

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF
THE MANITOBA SCHOOL QUESTION,

1896-1916

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BY

WILLIAM BERNARD READY, B.A., Dip. Ed.

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Chapter I.

The Historical Background

The School Question has been posed in many places and in many centuries. Since the decline of Rome and the slow emergence of Western civilization the schools have been a cause of distraction, an excuse for opportunism and politicking, a reason both for hope and despondency. The administration of the schools has bedevilled national and provincial governments for centuries, and the trouble all started when the Church reluctantly took them over nearly fifteen hundred years ago. From Manitoba it is necessary to go back to Monte Cassino in order to get the School Question in its proper perspective.

The problem of the schools first began in an age that was nearly overwhelmed with problems. Until the fourth century, and certainly since the first, the town schools of the Roman Empire were in a flourishing condition. Then with the crumbling of the Empire there came the decay of the schools. Nearly every town had boasted of an efficient public school, and even in the desperate days of the fourth century some of the more enlightened emperors had continued to support them with grants from the imperial treasury, but more and more the burden of their support fell upon the townsfolk already staggering under the heavy weight of imperial taxation made necessary by the rising tide of barbarous invasion. Gradually the schools declined. It is possible to watch their degeneration by regarding the writing of succeeding Romans. Boethius (480-527) is regarded as the last great classical writer, and he had to spend much of his time translating the Greek textbooks of the liberal arts, because the Romans were no longer capable of reading them

1. G. C. Sellery and A. C. Krey, Medieval Foundations of Western Civilization (New York, 1929), 57.

in Greek. After reading Boethius the writing of those who came after him is childish in comparison.

A Roman noble resident in North Africa, Martianus Capella, composed an elementary text for his children in the fifth century, because he could not obtain a teacher for them, and the fact that this book continued to be used in the West for centuries is not a tribute to its excellence but rather is a reflection upon an age that could not devise a better text than this poor thing. Isidore (d. 636), bishop of Seville, compiled an encyclopedia that contained all that a scholar was supposed to know; it was received with great wonder, although it was pitifully degenerate from the writings of the earlier years, and it was to prove more than adequate for many centuries. The decay of learning was temporarily slowed down under the Teuton kings, for when they were ruling the Empire some of them, like Theodoric the Ostrogoth, gave government funds for the payment of teachers and the maintenance of schools, but the lamps of learning would assuredly have flickered out had it not been for the rising Christianity.

Until this time the Church had not envisaged, there is no mention anywhere, a scheme of secular education for her officials or her people. Until the sixth century she was quite content to leave the matter of education to the state schools, merely adding a leaven of theology and Church law to complete the schooling of those who were entering the priesthood. When Marcus Aurelius

2. W. Kane, An Essay Toward a History of Education (Chicago, 1938), 97.

Cassiodorus, the long-lived secretary of Theodoric the Ostrogoth, retired from public life and devoted himself to the training of clerics he realized that the decay of the schools had left a gap that would have to be bridged if the Church was to survive. He began by teaching the aspirant clergy elementary school subjects, and several of the writings of Cassiodorus on this subject are still extant. His labours were helped by Isidore of Seville and great Pope Gregory, who, the true administrator, did warn one of the bishops for going too far with the matter. Nevertheless, for all his chiding, it was this splendid man who probably saved the West from total darkness by his espousal of the Benedictine Order. The Benedictines made the copying of books and the practice of teaching an integral part of their monastic life.

By the seventh century the only formal schools that existed were the Church schools, and education was primarily clerical in its scope. Fortunately the Roman Church exercised unquestioned hegemony over the West, and this assured the preservation of the Latin language, which was the key to the knowledge of the past. No sooner was the flickering light of learning beginning to waver less than the Teuton disturbances within the bounds of the old Empire threatened to quench it again, until protection arose from an unexpected quarter, from England. The Benedictine monasteries that had been established there by Augustine, great Gregory's legate, began to turn out missionaries and scholarly priests. One

3. Ernest Carroll Moore, The Story of Instruction (New York, 1938), 132.

4. Ibid., 137.

of them, the Venerable Bede (d. 732), was the greatest scholar of his age. Others, most of all Winfrith of Wessex, better known as Boniface, Christianized vast territories that had never known the Roman order, and by his endeavours, and those of his brethren, he organized the Franks, the Hessians, and the Thuringians. Always he kept in close touch with Rome, and the heathen "prince of the Franks" beseeched him to take over the organization of the Church in Gaul, which he did. Thus it was that through Gregory's tour of the slave-mart and his comment on the angelic Angles, by way of Augustine and Patrick, the whole of Northwestern Europe was eventually Christianized, and the forces subdued that would have destroyed the schools; the schools that the Church had taken over because the State had failed, as she had taken over so many other things which until the debacle of the fifth century had been the concern of the State.⁵

The heathen "prince of the Franks" who had besought aid of Boniface was probably Charles Martel (d. 741), a bastard of that Pepin who had made the palace mayoralty become to approximate to a means of extensive government. His son, Pepin the Short (d. 768), was educated by the Benedictines, and was crowned king by Boniface and later by the pope, thus replacing with the Carolingian dynasty the weak and imbecilic Merovingians. The association between pope and king which developed under Pepin was continued under his son Charles the Great, Charlemagne (d. 814). Like his father, Charles had received a smattering of education. He could read Latin and

5. Sellery and Krey, op. cit., 61.

some Greek, the palace school educated the sons of the royal household, Alcuin's academy interested the king, and frequent letters were sent to the bishops and abbots requiring that they maintain schools so that the state would have no lack of educated officials. Several of these capitularies required that laymen as well as clerics should be educated. One capitulary even suggested the establishment of schools for the sons of all freedmen, but this was never carried out, although many fine schools were established, even among the Saxons, and Latin became the official language of the State as well as of the Church.

Although the palace school under Alcuin and later under Erigena, when Charles the Bald was ruling, served as a sort of normal school for the whole Empire, it was the enactment that every monastic institution and every cathedral should have a school that was of greatest importance among the Carolingian reforms. The monastic schools were far more important than were the cathedral schools, for from the beginning of the ninth century all the better monasteries had two distinct schools, one for its own oblats and one for outsiders. All the great ecclesiastics were educated in the monastic schools. It must never be forgotten, however, that the three types of schools that were set up were for clerics. The grammar schools did not become common until the thirteenth century, and before 1300 the education of a layman or woman was by private tuition as a general rule. This general rule, however, did not apply to Italy,

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6. Hastings Rashdall, The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages, F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden, eds. (3 vols.; Oxford, 1936), I, 28.
 7. J. B. Mullinger, The Schools of Charles the Great and the Restoration of Learning in the Ninth Century (New York, 1932).

where the rhetoric schools, the old public schools of the Empire, never really died out, even under the Ostrogoths and Lombards, but somehow managed to survive all the cataclysms, so that while the northern schools and later colleges were to be theological in their motif the Italian schools were always to have a tendency towards secular learning and lay instruction.

Because of Charlemagne and his counsellors Europe was never again to endure the sinking darkness of ignorance that was enveloping her during the Merovingian period. The tenth century, with its Scandinavian raidings and a recrudescence of the Saracen invasions in the south, was a dangerous time, but it was never as bad as was the Merovingian time. It was the millennial year that saw the change from a period of darkness to a century of light and hope.

This millennial year of renaissance has nothing to do with the superstition that had connected that year with the passing of the world, and there was no breach with historical continuity between that year and those preceding it or succeeding it. Nevertheless the air was abustle, the schools were crowded as never before, the Cluniac and the later Cistercian reforms cleansed and strengthened the monastic system. There was a passion for inquiry, and the crusaders met one another and the adjacent East, the religion of Islam was encountered in its native place, and Aristotle came to Europe through the Arabic. The millennial year was the turning point in the intellectual history of Europe, and the increased efficiency

8. Margaret Deanesley, "Mediaeval Schools to c. 1300," in The Cambridge Mediaeval History (8 vols., New York, 1926), V., 765.

of the schools and the wider diffusion of the education that they were imparting is the historical evidence for this rebirth. It was the schools, moreover, that set the pattern for the way the great European recovery was going to shape. The character of the traditional education was to be the mold in which the future intellectual development of Europe was to be cast.

The schools generally, outside of Italy, were for the training of clerics, and the secular knowledge that was obtained there was based upon the fifth century text of Martianus Capella. The "seven liberal arts" were the curriculum, and from the time of Alcuin these were divided into the elementary Trivium and the more advanced Quadrivium. The Trivium consisted of grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic; the Quadrivium consisted of music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy.

Only a scantiest smattering of these subjects was taught, as the textbooks showed, and the Quadrivium was mainly important for preserving the skeleton of knowledge that the twelfth century Renaissance was to fill out. It was the Trivium that had supplied the secular knowledge, and it was dialectic that was the chief subject of the three.

It was the study of dialectic that led to the establishment of scholasticism as the great feature of medieval education. The Carolingian schools had revived the use of the Aristotelean dialectic, and Erigena brought it into prominence, and its characteristic questioning of the realities of the universals did not come to the

9. Rashdall, op. cit., 34.

10. Ibid., 35.

11. Ibid., 36.

fore until the great revival of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

While the Carolingian schools had thus set the pattern for the development of the medieval intellectual pattern, there were schools in Italy which had remained outside of the Carolingian order, although the pattern for those schools had originally come from Italy. In the cities of northern Italy the breed of lay teachers never completely died out, and when the revival came to Italy it was seen most clearly in the secular schools. In Italy there was no trace of the theory that scholars and teachers were ipso facto members of the sacerdotal order, and the growth of lay teachers developed with the growth of autonomous city life. There was a great and abiding difference between the two systems of education, and between them was an intermediate system of education, a mixture of the two, to be found in Southern France, where social life was also a mixture between the Italian and the French.¹³ In that feudal area where the soldier and the cleric were the important social figures the schools were tied to the cloister, but the continuing existence of the Roman Empire, which is the key to the history of medieval Europe, meant that the continuity of Lombard city life was never quite destroyed, and so the schools were never wholly smothered, but continued right through the waves of successive invasions by the West-Gothics, the East-Gothics, the Lombards, and the Franks. In Italy the idea of the municipium had survived, and had tempered the idea of sheer feudalism blessed by the Church, and thus it was possible for a political revival to occur in Italy

12. Ibid., 37.

13. Ibid., 95.

in the eleventh century, and with the political revival there
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 occurred also a secular intellectual renaissance.

During the later Middle Ages the Italian cities and their secular culture become of increasing importance. A fact not generally realized is that the very word civilization is etymologically derived from the city, and as the Church declined, through plague and war and schism, the cities forged ahead, and as they pandered to the human desires for luxury and easy living, for the human approach to problems rather than the theological approach, the people of Western Europe accelerated their traffic. In the management of colonies, the art of navigation, in double-entry book-keeping, in the accumulation of capital, in the appreciation of fine art, the Italian cities were the teachers of Europe, and their
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 secular schools were an expression of their attitude.

By 1300 in the rest of Europe the schools had begun to
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 operate for the laity as well as for the clerics. After that date there becomes noticeable in Europe, especially in England, the rise of a class of lettered laymen, specifically called laici literati, and there is evidence that the Pastons were not an isolated example, but members of a fairly well diffused body of literate, non-clerical English folk, although before the advent of Thomas More it is difficult to think of any layman north of the Alps who was really learned, in the way that Dante, for example,
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 was learned.

14. Ibid., 94.

15. A. G. Krey, The City That Art Built (Minneapolis, 1936).

16. G. R. Potter, "Education in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries," in The Cambridge Mediaeval History, VIII, 688.

17. Ibid., 689.

The cathedral grammar schools and chantry schools became a feature of the educational system during this century. The work of that notable pluralist, William of Wykeham, in founding his double establishment of Winchester and New College, is notable, but the age was one of increasing educational endowment, and an age of falling away from the ascetic efforts of the earlier Middle Ages. The Mendicants, the Dominicans from their inception, and the Franciscans later, were a great educational force in these times, and the regular monastic orders also taught schools, however perfunctorily on some occasions. The parish priests were also under an injunction to provide instruction, and the chaplains of the noble houses provided some instruction for the squires and their sisters. Girls, however, except in some nunneries, were left out of the educational scheme of things.

The idea of the medieval schools, however imperfectly expressed, and saving the Italian secular schools, was to fit a man for general responsibility by specific, exact, and disciplined training in grammar and literature and logic. The Renaissance substituted rhetoric for nearly all three of these former subjects, and ^{as} elegance could be taught it was decided, by such men as Melananchthon, the great Protestant educator, that specific behavior could be induced by education. ¹⁹ This was a complete reversal of the previous concept of education. It made the schools a source of propaganda for specific ends rather than for the general well-being, and the

18. Ibid., 715.

19. W. H. Woodward, Studies in Education during the Age of the Renaissance (Cambridge, 1904).

embattled Catholics accepted this doctrine from the Protestants.

The most recent book on Catholic educational philosophy maintained that in the days of Scholasticism the immediate "aim of this education was essentially one of intellectual discipline," but with the advent of the Reformation "the aim of education was no longer knowledge, but rather intellectual, aesthetic and moral formation."

The reformers and counter-reformers, learning from the pragmatists of the Renaissance, put piety, apologetics, and propaganda in the first place in the schools, and there was a loss of the ideal of wisdom. The schools were degraded to a means of infiltration, a method of attack, and it is as such that the schools of Manitoba must be regarded before the School Question in Manitoba can be seen in its proper perspective.

20. John D. Redden and Francis A. Ryan, A Catholic Philosophy of Education (Milwaukee, 1942).

21. Leo R. Ward, Blueprint for a Catholic University (St. Louis, 1948), 78.

The Question in Manitoba

The previous chapter has shown how the medieval spirit faltered and gave way to the secularism of the Renaissance, and thence to the division of the European culture into the two antagonistic orders wherein the schools became indoctrinatory machines, and no longer respected the ideal of wisdom. As the struggle took shape in Europe between the Catholic and the non-Catholic way of life, between the bourgeois and the baroque civilizations, it was impossible to confine the bitterness to the physical boundaries of that continent; it was bound to permeate the whole of Western civilization, wherever that civilization was to be found. Thus the opposing philosophies came to bedevil Canada. Quebec and Ontario were the two protagonists, and, finding themselves secure in their own provincial strongholds, they decided to seek a decision on the opening prairies, and it was through the schools that the bitter and distressing struggle was entered upon.

The straight coherent conflict between the opposing provinces was later complicated by the wave of European settlement that came to Manitoba, but the schools in Manitoba maintained their wretched position as weapons that were swung about so constantly that the giddied children were fortunate if they were not permanently bewildered. Indeed one is prone to reflect that those children who were to be denied schools as a result of the conflict were probably less unfortunate than might at first be imagined.

The Manitoba School Question is a prime example of that melancholy truism that upon questions involving race, language, or creed

In and for the Province the said Legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education, subject and according to the following privileges:

Nothing in such laws shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law or practice in the Province at the Union.⁴

This section of the Manitoba Act followed the precedent of the British North America Act which states:

In and for each province the legislature may exclusively make laws in respect to education, subject and according to the following conditions: Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of people have by law in the province at the Union.⁵

It will be seen from comparing these two sections that the only difference is the added precaution in the Manitoba Act of including the phrase "... or practice ..." by which the fact that these pre-Confederation schools had no legal existence was, it was hoped, safeguarded against.

The balance of power was gradually slipping away from the older, native, element of the population, and more and more of the Ontario Englishry took up land, entered into politics and trade, and in every way acted to the detriment of the clerical effort to people the new province with a Quebec overflow.⁶ Even in 1871 Archbishop Tache, writing to Father Lacombe, refers to the new settlers as "les ennemis,"⁷ and premature and unsuccessful attempts

4. Statutes of Canada, 1870, 33 Vict. III, 22.

5. Public General Statutes, 1867, 30 & 31 Vic. III, 93.

6. Mgr. Tache, Pamphlet (Manitoba Provincial Library)

7. Don Benoit, Vie de Mgr. Tache (2 vols., Montreal, 1904), II, 197, Tache to Lacombe, quoted.

men seem to be incapable of dispassionate action, treatment, or discussion. These three issues were involved in the Manitoba School Question. A Christian and a denominational system of private schools had developed in the West before Manitoba entered Confederation.¹ In the first session of the Provincial Legislature in 1871 there was passed an Act to establish a system of education in the Province.

This Act empowered the Lieutenant Governor to appoint not less than ten, and not more than fourteen persons to a Board of Education for the province. One half of the Board were to be Catholic, and the other half were to be Protestant. Two Superintendents were to be appointed, one Catholic and one Protestant, and they were to act as joint Secretaries to the Board. This School Act also regulated that the monies appropriated by the Legislature for education should be divided equally between the two sections.²

Until 1890 the only change in legislation concerning education was a minor one. It readjusted the money grants and representation, so that the increasing Protestant population of the Province was provided for.³ This legislation was a logical result of Clause 22 of the Manitoba Act, which had sought to safeguard the principle of separate schools.

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1. S. E. Lang, "History of Education in Manitoba," Canada and Its Provinces, (23 vols., Toronto, 1914), XX, 416-426.
W. B. Ready, "Early Red River Schools," The Beaver, Outfit 278, December, 1947, 34-37.
A. G. Morice, History of the Catholic Church in Western Canada, (2 vols., Toronto, 1910), I, 113.
G. M. Newfield, The Development of Manitoba Schools prior to 1870. (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1937)
 2. Statutes of Manitoba, 1871, 34 Victoria XII. An Act to Establish a System of Education in This Province.
 3. Eldon F. Sims, A History of Public Education in Manitoba, 1870-1890, (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1944).

were made by the Canadian element to upset the educational system
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on several occasions before 1890.

The Catholics at this time were appropriately always identified with the French. They were well aware of their worsening condition, and in order to safeguard their schools their leaders were prepared to pledge political support to any party that would promise to maintain the status quo in education, for as contemporary records show, there was a vociferous and well organized demand by the increasing non-Catholic majority to institute in the Province a system of public and secular education. 9 Doctor George Bryce, as early as 1875, writing in the Manitoba Free Press, bitterly complained about the dual system of education. 10 The reports of the Protestant superintendent were publicized in the same newspaper in that year because they too maintained that "The sections of the Board of Education should be done away with, and one Board organized, 11 which should fairly represent all sections of the community." By 1880 the Free Press came out squarely with: "The position taken by the Free Press upon this question cannot possibly be misunderstood. The ground we take is that it is not the duty of the state to teach religion, but the duty of the Church. We stand upon the broad ground that public money should in no case be devoted to the pro- 12 pagation of the dogmas of any particular class or denomination."

8. Sims, op. cit., 91.

9. Chester Martin, "Political History of Manitoba, 1890-1912." (Canada and Its Provinces) XIX, 240.)

10. Manitoba Free Press (Winnipeg), April 8, 1875.

11. C. W. Pinkham, Report of the Superintendent of the Protestant Schools in the Province of Manitoba, 1875.

12. Free Press, February 10, 1880.

The agitation of the Catholics was increased by the gradually mounting opposition to their separate establishment, and through the 1880's every Twelfth of July celebration brought to them across the river the mounting noise of truculent Orangeism. It does seem probable that in 1888 the Catholic political machine deserted the Conservative party and pledged their support to the Liberal party, which, under the leadership of Greenway and the direction of Joseph Martin and others, did promise to maintain the separate schools in the event of their election to office.¹³ Nevertheless, following a speech made by Attorney-General Martin at an Orange gathering at Portage la Prairie on August 5, 1889, the Manitoba Legislature imposed a system of public and secular education on the Province in January, 1890,¹⁴ and at the same time it forbade the use of French as an official language. Greenway denied that he had ever promised to maintain the status quo in education, yet Archbishop Tache, in an open letter to the Premier, cited three specific instances where Greenway had done so: "Your promises were made in 1888, they were violated in 1890, they are denied in 1892."¹⁵

13. John S. Ewart, The Manitoba School Question (Toronto, 1904), 220.

14. S. M., 1890, 55 Vic., XXXVII, 179, "An Act Respecting the Department of Education."

15. Public Archives of Manitoba, Greenway Papers, 5066.

Chapter III

The Manitoba School Act, 1890

The Manitoba School Question fundamentally affected the education of the Province, but the issue was engendered in a prevailing atmosphere of sectarian and racial bitterness that was typical of Canadian politics at this time.¹ The Greenway Government deliberately employed the School Question as a means of staying in office, and this was the cause of its unnatural growth into a great political issue.² An illuminating commentary on Manitoba politics some months prior to the passing of the Public Schools Act is to be found in this letter from the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province, Sir John Christian Schultz, to the Dominion Prime Minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, written on August 3, 1889:

Norquay's death has resulted in my Government feeling their oats more than ever before, or rather perhaps it has given fuller swing to Joe Martin. The position being that when Joe is away for speculative or business reasons everything goes on very quietly, but when my Premier is called away to a Picnic, Martin has to come to Winnipeg, and then there is a time, clerks were kept till midnight. The "Sun" reporters rush up to know what is to be done and whose head goes off, etc.... Then Orders in Council come over by the armful. Contracts are let, money, of which there is, unfortunately, plenty is given left and right to the municipalities, their school debentures, bought up at par. J.P.'s, Commissioners, Conveyancers, and Notaries Public created ad. lib. If anything needing explanation is at all delayed, then there is fuming.... No time for explanations ... cannot be bothered with statistics and information, etc.... My relations being with Greenway alone I always get the information I want, but against the giving of

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1. "... there came a succession of race and creed issues that bedevilled Canadian politics for more than a decade...." Fred Landon, "D'Alton McCarthy and the Politics of the Later Eighties," Canadian Historical Association Annual Report, 1932, 44.
 2. Chester Martin, "Political History of Manitoba," Canada and Its Provinces, XX, 240.

it Joe kicks, and when 'in vino' threatens to cut off Government House allowance, etc.... A few days ago he informed the "Sun" of his proposed abolition of juries in Civil cases, the abolition of the dual language, and the separate school system, together with sweeping changes in the Municipal System.³

This letter from Sir John Schultz becomes more interesting as a commentary when it is realized that at the same time (August, 1889) Attorney-General Joseph Martin in writing to Greenway concerning Schultz typically remarked: "As to the Lieutenant-Governor he can go to the devil as far as I am concerned. I certainly cannot sign a letter stating that there has been no trouble between him and us. When he commences to behave himself, and ceases to hold important Orders-in-Council until the very last day - ceases to violate the laws as to ordering things - then perhaps I may have some patience with the old fool. If he wants a fight I am ready for him; I don't think I shall get the worst of it...."⁴

It was at Portage la Prairie on August 5, 1889, that Joseph Martin first publicly stated that the Provincial Government intended to initiate a public and secular education system, and to abolish the dual language system. Martin was speaking in support of D'Alton McCarthy at an Orange gathering,⁵ and he seems to have become "drunk with the drum," for in writing to Premier Greenway next morning his letter has a defiant yet rueful ring:

Dear Greenway,

I am afraid reading the paper this morning you will think I have been going it rather strong. I had no right I suppose to be so definite on the French language matter -- perhaps I went too far, if so I am prepared to

3. Public Archives of Canada, Macdonald Papers.
 4. P. A. M. Greenway Papers, 6985.
 5. Ibid.

be censored, but I am sure that there is no use doing this thing by halves. Prendergast could not stay with us on the abolition of the Board of Education, and having abolished the Board of Education the only way to run the schools will be to make them all alike in the eyes of the law, and have no religious teaching in any of them. I think up to that point we are agreed, and what I said last night was the necessary outcome of the decision of the caucus to abolish the Board of Education.⁶ In doing this much we lose without doubt the support of the French, if we ever had any effectual support from them. Having lost their support what possible object can we have in not meeting the strong demand for the abolition of the French language?⁷ The connection between the two seemed so clear to me last night that without realizing I was going a little too far I spoke as if it were the settled policy of the Government to do both things. I sincerely hope that what I have done will meet with the approval of yourself, Ewart, and McMillan. As you know, I would be quite willing to suffer any penalty for compromising the Government....⁸

Despite the fact that a steady and popular opposition existed toward separate schools in the Province among the Ontario immigrants, and despite the publicity that attended this opposition in the editorials of Luxton and the writings of such men as Dr. George Bryce, it does seem that the question really arose as a political exigency. Once the question was posed there was much more political kudos to be gained from answering it, especially if in the answering a defiant note could be struck against the Federal Government. Moreover, the national Liberal party had been in the wilderness for so long that it welcomed the intransigence on the part of their lesser brethren in the West, seeing in this political move a chance to

6. This does show that the Orange speech was no spontaneous outburst. The matter had been discussed in caucus.

7. Language, not religion, was often the object of the political attacks, because the concrete evidence of printing costs could be cited.

8. P. A. M. Greenway Papers, 6855.

embarrass their political opponents. They seemed to believe that in attempting to regain power the end would justify the means. Wilfrid Laurier saw the Public Schools Act passed against his co-religionists without a protest, and the Liberal party for the next six years actively supported the action of the Manitoba Legislature, indeed they acted as allies in the political battle the Province waged against the Conservative central administration.

