

FRENCH-CANADIANS AND PRAIRIE SETTLEMENT, 1870-1890

FRENCH-CANADIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD THE
NORTH-WEST AND NORTH-WEST SETTLEMENT
1870-1890

A Thesis Prepared In Compliance With The Requirements For

The Degree Of

Master Of Arts

In

History

And Submitted To

McGILL UNIVERSITY

By

ARTHUR ISAAC SILVER

April, 1966

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Whatever it is a young M.A. student needs to keep going -- and to keep going in the right direction -- I was lucky enough to find a man who could give it to me. Prof. Terry Copp probably reduced the number of drop-outs by at least one this year. His interest, his encouragement, his help, were quite indispensable.

A young researcher's best friends are probably librarians and archivists, usually. Some of my best friends were archivists too. Frère Ethier and Frère Goulet of the Scolasticat St-Joseph have my gratitude and good wishes. I am sure no students are better treated than those who visit the Archives Deschâtelets for their research.

My thanks go too to the Abbé Beaudin, who obtained permission for me to see the papers of the Montreal archepiscopal archives, and then helped me patiently to go through them. And to Prof. Jacques Monet, s.j., who introduced me into the archives of the Collège Ste-Marie, and put me onto several other useful leads as well.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I. THE ACQUISITION OF THE NORTH-WEST	58
II. THE FERTILITY OF PRAIRIE LAND	99
III. THE DANGERS OF BEING A MINORITY	135
IV. THE PATRIE -- WHERE WAS IT?	175
V. CONTEMPORARY OBSERVATIONS	217
VI. CONCLUSIONS	235
Appendices	
A. LITERACY IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, 1870- 1890 ..	285
B. CIRCULATIONS OF QUEBEC FRENCH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS IN THE 1870s	290
C. RELATION OF PRESS OPINION ON NORTH-WEST TO PARTY AFFILIATION	292
D. EUROPEAN EMIGRATION AND NORTH-WEST SETTLEMENT	298
BIBLIOGRAPHY	307

INTRODUCTION

In 1870 Canada completed the acquisition of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company, and Manitoba entered Confederation as the fifth province. The Manitoba Act -- a law of the federal government, and the constitution of the new province¹ -- established the official status of the French language in the Northwest,² and continued the practice, begun by the Hudson's Bay Company's old Council of Assiniboia, of supporting from public funds separate Roman Catholic and protestant school systems. Carrying even further the resemblance of the new constitution to that of Quebec, an upper legislative chamber was to safeguard the rights of the racial minority -- English or French. In short, the Manitoba Act gave to the new province, as Sir George-Etienne Cartier told his Montreal-East voters, "un gouvernement calqué sur celui de Québec".³

¹Kennedy, W.P.M., "Statutes, Treaties, And Documents of The Canadian Constitution" (Oxford, 1930) 640-644. The Manitoba Act was validated by an Imperial amendment to the British North America Act in 1871.

²The use of the French language in the Northwest Territories was provided for in separate federal legislation.

³Tassé, Joseph, ed., "Discours De Sir Georges Cartier" (Montreal, Senécal & Fils, 1893) 706. (In a speech of 21 April, 1871, declining the nomination for the Conservative candidacy for the provincial seat.

Such provisions were only appropriate to the ethnic composition of Manitoba's population. The French-Catholic element predominated, and Manitoba has been described as being, on the eve of her entry into Confederation, "a little Quebec".⁴

Our problem arises from the fact that within 20 years of 1870 such a massive wave of English-speaking immigration swamped the French population of Manitoba, that by the end of that period, the upper legislative chamber, French language, and Catholic separate schools had all been abolished.⁵ The voice of the French-Catholics in the North-West had become so weak in relation to that of the English and protestants, that relatively little difficulty was encountered by the latter in their removal of those guarantees of French-Canadian rights.

⁴Morton, A.S., "A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71" (London, Nelson, n.d.) 802.

⁵The upper legislative chamber was done away with in 1876 -- for reasons of economy, and with the reluctant consent of the French-Canadian members of the two Manitoba legislative chambers.

For the great wave of English immigration⁶ that so changed the racial personality of Manitoba during those 20 years -- a wave of immigration that came more from Ontario than from any other single place⁷ -- was not matched by an immigration of French-speaking settlers either from Quebec or from France.⁸ The French-speaking population, a majority in 1870, hardly increased at all in the years that followed.

Why was this so? In retrospect, does it not seem like an abdication of the West to English-Canada?

⁶Expressions like English-Canadian, English-speaking, or English-origin seem rather cumbersome for repeated use. So with French-speaking, and so on. In this thesis, therefore, the word English will be used to represent the ethnic-linguistic group unless the context makes clear that "of England" is meant. Similarly, the word French will signify French-speaking or, of French national origin and culture, unless the context makes clear that French of France is implied.

