attempted, through Rev. Fr. Phelan and Brother Mulvihill,⁴⁵ to colonize the English as the French, but had failed; the Irish were not the colonizing type. However, Rev. Fr. Sinnott had had some success lately, having established two Irish parishes in Saskatchewan.⁴⁶ The Irish were not anxious to come to Canada for they " . . . would not come out under the British flag."⁴⁷

One of the committee said that he had been told of English-speaking (Irish) priests in Eastern Canada who would come to Winnipeg but for the fact of a French bishop. Russell asked why Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul Diocese and other Western bishops could get all the English priests they needed, most of whom came from Canada, and why St. Boniface could not obtain any. Because of these facts it had been thought that an English bishop would be able to supply them with English priests. The Archbishop was displeased; he asserted that it was an unCatholic and unnatural thought for

. . . the reason English priests would not come was that there were no positions that would suit them; in many places bilingual priests were needed.⁴⁸

English-speaking priests would not accept the invitation to come unless it was to a well-paid mission.⁴⁹ He could not get the men.

However, it was over the request for an English-speaking bishop that conflict broke out. Archbishop Langevin admitted that in the other matters they had a right to petition him.⁵⁰ But ". . . in this you go too far."⁵¹ For they did not know what a bishopric was:

You may mean [he said] that if we had a Bishop who would be more in social circles, it would be something. The first thing for a Bishop is to be a saintly man of God If with all this, the Bishop has a social influence, so much is gained, but this is a gift not given to every man, and this is a secondary matter You thought of it because you are mixed up with Protestants, and quite impressed by them; but remember this, that it is not always the priest or the Bishop that has the greater name that does the most good.⁵²

Replying to the argument that a bishop's see is always fixed in the largest city of his diocese, the Archbishop said that this was not so. He cited the case of the Archdiocese in Belgium where the See was fixed across the river from the largest city, Brussels.⁵³ It was not necessary, he said, that a bishop should reside in the most important city.⁵⁴ He did not sympathize with the request ". . . to change a See so as to put it on the other side of a river."⁵⁵

In ending the meeting, Langevin promised to set matters right at St. Mary's Church.⁵⁶ He approved in principle of an English College in Winnipeg, but he disagreed with the petitioners in the matter of timing; it was a matter of means, money and men. He would assent to the founding of one only when he was assured of its permanency.

As to the erection of new parishes, he could not discuss that ". . . because they concern me solely as Bishop."⁵⁷ He did not wish to discuss the moving of the See of St. Boniface or the matter of an English Bishop of Winnipeg; this would mean his replacement. Russell's Report describes, in part, the scene:

"His Grace (warmly): " . . . the conclusion would be that I should be removed and an English-speaking Bishop put in my place "

To this, the committee protested.

Langevin, quite angry, told them to go to Rome and to find out what Rome felt. This was a great insult to him - the worst insult which could be hurled at him.

After refusing to answer a question concerning English priests, Archbishop Langevin said that St. Mary's would be looked after, but all other matters were questions of ways and means.

He refused to discuss further the question of an English Bishop and said: " . . . You always have a reference to higher authority. Do that if you like, but if you do that, it means war, personal war, against me."⁵⁸

Archbishop Langevin's Memoire, both the first and second editions, follow quite closely Russell's Report, with two differences: Langevin adds facts which would be unavailable to the petitioners, and secondly, his language is much stronger. A fuller account of the discussion concerning Irish priests and their unsuitability for the West is added, which will be discussed below.⁵⁹

The first edition of the Memoire is dated 11 January 1907, three weeks after the meeting, but it agrees with Russell's Report; its main purpose however, is to justify the French stand. The second edition does not differ except in minor phrasing; it seems to have been composed as an account for one of his interested correspondents. In the foregoing account, Russell's Report has been closely followed, as it is the more detailed, with the odd additional detail or phrase from the Memoires. The Memoires also suggest three reasons for the petition, which will

bear examination.

In the first edition of the Memoire, the population of the Diocese is given as approximately 100,000, made up of about 50,000 French, 30,000 Slavs,⁶⁰ 7,000 English,⁶¹ 10,000 Germans and the remainder of 3,000 made up of Hungarians, Flemish and others.⁶²

Moreover, the Memoire notes that two English-speaking parishes in Winnipeg have existed for two years. St. Mary's parish was under Rev. Frs. Cahill and O'Dwyer while Immaculate Conception parish was directed by Mons. l'abbé Chérrier, a member of the University Council, who spoke excellent English.⁶³

Of the three main requests, the first half of the first one, that for English priests at St. Mary's and for future English parishes (Langevin's italics) to be erected in Winnipeg, had already been carried out. The Archbishop had been buying land and trying for three years to obtain diocesan priests to take charge of new parishes he was forming. One difficulty was lack of people; in the future parish of Fort Rouge there were only seventy English families - only 240 souls - which was not sufficient. In the future parish of St. Edward the Confessor, there were only sixty-four English families plus some sixty German ones. More families were needed before these areas could support parishes.⁶⁴

The section concerned with education is quite similar; no new information is provided, except that, as has already been noted in the narrative, above, concerning Langevin's investigation of the claim that the Jesuits could easily found an English-speaking College in Winnipeg. Nor is there much difference in the section concerning a suffragan Bishop of Winnipeg, except that the language is stronger. For instance, Langevin quotes himself as saying that he could not consider a suffragan Bishop

and that it took "... comble de l'audace de leur part"⁶⁵ as it was an insult to him, and after all, it was a question for the Pope. Or, when the Irish again returned to the Bishop question to say that several Irish diocesan priests in Ontario would come West if there was an English Bishop, Langevin noted that he was quite annoyed, but that he would be the most happy Bishop in the world if the Irish would immitate other nationalities, German, French, Poles, and group themselves together, instead of spreading out among Protestants; then he would give them English priests with pleasure. Another reason for the lack of Irish priests and settlers was because the Irish did not like the British flag and would not immigrate to Canada; their misery was increased because they lacked priests willing to share in the sufferings of the settlers.⁶⁶ In effect, he said, Irish priests were not missionary; and now Irish priests wish to come to St. Boniface as there were good parishes, founded out of the poverty of French religious orders, which they would like to have. This was not a rebuke, but a fact.⁶⁷

It is the second part of the Memoire, dealing with what Langevin considers the causes of the movement, which is of greatest importance. For outlined here is the core of the French stand against the Irish, which gives, albeit limited, an insight into the mentalities of both protagonists.

The first cause of the movement is the result of a pamphlet called A Searchlight,⁶⁸ written at the University of Ottawa by Irish Oblates, "... religieux mélcontents sans raison de leur supérieurs ...,"⁶⁹ according to Langevin. The pamphlet's thesis was that the University of Ottawa, erected by civil and Papal decree, was intended to exist for the English-speaking Catholics of Ontario and Quebec. The French had taken control and the pamphlet is an attempt to demonstrate that they had no right at

the University. The pamphlet, for the most part, is a collection of extracts of documents, ~~and~~ designed to put forward the English view. It is well written and convincing, but it makes a strong appeal to Irish nationalism, not however at the irrational level as Langevin claimed.⁷⁰ With this exception, Langevin's analysis of the pamphlet - that since the establishment of a French course, parallel to the English at Ottawa, that University is not what it should be by the wish of Leo XIII, an exclusively English-speaking Catholic University - is good.

In Winnipeg, the pamphlet was widely circulated among the Irish of St. Mary's and was successful in raising passions, disturbing people who had been peaceful and content with St. Boniface College, where several had sent their children as they had only to cross the Red River.⁷¹ Now, they had to cross the gulf of misunderstanding and aroused passions. The hope that Rev. Father Guillet expressed, that the excitement would soon die out, seemed dim indeed.⁷²

The second cause had to do with activities of Irish priests in Ontario and in the United States "... et même de religieux Oblates et Jésuites Irlandais à St. Marie de Winnipeg et au Collège de St. Boniface."⁷³ It was quite obvious who the priest at St. Mary's was, for Rev. Fr. Cahill, OMI, the pastor, was in Rome, attending the Chapter Meeting of the Oblate Order.⁷⁴ As he would have been gone for some time, probably the whole summer, there would have been ample time, with a minimum of interference, for the Irish to organize with the help, if the Memoire is correct, of the only Irish priest in the parish, Rev. Fr. O'Dwyer. The agitator from St. Boniface College can also be identified: he was Rev. Fr. Louis Drummond, S.J., and according to the Archbishop, it was he who directed Irish demands for an exclusively English-speaking College in Winnipeg.⁷⁵

Some reasons for their opposition are not difficult to find. According to the petitioners, Rev. Fr. O'Dwyer was unable to cope with the heavy demands put upon him by reason of his being one of the three or four English priests engaged in parochial work in the diocese.⁷⁶ He would be overworked, and this, coupled with a certain nationalism, would probably be enough to ensure his support, or at least, his benevolent neutrality.

The case of Rev. Fr. Drummond, S.J., is different. According to statistics gathered in 1911, there were at St. Boniface College:⁷⁷

Table IV

TEACHING STAFF OF ST. BONIFACE COLLEGE 1911

Jesuit Professors (Priests)	8 French Canadian 1 German
Jesuit Teachers (Scholastics)	7 French Canadian 3 Irish (or English)
Maristes Professors (Brothers)	1 French 2 French Canadian 1 Irish <u>1 German</u>
Total Teaching Staff	24

There were no Irish (or English) Jesuit Professors; Drummond had a French-Canadian background and so was probably listed as such for he spoke excellent French and English.⁷⁸ He was quite active, editing the Central Catholic⁷⁹ which for a time replaced the Northwest Review as the Irish Catholic organ. He was a brilliant man; his public lectures were always interesting and well attended, if newspaper reports are to be believed.⁸⁰ It is difficult to suggest just what led to his involvement, although his nationality might have had something to do with it (for he was Irish on his father's side).⁸¹ It may have been that he wanted

more scope in which to work, as the English Classical Course at St. Boniface College was never too popular. Then, too, he might have been convinced of the justice of the Irish case; but there are no obvious motives in Drummond's case.

The third cause was the claim that the West was English-speaking, if not now, it would soon be, and therefore it was necessary to have English bishops, priests and settlers.⁸² Langevin, however, pointed out that many were not of this opinion - Germans, Poles, Ruthenians, French - and that the character of the land was yet to be determined. These groups acknowledged English as the language of the country, but they also held to their language, church and school. Langevin understood this but the Irish did not; they wanted a bishop who would think as they did, who would understand their very different hopes and aspirations. They were unwilling to submit to a bishop of another language. Such was Langevin's interpretation of the causes behind the Irish request for an archévêque⁸³ of their language. At this point, there follows a long section demonstrating through history that the French language has equal status with English in Canada.

In concluding, Langevin notes that the thesis, that the West is English-speaking, has its distinguished adherents, among them the Apostolic Delegate, His Excellency, Mgr. Sbarretti, who had spent some time at the Delegation in the United States, where he had become convinced of this.⁸⁴ Thus

... rien d'étonnant que nos Irlandais de Winnipeg disent tout haut que dans ce mouvement en faveur d'un collège anglais et d'un évêque de langue anglaise,⁸⁵ ils auront l'appui moral de Son Excellence.

This was not all, for according to the Mémoire, the delegates

... citent le nom de tel catholique qui serait venu d'Ottawa, l'été dernier (1906) et qui aurait dit tenir, de source certaine, que, s'ils savaient s'y prendre, ils réussiraient! (sic)⁸⁶

The final note of the Mémoire is a list of parishes in Winnipeg,⁸⁷ showing the divisions according to language and population.

Table V
CATHOLIC PARISHES OF WINNIPEG 1906

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Nationality</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Population</u>
St. Mary's Church	English	400	3,000
Immaculate Conception Church	English	200	1,000
Holy Ghost Church	Polish	600	3,000
St. Joseph's Church	German	400	2,000
St. Nicholas' Church	Ruthenian	700	4,000
Sacré Coeur Church	French	200	1,000
		2,700	14,000

It may be seen that just in Winnipeg alone, Archbishop Langevin had an almost unsolvable problem on his hands, trying to handle the conflicting demands of various language groups.

This brief analysis of the documents associated with the petition illustrates certain difficulties and tendencies which were coming to the fore (in the Roman Catholic Church in Canada). The struggle for control of the University of Ottawa between French and Irish which was later to erupt into the battle over Regulation 17 in Ontario and spill into Manitoba, the rise of the Irish in the Church with the natural demand for more representation, the French insistence on the importance of their language and culture and the position of the Church as their defender in the struggle against assimilation; the growing social consciousness of the Irish and their desire to make the Church more 'respectable' by wresting some control from the French, are examples of tendencies, not only in Manitoba, but across Canada. The consequence of these difficulties and tendencies in the Diocese of St. Boniface was a growing

nationalism on both sides to the detriment of the faith and to the struggle for schools in Manitoba and Ontario.⁸⁸

The petition to Archbishop Langevin was the first general summing up of the Irish Catholic position; likewise, Langevin's Memoires outlined the French stand. Both knew what they wanted: the Irish, an English-speaking bishop, the French, the continuance of the status quo. From this point the question becomes one of policy to be argued among members of the Canadian hierarchy, the Apostolic Delegate, and Rome. Both sides begin to search for support in the hierarchy, which splits racially. The intervention of the Apostolic Delegate becomes increasingly required, and both sides take their problems to the highest authority, Rome.

Notes

- 1 Guillet to Langevin, 27 November 1906, Archdiocese of Winnipeg File, ASB, hereafter cited as Winnipeg File. I have found no confirmation of this statement anywhere else.
- 2 The correct title is: A Searchlight Showing the Need of a University for English-speaking Catholics of Canada, ASM, Manitoba School Question File, hereafter referred to as A Searchlight.
- 3 According to P. J. Henry, the term is an euphuism for Irish Catholics, which, he claims, describes 95% of Manitoba's English-speaking Catholics. Northwest Review, 2 September 1911, AWSV.
- 4 Russell to Langevin, 27 November 1906, Winnipeg File ASB.
- 5 The date of the interview is noted by Russell in Report of the Committee Who Waited on His Grace, The Archbishop of St. Boniface, cited hereafter as Russell, Report, Winnipeg Archdiocese, File 11, ASM (hereafter cited as File 11), as 1 December 1906. However, in the first edition of his Memoire Au Sujet De La Delegation De Quelques Irlandais (11) De La Paroisse De Sainte-Marie De Winnipeg Le 2 December 1906, (First Edition), dated 11 January 1907, cited hereafter as Memoir or Memoire, Second Edition (18 December 1908) Winnipeg File, ASB, the date differs. As 2 December was a Sunday, this date I have accepted. See the report of the interview in the Winnipeg Tribune, 27 December 1906, PAM.
- 6 Russell, Report, op. cit.
- 7 The parish created was Sacré Coeur, carved out of the parishes of St. Mary's and Immaculate Conception. The latter two, at that time (1905), for practical purposes, became English-speaking parishes; after the meeting, they became officially so.
- 8 Petition to His Grace the Archbishop of St. Boniface: Presented by a Committee appointed by a General Meeting of the Parishioners of St. Mary's Parish in the City of Winnipeg, Dated at Winnipeg 25 November 1906, Winnipeg File, ASB. The copy in St. Mary's Archives is undated, hereafter cited as Petition.
- 9 The Catholic population of Winnipeg in 1900 was 5,143; according to the petition, in 1906 it would be about 11,000. cf Census of Canada 1901 (Ottawa 1902).
- 10 This evidently disqualified them from consideration as English-speaking priests. The emphasis here is on the need for an English (Irish) diocesan clergy.
- 11 Petition, of 1906.
- 12 ibid. The Ecclesiastical Province of St. Boniface to 1903 included all of the Canadian West, extending

- to the Pacific, with the exception of Vancouver Island which was attached to the Ecclesiastical Province of Oregon. In June 1903, a Metropolitan Church was erected at Victoria over British Columbia. St. Boniface Diocese in 1906 included what is now the Archdioceses of Winnipeg and St. Boniface, the Vicariate Apostolic of Keewatin and Hudson Bay, and the western part of Fort William Diocese to Atikokan, Ontario; it held Metropolitan authority over St. Albert Diocese, Prince Albert Diocese, and the Vicariate Apostolic of Athabasca.
- 13 On the original of the petition on file in the Archives of St. Boniface, Winnipeg File, the word 'probably' is added in the margin by hand, in ink, presumably after second thoughts by the petitioners.
- 14 Petition, op. cit. At this time the issue was not settled, partly because of the bilingual clause in the Education Act of 1896 (the Laurier-Greenway agreement). This is the first evidence of the division of Manitoba's Catholic population into French and non-French; the latter assumed to be English-speaking, or, at least, English Catholic in their outlook. It appears to be wishful thinking.
- 15 ibid. This is a rebuke to the Archbishop who tried to make Manitoba truly bilingual.
- 16 ibid.
- 17 ibid. This is all from the petition, and in the order presented by the petitioners.
- 18 Members were: T. D. Deegan, N. Bawlf, E. Cass, Dr. J. K. Barrett, Dr. J. E. McKenty, R. Driscoll, M. McManus, J. E. O'Connor, J. J. Bugg, E. R. Dowdall and F. W. Russell. Russel to Langevin, 27 November 1906. Op. Cit.
- 19 Russell, Report, op. cit.
- 20 He had been trained in Hastings, England, as a reporter-apprentice. He knew shorthand and was trained to take verbatim reports of speeches. He served as secretary on almost every parish committee.
- 21 For full title, cf footnote 5, above.
- 22 Russell, Report, op. cit. Langevin borrowed Cahill from the Irish Province of the Oblates to satisfy the Irish. cf Langevin to Sbarretti, 7 December 1907, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 23 Pastors of St. Mary's Church from 1903: Rev. Charles Cahill, OMI (Irish) (1903-08), Rev. Richard M. D'Alton, OMI (Irish) (1908-12), Rev. Cahill (again) (1912-13), Rev. William Patton, OMI, (1913-17) (Irish).
- 24 Langevin, Memoire, op. cit.
- 25 Russell, Report, op. cit.
- 26 Winnipeg Tribune, 27 December 1906. PAM.