In order for the question to achieve the great importance that came to be attached to it there had to be a considerable opposition. This was immediately afforded by the Catholic Church. The Manitoba School System was quite agreeable to the Church up to 1890. Archbishop Tache, writing to the Free Press in August, 1889, stated:

During these past twelve years education has made great progress in Manitoba; the fact is, there are few countries, if any, which have a larger development in that direction. Visitors of intelligence are in reality very much astonished at the harmonious and efficacious work of our system; as a rule the population is satisfied with the management of our schools... surely there is not much reason for complaint....⁹

In a pamphlet published in 1893, however, Archbishop Tache leaves the reader in no doubt as to how the 1890 Act had changed his sentiments:

The result of the introduction of the new system has been detrimental to Catholics ... it materially retards instruction ... how painful to witness every day the friction, the disagreements, the injurious proceedings, the disunion and the uneasiness which prevail in the Province since three years ago. The law was to unite, and it divides....¹⁰

9. Free Press, August 7, 1889.

10. Ewart, op. cit., 139-159; quoted.

Both these statements of the Archbishop are directly connected with the 1890 Public Schools Act, and the former statement was the apprehensive, placatory utterance of a leader who realized that his party were at the mercy of the opposition, did the opposition but dare to act. Despite the most strenuous efforts of the hierarchy to buttress the native population with a Quebec overflow it was Ontario that was to provide the bulk of the settlers and so set the pattern for development. The perturbation with which Archbishop of Boniface viewed the rising Protestant flood was clearly evident in his letters:

Vous comprenez assez l'importance de la colonisation chez nous pour vouloir bien, si l'occasion s'en presente, encourager quelques Canadiens a venir fortifier nos rangs....¹¹

Si c'est possible envoyez-vous du monde. Si nous n'avons point d'immigration catholique, nous sommes perdus a tout jamais: le flot ontarien de nous deborder de toutes partes....¹²

Travaillez pour notre colonisation, autrement nous sommes perdus....¹³

Les ennemis font des efforts gigantesques, il fait mal de voir l'indifference de nos amis....¹⁴

These letters were written in the very early years of Confederation; the official biography of Mgr. Tache reveals that the Archbishop indefatigably circularized Quebec in order to secure immigration:

... que ces pays ont une grande importance dans le present, et en acquerront une plus grande encore dans l'avenir; que c'est un devoir de religion et de patriotisme pour les

11. Benoit, *op. cit.*, II, 196, Tache to Trois Rivieres, December, 1871, quoted.

12. *Ibid.*, II, 196, Tache to Trois Rivieres, February, 1872, quoted.

13. *Ibid.*, II, 196, Tache to Lacombe, February, 1872, quoted.

14. *Ibid.*, II, 197, Tache to Lacombe, quoted.

Canadiens-Français de la province de Québec de ne point laisser ces immenses régions passer en la possession exclusive d'une autre race.¹⁵

A study of the Dominion Government Census for the years 1871 and 1881 shows the need for the note of urgency in the Archbishop's appeal:

Year	Native Born	Non-Native Born
1871	10,400	1,565
1881	18,020	47,934

The 1871 total was composed of 9,863 French and metis, while the inconsiderable minority of 703 was classified as Anglo-Saxon, but the 1881 total breaks up into a totally different grouping. The French and metis account for only 9,940 of the total, the Anglo-Saxons account for 38,000, and the remaining 8,652 are classified as German.¹⁶

This state of things made it appear to the Catholics that all political means must be subordinated to the end of maintaining the existing privileges that they enjoyed under the Education Act of 1871, but their anticipation of events was not able to prevent what appears in retrospect to be almost an inevitable result of the pattern of settlement. That the problem was foreseen is apparent from contemporary letters and other writing:

L'immigration catholique, depuis vingt ans, n'avait point répondu aux desirs de l'ame catholique et française de Mgr. Tache ni a ses efforts; graduellement la race protestante s'emparait du pays, obtenait en sa faveur un enorme déplacement de l'équilibre ancien....

15. Ibid., II, 197.

16. Canada, Statistical Record and Abstract, Ottawa, 1880, pp. 40-41.

Depuis des annees et des annees Mgr. Tache contemplait avec anxiete cette maree montante dont les flots agites ne pouvaient apporter ni le calme ni la paix.... Il avait dit souvent a ses intimes que la tempeste finirait par eclater.¹⁷

It will be seen from these excerpts that the French and Catholic element of the Province were nervous about their status in the new order that had in its very origin a natural antipathy to the clerical Catholicism of Manitoba, patterned as it was so closely on the Catholicism of Quebec. The tempest did break, and dormant antipathies were aroused that did little to help the solution of the Question. From 1890 to 1896 the Catholics, on every possible occasion protesting their loyalty to the Imperial connection, began a long series of legal proceedings in order to regain what they considered their "inalienable rights," guaranteed by the British North America Act, specifically assured by the Manitoba Act, and recognized by other provinces of the Dominion. Eventually the onus of relieving them was thrown upon a Federal Government that was long in office, and was weakened by the demise of Sir John Macdonald. As soon as the Act was passed Cardinal Taschereau and the whole of the archbishops and bishops of Canada petitioned the Governor-General-in-Council to disallow the Act that was so obnoxious to the Catholics of Canada, but the Conservative Government advised the Governor-General not to interfere until the courts had settled the constitutional problems that were involved.

17. Benoit, *op. cit.*, II, 641.

18. Ewart, *op. cit.*, 6-118.

19. R. E. Clague, Political Aspects of the Manitoba School Question, 1890-1896 (unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1939).

The action of the Dominion Government received the support of the opposition, but in 1895 the judgment of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in the Brophy case²⁰ thrust the question squarely back on the unwilling Federal Government, for the judgment stated in conclusion:

All legitimate grounds for complaint would be removed if that system (the post-1890 system) were supplemented by provisions which would remove the grievances upon which the appeal is founded, and were modified so far as might be necessary to give effect to these provisions.²¹

The quiet of the courts was replaced by the racket of the political arena. The situation was rendered piquant by the fact that Prime Minister, Sir MacKenzie Bowell, was a high dignitary of the Orange Order, while Wilfrid Laurier, leader of the Liberal opposition, was a Quebequois Catholic. The Government was most unhappy about the situation. They had to deal with a recalcitrant²² Western Province in league with a federal opposition, and they were committed to introduce remedial legislation that would antagonize the Orange Order which, to say the least, "was traditionally antagonistic to State recognition and State support of sectarian, and more especially, Roman Catholic, institutions."²³ Moreover, while the hapless government attempted to solve the Manitoba School Question while almost covering under a shower of episcopal benedic-

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20. George M. Weir, The Separate School Question in Canada (Toronto, 1934), 47.
21. John R. Cartwright, Cases on the B.N.A. Act. V.
22. John L. Holmes, Factors Affecting Politics in Manitoba (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1936),
23. J. S. Willison, Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the Liberal Party (2 vols., Toronto, 1903), I, 208.

tions from the Catholic hierarchy, and while they helplessly watched the lean and taut opposition make irresponsible but telling political capital out of the situation, Laurier and his able aide, Israel Tarte, attacked the Government for tardiness and hesitance, but they would not be committed into admitting to any solution. Laurier played the situation in a masterly fashion, and his speech at Morrisburg on October 8, 1895, is an example of his political astuteness and of a cleverness that falls short of statesmanship:

I am accused by the Conservative press of having expressed no opinion on this question. I have expressed an opinion more than once upon it, but I have not yet expressed the opinion that the ministerial press would like me to express. I am not responsible for that question, but I do not want to shirk it; I want to give you my views, but remember war has to be waged a certain way. When the Duke of Wellington was in Portugal ... he withdrew at one time within the lines of Torres Vedras, and there for months he remained, watching the movements of the enemy ... and Massena said 'I want that man to come down from his lines, let him come down to the plain and I will thrash him, but I cannot assail him within the lines.' Gentlemen, I am within the lines of Torres Vedras. I will get out of them when it suits me and not before.²⁴

The Remedial Order of March, 1895, and the Order-in-Council of July, 1895, produced only truculence from the Manitoba Govern-
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 ment. John W. Daffoe, in his biography of Sir Clifford Sifton, reported that at this time two unsigned memoranda which are among the Sifton papers, "obviously from one high in the management of the Dominion Liberal Party," gave specific instructions to the

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24. O. D. Skelton, Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier (Toronto, 1903), II, 465.
 25. Holmes, op. cit., 100.
 26. J. W. Daffoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times (Toronto, 1931), 89.

Manitoba Government to embarrass and delay any settlement with Ottawa. The first memoranda suggested that as a preliminary to discussion the Provincial Government should insist on all remedial legislation being suspended while the matter was under scrutiny, and that further an enquiry should be initiated that would be sure of causing a delay because the educational systems of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and other provinces would come under review.

When the Dominion Commissioners were appointed a second memorandum was sent to Attorney-General Sifton concerning them: "Dickey, straight, but inexperienced; Desjardins, narrow, affable, but smooth and slippery, and not to be depended on; will no doubt keep in constant touch with the Archbishop...." The memorandum went on to advise that

... if the conference is likely to be a failure it should be kept going as long as possible.... It might with very great advantage be made to appear that if this present Federal Government, by reason of its hostile attitude (not being persona grata) prevented satisfactory settlement, still it by no means follows; but on the contrary there is good reason to believe that a friendly conciliatory government at Ottawa would be able to arrange a settlement that should be satisfactory, that the difficulties are not insurmountable but that friendly relations between negotiating government are necessary to successfully overcome them.... If you discover that the Federal Government is not free to accept any - short of a legally established separate school system you can with safety go a long way in making liberal offers.²⁷

The restiveness of the Conservative Quebec members, and the growing importance of the question led Sir Charles Tupper, who had

27. Dafoe, op. cit., 90.

emerged as Conservative leader, to call a special session of Parliament in January, 1896. The opposition led by Laurier was effectively aided by Conservative dissentients and by the Government's delay in introducing the remedial bill. The debates lasted several weeks, but a Liberal filibuster successfully denied the passage of the bill until the legal term of office came to an end for the Conservative Government. ²⁸ The Federal election of 1896 brought the Liberal party to power, but the Manitoba School Question remained to be answered.

28. Skelton, op. cit., II, 479.

Chapter IV

The Operation of the School Act

The Federal Election of 1896 was to exert a profound influence upon subsequent Canadian development,¹ but the victorious Liberal party did not solve the Manitoba School Question, although this problem had played a significant part in obtaining their victory. The deep and abiding principles which underlie the relationship between Church and State, especially in regard to education, are such that the most any democratic Western community can hope for is a periodically revised modus vivendi, wherein the more important questions at issue are tacitly left in abeyance.² It was Laurier's hope to effect such a compromise. Had he succeeded it would have enlarged his stature as a statesman; he did not succeed; he merely gave the problem the varnish of a solution.

The Catholic hierarchy were well aware of the truth of a statement made by Arnold J. Toynbee: "If we take a synoptic view of the several surviving forms of Western Christianity in their present state and compare them in respect of their comparative vitality, we shall find that this varies inversely with the degree to which each of these sects has succumbed to secular control."³ They accordingly did all in their power to assure the return of the Conservative Party to power, and in doing so they went to such lengths that they

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1. E. G. Cooke, The Federal Election of 1896 in Manitoba, (unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1943).
 2. There is such a fundamental cleavage in opinion as to what constitutes the voice of God.
 3. A. J. Toynbee, A Study of History (New York, 1947), 487.

provoked a crisis which was of the sort that the Catholic Church, in its hard-won wisdom, tends to deplore, involving as it does the exact and specific extent of its authority over its members who are also members of a predominately secular society.

The conservative spirit was very evident in the clerical denunciations of the Liberal party in the period preceding the election. The hierarchy of Quebec issued a joint mandement, instructing their people to vote only for those candidates who were pledged to remedial legislation.⁴ Mgr. Langevin, as Archbishop of St. Boniface, would admit of no compromise on the matter: "A Catholic who does not follow the hierarchy on the School Question is a Catholic no longer ... by my authority as a Catholic Bishop I declare that this man has no right to the title...."⁵ Bishop Lafleche of Trois Rivieres maintained: "Under the circumstances a Catholic cannot, under pain of sinning in a grave matter, vote for the chief of a party who has formulated publicly such an error, and for his followers who support him in that error, so long as they will not have publicly disavowed that error, and made a formal engagement to vote for the Remedial Bill accepted by the Bishops."⁶ And Mgr. Marois, Vicar-General of Quebec, wrote to a parish priest regarding the election: "I am charged by Mgr. the Administrator to tell you that it is a grave fault - a mortal sin - not to obey the bishops."⁷

4. Willison, op. cit., 238.

5. Ibid., 239.

6. Ibid., 247.

7. Ibid., 248.

Even the aged Father Lacombe, the hero and priest of the West, was used by the hierarchy to present their argument to Wilfrid Laurier. Writing in a widely publicized letter to the Liberal leader, Father Lacombe said:

At this critical moment for the School Question of Manitoba, permit an aged missionary, today representing the Bishops of our country, in this cause which concerns us all, to appeal to your faith, to your patriotism, and to your spirit of justice, to entreat you to accede to our request.... If, which may God not grant, you do not believe it to be your duty to accede to our just demands, and that the Government, which is anxious to give us the promised law be beaten and overthrown ... I inform you with regret that the episcopacy, like one man united to the clergy, will rise to support those who have fallen to defend us....⁸

Wilfrid Laurier showed that he was well aware of his position. In a speech made in Parliament on the occasion of the second reading of the Remedial Bill he said:

I was told from high quarters in the Church to which I belong that if I did not support the school bill ... which we now have before us I would incur the hostility of a great and powerful body ... I have only this to say, even though I have threats held over me, coming, as I am told, from high dignatories in the Church to which I belong, no word of bitterness shall ever pass my lips against that Church. I respect and love it.... I am here, the acknowledged leader of a great party composed of Roman Catholics and Protestants as well, in which Protestants must be in the majority, as in every party. Am I to be told - I, occupying such a position - that I am to be dictated to concerning the course I am to take in this House by reasons that can appeal to the consciences of my fellow Catholic members, but which do not appeal as well to the consciences of my non Catholic colleagues? No! ... So long as I occupy the position I do now, whenever it shall be my duty to take a stand on any question whatever that stand I will take, not from the point of view of Roman Catholicism, not from the point of view of Protestantism, but from the point of view that can appeal to the consciences of all men, ir-

8. Katherine Hughes, Father Lacombe, The Black-Robe Voyageur (Toronto, 1920), 361.

respective of their particular faith, upon grounds which can be occupied by all men who love justice, freedom, and toleration.⁹

This speech is revealing, and it is difficult to over-estimate the courage that Laurier displayed in his denial of the bishops. There is evident pride displayed in this office, that he, a French Canadian, was holding, and in its final peroration there is that resonant vagueness which commits the speaker to so very little, and yet which is so politically effective. The pride that Laurier took in his position was shared by his fellow-Canadiens; it was to play a part in the defeat of the bishops of Quebec. It was the canadienisme of Laurier, not his professed English Liberalism,¹⁰ that won him that victory. The young Laurier had flirted with that anti-clericalism that is a permanent feature of every Catholic society;¹¹ the mature Laurier was far more sure of himself, and his respectful antagonism to the bishops wrought their position among their flocks great and lasting harm; for while all other arguments would be ignored by the quebequois the arguments advanced by one of themselves against the hierarchy were sure of a ~~shocked~~ but secretly sympathetic audience.

The bishops were so sure of the obedience of the faithful that they over-estimated the power of their persuasion. The devout Catholicism of the quebequois in the past had assured the hierarchy of loyal obedience; but that had been because the bishops had been

9. Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1896, I, 2758.

10. Ibid., 2758.

11. Willison, op. cit., I, 46.

able to stand as the champions of Quebec against the encroaching English, the whole hierarchical strength lay in that position, but Laurier was no anglais, he was a quebequois leader of the anglais, colourful where Cartier was dull, sane where Riel was unbalanced. He stood as the defender of the rights of quebequois against the central government, and his countrymen pushed past the priests to support him.

The political acumen, the courage, and the energy of the old man, Sir Charles Tupper, were of no avail against the skilful electioneering of the Liberal party, eager for office after so many years in the wilderness. They exploited the racialism and the provincialism of Quebec, they profited by the economic discontent of Ontario, and by the Conservative defections in that province. The Manitoba Liberal Government became their offensive spearhead that was thrust so far out of that Province that the butt remaining was unable to secure a Liberal victory in the Federal elections there. The rest of the West voted so solidly Liberal, and the Maritimes were so evenly divided, that Laurier became Prime Minister with a majority of thirty seats. The final effort of the Conservative party to pass the Remedial Bill showed a quality that appeared to be far from the cynical opportunism of the ascending Liberals, and the speech of Sir Charles Tupper in reference to the Laurier-Greenway settlement deserves notice:

12. John W. Daffoe, Laurier: A Study in Canadian Politics (Toronto, 1922), 48; A. G. Morice, Vie de Mgr. Langevin (St. Boniface, 1916), 139.

A settlement that does not give substantial justice, that does not meet the case, in my judgement, ought not to be dignified by the name of a settlement. It may be forced upon the minority, they may be weak, they may be unable to resist, and a variety of causes may be brought into operation that will prevent them from obtaining their rights.... My predecessor Sir Mackenzie Bowell ... felt bound to bring forward a measure that was, in his opinion, calculated to carry out what the law and the constitution of the country demanded.... When I was called upon to form an administration, believing as I did, ... that a wrong had been done to the minority of Manitoba, and the Government of the Country were bound to right that wrong in accordance of the provisions of the Constitution, I went boldly to the country, and notwithstanding the great cleavage - notwithstanding all the clamour, and agitation and prejudice that were created throughout the country on this question; in the faithful discharge of what I considered my duty, I went forward and staked the existence of my Government on that measure....¹³

The Conservatives went down in attempting to remedy the grievances of the Catholics of Manitoba. It was partly by denying the claim of Manitoba Catholics that the Liberals won the victory for which they had sought so long.

The Reaction of the Clerical Party to the Liberal Victory

The Remedial Bill that had been proposed by the Conservative government was not altogether satisfactory to the hierarchy, who were the moving spirit behind the opposition of the minority in the Manitoba School Question. They realized that the pre-1890 pattern of Manitoba schools had gone, and they were concerned to get the best terms that were possible under the prevailing conditions. Archbishop Langevin, when interviewed by a Winnipeg Tribune reporter,

13. Canada, H. of C. Debates, 1897, I, 37.

said: "We do not hope they will restore the system just as it was before 1890.... We never asked for the text of the old law, and we have no intention of interfering with the present school system....¹⁴ All we want is to have our taxes for our own schools...."

When the Archbishop spoke the Remedial Bill had only just been announced, and it was some months later that Mgr. Langevin gave his considered opinion: "It is not that the bill was perfect. On the contrary it was imperfect...."¹⁵ Nevertheless, despite its imperfections, it obtained the wholehearted support of the Catholic hierarchy, for since 1890 the Catholic schools of Manitoba had become private schools, with all the financial debility characteristic of that type of educational institution. By 1894 twenty-four of the Catholic school districts had been disbanded because of financial difficulties or for other reasons consequent on the 1890 Act. Twenty-seven of them were operating as public schools, and an additional nine districts, formed since 1890, had given up the struggle¹⁶ and had come into the public system.

There was no Catholic serving on the advisory Board of Education; they were morally forbidden to serve, and wrote Archbishop Tache:

All the Catholics having anything to do in the general management of schools were dismissed (1890) ... all the Catholic inspectorships were abolished, but the Protestant inspectorates were preserved.... While dismissing all the Catholic inspectors a new inspectorship was

14. Winnipeg Tribune, February 13, 1897.

15. Montreal Herald, May 20, 1897.

16. Weir, op. cit., 51.

created for the Mennonites, and one of their denomination was brought from the United States to fill the situation.... Each section of the old board of education had its normal schools; those for the Catholics were abolished, while the Protestant normal schools were quietly continued ... the Rev. Dr. G. Bryce is always the Rev. Dr. G. Bryce; the other members of the school administration are as Protestant today as they were previous to May 1, 1890.¹⁷

The reaction of the minority to the 1890 Public School Act showed a state of mind that was not altogether at ease in a parliamentary democracy. The major argument of the Catholic opposition to the Act lay in the fact that a contract had been broken, and that therefore they were entitled to redress. This would have been the case under canon law, or under the French civil code, but the theory of parliamentary sovereignty implies the legality of a breach of contract, of an abrogation of statutory laws, whenever it is the will of the majority as expressed in parliament. It may have been the intention of the legislators to make the Manitoba Act a binding and sacred contract, but the sanctity of any contract within a parliamentary democracy remains only as long as the will of the people so wills. The Manitoba Public School Act of 1890 was manifestly the will of the majority of the people of that province, and it was constitutionally irrelevant to discuss the reasons why they so willed. Having done so they claimed their decision to be a sovereign one, and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council advised remedial legislation by the Federal Government.

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17. Archbishop Tache, The Schools called Public Schools of Manitoba Are in Reality Protestant Schools (Pamphlet, St. Boniface, 1893), 6.
 18. Cartwright, op. cit., V, 188.

To many of the Catholic opposition this aspect of parliamentary government was perhaps not sufficiently appreciated. To them it was a clear case of one of the saving clauses of Western Christendom PACTA SERVANDA SUNT being cynically broken by a pack of venal politicians, as this excerpt shows:

On a beaucoup parle du British fair play, ou esprit de justice britannique, et les Anglais s'en montrent fiers. A en juger par ce qui se passa alors au Manitoba, si cet esprit existe reellement en Angleterre, il ne doit pas etre un article d'exportation, du moins d'Angleterre au Canada. Car a cette mise en demeure indirecte du plus haut tribunal de l'Empire d'avoir a rendre aux catholiques manitobains leurs droits scolaires si injustement spoliés, le gouvernement de Greenway - un anglais, c'est a dire l'un de ceux-la qui se plaisent a taxer les Canadiens-français de manque d'attachement aux institutions britanniques-repondit que ce n'était point son intention de se desister en aucune maniere de sa determination de soutenir le present systeme celui contre reclamait le Conseil Prive.

Si c'est la le fameux fair play des Anglais, avouons qu'il ne ressemble pas mal a la maxime du fabuliste, d'apres laquelle.

La raison du plus fort est toujours la meilleure! Il n'y a jamais eu rien de glorieux pour un loup a engorger un agneau.¹⁹

Parliamentary procedure is such that the rightness or wrongness of a question or the quality of its supporters is immaterial so long as it is endorsed by a majority of the legally elected assembly. It was against this parliamentary principle that the opposition of Manitoba struggled without completely realizing the implications. It was a cause of their failure to compromise, and a further cause lay in the qualities of their leaders. Mgr. Tache and Mgr. Langevin were devoted shepherds to their flocks,

19. Morice, Langevin, 133.

but in their guardianship can be traced that excessive suspicion of outside interference that is typical of some of the French-Canadian leaders, especially among the hierarchy. The more liberal and speculative French Canadian clerical thought has traditionally been centered on Laval and Quebec, while the more aggressive and conservative elements have been found around Montreal and Trois

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Rivieres. It is from these centres that the great and zealous missionaries of the West set forth, and among them were the two men who in their turn led the opposition to the Manitoba School Settlement. They were so upright that they abhorred the pliable and opportunist men who organized the overthrow of their schools, they were so sure of the righteousness of their position that they were unwilling to compromise; logically but unwisely they tried to match their unchangeable principles with the fluctuating politics of the new and barely settled province. Their opinion of the contemporary Liberal leaders is evident in their official biographies and in their correspondence: "L'ecole est aujourd'hui le grand champ de bataille ou se rencontrent de preference les fils de lumiere, qui combattent pour la veritable lumiere, et les enfants de tenebres...."²¹

"C'est l'heure de Satan, mais j'espere ... Tarte enrage de me voir lui tenir tete et le prevenir en ouvrant des ecoles libres. Il blasphemé presque. Il ment surement...."²²

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20. Morice, Catholic Church in Western Canada.
 Benoit, Tache.
 Morice, Langevin.
21. Morice, Langevin, 126.
22. Ibid., Langevin to Mgr. Lafleche, quoted 136.

It can be seen that the School Question was made more complex by the personalities of the leading protagonists in the struggle. Wilfrid Laurier at Ottawa realized that by means of the School Question the Liberals could get back into office, and he, a quebequois,²³ would be Prime Minister; Israel Tarte was a political agent of great ability;²⁴ Joseph Martin, John Greenway, Clifford Sifton, and their following saw the political capital that could be made out of the question.²⁵ Opposing all these secular men, who were mainly concerned with the opportunist advantages to be gained from their position, were the Archbishops Langevin and Tache, who were, to say the least, unwilling to play any role in the political drama that would in any way detract from their pretensions. The hierarchy was not above dealing with politicians, but the Manitoba Liberals were convinced that they could proceed without the help of the minority, indeed they were determined to oppose them as a political means. As a result of these circumstances there was bound to be a bitter struggle, and so it fell out.