⁷Canada, Department of Agriculture, Federal Census, 1881, Manitoba Census, 1885. The census of 1881 shows 19,125 people of Ontario origin living in Manitoba, compared with 18,020 born in Manitoba, 8,161 in the U.K., 6,422 in the North-West Territories, 6,097 in continental Europe, and 4,085 in Quebec. There were more than twice as many from Ontario, therefore, as from any other place outside of Manitoba itself, and almost five times as many as from Quebec (whose emigrants were not, of course, all French-Canadians). The influence of immigration is seen in a comparison with the next census of Manitoba, only five years later. The number of Ontario-born has climbed to 34,121, while the number of Quebec-born is only 5,976. U.K.-born are 19,925, while continental Europeans number 8,770.

⁸See below, Appendix D.

How different, we speculate, would be Canada's present political picture if a second province of Quebec had been maintained on the prairies!

And could it not have been? The new province's languages and school systems were the same as Quebec's in 1870. Its government was "copied directly from Quebec's". And French-Canadians still enjoyed a head start in its settlement. Now they were invited to take advantage of this head start. "L'Ouest," Cartier told them, "c'est l'avenir."⁹

Indeed, the invitation of 1870 to French-Canadians might well have involved more than the new province's constitution and racial composition. A long history and tradition of French involvement in the territory would also seem to have pointed the way for them to take up the work of settlement. For the Red River Settlement, that "little Quebec" of 1869-70, was the centre of a territory in whose history French-Canadians had played so great a rôle that some of them had come to regard it as "L'apanage de la race

⁹Tassé, Joseph, "Discours De ... Cartier", 558. In an 1867 House of Commons speech. "Cette acquisition du Nord-Ouest," he said, "augmentera l'importance de tout le pays ... comme le savent les représentants de Québec."

française".¹⁰

During the French regime the North-West, like Ontario and the American middle west, was part of the hinterland exploited by the fur traders of the St. Lawrence. Only opened to the fur trade near the end of the French regime, the North-West was traversed but not settled by the French. As traders got their food from Indians, there was no need for the French to become involved in agriculture. Since hardly two decades passed between the time when La Vérendrye established the North-Western posts and the time when they were abandoned (for a concentration of manpower on the defence of the St. Lawrence valley in the Seven Years' War), it is not even possible to say that Frenchmen ever lived permanently in the territory.

When the North-West posts were abandoned after 1755, hardly any permanent trace was left of the civilisation they had represented. "Only two or three -- it may have been more -- old voyageurs continued to

¹⁰Morice, A.G., "Aux Sources De L'Histoire Manitobaine" (Québec, l'Événement, 1907) 4. Advocates of French-Canadian settlement in the North-West often pointed to this tradition of French involvement in the territory. The North-West belonged to French-Canadians as a patrimony bequeathed by those forbears who had first explored, traded, and lived there. See, for example, T.A. Bernier, "Le Manitoba: Champ D'Immigration" (Ottawa, 1887).

live with the Indians the life of the Indians."¹¹ France did leave a claim to the North-West, and Canadian politicians were to take it up a century later.¹² The French experience also left an impression on the historical consciousness of French-Canadians; if it wasn't exactly true that the French had brought civilisation to the wilds of the great North-West, some French-Canadian historians could at least claim later that they had planted the seeds.¹³

After the Conquest French-Canadians were in the vanguard of the renewed North-West trade. (Some, indeed, had already gone into the service of the Hudson's Bay Company from the time of the French withdrawal from the North-West in 1755). Now, as Montreal moved once more into the territory, French experience, usually combined with English capital, ran the trade. The voyageurs, the freighters, were virtually all French-Canadians. The traders themselves, whether backed by English or Canadian capital, were usually French-Canadians. Even during the period of the North-West

¹¹Morton, W.L., "Manitoba: A History" (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1957) 37.

¹²See below, 62.

¹³Dugas, Georges, "L'Ouest Canadien" (Montreal, Cadieux & Derome, 1896) 5-6. "Ce n'est pas aux Anglais que revient la gloire ... d'y avoir porté les premiers germes de la civilisation."

Company, so great was the number of French-Canadians among the bourgeois, and so widespread the use of French as the working language of the company, that that society of Scotch and English Montreal capitalists came to be known to many as a "French Company".¹⁴

With an estimated 1,500 to 2,000 whites living full-time on the prairies by 1780, feeding this staff of an unprecedentedly large fur trade was becoming almost as important as the acquisition of the furs itself. From Lake Superior to the edge of the plains, Indian-supplied corn and wild rice were the staple foods of the industry. Farther West, dried buffalo meat and pemmican became increasingly important staples of the fur traders' diet. A product of the prairie grasslands, pemmican made those lands increasingly important to the industry.