- 27 ibid. This question, as noted, appears only in the secular press, which might indicate a 'leak', perhaps deliberate. According to the report, ". . . a serious clash has occurred, and that the English-speaking people will stick together, and if necessary, will appeal to the apostolic delegate at Ottawa." This sounds like a declaration of war, or perhaps, a warning to Langevin.
- 28 ibid.
- 29 Langevin, Memoire, (2nd Ed.). Langevin's italics.
- 30 St. John's College moved from Cross Street to Main Street in 1884.
- 31 Russell, Report, op. cit.
- 32 ibid. The obstacles being the use of the French language, the French Classical Course, and the desire to study scientific subjects, which, while not excluded from the College curriculum, were subordinate to the Classical Course. cf W. L. Morton, One University, (McClelland and Stewart Ltd., Canada 1957) cf Minutes of the University Council, V, p. 148, for a note on divisions on University policy between French and English-speaking Catholics. The French wanted the University as such to be a degree granting institution, as weak as possible, while the English preferred a strong university, with the Colleges acting as residences, teaching theology and philosophy. English Catholics tended to side with the other religious (Protestant) groups on this matter. cf Morton, One University, pp 82-3, where he makes this note, with reference to the University Minutes.
- 33 ibid.
- 34 ibid.
- 35 ibid. This meant that if they wanted a college, they would have to accept financial responsibility and guarantee it.
- 36 Langevin, Memoire, op. cit.
- 37 Russell, Report, op. cit.
- 38 Langevin, Memoire, (2nd Ed.), op. cit.
- 39 Langevin, Memoire, op. cit.
- 40 ibid.
- 41 ibid.
- 42 Russell, Report, op. cit.
- 43 ibid.
- 44 ibid.
- 45 Langevin, Memoire, op. cit. Mulvihill had been sent to Ireland as an agent of the Canadian government to recruit settlers, without success. cf Langevin to Sinnott, 8 January 1907, Langevin Correspondence, where Langevin congratulates Sinnott on being the first English priest to establish a colony.
- 46 ibid.
- 47 ibid.
- 48 ibid.
- 49 ibid.

- 50 More English parishes, increased church accommodation, English-speaking priests, educational matters.
- 51 Russell, Report, op. cit.
- 52 Russell, Report. op. cit.
- 53 ibid.
- 54 ibid.
- 55 ibid.
- 56 St. Mary's already had two Irish priests, the pastor Rev. Fr. Cahill and his curé, Rev. Fr. O'Dwyer. What is wanted here are assurances that St. Mary's would become an exclusively English-speaking parish officially.
- 57 Russell, Report, op. cit.
- 58 ibid. This is all from the Report.
- 59 See notes #66 and #67 below on this point.
- 60 In pen, this is changed from 25,000, an increase of 5,000.
- 61 In pen, this is changed from 10,000, an increase of 3,000.
- 62 Langevin: Memoire 1st Ed., op. cit. His diocese included what later became the Diocese of Regina.
- 63 ibid.
- 64 Langevin, Memoire (2nd Ed.) Langevin's Italics
- 65 Langevin, Memoire (1st Ed.) op. cit.
- 66 ibid. Langevin's italics. cf Russell, Report, op. cit.
- 67 Langevin, Memoire, (2nd Ed.) op. cit. Langevin's italics.
- 68 cf footnote 2, above.
- 69 Their superiors were probably French.
- 70 Langevin, Memoire, op. cit.
- 71 ibid.
- 72 cf footnote 1.
- 73 Langevin, Memoire (2nd Ed.), op. cit.
- 74 Cahill returned from Rome after the petition had been presented. cf Morning Telegram, 21 December 1906, PAM and the Winnipeg Tribune, 17 December 1906, PAM. Incidentally, one of the items discussed at the Chapter Meeting was the University of Ottawa and 'a pamphlet', presumably A Searchlight. A special committee recommended unanimously to remove jurisdiction of the University from the Montreal Provincial and place it under the Buffalo Province, headed by Rev. Dr. Fallon. This was opposed by Archbishop Langevin and all other French Canadian delegates. The dispatch in The Morning Telegram (21 December 1906) is dated Ottawa 20 December. Langevin did not go to Rome, but Cahill did, and it is possible that Langevin had delegated his vote to Cahill.
- 75 Langevin to Mathieu, 22 January 1914, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 76 Petition, op. cit.
- 77 Recensement Terminé le 20 Avril 1911: Statistique Diocèse de St. Boniface, Population File, ASB.
- 78 Interview with Rev. Fr. V. Jensen, S.J. cf footnote 80, below.
- 79 It was published from 11 August 1906 to 8 March 1908; publication at best was haphazard.

- 80 For example, Northwest Review, 28 October 1905, AWSV; Drummond lectured at Rainy River, Ontario, on "Some Irish Orators", in aid of the new Catholic Church being built there. Mostly non-Catholics attended the lecture. That Sunday he preached in both French and English. cf Russell, History of St. Mary's Church, op. cit., p 11, for a brief biography of Drummond.
- 81 Interview with Rev. V. Jensen, S.J.
- 82 Langevin, Memoire, op. cit.
- 83 ibid. Italics mine: the original request was for a suffragan bishop. Langevin has interpreted this as an English archbishop of St. Boniface, which may possibly have been the intent. This, though, would appear to be an exaggeration.
- 84 Langevin, Memoire, op. cit.
- 85 ibid. Probably the Apostolic Delegate had made a vague reply to their requests, which could be taken either way, and the Irish had interpreted in this way, and given this impression to Langevin.
- 86 ibid. Langevin's (sic).
- 87 ibid. The table is dated 11 January 1907. The Census of 1900 gives Winnipeg a Catholic population of 5,143. If the petitioners are correct in claiming that it doubled within the previous five years, then the population would be about 11,000. This is probably a good guess; by 1910, the Catholic population, according to the Census figures, had risen to 19,095. The petitioners probably did not count the Greek Rite population of 4,000 in their estimate.
- 88 St. Boniface Diocese extended into Northern Ontario as far east as Atikokan.

CHAPTER III

STRUGGLE FOR DIVISION

One of the first things Archbishop Langevin did after receiving the petition was to seek advice. Accordingly, the next day (December 3) he sent the petition, along with a request for comments, to the pastor of Immaculate Conception parish in Winnipeg, Rev. Fr. Chérrier. In his letter, Langevin claimed that an English bishop would eventually mean English priests, professors and Archbishop.¹ Rev. Fr. Chérrier replied a few days later² and acknowledged "avec peine" that an influential member of his parish had been present at the meeting of Irish which had drafted the petition. He was convinced that the movement was one of nationality, due mainly to the agitation of their "leaders". Furthermore, he had been assured by someone from St. Mary's Church that the Apostolic Delegate had said in effect that he (the Delegate) did not see any great difficulty in obtaining an English bishop at Winnipeg and that, given a change, things would be different at St. Mary's; English-speaking priests would direct St. Mary's Church.³

Not all the Irish, however, supported the petitioners. A letter dated December 6 was sent to Archbishop Langevin by an Irish real-estate dealer.⁴ He disclaimed any connection with the Irish petitioners

in their attempt to change the priests of St. Mary's and expressed his satisfaction with the status quo. Whether or not he was a spokesman for a large or small group, or was speaking only for himself, is difficult to prove. Forrester's letter was a welcome surprise to Langevin, for in his reply, he thanked him heartily, writing that he ". . . never received a letter that pleased [him] more"⁵

Archbishop Langevin was a voluminous letter writer; on the day he wrote Rev. Fr. Chérrier, he also wrote several other letters, in which he referred in passing to the incident of the previous day. In a letter to Cardinal Begin, he outlined the Irish demands - Irish priests, an English college in Winnipeg, and an English bishop, suffragan, to reside in Winnipeg. Then, he wrote, there would be demands for German and Polish bishops as well. If, he wrote, "... je n'ai pas le boneur d'être un English-speaking bishop, I am a bishop speaking English."⁶ He feared that if an Irish bishop ever had the throne of St. Boniface, there would be no French College, no more teaching of French and no Les Cloches de St. Boniface.⁷ In a letter to the Bishop of St. Hyacinthe, he listed the Irish demands and promised that they would get nothing.⁸ But the Irish did get something. The Winnipeg Tribune, Monday, 17 December 1906, carried a front-page story with the following heading: "Rebuked by Archbishop: Ecclesiastical authority will be upheld by His Grace Archbishop Langevin."⁹ In a pastoral letter read at the churches of Immaculate Conception and St. Mary's, Langevin stated that he was the head of the Roman Catholic Church in the West, and that it was his duty to decide policy:

Parishioners, however, prominent, [he wrote] were permitted to assist . . . in carrying out the work of the Church, but they were not to dictate what work was to be undertaken. Moreover, the lay mind was not capable of forming

a judgement on parochial requirements because they did not know the facts of the case.¹⁰

Parishioners of St. Mary's and Immaculate Conception were informed that the Archbishop had been acquiring land since 1903 in Fort Rouge and in the west of the city with a view to forming new parishes. Now, two new parishes were to be formed, St. Edward the Confessor in the west of the city, and St. Ignatius Loyola in Fort Rouge. This was no answer to the petition, but the logical fulfillment of his plans. New Churches were to be erected in the new parishes. At St. Mary's, Rev. Fr. Cahill, the pastor, who had recently returned from Rome, told the parishioners that the Archbishop had mildly rebuked them for their presumption to attempting to dictate to him. According to the article, Rev. Fr. Cahill's remarks were quite pointed, as he supported the Archbishop's stand.¹¹

Two days later, in the secular press, an article appeared in the Tribune which ostensibly announced the date of a meeting of English-speaking Catholics of St. Mary's Church to discuss the Archbishop's reply to their petition. According to that article, the most important request had been the one for a bishop. Langevin had

. . . received the deputation very coolly and practically told them that he was the head of the Church in the west and would not be dictated to by any parties. It is understood that a serious clash has occurred and that the English-speaking people will stick together, and if necessary will appeal to the Apostolic Delegate at Ottawa.¹²

The Irish of St. Mary's would appear to be accepting Archbishop Langevin's threat of war.

Grievances composed the remainder of the article; some, such as the difficulties in obtaining a Catholic university education, the lack of church accommodation in Winnipeg and the lack of English-speaking

priests, had been part of the petition. Three others were added; one, which has already been discussed,¹³ was the addition to St. Boniface College. The second was a veiled accusation St. Mary's was contributing more to the Church than she received:

- . . . St. Mary's congregation . . . which contributes
- . . . more than any other Church in the country
- [the west] to church purposes, has been slighted . . .

Furthermore, they accused the Archbishop of building a \$250,000 cathedral while English Catholics in Winnipeg were lacking church accommodation. Essentially, the disturbances were caused because French interests were looked after much better than the English: the English had been slighted. In order to improve their position,

the deputation . . . expressed the opinion that the members of the church be taken into the confidence of the ecclesiastical authorities.¹⁴

The article would seem to have served a threefold purpose. First, and probably least important, it was an announcement of the meeting at which the deputation would report.¹⁵ Secondly, it was a resumé of the petition and the grievances which had caused it, and an attempt to gain support from other Catholic groups in Winnipeg, as well as to solidify support within their own ranks. For the emphasis in the article, as contrasted with the petition itself, appears to be on the material losses of Winnipeg Catholics. Thirdly, it was a reaction to Langevin's pastoral letter of the previous Sunday, and even, perhaps, a declaration of war. Langevin had threatened war if they were to appeal to higher authorities; there is a claim that the Irish would stick together and appeal to the Apostolic Delegate. For practical purposes, then, this article marks the beginning of an internecine struggle, or even, war, between two Catholic groups. Both had taken

clearly defined stands; the Irish in their petition and in the Tribune article, the Archbishop in Russell's Report, in his Memoires and in his pastoral letter.

II

Although Langevin had announced the formation of two new parishes on 16 December 1906, in his pastoral letter, he took no obvious steps to implement his promise. After waiting for a year, more or less patiently, the English-speaking Catholics of Winnipeg appealed to the Apostolic Delegate, Mgr. Sbarretti.¹⁶ On 29 August 1907, Langevin wrote the Apostolic Delegate and stated that he had begun work on the erection of a parish in Fort Rouge, out of St. Mary's parish, and one in the west of the city, out of Immaculate Conception parish. However, there was a lack of potential parishioners in both these areas; in Fort Rouge there were only about sixty families, mostly English with some French, while in the west there were about seventy English families, with an equal number of German ones. He had already laid out boundaries for the new parishes, and was getting a Religious Order for one parish and a diocesan priest for the other. But, there were too few families and this difficulty was compounded by language differences, which plagued him throughout his diocese. He would erect the two parishes when men and means were available.¹⁷

A month and a half later, the Apostolic Delegate wrote Langevin concerning the new parishes. Langevin had promised these parishes at the time of the petition (December 1906) to the Irish. The Irish had complained to the Delegation about the delay and had proposed that the

Delegate come to Winnipeg to investigate and make a decision from his observations. Mgr. Sbarretti warned Langevin that the situation was explosive; the Archbishop would be wise to act as circumstances demanded. In his letter of 29 August 1907, the Archbishop had promised to act when he had the means; the Apostolic Delegate had been assured that the means were there - Catholics would give generously -

"... et si je pouvais être utile à Votre Grandeur pour trouver les hommes, je serais heureux de l'aider."¹⁸

In replying to this letter, Langevin attacked the Irish. It was not the priests who complained of a lack of facilities, but the laity. The Irish Catholics were attempting to gain support for a policy which would benefit them, without caring for Catholics of other nationalities, particularly the Germans. The excitement which Sbarretti had mentioned as existing in his diocese, was the result of two or three individuals

... connus par leur zèle en faveur de la cause
irlandaise parlent au nom d'autres qu'ils n'ont
pas consultés.¹⁹

He acknowledged the Delegate's right to make a personal inspection; but, if this was done, it would amount to a triumph for the Irish, which would increase their support. In closing, he claimed to have no need of the priests the Delegate had offered to obtain for him.²⁰

In early January of 1908, Langevin complained to a correspondent that the Irish element in his diocese was costing him friends. In addition, the Irish element was leaning for support on the Apostolic Delegate.²¹

Another letter from the Apostolic Delegation arrived shortly after the New Year. Langevin was warned that it was necessary, in spite of all difficulties, to erect the two promised parishes as quickly as

possible. The Irish had retained, since early December, a lawyer to plead their case at the Delegation.²² Langevin did not reply. Three weeks later, Langevin received a letter from Mons. A. A. Sinnott, secretary to the Apostolic Delegation, requesting Langevin to answer the Delegate's questions concerning the future parishes.²³ Langevin's answer was to erect Canonically the parish of St. Edward the Confessor on 24 January 1908 and that of St. Ignatius Loyola on 5 February 1908.²⁴

Shortly afterward, Jesuit priests arrived to take charge of the parish of St. Ignatius Loyola. In early March, after the new parish of St. Ignatius had held its first service, Langevin received a letter from the Apostolic Delegate congratulating him on the erection of the parish. The Delegate also noted that instead of the sixty families Langevin had claimed lived in Fort Rouge, one hundred had attended the first service, according to The Central Catholic.²⁵ As Langevin had lost the bilingual priest he had obtained for St. Edward's the Delegate offered to find him one who could speak German and English.²⁶

Nothing was done. On 22 May 1908, Mgr. Sbarretti wrote Langevin and warned him that if something was not done soon

"... je serai forcé contre mon gzé à donner une
décision définitive sur la question, comme je
l'ai indiqué²⁷

He had previously indicated that he himself would supply a priest and order Langevin to accept him as pastor of St. Edward's.²⁸ Langevin, from the Hotel-Dieu de Montréal, replied shortly after, and wrote that he had a priest working on facilities for the parish.²⁹ Langevin was thanked for the good news by the Apostolic Delegate shortly after.³⁰

Thus, by early 1908, the Irish had obtained three of their six demands; that St. Mary's and Immaculate Conception parishes be recognized as exclusively English-speaking parishes; that more English-speaking

parishes be erected, and that more English-speaking priests be brought in. Of the other three demands - that the west be recognized as English-speaking and administered as such, for an English-speaking bishop, with a See at Winnipeg, and that an English-speaking College be erected at Winnipeg - the third had been conceded by the Archbishop. The Irish, encouraged with their success, began to press for the acceptance of their other two demands. They had broken with Archbishop Langevin; they had declared war on him by appealing to higher authority and they would continue to do so. By 1912 they would have gained partial acceptance for the claim that the west was English-speaking, and in 1915 they would see all six of their demands accepted and implemented.

III

The actions of the Irish were not without effect on the Archbishop. As the Irish had already taken their side of the question to higher authority, Langevin prepared his case. For this purpose, a document on the Irish Question (*La Question Irlandais*) was drawn up, authorized and signed by Langevin.³¹ In this document some rather interesting changes are made. The Irish would like to replace the priests they have (Revs. Frs. Cahill and O'Dwyer) with priests of Irish origin.³² They have embarked on a campaign to force the Archbishop of St. Boniface to establish two more Irish parishes³³ where these are not sufficient to support them. As a result the Archbishop would be forced to incur a large debt - the cost of land, construction of a church, etc. - which the Archdiocese could hardly afford.³⁴ One reason for this request was land speculation. Among the agitators were land speculators who would

~~who would~~ like the new church to be built in areas designated by them, which would enhance the value of their property. Another reason was the desire to gain control of the Archdiocese by pressing for an English-speaking Irish coadjutor bishop with the right of succession in Winnipeg.

In 1908, in the city of Winnipeg, Langevin claimed that there were some 15,450 Catholics.

Table VI³⁵

WINNIPEG CATHOLIC POPULATION BY NATIONALITY 1908

English	4,500
French	1,250
Polish	3,200
Ruthenians	4,000
Germans	<u>2,500</u>
Total	15,450

Of these 15,450 Catholics, the Irish were only 4,500. Encouraged by the events in the diocese of Sault Ste. Marie, with a population three-quarters French, where an Irish bishop had been nominated, the Irish in Winnipeg, as in Ottawa, were petitioning and pressing for an Irish bishop.