It would be well at this point to consider the actual disabilities that were imposed on the minority in 1890 by the Manitoba Legislature. The French language was proscribed, and English became the only official language; all education was to be conducted through the medium of English.²⁶ The Joint Boards of Education were abolished, and an advisory board was set up of which said Archbishop Tache:

23. Clague, op. cit.

24. Skelton, op. cit., 484 et sequ.

25. Dafoe, Sifton, 61-100.

26. S. M., 1890, 55 Vic. XXXVII, 179.

"It is morally impossible for Catholics to become members of this organization."²⁷ As a result of the episcopal boycott all members of this advisory board of seven were non-Catholic. This advisory board regulated the non-sectarian religious exercises that were to be conducted just before closing school in the afternoon. These closing exercises were not compulsory, and the school trustees could decide whether or not they were to be held (sections 6 and 7). Also the schools were under no circumstances to have any other religious exercises or instruction. All schools that did not comply with this regulation ceased to be public schools within the meaning of the Act, and so lost the Legislative financial grant. All textbooks had to be authorized by the advisory board, and the financial penalty of the withholding of the grant was imposed on those schools that did not obey (Section 141).

The hierarchy had long realized that the "efforts gigantesques" of the Ontario enemy had defeated their hopes of making the first new province into an extension of Quebec, and they had hoped that by carefully selecting their places for settlements and by preserving their own ways of life they could preserve their flocks from what they firmly believed were the baneful influences of the great majority of the new settlers. They received sufficient encouragement from their brethren in the East to support them in their struggle, and this served to make compromise unlikely and the situation uneasy. Archbishop Langevin was so convinced of the

27. Tache, Pamphlet, Manitoba Schools, (St. Boniface, 1903), 6.

justice of his cause that he dismissed Tarte's offer of mediation
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 with scornful brusqueness, and even as late as September 16, 1896,
 the Manitoba Free Press reported that "Archbishop Langevin will
 insist upon all that the Remedial Bill contained, with a Parliamen-
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 tary grant to separate schools in the bargain...." This obstinate
 refusal to realize the changing pattern of events was materially
 strengthened by letters such as this one from Three Rivers:

J'ai lu avec le plus grand plaisir hier l'energique et
 vraiment episcopale protestation que vous avez faite dans
 votre sermon du 22 Novembre contre le pretendu reglement
 Laurier-Greenway de la question scolaire du Manitoba. Il
 va sans dire que je lue donne ma complete adhesion, et
 que j'en porte absolument le meme jugement, c'est a dire
 qu'il est nul devant l'qutorite imperiale et canonique.³⁰

The French Catholic leaders in Manitoba did not realize the
 political implication of the Manitoba School Question; had they
 realized them they would have accepted any compromise with thankful
 alacrity. Instead of doing so they let their unrealized desires
 torment themselves, and allowed their hopes and fears to be exploited.
 Generations were to be harassed because of their intransigence.

28. Morice, Langevin, 142.

29. Free Press, September 16, 1896.

30. Ibid., 144.

Chapter V.

The Laurier-Greenway Compromise.

As soon as the Liberal victory was achieved the Manitoba School Question came under review. The Manitoba Free Press, under the headline: "QUEBEC EFFORT," reported Mr. Laurier's speech at a banquet which was held in his honour by the Quebec Liberals at Quebec on October 29:

... Mr. Laurier proceeded to deal with the school question. He referred to the promise made before the election that the question would be settled within six months. 'We have been in power only four months; but before six months have ended we shall have effected a settlement which shall preserve all the rights of conscience, and those who believe that religion should be taught in the schools will have satisfaction. We have obtained all the concessions an honest man has the right to expect. We don't pretend we shall meet the views of extremists. There are those in Manitoba who are condemning beforehand the least concession; and there are those in Quebec who would not be satisfied unless we exact the pound of flesh we have a right to out of the bosom of Manitoba, nor until we have inflicted on the province direct humiliation. We wish to deal with others as we would have others deal with us. What we have suffered under the iron heel of tyranny we don't wish to inflict on others, and thus we have reached such a just and equitable settlement that it will meet the views of all straightforward and honest men. I know we have people who believe and hope we cannot succeed, and we have all those devout Catholics who believe we shall restore everything they have themselves destroyed. We don't appeal to those, nor to those who have traded on their religion for the last twenty-five years, but we appeal to sincere men, Catholic or Protestant, we appeal to all Christians who want the rights of conscience to be respected, and who will be satisfied with that. To these I say, within a few days, within a week, we shall be in a position to announce the terms of our settlement. That settlement will be embodied in the act of the legislature of Manitoba, which will be drawn up, and carried, by a sympathetic government.... We have been in power four months, give us time. As I have kept the promise con-



cerning this school question, so shall we keep the promises respecting all reforms....¹

While Laurier was so addressing the quebequois, Israel Tarte² was in Manitoba, visiting with Mr. Prendergast and attempting to win over the Manitoba Catholic party to what his leader considered was a reasonable settlement. Addressing some Winnipeg public school children he said:

My dear young friends, in my day we had no such magnificent schools as I see in Winnipeg. We had small schools, and in them English was not taught. I was twenty-seven years old before I could speak one word of English, and this will explain why I cannot speak as well as I would like. My imperfect knowledge of the English language is a great lesson to me and I hope to all public men in this regard. Now I have grown older it is my wish to see our boys and girls growing up together, learning together, respecting and loving one another. If my trip to the West helps to unite more closely the children of all creeds, I feel that I shall have done good work in it, and the feeling I have found everywhere gives me great hope. I am confident that in a very short time we will be able to announce that we have settled that question, which, in my opinion, should have been settled long ago. I see strong healthy boys and some very nice girls here, and I don't see for the life of me why my son should not find some love among you. (Laughter) There is no reason why Roman Catholics and Protestants should not walk together in childhood as they have to in after life.... My young friends, I bid you goodbye, and I hope the next time I visit Winnipeg I shall find in these halls Roman Catholics and Protestants working hand in hand.³

It does not require much perspicacity to realize that Tarte was breaking the news of the settlement as politically as he could, nor does it require much thought to realize how Mgr. Langevin would view such a speech as the one quoted above.

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1. Free Press, October 30, 1896.
 2. James E.P. Prendergast was a Catholic, a Manitoba Liberal who followed Laurier rather than Langevin. (See Pamphlet, Manitoba School Question, Winnipeg, 1890.)
 3. Winnipeg Tribune, October 30, 1896.

Tarte was even more specific when addressing a meeting at

St. Norbert:

Speaking at St. Norbert Thursday on the School Question, as reported in the press, Mr. Tarte said it was impossible to restore to the Catholic minority of Manitoba such a system of separate schools as they had prior to 1890, but that they would get concessions that, while they probably would not please the bigots, would be a vast improvement on the present state of affairs.... Mr. Tarte said he had come to Manitoba bearing a message of peace, and he asked that Catholics should reflect and exercise the broadest spirit of toleration.... He admitted that the Manitoba School Question had reached a desperate stage, but he had every confidence that Mr. Laurier and those surrounding him at Ottawa would be equal to the occasion, and find a solution that would be satisfactory to all fair-minded people.⁴

These appeals of Israel Tarte for toleration and fair-mindedness were enough to make the Catholics realize that the Laurier-Greenway agreement was not to fulfill their wishes. While the eloquence was ascending the Catholic press showed itself aware of the situation. The Winnipeg Tribune quoted this excerpt from Le Monde:

After showing himself implacable on the school question Mr. Tarte has now given up the flag to the enemy, and to what enemy? To the author of that infamous law of 1890 against which fought so much formerly, to the notorious yellow Martin, the fanatic par excellence, rabid persecutor of Manitoba Catholics. It is in the name of the Catholic province of Quebec that this traitor has dared to speak to the fanatical persecutors of the Catholics; it is in our name that he has capitulated before them....⁵

The Liberal party had evaded any written promise as to the kind of relief that they would bring the Catholics of Manitoba. They had talked a lot about justice and toleration, and they had

4. Free Press, October 31, 1896.

5. Winnipeg Tribune, October 29, 1896; Le Monde quoted.

tried to arouse on their behalf the men of good-will among the minority; but however naive the minority might be (and under whatever circumstances), it was with a sinking feeling of disillusionment that such phrases were heard. In the mouths of the politicians promises are frequently heard when no concrete and specific remedy is forthcoming. The uneasiness of the Catholics came to an end with the publication of the agreement reached between the Dominion and Manitoba governments on November 18, 1896. Their uneasiness was replaced by a conviction that they had been betrayed. The agreement stated that the public system of education was to remain throughout the province, and that there was to be no racial or religious segregation (this was probably foreseen following Israel Tarte's speech to the Winnipeg public school children). Children were to be taught in their mother tongue as well as in English, and as far as possible the teachers were to be of the same linguistic group as the children they taught, but they had to satisfy the Board of Education concerning their capability to teach. Religious instruction could be given after school-hours (3:30-4:00) in the school-rooms as long as parents demanded it, and supplied the instructor. Except for this last half-hour, coming directly after the school day, all state-aided education in the province was to be secular and public.

There were such men as Mr. Prendergast, who, viewing the situation realistically, accepted the settlement, and worked loyally

6. R.S.M. 1902, II, Cap. 143, s 215-224 (Laurier-Greenway Compromise).

to implement it, and to win support for it among the Catholic minority. The official Catholic opinion was hostile to the settlement, and this excerpt from the North West Review expresses this rather unfortunately, but very typically:

The Honorable the Minister for Public Works gave utterance last week to some words which may have won him temporary applause but cannot commend themselves to his Catholic brethren (Israel Tarte's speech to the public school children). He emphasized his wish - as if it were ours too - that Catholic children should associate at school with Protestant children. Now that is, most emphatically, what Catholic parents want by all means to avoid. It is all very well to speak about the supposed advantages of mingling with other people's children, but no family that respects itself ever countenanced promiscuous contact with any and every other family, and what is true on the score of manners and breeding is still more true in the realm of religion. We Catholics are a religious family, the only one enjoying the possession of unadulterated truth; we may therefore be compared without vanity (since we hold this of the mercy of God) to a princely family surrounded by upstarts; though the latter may be worthy people in their way, the former will keep them at arms length and will be especially careful that his own children do not associate with the coarse element. Grown-up persons, well instructed in their religion, and having acquired fixed habits of thought and action, may often, without much danger, mingle with those whose principle of thought and action are fundamentally wrong, but the plastic and imitative mind of the child, in which the senses and imagination overpower the will, is sure to suffer from intercourse with children whose religion is a mere matter of exterior observance founded on imaginary history. The danger for Catholic children in public schools arises less from the teachers than from the Protestant pupils. If any teacher should indulge in any bigoted remark about the 'errors of the Church of Rome' he would probably be hauled over the coals by someone; but who can prevent the bitter taunt, the cruel sneer, the brutal insult from a Protestant to a Catholic child on the way to and from school. Those Catholics who have attended public school in places where Catholics are a small minority know what I mean. Happy is the brave boy who has met such cowardly treatment with a knockdown blow; he has probably saved himself from it in future. But many, unfortunately the great majority of boys and girls, are not morally brave, and this majority are sure

to have their faith undermined or at least tarnished by the jibes of their ignorant and prejudiced Protestant schoolmates. It may be objected that some Catholics who have been educated in Protestant schools have come out scatheless. We doubt very much if any Catholic wholly educated in Protestant schools ever issued from them a true Catholic. If any of them did it must be that the high moral tone and Catholic spirit of a really intellectual home counteracted the subtle poison of an heretical atmosphere. But how few are so happily circumstanced! How many are the children of well-meaning but uninstructed parents, whose moral influence suffers from the limitations of their own culture!⁷

The tone of this editorial mirrored a part of the Manitoba Catholic minority who, obviously, would look askance at the new settlement. It would be difficult for any non-Catholic, however tolerant, to read such journalism without annoyance, and in Manitoba in these early days it must have done the minority cause great detriment, and must have dismayed the more reasonable members of the minority. The newspapers of the period are full of quotations from the speeches of Israel Tarte, who, in 1892 had roundly attacked the Manitoba Public School Act, and fervently pressed for a return of the pre-1890 school system. There was a realization on the part of men like Prendergast that with such men as were in power the only thing to do was to accept what was offered, and to be grateful for the measure of relief that was afforded, well aware that that was more than the Manitoba Liberals needed to give. Moreover, although the Catholic religion was relegated to the status of an extra-curricular activity, the French language again became an integral part of the educational system in those parts of the province where

7. Winnipeg Tribune, November 7, 1896, excerpt from North West Review quoted.

it was desired. The bi-lingual liberty that was contained in the agreement was a direct attempt to placate the French. The English speaking Catholics were in effect ignored and whereas in Winnipeg and Brandon, the English-speaking Catholic centres, a system of private schools grew up, the French were able to utilize the public schools, where French was the language of instruction, and which, because of their rural isolation, were less liable to sudden inspection. The official reports of the Department of Education are evidence of how the French schools persistently impeded by their intransigence anything approaching a common system of education within the public schools of the province.

The memorandum of settlement was decided upon on November 12, and the legislature of Manitoba passed an act in January, 1897, putting this agreement into effect. The provisions of the act were the same as the provisions contained in the memorandum of the settlement. These are the pertinent sections of the act:

1. Religious teaching to be conducted as hereinafter provided, shall take place in any public school in Manitoba;
 - (a) If authorized by a resolution passed by the majority of the school trustees of the district in which the school is carried on, or,
 - (b) If a petition be presented to said school trustees asking for religious teaching and signed by the parents or guardians of at least ten children of the school in the case of a rural school district, or by the parents or guardians of at least twenty-five children in the case of a city, town, or village school.
2. Such religious teaching shall take place between 3.30 and 4 o'clock in the afternoon, and shall be conducted by any Christian clergyman whose charge includes any portion of the school district, or by any person duly authorized by such clergyman, or by a teacher when so authorized.
3. Where so specified in such resolutions of trustees, or where so required by a petition of the parents or guardians, religious instruction during the proscribed period may take place only on specified days of the week instead of on every teaching day.

4. In any school in towns and cities, where the average attendance of Roman Catholic children is forty- or upwards, and in any rural and village districts where the average attendance of such children is twenty-five or upwards, the trustees shall, if required by the parents or guardians of such number of Catholic children, respectively, employ at least one duly certificated Roman Catholic teacher in such school. In any school in towns or cities where the average attendance of non-Roman Catholic children is forty or upwards, and in village or rural districts where the average attendance of such children is twenty-five or upwards, the trustees shall, if required ... employ at least only duly certificated non-Roman Catholic teacher.
- 5-9. (These regulations deal with the allocation of space to the various denominations for the religious instruction. The only purpose of these regulations was to ensure that no child was present at these religious extra-curricular activities unwittingly or unwillingly. When the space was limited, and was needed by both denominations, it was to be divided equally, irrespective of the numbers involved. On no account were there to be two denominations sharing the room at the same time. There was to be no separation of children by denominations during school hours.)
10. When ten of the pupils in any school speak the French language, or any language other than English, as their native tongue, the teaching of such pupils shall be conducted in French, or such other language, and English on the bi-lingual system.
11. All the provisions of "The Public Schools Act" and amendments and of "The Education Department Act" inconsistent with the provisions of this Act are hereby repealed.
12. This Act shall come into force on the First Day of August, A.D., 1897.⁸

This was the Act upon which the Public School System of Manitoba was to function for the next twenty years, but not in the way that was intended.

8. S. of M. 1896, 60 Vic., Cap. 26. An Act to Amend "The Public Schools Act."

Chapter VI.

The Results of the Compromise

The signing of the agreement in November, 1896, meant that the drive and energy of Clifford Sifton was transferred to the Federal Government, and on November 18, 1896, he became Minister of the Interior and Superintendent of Indian affairs in the Laurier¹ Ministry. His political acumen and ability were outstanding, yet his treatment of the School Question, and his later reaction to the North West schools question² do pose the question as to how far the Laurier-Greenway settlement was in the nature of a quid pro quo. Certainly some of the newspapers of the time were in no doubt about some alleged chicanery:

Mr. Martin's melancholy telegram to his friends in the West intimating that Mr. Laurier declines to recognize his indubitably strong claims to the Interior portfolio will be a disappointment to Manitoba Liberals. It will be unwelcome because the news testifies to the ascendancy of Tarte in the counsels of the Cabinet, and because of the other arrangement that Tarte has determined upon, namely the purchase of Clifford Sifton is degrading to politics and disgusting to all men of principle.... Now Mr. Laurier, under the influence of Tarte, enters into the corrupt intrigue with Sifton ... Mr. Sifton is ready to swallow his school principles for the sake of the office that is waiting him. Mr. Sifton is ready to sell out.... The business is a mass of disgusting intrigue, of open and unblushing corruption....³

As the Manitoba School Question had brought a passing political supremacy to the Manitoba Liberal party,⁴ and as it had so materially assisted the national opposition in their attempt to

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1. In the many references made to Sifton in political journalism, in memoirs and in biographies, his integrity was often doubted, but his ability was never questioned.
 2. Daffoe, Sifton, 277-302.
 3. Mail and Empire (Toronto), October 8, 1896.
 4. Clague, op. cit., 152.

5
 regain a federal majority, so it was now to be the means whereby an able and ambitious politician was to achieve a seat in the Dominion Cabinet. In a somewhat adulatory biography of Clifford Sifton it is said:

It was of course the school question which not only introduced Clifford Sifton to the field of Dominion politics but gave him the training in political advocacy and management that enabled him, at the age of thirty-five, to take his place in the arena, not as a neophyte, but equipped to become almost immediately one of the directing and governing minds of Laurier's first government, 'the ministry of the Talents' as it was called by its admirers.⁶

It is easy for the reader to appreciate the melancholy with which Joseph Martin received the news of the appointment of Sifton. It was he, in his peculiarly impulsive way, who had first openly spoken of the Manitoba Government's plan to make an issue of the school question.⁷ It was he who had been largely responsible for arousing the bitter feelings so necessary to make it a capital issue. Yet the very impetuousness and truculence which had served him so well in his political career previously were to prove his undoing. He resigned once too often ...

Joseph Martin, who had been the maker and shaper of the government policies and their champion in the Legislature and throughout the province, tendered - not for the first or second time - his resignation, to find, not a little to his surprise, that the premier no longer regarded his services as indispensable. Mr. Martin disappeared from the government⁸ and Clifford Sifton reigned instead.⁹

From May, 1891, when Sifton succeeded Martin as Attorney-General of Manitoba, until November, 1896, when he entered the

5. Ibid., 190.

6. Dafoe, Sifton, 100.

7. Portage la Prairie Speech, August 5, 1889.

8. Mail and Empire, October 8, 1896.

9. Dafoe, Sifton, 28.

Dominion Cabinet, Sifton was the real power in the Manitoba Govern-
 10
 ment. His family background of Irish Protestantism and Ulster
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 settlement made his antipathy to Catholic schools quite understand-
 able and even reasonable. Moreover, the political situation was
 such that any aspirant to political office with an Ontario upbringing
 12
 could hardly fail to take advantage of the situation. The
 Manitoba Liberals had well earned a reward from Laurier, and the
 ability of Sifton was already proven, although it was to become more
 evident in the wider political sphere that was to bring him fame and
 13
 fortune. Moreover, Sir John Thompson's sneer of Laurier's asso-
 ciation with a "black Tarte and a yellow Martin" may have rankled
 with the new Prime Minister, who could hardly have possessed any
 warmth of attachment in any case for that dispossessed and belligerent
 politician.

Clifford Sifton immediately began to prove how industrious and
 capable he could be as a federal minister. As Minister of the In-
 14
 terior he revitalized that previously moribund department, and
 his energetic efforts to people the West soon began to be evident.
 The difficulties in the way of settlement were many, and Mr. Sifton,
 speaking in Parliament of his settlement policy, said:

The problem that confronted me when I was sworn in as
 Minister of the Interior was this: from the inter-
 national boundary to nearly one hundred miles north of
 Edmonton, from the boundary of Manitoba to the Rocky

10. Dafoe, Sifton; Skelton, Laurier, et al.

11. Dafoe, op. cit., 7-9.

12. Ibid., 8.

13. Ibid., XV.

14. While Sifton deserves credit for his work, it must be remembered
 that it was the ideal time for Canadian immigration.

Mountains, the whole fertile belt was looked upon as railway reserves. Insofar as every tract of land in the whole North West which was considered fairly fit for settlement was concerned, it was covered with reservations of some kind in favour of the railway companies.¹⁵

The railways had delayed taking up their options, because by so doing they postponed their liability to taxation, and in 1897 only 1,825,433 acres had been patented, although at least 24,000,000 acres were within their entitlement. The Liberal government immediately ceased to make further grants of lands to the railways, and by 1905 the energetic and representations of the Minister of the Interior had resulted in the railways taking possession of 22,478,013 acres of their reserves, leaving only a few scattered pieces to be patented. Having cleared the land, Sifton's next move was to simplify the process of homesteading, and the Dominion Land Act materially increased the discretionary powers of the Minister, and at the same time rendered the operation of his Department remarkably free from interference or inspection. J. W. Daffoe, in his biography of Clifford Sifton, wrote:

The change in the auspices under which the homesteader set about his arduous nation-building task of turning the bald high prairie into waving wheatfields was little short of magical. The homesteader on the land became content; and the door to the West, thus made open, stood ready to receive the settlers of the world.... The empty West of Edward Blake's lamentations was no more.... Immigration increased from 20,000 in 1896 to 32,000 in the following year, the next year the figures were 44,000 ... the count of immigrants entering Canada during the Sifton regime exceeded half a million.¹⁶

15. Daffoe, op. cit., 132, quoted.

16. Ibid., 137.

While the majority of the new settlers came from Great Britain and the U.S.A., the Sifton policy in conjunction with other factors introduced into Western Canada a considerable European element¹⁷ that was to cause a considerable complication to the pattern of Western Canadian society, and especially was this influx to embarrass further a school system that was already unable to meet the rival and disparate claims of the older settlers.

Since 1897 the administration of the educational enactments of the Legislature had met with a non-cooperative spirit from the majority of the Manitoba Catholics, who stood behind Mgr. Langevin in his angry denunciations of the Laurier-Greenway compact. Before proceeding to deal with the reaction of the Catholic majority to the compact, it would be well to realize that there were some Catholics who were prepared to cooperate. One writer, who for obvious reasons signed himself A CATHOLIC AND A LIFELONG CONSERVATIVE, in a letter to the Winnipeg Tribune said:

It may have been zeal which at first caused your Grace to descend from the high position in which you were placed to the petty broils and squabbles of a party. Prior to this difficulty which has arisen wholly by and through political intrigue, your Grace took no effective measures to open or sustain separate schools throughout your province. This may be met by the argument that the Conservative party had promised certain rights to the Catholic minority....That is why I venture in this open letter to tell your Grace that it is out of no disrespect to you as our religious chief that we as Catholics are opposed to anything like offering opposition to our present government. Mr. Laurier promised us a meed of reform in the Manitoba school laws. That promise he has fulfilled. Why turn from the hand that by peaceable means has secured for us as Catholics certain concessions. Catholic teachers are employed under the present school law in our public schools; Catholic trustees

17. Robert England, The Colonization of Western Canada (Toronto, 1936).

and inspectors are not unknown in these offices.... Our Catholic children are hampered, I regret to say, by the subjective attitude of our people to the Church. We are enervated by clerical influence - kept back by clerical domination, and our children are the sufferers thereby....¹⁸

A second letter was published to which the writer almost defiantly appended his name:

A letter of congratulation (to Wilfrid Laurier) was mailed at Deleau postoffice two weeks ago with the signatures of 42 French Roman Catholics accepting the school settlement, being the best that could have been arrived at.... If each and every French Roman Catholic ratepayer would consider the advantage we have in the new law each and every just and right thinking Roman Catholic would accept it.... I respect the clergy, but I differ from them on this question, as I do not think it wise to let them control the schools and corral us all.... I may add that the 42 signatures to the memorial represented herein would be 90% of the French Roman Catholics in the district of Deleau, and more could have been obtained, had it not been impossible for the deep snow to reach every person.... respectfully, E. Lapham.¹⁹

The Toronto Globe published the following interview with the Hon. J.E.P. Prendergast of St. Boniface, and while the two previous letters could be belittled as being the utterances of insignificant members of the Catholic group, the words of Mr. Prendergast were bound to command a certain attention in the West: The reporter asked Mr. Prendergast "What do you think, Mr. Prendergast, of the educational question in Manitoba?"

Well, circumstances alter cases, and I may say to begin with, that in short our position is the following: There are fifty-one of our schools that have been closed, some for one and two, and other for three and four years, which means, in sound figures, as far as those are concerned, that 1,000 or 1,200 children have for almost a generation been deprived of secular education, and to a considerable extent of religious instruction as well. There are also twenty-five schools that are organized and in operation

18. Winnipeg Tribune, December 15, 1896.

19. Ibid., January 14, 1897.

under the sub-schools act, and these are also deprived of denominational instructions, which, from our standpoint, is one of the objections to the system. We then have thirty-two schools which are maintained as parish schools, that is to say, purely by voluntary effort and by voluntary subscriptions. In most cases, besides contributing to the parish schools, to which they send their children, my co-religionists are at the same time bound, as in Winnipeg, and so many other places, to contribute as well to the support of the public schools, from which they cannot at present conscientiously derive any benefit whatsoever. Besides being an intolerable situation, this under actual circumstances of the country and the stringency of the times, cannot last much longer, and experience teaches us that our separate schools must in the future, as in the past, continue to decrease gradually, as well as in number, as in efficiency.