Supplied at first by the plains Indians, buffalo products came to be more and more provided by a

¹⁴Morice, A.G., "Histoire Abrégée De L'Ouest Canadien" (St. Boniface, 1914) 19. "Tous les serviteurs, guides, interprètes, 'voyageurs', et autres subalternes, un bon nombre de ses commis et quelques-uns de ses bourgeois ... étaient de race française. Mêmes ses plus hauts fonctionnaires étaient familiers avec la langue de cette race.... En sorte que cette corporation passa bientôt pour une société française." H.A. Innis, in his chapters on the North-West Company, quotes references to it as the "Canadian" company, at a time when Canadian was synonymous with French-Canadian. See Innis, H.A., "The Fur Trade In Canada" (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1962) 239, 262, 270, 274, etc.

new French element on the prairies -- the Métis. These were children of white fur trade employees¹⁵ and Indian women, united by their fathers' language and a trace of their religion. Learning to hunt the buffalo from their maternal relatives, they banded together in great organised hunts that soon became the great industry of the grasslands.

A numerical predominance of the French-Canadians in the fur trade itself is perhaps indicated by the numerical majority of the French among the half-breed population.¹⁶ Far from the women of home, the white men of the fur trade were forced to take mates from among the local Indian populations. Often, when their term of service with the trade was ended, they would settle with their wives' people (so accustomed had they become to the country), taking up the hunt with them, and raising their children among them. By 1811 these children had formed a sizable population, gathered together and hunting buffalo in its own bands across the prairies, to supply the fur traders of Montreal and of York Factory. Among these half-breeds, the French

¹⁵And Officers. Hudson's Bay Company Governor Sir George Simpson was said to have had 70-odd half-breed children between Red River and the Rockies.

¹⁶The first Manitoba census in 1870 showed 5,757 French half-breeds and 4,083 English half-breeds in the province.

predominance was probably more than numerical. The number of instances of French-speaking half-breeds with English-sounding names (such as Cuthbert Grant, Guillaume Sayer, or John Bruce) indicates that the French element absorbed or assimilated other elements with it to a certain extent.

Thus, the first explorers of the plains, and the first to set up trading posts on them, were French. The first to embark on the post-conquest fur trade were French-Canadians, who continued to be the largest contingent of the trade's labour force. And the main suppliers of the trade's staple food on the prairies were the French half-breed children of the traders themselves.

The first agricultural settlement on the plains was, however, not French, nor French-Canadian, but Scotch. For seven years Lord Selkirk's settlers struggled not just against grasshoppers, floods, and cold, but also against the hostility of the Montreal-based fur traders and the Métis whom they stirred up with hints that the Scotch had come to steal their lands and their livelihoods.¹⁷ The North-Westerners themselves saw the planting of the colony as a move by the Hudson's

¹⁷Stanley, George F.G., "The Birth of Western Canada" (London, Longmans, Green, 1936) 11.

Bay Company to harm their trade.

In 1821 the opposition of the North-West Company to the Red River colony was done away with permanently by the merger of that company with the Hudson's Bay Company.¹⁸ The opposition of the Métis had been ended in 1818 with the arrival at Red River of the first clergymen -- three Roman Catholic, French-Canadian missionaries sent by Bishop Joseph-Octave Plessis of Quebec. Selkirk himself had asked the bishop to send the missionaries -- ostensibly because some of his own colonists had asked for clerical service, but perhaps too in a hope that French-Canadian missionaries would be able to harness the passions of the Métis (who, despite their Indian life, still felt some vague attachment to their fathers' religion)¹⁹ and persuade them to

¹⁸The merger ended outright attacks or overt forms of opposition to the colony. But since both companies saw colonisation as in the long run dangerous to the fur trade, nothing was done after 1821 to encourage the further growth or development of the settlement. Since the Hudson's Bay Company took its employees mainly from Northern Scotland, the Shetlands and Orkneys, the merger (by which the Hudson Bay route triumphed over the St. Lawrence) had the further effect of cutting off all contacts between Canada and the North-West save only those maintained by the Catholic Church, in whose organisation the North-West was a part of the ecclesiastical province of Quebec.

¹⁹The later noted piety of the Métis was apparently due not so much to an inherent sense of Catholicism as to their custom of complete obedience to their chiefs, which made for an intense devotion to their priests. The personal and superstitious nature of their religion is seen in their acceptance of Riel's heresies in 1885.

settle down quietly at peace with the colony.