IV

The years from 1908 to Langevin's death 15 June 1915, are times of petty skirmishing. Each side attempts to show the other up; the Irish continue their struggle for an Irish bishop, who they believe, can solve all their problems, and Archbishop Langevin struggles to maintain the status quo. However, most of the events of importance took place outside of Manitoba in Quebec and Ontario. Bourassa's split with Laurier, the growing struggle over Regulation 17, the Reciprocity question, the Naval Bill, the annexation of Keewatin, all had an effect which is difficult to evaluate. The struggle in St. Boniface diocese continued



but it changed its character as it became more enmeshed with the struggles in Eastern Canada and in the split between the English-speaking and French-speaking hierarchy. The Apostolic Delegate was hard put to maintain a semblance of order within the Church.

According to Langevin, the Irish bishops wished to anglicize all French Catholics outside the province of Quebec, including those in dioceses where the majority was French.

C'est comme une seconde conquête du Canada, et chose étrange, les angliciseurs dans le clergé sont plus ardents que les Protestants anglais contre les français, et ils prétendent s'appuyer sur le Sainte-Siège.³⁶

In that same letter to Cardinal de Lai, secretary of the Sacred Consistorial Congregation, Rome, Langevin wrote of the systematic opposition of the Apostolic Delegate, Mgr. Sbarretti. At the First Plenary Council of Quebec, held in 1907, Sbarretti's partiality for the English had been evident. Sbarretti admitted the claim of the English. Canada would be English-speaking: "... dans ce pays britannique, il fallait n'accepter que l'anglais."³⁷

In November 1910, another example of the division appeared. Hitherto, the University of Manitoba had taught only science subjects but there was a strong movement to allow it to teach all subjects.³⁸ The year before the University had made the decision to teach some of the humanities.³⁹ This forced St. Boniface College, the main opponent to the move, to reconsider its affiliation with the University. But, more important, it also demonstrated the difference of opinion between the English-speaking and French Catholics. St. Boniface College was not interested in joining a State University where it might lose its rights. Langevin accused Irish Catholics of not appreciating St. Boniface

College, with supporting the movement for a teaching university, with however, a residence directed by Jesuits, who would teach dogma and philosophy.⁴⁰

Further outbreaks were confined to the newspapers, both secular and clerical. That a division between French and English Catholics existed was known to all who could read. The letter columns of the Winnipeg Tribune and the Manitoba Free Press, and, to a lesser extent, those of the Northwest Review, became outlets for the quarrel. Correspondents complained of a shortage of Irish priests, that this could be rectified if there was an English-speaking bishop in Winnipeg, that Catholic newspapers misrepresented the Catholic cause by confusing it with French nationalism, and that Catholic papers of other nationalities took a delight in insulting English-speaking Catholics on every

occasion.⁴¹ Divisions in the Catholic body were commented upon by secular newspapers.⁴² The Irish were accused (by a W. F. Gray) of wanting to obtain bishoprics and other advantageous positions, in order to rule, to annihilate the French Canadians racially and with respect to speech. One Irishman, resident in the Northwest, claimed that the Irish had lost the missionary spirit and that ". . . their only desire now is for fat city parishes and for bishoprics."⁴³

The result of this friction was the relative stagnation of Catholic Action in Winnipeg. Friction, however, according to a correspondent in the Northwest Review also existed among the English-speaking Catholics themselves, as well as among the different races composing the Winnipeg Catholic Body.⁴⁴ It would appear that the disease was spreading.

In 1912, however, two important events occurred. The Metropolitan Church of Edmonton was erected 30 November 1912. At the same time, the diocese of Calgary was formed. Langevin was quite pleased. Writing to

the new Archbishop, Mgr. Legal, he said that "... la formation d'une nouvelle province ecclésiastique était bien accepté"⁴⁵ However, pleased as he was about the erection of the new ecclesiastical province, Langevin was not pleased with the nomination of Mgr. MacNally, of Irish origin, to the new see of Calgary. In vain he protested; he complained to the Apostolic Delegate, Mgr. Stagni, that the nomination was unfortunate and dangerous, not only to the new See, but to the Church in the West. For it would disrupt church discipline and disturb the fight for schools.⁴⁶ No change was made, and MacNally became bishop of Calgary, the forerunner of Sinnott, marking the end of exclusive French control in the west.

In 1913, the Apostolic Delegate made a tour of the church in the west. There is not too much information on his visit. He was in St. Boniface diocese from 18 June to the 23 June, 1913. In answer to Langevin's question he had expressed a wish to meet members of the Catholic Club,⁴⁷ but if he had private interviews with anyone, it is difficult to say. His schedule appears quite full, but there was a reception in Winnipeg, with the address being delivered in English.⁴⁸ In any event, Mgr. Stagni's trip west would have given him a fuller understanding of the problems the Church faced in the west.

Thus the stage was set for the final struggle. Langevin's health had been none too good; he had spent the winter of 1913-14 in Texas,⁴⁹ leaving the diocese under the care of Bishop Bélieau. The Irish acted. By May of 1915, Langevin had received word that complaints against him had been sent to Rome by the Irish.⁵⁰ In early June, writing to one of his parish priests Langevin claimed that disturbances in the parishes were part of "a regular plot" to create trouble.⁵¹ Thirteen days after writing that letter, Archbishop Langevin died in Montreal, and with him, the old order.

Notes

- 1 Langevin to Chérrier, 3 December 1906, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 2 Chérrier to Langevin, 6 December 1906, Winnipeg Diocese, ASB.
- 3 ibid. Quite probably the Delegate had spoken off-hand in generalities, which the Irish had interpreted specifically. Nevertheless, the Delegate's supposed support was probably quite important in encouraging the Irish to petition.
- 4 Forrester to Langevin, 6 December 1906, Winnipeg Diocese, ASB.
- 5 Langevin to Forrester, 10 December 1906, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 6 Langevin to Begin, 3 December 1906, Langevin Correspondence, ASB. This is Langevin's phrasing.
- 7 ibid. He seems to have interpreted their demands as a request for an Irish Bishop of St. Boniface.
- 8 Langevin to Bernant, 3 December 1906, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 9 Winnipeg Tribune, 17 December 1906, PAM.
- 10 ibid.
- 11 ibid. This is all from the article.
- 12 Winnipeg Tribune, 19 December 1906.
- 13 cf footnote #26 and #27, Chapter II.
- 14 Winnipeg Tribune, 19 December 1906.
- 15 This would be Sunday, 23 December 1906.
- 16 I have been unable to locate Mgr. Sbarretti's first letter to Langevin on this subject. Further, there are no letters in St. Mary's Archives to the Apostolic Delegate on this matter.
- 17 Langevin to Sbarretti, 29 August 1907, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 18 Sbarretti to Langevin, 15 November 1907, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 19 Langevin to Sbarretti, 11 December 1907, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 20 ibid.
- 21 Langevin to Mgr. C. A. Beaudry, 5 January 1908, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 22 Sbarretti to Langevin 5 January 1908, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 23 Sinnott to Langevin 23 January 1908, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 24 Archvêche de St. Boniface, Chancellory Office, St. Boniface Diocese. This book contains the decrees erecting all the parishes of St. Boniface Diocese.
- 25 Sbarretti to Langevin, 5 March 1908, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB. The Central Catholic at this time replaced the Northwest Review as the English Catholic paper.
- 26 ibid.
- 27 Sbarretti to Langevin, 22 May 1908, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 28 ibid.
- 29 Langevin to Sbarretti, 26 May 1908, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 30 Sbarretti to Langevin, 30 May 1908, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 31 La Question Irlandais, 28 January 1908, Winnipeg Diocese, ASB.
- 32 cf footnote #23 and #56, Chapter II.
- 33 This was written just at the peak of the argument with the Apostolic Delegate over the parishes.

- 34 In 1915: St. Edwards owed St. Boniface diocese \$110,000.00
 St. Ignatius owed " " 12,000.00
 Immaculate Conception owed " 10,500.00
 St. Mary's had a very heavy debt.
 Bélieau to Perrier, 4 October 1915, Population File, ASB.
- 35 La Question Irlandais, op. cit.
- 36 Langevin to Cardinal de Lai, 18 October 1910, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 37 ibid.
- 38 Morton, One University, op. cit., p 76. The University taught few subjects to this time, mostly in the scientific field which the member colleges were not prepared to teach.
- 39 ibid.
- 40 Langevin to Stagni, 4 April 1913, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 41 Letter, signed A Reader, Northwest Review, 7 January 1911; Letter, signed A Reader, Northwest Review, 12 July 1911.
- 42 Winnipeg Tribune, 5 July 1911, for an example.
- 43 This was a digest of an article by W. F. Gray in the Downside Review, reprinted in the London Tablet, 2 September 1911, and re-reprinted in the Northwest Review, 23 September 1911. The Northwest Review, of course, decisively refutes the arguments.
- 44 Letter, Northwest Review, 15 October 1912.
- 45 Langevin to Legal, 6 March 1913, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 46 Langevin to Stagni, 12 February 1914, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 47 Stagni to Langevin, 2 April 1913, Apostolic Delegate File 2, ASB.
- 48 Programme for Stagni's Visit, Apostolic Delegate File 2, ASB.
- 49 A. G. Maurice, Vie de Mgr. Langevin, (St. Boniface 1916) pp 308-9.
- 50 Langevin to Mathieu, 12 May 1915, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 51 Langevin to Giocheuski, 2 June 1915, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.

CHAPTER IV

THE PETITION OF 1914-15: THE ENGLISH CASE

There are, in St. Mary's archives, two petitions outlining the English case for a separate diocese. One is entitled "Petition to Benedict XV" and the other is addressed to "Your Holiness". Both are undated, but the second one appears to be a supplement to the first. Benedict XV became Pope 3 September 1914; thus the petitions must have been sent between that date and before 4 December, 1915. According to Mgr. Bélieau the petitions were sent to Rome prior to Archbishop Langevin's death.¹ Langevin had been quite ill for some years² so that with the election of a new Pope and the strong possibility of a new Bishop of St. Boniface, the time would appear opportune to press for changes.

The first petition to Benedict XV stated that the petitioners

. . . desire to lay before Your Holiness a few salient facts respecting the state of affairs under which the great majority of Catholics are forced to live in their . . . diocese.³

The petition opened with their estimate (as there were no official, accurate figures) of Latin Rite Catholics in St. Boniface Diocese:

Table VII
CATHOLIC POPULATION OF MANITOBA: PETITION 1914

<u>Nationalities</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
English-speaking	26,016	about 30%
French	23,859	about 27%
Poles	14,660	about 17%
Germans	10,736	about 12%
Métis	11,000	about 13% (largely Indian)

These figures reduced the French population which St. Boniface authorities had claimed. The petitioners asserted that the French

dominated Church government in the three prairie provinces and that the French clergy had on all occasions sought to exaggerate the number of French Catholics. In the census of 1911, the Métis were classified as French, increasing French numbers by approximately 11,000. Besides, there were many of French background who were not Catholic or who now spoke English as their language, but who were counted as French Catholic to inflate French numbers. The number of English-speaking Catholics was constantly increasing as new immigrant groups were assimilated, while the French population grew but slowly. In Winnipeg alone there were some 14,560 English-speaking Catholics. Some ninety percent of the clergy was French, but only twenty-five percent of the Catholic population was French. One French priest existed for every 163 French Catholics, but there was only one English priest for every 3,000 English-speaking Catholics.

The petitioners claimed that because St. Boniface was very near the business center of Winnipeg, land there was quite valuable, so valuable in fact that ". . . the people of St. Boniface have learned . . . that half the property in town was held by the English-speaking business men of Winnipeg."⁴ They predicted that "within the next five years St. Boniface will become part of Winnipeg . . . "⁵ The absorption of St. Boniface would mean that the Metropolitan of the Church in the West ought to become known as the Archbishop of Winnipeg ". . . to secure that title for the Church before it is assumed by the Anglican sect."⁶

The second part was concerned with the language question. The old, familiar, claim that English, as the language of business, was necessary for advancement, was again put forward. Germans, Poles, Italians, and Ruthenians were all adopting it. The example of the Irish race was cited:

. . . the forefathers of very many of us came from the British Isles with no other language than Celtic, and having by hard necessity to learn English, took care that their children acquired a mastery of English - the change of speech did not cause any less of faith and need not do so here.⁷

The new groups were learning English; they showed no desire to learn French and their children would all be English-speaking. As English was to be the common tongue of the prairies, it seemed odd that practically all the clergy and hierarchy of the prairies should be French, while in Quebec there

. . . are half as many more Catholics of English speech than there are people of the French language in the whole of these three prairie provinces, the idea even of an English-speaking Bishop was never thought of.⁸

The third division dealt with primary education, a topic which is intimately bound up in this question. The position of the petitioners was as follows: the right of Catholics to separate schools had been lost in Manitoba. This hurt all Catholics except the French - because they " . . . have been settled by the clergy in groups or colonies where Catholics of other nationalities are neither wanted nor welcome."⁹ They were enabled to have French teachers and thus, in reality to have French schools for the Government permitted this, even though contrary to existing laws,

. . . owing to the friendship existing between the political party . . . in power and the Ecclesiastical authorities at St. Boniface.¹⁰

Catholics of other nationalities had never been encouraged to group themselves; thus their children had to attend public schools where no religious instruction was given or were forced to build schools of their own, while paying taxes for the public schools. The petitioners would

like legislation similar to that of Saskatchewan and Alberta; it could be obtained but, as the teaching of French was severely restricted in those provinces, the French hierarchy was uninterested. ". . . Our rights as Catholics have . . . always been sacrificed on the altar of French nationalism."¹¹

With regard to higher education, St. Boniface College, the only Catholic institution in the west, although nominally bilingual, was French. It did not provide higher education for all the young men of the diocese. The French professors out-numbered the English ones four to one ". . . and the methods, the ideals, the surroundings, the ambitions of the place are French."¹² Besides, the Archbishop had once said: "The College must be and shall remain French."¹³ There was no provision for the higher education of English-speaking Catholic young men, and thus, young men had to be sent away at great expense to obtain a Catholic education, or, attend non-Catholic institutions.

The Catholic press is discussed in the next section. The publishing work of the diocese was handled by the West Canada Publishing Co., with the shares divided as follows:

Table VIII
SHAREHOLDERS OF THE WEST CANADA PUBLISHING CO. 1914

<u>Shareholders</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
The Oblate Fathers	29.5
His Grace the Archbishop	27.3
The English-speaking laity	16.6
St. Mary's Parish (exclusively English)	18.2
The German Catholic laity	3.6
The Polish Catholic laity	3.0
The French Catholic laity	1.8
Total	100.0

The English-speaking Catholics had contributed 34.8% of the capital, expecting no dividends but only ". . . the right to expect that the company's publications be of some use to the Catholic cause of the country."¹⁴ However, the company was managed by an Oblate priest, under the strict supervision of the authorities of St. Boniface. Moreover, the English publication, The Northwest Review, was the poorest of all; it continually lauded French activity and condemned ". . . anything and everthing that can be classed as an expression of opinion by the English-speaking members of the Church."¹⁵ It attacked English Catholics and anyone, including bishops, who opposed French aims. Its pages contained the most extreme expressions of French nationalism from Quebec as

. . . clippings of this unpleasant nature are sent to the office by the Church authorities with an order for their translation and insertion.¹⁶

The final section dealt with the need of English-speaking priests. As the future of the West would be English, the Church was held in small respect because of the dominance of the French hierarchy as the Church's

. . . divinely appointed rulers were men far removed by mentality and training from the environment in which they were destined to move.¹⁷

An example was the wearing of the cassock, which was not liked by some clergy and all English-speaking Catholics. They clergy was forced to submit to insult and ridicule and ". . . we, their people, to untold humiliation on their account."¹⁸ Under the present system there could be no converts gained and the Church could have but little influence.

The petitioners ended with the hope that the Pope would ". . . give ear to our statements and to our appeal in the spirit in which they are made . . ."¹⁹ No specific requests were made.

The second petition, addressed simply to "Your Holiness" appears

supplementary to the first one, giving specific facts and figures to support the general claims of the former petition. Because of this (and the fact of its position in the file) it would appear to have followed the above petition although it may have been sent with the former to Rome. In the prologue, however, it states that its main argument will be ". . . the need of an English-speaking bishop in the diocese of St. Boniface . . .".²⁰

The petition has some eight divisions, with a conclusion. The petitioners request that the next Archbishop of St. Boniface be English, one who would treat his flock without discrimination. The second request is to divide the archdiocese of St. Boniface, if the first was not accepted, with an English-speaking suffragan bishop in Winnipeg.²¹

The first section examines various population claims, to discover exactly what the Catholic population of St. Boniface diocese was, and to demonstrate that the French population had been artificially inflated, while the English population had been artificially deflated. To illustrate the problem, the following table was put forward:

Table IX

CATHOLIC POPULATION OF ST. BONIFACE DIOCESE (Various Sources)

	1	2	3	4
French	29,595	33,786		
English	9,485	11,189	73,994	110,000
Polish	9,369	13,185		
German	2,062			
Others	4,468	10,786	6,000	
Ruthenian	<u>32,637</u>	<u>45,000</u>		<u>40,000</u>
TOTAL	87,816	113,949	79,994	150,000
Ruthenian Rite	<u>32,637</u>	<u>45,000</u>	<u>32,637</u>	<u>40,000</u>
TOTAL LATIN RITE	55,178	69,949	47,357	110,000

outside of Manitoba

Sources

Column 1: These figures were given in an address delivered before a convention of French-Canadian Catholics held in St. Boniface, 20 March 1912, by Rev. Fr. Theophile Hudon, S.J. These figures are about two years old.

Column 2: From an article entitled "French Claims" in the Northwest Review 15 October 1910, signed by "Un pretre temoin", from Montreal. These figures are about three or four years old.

Column 3: From the Government Census of 1911, which represents the total Catholic population of the Province of Manitoba only.²² That portion of the diocese outside the province of Manitoba contains about 6,000 Catholics. Three figures are three years old.