"Would, in your estimation, the proposed amendments remedy this unfortunate state of affairs?"

I have no hesitancy in saying that the agreement, if carried out in a spirit of good faith, will surely improve in a considerable degree the state of affairs, but, of course, that is not altogether a matter of laws, and a matter of legislation, but also a matter of good faith between parties. I am happy to see, however, that public opinion has not so much followed the amendment as preceded it and paved the way to it. The mass of people today realize that two elements of this importance cannot for ever live apart, as we have been doing for some time past, and that the declared convictions and honest scruples of a considerable portion of the community are entitled to some consideration at the hands of their brethren, of other creeds and denominations. I need not say that the proposed amendments will not reinstate us in our former status, for the schools will be in the future, as they have been for the past six years under the superior control of the government, but at the same time I find in the proposed settlement a series of decided improvements in the law which I believe my co-religionists would make a serious mistake in not putting to serious and honest trial.

"What are these?"

To begin with we have secured religious instruction.... Then children brought up in the French tongue will be educated in that language, and English will be taught them by the bi-lingual system... from our standpoint I see in this arrangement promise of great improvement in the future.... I intend for my part to give my most loyal

support to the proposal, and to make an honest effort to reap from the same all the good that it can possibly yield.... We now have been labouring for more than six years under our present difficulties....

"I understand you then to say that the position of the Roman Catholic is a critical one to-day?"

A most critical one. From a general point of view I say it would be almost a national crime to let more schools close their doors than the fifty-one which have already done so.... I cannot but see in the new terms now arrived at an occasion for the most precious improvements in those twenty-five or thirty French schools which have joined in to-day in the public schools act. As far as our voluntary parish schools, thirty-two in number, are concerned I am not disparaging a self-sacrificing spirit of their supporters when I say that, financially crippled and starved as they are, they cannot, at least in nineteen cases, give any more than the most meagre and lamentable results, and besides receiving no legislative grant, they are cruelly in need of being relieved of this double tax under which they are labouring to-day. For one half of them, probably, if we judge from the past, would be in a year or two closing or joining under the present act, both of which extremities I would wish, for my part, to see avoided.²⁰

Mr. Prendergast was to receive considerable patronage from the Laurier government, but in review his opinions seem rather guided by reasonable expediency than by sycophantic agreement with his political superiors. The Hon. Edward Blake, who had served as counsel to the Catholics before the Privy Council in England, wrote in January, 1897:

Having considered the provisions now under discussion I think them infinitely more advantageous to the Roman Catholic minority than any remedial bill which it is in the power of the parliament of Canada to thrust on Manitoba.²¹

Again it is proper to remember that the sympathies of Edward Blake naturally lay with the provincial opposition to the encroaching cen-

20. Toronto Globe, November 21, 1896.

21. Free Press, February 16, 1897.

tral government, and, of course, he was generally a supporter of his successor, Wilfrid Laurier. These remarks from various shades of lay opinion reveal that there was not complete accord behind the opposition uncompromisingly maintained by Mgr. Langevin to the new amendment. Israel Tarte failed to win him over during his visit to the West. He wrote ruefully to Laurier:

Archbishop Langevin stands firm for the right to organize Catholic School districts. In other words, he demands the re-establishment of separate schools which, as you know, is out of the question. The priests who surround him are fanatical and full of prejudice.²²

The Manitoba Government, with a view to redressing one of the grievances, placed the French schools under the exclusive supervision of a French Catholic official, who plaintively reported:

Being aware that I was favourably known by the large part of the clergy of the archdiocese of Ottawa, where I had studied theology under Archbishop Duhamel and that I had been the schoolmate and friend of Archbishop Langevin, that I had taught with success, for more than fifteen years in the Separate Schools as well as in the public schools of Ontario; Sir Wilfrid Laurier recommended my appointment as Inspector of the French Schools, and I was so appointed by the Manitoba Government. When I speak of French schools I speak of schools attended by Catholics, because, here, all who speak French are Catholic, be they French Canadian, half-breed, Belgian, or French.

My principal duties consist of visiting schools, assisting in their administration, and obtaining what is required from the Government for their good working.

When I came here, or rather last year, thirty-five schools, attended by pupils who were, so to say, all Catholic, were in operation as public schools. The schools were under the direction of Catholic male or female teachers. Since the Greenway-Laurier agreement, the parish priest was invited by both the teacher and the inspector to visit the schools and take charge of the religious instruction from 3:30 - 4:00 o'clock p.m.

22. Dafoe, Sifton, Tarte to Laurier, quoted, 97.

About half of those thirty-five public schools are at present separate schools for the following reasons:

At first Archbishop Langevin and his clergy refused to recognize me as an inspector and opposed the trial of the settlement in a systematic manner. Then, the Superintendent of the Archbishop's Schools, the Rev. A. Cherrier, set to work to induce Catholics who had public schools to convert them into separate schools, and he supplied the teachers gratuitously. On the other hand all those who have helped in the organization of the two schools I have established at the urgent requests of the trustees, or who have sent their children to those schools are under excommunication, that is to say - they have no participation in the sacraments of the Church and they would be deprived of Catholic burial if they were to die in that condition.

Every means at Mr. Cherrier's disposal having been used to no purpose, other means of a more expeditious character are resorted to, as may be seen from Mr. Alex McDougall's letter herewith enclosed.

Being unwilling to render these poor people liable to the censure of the church and to rouse the ire of the clergy against me, I thought it proper to discontinue the organization of French schools, and I advised them to wait with patience for the decision of Rome which is not long to come. You will understand, dear sir, that with such an opposition on the part of the Archbishop and his clergy, public schools have decreased in number, and my position has become almost a sinecure for the present.

The schools which are now in operation under the settlement, and under my control, are pretty well scattered throughout Manitoba. The teachers whose services I have secured for these schools have all been educated in Roman Catholic educational establishments, and are recommended by their parish priests as moral and religious persons. Catechism is taught from 3:30 - 4 o'clock daily. Parish priests are entitled to visit these schools, and are invited to do so, but none, to my knowledge, have yet crossed the threshold of a public school. There is no uniformity as regard to books. None but Catholic books are to be found; they are those used in the Archbishop's separate schools. I have the authority of the Advisory Board to use my judgement until French books have been approved by them....

Since my arrival the Government has always appeared to be well disposed towards me and ready to lend assistance in the organization of schools for, at the present date, several Catholic groups are without schools, and, with the Archbishop's permission, I could, with the assistance

of the Govt ... organize schools that are practically Catholic.

All that I have asked the Government in respect to schools has been granted to me, and especially my appointment to the Board of Examiners and their approval of a set of reading books....

The clergy have fought against public schools and have attempted to abolish them wherever Catholics are found, not because these schools were considered as being dangerous to faith or morals, since they were supplied with books similar to those in separate schools, and possessed Catholic teachers recommended by their parish priests, and they were and are still bent on abolishing the remainder, if possible on the ground that if they are not fought and are allowed to exist in peace, and progress under the supervision of a Catholic inspector, such schools would give full satisfaction, and would injure separate schools to a very great extent, as the latter would very likely be turned into public schools....

The reasons urged by the clergy to fight any arrangement, as well as the concessions it might admit of, are that these concessions being brought about through the goodwill of the Government without being embodied in the law would be cancelled upon such goodwill coming to an end....

The free schools, with the exception of the Sisters' and Brothers' schools, are in a pitiable state compared with those of the State....²³

While the plight of this hapless inspector can be imagined, it is also easy to realize why there was antipathy towards him in Manitoba among his co-religionists. He was a nominee of their antagonist, Laurier, and he was answerable to the Advisory Council and the Manitoba Government, two institutions that were devoid of Catholic sympathies. The Advisory Board in particular was fashioned as a secular or Protestant administration. Moreover, when the Inspector speaks with pride of his instruction in theology he immediately becomes sus-

23. James Collin Miller, National Government and Education in Federated Democracies, Dominion of Canada (Philadelphia, 1940), quoted, 148ff.

pect of being a "spoiled priest," and they are always distrusted in any simple Catholic society. It is difficult to see what alternative the Government could have adopted. They had to appoint a French inspector, and it would have been a hardy local man who would have taken on the post. Whoever was appointed would have been bedevilled, so it was just as well to use an outsider, and blame Laurier for it.

Archbishop Langevin was absent during the negotiations that preceded the Greenway-Laurier settlement, but on his return from Rome in September, 1896, his sentiments were immediately sought by the newspapers, nor were they kept in any doubt as to how he felt about any settlement engineered in his absence. ^B Before he had gone to Rome he ²⁴ spurned the overtures of Israel Tarte, and now:

Archbishop Langevin interviewed by your correspondent yesterday said: 'I am very well pleased with my interview with the Pope, but you may understand that in matters like the Manitoba School Question His Holiness is not disposed to interfere. He is quite content to leave settlement of the matters which concern the welfare of his people to the ecclesiastical superiors of the Province.'

"Can you say if it is true that a settlement has been reached?"

Matters are in much the same condition as when I left, as far as I am aware. You see, I have been away, and have not seen any Canadian newspapers. I have had no communication with the Government since my return. I do not know what Mr. Laurier proposes or what Mr. Greenway proposes or whether they propose anything. If it is true that a settlement has been reached I do not care whether they consult me or not so long as the settlement is satisfactory, and the minority are accorded justice and fairplay.

"Would it be true, your Grace, that you would be disposed to accept as basis of a settlement the right to give religious teaching in public schools?"

If it be true as reported that the question is one the verge of settlement, I do not care to say anything that

may retard that result. Not knowing what has been proposed I cannot give any opinion on it.²⁵

Any arrangements based on the constitution, the petitions of the Catholics of Manitoba and of the hierarchy, also on the judgment of the Privy Council, will be received by us as satisfactory....

Archbishop Langevin was speaking to a representative of the Nor'Wester, and a careful analysis will show that the Archbishop had not changed his attitude on the School Question in the slightest. Though fatigued after his journey from the East, and after a siege of hand shaking that would have overcome any ordinary man, His Grace extended a lengthy interview to a representative of the Nor'Wester.

His Grace replied to the reporter that he was in complete ignorance as to what Mr. Laurier proposed doing:

'But, Your Grace,' added the reporter, 'it has been given out from an apparently authoritative source that Premier Greenway will settle this question on the basis offered the Dominion Commissioners last spring, to wit: the alternative of purely secular schools, or the present system, with the privilege of imparting religious instruction during the last half-hour of the school term each day.'

'That will not be a settlement,' replied His Grace.... 'Anything less (than the remedial bill) will be no settlement. I do not say a remedial bill is necessary; Mr. Greenway can, if he chooses, legislate to our satisfaction, but whether it be here or Ottawa, the essential rights guaranteed to us by the constitution must be embodied in the Settlement, else it will be useless to discuss it.... His Holiness the Pope has endorsed the stand we have taken and will continue to endorse it....'

'Your Grace must have noticed what the Toronto Globe said editorially to the effect that the events of the past few months must have convinced any man, who is not living in a land of dreams, that legislation such as the Archbishop supported is out of the question, and that it

25. Mail and Empire (Toronto), September 21, 1896.

would be a part of wisdom for Archbishop Langevin and his friends to bow to the inevitable. The continuance of agitation, the Globe declares, can serve no purpose but to keep alive a controversy fruitful of ill-feeling and expectations that cannot be realized.'

'That is strange too. Mr. Laurier is in power by a majority from Quebec, all pledged to restore our rights to us. His Quebec following are pledged to even more than Sir Charles Tupper's remedial bill, which many of them declared did not give their co-religionists in Manitoba all they were entitled to. Surely Quebec will stand by its promises....'26

The hopes of Manitoba Catholics were based upon the support of Quebec. They did not realize that the privileges of Quebec had come with the condition of the Conquest. Times had changed, the West was filling with men Ontario bred. Quebec could hold its own, but no more. If only the Archbishop had realized this a satisfactory compromise would have been assured.

Chapter VII

The Problem of Laurier

The indignation expressed by Archbishop Langevin and the uncooperative attitude adopted by the clerical party towards the operation of the settlement were of no avail. A token attempt was made by the Catholic members of the Manitoba Legislature to reverse the new educational order, but only three members of the Legislature supported the motion that:

Be it resolved that a Bill be prepared in obedience to the command of her Majesty, and on the lines of the Remedial Order, so as to restore to the Catholic minority all the constitutional rights of which they have been deprived.¹

The thirty-seven Protestant members ignored party lines to vote against the motion, and Messrs. Pare, Marion, and Lauzon had the satisfaction of having made the gesture, for that was all that it was. The growing prosperity of Manitoba, the higher prices for agricultural products allied with the mining development and the increasing immigration, together with the realization that the power of the Catholic political machine was a thing of the past,² combined to thrust the school question from the political scene. The Catholics were defeated, but the bi-lingual salve was to prove vexatious in its application, and in its turn was to provoke a further series of educational and political distempers.

In those districts where there were French settlements, the amended 1897 law³ was accepted, as French Protestant teachers were

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1. Manitoba, Journals of the Legislative Assembly, March 17, 1897, 62-3.
 2. Holmes, op. cit., 104.
 3. C. B. Sissons, Bi-Lingual Schools in Canada (Toronto, 1917), 118.

too exotic a species to be common on the prairies, and also because the law allowed the employment of Catholic teachers in districts where there was a Catholic majority.⁴ In Winnipeg and Brandon the problem could not be satisfactorily answered by a grudging, perhaps casuistical, acceptance of the position. In these two centres the Catholics were generally English-speaking or at least under English direction in a scattered group. These Catholics established private schools and most of the Catholics of these districts have, since 1890, supported their own schools as well as paying the public school tax.⁵

Slowly Mgr. Langevin began to see the futility of his resistance. Stricken with typhoid fever in September, 1897, deserted by some of his Catholic supporters who had stayed with Laurier,⁶ and uneasy over the result of the Prime Minister's appeal to the Vatican regarding clerical interference in political affairs,⁷ he wrote on October 30, 1897:

J'en ai encore, hélas, pour des années à porter ma lourde croix. La question des écoles le silence de Rome, la conduite indigne de certaines Catholiques me font plus souffrir que la fièvre.⁸

Gradually Laurier's diplomatic handling of the situation began to achieve some sort of rapprochement. Moreover, the Vatican had tacitly upheld Wilfrid Laurier's appeal, and Mgr. Langevin began to listen to Laurier, and then, through the consummate artistry of the politician, began to deplore with his distinguished co-religionist

4. S. of M. 60 Vic., Cap. 26, s. 4.

5. Weir, op. cit., 52.

6. Notably J.E.P. Prendergast, later Chief Justice, Manitoba Court of Appeal.

7. Morice, Langevin, 172.

8. Ibid., 172, quoted.

the bigotry that was to be found in Manitoba. The official biography of Mgr. Langevin states:

L'Annee 1898 fut signalee par des negociations avec le gouvernement Laurier ayant pour but d'ameliorer la situation scolaire du Manitoba. Ces pourparlers commencerent des les premiers jours de l'annee, et L'archeveque de St. Boniface se garda soigneusement de rien dire ou faire qui put nuire a leur succes. De Son cote, le premier ministre paraissait anime de bonnes intentions, ce que Mgr. Langevin reconnaissait sans peine lorsqu'il ecrivait a Mgr. Begin, alors administateur de Quebec: 'Vous trouverez ci-inclus une copie du memoire que le Premier Ministre m'a remis. Je lui ai fait de vive voix les remarques contenues dans l'autre memoire qui lui a ete presente, ainsi qu'a M. Sifton mercredi, le 2 courant. M. Laurier est pret a tout accorder ... L'idee de M. Laurier est de faire accepter les divers articles de ma memoire et de les presenter au Board of Education, ou Advisory Board de Winnipeg, qui a droit de faire des reglements scolaires. Il parait decide a regler la question et il m'a promis de parler lui-meme au Dr. Bryce, le fougeux ministre, qu'on a du faire venir de Winnipeg, et il va essayer de le rendre raisonnable.'

'Les propositions de Sir Wilfrid Laurier etaient les suivantes:

1. L'archeveque de St. Boniface sera membre du Bureau d'Education, avec droit de se nommer un substitut.
2. Il sera represente au bureau des examinateurs.
3. On nommera un certain nombre d'inspecteurs approuves par L'archeveque.
4. Les diplome d'instituteurs ne seront point requis pour le moment dans les cas des congregations religieuses.
5. Les livres (d'instruction) de classe seront les memes que ceux dont on sert aujourd'hui dans les ecoles separees de l'Ontario, et devront etre approuves de la meme maniere.
6. On adoptera le systeme scolaire en vigueur au Nouveau-Brunswick, et dans la Nouvelle-Ecosse en ce qui est la separation des enfants selon leur religion.⁹

These modified demands showed that Archbishop Langevin was, however reluctantly, becoming increasingly aware that the trend of

9. Ibid., 173, quoted.

Manitoba politics was not in his favour, and that he would be fortunate to obtain anything at all to reassert his authority in the realm of public education. Nevertheless even these lesser demands were summarily denied and all that was obtained was a place on the Advisory Board of Education and a tacit acceptance by that Board that the inspectors appointed to French schools would first win the approval of His Grace. This was the situation until 1916.

Gradually the permanent administrators of public education within the Province worked out a modus vivendi, marred only by occasional intransigence, but the makeshift nature of the settlement marked it with the unsettled condition that is generally associated with a time of transition. Politically the Manitoba School Question had served a purpose; it was a means whereby the Liberal party in Manitoba had secured itself in power,¹⁰ and it was a deciding factor in the Federal¹¹ election of 1896. It remained a political factor in provincial politics although the secular and non-Catholic element in the province was so firmly in control that the issue was beyond all questioning. The rejection of the Coldwell Amendments of 1912 was to foretell the total eclipse that was to come in 1916, and by that time so many new factors had arisen to complicate the question that the original arguments lacked any real force as determining factors in the new settlement.

The Manitoba School Question was essentially a product of the time, and although it was integrally interwoven with the developing

10. Clague, op. cit., 133.

11. Ibid., 209.

Canadian pattern, it was nevertheless a further manifestation of a recurring historical phenomenon that is an inevitable result of the development of Western civilization. Perhaps the most important result of the political implications of the Manitoba School Question was the effect it had upon the actions of those Canadians who were liable to two loyalties, the Catholic Church as well as the State. Europe owed much, if not everything, to the safekeeping of the Church during the Dark Age. For centuries the princes admitted their gratitude to the papacy, until they began to develop a national way of life that would ensure their own sovereignty without the over-riding interference from the papacy. Hence, to a greater or less degree, opposition developed against the authority of Rome, which power reached its apogee under Innocent III. The Northwestern countries protested most violently, and their protests were provoked by clumsy mishandling, by economic pressure, and by a thrust towards separatism that eventually broke up Christendom into rival antagonistic sections. Within the new Western nation states the first loyalty was to the Crown; it was assured by persecution, by self-interest, by some genuine revulsion against a corrupt papacy.

Within these Protestant countries there remained a certain conservative element who kept the old allegiance. Their position was at the least anomalous and at the most perilous. They constituted an unpredictable element of the population, they were necessarily regarded with a certain amount of unease by the most benign of national governments, and with abhorrence and fear by many sections of the population. The gradual transference of power to a democratic system of government in these countries accentuated the problem. In some countries, as in

Germany and France, this Catholic minority was sufficiently strong to form a political party, and while England itself was free from any such problem, the Irish Parliamentary Party proved a constant reminder of the failure of parliamentary government to function in a non-homogeneous society. It was in Canada, however, where the Irish solution was not sought, that the problem was really besetting, and it was the Manitoba School Question that was responsible for partly resolving it.

The hierarchy of Quebec had won an unchallenged place in the loyalty of the people of Quebec; until the challenge of Laurier the opposition to their authority had been merely an anti-clericalism that is a necessary concomitant to any provincial Catholic society. In their attempt to operate their mandements outside their province the bishops posed the question. Did the authority of the Quebec hierarchy pass out of Quebec over all of Canada? If so their solution meant that Catholic laymen would be severely circumscribed in their political activities, it would have stultified their participation in Dominion affairs, it would have meant that quebequois laymen would have only parochial, or at the most provincial, interests in matters in which they could express a deferential interest. To any man like Laurier the position would appear intolerable, and in his wake were bound to be those who had not the ability but only the desire to defy the hierarchical circumscription.

The issue had come to a head in the federal election of 1896, when the bishops supported the Conservative Party, and Wilfrid Laurier was the leader of the opposition. The Quebec hierarchy had done all that was in their power, and all that they imagined was in their power,

to block the rise of Laurier. Yet this Quebec Catholic became Prime Minister of Canada in spite of the Quebec hierarchy; he polled a tremendous majority in that province in spite of them. And having done so he then appealed, along with other Catholic laymen, to the Vatican, and asked for a definitive statement regarding the place of a Catholic layman in a secular and Protestant society. He was not answered, but the antagonism of the bishops was abated. It is questionable whether he could be satisfactorily answered.

12

As soon as Laurier was elected Premier he set about consolidating his position, and he well knew that his treatment of the Manitoba School Question could, unless the bishops were curbed, lose him Quebec, and thence all Canada. He knew that the bishops were incensed after his apparent defalcation; they were determined to humiliate him if at all possible: "They will not pardon us for their check of last summer; they want revenge at all costs."

13

The Canadian laymen decided to appeal to Rome. Within two months of the Liberals taking office two emissaries of the French liberals, the parish priest of St. Lin and the Chevalier Drolet, proceeded to the Vatican. There followed swiftly two more distinguished intermediaries, Charles FitzPatrick, Solicitor-General of Canada, and Charles Russell, of London. With them was a petition to the Pope signed by Laurier and forty-four members of Parliament, protesting against the political action of the Canadian hierarchy. Rome does not lightly quarrel with governments and prime ministers. By March

12. Skelton, *op. cit.*, II, 30-44.

13. *Ibid.*, II, 57.

(1897) the Nuncio Monsignor Merry del Val was in Canada as apostolic delegate, and though care was taken to save the faces of the bishops, their concerted assaults on the government ceased, and Laurier never had again to face their open hostility. The passionate zeal with which some of the Quebec clergy embraced the faith of nationalism as preached by Bourassa was a direct result of this thrust of Laurier.

The victory gained by Laurier was a considerable one, but he won it at some expense.¹⁴ No events could change the traditional behaviour of the French Canadian hierarchy. They withdrew, but they never took their eyes off Laurier, and he was well aware of this all the days of his life. For the rest of his political career he walked in the shadows of his Church.

14. Ibid., II, 27-44.

Chapter VIII

The Implications Complicated by Immigration.

1896 was the end of a chapter in the Manitoba School Question. The election of 1896 began a new phase. New issues were raised, and there were new alignments in the continuing struggle. There was bound to be a continuing struggle; it was not to be avoided, unless a satisfactory answer could be given to the perennially besetting question: TO WHOM DO SCHOOLS BELONG? The issue was comparatively simple in Manitoba up to the Laurier regime. The conflict ran along lines that were inherent in the settlement of the country, but in the process of that settlement Manitoba would have necessarily resolved the problem itself far more simply had not the issue become a political argument that could only reach a partial solution, and which had to admit the compromise of Greenway and Laurier. From that Compromise the School Question achieved a new lease of life. Normally the Ontario flood of settlers would have achieved such a hegemony by the turn of the century that Manitoba would have become a prototype of Ontario; English would have become the first language in the schools, and the privileges of the minority would have been kept within the limits that such a majority would have regarded as the irreducible minimum.¹ This could have been achieved upon a provincial level, but on the national plane the susceptibilities of Quebec had to be considered, however reluctantly.² Laurier had to compromise, and Manitoba was willing to do so. Naturally enough the compromise was intended as a solace for the French, but its

1. Sissons, op. cit., 118.

2. Claque, op. cit., 2.

artful wording benefited the Mennonites as well. It would have benefited any other racial group that was in the province equally, but there were none that seemed likely to upset the system, but the Compromise was there, for those who wanted it. Within ten years there were tens of thousands of new settlers who were of Catholic stock and claimed or, who were persuaded to claim, the advantages of the Compromise, and the whole political structure of the province was to be shot through with the reaction. The Ontario pattern of settlement was to receive a severe set-back. Nevertheless the political acumen of the Manitoba politicians was to prove equal to the occasion. Within the province there was to be placatory indulgent treatment of the racial and religious minorities, while outside the call was made for Orange aid. It was brilliant political manoeuvring, and it extended the boundaries of the province against the opposition of the Quebec hierarchy and at the same time convinced the local Catholic leaders that Roblin and Rogers were their champions.³

The problem which was to confront Manitoba during these formative years of the early twentieth century was the problem of absorbing the new settlers into the prevailing Canadian way of life. The task was rendered far more difficult than was necessary by the Laurier-Greenway arrangement. The problem which confronts every society that accepts or endures considerable infiltration of foreign elements is the amount of liberty that should be allowed in order to maintain some sort of concert within the community while at the same time en-

3. Weir, op. cit., 56.

deavouring to fit them into the existing social order. Especially does this problem present itself urgently when the new settlers are of a different race and religion, and speak a language that is foreign. In Manitoba the question was further complicated by the fact that these new settlers were largely affiliated by religious ties to the dispossessed and resentful French-Canadian element of the province.⁴ It was only natural that these new settlers settled in homogeneous groups, and for a while their homogeneity could be condoned, but eventually a heterogeneous society was to be considered as the inevitable result of their settlement.