Hard on the trial of the missionaries came a group of French-Canadian settlers from Lower Canada. Selkirk had asked for these too, in the hope that they would form an example for the Métis, and a nucleus around which a French-Métis agricultural community could form. Eight years of hardships, the unaccustomed difficulties of floods, grasshoppers, and mice, ended with a mass departure of French-Canadians (about 90 settlers in all) from the Red River country -- some to the United States, most to Lower Canada.

The clergy were left as the principal French-Canadian element influencing the Métis, persuading them to settle down in church-centred communities -- first at St. Boniface and Pembina, then, when Pembina was found to be in U.S. territory, at the White Horse Plain.²⁰ While twice-yearly buffalo hunts remained the basic occupation of the Métis community, some acceptance of agriculture and other sedentary occupations did gradually come about, though it is difficult to determine to what extent exactly. The testimony of witnesses conflicts. In 1860 the Earl of Southesk wrote of the Métis:

²⁰In 1823, Bishop Provencher of St. Boniface, at the request of John Halkett, ordered Father Dumoulin, the priest at Pembina, to return to British territory. Many of his loyal parishioners were persuaded to come with him.

They build and farm like other people, they go to church and to courts of law, they recognise no chiefs (except when they elect a leader for their great hunting expeditions), and in all respects they are like civilised men.²¹

Yet J.J. Hargrave, writing a few years later, claimed that one of the chief problems for the colony's future would "lie in persuading the hunting portion of the partially civilised community to devote themselves to sedentary or agricultural labour. This is the French half-breed race...."²²

In fact, it appears that, like any great social change, the transformation of the Métis from a hunting to an agricultural people was a long, gradual one, affecting first some Métis, more disposed than others to make the change, so that by the 1860s a portion of that population was agricultural, while the majority still relied heavily on the buffalo hunt. In reacting to the efforts of the missionaries,

Les uns ... devaient se prêter efficacement
au jeu des influences nouvelles et se
rapprocher insensiblement du niveau de leurs

²¹In Stanley, G.F.G., "The Birth of Western Canada", 7.

²²Hargrave, J.J., "Red River" (Montreal, Lovell, 1871) 466.

modèles. Les autres, au contraire, devaient décourager les tentatives des missionnaires et se river spontanément au milieu primitif....²³

A common Métis practice was to acquire a property on the bank of the Red, Assiniboine, or Seine River, to put up a one-room wooden house upon it, and to farm it to a rather limited extent, while still going twice yearly on the great buffalo hunts that prevented properly persistent attention to farming. In this way the Métis continued to provide the mainstay of the fur traders' diet (only to a limited extent supplanted by grain from Red River agriculture). They also worked for the trade as freighters, operating York boats and Red River carts that carried supplies and furs first between the prairies and Hudson Bay, and later between Red River and the U.S. transport lines. Thus, while the British officers of the company formed an elite of the North-West community, the French element, as a labour force, was no less important, and was, in numbers, superior to the English element.

Some French-Canadians and French-Métis did, moreover, form part of the elite. Among this group were

²³Giraud, Marcel, "Le Métis Canadien" (Paris, Institut d'Ethnologie, 1945) 631-632. The greatest adaptation to sedentary life was naturally found among the Métis of Assiniboia (the Hudson's Bay Company administrative district that roughly corresponded in area to the Manitoba of 1870), while those Métis most resistant to change drifted farther into the North-West away from the influences of St. Boniface.

the Bishops of St. Boniface, who, from the beginning, were always members of the Council of Assiniboia (the territorial government set up under the Hudson's Bay Company to administer that district). Also included in the settlement's elite were those French-Canadians and Métis who best adapted themselves to and most succeeded at agriculture and commercial enterprises. They also often sat on the Council, and acted as justices of the peace, customs officers, and other servants of the administration. Their children were educated at the classical college set up by the missionaries at St. Boniface, and sometimes, like the children of the English elite, at the more respected schools of Canada. Louis Riel was himself one of these, the son of a mill-owner, who received a college education in Montreal.²⁴

If it is true that the conflict of 1869-70 was not really between French and English, but basically between a primitive fur-based economy and a more sophisticated wheat-based one,²⁵ then evidence of

²⁴Even if the motive for sending them East was training for the priesthood, the result, as seen in the case of Riel, was the acquisition of social and political maturity and ability.