Column 4: These are taken from the Ecclesiastical directory for 1914. They appear much too large - an increase of about 80% in three years.

The petitioners stated that the figures of columns 1 and 2 were estimates made by the French; the desparity of thirty percent between the two was evidence of their unreliability. Further, the French column also included the Métis, who, in some cases, were about twenty to thirty percent of Scotch and Indian blood, not French and Indian. In St. Boniface diocese it was estimated that there were about 8,401 Métis.

In the three years previous, since the estimates of Column 1 and 2 were made, few French had come West. Germans, Poles and English-speaking Catholics had entered in great numbers. Thus, by deducting 10,000 to include the Métis, and adding a ten percent natural increase for the three year period, the French population in 1914 was estimated at 23,859.

Likewise, estimates of the English-speaking population were incorrect. In 1912, for the purpose of a petition presented to the Public School Board, the Catholic population of Winnipeg was estimated at 28,000 by a committee of pastors and laymen, representing various nationalities. It was discovered also that fifty-two percent of the children attending public schools were English-speaking; applying the same ratio to the adult population in 1912, there were 14,560 English-speaking Catholics in Winnipeg alone. No estimate of the number outside Winnipeg exists, but the petitioners estimated between 10,000 and 20,000. Thus, with the ten percent increase allowed the French, and 10,000 to cover those outside of Winnipeg, the English-speaking Catholic population of the diocese would be about 26,016 - more than twice the number allowed by French estimates. The estimates for the Polish, German, Hungarian, Italian and Assyrians

were also out of date as those groups had increased greatly through immigration. This increase was about thirty percent, which would bring their number in 1914 to 14,660 for the Poles and 10,736 for the others. The estimate of the petitioners may be summarized as follows:

Table X

ENGLISH ESTIMATE OF ST. BONIFACE DIOCESE POPULATION 1914

Nationality	Population	Approximate per-cent of total
English Catholics	26,016	30
French	23,859	27
Germans (1)	10,736	12
Poles	14,660	17
Métis	11,000	13
TOTAL	86,261	

(1) Includes: Italians, Assyrian, Hungarian and others.

Therefore, the ratio: French and French-speaking (Métis and Indian), forty percent of the total; English and others, sixty percent of the total.

Of the sixty percent remaining, only a small percentage did not or would not understand English in the future.

The next point, after having established the 'true' proportions of nationalities in the diocese, was the examination of the clergy. This is summed up in the following table.

Table XI

NATIONALITY OF THE CLERGY 1914

Nationality	Diocesan	Regular	Totals
French	70	67	146
English-speaking	2	7	9
Polish	2	3	5
Italian	1	1	2
German	0	2	2
	84	80	164

The cause of this situation was the responsibility of the French.

All priests who came to St. Boniface had to accept French traditions, ideals and practices.

These French ideals are so arbitrarily enforced that no self-respecting English-speaking priest will voluntarily accept them. The few who did come . . . were finally driven out of the diocese.²³

Citing the example of the Diocese of St. Paul, they claimed that Canadian English-speaking priests went there, instead of coming to the Canadian West, because of the reasonableness of the English Bishop there.

"With an English-speaking bishop in St. Boniface there will be no difficulty about securing English-speaking clergy."²⁴ This was the only solution.

As a result of these peculiar circumstances, the English were ministered to by French-speaking priests, whose knowledge of English was rather uncertain at best. Another, far more important difficulty, was the marked difference in temperament and mentality between the two races:

. . . it is impossible for a French priest, trained and educated according to French ideals, to fully understand and sympathize with the ideals and aspirations of our Irish people.²⁶

Furthermore, French priests were not as influential with non-Catholics as English-speaking priests would be: "an English bishop and clergy not isolating themselves entirely from the community . . . are more readily understood and become more effective in their efforts for the good of the people."²⁷ This policy of isolation had been carried so far by the French bishops that they preferred French-speaking Catholics not to mix with Catholics of other races. As the west was becoming an English-speaking country, it was necessary that changes be made which would redress the balance. The foreign populations were learning to speak English fluently with no desire to learn French. Furthermore, their clergy had predicted that these new immigrant groups would become English-

speaking; it was therefore necessary to have " . . . one Church, one pastor, one school, one teacher, one college, one language and one set of books . . ."²⁸

The section on primary education is similar to that of the previous petition: Catholics in Manitoba were suffering because the French were not willing to risk their bilingual schools,

. . . an advantage which advances the cause of French nationalism even if it does stand in the way of advancing the interests of the Church among Catholics generally.²⁹

The section on higher education is more strongly worded than that of the former petition, but nothing new is added. However, the next section, considering the Catholic English-speaking press, has an addition dealing with the impression the English paper, the Northwest Review, made on Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

Control was held firmly by the French; attempts to change this had failed. The tenor of articles published by the Review was alien to English-speaking people, and injurious to the church, for English Catholics had no medium through which to express themselves and were forced to use the secular papers. The Review was aggressively French, full of propaganda supporting French claims. For instance, a letter

. . . denounced as a 'liar' the Right Reverend M. F. Fallon, Bishop of London, Ontario, a prelate greatly loved by the English-speaking Catholics of the whole of Canada.²⁹

Through this policy, Catholic interests were coloured with French nationalism, " . . . directed to the perpetration of French domination and the suppression of English-speaking aspirations . . ."³⁰ This resulted in a feeling among Catholics of other nationalities that their rights were constantly sacrificed, causing a diminution in zeal and a

and a considerable loss of faith" . . . the extent of which is either not realized or is disregarded by ecclesiastical authorities"³¹

Another product was the creation of a spirit of hostility among non-Catholics who comprise eighty percent of the Archdiocese's population; it had become impossible, with the confusion of French nationalism and Catholicism, to bring about a feeling of good will. For the Northwest Review and the other Catholic papers kept alive and created antagonistic attitudes towards Catholic aims, such as relief from educational burdens.

The matter of the soutane or cassock was raised again. This was a matter which plagued both the English clergy and the Irish or English-speaking laity alike. The Archbishop enforced the wearing of the soutane at all times and in all places - in the streets and in all public places. This was one reason why English-speaking clergy would not come to St. Boniface.

As regards the hospitals and houses of charity, they were run by French religious orders because only French sisterhoods were wanted or allowed in the diocese.

"The Faithful Companions of Jesus, an English-speaking sisterhood, were admitted to the diocese by the late Archbishop Taché . . . They established schools at Brandon . . . and at Kenora Shortly after his consecration the present Archbishop banished these efficient teachers from the diocese."³²

In view of the above facts, the petitioners wanted an Archbishop who would ". . . be a pastor without discrimination to all his flock".³³ This, to them, eliminated French bishops; an English-speaking prelate was desired. In effect, this would mean an Irishman as Archbishop of St. Boniface. Their preference, however, was for an English-speaking suffragan bishop, with a See including Winnipeg and Brandon, and all

that portion of the diocese lying West of the Red River and North of the Assiniboine River. The result of such a move would be to end "the blight of French-Canadian Nationalism";³⁴ discrimination would end with all sections receiving their due share of attention; and the church would be freed in the West to ". . . attain to the greatest development possible in its labours for the salvation of souls."³⁵

These two petitions outline quite clearly the problems of the English-speaking Catholics of Manitoba, or what appeared to some to be problems. It is doubtful if conditions were as bad as represented, but there is no doubt that wide dissatisfaction existed, certainly enough to provoke three petitions. Comment on the accuracy of all points mentioned is outside the scope of this thesis, which is concerned with policy. Most points, individually, could be perhaps dismissed as insignificant or exaggeration, but taken together they do form a series of small, nagging, annoyances.

The Irish appeared to desire a fair settlement; they do not ask, in their request for a separate diocese, the whole of the area west of the Red River but only that part West of the Red River and North of the Assiniboine. In effect they were requesting a diocese, without the French, which would include the majority of English-speaking Catholics, or those who would be in time English-speaking Catholics. This was the ideal of division later adopted by Archbishop Bélieau, and which became the principle of division in 1916.

Notes

- 1 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 2 Winnipeg Tribune, 16 June 1915, Manitoba Free Press, 16 June 1915.
- 3 Petition to Benedict XV, File 11, ASM. The signers of the petition are not listed in the copy.
- 4 Petition to Benedict XV.
- 5 ibid.
- 6 ibid
- 7 ibid. This is contrary to the French claim that to change one's language was to change one's faith.
- 8 ibid.
- 9 ibid.
- 10 ibid.
- 11 ibid.
- 12 ibid.
- 13 ibid.
- 14 ibid.
- 15 ibid.
- 16 ibid.
- 17 ibid.
- 18 ibid. Langevin wrote the following in 1915. "Les Irlandais, on le sait, ont une horreur instinctive de la soutane, et s'ils détestaient autant le péché, ils seraient de grands saints." Langevin to Perrier, 18 May 1915. Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 19 ibid.
- 20 Petition to "Your Holiness", File 11, ASM.
- 21 ibid.
- 22 In this Census, there is a confusion between the Greek Orthodox Church (non-Catholic) and the Greek Catholic Church; no distinction has been made as only the Greek Church appears in the statistics. Population of Ruthenians and Catholics therefore will not be too exact. It could be out by as much as 20,000.
- 23 Petition to "Your Holiness".
- 24 Petition to "Your Holiness", op. cit. The Bishop of St. Paul was Irish.
- 25 ibid.
- 26 ibid.
- 27 ibid.
- 28 ibid.
- 29 Mgr. Fallon was the leader in the struggle over the University of Ottawa (see footnotes 70-72, Ch. I on the Searchlight) as a leader in the struggle for Regulation 17, against the French in Ontario.) He, too, was Irish.
- 30 Petition to "Your Holiness".
- 31 ibid.
- 32 ibid. I have not checked on this point. This may be only an interpretation of an event having other causes. However, of the 18 Religious orders which Archbishop Langevin brought into his diocese, none were English-speaking; most were French. cf The Story of Manitoba Vol. III, (Winnipeg 1913), pp 50-53.
- 33 ibid.
- 34 ibid.
- 35 ibid.

PART II : DIVISION

CHAPTER V

NEWS OF DIVISION

At the time of Archbishop Langevin's death on June 15, 1915, St. Boniface Diocese had Metropolitan authority over the Dioceses of Regina and Prince Albert (in Saskatchewan) and the Vicariate Apostolic of Keewatin. Within its own limits, it included all of Manitoba prior to May 15, 1912, when the boundaries were extended to their present limits, plus a certain portion of Northwestern Ontario, including Fort Frances, Atikokan and Rat Portage (Kenora).

Langevin had been sick for some years, and prior to his death had taken pains to secure the succession to his Diocese of Bishop Bélieau,¹ who was consecrated titular Bishop of Domitianopolis and Auxiliary Bishop of St. Boniface 25 July, 1913.² Bélieau was born March 2, 1870, at Mount Carmel, Quebec. His family moved to St. Boniface late in 1882, and at the age of 12, he entered St. Boniface College where he had a brilliant career. In September 1890 he entered Grand Seminary at Montreal where he studied theology; on 24 September, 1893, he was ordained priest for the diocese of St. Boniface. He came to St. Boniface in August of 1895 after having spent two years in Rome, where he obtained the degree of Doctor of Theology. From his return, he was constantly attached to Archbishop Langevin, being in turn Secretary and Chancellor; from 1905 to Langevin's death he was the procureur diocesain³ and a member of the Diocesan Council.

At Langevin's death, Bélieau became administrator of the Diocese

sede vacante.⁴ Immediately after Langevin's death, speculation in the secular press, particularly in the Manitoba Free Press, broke out concerning the succession. The Free Press stated that "there was absolutely no way of even conjecturing whether or not the successor . . . would be an English-speaking dignitary."⁵ Quite obviously a climate had been created which expected some change in Church administration. When the news of the division was first released, the Free Press was able to report that the rumour of Mons. Sinnott's appointment had been persistent in Ottawa ecclesiastical circles for some time.⁶ Public opinion and ecclesiastical circles would seem to have been prepared for a change.

With Langevin dead, the old order ended, and with a new one beginning, the time no doubt seemed ripe for change. Bélieau must have realized this, for in early September, a certain gentleman, unnamed, told him that Mons. Sinnott would become an Archbishop in Winnipeg.⁷ It was not made clear whether Sinnott was to become Archbishop of St. Boniface or if a new Archdiocese was to be erected. Bélieau, in a letter to Mgr. Stagni, merely quotes his source⁸ as saying that Mons. Sinnott will be his (the source's) future Archbishop.⁸ Furthermore, the people of the diocese were well aware of this fact; even the Religious women knew of Sinnott's rumoured appointment, for one Sister told Bélieau of it.⁹ However, the crowning evidence is Bélieau's report of a sermon delivered from the pulpit of St. Mary's Church in Winnipeg. Evidently Fr. Patton, the pastor, had just returned from Ottawa at the height of the French drive for a more equitable division. He asserted that the borders would not be changed "because Rome never changes"¹⁰ adding that all matters had been arranged since October last.¹¹

There is evidence that by the end of September, or at the latest,

early October, Bélieau knew that something was going to happen. There is a draft letter, undated except for the month and year (September 1915) addressed to Cardinal Begin of Montreal. Bélieau wrote that "l'assault du Siège de Saint-Boniface est évidemment fait par l'influence anglais"¹² and stated that "... l'anglais ... fait porter son effort à Rome"¹³ Even before the end of September, before his suspicions had been confirmed, Bélieau had been worried. Writing to Bishop Mathieu on the 20 August, he mentioned the possibility of transferring the see of St. Boniface to Winnipeg and changing its name.¹⁴ He claimed (quite rightly, it would appear) that if this was done, an English Bishop would rule.

By 4 October, Bélieau was obviously worried, but he was able to write that

"la demande des gens de langue anglais d'avoir un évêque de leur langue à Winnipeg n'avait pas de chance d'être prise au sérieux"¹⁵

However, he was afraid of other possibilities which might occur, such as naming an English Archbishop for St. Boniface or erecting a separate Diocese of Winnipeg. The first was dismissed as une abomination and the second as impossible, for although the financial condition of St. Boniface was good, it was also delicate because of taxes which took up a great part of the revenue.¹⁶ However, further in the letter, he stated that

"pour l'harmonie, nous sommes en faveur d'une division par nationalités quand les groupes soit assez fortes."¹⁷

But this would have to wait, for outside of Winnipeg, there were very few English Catholics scattered among the French. Even in Winnipeg there were too few parishes to support a bishop.¹⁸

La division est impossible et si Rome l'effectuait elle allumerait le feu de la discorde pour 50 ans¹⁹

On December 4, 1915,²⁰ the Archdiocese of Winnipeg was erected; nothing

was known of this until the nomination of the three Archbishops for Western Canada was announced at the Consistory of 9 December, and published in the unofficial newspaper of the Vatican, the Osservatore Romano.²¹ The borders of the new Archdiocese were published, also.²² On that same day, the news was flashed to Winnipeg and the Tribune that evening proudly announced that Western Canada was to have three new Archbishops, and that Mons. Sinnott would become Archbishop of Winnipeg.²³ No mention of borders ever, apparently, appeared in either of the two local papers. Their interest lay solely in the fact that Winnipeg was to become an Arch-bishopric.

Sinnott was undoubtedly well qualified for the position, speaking English, French and Italian. Moreover, he was a brilliant man.²⁴ Indeed, he had been nominated as a candidate for bishop in 1909,²⁵ although he had not been chosen. If anyone knew the situation in Winnipeg, it would have been Sinnott; he was ideally placed to observe, and certainly would have been conversant with the Petition of 1906, and the erection of the Parishes of St. Edward the Confessor and St. Ignatius Loyola. Further, he would have followed the struggle over the cassock. He would have known fully the situation.

Bélieau had known that there would be some administrative changes affecting his Diocese, as has been seen, but he had not known just exactly what they would be. The possibilities of an English-speaking Bishop at St. Boniface, the transfer of the see to Winnipeg, the erection of Winnipeg as a separate diocese, all had been considered by him. Thus, he could not have been unduly surprised to read in the Winnipeg Tribune of 9 December 1915, that three Archbishops had been nominated for Western Canada: Mathieu in Regina, Sinnott in Winnipeg and himself in St. Boniface.

When the first announcement in the Tribune appeared, the authorities at St. Boniface were quite unprepared. They would have been prepared for an announcement concerning the succession of St. Boniface but the division of the see into three separate administrative units came as a complete surprise. According to officials at the palace, quoted by the Tribune, no intimation of the division had leaked out.²⁶

The report was quite vague; all kinds of speculation were rife, According to a prominent member of the Catholic clergy²⁷ it had been only a matter of time before Winnipeg absorbed St. Boniface.²⁸ In fact, he claimed, it was even then part of Greater Winnipeg.²⁹

It has always been [he said] the custom to give the Archbishop's title to the larger town, and it has been felt for some time that the Archbishop of St. Boniface should become known as the Archbishop of Winnipeg. It is quite probable that Mgr. Sinnott has been nominated and that he will become Archbishop of Winnipeg, but I think . . . that Bishop Bélieau will continue to be a suffragan bishop . . . It has always been the aim . . . of the English-speaking Catholics for years to have not only an English-speaking Archbishop,³⁰ but one having the anglicized view. There has been no quarrel between the French and English-speaking Catholics but it has always seemed impossible for the viewpoints of the two to coincide and the English and Irish Catholics have felt for a long time that their numbers entitled them to an English thinking and speaking Archbishop. The appointment of Mgr. Sinnott . . . will be hailed with delight, while it is also believed that the French Catholics, still having a bishop of their own race . . . would not be unduly disappointed.³¹

Such was the attitude of the victorious!