Large areas of the Canadian West have been settled by individuals having a variety of ethnic and occupational backgrounds... the process of settlement was long and arduous.⁵

Professor C. A. Dawson, in his study of these groups, advanced the conclusion that assimilation must come eventually to all the homogeneous groups, although a great burden is placed upon Canadian institutions and Canadian patience in the process of their economic and social adjustment. In speaking of the Roman Catholic groups he says:

The other groups belong to the Roman Catholic Church whose sectarian stages were outgrown during the early centuries of the Christian era. Long ago this Church learned to deal discriminatingly with secular forces. Its way of life and the philosophy of a competitive and individualistic order have become adjusted to each other. As a religious group it is mature and wise in the ways of two worlds. Ritual and technique have taken the place of the unconventional enthusiasm of the early centuries of expectancy. At times it has become linked with linguistic and nationalistic revivals, and has received a transferred emotional quickening in some respects akin to sectarianism. Thus the Roman Catholic Church is linked with the linguistic and nationalistic sentiments in German settlements in the prairie regions.

4. Sissons, op. cit., 124.

5. C. A. Dawson, "Group Settlement: Ethnic Communities in Western Canada," Canadian Frontiers of Settlement (9 vols., Toronto, 1936), VII, xiii.

Similarly the Catholic Church is associated with French-Canadian nationalism in facing Anglicization and the marked secularization which accompanies it. In situations where cultural invasion threatens, religious and nationalistic minorities manifest a sectarian tinge, and seek to retain their identity by isolating themselves in some measure from their neighbours. This is done by settling in homogeneous groups and maintaining their own language and institutions.

Such congregate settlement is called segregation. Racial and religious groups may have blocks of land allocated to them as had the Doukhobors and the Mennonites, and in large manner also the German Catholics and the Mormons. Without prevision, however, segregation may take place through the natural desire of the immigrants to settle beside neighbors possessing the same language, religion, and general culture. This process (of segregation) was present in all groups, but it was most active in the case of the Mormons, Germans, and French Canadians.... Furthermore leaders in these homogeneous communities were active in stimulating the entry of population elements possessing their own ethnic background. Consequently these minorities became distinctive societies, occupying their own land-base and further separated from neighbouring communities by language, institutions and nationalistic and sectarian sentiments. For varying periods these "culture islands" enjoyed a "splendid isolation." During this period, distinctive sects like the Mennonites and Doukhobors remained at a stage of arrested development in their life cycle. The world was shut out, and they retained their initial fervours and way of life unmodified. Such a condition could not continue.... Portions of these sects moved to new isolated areas. Those who remained experienced an invasion of people, institutions, and ideas which profoundly changed their way of life.... Through the various avenues of social and economic penetration these ethnic groups are led to speak the official language of the region, and to adopt its prevailing methods of making a living, its expenditure practices, and loyalties. The assimilation of a colony gathers momentum through the children of immigrants and may require two generations for its completion. Knowing their young people's susceptibility to the cultural penetration of the surrounding community, the sectarians respond to the situation by perennial opposition to government schools and to extensive contacts between their children and non-colony people.⁶

This characteristic of segregate people was absent in Manitoba because of the Laurier Compromise.

6. Ibid., VII, xv.

The Compromise of 1897 was an Act which had to be applied in administration. Administrators are always human and in Canada usually humane; to the natural tendency to avoid rigorous administration was added a positive desire not to be harsh with those affected adversely in their beliefs and sentiments by the School Act. It was also natural that the government, once the issue had been settled and had ceased to arouse public interest, should follow the sound political public rule of not antagonizing prospective supporters unless by so doing more could be gained from other groups. Thus the French and the Mennonite minorities enjoyed the fullest liberty in bi-lingual instruction.... For this electoral support was gladly given, and insensibly the Roblin group began to move towards electoral dependence upon the minority and marginal groups of Manitoba.⁷

The bi-lingual privileges would have been no real problem had not the Sifton immigration plan peopled the West with various ethnic groups and European settlers. The bi-lingual clause did not say that the mother-tongue be English, French, or German, and therefore it could be the language of any group in a school district. The Poles were Roman Catholics, and the Ukrainians had come out without their clergy. There was a hope that these potential allies might be the means of reversing the educational system. The Roblin government administered the school laws in force, but courted the "foreign vote." It showed sympathy with claims of the new groups. It began to realize the political implication of the School Question.

This support was not made manifest in the provincial elections of 1899. Their support was courted later, for the Conservatives' main gains were in the urban centres of Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie, and Brandon, and three of the straight Liberal gains were the Catholic constituencies of La Verendrye, Carillon, and St. Boniface. The

7. W. L. Morton, "The Rise of the Progressive Movement in Canada," Canadian Historical Review, vol. 25, 279.

Mennonite and Icelandic votes were more or less evenly divided among
 8
 the two opposing parties.

Moreover, as the election addresses show, neither the Manitoba School Question nor the rights of racial minorities were a party issue at this time. The three French-Canadian gains that the Liberals made were probably made despite Greenway and because of Laurier. The Liberals based their optimism upon the "freedom from coercion" that the province had enjoyed under their guidance, and it was only in that indirect manner that the School Question was mooted. Premier Greenway, in a lengthy manifesto issued on November 16, 1889, said:

The progress of the province and the satisfactory position of our farmers have fully justified the policy of the government.... I am firmly convinced that still lower (freight) rates can be secured ... our credit never stood higher in the money markets of the world.... The policy of the government at the next session is to introduce legislation prohibiting the sale of liquor to the extent of the powers of the Province....

As regards the School Question there was only a passing reference:

That attack (on the national school system) was supported by those within the province who oppose me to-day, and despite their efforts we succeeded in preserving the system which will continue so long as I maintain the confidence of the electors.⁹

The province was doing well under the Greenway government. The School Question had become quiescent, the railways were admittedly improving, and there was a steady flow of settlers. The only issue that the Conservative opposition made much of was the liquor traffic, charging the government with delaying and evasive action.

8. Holmes, op. cit., 117.

9. Political Scrapbook, Provincial Library, Manitoba.

The real reason for the defeat of the government lay not in any specific issue but in the fact that they had been in power for a decade. In most democracies that is generally regarded as long enough. Especially was this the case with the Greenway government, which was rather a colourless selection of politicians after the departure of Sifton and Martin. Moreover, the Conservatives with extra provincial help made a lively election out of it, and the Liberals, as their newspapers testify, were too sure of themselves, as these quotations from the Manitoba Free Press show:

Mr. Greenway never had such a "snap" before in a general election.¹²

How can Sir Charles' nominee carry the province, when Sir Charles could not carry his own province?¹³

When Mr. Greenway caught Sir Charles stumping the province he immediately dissolved the legislature, seeing in the presence of the Great Stretcher an opportunity of securing an even larger majority than he otherwise would.¹⁴

Thomas Greenway, the former premier of this province, had had to encounter and resist the onslaught of Sir John MacDonalld allied with the C.P.R., Sir John Thompson, Sir MacKenzie Bowell, and Sir Charles Tupper. He brought the province out victorious from each and every encounter. He must be a pretty smart fellow.¹⁵

The Conservatives charged the Liberals with anti-Catholic legislation, but they never really made an issue out of it. Their charges were more in the nature of political polemic, and the results show that they had little effect on the results, or else the Conservatives would never have won Brandon and Portage la Prairie, and Greenway

12. Political Scrapbook, Liberals and the 1899 Election, P.L.M.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid.

would have lost La Verendrye, Carillon, and St. Boniface. The only
 16
 three Catholics in the new legislature were these three Liberals.

Early in the campaign Hugh John Macdonald began to harp upon the slogan
 "CANADA FOR THE CANADIANS," and for a while the Liberal press made
 great play with this unfortunate slogan as this excerpt from the

Winnipeg Telegram shows:

The subsidized organs that the Laurier and the Greenway governments keep going for the purpose of influencing the foreign vote are naturally circulating falsehoods about Mr. MacDonald's franchise proposals (Hugh John had suggested that the franchise should be limited to English-speaking residents) and the Free Press is, naturally, quoting these falsehoods as testimony of the unpopularity of Mr. MacDonald's policy among the foreign element.... By the desperate efforts to make Mr. MacDonald's policy appear unpopular among the foreign element, it is certainly not hurting Mr. MacDonald among the English-speaking people, of whom the majority of its readers doubtless consist. At the same time it is deplorable that the subsidized foreign press should thus attempt to take advantage of their readers' supposed ignorance of the English language in order to misrepresent to them the policy of Mr. Macdonald. This is in itself an argument in favour of requiring English from those entrusted with the franchise. Those foreigners who have learned English, of course, know enough to ascertain, by reading English papers and by conversation with their English neighbors what are the particulars of the policy they are called upon to vote on. But those who do not know English are a ready prey to the misrepresentations of papers published in their own language ... it shows what desperate efforts the Greenway government is making to capture the foreign vote, in order to try and offset the overshadowing English-speaking vote it knows will be recorded against it at the coming elections.¹⁷

This quotation shows no gentle concern to the "foreign element."

It shows the Conservative party depending upon the Ontario vote, which they received. Nevertheless the Conservatives were not above castigat-

16. Holmes, op. cit., 116.

17. The Morning Telegram, September 12, 1899.

ing Greenway with any stick they could lay their hands on, and the Telegram on September 8, 1899, is full of praise for an attack made upon the Free Press by the NorthWest Review:

In its last issue the NorthWest Review simply flays the Free Press. The operation is most delicately done, and it is doubtful whether the coarse-grained Free Press will realize that the operation has been performed at all. Here is one manner in which he simply turns the Free Press inside out: 'When people get angry they are apt to forget things. A few days previous to this childish outburst, the same editorial writer took Hon. Hugh John MacDonald severely to task for what it alleged to be his unreasonable prejudice against the Galicians because they are Catholics. But lo! on Saturday last the Free Press turned around and berated Mr. MacDonald for attempting to draw political support from the ultramontanes.¹⁸

The abuse and invective hurled at the opposing parties by the party newspapers follows a recognizable pattern:

The methods to which it resorts are beyond description mean. It probably hopes that it will reach a depth of paltriness in time so revolting that no self-respecting antagonist will descend to expose its calumnies. At this kind of work the Free Press certainly has all the advantages that the skunk has over anyone who is tempted to kick that loathsome animal....¹⁹

The foreign element was not really courted by either party, and both sometimes tried to wish them onto the other, as this quotation shows:

To the editor of the Telegram. Sir, I notice in the report of the speech of the Hon. Hugh John MacDonald that he is reported as saying that 'Mr. Greenway is now trying to lay the blame for the importing of shiploads of Galicians and Doukhobors upon the Hon. T. Mayne Daly, late Minister of the Interior.' I have seen further references in the Grit Press that I am blameable for the introduction of Galicians into this province.... It is the veriest nonsense for the Winnipeg Free Press to charge Sir John MacDonald's government with any responsibility with Galician emigration....²⁰

18. Ibid., September 8, 1899.

19. Ibid., September 12, 1899.

20. Ibid., September 7, 1899.

The 1899 provincial was a Tory-Grit struggle on the Ontario pattern. The racial background of the successful candidates shows how much the province had taken in; in so short a time the original settlement was almost without representation. Of the forty members of the new legislature sixteen were born in Ontario, four in England, two in Scotland, Quebec, and Manitoba. There was one apiece from Iceland, Nova Scotia, Ireland, New Brunswick, and Germany. Two Manitobans and two quebequois show that the political pendulum was swinging away from the native-born, and towards a certain type of settler - the Protestant British or Ontario settler, who was to become such a dominant minority in Canadian affairs. Only after the elections, in the early years of the twentieth century, did the Conservative party become really concerned with the foreign vote. Until their political value was realized the immigrants were disowned by every party. Even the Independent Labour Party, which entered the political arena in 1899, said in their Election Manifesto:

The present immigration is largely maintained in the interests of those connected with transportation and land speculation, and those employers to whose profit cheap labour directly contributes. A good healthy flow of immigrants is desirable and necessary. The right type of immigrant is not to be obtained from bonussing transportation companies....²²

A parallel may be seen in the manner in which Greenway initiated the Manitoba School Question in order to stay in power, or at least to strengthen a somewhat precarious position, and the manner in which Roblin, a decade later, was to pursue a similarly opportunistic pattern

21. Holmes, op. cit., 117.

22. Election Manifesto of Independent Labour, Political Scrapbook, 1899, P.N.M.

in relation to the "foreign element." Both cases were manifestations of the same phenomenon - the exploitation of an apprehensive and weak section of the community for a political advantage.

Chapter IX

The Traffic in Schools

The success of the Conservatives in the Provincial elections gave to the Catholics a gleam of hope. Although Hugh John Macdonald had carefully avoided the explosive problem of the Manitoba School Question in his electionary platform, these hopes were based upon the implications in the national political scene. The aged Tupper was in need of an heir, and Macdonald seemed likely. The Manitoba Free Press, now an opposition paper, said on July 9, 1900:

THE SCHOOL QUESTION - which horse will the Conservatives ride at the next General Election? - French Conservative newspapers are still harping on the Manitoba School Question, hoping to embarrass Sir Wilfrid Laurier by the allegation that he has failed to settle it. They are also making the most of the intimation by Senator Bernier that Sir Charles Tupper, if returned to power, will introduce another remedial bill. Le Trifluvien, referring to the request of the Catholics of Winnipeg for remedial legislation, repudiates the reply of Hugh John MacDonald that it was impossible to accede to the request because Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mr. Greenway had declared the question was already settled. Le Trifluvien adds: A pretty general tacit agreement seems to point him (MacDonald) as an eventual successor to Sir Charles Tupper. Well, let him take note of this: Conservatives, who, like us are Catholics, before being Conservatives are Catholics. That is to say the healthiest element of the party will never permit to guide them a man bound by a previous engagement to leave the School Question in the state it is now. They can govern without us, though not for long, as experience has shown. They will not govern with our assistance, with our support, unless this point is clearly elucidated at an opportune time. Therefore Sir Charles Tupper must elucidate where he stands.... He cannot blow hot on one province and cold on another.¹

This reference to the Catholic sense of resentment against the settlement was continually before the minds of the Manitoba legislators. They were aware that in the Federal Parliament there would always be

1. Manitoba Free Press, July 9, 1900.

support for a Manitoba government which appeared to be about to relieve the Catholic minority. Roblin was to succeed McDonald as premier before the end of the year. The next decade was to be a Roblin regime in Manitoba. Almost immediately the Free Press came out with headlines that were duplicated, for various reasons, by every newspaper in the province: THE PREMIER AND THE ARCHBISHOP. Startling Evidence Of a Compact between Church and State in St. Boniface.

BETWEEN MR. ROBLIN AND MGR. LANGEVIN.

Some ten or twelve days ago Mr. Roblin wended his way to St. Boniface and sought an interview with Archbishop Langevin. He had a bargain to make. He desired the election of a supporter in the bye-election then pending in that division, and he proposed that if the Archbishop would secure the election of a Roblin man, in return the government of Manitoba would make some grant, or introduce legislation that would meet the views of the Archbishop and his associates in reference to the schools of this province. Mr. Roblin, therefore, intimated that the new government were desirous of being friendly with the French-speaking population, and held out some hopes in this regard. The archbishop promised to do what he could, and subsequent events show that he took an active interest in promoting the candidature of Mr. Roblin's nominee, Mr. Joseph Bernier. The public of Manitoba, knowing his record, will not be surprised at any action Mr. Roblin might take to secure the return of his candidate, but they will be pained and shocked to hear that the first minister of the Crown in this province made a compact with an ecclesiastic, the effect of which was for the delivery of one government supporter at the polls, certain legislation would be submitted to the Crown for its assent favourable to the views of the ecclesiastic....²

The righteous anger of the Free Press at this action, which so closely resembled that of Greenway in an earlier decade, was further augmented by the publication in St. Boniface of an election poster:

2. Ibid., November 24, 1900.

Les electeurs de St. Boniface sont pries de lire less different documents qui suivent. Ils verront comment le clan qui appuie M. Mager a voulu les tromper.

Ils ont proclame d'abord publiquement, puis ils continuent de dire privement a la derobee, que Sa Grandeur Mgr. L'archeveque donne son appui a M. Mager, et le refuse a M. Joseph Bernier. Ils disent la meme chose du gouvernement. Or tout cela est faux, les documents suivants le prouvent: DECLARATION DE MGR. L'ARCHEVESQUE DE SAINT BONIFACE. Comment on s'est permis publiquement de mettre en doute ma fidelite a ma parole donnee, voici less faits:

Propositions des Catholiques Liberaux

1. J'ai declare d'abord jeudi 15 courant, que je n'aurais pas d'objections a la candidature de M. Mager, si c'etait le moyen de sauver la situation, miad j'ai ajoute qu'il me fallait consulter avant d'agir, que je ne connais pas assez les hommes et les choses.

Ma Neutralite

2. J'ai promis de ne pas intervenir d'avantage lorsqu'on m'a annonce, vendredi 16 courant, a midi, par telephone, que M. Mager etait mis sur les range par un groupe catholique, mais j'ai cru simplement devoir rappeler a M. Mager qu'il m'avait promis de travailler pour M. Joseph Bernier. M. Mager ne m'avait parle de sa candidature. Apres la nomination des candidates, samedi, j'ai donne instructions a tous mes pretres, par M. le Vicair-General, de rester neutres, de ne rien dire en chaire, puisque les deux candidates se declaraient en faveur de gouvernement local.

Resignation de M. Mager

3. Quand M. Mager a resigne spontanement le dimanche matin 18 courant, je l'air approuve, et je suis meme alle, accompagne de le M. le Vicair-General, le feliciter sincerement, mais quand M. Mager a retire sa resignation, le meme jour, dimanche soir, je ne l'ai ni approuve ni felicite, et je regrette qu'il a persiste a se presenter, parcequ'il fait du tort a la cause catholique, etant moins apte que M. Joseph Bernier, avocat, a nous rendre services voulus. Voila les faits, et je defie qui ce soit de les dementir selon la verite.

ADELARD

Archeveque de Saint-Boniface.

3

Moreover, there was appended to this proclamation a letter from Roblin which read as follows:

Winnipeg, November 16, 1900

J. A. Senecal, Esquire,
President L.C.A.S., St. Boniface.

Dear Sir:

I am glad to see that Mr. Joseph Bernier has consented to contest St. Boniface in this bye-election now being held there. I hope all friends of the party as well as of the government will rally to his support and elect him by a substantial majority.

Yours respectfully,

⁴
R. P. ROBLIN

It can be imagined what an effect this collusion produced in the opposition press. On December 6 the Free Press published an editorial which read:

INVESTIGATE. Mr. Roblin persists in a general denial of the school compact with the Archbishop of St. Boniface. The public is very much concerned about the matter. We were told at the Manitou banquet (Wednesday December 5) that there was no truth in the statement that the premier of this province had made an agreement with the Archbishop to exchange public school funds for a government supporter at the recent bye-election. Mr. Roblin is now the leader of the Manitoba legislature.... Mr. Tarte, the minister of public works, moved the appointment of a committee of the House of Commons to investigate a statement that had crept into the press that he had profited personally by the arrangement for the extension of the Intercolonial.... Let Mr. Roblin be as open and honest as was Mr. Tarte. Let him appoint a committee which will have the power to call witnesses and order the production of documents and make a thorough investigation, and so vindicate himself if he can. But Mr. Roblin knows he can't do this, and we, therefore, don't expect him to do it.... The matter is important enough to call the legislature together almost immediately and investigate fully, for if Mr. Roblin's policy of condemning the Greenway government for having, as he said, 'taken away the rights belonging to separate schools in Manitoba,' and giving the assurance 'that if he was returned to power he would at once give back to the Roman Catholics their separate schools, and restore everything

4. Ibid., quoted.

that the Greenway government had taken away from them by the Act of 1890.' If, we say, this policy of Mr. Roblin's, sworn to us as having been announced by him in 1896, is to be put into force, or any part of it, then the legislature should be immediately informed....⁵

It does seem apparent that at this time Roblin was dealing with the St. Boniface Catholic party. The warm endorsement that the Archbishop gave to his candidate is evidence of this. It does, moreover, indicate that Mr. Roblin had begun to realize the value of intrigue as a political weapon. The Free Press statement showed that the Liberals appreciated the political implications that were latent in the School Question.

The Winnipeg Tribune, as a government organ, roundly berated the Free Press for its telling attacks upon Mr. Roblin. On December 3 an editorial said:

It is a singular spectacle that the Free Press is presenting in connection with the statement that a compact had been made between the Archbishop of St. Boniface and Mr. Roblin, prejudicial to the interests of the public schools. This being promptly denied and described as the product of an unbalanced mind, the Free Press apparently attempted to back up one falsehood by manufacturing another, and stated that documentary evidence of the compact existed. Challenged to produce that evidence the Free Press failed to do so, or even to produce any evidence of any sort. The machine organ has apparently been trying to manufacture an anti-Roman Catholic cry upon the basis of falsehood, and has been placed in the singularly contemptible position by a simple request to produce some evidence on behalf of its statement, or to tell what reason it has for believing in them....⁶

The local papers throughout the province echoed the Winnipeg dailies in argument as to whether there had or had not been made a compact infamous or otherwise. The Liberal papers came out strongly against Roblin. Said the Manitou Sun:

5. Ibid., December 5, 1900.

6. Winnipeg Tribune, December 3, 1900.

It is said on pretty good authority that Mr. Roblin has formed a compact with Archbishop Langevin.... If this is true we are very sorry indeed."

The Stonewall Argus said:

Viewed from the point of purely party power the Liberals might rejoice that Mr. Roblin is playing this game. It means an early return to power for those who stood manfully by the national schools.... How does the Hon. D. H. McFadden, grand master of the Orange Order, enjoy following his leader along that course?⁸

It took the Roblin regime quite some time to realize the political implications of the Sifton immigration. In January, 1901, the Canadian Commissioner of Immigration, Mr. W. T. Preston, writing from Hamburg, angrily denounced the ignorant attitude that the premier of the province was displaying towards the new settlers. The Free Press was glad to print it:

Mr. Roblin is lending himself to the efforts put forth in Canada to give the term Galician an ugly sound. 'Give us Germans' Mr. Roblin cries, 'not Galicians' ... oblivious of the fact that a large part of the so-called Galicians are really Germans.... If the premier of Manitoba will pardon a suggestion, my advice is that he shall embrace an early opportunity of visiting Great Britain, Scandinavia, and the continent for the purpose of inquiring into the emigration question. I will venture the assertion that if he will do so, and honestly search for information instead of social distinction, he will return to Winnipeg much wiser on the point than he is now....⁹

Gradually the fact was becoming apparent that the foreign element, especially the Galician, had begun to matter. Principal Patrick of the Manitoba College was widely publicized for a speech he made on December 2, 1900, which said:

Without discussing the wisdom or the unwisdom of the present immigration policy he urged the people to throw open the opportunity of manhood and womanhood to those

8. Political Scrap Book, 1901-2 (Provincial Library Manitoba), 22.

9. Manitoba Free Press, January 5, 1900.

who had come in among us. These foreigners (the Galicians) were now (in Winnipeg) 9,000 in number. It has been said that schools cannot be established among them under the present laws. The Rev. gentlemen asked what it meant to have these people grow up in ignorance. Already there was the barrier of speech and alien habits of life. Our own safety bids us take action.... The duty is to call on the government, provincial or Dominion, to institute schools at once, and enforce attendance.... We are threatened with a grave period until we establish schools.

This is but a brief excerpt from two and a half columns that
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 the Winnipeg Tribune devoted to the speech. There was also an edi-
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 torial published on the favourable impression the speech had created.

In the Free Press of February 18, 1901, this news item appeared:

A GALICIAN SCHOOL. Education in English and in the native language given to 1,100 children in the City. Upon the repeated requests of the Galician citizens of Winnipeg a new school was opened three weeks ago in the basement of the Church of the Holy Ghost on Selkirk Avenue. The teaching is given in English every morning from nine to twelve o'clock, including Saturday, while the respective native languages are taught in the afternoons from 2 to 4. Rev. Father Kuluway, O.M.D., who is the manager of the school, reports over 110 children attend the school already, and that there would be more if the accommodation of the school would permit. The expenses which are required for the starting of the school are great, especially in such a case where there is no government or municipal grant, and the Galician population is the poorest in the city.¹²

It was organized as a Catholic school.

There was a growing realization that something should be done for this foreign element, and in order to amend the School Act to secure the cordial assistance of St. Boniface, Roblin sought to implicate the previous government, as this excerpt from the Free Press shows:

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10. Winnipeg Tribune, December 3, 1900.
 11. Ibid.
 12. Manitoba Free Press, February 18, 1901.