²⁵As claimed, for example, by R.O. MacFarlane, in "Manitoba Politics and Parties After Confederation", in the 1940 Report of the Canadian Historical Association, 45-55. This, of course, is the basic argument of G.F.G. Stanley's "The Birth of Western Canada".

significant pre-Confederation progress among the French-Canadians and Métis of Assiniboia is seen in the existence of a significant pro-Canadian party among them, opposed to Riel during the troubles of 1869-70. Members of this party, such as Pascal Breland, Charles Nolin, or Pierre Léveillé, included ex district judges, commercial entrepreneurs, or successful farmers, and they usually played important rôles in the government of Manitoba after Confederation.²⁶

A wide range of success, then, at adaptation to civilised life, is seen among the French-Canadians and Métis of the North-West:

The more sedentary portion made good farmers, but every grade of settler was found among them, down to those whose homes differed little from their former camps among the Indians, and whose livelihood continued to be hunting and fishing as of old.²⁷

In any case, they were numerically important enough to be always represented on the Council of Assiniboia, to cause French to be accepted as the working language of the North-West, and to warrant the granting of an annual sum of money by the Council of Assiniboia to the diocese of St. Boniface for the support of a Roman Catholic

²⁶Morice, A.G., "Dictionnaire Historique Des Canadiens Et Des Métis Français De L'Ouest" (Kamloops, 1908). See under names mentioned.

²⁷Morton, A.S., op. cit., 804.

school system. In this respect, and in the sense that anglophone and francophone lived peacefully, side by side, in the same settlement, Assiniboia deserved its Little Quebec epithet.

In 1870, the first census of the province of Manitoba showed its population to contain 558 Indians, 5,757 French half-breeds, 4,083 English half-breeds, and 1,565 whites,²⁸ the latter perhaps divided among French and English in roughly the same proportions as the half-breeds.

Thus, the history of the North-West, so full of French names and activity, as well as the actual make-up of the colony, a majority of whose population was French-speaking and Roman Catholic, made it seem quite natural for official status to be given to the French language and the Catholic schools by the Manitoba Act. That act seemed only to confirm, in these areas, the past and present custom and rule of the North-West itself.

But by the time that Rupert's Land was brought into the Canadian Confederation, a change, more than just

²⁸Cited in Morton, W.L., op. cit., 145, and in Morice, A.G., "Histoire Abrégée....", 89, as well as in Trémaudan, Auguste-Henri de, "Histoire De La Nation Métisse Dans L'Ouest Canadien" (Montreal, Editions Albert Levesque, 1936). In "The Birth of Western Canada", p. 13, Stanley gives the figures 5,720 French-speaking half-breeds, 4,080 English-speaking half-breeds, and 1,600 white settlers.

political, had already begun in the colony. Of the whites numbered in the 1870 census, a small but loud portion were English-Ontarians who had come to the West since the end of the 1850s. Establishing themselves in Assiniboia, they had for years been heralding the imminent triumph of a wheat-based society over the fur-based one -- and of an Anglo-protestant society over a French-Catholic one.²⁹

Indeed, loud calls for annexation of Rupert's Land by Canada had long been made by Ontarians, and by that fierce Anglo-Ontarian journal, The Globe. Anglo-Ontario reformers, unable to win the ascendancy in the Canadian legislature by winning representation by population, hoped to get it by adding an English-colonised North-West to the united Canada, thereby getting the upper hand over the Canada-East French. Ontario frontier farmers, prevented from expanding northward by the Precambrian Shield, looked to the North-West as a field for agricultural expansion within British territory. The connexion of the Red River settlement

²⁹See, for example, Dugas, Georges, "Histoire Véridique Des Faits Qui Ont Préparé Le Mouvement Des Métis A La Rivière-Rouge", or Morice, A.G., "Histoire Abrégée....", 82, or Stanley, G.F.G., op. cit., 49-52, or Riel, Louis, "L'Amnistie", or the testimonies of Archbishop Taché and A.G. Archibald, in Canada, Parliament, "Rapport Du Comité Spécial Sur Les Causes Des Troubles Du Territoire Du Nord-Ouest En 1869-70" (Ottawa, Taylor, 1874) 8, 11, 12, 140....

with the American transportation system through Red River steamboat, Pembina, and St. Paul, Minnesota, also stirred Canadian businessmen to desire an immediate connexion with that territory. The call for the annexation of Rupert's Land to Canada was most loudly English-Canadian. When, in 1858, Alexander Morris urged that annexation before a Montreal English audience, it was not a new Quebec, but a Nova Britannia³⁰ that he called for. And when, on the eve of annexation, the Canadian Senate set up a select committee to investigate the potentials of the new country, the committee's membership was English, and its witnesses -- including Schultz, Mair, and Boulton -- were English to a man.³¹

So evident was the English bias in the Canadian desire to annex Rupert's Land, that Cartier himself is reported to have told the British Colonial Secretary in 1859 "that, as head of the Lower Canadian party, any proposal of this kind would meet with his determined opposition -- as it would be putting a political extinguisher upon the party and the Province he represented, and, if carried out, would lead to a

³⁰Morris, Alexander, "Nova Britannia" -- a speech given at Montreal in 1858, printed in book form at Toronto, by Hunter, Rose & Co., in 1884.