However, there was as yet no certainty. The Free Press, the next day, sounded a note of caution, since the cablegram which had announced the nominations was in some respects incorrect and no confirmation had as yet been received.³² There was no surprise expressed concerning Regina's elevation and

. . . it would cause no great surprise, no great surprise (sic.) that Mons. Sinnott had been raised to the elevation of an Archbishop with the title of Archbishop of Winnipeg . . . but . . . it is considered improbable that both Winnipeg and St. Boniface are to be Archbishoprics.³³

Officials of the Diocese of Regina viewed the report with caution, also. The Free Press quoted the Chancellor of Regina Diocese to the effect that reports of Bishop Mathieu (of Regina) becoming an Archbishop should be treated "with suspicion". Bishop Mathieu had received no confirmation.³⁴

In a dispatch from Ottawa, the Free Press reported that "the rumour of the appointment (of Sinnott) has been persistent in ecclesiastical circles . . ."³⁵ Sinnott and the Apostolic Delegate refused to comment; not surprisingly, St. Boniface also refused comment.³⁶

By this time everything was confusion. No one seemed to know what had happened; if anyone did, he was silent. The Tribune reported:

The anticipated appointment of a successor to the late Archbishop Langevin, combined with the expectation that his title would be changed from 'Archbishop of St. Boniface' to 'Archbishop of Winnipeg' had whetted the appetites of the curious, but the possibility suggested in Thursday's report from Rome that St. Boniface and Winnipeg had been created Archbishoprics is scarcely considered creditable.³⁷

Rumours were flying about. Catholic circles were in an uproar; Catholics . . . formed themselves into little groups here, there and everywhere and discussed in animated whispers the joyful news . . .³⁸

On 11 December, the Winnipeg Tribune interviewed Rev. Fr. Prud'homme, Chancellor of St. Boniface diocese. Fr. Prud'homme was " . . . prepared to believe that Winnipeg has been made a bishopric, but an archbishopric, never."³⁹ He felt that Sinnott might become Bishop of Winnipeg, but that Bishop Bélieau would become Archbishop of St. Boniface. He said

that it would be unheard of for two Archdioceses to be adjacent like Winnipeg and St. Boniface.

The news had broken in the middle of the week.⁴¹ The Northwest Review, published weekly, carried the full text of the bulletin⁴² which had set off the round of speculation in its issue of December 13. It added, however, that the bulletin had not been confirmed. Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface did not comment until the news was official,⁴³ outlining the contents of the bulletin without comment except to note that the boundaries between the two archdioceses were not known as yet.

There was reaction from Quebec. Les Cloches quoted, with apparent approval, an article from L'Action Catholique of Quebec, undated, which said that the division of St. Boniface into two archdioceses " . . . était de nature à causer quelque surprise," but "la surprise doit maintenant faire place à une respectueuse soumission."⁴⁴ By the 15 January, then, the French attitude was one of acceptance - however, unenthusiastic - but also one of wait-and-see: the important matter of borders was not yet officially known.

Meanwhile, the Northwest Review was quite pleased. Claiming that the erection of their own Archdiocese was " . . . an honour never suspected even by those in close touch with the trend of ecclesiastical events in Western Canada"⁴⁵ The Review went on to describe the stunned reaction of the English-speaking Catholics. The fact that the new Diocese was to be an Archdiocese also meant a great deal. According to the Review, both Regina and St. Boniface were happy with their Archbishops; Winnipeg Catholics were particularly satisfied with their Archbishop,⁴⁶ especially as he was Irish!

III

Regardless of what the Northwest Review wrote, St. Boniface was not pleased with the news. It signified victory for the Irish in the struggle dating back to 1905. Some considered it a direct insult to the French and the former Archbishops and Bishop of St. Boniface.⁴⁷ Bélieau wrote to Mathieu that St. Boniface diocese would be to the East of Red River, adding that "la vengeance est assen réussie."⁴⁸ The limits were not yet known, however. Bélieau only learned of the actual division when someone from Chicago sent him a copy of the Osservatore Romano of 9 December 1915, which outlined the divisions.⁴⁹ Bélieau knew the division before the Apostolic Delegate which is not usual procedure.⁴⁹ Thus, if Bélieau could write Mathieu on the 13 of January and generally outline the division, and receive a letter from the Apostolic Delegate on 27 January 1916 stating that there was yet no official word,⁵⁰ obviously something was wrong.

In that same letter to Mathieu, Bélieau suggested that he might resign to help the French cause.⁵¹ This would be a rather drastic step, but it might bring to Rome's attention the injustice which had been done in Western Canada. To be successful, his resignation would have to be accompanied by an unequivocal declaration of support from the French Canadian Bishops, or it would be in vain.⁵² His reasoning is interesting for he is almost solely concerned with the effect on the French population of the West. Claiming that this policy (of division and of bringing in an English-speaking Bishop to Winnipeg) would be ruinous to the French population, which was still the largest Catholic group in Western Canada, and to the preservation of the French language, he feared

that the continuance of Rome's policy would lead to the replacement of French bishops in Edmonton, Regina and Prince Albert, to the great detriment of souls.⁵³ Whatever the merits of the plan, he soon abandoned it, for no further mention of it occurs in his correspondence of this period. It does illustrate, however, the feelings that were aroused, particularly on the French side.

About this time, a meeting at St. Boniface of some of the French Bishops of Western Canada took place. According to Les Cloches, Mgr. Mathieu (of Regina) visited St. Boniface on 10 and 11 January: Mgr. Pascal, Bishop of Prince Albert arrived at St. Boniface 7 January and left on the 13 January: Mgr. Charlebois, Vicar Apostolic of Keewatin, arrived on the 11 January and left on the 14 January.⁵⁴ There seems to be no published reason for the conference, but after it, Mgrs. Pascal and Mathieu went East to Quebec,⁵⁵ quite possibly to inform the Bishops of Quebec of the situation and to gain support against the danger which now faced the French in the West. Les Cloches reported that Bélieau and Charlebois planned to attend the Quatrième Congress des Canadiens-Français De Québec⁵⁶ on the 15th and 16th of February. Quite possibly they were preparing to present St. Boniface's case to the Congress. In any event, Mathieu and Pascal would inform the French Bishops of Eastern Canada.

In a letter to the Archbishop of Montreal, dated 17 January, Bélieau claimed that if the limits of St. Boniface were sharply curtailed, the Archbishop of St. Boniface would be faced with bankruptcy. The question of boundaries was also a question of arithmetic, as well as of area.⁵⁷ He had as yet received no official document defining the boundaries.

The next day, 18 January 1916, Béliveau received from Chicago⁵⁸ a copy of the Osservatore Romano of 9 December 1915 in which the limits of St. Boniface were defined. The division, quite naturally, was through the Red River; Rome has always preferred to divide according to geographical and civil boundaries. In a letter to the Apostolic Delegate dated 18 January 1916, Béliveau stated that the Red River division would place St. Boniface Diocese in an alarming and lamentable state.⁵⁹ He proposed the Assiniboine River as a boundary "... au moins en dehors de la ville de Winnipeg"⁶⁰ as this was a more practical division. To do otherwise would be to ruin St. Boniface, left with only four or five decent parishes and a few "miserables petites missions."⁶¹ Some 20,000 French Catholics would remain under the English Archbishop, for within the southern limits of the Assiniboine River there lay many large French parishes. Besides,

Rome a sûrement crée la Diocèse ... pour travailler à la paix religieuse de l'ouest. Si la limite devenait la Rivière Rouge, en donnant tout l'Ouest à Winnipeg, la remede serait trois fois pire que le mal.⁶²

Winnipeg, too, would be excessively strong in relation to St. Boniface.

It would be easy to demonstrate, Béliveau informed the Delegate, the injustice of the division, and, by consequence, the bitterness and discord which would result. He did not blame the Holy See, but only those who had incorrectly informed it about the area east of the Red River, with its poor, unsettled nature. In giving this false information, the enemies of St. Boniface had tried to deliver a death blow: "on me laisse un titre, et on m'enlève la chose."⁶³ He requested half an hour of the Delegate's time to plead his case, while asking that publication of the Bull be delayed.⁶⁴

No reply was sent until 27 January as the Delegate had been visiting

dioceses.⁶⁵ At that date there still had been no official word on the limits; they would know only when the Bulls were published. The Delegate admitted that Bélieau's arguments had merit and he offered to assist him in presenting his case to Rome.⁶⁶

From 18 January, preparations were made to present St. Boniface's case to the proper authorities. Petitions were circulated among the laity and a brief was drawn up demonstrating the folly of the Red River division. Bélieau's plan, that national dioceses should be formed, was followed⁶⁷ with the design being to gather all French Catholics into one flock. The language, culture and religion of the French were intimately linked: "la foi est intimement liée à la langue,"⁶⁸ wrote the Hon. Joseph Bernier to Bélieau. If Rome did not allow the French to remain under "la hailette d'un pasteur Canadien-Français"⁶⁹ it would be a disaster not only for the language but even for the faith as well.

That the division must be accepted as fact was obvious; to fight this would be futile. Les Cloches counselled respectful submission, as Rome had spoken.⁷⁰ However, the question of boundaries was another matter. For if the Red River was to be the boundary, St. Boniface could scarcely exist; there was nothing to lose, for, at worst, the boundary would remain the same.

Notes

- 1 Langevin to Stagni, 3 March 1913, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
Langevin notes that he has written Rome asking that Bélieau be appointed Auxiliary Bishop to St. Boniface.
- 2 Les Cloches De Saint-Boniface, 1 August 1915, ASB.
- 3 An official who is concerned with the temporal management of the Diocese: one in charge of finances.
- 4 Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface, 1 August 1915, ASB.
- 5 Manitoba Free Press, 16 June 1915, PAM.
- 6 ibid., 10 December 1915: an article dated December 9 From Ottawa.
- 7 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 8 ibid.
- 9 ibid.
- 10 ibid.
- 11 ibid.
- 12 Bélieau to Cardinal Begin, September (no day) 1915, (Draft) Population File, ASB.
- 13 ibid. He was asking the Cardinal to inform his friends in Rome of the true facts to counteract the effect of English influence.
- 14 Bélieau to Mathieu, 20 August 1915, (Draft), Population File, ASB.
- 15 Bélieau to Perrier, 4 October 1915, Population File, ASB.
- 16 ibid.
- 17 ibid.
- 18 ibid.
- 19 ibid.
- 20 Date of the Bull: See Appendix I
- 21 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB, also Bélieau to Stagni, 18 January 1916, Bélieau Correspondence ASB.
- 22 Bélieau to Stagni, 18 January 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 23 Winnipeg Tribune, 9 December 1915, PAM.
- 24 Winnipeg Tribune, 9 and 10 December 1915; Manitoba Free Press, December 10, 1915. Winnipeg Free Press, April 18 and 19, 1954, PAM.
- 25 Sbarretti to Langevin, 14 August 1909, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB. Sinnott was the third of three candidates listed.
- 26 Winnipeg Tribune, 9 December 1915, PAM.
- 27 This is the description given in the Manitoba Free Press, 10 December, 1915, PAM.
- 28 ibid.
- 29 ibid.
- 30 There does not seem to be any record of this claim for an Archbishop. A bishop yes, but not an Archbishop, although Langevin had so interpreted their claims previously. cf Chapter II, p 25.
- 31 Manitoba Free Press, 10 December 1915, PAM.
- 32 ibid., 11 December 1915, PAM.
- 33 ibid.
- 34 ibid.
- 35 ibid.
- 36 ibid.

- 37 Winnipeg Tribune, 10 December, 1915, PAM.
- 38 Northwest Review, 25 December 1915, AWSV.
- 39 Winnipeg Tribune, 11 December 1915, PAM.
- 40 ibid.
- 41 December 9, 1915, was a Thursday.
- 42 Text: "Rome, December 9: At the consistory Pope Benedict appointed Mgr. Mathieu Archbishop of Regina, Mgr. Bélieau Archbishop of St. Boniface, and Mgr. Sinnott Archbishop of Winnipeg. Mgr. Sinnott is secretary to the Papal Delegate at Ottawa."
- Northwest Review, 13 December 1915, AWSV.
- 43 Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface, 1 January 1916; Les Cloches was a bi-monthly publication: Bélieau received a telegram from the Apostolic Delegate, dated 17 December 1915, outlining the Bull and a letter dated 18 December 1915, ASB.
- 44 From L'Action Catholique of Quebec, undated, quoted by Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface, 15 January 1916, ASB.
- 45 Northwest Review, 25 December 1915. This seems rather doubtful.
- 46 ibid.
- 47 Bélieau to Mathieu, 13 January 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 48 ibid.
- 49 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB. The Delegate informs the Bishop of any changes under normal procedure.
- 50 Stagni to Bélieau, 27 January 1916, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 51 Bélieau to Mathieu, 13 January 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 52 ibid.
- 53 Bélieau to Archbishop of Montreal, 17 January 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 54 Les Cloches De Saint-Boniface, 15 January, 1916, ASB.
- 55 ibid.
- 56 ibid.
- 57 Bélieau to the Archbishop of Montreal, 17 January 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB. Bélieau wrote: "Je ne puis croire Rome capable d'un pareil sulement, mais en donnait dans l'idée de ceux qui on suggéré cette division, on a réalisé la chose objectivement, l'ent en ne la voulaient (sic) pas subjectuellement."
- 58 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 59 Bélieau to Stagni, 18 January 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 60 ibid.
- 61 ibid.
- 62 ibid. He ended the letter with this phrase: "... j'ai le coeur malade et souffrant; j'espere cependant."
- 63 ibid.
- 64 ibid.
- 65 Stagni to Bélieau, 27 January 1916, Apostolic Delegate File 1, ASB.
- 66 ibid.
- 67 Bélieau to Perrier, 4 October 1915, Population File, ASB.
- 68 ibid.
- 69 ibid.
- 70 Les Cloches De Saint-Boniface, 15 January 1916. This is a comment of L'Action Catholique of Quebec, undated, quoted with apparent approval by Les Cloches.

CHAPTER VI

THE FRENCH CASE

There were actually two sides to the French Case. The first had to do with the fact of division, the second was concerned with the actual division of 4 December 1915, which they considered unjust. Their stand in the first case was based on the claim that division was unnecessary as the Archbishop of St. Boniface, Mgr. Langevin, had competently administered the diocese in the face of grave social and economic change. The justification of this claim is sketched in official statistics, particularly in official statistics concerning the growth of population and clergy.

In the first place, it was difficult to obtain English-speaking priests for the Irish as "... au Canada les prêtres de langue anglais sont peu nombreux."¹ Bélieau, writing a defense of the French, quoted the Catholic Church Extension Society as saying that many in Ontario would lose their faith because of the lack of English-speaking priests.² In addition, to be useful in the West, particularly in St. Boniface diocese, priests needed to speak two languages or more. St. Boniface dieocese was not bilingual, but multilingual.

French-speaking Catholics in late 1915, were still the largest single Catholic nationality, numbering some 31,551 to 30,903 for all other groups of the Latin Rite combined:

Table XII
CATHOLIC NATIONALITIES¹ IN ST. BONIFACE DIOCESE 1915

<u>Nationalities</u>	<u>Numbers</u>
French	31,551
Polish	12,916
English	11,547
German	2,055
Dutch	1,434
Indian	1,445
Italian	1,106
Other	400
	<u>62,454</u>

(1) The Ruthenians were not counted as they had a bishop of their own rule.

The difficulties which the French authorities had to face were illustrated by the growth in population of the diocese, as shown in tables I and II, pages 4 and 5 above. Since 1895, Langevin had erected 48 new parishes in St. Boniface diocese, for a total of 81 in the diocese in 1915. Before the diocese of Regina had been erected, Langevin had been responsible for the creation of 33 new parishes there, for a grand total of 81 new parishes with resident priests. Langevin had brought to his diocese five communities of men and fourteen of women, besides founding one, the Oblate Missionaries of the Sacred Heart and Mary Immaculate. In 1895 there had been eight convents in St. Boniface; thirty-six in St. Boniface had been built by 1915 as well as seven more in Regina (to 1910). In 1895 there had been but one Catholic paper; by 1915, there were six. St. Boniface Cathedral had been built, the minor seminary founded. St. Boniface College, St. Boniface Hospital and St. Mary's College were enlarged. Churches were built in nearly all parishes and chapels in nearly all missions.⁵ From 1895 to 1913, he erected at least 8 new parishes, began some 25 educational institutions - convents, parish schools,⁶ built three hospitals, three orphanages and six Indian schools - as well as increasing threefold the number of priests.⁷

Table XIII⁸

CLERICAL POPULATION 1914 - ST. BONIFACE DIOCESE

Year	Priests <u>Diocesan</u>	Total <u>Regular</u>	Communities of men	Communities of women	Catholic Population
1895 ⁽¹⁾	36	40	76	5	29,000
1907 ⁽²⁾			210		86,335
1911	96	139	235	11	123,073 ⁽³⁾
1914	85	102	187	11	97,816 ⁽⁴⁾
1915	89	92	181		62,454

(1) Figures for the year 1895-1911 include what later became Regina diocese: in 1910 Regina diocese was split off from St. Boniface, which explains the decrease in 1914.

(2) These figures are from Le Canada Ecclésiastique (Montreal 1908) and only include the total number of priests.

(3) These figures include the Ruthenians.

(4) Source for 1915 figures: Le Canada Ecclésiastique, (Montreal 1916) p 240.

In 1915, statistics showed the following national composition of the priests of St. Boniface:

Table XIV⁹

NATIONALITY OF ST. BONIFACE CLERGY 1915

	French	English	Polish	German	Italian	Total
Diocesan Clergy	80	3	5	1	-	87
Regular Clergy	66	13	4	8	1	92
	146	16	9	9	1	181

In addition, there were a total of 721 Religious women of some eighteen orders in twenty-five communities, of whom 595 were French, 81 were English, 28 were Polish, 12 were German, and there were 5 Hungarians.¹⁰

The above tables and statistics demonstrate that, at worst, the authorities of St. Boniface had done a creditable job in keeping abreast of the population increase. It ought to be noted that although English-speaking priests were in short supply, so were priests of other nationalities. Moreover, in this emergency, Langevin was doubtless anxious to obtain priests of any nationality. There is ample evidence that he

attempted to get priests for the Ruthenians¹¹ and it would seem unlikely that he would discourage English priests from coming West. Bélieau claimed that there were not enough English-speaking priests in Ontario.¹² It was a feat in itself that Langevin was able to do as much as he did in view of the circumstances which he faced.