THE ST. BONIFACE TREATY. There being, it is alleged, documentary evidence in existence, altogether aside from anything already published, of a concordat entered into between the province of Manitoba, represented by its first minister, and the church of Rome, represented by the Archbishop of St. Boniface, respecting education in this province, and the matter being one of public notoriety, it is suggested as a model of a resolution to be moved at the approaching session of the legislature a certain resolution moved in the same legislature on the 29th of March, 1892, which was seconded by Mr. R. P. Roblin as follows: Resolved that a committee be appointed to investigate whether the Hon. Thomas Greenway did make to his Grace Archbishop Tache or to any other person or persons in 1888, the following pledges:

That his government would not move for the abolishment of separate schools.

That dual languages in this province would not be done away with during his term of office.

That his government would not attempt to diminish the number of French representatives in the legislative assembly.

With power to send for person or persons, papers, and documents, and the said committee shall have power to receive evidence under oath.

It is to be remarked that the alleged interview set forth in Mr. Roblin's motion did not take place between Mr. Greenway and the Archbishop, but with some gentleman who was supposed to have represented his Grace. In the present case it is quite clear that Mr. Roblin had an interview with his Grace, and to use Mr. Roblin's own language on the occasion referred to 'the question was as to the actual facts of the case. Had the First Minister made certain pledges as first minister to the head of the Roman Catholic Church, or had he not?' This is the question that Mr. Roblin propounded from his place in the legislature, and which he himself is now called upon to answer.¹³

The Greenway-Tache deal was angrily denied by Greenway and his associates. Mgr. Tache lost a great deal of the power of his allegations by refraining from publishing them until four years had elapsed and political capital could be made of them.

13. Manitoba Free Press, February 20, 1901.

The Catholic Church was becoming increasingly aware of the potential that existed in the new flood of immigrants, most of whom were Catholic. The NorthWest Review constantly defended their interest at this time, and sought to make them a part of the Catholic machine, thereby gaining sufficient political power to cause the abrogation of the obnoxious clauses contained in the School Act. The correspondence columns in the issue of Tuesday, February 27, contained these letters:

THE GALICIANS. Sir, I noticed in the Telegram this morning a very bitter and sensational editorial on the Galicians in general and more especially on the colonies north of Strathclair and Shoal Lake, based upon a most scurrilous article which appeared in the "Shoal Lake Star" of the 15th inst.... To say there are not some poor, some immoral and some vicious people would not be true, but the percentage among such a large number of Galicians at that point is small. Anglo-Saxons have not a monopoly of all the vice.... I admit that in addition to there being a few immoral and poor among the Galicians there is a certain antipathy to them for two reasons. In the first place along political party lines by strong Conservatives who desire to hurt the Minister of the Interior, and also by many others living in the same district who were accustomed to having their hay and wood free off the lands taken up by these people.... A terrible mistake is being made in decrying this kind of immigration by some party politicians.¹⁴

The Telegram and the Tribune up to this time had generally deplored the immigration policy of the Liberal administration. The "peasants in sheepskins" were eyed askance, and Sifton was urged to improve the stock.¹⁵ This letter, which was from Commissioner of Immigration McCreary, was followed in the NorthWest Review by a letter from Father Kulawy, a Polish priest:

14. NorthWest Review (Winnipeg), February 27, 1901.
15. Dafoe, Sifton, 318.

The great majority (of the Shoal Lake Galicians) are satisfied with their location, and with few exceptions would not go back to Galicia.... During my mission at the Galician colony north of Shoal Lake from January 12-15 there were every day considerable numbers of people at the church services. I had long talks with them in the afternoons, and I never heard a word about the so dreadful deeds attributed by the editor to so poor, but so law abiding, class of people.¹⁶

Gradually public sentiment was overcoming party antipathies, and while the Galicians and other "foreigners" were not socially acceptable, at least their existence was admitted and tentatively and cautiously some provisions began to be made for their education. The provisions were fumbling and slow, as all democratic institutions are in their early days, but all the interested parties began to see that in the assimilation of this foreign body there was an advantage to be gained. There was a slowly growing realization of the implications that lay behind this growing immigration that was to give such an impetus to the concern of the churchmen and the politicians over their education.

16. NorthWest Review, February 27, 1901.

Chapter X

The Influence of Politics on the Schools

The new implications resulting from the flood of Catholic European immigrants began to be realized shortly after the turn of the century. In Winnipeg the Ukrainian element had begun to assume large dimensions and in November, 1901, the problem was under discussion at the Winnipeg School Board. The Ukrainians were huddled in the Catholic private schools, and the situation looked quite hopeful for the Catholics. The Manitoba Free Press came out with:

Schools Settlement. Catholic Trustees notify City Board of Acceptance of Proposition for Taking over Separate Schools. The official notification was received at the school board office this morning from the Catholic School Trustees that they accepted the proposition submitted to them some time ago regarding the taking over of the Catholic Schools by the public board. Mr. Nicholas Bawlf and Mr. M. McManus are appointed a committee to confer with representatives of the board regarding the taking over of the Catholic Schools under the control of the public board, and the rent to be paid. The proposition was submitted to the board and read as follows:

- A. That the provision be made on the reopening of the Catholic Schools for the provision of the children of Catholic ratepayers, and that this provision will be exactly the same as that now enjoyed by those who have previously taken advantage of the same.
- B. That on and after the entrance of such children no distinction whatever shall apply in regard to their regulation, but it shall be clearly understood that they shall thereupon become public school children.... Nothing in the foregoing shall be construed so as to conflict with clause 7 - 1 of the Public Schools Act.
- C. That as the Public Schools Act makes provision for the hiring of Catholic teachers upon petition from the parents, the board of trustees shall so act.
- D. That in order to provide for any possible dissatisfaction from any source, and with a view to maintaining the national and public character of the schools, no distinctive or religious garb shall be worn by any teacher in the schools.

E. That with a view to keeping the present system of appointments uniform female teachers should be preferred in the selections to be made.

F. That upon being advised by the Catholic ratepayers that their children will attend the public schools on their reopening on September next, the board of school trustees will thereafter rent such school buildings as are necessary and suitable for the increased school population thereby effected, and arrange to pay therefor on a lease of one year or more, as may be arranged on a basis of valuation to be ascertained by the chairman of the building committee, and the building inspector of the public schools, and two persons to be appointed by the Catholic School Board.¹

The Free Press went on to say:

Mr. D. W. Bole, chairman of the board, interviewed on Saturday said that arrangements had been made to take over the Catholic Schools at an early date. Mr. John McKechnie, chairman of the building committee, and Mr. J. B. Mitchell, the building superintendent, are the board's committee to settle the question of rental, and they have met the representatives of the Catholic trustees with that purpose in view. Seven or eight new teachers will be required to deal with the addition influx of scholars.²

But the news of settlement was premature. Before the month was out (September 25, 1901) the NorthWest Review ran this editorial:

OUR CITY CATHOLIC SCHOOLS. Referring to the discussion which took place at the last meeting (20th inst.) of the Winnipeg School Board and the Catholic Schools of the city, the Free Press has the following statement: 'No Action was taken regarding the Catholic schools. The matter was brought up, but the motion of adjournment carried before it was passed.' The Tribune goes further, and conveys to its readers the important information which follows: 'The local school question was again up for discussion at a special meeting of the school management committee held last night, but nothing was accomplished that would bring about a settlement of the difficulty.'³

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1. Manitoba Free Press, November 1, 1901.
 2. Ibid.
 3. NorthWest Review, September 25, 1901.

The problem of reimbursement for existing buildings was the concern of the Winnipeg School Board, whereas the Catholics were far more concerned about the retention of their original staff of teachers, most of whom were religious, and thus were accustomed to dress in their religious garb. Moreover, however highly regarded these teachers might be by their co-religionists, they were not qualified teachers, except in rare instances. That was the point upon which the discussions bogged down. As the Winnipeg Tribune stated:

One of the principal demands of the Catholic School Board is that the present teachers of the Catholic Schools should be re-engaged by the Public Board. But from what was stated last night it appears that probably not a single one of the teachers is at present qualified as the act requires. This should not be taken as a reflection on the ability of the Catholics as teachers, for it is admitted that some of the cleverest in the profession are engaged in the Catholic Schools, and that they could easily qualify at the next examination if required to do so; but the board has the difficulty to face of engaging teachers who have not qualified in Manitoba. 'There is no difficulty' said one of the trustees after the meeting, 'in the matter of renting the present Catholic schools, but the whole trouble is the engaging of their teachers, who, so far as the school act goes, are unqualified, and the usual levy could not be made in these cases if they were engaged. I cannot see' he added, 'how we can run flatly against the act. If the law is not right, it should be changed.... We are not law makers or law changers, and we cannot meet the wishes of the Catholic School Board under the circumstances in the matter at present....'⁴

The Tribune adopted a very moderate attitude towards the question of these Catholic schools, and was warmly commended by the NorthWest Review for its comments.⁵ The problem was piling up, and it had to be faced. As an opposition paper, the Free Press supported the federal system of immigration, but it was wary of applying praise

4. Political Scrapbook, P.L.M.

5. Ibid.

or blame to the immediate problem of assimilating the immigrants into Manitoba. After all, that was the Conservative Government's problem.

The solution that was applied was a political one. Two of the features of the Conservative party policy at this time were the desire to convince the federal liberals of Quebec that the Catholics of Manitoba would fare better under them than under the provincial Liberal party, which had so vehemently attacked separate education in the previous decade, and that the attempt to win the favour of the local Catholic machine, which was easy enough because of the anti-Catholic tradition of the opposition.

The immigration policy showed one of the great weaknesses of a federal system of government. How were the immigrants to secure education for their children? It was not a federal matter.

These new settlers were shipped through to a province, and thereupon became the responsibility of the provincial government. In such matters as education the provincial rights had been jealously maintained, and as a result of a local Conservative legislature, which had showed itself anti-pathetic towards the immigration policy of the federal government became responsible for a position that they had no hand in occasioning, and which they deeply deplored. Thousands of foreign-born children were literally dumped upon them, and the Liberal provincial opposition watched for the clumsy handling of the situation which had been thrust upon their political enemies by their brethren in Ottawa. Roblin wished to secure the votes of these new settlers. He was not concerned with any real problem of education. His main ally was to become the Catholic machine already existing within the province. As Sissons said:

Nothing was more natural than that men of their own speech should be appointed to help them form school districts. But just here the administration failed miserably. The school organizer did everything for the political advantage of the government that appointed him, and next to nothing for the welfare of the helpless communities. Whole areas settled by Poles and Ruthenians remained for five and ten years without adequate school accommodation. It was suspected that organizers were as far as possible attempting to stop schools from being organized. They were then closely in touch with St. Boniface, and the then Archbishop had refused to accept the compromise of 1897 as final.⁶

It is interesting to read what the Archbishop of St. Boniface was thinking at this time. In an interview at Montreal on November 27, 1902, he said:

The school question in Manitoba is not settled. It will be settled when right has been done, right, such as promised to the Catholic province in 1870, by the imperial authorities. The fact that we enjoy a certain degree of toleration, instead of legal recognition of our rights, is not sufficient, but then we appreciate the increasing goodwill of the best thinking men in the land.

Every true British subject will realize that what is good for England, good for Quebec, is also good for Manitoba. At present we are more confident than ever that our rights will be recognized, because the principle of religious education, of denominational education, has received recently more new and emphatic consecration in the heart of the powerful British-Empire-England. We have even every reason to believe that the influence of King Edward VII was felt in this respect. Of course, in Manitoba, we have beside National law and conscience, the constitution of the country in our favour, and we, therefore, most sincerely hope that the school question will be settled before long.

No country is more healthy than ours and the fertility of the soil is something marvelous. Our people are peaceful and happy, they all like the country. Of course, I do not speak of those who refuse to obey the law. No one loves a country when one refuses to behave like a good citizen. And then we have no consideration for the hunting of pious fools, singing hymns, and brought from Europe at heavy cost, but we have seen European settlers of a

6. Sissons, op. cit., 123.

better class, like Galicians, kneeling down and kissing the soil to thank God for giving them good land in a free country. All these people are already good Canadians, anxious to have their children educated according to their religious principles.

In the Galician school in the Holy Ghost church at Winnipeg, 125 Galician children receive good instruction in English, and in their own language. Unfortunately however, they do not receive a cent from the city or the government. Such a thing cannot continue for very long, because even now in Winnipeg our people are objecting to paying a double tax.⁷

The Archbishop had already realized that his hopes of filling the plains with his beloved canadiens had become a certain failure.... By 1899 he saw that if the schools were to come back to the Church it could not be through the influence of the immigrants who only trickled into Manitoba from Quebec. It had to be brought about therefore with the help of the new Canadians who were never to understand his Canadian design. Sorrowfully speaking at St. Boniface he had said:

J'ai l'ame navree quand je songe qu'un si grand nombre de mes compatriotes comprennent si peu les immenses avantages qu'offrent le Manitoba et le Nord-Ouest a tous ceux qui veulent etablir une nombreuse famille. On le reconnaitra plus tard, mais il sera trop tard....⁸

His biographer continued:

Si, au lieu d'aller s'etoler dans les filatures de la Nouvelle-Angleterre au risque d'y perdre la foi, les milliers de Canadian-Français qui se sont crus dans la necessite de quitter leur province natale s'etaient diriges du cote des immenses plaines a ble, qui sont aujourd'hui reconnues comme le grenier d'abondance du Canada, et presque de l'Amerique, quel en aurait ete le resultat? Ils seraient a peu pres tous a l'aise aujourd'hui, auraient pu se procurer gratis des terres pour leurs enfants, et, chose qu'il ne faut pas oublier, rien qu'au Manitoba la population de langue français serait bien des fois plus nombreuse qu'elle n'est. Comme consequence, la question des ecoles separees ainsi celle du bilingualisme seraient depuis longtemps

7. Political Scrapbook, P.L.M.

8. Morice, Langevin, quoted, 181.

reglees, ou plutot elles n'auraient jamais existe!⁹

Father Morice then gave praise to the efforts of the Catholic colonization societies which had attempted to stem the "Ontario flood" of the enemi in Manitoba by sending in the quebequois, but, he went on:

Que sont quelque centaines de Canadiens contre les milliers d'etrangeres de toute race, Anglais, Allemands, Polonais, Galiciens, et autres, qui inondent ces belles prairies de l'Ouest decouverte par le Canadian Laverendrye?¹⁰

Sissons alleged in his book, Bi-Lingual Schools in Canada, that the Archbishop was a major agent in the tardy educational program of the new settlers:

His (the Archbishop's) view was that no schools were better than the 'Godless' schools of the Act. While he held sway in St. Boniface and Sir Rodmond Roblin was premier, the French never ceased to hope that recognition would one day be given to French schools.¹¹

This book excellently described the educational chaos in the province at this time:

The school organizers organized practically nothing but the foreign vote. Whatever the opinion of the framers of the agreement of 1896 may have been as to the extension of bi-lingual privileges to Austrians and others, the Act plainly permitted the parents of any ten children of non-English origin to demand such privileges as a right. But everywhere the practical difficulty arose of securing bi-lingual teachers for the new schools. It was manifestly impossible to secure any number of English teachers with training in Polish or Ruthenian. It was equally impossible to obtain a body of Ruthenian or Polish teachers with a sufficient knowledge of English. Granted the necessity of providing bi-lingual teachers at all for the Austrians, and clause 258 - 1 was mandatory, not permissive, the only course to pursue was that actually pursued, namely, the providing of training schools. In 1905 a training school was provided at Winnipeg, for both the Poles and Ruthenians. This arrangement proved unsatisfactory, and in 1907 a second and separate training school was provided

9. Ibid., 182.

10. Ibid., 183.

11. Sissons, op. cit., 123.

for the Ruthenians at Brandon. The cost of board, lodging, and tuition was advanced to the students. At the end of their three years' course and the subsequent normal course of eleven weeks they were supposed to enter the teaching profession, and remain in it until they had paid back the six hundred dollars or thereabouts advanced. Needless to say the government did not always succeed in collecting the total amount. On the whole it must be admitted that these schools were a failure. They took lads with varying degrees of education in their own language, and generally with little knowledge of English, and undertook in three years and a few weeks to give them a grounding in various subjects in the curricula of the public school and high school in addition to training in two languages and in the methods of teaching. The task was too great for the time and was admitted to be such by the principals in charge.¹²

That the task was too great is evident from this report of the Department of Education, 1908. Principal J. T. Cressey submitted a most circumlocutory statement which indicated that if success was being achieved it was doing so against great obstacles:

It may not be out of place to indicate briefly the aim of our institution. Our purpose is to train teachers, giving them the necessary non-professional qualifications for service in the bi-lingual Ruthenian-English schools in the province. This is a stupendous task; it must be remembered that some begin with very little culture, and some have been denied by nature those qualities which are essential for teaching little children.... We wish to instill into their minds the true Canadian sentiment, so that they will love their adopted country, love its laws, and love its national flag, so that as they see it flying every day over 'the little red school-house' they can show them that it is no mere lip-service - just to look at - but it is the emblem of our liberties, freedom of conscience, and that it stands for civil and religious liberty. We wish to teach them the history of that glorious old flag.... Then again we try to educate them in nature study, give them a taste for the beautiful... to teach them to love nature, and through nature the Creator of all Nature, the Lord God himself.

As the Ruthenians and Poles have been placed in large

12. Annual Reports of the Provincial Department of Education, 1908.

communities by themselves, where, if allowed to grow up in ignorance, they would eventually become a menace to the State, therefore it seems to me that the state must educate these people for its own preservation.¹³

While the general tone of inspectors' reports at this time are obviously intended for public reading, there is nevertheless a cloying air of sycophantic desire to please the administration present in nearly all of them with a few notable exceptions. The above report on the Ruthenian Normal School was not a report in the academic sense of the word. It gave vent to pious aspirations and to rather dismaying chauvinistic sentiments, but the cautious use of the word stupendous gives the reader an idea of the magnitude of the task that these limited men were attempting. The bi-lingual clause of the 1897 School Bill could at least have been made permissive instead of mandatory without any real opposition from the new settlers or from the older Mennonites. The bi-lingual clause 258 was retained, and education consequently severely retarded because of Roblin's effort to secure the Catholic vote. This was impossible at the time in Manitoba without the co-operation of the Archbishop of St. Boniface, and Roblin was willing to jeopardize educational advance in the province in order to placate the Catholic machine. Roblin was well aware by this time of the political implications of the School question.

In 1908 a training school was established in Winnipeg to train bi-lingual teachers for the Polish-speaking districts. An excerpt from the 1909 report of the Department of Education said:

13. Ibid.

It is the significance of our Canadian national life, and the influence of its elements that we seek to-day, even among our Canadian foreigners. Truly, the art-loving Poles help to build the country which receives them into her midst, and they do love and revere their foster-mother as they would their own fair Poland. The cost and value of our civilization should appear so clearly to us Canadians that our feeling of indebtedness to the past and obligation to the future will arouse in us a greater love for the many races who come here and help build the mighty British Empire.¹⁴

In neither training college was there ever a report which frankly gave the average standings of the pupils, the progress they had made, or had not made. In no cases was an adequate report submitted, yet all the annual reports were accepted and printed.

The Mennonite colonists were not of a pattern with the rest of the European settlement of Manitoba. The stricter sects of Mennonites remained completely aloof from any contact, but in Southern Manitoba the more sophisticated of them began to establish school districts that became models of what a bi-lingual school should be.¹⁵

The statistics prepared by the Department of Education in the first fifteen years of the twentieth century show a gradual degeneration in education. By 1915 one-fourth of all the rural schools in the province were bi-lingual, and generally badly taught.

The confusion was even worse confounded in 1907, when the Roblin regime, in a burst of patriotic fervour, insisted that each school should fly the British flag.¹⁶ The Mennonites regarded this as sinful, and refused to comply. For a while the Mennonite schools

14. Ibid., 1909.

15. Sissons, op. cit., 133.

16. Hugh R. Ross, Thirty-five Years in the Limelight: Sir Rodmond P. Roblin and His Times (Winnipeg, 1936), 104.

reverted to private separate schools, and it took years of diplomacy by the harassed public administrators before they accepted this flag-waving ordinance.

The schools at this time seemed to be only important as a political argument. Education suffered because of the political implications that were contained in the school question in Manitoba. On the one side there was a provincial politician in league with an anachronistic Catholicism, and on the other side was a Protestant Liberal opposition integrally pledged to public and secular education and who were beginning to realize the political and social value of assimilation. For the first fifteen years of the new century that the struggle was waged, the children were ignored.

Chapter XI

The Autonomy Acts

Perhaps the political implications of the Manitoba School Question were never more fully realized than when the problem was debated over the yet unpeopled West. The tendentious problem contained all the disintegrating venom that had so debilitated Manitoba when it became an issue in the Autonomy Acts of 1905.

Next to Manitoba the Province of Saskatchewan was probably the scene of the most bitter and protracted controversies over separate schools and language issues ever waged in Canada.¹

There was no political organization in the Northwest Territories prior to 1875, and there was no system of education until 1884. None was necessary. Nevertheless Section II of the Northwest Territories Act 1875 empowered the local council to pass all the legislation that was necessary to initiate a system of education subject to the following proviso:

A majority of ratepayers of any district or portion of the Northwest Territories may establish such school therein as they think fit, and make the necessary assessment and collection of taxes therefor, and further, that the minority of ratepayers therein, whether Catholic or Protestant, may establish separate schools therein, and that in such latter case, the ratepayers establishing such Protestant or Catholic separate schools shall be liable only to the assessments of such rates as they may impose upon themselves in respect thereof.²

This section of the Act makes it clear that the intention of the legislators was to permit the establishment of separate

1. Weir, *op. cit.*, 62.

2. S.C., 38 Vic., C.49, S.11.

schools on the (Ontario or) Quebec pattern, or on the 1870 Manitoba pattern. From 1884 until 1892 such a system did operate, and then:

In 1892 and 1901 the Territorial Assembly passed ordinances of doubtful validity which radically curtailed separate school privileges, and established, or rather substituted, a system in most respects identical to that existing in Saskatchewan at the present time. After the establishment of a public school district, a separate school district, Roman Catholic or Protestant, might be organized within the same area; in other words the boundaries of the two districts were to be coterminous. Furthermore uniform academic training and certification of teachers, uniform inspection, the use of uniform texts (with a few minor exceptions) and uniform examination standards applied to all schools receiving government aid. The Ordinance of 1901 placed all schools receiving government aid under the control of a commissioner of education, who was also a member of the executive council. The only remaining vestige of the former board of education, with its Protestant and Roman Catholic sections, was the Educational Council, composed of two Roman Catholics and three Protestants, whose powers were advisory only. Religious instruction, as directed by the board of trustees, might be given during the last half hour of the day, but only to those children whose parents or guardians offered no objection. In addition, the use of the English language as the medium of instruction in the schools was made compulsory, although provision was also made for teaching a primary course in French.³

The actual wording of the 1901 ordinance is as follows:

1. All schools shall be taught in the English language, but it shall be permissible for the board of any district to cause a primary grade to be taught in the French language.
2. The board of any district may, subject to the regulations of the Department, employ one or more competent persons to give instruction in any language other than English in the school of the district to all pupils whose parents or guardians have signified a willingness that they should receive the same, but such course of instruction shall not supersede or in any way interfere with the instruction by the teacher in charge of

3. Weir, *op. cit.*, 66.

the school as required by the regulations of the Department and this ordinance.⁴

It will seem from the changing structure of the ordinances that French was gradually losing its privileges even in the Northwest. The 1885 armed protest did not in any way help the efforts of those who tried to keep French in its original position of privilege.

In 1892 Mr. Frederick Haultain moved:

That it is desirable that the proceedings of the (NorthWest) Legislative Assembly shall be recorded and published hereafter in the English language only.

This proposition was moved in amendment by Mr. Prince as follows:

That whereas in the election districts of North Qu'Appelle, South Qu'Appelle, Moose Jaw, Red Deer, Edmonton, Albert, Battleford, Prince Albert, Cumberland, Mitchell and Batoché, there is a large population of French Canadians, And whereas the French language has been recognized as an official language in the NorthWest Territories in consideration of the services rendered the country by the first Canadian voyageurs and missionaries who evangelized, civilized, and settled there at the cost of many lives.

And whereas the French population is increasing every day in the interests of the cause of immigration in the NorthWest Territories no change should be made tending to make it appear that the people of the NorthWest Territories are lacking in justice, liberality, or political tact in regard to the national interest of every Canadian....⁵

This typical frontier amendment was of no avail. English was the official language of the Territories from that time on. Archbishop Langevin, Mgr. Grandin, and Father Leduc maintained

4. Ibid., 272.

5. Journals of the Legislative Assembly, N.W.T. 1891-2, 110.

that separate schools actually ceased to operate in the Territories after the Ordinance of 1892.⁶

With the Autonomy Acts of 1905, creating the new provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, the school question proved to be the major cause of argument. Haultain conveyed two drafts relative to the proposed constitution of the new province, and in neither of them was the separate school question an issue. Mr. Haultain had taken it for granted that provincial autonomy would apply to education. Nevertheless the delay in granting provincial status to the Territories was, it was suspected, because of Catholic attempts to impose a separate school system on the new provinces.⁷

The introduction of the Autonomy Acts into the Federal Parliament aroused a storm. Wilfrid Laurier introduced the school clauses, now contained in Section 17, and as originally introduced it was provided that section 93 of the B.N.A. Act would apply to the new provinces. Separate schools were to be allowed to the minority who were not to be liable to public school tax. The contention made by Laurier was that Section 17 merely modified the existing pattern of education, and brought it in line with the school systems of most of the rest of Canada. This was hotly denied by the Opposition, who feared that another Manitoba School Question might be about to appear farther West to bedevil all of them again.