³¹"Report Of The Select Committee Of The Senate On The Subject Of Rupert's Land, Red River & The North-West Territory" (Ottawa, Taylor, 1870).

dissolution of the Union"³² -- though he later explained to the Canadian House of Commons: "Je n'ai jamais été opposé, en principe, à cette mesure. Mais je n'ai jamais voulu consentir à ce que la province d'Ontario devint seul propriétaire de cette immense région, à l'exclusion des autres provinces...."³³ Indeed, once Confederation was agreed upon, with its federal House of Commons in which Ontario would have its representation by population, Cartier favoured entry of the North-West as a way to offset Ontario's ascendancy.³⁴ If that North-West could be French or half-French, so much the better.

Yet to maintain the French position in the North-West would now become a challenge. The trickle of pre-1870 English-Ontario immigration to the territory now threatened to become a deluge. To the Métis of Red River, the threatening implications of such an influx were terrifying enough to prepare their spirits for the rising of 1869-70.³⁵ The guarantees of the Manitoba Act

³²From a letter by A.K. Isbister to Donald Gunn, printed in the Nor'Wester on 28 December, 1859, and quoted in Morton, W.L., op. cit., 107.

³³Tassé, op. cit., 625.

³⁴Careless, J.M.S., "Brown Of The Globe" (Toronto, Macmillan, 1959) II, 136.

³⁵See Archbishop Taché's testimony before the 1874 special committee on the causes of the 1869-70 troubles. Also, the minutes of the Council of Assiniboia, 25 October, 1869, in Brown, R.C., & Prang, M.E., "Confederation To 1949" (Toronto, Prentice-Hall, 1966) 9.

satisfied the Métis, who felt that these, including the provisions of land grants to them, would be enough to protect them from the English-Ontarians. But the French-Catholic clergy of the North-West were not so optimistic.

The English members of the Canadian government had been quick to acknowledge the pioneering work of the French in the North-West, by asserting the old, 18th-century French claims to the country at the 1857 House of Commons Select Committee hearings on Rupert's Land, and they had acknowledged the French presence in the Manitoba Act. But would they continue to respect French rights in the country if an overwhelming wave of English immigration swept it, clamouring for suppression of the French language and Catholic schools? The clergy thought not. Bishop Taché continued to the end to oppose annexation, and if that appeared inevitable, then the only way to protect the French position in the North-West was by obtaining an immigration of French-Canadians from Lower Canada to counterbalance the Anglo-Ontarian influx.³⁶ By 1866, Bishop Grandin too was calling for such a movement from Lower Canada. "Que je

³⁶See below, 85-86.

voudrais voir," he wrote, "de bonnes familles canadiennes se fixer ici.... Elles nous dédommageraient de ces paresseux qui abandonnent leurs terres aux Anglais pour aller vivre en sauvages dans la prairie."³⁷

Within a year of the Canadian take-over, a considerable Ontario emigration was already headed for the new province of Manitoba. At the same time the French element in Manitoba was making loud appeals for a similar immigration from French-Quebec. Le Métis, which, in its opening issue, had promised to protect French rights in the North-West by working for "L'application de l'acte de Manitoba dans son interprétation la plus large et la plus libérale,"³⁸ referred in its issue of 15 June, 1871, to a group of French-Canadian settlers who "souponnent ardemment après une immigration de bonnes familles de cultivateurs de la province de Québec...." The paper remarked: "Ils ne sont pas seuls à former ce souhait."³⁹

But the response to these calls was far from adequate. In 1894, the old and tired Archbishop Taché (who, more than anyone else had worked to obtain a

³⁷Quoted in Marcel Giraud, op. cit., 957.

³⁸Le Métis, 27 May, 1871, 1.

³⁹Le Métis, 15 June, 1871, 3.

French-Canadian immigration for Manitoba) would admit in a letter to Le Canada that "le succès n'a pas répondu à mes efforts."⁴⁰ The Canadian census showed the failure years earlier. The 1870 census of Manitoba had shown 5,757 French half-breeds, 4,083 English half-breeds, and 1,565 whites. Since the half-breed population had been a natural off-spring of the whites in the North-West, the population of the old and static settlement probably contained the same proportion of French and English among the whites as among the half-breeds. But by 1870, counting among the whites the recently arrived small groups of Ontarians and Americans, let us put the ratio of French to English at 50:50.⁴¹ This gives us for 1870 a total French population of 6,540 and a total English population of 4,865.

By 1880 the census shows that the French population of Manitoba, suffering from an exodus of Métis to the North-West Territories after 1870, had

⁴⁰Quoted in Rumilly, Robert, "Histoire De La Province De Québec" (Montreal, Valiquette, n.d.) I, 192.