Langevin and Bélieau always claimed that Irish racial prejudices were the cause of much difficulty. The Irish have been a problem for all who have had to deal with them - indeed it is difficult even for the Irish to agree among themselves - and the French of Manitoba would seem to have failed along with the British in Ireland. The Irish were generally able to force Archbishop Langevin to accede to their wishes by threatening him with this kind of trouble.¹³

The fact of division was a blow to French pride, but, when it came, there was little that could be done about it. There could, however, be something done about the boundaries, and it was on this point that the Archbishop-elect of St. Boniface, Mgr. Bélieau, concentrated. Bélieau had considered the possibility of 'national' dioceses and he concentrated on achieving this end. It seems certain now that in the future the diocese would have had to be divided: but at that time this was not obvious, consequently the division was accepted unenthusiastically for the French considered it an act of partiality;¹⁴ but the boundaries as first decreed were strenuously opposed.

II

After circulating a petition among the French-speaking laity¹⁵ and working out the racial and economic consequences of the division as delineated in the Osservatore Romano of 9 December 1915, Bélieau, with

his Chancellor, M. l'abbé J. H. Prud'homme and l'honorable Judge L. A.

Prud'homme¹⁶ went to Rome to plead for a more just division. Judge Prud'homme went as the delegate of the French laity, bearing a petition, signed by some 32,000 French-speaking Catholics of St. Boniface diocese.¹⁷

They arrived at Rome on the 10 March, leaving on the 7 April, returning to St. Boniface on the 5 May.¹⁸ According to La Croix of Paris, quoted by Les Cloches, Bélieau's

"... communications concernant la détermination exacte des limites entre les nouveaux diocèses ont été très appréciées par le Saint-Siège."¹⁹

However, Bélieau did not receive a warm welcome in Rome, according to his own testimony.²⁰ Further, he was told that something much worse had threatened the diocese;²¹ and he claimed that it had required great pressure to force the division and that he had been told, prior to leaving for Rome, that division by Red River was designed to ruin St. Boniface diocese.²²

One other factor that aided Bélieau in his petition for a more equitable settlement, and which was probably unknown to him, was the fact that in their second petition to Rome, the English Catholic petitioners had requested exactly the same boundaries which Bélieau himself desired.²³ This division was the Red River East and West, and the Assiniboine River North and South. The final division did not adhere to this formulae but it did correspond quite closely to it.

There were three documents demonstrating the impossibility of the division by Red River and the justice of a division by the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. The first document is a comparison of the division's effects by Red River as already decreed, and the proposed new division. With Red River as the boundary, St. Boniface would have:

Table XV²⁴

DIVISION BY THE RED RIVER

	<u>St. Boniface</u> ¹	<u>Disputed Area</u> ²	<u>Winnipeg</u> ³	<u>Red River Division</u> ⁴
<u>Parishes</u>	24	22	29	51
French	11,977	10,158	6,984	17,142
English	1,583	457	8,831	9,288
Polish	2,184	33	12,927	12,960
Flemish	1,024	964	292	1,156
Others	986	73	2,237	2,310
	17,754	11,685	31,271	42,956
<u>Missions</u>				
French	1,733	1,402	555	1,957
Polish	862	50	974	1,024
English	265	312	388	700
Others	728	87	945	1,032
Totals:	21,342	13,536	34,133	47,669

- (1) That area of St. Boniface East of the Red River.
 (2) That area west of the Red River, south of the Assiniboine River.
 (3) That area west of the Red River, north of the Assiniboine River.
 (4) That area west of the Red River.

If the division was made by the two Rivers, then St. Boniface would have a total population of 34,878 and Winnipeg, 34,133: St. Boniface would have 24,893 French Catholics, while Winnipeg would have 7,539.²⁵

The following table shows the proposed division of clergy.

Table XVI²⁶

	DIVISION OF CLERGY BY THE RED RIVER DIVISION						Total
	<u>Diccesan</u>	<u>Regular</u>	<u>French</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Polish</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Priests</u>
St. Boniface	36	29	62	1	2		65
Winnipeg	55	63	84	15	9	11	118
Total:	81	92	146	16	11	11	173

St. Boniface would be left with 22 institutions under Religious women and eight under orders of men. Winnipeg was allotted 42 institutions under Religious women and 13 under orders of men.²⁷ Of 28 convents, St. Boniface would be left with six.²⁸

In their petition to Pope Benedict XV, the French-speaking laity of St. Boniface diocese exposed "... la situation lamentable qui résulterait

de la division du diocese de Saint-Boniface"²⁹ The first point the petition states is that, while on a map, division by the Red River appears plausible, in fact it is not; for that left to St. Boniface is only an area of swamps, rocks, of gravel and water.

Ce pays est d'un conformation géologique telle qu'il n'est propre à aucune exploitation; il fait partie d'une zone aride, véritable désert

Because of this, population in Manitoba has spread out beside the two rivers. St. Boniface's parishes were mostly on the West side of Red River and thus, by such a division, St. Boniface would lose

... ses plus populeuses et plus riches paroisses, la plus grande partie de ses communautés religieuses et les trois-quarts de son clergé paroissial. Ce sera la suppression virtuelle du diocèse; le titre seul en subsister véritablement. Au point de vue matériel, ce peut être la banqueroute.³¹

In a nutshell, this was the French stand.

A warning was given: "cette division ... crée un situation violente, d'où il résultera une lutte de races qui durera cinquante ans."³² In parishes with resident priests, French-speaking Catholics number 28,927, forming three-fifths of the Catholic population; one-fifth is made of about 10,897 English-speaking Catholics with a similar number of Poles, Germans and others composing the other fifth. The most unjust act of the Holy See was the placing of some 18,863 French Canadians under the English Archbishop, with only some 9,845 English-speaking Catholics, the rest of the population being made up of divers races.

Et le but de cette scission inexorable! satisfaire les ambitions nationales exagérées de six ou sept mille Irlandais Catholiques bloqués dans la ville de Winnipeg.³³

Besides which, a good many Irish did not see the necessity of a division.

Out of a total of some 31,967 French-speaking Catholics, only

13,104 would remain under the Archbishop of St. Boniface if the Red River division were to remain. A national diocese

... aurait pour avantage de donner satisfaction
à ces populations, de ne pas imposer aux populations
de langue français du Manitoba conserveraient ainsi
un pasteur de leur langue³⁴

This was the solution requested by both French and English: and the boundaries were changed to include the French south of the Assiniboine. For practical purposes, national dioceses were established. The Poles, Germans, and others came under the new English bishop, where according to the Irish, they would soon share the ideals and aspirations of the English-speaking Catholics of Manitoba.

III

Bélieau returned from Rome with more equitable borders, with a more homogeneous diocese than that of Winnipeg. Feelings at St. Boniface still ran high, for the division humiliated, saddened and angered them.³⁵ Arriving in St. Boniface on the 5 May 1916, Bélieau lost no time in attempting to alleviate the injured pride of the French. That Sunday, Bélieau spoke; he counselled patience, spoke of the need of sacrifice, and pledged to carry on the fight for their schools and language. The limits of the diocese were now more satisfactory than those which had first been announced.³⁷

In welcoming back Mgr. Bélieau, the curé of the Cathedral, the Rev. Fr. Dugas, who had been Archbishop Langevin's Vicar General, spoke on the diminution of prestige the metropolitan Church of St. Boniface had suffered and expressed the regrets of a great number of those that the division had removed from the diocese of St. Boniface.³⁸ However,

the account published in Les Cloches was not complete, for someone took the trouble to send a copy of La Libre Parole to the Apostolic Delegate, Mgr. Stagni.³⁹ La Libre Parole contained a much fuller account of Dugas' sermon, which Bélieveau later admitted was accurate.⁴⁰ Moreover, Dugas had shown Bélieveau the sermon before delivering it, and Bélieveau had permitted Dugas to pronounce it in the Cathedral; but an edited version, on Bélieveau's orders had appeared in Les Cloches.⁴¹

The Apostolic Delegate claimed that Dugas' welcome to Bélieveau was

... de très mauvais goût et manque absolument d'égard vers le Saint-Siège, qu'il déclare avoir cédé, sur des informations fausses devant la pression peu scrupuleuse d'un certain "group" ... si remuant, aurait certainement profité de la vacance du diège pour faire valoir sa "thèse", et ici à la Délégation Apostolique je deurais en savoir quelque chose."⁴²

Dugas' 'welcome' to Bélieveau was strong language but it no doubt accurately expressed the feelings of a great many people.

Bélieveau replied to the Delegate's letter, admitting his sympathy with that point of view.⁴³ Further, in his long letter of some twelve pages, he went to great pains to support the charge that the division had resulted from agitation carried on by a certain "group", called "the St. Mary's bunch."⁴⁴ In essence, he claimed, Dugas was defending the Holy See, for it was unthinkable that such an unjustifiable and unjust action could have been taken by Rome, unless Rome had been given false information. For proof that someone at the Delegation was involved, he cited two examples of 'leaks' emanating from the Delegation. The first was the testimony of a certain unnamed gentleman who had been to Ottawa in early September and told Bélieveau that Mgr. Sinnett would be his future Archbishop. (There was nothing said of division, the

implication being that Sinnott would succeed to the See of St. Boniface).

The second instance was the testimony of Rev. Fr. William Patton, Pastor of St. Mary's Church, who said from the pulpit when rumours of the change in boundaries began to circulate: "No such changes have been made, because Rome never changes. No concessions have been made."⁴⁵ He went on to say in particular that the whole matter had been arranged since October of 1915. It would appear that the diocese was well prepared for some changes.

Such was the French stand concerning division. On the 14 June 1916, Bélieau wrote to Rev. Fr. Dugas, the pastor of the Cathedral, and former Vicar General of Archbishop Langevin, and told him that he intended to appoint him as Vicar General.⁴⁶ It would seem that Bélieau fully agreed with the position taken by Rev. Fr. Dugas.

On the 14 May 1916, the Bull, Inter Praecipuas was read in the Cathedral of St. Boniface, St. Mary's Church in Winnipeg and in the Cathedral of Regina diocese, by order of the Apostolic Delegate.⁴⁷ These actions divided St. Boniface de facto; acts were drawn up by the pastors involved and sent to the Apostolic Delegate. In the next issues⁴⁸ of Les Cloches and of the Northwest Review, translations in the vernacular appeared. A copy of the act certifying publication of the Bull, signed by the Apostolic Delegate, dated 23 May 1916, was sent to the various pastors involved.

In the matter of division St. Boniface authorities benefited in their struggle for a more equitable settlement by the fact that the division they desired was also⁴⁹ one suggested by the Irish petitioners in 1914,⁴⁹ that is, by the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. The division, of course, was not by the Assiniboine, but by a line drawn from St.

Norbert (just outside Winnipeg) West, to include the bulk of French settlements, then dropping down to the United States-Canada border.⁵⁰

The French were not pleased with the fact of division, but led by Archbishop Bélieau they accepted it, after some changes had been made. They were more fortunate than Winnipeg in that the Catholic population of St. Boniface was much more homogeneous; from the French standpoint, a national diocese through which they could continue to fight for their language, culture and schools,⁵¹ had been formed.

Notes

- 1 Bélieau to Perrier (in Rome), 4 October 1915. Population File, ASB.
- 2 ibid. This is a lack of Irish priests for Irish Catholics - not French priests for French Catholics.
- 3 Table from: Responsiones ad quaestiones de Statu Dioeceseos (31 Aout 1915) preut a Sacra Congregatiéne Consisteriali in schemate N. iv presitas, huic subjiciuntur, (hereafter referred to as Responsiones ad quaestiones), Population File, ASB.
- 4 Northwest Review, 19 June 1915, AWSV.
- 5 ibid.
- 6 The Story of Manitoba Vol. III (Winnipeg, S. J. Clarke, publishers, 1913), pp 50-53. Some schools Langevin established were: Holy Ghost School (Polish), St. Joseph's School (German), St. Nicholas' School (Ruthenian), Sacred Heart School (French), St. Edward's and St. Ignatius' Schools (English).
7. ibid.
- 8 Relatio De Statu Dioecesis Sancti Bonifacii 1914, Population File, ASB. (Note exceptions to above table in footnotes).
- 9 Le Canada Ecclésiastique (Montreal 1916), p 240.
- 10 ibid.
- 11 On this point cf "S. G. Mgr. Adélard Langevin, Archévêque de St. Boniface, et les Ukrainiens", by Joseph Jean, O.S.B.M., CCHA Report (1944-45).
- 12 See footnotes 1 and 2, this chapter, above.
- 13 When in 1913 the parishioners of St. Mary's Church, with the aid of Rev. Fr. Cahill, wanted to build a larger church, Archbishop Langevin and Bishop Bélieau, opposed them because they thought the time inopportune as a great land boom was in progress. By threatening racial strife, they were able to have their way and contracted a large debt. The land boom collapsed leaving St. Mary's with a heavy debt, which was not liquidated until this last year (1960). cf Correspondence between Sinnott and Bélieau for August and September of 1921, St. Mary's Parish File, ASM. Bélieau had answered Sinnott's request for details on the reasons for the loan, and Bélieau claimed that the Irish threatened racial strife if permission was not granted.
- 14 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB. cf Dugas' Sermon, Les Cloches de St. Boniface, May 15, 1916, ASB.
- 15 Printed as Appendix II.
- 16 Les Cloches de St. Boniface, 15 May 1916. M'l'abbé Prud'homme was the son of Judge Prud'homme, Manitoba Biography May 1918 - March 1924, p 127, PAM.
- 17 ibid., See Appendix II.
- 18 ibid.
- 19 La Croix, 8 April 1916, quoted by Les Cloches de St. Boniface, 15 May 1916, ASB.
- 20 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 21 ibid. Probably an English-speaking bishop at St. Boniface.
- 22 ibid.

- 23 cf Chapter IV, analysis of the second petition.
- 24 Table from a Document (unnamed, undated) in Population File, ASB, showing the division according to the Red and Assiniboine Rivers.
- 25 ibid.
- 26 ibid.
- 27 ibid.
- 28 ibid.
- 29 Petition: A Sa Sainteté Benoit XV Pope, Appendix II hereafter referred to as Petition to Benedict XV.
- 30 ibid.
- 31 ibid.
- 32 ibid.
- 33 ibid.
- 34 ibid.
- 35 ibid. "... cette création (la diocese de Winnipeg) prend une signification qui nous humilie, nous attriste et nous indigne."
- 36 cf Les Cloches de St.-Boniface, 15 May 1915 reprints his sermon.
- 37 ibid.
- 38 ibid. Only a part of Dugas' sermon is given.
- 39 Stagni to Bélieau, 30 May 1916, Apostolic Delegate File 2, ASB.
- 40 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB. He said that La Libre Parole was an organ of the Liberal party, exclusively political, free from clerical influence, which had been published for only two months. No copies survive in Winnipeg.
- 41 ibid.
- 42 Stagni to Bélieau, 30 May 1916. Apostolic Delegate File 2, ASB.
- 43 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 44 ibid.
- 45 ibid. He was quite wrong.
- 46 Bélieau to Dugas, 14 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 47 Les Cloches de St.-Boniface, 14 May 1916, ASB.
- 48 Les Cloches, 1 June 1916 (a bi-monthly publication) and the Northwest Review (a weekly) on the 20 May 1916.
- 49 cf Chapter IV, "The English Case", on the petition to "His Holiness".
- 50 See Appendix I, for actual terms of division. The boundary was later shifted a little West in 1937.
- 51 Bélieau's first sermon on his return; cf Les Cloches de St. Boniface, 15 May 1916, ASB,

CHAPTER VII
THE BULL, "INTER PRAECIPUAS"¹

The Bull, Inter Praecipuas, dated 4 December 1915, is quite unique in that it legislates on three distinct matters. A Bull usually deals with but one subject. By this Bull, the Ecclesiastical Province of Regina is erected; the former Bishop of Regina (Mgr. O. E. Mathieu) becomes the first Metropolitan of the new Province; the Archdiocese of St. Boniface is divided and the Archdiocese of Winnipeg is erected.

The Archdiocese of St. Boniface is divided in two ways: one, it loses metropolitan authority and privileges within the area of the new Ecclesiastical Province of Regina; and second, it loses actual territory with the erection of the new Archdiocese of Winnipeg.

The Bull reorganizes administratively the Church in Western Canada. It is this fact which provides the relationship among these three actions, making changes necessitated by growth. To recapitulate, the Church of St. Boniface was the mother Church of the West; at the time of its erection as a Vicariate Apostolic for the Northwest in 1844² it included all of the Canadian West to the Pacific.³ It was erected as a Bishopric 4 June 1847, and raised to an Archdiocese 22 September 1871, which was also the date of erection of the Diocese of St. Albert (in Alberta). Thus, St. Boniface had metropolitan authority over the Vicariate Apostolic of Grouard (erected April 8, 1862) and the Diocese of Prince Albert (in Alberta) as well as having ordinary

jurisdiction over the rest of the west to the Rocky Mountains.⁴ In 1890 the Vicariate Apostolic of Prince Albert (in Saskatchewan) was erected; it was elevated to the status of a diocese 3 December 1907. The Vicariate Apostolic of Mackenzie was erected in 1901, on March 4, 1910, the Diocese of Regina and on August 10, 1910, the Vicariate Apostolic of Keewatin. The Diocese of St. Albert (in Alberta) was transferred to Edmonton and became a Metropolitan, with the Diocese of Calgary, erected at the same time, and the Vicariate Apostolicks of Grouard and Mackenzie, as suffragans, 30 November 1912. At the time of the Bull, 4 December 1915, the metropolitan authority of St. Boniface extended westward to the Alberta-Saskatchewan border, southward to the Canadian-United States border, to the East was included Rat Portage (Kenora), Fort Frances and Atikokan of Northern Ontario; northward, it extended indefinitely.