Laurier in reply to his critics said:

6. Weir, op. cit., 62.

7. A.H.V. Colquhoun, Press, Politics, and People: The Life and Letters of Sir John Willison (Toronto, 1935), 131.

In the course of the years I have been in this House Parliament has had to face and solve questions, simple enough in themselves, but complicated and rendered difficult by sudden bursts of passion. And here again I may repeat what I had occasion to say some few days ago, that in using the word 'passion' I do not want to convey any offensive sense. I recognize, we all recognize, that passions are sometimes the outgrowth of noble sentiment.... If it goes beyond a certain line it becomes blind, unthinking, unreasoning passion. In 1875 on the New Brunswick School Question, in 1889 on the Jesuits Estates questions, and in 1896 on the Manitoba School Question.... In 1896 I opposed the government of Sir MacKenzie Bowell when they endeavoured to force upon the province of Manitoba a system of schools which, according to the highest judicial authority, the province of Manitoba had a right to reject, and which it had rejected by action within the scope of its legitimate authority. And in this year, 1905, when two provinces are to be brought into the Dominion, in which provinces there is a system of private schools such as we have in the provinces of Quebec and Ontario, I stand again, as I believe, on the rock of the constitution of Canada when I say that this parliament should, according to that constitution, give to the minority in the new provinces the same rights and privileges as are given to the minority in Quebec and Ontario⁸

R. L. Borden in reply questioned the sincerity of the Liberal party in their concern over the school laws for the new provinces. Borden recalled Laurier's opposition to the Remedial Bill that the Conservatives had introduced to alleviate the lot of Laurier's fellow-Catholics in Manitoba:

At his right hand he (Laurier) had Israel Tarte, who then represented in this House the constituency of L'Islet, who, I believe, expressed sincerely the strong views he entertained on this question. At his left was Mr. Dalton McCarthy, to whom at least the same tribute is due. And between these two was Sir Wilfrid Laurier, willing to accept the support of both. Like the three Romans who went forth to hold the bridge, these gentlemen went to hold the breach.

8. Canada, House of Commons Debates, 1905, 2916.

Mr. McCarthy had on his shield the device 'No Coercion; Provincial Rights.' Mr. Tarte had upon his shield the device 'The rights of the minorities; Equal justice to all.' The right hon. gentleman had on his shield on one side the device of Mr. McCarthy; on the other side he had the device of Mr. Tarte....⁹

Laurier was in favour of going back to the original act of 1875, and as a precedent he had the speech made by Sir John Thompson, as reported in Hansard April 26, 1894, wherein the then Prime Minister questioned the legality of school ordinances subsequent to 1875.... While disallowance could not have nullified the regulations which existed before, it would have restored to the separate schools control by the Catholic section of the Board of Education....¹⁰"

Writing to a friend of his in Montreal Laurier said:

Can you doubt that if the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan had been admitted into the Dominion in 1867 instead of 1905 they would not have received the same treatment as was given to Ontario and Quebec?¹¹

This argument was a poor one. There were forces working on Laurier both for and against the separate schools for the province. In many ways Borden's metaphor was apt. Laurier always had to walk between men like Tarte and McCarthy, always under the shadow of the Church.

For a while it seemed as if lengthy debate and no settlement would be the fate of the school sections of the Autonomy Bills, but after months of discussion a compromise was effected whereby the

9. Ibid., 2933.

10. Ibid., 1894, 2042.

11. Skelton, op. cit., Laurier to Dougall, quoted, 232.

minority rights as stated by the 1891 ordinance were to become the educational standard for the new province. The second reading passed to the overwhelming majority of 140 to 59. Nevertheless the passions that were engendered through sectarian bitterness or generous indignation did not die down easily.

The thrust and design of politics that embittered the whole pattern of Canadian development seemed destined to go on and on. No barrier or boundary seemed to contain the School Question and its political implications. Wherever the Canadians moved, they took it with them. It was a far larger issue than mere school houses or teachers' certificates. It was the implications of the subject rather than the apparent arguments that was so important.

The suspicion that had been mutually engendered between the French and the English caused the undertones of the School Question to be of deeper significance than the vociferations.

It was one topic upon which there was a fundamental difference of opinion. It ante-dated democracy, it was to be found in the very essence of European history, as the NorthWest of Europe struggled against the theocracy of Rome. The murder of A'Becket implied the same sentiments as did opposition to the Catholic School in Alberta.

Chapter XII

The Boundary Question and the Nuncio

The compromise reached over the schools in the two new prairie provinces was a signal for another political development connected with the schools in Manitoba. Some members of the Conservative caucus saw an opportunity to discredit the Roblin policy of placatory dealings with St. Boniface. The scheming of Robert Rogers to oust Roblin from the premiership had not escaped the sardonic eye of the Free Press editorial writer:

The facts of the trouble in Roblin's Cabinet are not entirely known, but piecing one thing with another a fair outline can be obtained on the successive movements whereby Mr. Rogers has sought to impose his leadership on the Conservative Party to the disparagement of the premier. Mr. Roblin, at the close of the last session of the legislature went to Cuba, and remained a couple of months. Mr. Rogers stayed at home and worked and schemed.

Mr. Roblin came home to find his lieutenant embarked on an agitation distinctly anti-Catholic. Mr. Rogers who was in the East when the explosion over the autonomy bills occurred conceived the idea that by appealing vigorously to Protestant sentiment in Manitoba he might strengthen his grip on power and incidentally help party friends at Ottawa to badger Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

Mr. Rogers is reported to have talked pretty freely down East about his intentions in the matter. He is said to have openly declared that the Manitoba Government had been playing for years with the Catholic vote, but that he was determined, if he could have his way, that they should take the other tack and take an ultra-Protestant stand.

Mr. Rogers came back with this idea and proceeded to put it into effect. By the time Mr. Roblin got home the situation had got out of his control. The minister of public works had the drop on his chief through the fact that he absolutely controls the Conservative newspaper in this city, and if he does not completely control the other one is able to make it do his will. Through these agencies he

called the tune, and Mr. Roblin, although with much reluctance, had to dance. The whole boundary legislation, with appeal to the electors of Mountain, was Mr. Rogers' idea with Mr. Roblin as an unwilling accessory.

Triumphant in this Mr. Rogers is now planning a new coup. He wants to call the legislature at once, repeal the school settlement of 1897, and dissolve on the issue, going to the country at the earliest possible date. He believes it is politically wise to throw the Catholics over and make a bold bid for Protestant support.

Mr. Roblin, it is understood, is opposed to the proposal, and is fighting it vigorously, but it is understood that he stands alone in this regard. Mr. Rogers has the open support of Dr. McFadden and Mr. Agnew and the secret countenance of Mr. Campbell. The premier's political judgment tells him that the course proposed, while it might be of temporary value would be full of peril for the permanent welfare of the party. Besides, he is bound to some extent to his past. He and Archbishop Langevin have long been close political friends and allies for ten years past, and it is regarded as quite possible that he has given hostages for his good behaviour.

Mr. Rogers however is pressing his point relentlessly and Mr. Roblin must keep up or fall out. If Mr. Roblin obeys he retains the name of leader, although the real control passes to - if it has not already passed - Mr. Rogers. If he refuses Mr. Rogers will become premier in name as well as in fact. Mr. Roblin is not without political resourcefulness, but good judges of the situation believe that his lieutenant has a stranglehold on him; and can put him out of business any time.¹

Political journalism at this time reached a very high level of excellence in the Manitoba Free Press, and the above excerpt is a typical example of its attacks upon the Roblin regime. As an opposition paper it naturally cannot be taken as evidence of

1. Manitoba Free Press, May 1, 1905.

government infamy, but the Winnipeg Telegram, a government organ, was certainly embarrassing the Roblin policy. Moreover, a situation had arisen in Canada that was without precedent, and which presented grave constitutional hazards, of a kind which are bound to occur in a predominantly secular society when the political leader of that society has to decide upon such matters as the Manitoba School Question.

The Manitoba School Question had aroused bitter opposition to Laurier among the hierarchy, especially among those who were in the missionary tradition of Three Rivers rather than in the more metropolitan tradition of Quebec. In order to curb the ultramontanism of the hierarchy who had waxed virulent against him, Laurier had appealed to the Pope. For a while the Holy Father had avoided the issue, but Laurier brought so much influence to bear that Mgr. Merry del Val was sent to Canada as a vatican observer to report on the situation. As a result of his visit, which was of short duration, the liberal Pope Leo XIII had published an encyclical in December, 1897, which, while praising the hierarchy for their devoted labours, also insisted that in dealing with the secular powers a more conciliatory attitude must be adopted:

Let no one therefore lose sight of the rules of meekness, of moderation, and of brotherly charity ... until it should be granted to them (the bishops) the full satisfaction of all their claims let them not refuse partial satisfaction.²

As a result of the problems that were engendered by the Manitoba School Question a papal Nuncio was appointed to Canada.

2. Leo XIII, Encyclical (Rome, 1897).

Mgr. Sbarretti, who was appointed by the Vatican, was cast by the opposition, and by some Protestant liberals, as a Vatican spy, and was said to have had a hand in preparing some of the school clauses for the Autonomy Acts. The Winnipeg Telegram on April 10, 1905, stated:

No man can reasonably entertain a doubt that Mgr. Sbarretti has been negotiating with the Laurier Government ever since he came to this country.... The appointment of a Papal Legate was not due to any representations by the Catholic bishops, but was the result of the political difficulties in which Sir Wilfrid found himself through his double dealing on the Manitoba School Question.... Mgr. Sbarretti has been in Canada because Sir Wilfrid asked to have a 'representative on the spot' and because the Liberal Catholic members promised His Holiness that the Manitoba settlement was only the beginning of 'justice'....³

The position of the Papal Nuncio was an unenviable one. He was not the leader of the Canadian hierarchy, rather he had come to curb them, yet his presence was bound to give rise to suspicions of supra-national authority. It was a shrewd move on Laurier's part to call for a Nuncio to save himself from the bishops, but it was also a two-edged sword of defense. The Papal Nuncio was bound to be suspect to non-Catholics.

The suspicions of the period were aroused by the statement of two Manitoba politicians who alleged that this Italian cleric, emissary of the head of the Roman Church, had tried to make them sign a compact whereby in return for privileges to the Catholic schools of Manitoba he would get them the boundary extensions that they were demanding from Ottawa. The sensation can be

3. The Telegram, April 10, 1905.

imagined when they made these allegations. The Winnipeg Telegram came out in headlines about it:

PREMIER LAURIER IS RESPONSIBLE. Eastern Press Comment on the Situation - Globe Censures on the Papal Delegate, Who Declares He Will Make No Reply and Will Give No Interview on the Subject. Ottawa, April 5 - (Special). Mgr. Sbarretti announced that he would make no reply to the Hon. Robert Rogers, nor would he grant an interview on the subject.

Montreal, April 5 - (Special) - The Star, referring to the charges of Mr. Rogers says editorially 'That Mgr. Sbarretti should attempt to get better terms for his co-religionists is neither surprising nor worthy of condemnation. Our fellow Catholic Citizens have never professed to be satisfied with the Manitoba settlement of the school question, and they were always agitating with a frank persistence for a reconsideration of the matter. Consequently that the papal abligate should approach the Manitoba ministers on the matter, need alarm no one.

But the intolerable part of the accusation made by the Hon. Mr. Rogers is that Mgr. Sbarretti declared that the acceptance of his proposed amendment to the Manitoba School laws 'Would greatly facilitate an early settlement of the discussion, the fixing of their boundary, which would be extended to the shores of the Hudson Bay' and 'that our failure to act in the past had prejudiced our claim to extension westward.'⁴

It was inevitable that these accusations should have aroused widespread and angry comment. The Catholic press would necessarily further infuriate the non-Catholic readers by accepting the possibility of the situation.

Discussing the Hon. Robert Rogers' statement, The Globe said:

It is a matter for profound regret, therefore, that a gentleman in Mgr. Sbarretti's position should have been guilty of conduct that must tend to increase public excitement, and intensify irritations and heartburnings that are already too

4. Ibid., April 6, 1905; The Globe (Toronto), April 5, 1905.

much in evidence. Roman Catholics will make a great mistake if they impute the resentment which will undoubtedly be shown over this incident to bigotry or any allied feeling.

Thousands of the broadest-minded and most tolerant men in this Dominion will condemn the conduct of which Mgr. Sbarretti is accused, and which he tacitly acknowledges by refusing to deny. The spectacle of representatives of a free province being threatened by one who is not even a citizen of Canada, and whose interference in matters of state is a violation of the sound and established maxims of government should be intolerable to everyone who values the peace and liberties of his country. There should be no sectarian lines separating one citizen from another on this ground. The indignation of the government of Manitoba in this regard will be overwhelmingly shared.⁵

The opposition press realized that Laurier would be harassed by this accusation. The bishops were not to blame; they did not even wish for the Nuncio. That was all Laurier's doing.

The Mail and Empire said that Laurier was the culprit:

There may be a disposition on the part of the public to blame the representative of the pope for this extraordinary situation, but nothing could be more unjust. It was on the invitation of the first minister, preferred through the Hon. Charles Russell, that the pope should be represented, that the delegate came. The individual answerable for the diplomatic relations with Rome is therefore Sir Wilfrid. When Mgr. Sbarretti supervised the school classes of the NorthWest Constitution that prelate was merely undertaking a duty that Sir Wilfrid had asked him to undertake.⁶

The World stated that a severe blow had been dealt to the Liberals:

The news that comes from Winnipeg is of a disquieting nature. It is idle for Mr. Tarte or for anyone else to disassociate Laurier from the political activity of the Papal delegate. The premier's treatment of Manitoba's ministers, as related by Mr. Rogers,

5. The Globe (Toronto), April 5, 1905.

6. The Mail and Empire (Toronto), April 5, 1905.

and of which there is documentary proof, bears out the theory that Sbarretti spoke with the authority of the Dominion Government, when he handed out an ultimatum to the official representatives of Manitoba.⁷

The whole picture envisaged political implications that were abhorrent. The Ottawa Journal of April 5 said:

This statement fixes the fact of Mgr. Sbarretti's course as far as the proven facts go. The answer is possible that that papal delegate was acting merely in a personal or private capacity without the knowledge of the government or any of its members for instance, and the question rests merely between the papal delegate and Canada, and may reasonably end with a request from the government to Rome that Mgr. Sbarretti be withdrawn as a foreign diplomat who has interfered with the domestic policies of the country.⁸

It can be seen from these extracts from the newspapers that the great part of English-speaking Canada were horrified at the dark hints of Vatican interference in Canadian affairs. The Rogers account of the incident was a severe indictment of the government and of the papal nuncio:

In three days time (after presenting the memorial to Sir Wilfrid) a letter was received from His Excellency Mgr. Sbarretti asking for a conference. This invitation was accepted, and His Excellency then presented the following memorandum, remarking if we would place this on the statute book of the province that it would greatly facilitate an early settlement of our mission, the fixing of our boundaries, which would be extended to the shores of Hudson's Bay.... I deny the right of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Mgr. Sbarretti to undertake to mix up the matter of Separate Schools with that of our boundaries....⁹

Sir Wilfrid Laurier denied the allegations of Rogers in a lengthy speech from the floor of the House, which showed Laurier's

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7. The World (Toronto), April 15, 1905.
 8. The Ottawa Journal, April 5, 1905.
 9. Manitoba Free Press, April 5, 1905, quoted.

complete bewilderment:

Well sir, I cannot conceive how the papal delegate or anyone else could have stated that the failure of the province of Manitoba to amend the school act prevented the extension of its boundaries westward, and that if such had been done it would have facilitated this extension. I cannot conceive how such a statement could have been made, considering the fact that from the month of June 1896 when we came into office, up to the month of January 1905 we never received from the government of Manitoba a communication asking for the extension of the boundaries of that province....¹⁰

A stormy session ensued following Laurier's speech, and a member said:

There is evidence that the right hon. gentleman (Laurier) is paying his political debts at the expense of the civil and educational rights of the people of this country.¹¹

At this point the Speaker called him to order for making an offensive imputation about the Prime Minister. Eventually the remarks were withdrawn despite the admiring and encouraging shout from Colonel Sam Hughes:

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Don't let them bluff you, Billy.

The next day the arguments broke out rancorously again, and it seemed for a while to be grave political crisis. Nevertheless it eventually cleared because the whole thing had been distorted by Mr. Rogers. The Apostolic Delegate never even saw Rogers, nor did he send an invitation to him. On the basis of a previous acquaintance Sbarretti had an informal conversation with the Attorney-General of Manitoba to see if in any way the double taxation

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10. Canada, H.C.D., 1905, 3840.
 11. Ibid., 3857.
 12. Ibid., 3858.
 13. Sbarretti's statement, quoted, 390, ibid.

for schools could not be eased on the Catholics of Winnipeg and Brandon. It was a purely private conversation, and Rogers was neither invited nor was he present. Laurier spoke with unwonted heat during the debate, and bitterness and religious bias were evident on both sides of the House.¹⁴

Although criticism remained steaming for some time, and although there were important repercussions, and in the two hotly contested bye-elections which followed - in London and North Oxford - the Autonomy Bills were made the issue, and the Laurier Liberals won both of them despite the defection of J. S. Willison and Clifford Sifton.

Resentment in Quebec was fanned against the bitterness that had attended the debates in the House on the School Clauses in the Autonomy Acts and the allegations of Rogers. Quebec began to see more clearly the real gulf that existed between herself and the English provinces that all of Laurier could not bridge. Resentment was fanned by the inflammatory utterances of Mr. Bourassa, who, although he had voted for the amended Autonomy Acts, held a great mass meeting in Montreal in the same April, and he was warmly applauded as he attacked the "unjust, illegal and oppressive territorial ordinances" that were to hamper the educational facilities of the minority in the new provinces.¹⁵ Laurier with his usual acumen foresaw the growth of the Nationalist party under

14. Ibid., 3835; 3855-3871.

15. Skelton, op. cit., quoted, 247.

the aegis of Bourassa. Writing to the Hon. J. B. Casgrain on

April 20 he said:

My dear Senator, I am not as optimistic as you are. I believe that I shall pull through this difficulty, but I am not sure that I shall pull through, as you suggest, stronger than at the beginning. Matters are not going too badly at the moment in the English-speaking provinces. I believe that there is in fact a distinct reaction in our favour. But our friend Bourassa has begun in Quebec a campaign that may well cause us some trouble....¹⁶

16. Ibid., 248.

Chapter XIII

Laurier, Sifton, and the Manitoba Liberals

The political implications of the Manitoba School Question were becoming more subtle and involved Canadian politics became more sophisticated as they grew more complex. It was the successful liberal handling of the Manitoba School Question that had brought Clifford Sifton into Dominion politics, where he was to win such prominence. It was the latent implications of that same question that were the occasion of his resignation. Laurier had always regarded Sifton as a collaborator on the 1897 Compromise which he refers to in a letter to John Wesley Dafoe as "The policy which Sifton and I carried through in 1896 and 1897." Moreover, in another letter to John Wesley Dafoe written in 1903, arguing in favor of public aid for the Winnipeg Catholic Private Schools, Laurier said: "I have talked to Sifton on this point and he agrees with me." ¹ Nevertheless Sifton left the Cabinet and walked from Laurier's side.

The resignation of Sifton possesses a fascination to any student of politics. His official biographer Dafoe said:

When, upon his hurried return from the South, he got the text of the Autonomy Bill, he discovered that the provision imposing an educational limitation on the Western provinces, instead of simply continuing the system created by the ordinances, had revived in all its original sweep and power the legislation of 1875.... The Protests of the Roman Catholic at the limitations upon the power of the Church... had at last borne fruit in Do-

1. Dafoe Papers (Unpublished, Winnipeg).

minion legislation.... And to this Clifford Sifton, the champion of Manitoba's rights in the great school controversy, was expected to meekly give his consent, in the sacred name of the constitution.²

Therefore, maintained Dafoe, Sifton resigned. Yet there are other versions regarding the reasons for his resignation. His biographer said that if his deafness had not prevented him from normal intercourse in the clubs and salons at Ottawa he would not have drifted away from his chief. Henri Bourassa condemned Sifton as playing a game that would materially benefit the pockets of those railway tycoons MacKenzie and Mann, and in this allegation he was supported in the House.³

Skelton in his Life and Letters of Wilfrid Laurier said the most probable reason for Sifton's resignation was:

The personal antagonism between Mr. Sifton and Mr. Fitzpatrick (Minister of Justice) and the personal attacks being made or prepared against Mr. Sifton doubtless had a part in their decision.⁴

Mr. Sifton was certainly piqued about not obtaining the portfolio of the Ministry of Justice.⁴ Early in 1905 he went to the Southern States, and his absence from the House was an embarrassment to the Government. Sifton accepted the amended school clauses, and continued to serve in the House as a private member.

The angry denunciations and the storms that were engendered over the School Question were Eastern and political. C. C. Lingard, in Territorial Government in Canada, states:

The Roman Catholics in the NorthWest realized that they possessed the full extent of the privileges which they could possibly receive from any local

2. Dafoe, Sifton, 288.

3. Canada, H.C.D., 1905.

4. ~~xxxxxx~~ Dafoe, Sifton, 248, 236.

legislature, and as a result a perfect understanding and a peaceful relationship existed between the Protestant and Roman Catholic sections of the community. Political, denominational, and racial prejudices appeared to have little to do with the stand taken by those most vocal on the issue. It was a characteristic of the Western pioneer not to concern himself with his neighbour's creed. Rather he regretted interference from the East, whether from the Dominion Government or from the sectarian agitators of Ontario.⁵

The bitterness of the parliamentary debates on the School Question in the NorthWest was directly in line with the Manitoba School problem. The Quebec members felt more and more that their position was viewed with lack of sympathy and understanding and from this time, the Nationalist Movement received a powerful impetus. As a result, Laurier's influence weakened in Quebec.

As a result the obscurantist provincial tendency of Quebec began to reassert itself.

The federal flurry and the result of Sifton's resignation were not felt immediately in the West. The 1897 Amendment in Manitoba had set the pattern that was to remain substantially unaltered until 1916. In the minds of the French-Canadians language and religion are indissolubly related, and the linguistic clauses in the 1897 Compromise, and the inefficient supervision of their schools by the provincial department of education, left them fairly well satisfied to let well enough alone. The Catholics who were most resentful of the set-up were those English-speaking Catholics who were bereft of their schools unless they supported them themselves, as well as paying the general school tax. These Catholics

5. C. C. Lingard, Territorial Government in Canada (Toronto, 1946).

were largely congregated in Winnipeg and Brandon. They generally belonged to the lower-income groups, and despite the fact that the religious undertook most of the teaching duties they found the task of supporting their own schools a very heavy financial burden. It is surprising to realize how little contact there was or is between the various racial groups within the Catholic Church in Manitoba. From the early twentieth century the Polish and Ukrainians began to pour into Winnipeg, and yet it only meant that the Irish Catholics felt that they could move up one in the social scale. There never has been any real integration and parishes are still organized upon racial and linguistic characteristics.

The general feeling among Catholics was that if help was to come it would come through the Roblin government, and Catholic opinion at that time was favourable to that administration.⁶ The sect that did oppose the Roblin regime was the Mennonite, for they did not feel it proper to obey the stirring appeal of Premier Roblin to fly the Union Jack above their school-houses, and from 1907 until 1913 most of the Mennonite schools seceded from the public school system, and were won back eventually mainly because of the patient and untiring efforts of the permanent staff of the provincial department of education.

It was the political implications that decided the general education pattern in Manitoba. Nevertheless from guilt or blame of any kind the permanent officials of the provincial department deserve to be protected. While many of them were limited men, as

6. F. Castell Hopkins, ed., Canadian Annual Review, 1913 (Toronto, 1914), 562.

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 their reports show, it was their hard work and genuine integrity that made the school system function. It was the teachers and the inspectors and the administrators who ignored the political problem and who unostentatiously established a modus vivendi that succeeded in creating a cordiality of feeling among the teachers and administrators within the framework of the Public School Act.

In 1907 a separate Department of Education was established, and the actual administration began to improve. Nevertheless the actual teaching progress remained at a very low level. The burden of supporting their own private schools was such a burden to the non-conformist Catholics of Winnipeg and Brandon that they constantly attempted to get some alleviation from their double burden of school taxation. Sir Wilfrid Laurier showed himself conscious of their position in these letters which he wrote to Mr. J. W. Dafoe: "... I was however forcibly impressed that their position was a painful one (the Winnipeg Catholics) and that they have been treated with the greatest liberality. I would hope that every effort should be directed to get the Liberal party to make them concessions for their schools in Winnipeg, and it should be good tactics to quietly prepare public opinion in that direction."⁸

In another letter: "An attempt is made to have the Catholic schools taken over by the public school board. It is in the public interest.... I attach the greatest importance to have this done...."⁹

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7. Annual Reports of the Provincial Department of Education, 1908-10.
 8. Dafoe Papers.
 9. Ibid.