⁴¹Even if the English were really a great majority of the white population, we should still be able to go with 50:50 for the sake of argument since the entire white population was so small in any case.

grown to only 9, 959 -- an increase of 3,419, or 52 percent, since 1870. At the same time, the English population had grown to 38,285 -- an increase of 33,420, or 687 percent! Between 1880 and 1885, the French population increased by 12 percent, while the English by 100 percent. Meanwhile, a new population of Europeans, neither French- nor English-speaking, but already learning the latter language, out-numbered the French in Manitoba even in 1880, and grew by 48 percent between 1880 and 1885, compared with the French increase of 12 percent.

In 1890, the census showed 11,102 French-Canadians living in Manitoba -- only 7.3 percent of a total provincial population of 152,506!⁴² In that same year, the Manitoba government, firmly in the hands of an overwhelming English majority, deprived the French language of its official status in Manitoba, and ended the system of separate schools in the province. These two guarantees of the Manitoba Act, so vital to the French-Canadians of the North-West, were swept away within 20 years of their establishment, and easily so, because no strong French-Canadian voice any longer existed in the province to defend them. Within 20

⁴²Canada, Department of Agriculture, Federal Census, 1881, 1891, vol. I of each, Manitoba Census, 1885.

years, a territory whose history was filled with the names of French and French-Canadian men, a colony whose personality had earned it the name of Little Quebec, was swept by such a tide of non-French immigration that the French presence there was eclipsed, and the power of the French community to defend its rights successfully was destroyed.

Nor was it immigration from outside of Canada that really turned the tide against the French-Canadians in Manitoba. If French-Canadians in Quebec and the U.S., whose population approximately equalled Ontario's, had sent to Manitoba as many settlers as Ontario did between 1870 and 1890, the French-Manitoban community could probably have survived.

In considering the French-Canadian population of Manitoba (that is, those shown on the census as having French national origin, excluding the Métis, and not including those born in France) we have assumed the 1870 population to have been half of the white population, or 783. By 1880 it had grown to 5,234 -- an increase of 4,451, or 568 percent. But at the same time, the Ontario-born population in Manitoba, which we have assumed to have been in 1870 the other half or less of the whites, or 782, had grown by 1880 to 19,125 -- an increase of 18,343, or 2,346 percent! Again, between

1880 and 1885, the French-Canadian population increased by 28 percent to 6,711, while the Ontario-born population increased by 78 percent to 34,121.⁴³

The figures for the rest of the North-West tell the same story, and in the territories, the pattern of the extinction of French influence is the same as in Manitoba. In 20 years, from a replica of Quebec, to an English stronghold. The lack of French-Canadian immigration to the North-West in those two decades left the way open for an overwhelming English majority to abolish those very laws which might have been expected to help attract such an immigration.

⁴³Ibid. Also see the Census of the North-West Territories, 1885. In chart form, the failure of the French Canadians to settle in the North-West looks like this:

MANITOBA: POPULATION

	1870	1881	1885	1891
French-Canadians	[783]? (6,540 with Métis)	9,868 (includes Métis)	11,190 (includes Métis)	11,102 (does not include Métis)
British-origin	[782]?	38,255	73,034	
Ontario-born	[782]?	19,125	34,121	
TOTAL PROVINCIAL POPULATION	11,963	62,260	108,240	152,506

Asking why French-Canadians did not settle in the North-West between 1870 and 1890 may itself be enough to raise objections. Was there, in fact, any considerable immigration to the North-West between 1870 and 1890? It is so much a commonplace of Canadian history to say that the prairies were not settled till the end of the 1890s and the early 20th century, that settlement up till 1890 may not even seem significant enough to study at all. Granting, after all, that French-Canadian immigration to the North-West in this period was insignificant, if English-Canadian immigration was also insignificant, it makes no sense to single out the French in particular for not having gone.

It may be that this objection is partly (at least) founded on an ambiguity in the use or meaning of the term, North-West. It may refer, after all, to what became the prairie provinces, or, to what became Saskatchewan and Alberta. Thus we may refer to the North-West as including Manitoba, or we may speak of "Manitoba and the North-West" -- the North-West referring to the territories of Saskatchewan, Assiniboia,

and Alberta.⁴⁴

When it is said that the North-West was not really or significantly settled until the late 1890s and early 1900s, which North-West is, properly speaking, being referred to? What probably should be meant is the North-West Territories, viz., Saskatchewan, Assiniboia, and Alberta. But the objection to the study of settlement until 1890 is founded on the unjustified inclusion of Manitoba. In other words, Manitoba was, in fact, sufficiently settled by 1890 to warrant our study, even if the territories weren't. The fabulous increase in western population of especially the first decade of the 20th century applies more properly to the North-West Territories, while the permanent character of Manitoba's population had already been pretty well established by 1890.