Thus, St. Boniface, which had been the Metropolitan See of the West to the Rocky Mountains until November 22, 1912, had been progressively re-organized with always a loss of authority and territory, as a result of the continued growth of the Church in the West. This was a natural phenomenon, not resented by the authorities of St. Boniface, but, indeed, welcomed as easing the heavy load of responsibility. The Bull of 4 December 1915, as far as it effected the metropolitan authority of St. Boniface and that of Regina, was quite in keeping with tradition. What was not in keeping with tradition was the erection of two Archdioceses with adjoining borders, located in the same civil province, where, superficially, one was sufficient.

In the introduction of the Bull, the powers and duties of the Holy See, with regard to the erection and division of dioceses are outlined,

as well as the object of having each civil province of Western Canada constitute at least one ecclesiastical province. To this end, the Dioceses of Regina and Prince Albert (in Saskatchewan) are detached from the Metropolitan Church of St. Boniface, the Diocese of Regina being elevated to an Archdiocese and Metropolitan of the Ecclesiastical Province of Saskatchewan, the Diocese of Prince Albert becoming suffragan. St. Boniface is further divided, this time territorially, and a new Archdiocese of Winnipeg, immediately subject to the Holy See, is erected, with all rights and privileges, but without duties, as there were no suffragans, of a Metropolitan Diocese. An Archbishop is not named. The right to further divide and circumscribe remains with the Pope; the division is not necessarily final. The responsibility for carrying out these changes is given to the Apostolic Delegate to Canada, Mgr. Stagni, even to the extent of settling differences: within six months he is to transmit to Rome authentic evidence of the act of execution.

There are several other minor things which may be mentioned: all rights, privileges and perogatives which other archbishops enjoy are assigned to the Archbishop of Winnipeg, even the right of wearing of the pallium;⁵ all documents relating to the new Archdiocese are to be transferred to the Archbishop of Winnipeg by the authorities of St. Boniface.

Five days later, (9 December 1915), another Bull was published at Rome, nominating Mons. A. A. Sinnott, the Secretary of the Apostolic Delegation to Canada, the first Archbishop of Winnipeg. At the same time, the Auxiliary Bishop of St. Boniface, and administrator sede vacante, was nominated Archbishop of St. Boniface.⁶

For the purpose of this thesis, the erection of the ecclesiastical province of Regina and its effect on the powers, influence and prestige of St. Boniface, will be ignored. However, to this time, with the exception of the Diocese of Calgary,⁷ all Bishops of the West, to the Rocky Mountains, had been French. There was little, if any, opposition to the erection of the ecclesiastical province of Saskatchewan. The difficulty was the erection of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg.

II

The most unusual and important aspect of the Bull Inter Praecipuas is the erection of the new Archdiocese of Winnipeg immediately subject to the Holy See. All Bishops of course are subject to the Holy See, but there exists a definite hierarchy of order. Each Bishop is supreme in his own diocese; he has ordinary jurisdiction. No other Bishop can legitimately interfere in his diocese. But there is a definite order which the erection of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, immediately subject to the Holy See, breaks, although in practice no authority is lost or gained. What is gained, if anything, is a certain prestige. The only exception to this hierarchy of order in Canada is the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. Other examples exist, for instance, the Archdiocese of Washington in the United States; but, wherever dioceses immediately subject to the Holy See do exist, special circumstances prevail, for this is not a normal unit of Church administration. A great deal of administrative flexibility was displayed by the Holy See in this instance, for this was one of the first examples of its use. It served its purpose as it successfully reduced the areas of conflict between

various Catholic groups in Manitoba.

The Bull, however, at the time, was a severe blow to French pride. St. Boniface had earned a primacy of honor; the French had built the Church in Western Canada to what it was and it must have seemed strange to be rewarded in such a manner. However, times had changed; the complexion of populations had changed. Older methods, attitudes, and administration had to change to keep pace.

Each of the prairie provinces now had a corresponding ecclesiastical province, with coinciding borders, except Manitoba. Here the pattern, as noted, was disturbed, with two adjacent Archdioceses within the provincial borders. However, St. Boniface Archdiocese remained a Metropolitan See, with the Vicariate Apostolic of Keewatin as suffragan, later adding the Vicariate Apostolic of Hudson's Bay.⁸ The Archdiocese of Winnipeg, made immediately subject to the Holy See to avoid conflict, will probably never have suffragans or attain metropolitan status.

The importance of this Papal legislation is that it provided a solution to the Irish-French problem in the West. (The battle still raged in the East.) Each section now had its own Archbishop, equal in authority and power; each section had now a leader more in harmony with its aspirations. Although problems and difficulties still remained, solutions could now be worked out in a less explosive atmosphere. What is important is that a solution was found which lasted.

Notes

- 1 Bulls are called after the first two words in Latin. Hence Inter Praecipuas is the name of this Bull of erection. All quotation are from the copy of the Bull printed in Appendix I^W, as it appeared in the Northwest Review of May 20, 1916, AwSV.
- 2 Morice, History I, p 217.
- 3 ibid., and pp 114, 116.
- 4 The Rocky Mountains to the West came under the province of British Columbia in 1903. The diocese of Vancouver had been created July 28, 1846, under the Province of Oregon, which included Vancouver Island only.
- 5 It is a circular band of white wool with pendants, worn by Archbishops on certain occasions. It is a symbol of authority.
- 6 cf Les Cleches de St. Boniface, ~~ASB~~, December 20, 1915, ASB.
- 7 The Bishop of Calgary was Bishop MacNally. cf Winnipeg Tribune, December 9, 1915, PAM and Manitoba Free Press, December 10, 1915, PAM.
- 8 Erected December 15, 1931.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FIRST ARCHBISHOP OF WINNIPEG

This brings us to the final set of problems, to determine the reasons for Archbishop Sinnott's appointment, the reasons for delay in his consecration and in his taking possession of the See. Some of the above questions, and other supplementary ones, cannot be fully answered, but, with the evidence at hand, it will be possible to make some plausible conjectures.

Alfred Arthur Sinnott was born at Crepaud, Prince Edward Island, February 22, 1877, the youngest of eleven children. His father was a government contractor, but, shortly after Mgr. Sinnott's birth, left to farm near Morell, Prince Edward Island. When thirteen years of age, Sinnott had passed the matriculation admission examination to Prince of Wales College in Charlottetown; in 1891 he began classical studies at St. Dunstan's College, Charlottetown. After taking his B. A. degree from Laval, he entered the Grand Seminary at Montreal in 1896. Three years later, he went to Rome; on 18 February 1900 he was ordained priest by Archbishop Stonar of Trebizond. He taught at St. Dunstan's for two years after his return to Canada, leaving in 1903 to become Secretary of the Apostolic Delegation to Canada, headed by Mgr. Sbarretti. In 1907, he was made a Private Chamberlain of Pius X and given the title of Monsignor. He was noted as a man of great executive ability.

As secretary to the Apostolic Delegation, Sinnott would have been quite conversant with the series of petitions from Winnipeg to Rome¹ complaining of French domination and the danger to the Faith if French predominance continued.² For, as it is the policy of Rome to use the Apostolic Delegation to solve, or to recommend solutions to problems which it cannot solve within a particular country, it is quite probable that the Apostolic Delegation would have been given instructions to investigate the situation as outlined in the petitions to Rome.³ Sinnott, as secretary, would have access to this information; likewise he would be aware of the problems of the English-speaking Catholics of the West for a similar struggle was being waged in the East between French and Irish.⁴

Certainly, Sinnott had influence at the Delegation. Mgr. Stagni had been appointed Delegate in 1910; Sinnott, appointed secretary in 1903, was kept on, a tribute to his ability. According to Langevin, he held altogether too much influence, and had "... trop sein la précédent administration francophobe, s'il est trop Irlandais"⁵ Besides, the Apostolic Delegate was not in the best of health.⁶ A few months later, Langevin, writing to one of his correspondents, openly wondered if Sinnott was not at the root of many of his problems.⁷

As we have seen, Sinnott apparently was one of the agents "the St. Mary's bunch"⁸ worked through. According to Stagni, he was not aware of any maneuvering through the Delegation to influence the status quo. of St. Boniface, during the vacancy of the See,⁹ that is from June 15 to December 17, 1915. However, there is no evidence to prove that the Delegate did not know of the series of petitions sent to Rome.¹⁰ Available evidence would seem to suggest that he would know, for if Rome were

to investigate the problem through proper channels, he would have to know. On the other hand if Rome took the petitions at face value, plus the evidence of the former Delegates, Cardinal Falconio (1899-1902) and Cardinal Sbarretti (1902-1911), without using the Apostolic Delegation, then he would not know. This, however, would be quite unlikely.

It was no secret that Langevin had been seriously ill for some time; the decision might have been taken two or three years prior to his death. Bélieau, writing to Mgr. Stagni, was of this opinion:

Je suis absolument porté à croire que ce groupe [the St. Mary's bunch] remuant n'a pas attendu la vacance du Siège de St. Boniface pour faire son travail, faut le travail devait être fait à la morte de Mgr. Langevin et il n'a eu qu'à attendre l'effet de ce travail pendant la vacance du Siège.¹²

The answer to the problem lies, probably, in the Vatican archives or those of the Apostolic Delegation in Ottawa.

Although the Apostolic Delegate claimed not to know anything about the division, somebody at Ottawa knew. Bélieau, writing to Mgr. Stagni claimed that someone at the Delegation knew of it in early September (of 1915), about two and a half months before the official announcement.¹³ For one of Bélieau's acquaintances had been to Ottawa, and returning, had informed him, (Bélieau) that Mons. Sinnott would become his next * Archbishop.¹⁴ Who the informant was, is not stated. It might have been Sinnott himself, for one of the reasons advanced for Sinnott becoming Archbishop was that the erection of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, immediately subject to the Holy See, was his idea; he was appointed to make it work in practice.¹⁵ Separate Archdioceses would avoid possible conflicts between the two groups over matters of authority and precedence, and would ease feelings on both sides by making neither superior to the

other, but each superior in a different way. For Winnipeg would be subject immediately to the Holy See, and St. Boniface, although retaining metropolitan status, would still be subject to the normal hierarchical system. Sinnott might know of the decision, but even if he did not, it is probable that he would have aided the Irish in their struggle, and might even have been quite involved in it. Indeed, according to Bélieau, Sinnott did know, and was deeply involved. However, this testimony by itself is not sufficient; convincing evidence on either side is lacking, but what little evidence exists, points to Sinnott's involvement.

After the first furor had died down, it was expected that Sinnott would lose no time in taking possession of his See. Speculation in the Free Press considered the end of May a likely time, and Winnipeg, a likely place, for his consecration¹⁶ - even before the Bull had been published in the Diocese. However, this was not to be so. After the first exchange of letters between Bélieau and Sinnott in their new capacities,¹⁷ correspondence died out shortly after. Sinnott reported to Bélieau that he was taking a vacation for three weeks;¹⁸ after, he returned to the Delegation.¹⁹

By this time Bélieau had discovered what the limits of his Archdiocese were to be; he was far from being satisfied. For although the natural borders of the Red River looked impressive on the map, in actual fact, they were inadequate. The description of his struggle for a more just division had already been described above. The French Canadians were outraged at what they considered a direct insult to them. They accepted the fact of the division, but complained that by using the Red River as a boundary, more French Canadians would be under the English Archbishop than were under the French.²⁰ Petitions were signed, and

Bélieau prepared facts and figures; in the company of his Chancellor, Fr. Prud'homme, and Judge Prud'homme representing the laity,²¹ he departed for Rome on February 11.²²

While this activity was going on, it would have been impossible for Sinnott to take possession of his See for the Bull had not yet been published in the Archdiocese of St. Boniface.²³ His Diocese had been erected de jure but not de facto. However, after Bélieau's return from Rome in early May, with more realistic borders, the way was cleared. Still Sinnott did not come; rumours, quite prolific, again circulated. One had it that there would be further changes in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg,²⁴ another that Mgr. Sinnott's arrival in Winnipeg would be delayed pending the results of the December consistory at Rome;²⁵ but these and all others were quashed with the report that Sinnott had leased a house for his residence.²⁶ This news was not known, however, until late November when the arrangements were completed.

Sinnott was consecrated 21 September 1916, in the Delegation's chapel, with a few invited friends present.²⁷ This brings up another problem, for according to canon law at that time, a bishop had to be consecrated within six months of his nomination, or be re-nominated. Sinnott was over his limit,²⁸ and in his documents in the Archives of St. Mary's, there is no further Bull re-nominating him, although there may be one elsewhere. However, through his connections with Rome through the Delegation an extension would be relatively easy to obtain. Permission is granted only in unusual circumstances; Sinnott would certainly have qualified for special treatment. This problem, in itself, does not present serious difficulty.

One year after his appointment as Archbishop, the Northwest Review

announced that Sinnott would arrive in Winnipeg on December 23, 1916, accompanied by the Apostolic Delegate and would take possession of his See the next day.²⁹ For all this time, Mgr. Sinnott, the Delegation, and the officials of St. Boniface maintained a discreet silence. On December 24, 1916, Sinnott was installed in his See by the Apostolic Delegate, Mgr. Stagni. He received a very warm welcome from the Catholics of Winnipeg,³⁰ as well as an official civic welcome from the Mayor and Council of Winnipeg.³¹

II

There are three quite plausible reasons for Sinnott's delay in taking possession of his See. Sinnott had been nominated Archbishop 9 December 1915; he was consecrated 21 September 1916, and installed in his Diocese 24 December 1916 - a most awkward time of year. There is a draft of a letter from Sinnott to Fr. Patton, pastor of St. Mary's church, undated, in which Sinnott said that the long delay was ". . . occasioned by events altogether independent of my will . . .".³² These events could be the French struggle for a more equitable division and, as already hinted, his decision to wait until feelings cooled.³³ Agitation had been quite hostile and it no doubt occurred to Sinnott that discretion was the better part of valor. Other events, more secondary perhaps, would have some influence. According to Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface the reason for the delay was "... la guerre qui désole le monde."³⁴

A third reason is the one Sinnott himself gave. Writing to Archibishop Bélieau at the end of November 1916, to invite him to his enthronement, he mentioned, among other things, that his successor as

secretary at the Delegation had just arrived within the last few days.³⁵ It would take some time to search for a proper man, to ensure his competency, for the position, as Sinnott had demonstrated, could be a powerful one.

Individually, the reasons perhaps, are not convincing; taken together they do seem valid. Certainly it was wise to wait until passions were burnt out; the war would have probably increased the activities of the Delegation; and the problem of finding a proper successor could have proven difficult. However, the important reason would seem to be the first one, based as it is, on prudence.

Sinnott's appointment as Archbishop of Winnipeg terminated definitely the practice of appointing exclusively French bishops to Sees in Western Canada (although it may perhaps be argued that the appointment of Bishop MacNally to the See of Calgary in 1912 ended this policy). Sinnott assumed his charge at a time when the interests of the Church in the West seemed to require an English-speaking bishop who could better appreciate the hopes and aspirations of a large number of English-speaking Catholics.

The result of perhaps too much clerical control in French Bishoprics in Western Canada had been to equate French and Catholic in the minds of most non-French and non-Catholics to the very great danger of the Faith among the English-speaking. Misunderstandings between French Catholic and English Catholic, between French Catholic and English Protestant, had combined to push the Irish English-speaking Catholics in the midst of the struggle between French Catholics and English Protestants, a position the Irish had no desire to hold. Sinnott was to begin to turn back this tide of misunder-

standing and prejudice. It is however, still much too early to attempt to evaluate his work as Archbishop of Winnipeg, but this is certain: his position in the history of the Catholic Church in the West will be an important one. For he was to the English-speaking Catholics of the West as Langevin was to the French, an energetic defender of their rights.

Notes

- 1 Winnipeg Tribune, February 18, 1950, PAM.
- 2 See two petitions to Pope Benedict XV, File 11, ASM.
- 3 The Apostolic Delegate visited St. Boniface Diocese in June of 1913.
- 4 The struggle was over Regulation 17, which cut down the incidence of bilingual schools in Ontario. cf Margaret Prang "Clerics, Politicians and the Bilingual Schools Issue in Ontario" 1910-17, CHR, December 1960.
- 5 Langevin to Mathieu, 3 February 1914, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
Langevin went even further: "Il me semble que l'on devait avoir un autre secrétaire à la Délegation!"
- 6 ibid.
- 7 Langevin to Meyer (at Rome), 9 April 1914, Langevin Correspondence, ASB.
- 8 Bélieau to Stagni, 12 June 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB. According to Bélieau, delegates from St. Mary's Church had met with Sinnott and had asked for an English-speaking Bishop of Winnipeg.
- 9 ibid.
- 10 Telegram, Stagni to Bélieau, December 17, 1916, Apostolic Delegate File #2, ASB, informing Bélieau that he had been nominated Archbishop of St. Boniface. Actually the See was filled 9 December 1915 when Bélieau was nominated, but official confirmation was not available until 17 December.
- 11 These are the two discussed above in the period 1913-14; See Winnipeg Tribune, 18 February 1950, PAM. The information must have been quite general to survive until 1950.
- 12 Bélieau to Stagni, June 12, 1916, Bélieau Correspondence, ASB.
- 13 ibid.
- 14 ibid.
- 15 Testimony of Rev. Fr. J. K. MacIsaac; M.A., D.D., J.C., pastor, Our Lady of Victory Parish, Winnipeg. Rev. Fr. MacIsaac is quite steeped in the history of the Archdiocese.
- 16 Manitoba Free Press, 23 January 1916, PAM.
- 17 Bélieau to Sinnott, 31 December 1915; Sinnott to Bélieau, 5 January 1916, Winnipeg File, ASB. Bélieau initiated the correspondence; the tone was correct on both sides.
- 18 Sinnott to Bélieau, 14 January 1916, Winnipeg File, ASB.
- 19 Les Cloches de St. Boniface, 1 January 1917, ASB.
- 20 A. Se Sainte Benoit XV Page, ASB.
- 21 Les Cloches, 15 May 1916, ASB.
- 22 ibid.
- 23 This was not done until 14 May 1916, when it was published simultaneously in St. Mary's Church, St. Boniface Cathedral, and the Cathedral Church of Regina diocese. cf Les Cloches, 20 May 1916, ASB.
- 24 Manitoba Free Press, 21 November 1916, PAM.
- 25 ibid.
- 26 ibid.
- 27 Winnipeg Tribune, 24 December 1916, PAM.
- 28 He was two months and seventeen days over the limit.
- 29 Northwest Review: 9 December 1916, AWSV.
- 30 See address of Winnipeg Catholics in the Northwest Review of 1 January, 1917, AWSV; also reports in Winnipeg Tribune and Manitoba Free Press, 24 December and 25 December, 1916, PAM.