Despite the efforts of Laurier the Manitoba Liberals were not very concerned about the state of the Winnipeg Catholics. There were a variety of reasons for the lack of sympathy shown by the Manitoba Liberals to the plight of the Winnipeg Catholics. Laurier's pleas on their behalf were of no avail. A further complication had arisen to confuse the issue of the Manitoba School Question - the revival of the Liberal Party as a Provincial organization. Manitoba Liberals, less than any other Liberals, were, as events were to show, under the Laurier sway. They were disgruntled about the federal administration of electoral lists, and they contained elements that were constitutionally opposed to the compromising attitude of Laurier on the School Question. The somewhat murky political implications began to give way to a reasoned appreciation of the situation.

Chapter XIV

The Slavic Alliance

The traditional opponents in the School Question throughout Canada were the French and the English. Quebec and Ontario were on opposite sides of a divide, and somewhere in between were the English speaking Catholics whose confused loyalties and liberal traditions made them suspect to both sides. Although the quebequois were so generous and so good to the tens of thousands of starving Irish emigrants during the hungry forties, the gratitude of the Irish faded as they moved away westward. Those who remained in Quebec were often assimilated, but throughout Canada there was a remarkable lack of sympathy between the Irish English-speaking Catholics and the Canadian French-speaking Catholics. The lack of sympathy goes back into history for explanation. The traditional friendship between Ireland and France was a friendship between two educated and cosmopolitan classes of society, whereas the French Canadian and Irish Canadian came generally from the peasant and insular stock. They were divided by language and by the tendency of the Irish Catholics to be absorbed into the prevailing Canadian culture. More and more it was becoming evident that the English speaking Catholics were being absorbed into the English pattern of Canadian society. The French did not regard them as full allies, but rather as co-belligerents.

The great influx of the Slavic Catholics whose numbers began to outweigh the English speaking Catholics of the West, and who were less liable to assimilation by the English, began to be re-

garded as an opportunity by the French. It was this alliance with the Slavic Catholics that was to complicate the political implication of the Manitoba School Question.

The French, basing their hopes upon the apparent cordiality towards that of the Roblin Government, began to make common cause with the Slavic communities in Manitoba. These helpless and ignorant people arrived by the thousands in Manitoba, and for the first ten years after their settlement they were often without schools. This was not due entirely to government apathy; rather, it was another manifestation of the political implications of the School Question.

Whole areas settled by Poles and Ruthenians remained for five to ten years without adequate school accommodation, to say nothing of qualified teachers. It was suspected that the school organizers were really endeavoring as far as possible to keep schools from being organized. They were closely in touch with St. Boniface, and the then Archbishop (Langevin) had refused to accept the compromise of 1897 as final. His view was that no schools were better than the 'Godless schools' of the Act, while he held sway, and Sir Rodmond Roblin was premier the French never ceased to hope that recognition would be given to Catholic schools.¹

In order to buttress his claims, and because he deeply abhorred the public schools, and because it was his pastoral duty, Archbishop Langevin enrolled the Slavic Catholics. In waging their war for them, because they had no priests of their own, the Archbishop was furthering his own cause for his own people. No man who played provincial politics in those times could fail to be accused of unworthiness, and yet the actions of the Archbishop

1. Sissons, Bi-lingual Schools, 123.

of St. Boniface was not devoid of some elements of justification. To any French-Canadian cleric brought up in the rigid seminaries of Quebec, the pattern of Canadian democracy must at times have appeared dishonest and beyond his comprehension. The zeal and misguided activity of the Archbishop for his schools was directed towards a proper end. Some grateful immigrants wrote thus:

Your Grace may believe that we are grateful to him. We do not forget who gave us the money to build our churches, who sent us priests, who has accepted Hungarian boys for the priesthood.²

As far as he was concerned, the means were quite justified. The St. Boniface organization was attempting to deal with a political machine that was beyond its scope. The Manitoba School Question was an example of a clash of two differing ways of life, two different opinions, "The juxtaposition of two civilizations, two philosophies, two contradictory views of the fundamental nature of man.... This primary antithesis of Canadian history...."³

The distinguishing mark of French-Canadian society is its cohesion. Were this to be lost the Archbishop was aware that the whole structure of a French-Canadian society would be in danger. This cohesion depended upon segregation, and the schools were an essential part of that policy. Moreover, as the clerics were well aware, the non-confessional neutral school is not a British phenomenon. It is essentially North American in its development, and that was another reason that gave them to hope, because more and more they saw Roblin become so British that he was more British

2. Free Press, September 17, 1910.

3. E.R.M. Lower, Annual Report, Canadian Historical Association, 1943.

than the British themselves. The Imperial League were playing Roblin, and nothing could be more British than separate schools. It was during the 1900's that Manitoba teachers began to visit England on organized tours of inspection, and this again may have disposed St. Boniface to hope for some relief from the administrators. It must be admitted, however, that in all the reports of these educational tours by the teachers and inspectors there was very little mention of any sort of school and none whatever of the British system of separate schools.⁴

It will be seen therefore that Archbishop Langevin was not completely unjustified in supporting the Slavic Catholics and in passively resisting the erection of public schools among them. Moreover, outside of Manitoba events were occurring that looked as if they might have a political effect upon the Manitoba School Question. The French-Canadian nationalism was beginning to make itself felt as a political factor and this movement received impetus from the Manitoba School Question, just as it did from the demands for military and naval preparedness. Roblin knew that this growing political power would deal with him if he promised some consideration to their distressed brethren in the West.

The Slavic alliance entered into by Archbishop Langevin was more than an astute move by a wily cleric. The political implications cannot be ignored, and he regarded it as his duty to attempt to profit by them. He wrote this to the Free Press:

4. Annual Reports, Department of Education, 1909-1914.

... I am not a politician ... and I feel just as much at home dealing with a Liberal as with a Conservative Government. But I am an Archbishop of the Catholic Church, and I have the responsibilities of the spiritual welfare of thousands of souls. It is not for me to cause trouble ... but I must state the truth at all hazards. This I do when I maintain that the School Question has not been settled....⁵

As a result Manitoba education suffered grievously.

The political implications of the Manitoba School Question were realized by the Manitoba Liberals with apprehension. Within their ranks they numbered sincere and intelligent members who realized that the parious system of education in Manitoba was hampering the development of the Province. The bi-lingual clauses of the School Act were, they realized, splitting the province into at least four unassimilated and segregate groups. They set their faces firmly against the system. It was not only the political implication that concerned them, it was Canadianism as well. They wanted to see an assimilated people. Perhaps it was not unnatural for them to believe that thereby their position would be improved, as educated people who could speak English would naturally vote for the Liberal party in Manitoba! They followed the English Liberal espousal of democracy which connoted compulsory free education. The people were to rule, and so they had to be educated. In January, 1908, the Liberals introduced a motion in the Legislature to bring compulsory education to the Province, but it was defeated. In 1914 T. C. Morris stated in an election manifesto that:

5. Free Press, August 27, 1910.

We are living in a democratic age, and we have democratic institutions. Our government is founded on the principle that laws are made for the people, and that the people rule.⁶

There is no doubt that the Manitoba Liberals lost much of the traditional French-Catholic vote because of their uncompromising stand upon the doctrines of secular liberalism.

6. Political Scrapbook, P.L.M.

Chapter XV

The Coldwell Amendments

The political implications of the Manitoba School Question were the causes for the drastic educational conditions that existed within the Province. The bi-lingual liberties were playing havoc with many of the two few existing schools, and the difficulty of securing bi-lingual teachers prevented the establishment of the much needed expansion of the system. The pattern was fairly well set for the play of political action by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. During that time the Manitoba Liberals sloughed off their Laurier attachment and became Western, secular and progressive. The Catholic Church gained strength from the Slavic Alliance, and concerned itself with politicking in order to regain what it had lost. There was something almost piously Bourbon about the way in which the organization at St. Boniface never realized the full implications of the situation until it was too late. The concord which existed between the Archbishop of St. Boniface and Premier Roblin exacerbated the Manitoba Liberals and accentuated their already existing secularism. The Catholic Liberals of Manitoba remained steadfast in their adherence to the Federal party while they became a rump in Manitoba, scolded by their ecclesiastical superiors, scorned by their erstwhile associates, and used by their former opponents; their position was not a happy one. With the defeat of Laurier in 1911 these remnants had not even the pride of a Dominion leader to brighten their aimless path. Their only political importance lay in the fact that they were attached to the Quebec members of Parliament.

Mr. Robert Borden and his Conservative Government seemed, for a while, to be a beneficent change for the Manitoba Catholics. Roblin appeared also to think that remedial action was possible, and as a political move parleys and proffers began.

In 1912 Roblin was again seeking to extend the boundaries of Manitoba, and there was resistance from Ontario. The obviously was therefore Quebec, and it was a good political move to pose to the Quebec members as the champion of the Catholic schools. It was not until Roblin decided to argue the boundary case that he did make a gesture towards the Catholics, and then it was not so much for their support, as for that of their Quebec allies. Moreover, the gesture was but an empty one; although it did provoke much sound and fury it signified nothing.

The Goldwell Amendments were concerned with the change in the connotation of the word school. By the amendments the word school was now held to mean "every school building, school room or department in a school building owned by a public school district, presided over by a teacher or teachers."¹ This anomalous interpretation of the word school brought a gleam of hope to English and French Catholics alike, but the wording was designed only to bring hope, and not relief. Events were to show it to be a trick. In reference to the amendments Dr. Weir states:

Certain political gossip current in the West twenty years ago (1914), with regard to Manitoba's boundaries, might be mentioned. It was alleged that Sir Wilfrid Laurier's hands were tied by Quebec influence, and that no accession of territory to Manitoba was possible until the Roman Catholic minority

1. R.S.M., 1913, Cap. 165, s. 252.

of the Province was granted a fuller measure of sectarian school privileges. With the passing of the Coldwell Amendments, however, the Quebec ban was alleged to have been removed, and Sir Robert Borden was free to grant the territorial extensions.²

The realization of what the Coldwell Amendments could mean came to be understood only gradually, and then the sectarian bitterness welled up once again in Manitoba.

The 1897 Compromise was already sufficient to ensure that wherever there were more than forty Catholic children in any school in town or city the trustees had to employ a Catholic teacher (legally qualified) to look after them.³ The new interpretation of the word school meant that in any school any schoolroom could be construed as a separate institute as far as the meaning of the Act was concerned. This meant that all schools where the pupils were Catholic could claim all Catholic teachers instead of the niggardly single exception they were previously allowed. Naturally the Act only applied to the public schools of the Province, but the Winnipeg Catholic private schools eagerly suggested a simple way that would benefit them. They would lease their school premises to the city, come into the public school system, and enjoy all the benefits and privileges that they had so long demanded. No sooner was this demand made public than Coldwell, an Orangeman, roundly denied that he had in any way attempted to curry favour with the Catholics.⁴ A study of the newspaper headlines at this time is sufficient to give an idea of the temper of the times.

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2. Weir, Separate Schools, 53.
 3. S. of M. 60 Vic. Cap. 27.
 4. Manitoba Free Press, July 14, 1913.

SCHOOL BOARD ASKED TO TAKE OVER THE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS.

Minister of Education Discusses Matter with Board at Private Meeting.... In the course of further discussion Mr. Coldwell said he understood it was the desire of the Catholics that the board should lease the buildings at present devoted to the education of Catholic youth, leaving the children undisturbed.⁵

MAY ADJUST THE SCHOOL QUESTION.

Catholics look to Education Minister to Complete Arrangements.⁶

The air of hope that these excerpts demonstrate are but the beginning of a swelling tide, a tide that was to swell with promise and then to flatly subside again. The Borden Government had given Roblin the boundary extension he had sought, and even here the Manitoba School pattern ran true to form for the opposition in the Province alleged that a compact was made by Roblin with the Church.⁷

The simplicity of the pattern which so far consisted of vague generalizations by the Catholics and the Ministry of Education began to lose its bilateral content early in 1912, when the Orangemen began to get suspicious:

SUSPICIOUS OF MANITOBA SCHOOLS - Orangemen Fear That Recent Legislation May Have Dangerous Elements - WILL WATCH CLOSELY - Fact that Both Sides were Satisfied Considered Ominous by Grand Lodge.⁸

Slowly it became realized that the Coldwell Amendments were not to be in any way beneficial to the Catholic Schools. The matter finally was clarified by a visit of a delegation from the Orange Conservative delegation that waited on the Minister of

5. Ibid., September 10, 1912.

6. Ibid., September 20, 1912.

7. Ibid., July 8, 1913.

8. Ibid., May 31, 1912.

Education, and by the NorthWest Review, which kept on asking the Premier and his Minister to implement the Amendment. The Free Press reviewed the situation:

With what purpose and intention were these Amendments framed by the Minister of Education? ... This discreditable game of hide-and-seek which Mr. Goldwell is playing with his responsibility as Minister of Education is one to which an end must be put.¹⁰

Despite the protests of the Hon. Joseph Bernier, which appeared in Le Manitoba, it became more and more evident that the Catholics were losing faith in the Goldwell Amendments, and the Orangemen remained suspicious and lowering in spite of all Goldwell's protestations. It does appear that the Amendments were framed to gain Catholic support for the Roblin Government at a time when they needed it, and the ensuing opposition was regarded as an excuse for failing to implement them. The Amendments became another source of bitterness and frustration to the Catholics of Winnipeg, who by this time were supporting eight more or less inadequate private schools. The provincial Liberal and Conservative parties had both used the School Question now for their ulterior motives. Nevertheless the impression remained that Roblin would have implemented the Amendments had he been able to do so without arousing a political storm. The Roblin technique was running out of pace with the times. There was a chicanery in his actions that was becoming too apparent.

9. Political Scrapbooks 1912-1915, P.L.M.

10. Free Press.

Chapter XVI

The Reforming Liberals

The Liberals in Manitoba were showing a genuine reform spirit in regard to the Manitoba School Question. They were seriously embarrassing the provincial government by their allegations and were showing a lively concern and sympathy for the lot of the permanent administrators. There were undoubtedly political implications contained within their reforming zeal, but basically their concern was a genuine one, based upon the parlous state of education in the province. The provincial Liberal party set themselves firmly against all compromise and went all out for secular compulsory or public education in which English was to be the language of instruction.

The Free Press ran a series of articles during 1912 and 1913 upon the state of the schools, and the allegations that were made caused the government some confusion. The Free Press admitted that the Mennonite schools, gradually returning from the flight from the flag in 1907 to the public fold, were making progress, but that they were unique in this improvement. In answer to the Free Press charges all that the Deputy Minister of Education could say was that the situation was better than in 1904, and that the occasional convent schools were imparting good instruction.¹

The Liberals again admitted this, but pointed out that in 1913 out of the 150 French schools in the Province, 100 were one-room rural schools, and furthermore that none of these schools had

1. Manitoba Free Press, November, 1912 - February, 1913.

as yet successfully entered a child for high school. This was compared with the successful record of the English speaking schools (500) and some of the Mennonite schools. The Polish-Ruthenian schools, as the departmental reports show, were in a dire state. No positive remarks are made about them, except for the bald statement that they were making progress. The Free Press articles are of interest because they do show that the Liberal opposition was finally taking a real interest in educational reform. It must be admitted that some of the zeal for the abolition of bi-lingual schools, for compulsory and public education, were also subjects likely to appeal to the Orange vote, now so suspicious of the Coldwell Amendments, as the newspapers show:

OPPOSE STRONGLY BI-LINGUAL SYSTEM. - Orange Order takes Strong Stand on School Question. T. J. Noble Returns from Convention.²

Nevertheless the reform movement was present, and it came before the political implications of the question. There was a genuine desire to assimilate the new population and to Canadianize them through education.

The state of Manitoba schools had achieved notoriety. Writing in 1916, C. B. Sissons, in reference to the Manitoba Schools System, said:

Manitoba has gained considerable notoriety by reason of its provincial politics, and nowhere in Canada has education suffered more from the fact that it is a purely provincial matter. Indeed, in the last analysis the School Question has been in large part responsible for the 'mess of politics.'³

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2. Manitoba Free Press, August 12, 1913.
 3. Sissons, Bi-Lingual Schools, 114.

The future polyglot nature of the province was not anticipated by Sifton and Laurier in 1896. It was the Liberal Government that had been mainly responsible for scouring "the highways and byways" of Europe to increase the prairie population. A bi-lingualism that was confined to French and English it might have been possible to handle, but the hordes of leaderless immigrants made the educational system hopeless.

The illiteracy of Manitoba became a byword throughout Canada, and after the visit of the Hon. Herbert Samuel in 1913, even across the Atlantic. Mr. Samuel, it will be remembered, ventured to say at Montreal, in reference to the educational system in Manitoba ... 'a generation behind the rest of the civilized world' and was called for his pains by the Premier of the Province 'a jelly-bag of an Englishman.'⁴

Within the rural areas the shifting of one average French Canadian family was liable to upset the educational pattern of the community. The Union Point Case showed the impossibility of the system. As the English settlers moved out of this community the French settlers moved in, at the bidding, it is suggested,⁵ of their spiritual directors. The trustees were forced to employ a French teacher. The parents complained about the efficiency of the French teachers, and the trustees were fined by the local magistrates. Appealing against the fine they were unsuccessful, but the judgment of Mr. Justice Prudhomme contains a succinct comment on the result of the chaotic state of the schools:

It has been proved by Pulcerie Nolette, who attended that school, that both on August 2, and previous to that date, Brown (the English-speaking teacher) could not speak French, that she was preparing for entrance

4. Ibid., 120.

5. Ibid., 120.

to high school, and that Brown did not teach her French dictation, that she does not speak English, and that Brown spoke English while teaching French. Inspectors Young and Goulet both visited the school in September last, and both swear that Brown was not competent to teach French.⁶

The 1911 census gives Manitoba more than a quarter of the population as foreign born. Of these nearly 40,000 were classed as Austro-Hungarians, or, as they are more generally known, as Galicians or Ukrainians. These poor people arrived in Manitoba almost like livestock, and were generally without the spiritual guidance of their priests. Archbishop Langevin, who had never accepted the 1897 Compromise, wrought on them as well as he could. The Ukrainians who settled in a town were cared for in a fashion, but in the country districts whole generations of them grew up without any education whatever. A previous chapter described the inadequate methods that were adopted to provide bi-lingual teaching staffs for these immigrants, and the platitudinous reports that attempted to cover up the failure. The Catholic Church saw them as potential allies in the political struggle for schools (the 1911 Census showed that there were 11,000 more Ukrainians in Manitoba than there were French-Canadians). The public schools were regarded by Archbishop Langevin as "Godless institutes." There was reason for Roblin's lack of enthusiasm in organizing school districts among them, as it would incur the hostility of the French-Canadians who, as late as 1913, referred to him as the one who had relieved the Catholics of "one of the most cruel griefs, the most crying injustice of the Laurier-Greenway settlement."⁷

6. Ibid., quoted, 121.

7. Ibid., 124.

The provincial elections of 1914 were won by a narrow margin by the Roblin government. The Liberals stood firm on the principle of public schools, compulsory education, and the end of bi-lingual-⁸ism. This did lose them some support, and the NorthWest Review at this time joined with Le Manitoba in preferring the evasiveness of Roblin to the downright statements of Norris. In 1915, however, the Roblin government tumbled. The Liberal party came to power, and the Manitoba School Question entered upon a new phase. A phase began where education was primarily regarded as a matter affecting the welfare of the schools and not as a political pawn.

Chapter XVII
The Liberal Reform

The Norris administration immediately set about the reform of the schools. The political implications had delayed reforms that were needed and were long over-due. It was evident that the dull verbiage and inconsequential reports of the old regime had not shown the real educational pattern. The crisp and frank statements of the Liberal Report were a refreshing innovation. While it is true that the Manitoba Liberals were following a traditional political pattern in their attempt to set up a public and secular school system, and while it is true a rankling sense of injustice lingered in the minds of the dispossessed Catholics, a genuine reform was accomplished. A Manitoba political party lost an election (1914) rather than allow themselves to promise the maintenance of an educational status quo to which they were sincerely opposed. The Hon. R. S. Thornton, speaking in the Legislature on January 12, 1916, said:

On June 30th, 1915, there were in operation altogether 2,727 departments in the various schools - In this number there are 126 French bi-lingual schools - 61 German bi-lingual schools - 111 Ruthenian and Polish schools. The enrolment in these schools numbers 16,270, while the total enrolment in the whole province, including cities, is 100,963, so that the number of children enrolled in these rural bi-lingual schools is one-sixth of the total enrolment of the whole province.... There should be one common school teaching the things which are common to all, and leaving to individual effort those things which are of private concern. There should be one standard of teacher eligible to teach in all schools of the province.

There should be a Normal School to which all teachers should measure up.... It will take many a long year to undo present conditions. The transition towards new

conditions must of necessity be accomplished gradually, but we can set our faces in the right direction, and patiently, steadily, and considerably travel towards the goal - A grave injustice is being done the children.... Each generation must take its responsibility, and act in the spirit of its own times, yet ever watchful of the result to succeeding generations. We are building today for the Canada of tomorrow, and our common school is one of the most important factors in this work.¹

On January 14 a "Special Report on Bilingual Schools in Manitoba" was presented to the Legislature. As this thesis is concerned with the political implications of the problem, there is little need to dwell on the work of the trained administrators of provincial education, but this Report gave convincing evidence of the chaotic state of education in Manitoba at this time. The report was compiled by the permanent inspectorate of the Department of Education. They seemed to have welcomed the opportunity to be frank. As an example:

Isle des Chenes, No. 995	(Inspector) Young says:
33 French	"The senior grades understand English, but use one word only in answering question."
Lorette, No. 993	
20 French	"Knowledge of English weak."
2 Poles	
Haywood, No. 1193	(Inspector) Newcombe says:
27 French	"In lower grades they know little or no English. A few pupils in the upper grades can converse."
Lecog, No. 1121	(Inspector) Herriot says:
27 Pupils	"They understand English fairly well. Older ones can converse, but not easily."
St. Roch, No. 1269	(Inspector) Young says:
	"Knowledge of English weak." ²

1. Political Scrapbook, P.L.M.

2. Special Report on Bilingual Schools in Manitoba, Dept. of Ed., 1916.

This report was the first genuine statement to come out of the Department of Education upon the deplorable state of affairs that was existing. It must be remembered that it came at a time when political feeling was not sympathetic to the foreign or French element. Canada was at war, and the British sentiment reacted strongly against those Canadians who were not very enthusiastic over the Imperial conflict. While this factor made it easier for the Provincial Government to press for the abolition of the privileges of the non-British Canadians, it would be unwise to give this factor undue importance. The Liberal Party was committed to educational reform along traditional Liberal lines in any case, and had so acted in accordance with their principles.

The French-Canadians partly encompassed their own disaster. Since 1890 the French-Canadian effort to win back for themselves their old privileges had led them to indulge in politics in an expedient and opportunistic fashion. Their suspicion of the English political machines was well founded, but they in their turn could not be trusted, and eventually their support was discounted. Archbishop Langevin delivered the coup de grace to his own schools when he insisted that the Ukrainians were also entitled to separate schools. As Dafoe said:

... the influences which turned the supposed bi-lingual schools into French clerical schools in defiance of the law and in contempt of the agreement of 1897, now acclaimed as sacred, deliberately instigated the Polish and Ruthenian sections of the community to claim, under the school law, the rights which it was the intention of limiting to the French alone, although those who drafted the law did not have the courage to say what they meant. The agitation against bi-lingualism in Manitoba was directed primarily against the system of Slavic

schools, which was being fastened on the province. The people, in wiping them out, did not distinguish between them and the French schools; it was because under the circumstances they could not do so. The French, the Polish, the Ruthenians, having made common cause, invited and received identical treatment....³

The "Thorough" Norris administration completely excised the bi-lingual clause 258 from the Public School Act. Compulsory school attendance was introduced, and adequate schooling had to be provided privately for those children whose parents or guardians were unwilling to send them to the public schools. The Normal Schools were re-
⁴organized, and the whole technique of education was brought into proper alignment. The Manitoba School Question was still unsolved, and there was still bitterness among the French at their "betrayal." Nevertheless, the patient work of administrators began to knit the Province into one coherent educational whole.

The Manitoba School Question was by no means finished. Every decade revives it in some form or other. In Winnipeg there are frequent papers read to Catholic societies on the problem of Catholic schools and the "double taxation." The diplomatic handling that the Department has accorded the French-Canadians has kept them reasonably well satisfied. At the moment, however, the larger school unit is threatening the French school position. The Ukrainians are being subjected to a zealous anti-Communist program and to a revivalist campaign to restore their wavering Catholicism. At the moment the 50,000 Catholics of Winnipeg are divided into four unsympathetic groups, and these groups are quite apart from

3. Dafoe Papers.

4. Annual Report of the Department of Education, 1916.

the French-Canadian element of the province. Should an able organizer ever cause the coalescing of these groups, the political implications would be unusually interesting, and the cause of education would probably suffer.

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