- 31 Manitoba Free Press, 24 December 1916, PAM.
- 32 Draft: Sinnott to Patton, undated, File 11, ASM.
- 33 According to Archbishop Sinnott's nephew, Rt. Rev. O. J. McInerney, pastor St. Edward's Church, Winnipeg, Sinnott stayed at the Delegation working, preparing to leave, and waiting for the agitation to die down.
- 34 Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface, 1 January 1917, ASB.
- 35 Sinnott to Bélieau, 28 November 1916, Winnipeg File, ASB.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSIONS

The division of the Archdiocese of St. Boniface and the erection of a suffragan diocese in Manitoba would have occurred eventually, corresponding to the logic of previous divisions of the Church in western Canada. However, the erection of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, immediately subject to the Holy See, would not have been expected. There appears to be no record of such a proposal emanating from Winnipeg - at least not in the official documents examined above. The proposal probably came from elsewhere and, in view of the circumstances, appears excessive. The petitioners had asked for either an English-speaking bishop at St. Boniface or the erection of a suffragan diocese in Winnipeg, with an English-speaking bishop. The first conclusion then is that in the erection of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, outside influences would have appeared to have played a major rôle in determining the kind of division.

In the three petitions described, many charges, some true, some not, were directed against the Archbishop of St. Boniface in his administration of the diocese. Whether these accusations, in themselves, were sufficient to create and prolong a state of active dissatisfaction, is difficult to say. The petitioners, of course, claimed so, but this would appear doubtful; by 1908, at the very latest, they had won recognition from Mgr. Langevin of the justice of their first demands, except for the request of a suffragan diocese in Winnipeg with an English-

speaking bishop, which was, after all, a matter for the Pope. The first petition had been drafted as the result of A Searchlight's influence; the other two petitions were sent to Rome during the height of the battle in Ontario over Regulation 17 and the rights of the French language, and the election of a new Pope. The wars between Quebec and Ontario, between the Irish and French in Ontario, between the Irish and French in the Canadian hierarchy, affected the struggle between Irish and French in St. Boniface diocese greatly.

Thus, besides the immediate causes outlined in the petitions and the impact of the enormous increase in population, there would appear to be two additional ones; first, outside influence as indicated, and second, a certain Irish nationalism, with a corresponding, but less violent, one on the part of the French. Both, however, must share the blame here, but in justice some other things ought to be mentioned. The French method of Church administration, both at the parochial and diocesan level, differed from that which the Irish would have been accustomed to, and, no doubt, this annoyed them (the Irish) greatly. The two nationalities had ambitions, much too conflicting, to allow them to work together harmoniously in the Church. And both, unfortunately, were the victims of their national characters and too profoundly influenced by events in Eastern Canada to come to an independent agreement. Local complaints, while important, do not seem sufficient to cause such continuing agitation as that of the Irish. The injustices of which the Irish complained (although injustices there certainly were) were not sufficient in themselves; others' influences provided the impetus.

Although the facts were probably known to them, the Irish petitioners

of 1906 and 1914-15 probably did not realize the extent of the problems which faced Archbishop Langevin as a result of the tremendous increase in Catholic population. From 1891 to 1915, the Catholic population of St. Boniface diocese (as it existed prior to the division of 1915) jumped from about 20,000 of all rites to 110,000 of all rites. Apparent 'discrimination' might result from the necessity of providing for other Catholics not as fortunate as those of St. Mary's parish. Under such circumstances, Mgr. Langevin would have been criticized no matter what action he took, for every group could not have been satisfied. These complaints would have been intensified by the troubles the Church was experiencing in Eastern Canada. It is no wonder that Apostolic Delegates were forced to play active rôles in the Catholic Church in Canada, and that the Canadian Apostolic Delegation soon earned the reputation as "... un des déléguations les plus difficiles peut-être du monde."¹

In the future, St. Boniface diocese would have been divided. Although it is difficult to conjecture just what the actual division might have been, it is quite possible that it would resemble the existing one. For the one which exists today seems quite fair and reasonable. The only difference, probably, would be that Winnipeg would be a suffragan of St. Boniface. For St. Boniface, the division made it a 'national' diocese, composed mostly of French-speaking Catholics; it became homogeneous as other elements came under the new diocese. Immediate racial problems within the diocese disappeared at once.

For the new diocese, the division had its unfortunate aspects; it was, and remains today, a mixture of nationalities with the problems arising out of these differences still existing. The lot of an Arch

bishop of Winnipeg would seem to be much more difficult than that of an Archbishop of St. Boniface.

"The division", said one clerical official, "has worked out satisfactorily. The three Archbishops of Manitoba are all busy."

Notes

- 1 Cinquante Ans à la Délégation Apostolique, (L'Oeuvre des Tracts, No. 36, June 1949, Montréal), p 16.

APPENDIXES

APPENDIX I

APOSTOLIC BULL INTER PRAECIPUAS¹

Concerning the Erection of the Province of Regina, the Division of the
Diocese of St. Boniface and the Erection of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg,
Canada.

Benedict Bishop
Servants of the Servants of God
Ad perpetuam rei memoriam

Amongst the principle responsibilities of the Holy See, has always
been eminent that of erecting new dioceses and ecclesiastical provinces,
as often as extent of territory or the number of the faithful or the
hardship of journeys demand it, so as to render pastoral care and
vigilance more efficacious. And if this usefully takes place in other
regions, it has seemed to be expedient in the Dominion of Canada also,
that the very extensive civil provinces of which the Dominion itself
consists, and which are regarded as civil States, independant of one
another and united by a federal bond, should be given a proper hierarchy,
so that each civil province should constitute at least one ecclesiastical
province, self-contained and independant. All these matters having
been maturely weighed, by the advice of Our Venerable Brothers who
preside over consistorial affairs and having obtained the consent, as
far as needed, of those concerned or who claim to be interested, We,
of the plenitude of the Apostolic power, have enacted and decreed to
erect in the civil province of said Dominion called Saskatchewan, a new
ecclesiastical province, by detaching from the ecclesiastical province
of St. Boniface the two dioceses of Regina and Prince Albert, and by

constituting the church of Regina a Metropolitan church, assigning to it as suffragan the Diocese of Prince Albert. By this Apostolic Letter, therefore, We raise the church of Regina to the honour and dignity of an Archbishopric, granting it all the rights and prerogatives which belong to Metropolitan Churches, and to it We make subject the Diocese of Prince Albert. By this Apostolic Letter, likewise, We constitute Archbishop of the same diocese Our Venerable Brother Oliver Elzear Mathieu, hitherto Bishop of Regina, without the need of a further Apostolic Letter. Further, the very extensive diocese of St. Boniface We have divided into two parts, and the Eastern part, on this side of the Red River, where the city of St. Boniface stands, we (sic)have reserved to this ancient Archiepiscopal church, with the privileges and metropolitan rights which it formerly enjoyed, the two Dioceses of Regina and Prince Albert being however excepted. And the Western part, beyond the Red River, where stands the city of Winnipeg, We, of the plenitude of the Apostolic power have assigned to a new diocese immediately subject to Us and Archiepiscopal, which We erect by this Apostolic Letter and decree to be named from the chief city of Winnipeg. Of these dioceses the dividing line will be that imaginary line which from the confines of the ancient Diocese of St. Boniface descends southward through the middle of Lake Winnipeg to the mouth of the Red River; which afterwards, in like manner proceeding southward, ascends through the middle of the course of the Red River, and advances beyond the towns of St. Boniface and Winnipeg to meet the parallel line which divides regions, vernacularly townships, IX and X determined by the official survey of the Canadian Government; then this parallel line preceeding

westward, shall be the dividing line of either diocese until it joins the meridian line which has been fixed by the aforesaid official survey between the Western sections, vernacularly ranges XII and XIII, that is placed to the west of the principal line; finally, from this point the dividing line again proceeds southward as far as the civil confines of the Dominion of Canada and of the United States of America, coinciding with the confines whereby the County of Souris is divided from the Counties of Macdonald and Lisgar of the civil province of Manitoba.

And, We will that the Archbishops of Winnipeg enjoy all the rights, privileges and prerogatives which other Archbishops enjoy; and therefore, previous postulation having been duly made in Consistory, We grant them the use of the Pallium and to have the Cross borne before them, within the confines however of their own Archdiocese. To constitute an income for the Church of Winnipeg We assign all the property and revenues, even adventitious, to accrue under whatsoever title to the Archiepiscopal Mensal Fund, giving at the same time to the Archbishop for the time being power, at his discreet pleasure, to impose Cathedraticum, to select from amongst the churches existing in the city of Winnipeg the most suitable as his Cathedral, and to enact and decree, according to the sacred canons, other things necessary or useful for the good government of the Archdiocese. So, as regards the government, administration, endowment and taxation of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, as regards the power, authority, titles (attributions), functions, rights and duties of the Archbishop himself, as regards the erection of a Cathedral Chapter or Board of Consultors, as regards the founding of a Diocesan Seminary, as regards the obligations and rights of the faithful, and other such matters, We order to be observed what the sacred canons, especially the

Tridentine Synod, enact and prescribe, being moreover observed and safe-
guarded the published decrees of the First Plenary Council of Quebec. We
command moreover that all documents, ordinances and proceedings (acta)
which relate to the Archdiocese of Winnipeg and to the faithful thereof,
be as soon as possible consigned by the Chancellery of the Archdiocese of
St. Boniface to the Chancellery of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, to be
carefully preserved in its Archives.

To Ourselves, moreover, and to the Apostolic See, We reserve the
power of making a new division and circumscription of these dioceses,
whenever that shall seem expedient to Us in the Lord.

All these matters having been prescribed as above, We depute for
their faithful execution Our Venerable Brother Peregrino Francesco Stagni,
Archbishop of Aquila and Delegate Apostolic in the Dominion of Canada,
giving to the same all necessary and opportune faculties, even that of
subdelegating for the purpose in question any ecclesiastical dignitary
whomsoever, and of definitely pronouncing on any difficulty or objection
whatsoever that may arise in any wise in the course of execution, im-
posing on him moreover the obligation of transmitting within six months
to the S. Consistorial Congregation authentic evidence of the act of
execution, for preservation in the Archives of the same S. Congregation.

All things whatsoever to the contrary, even those worthy of special
and express mention, by no means notwithstanding.

Given at Rome, from St. Peter's, in the year of Our Lord 1915, on
the 4th day of the month of December, in the second year of Our Pontificate.

Despatched on 14 March, in the second year. Loco Plumbi.

O. Card Cagiano De Azevedo, S.R.E. Cancellarius.

G. Card. De Lai, S.C. Consistorialis Secregarius.

Julius Campos, Protonotarius Apostolicus.

Raphaël Virilli, Protonotarius Apostolicus.

Reg. in Canc. Ap. vol. XIII, n. 19.

M. Riggi, a tabulario C.A.

APPENDIX II

A SA SAINTETE BENOIT XV. PAPE

Très Saint-Père,

Les Canadiens-français du diocèse de Saint-Boniface prient Votre Sainteté d'entendre leur parole.

Ils sont menacés d'un événement qui serait un désastre et qu'ils veulent porter à la connaissance personnelle du chef de l'Eglise; car le Pape est juste, et ses enfants ont eu de tout temps la prérogative d'aller jusqu'à Lui.

Humblement agenouillés aux pieds de Votre Sainteté dans les sentiments du plus entier et du plus loyal attachement, nous venons cependant Lui exposer la situation lamentable qui résulterait de la division du diocèse de Saint-Boniface en la manière décrite dans un communiqué officiel publié par l'Osservatore Romano du 9 décembre.

La population laïque de langue française, agissant en dehors de toute sollicitation et de toute suggestion, prend elle-même l'initiative de rédiger et de signer le présent document, auquel nous voulons donner le caractère d'une respectueuse mais énergique protestation.

Qui donc, Très Saint-Père, a pu renegocier Rome de cette façon? Qui donc a pu imaginer l'anéantissement du vieux diocèse français des Provencher, des Taché et des Langevin, avec une si complète absence de miséricorde? Ce sont les questions que nous nous posons avec surprise et stupéfaction.

Le communiqué de l'Osservatore Romano attribue au nouvel archevêché de Winnipeg la partie occidentale de la rivière Rouge et du lac Winnipeg; à Saint-Boniface on laisse la partie orientale de ces deux nappes d'eau. Cette délimitation paraît plausible au simple examen des cartes géographiques; dans le fait, c'est une anomalie puisque le territoire situé à l'est du lac Winnipeg et de la rivière Rouge, sauf une lisière qui varie entre quinze et vingt milles de la ville de Winnipeg, n'est qu'une région de marais, de roches, de sable et d'eau. Ce pays est d'une conformation géologique telle qu'il n'est propre à aucune exploitation; il fait partie d'une zone aride, véritable désert, qui s'étend jusque dans l'est canadien et qu'on prend vingt-quatre heures de chemin de fer à traverser. Le colon paise sans s'y arrêter. La province du Manitoba comptera bientôt cent ans d'occupation, mais le territoire qu'on daigne laisser à Mgr l'Archevêque de Saint-Boniface est encore à l'état primitif; seule une mince bordure de terres cultivables avoisinant Winnipeg a permis la fondation de quelques paroisses.

C'est cette stérilité du côté oriental de la rivière Rouge qui explique la disposition extraordinaire des populations des deux rives. La région des terres à blé ne commence véritablement qu'à Winnipeg; de là elle s'étend jusqu'aux Montagnes Rocheuses. L'Eglise de Saint-Boniface, suivant en cela, du reste, le mouvement de la colonisation, a multiplié les églises et les paroisses sur le côté ouest de la rivière. Elle y a accumulé sans se lasser les œuvres les plus nombreuses et les plus

variées. Et c'est ainsi que le diocèse de Saint-Boniface, s'il subit la réduction que nous redoutons, perdra ses plus populeuses et plus riches paroisses, la plus grande partie de ses communautés religieuses et les trois-quarts de son clergé paroissial. Ce sera la suppression virtuelle du diocèse; le titre seul en subsistera véritablement. Au point de vue matériel, ce peut-être la banqueroute.

De plus, Très Saint-Père, cette division de diocèses, telle qu'on nous la fait connaître, crée une situation violente, d'où il résultera une lutte de races qui durera cinquante ans.

Dans les paroisses ayant prêtre résidant les fidèles de langue française, au nombre de 28,927, formaient les trois cinquièmes de la population catholique du diocèse de Mgr Langevin: les catholiques de langue anglaise, au nombre de 10,897, n'en formaient qu'un cinquième; le dernier cinquième était formé de races diverses: allemande, polonoise, et autres.

Pour guérir un malaise suscité par un groupe peu nombreux mais fort remuant à Winnipeg on a recours à un remède infiniment pire que le mal. On fait posser 18,863 Canadiens-français sous la direction d'un évêque de langue anglaise, alors qu'ils ont été à l'effort depuis un siècle et sont les mieux organisés pour les œuvres paroissiales, tandis que ses ouailles de langue anglaise ne sont qu'au nombre de 9,845, le reste appartenant à différentes nationalités. Et le but de cette scission inexorable! satisfaire les ambitions nationales exagérées de six ou sept mille Irlandais catholiques bloqués dans la ville de Winnipeg. Et parmi ces Irlandais bon nombre ne voient pas la nécessité de deux archevêchés en face l'un de l'autre, et ils ont été fort surpris de ce dédoublement de diocèses.

L'injustice devient surtout criante quand on examine le territoire situé au sud de la rivière Assiniboine. La presque totalité de la population catholique de cette région est de langue française - environ dix mille, contre quelques centaines de fidèles de langue anglaise.

Au milieu des luttes que les Canadiens français du Manitoba soutiennent pour le maintien de leur langue, la création, à Winnipeg, d'un diocèse en si grande proportion française gouverné par un évêque anglais, à côté du diocèse retranché qu'on accorde encore à l'évêque de Saint-Boniface comme le triste lameau de premier diocèse de l'ouest, cette création prend une signification qui nous humilié, nous attristé, et nous indigne.

Nous espérions que dans l'Eglise au moins, à cause de notre nombre, et, nous le disons humblement mais avec formété, à cause des états de service de notre clergé français, qui fonda l'Eglise de ce pays dans les larmes et dans le sang, nous espérions que dans l'Eglise on reconnaîtrait les droits de notre langue au moins aussi longtemps que nous y serions la majorité. Hélas! sur 31,967 total de la population catholique française et des paroisses et des postes visités, Mgr l'Archevêque de Saint-Boniface n'en conserve que 13,101! et le reste va à l'archevêque de Winnipeg.

La nomination de Mgr Sinnott est un fait accompli. Nous comprenons que Rome peut difficilement revenir sur cette décision. Mais Votre Sainteté ne pourrait-elle pas en faire un évêque national pour les populations de langue anglaise?

Ceci aurait pour avantage de donner satisfaction à ces populations, de ne pas imposer aux populations de langue française un mal dont se plaignent celles de langue anglaise, et de laisser intact le territoire du vieux siège métropolitain de Saint-Boniface.

De plus, les Canadiens-français du Manitoba conserveraient ainsi un pasteur de leur langue, qui pourrait, d'autorité, les visiter et les diriger dans la revendication de leurs prérogatives nationales. Ils ont besoin de cette direction.

Voilà, Très Saint-Père, la situation. Nous la soumettons à Votre Sainteté avec respect, confiance et franchise. Comme assurance de cette disposition de nos âmes envers le chef suprême de l'Eglise nous prions Votre Sainteté de nous bénir.

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