The growth of Manitoba's population may be seen easily from the following tabulation of census results from the first six Canadian censuses:

⁴⁴Hereafter in this paper the term North-West will generally mean the entire area which now constitutes the three prairie provinces. Where the meaning is other than that, the context will make it clear, as when it forms part of an expression such as "Manitoba and the North-West" or "the North-West Territories" etc.

<u>CENSUS YEAR</u>	<u>MANITOBA POPULATION</u>
1871	25,228 (1898 boundary)
1881	62,260
1891	152,506
1901	255,211
1911	455,614
1921	610,118

The growth of the North-West Territories, however, shows a different pattern:

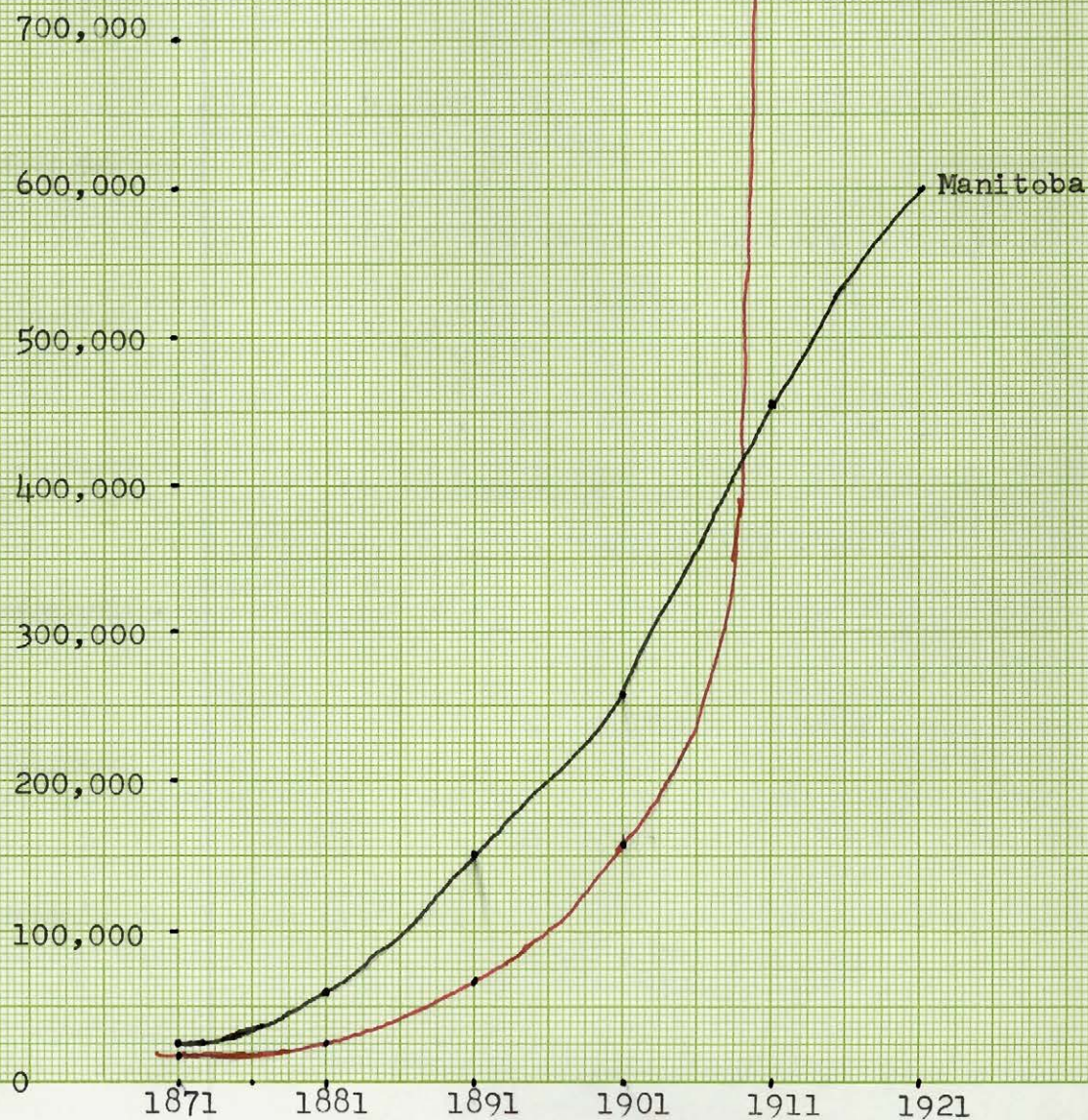
<u>CENSUS YEAR</u>	<u>NORTH-WEST POPULATION</u>
1871	18,000
1881	25,515
1891	66,799
1901	158,940
1911	867,095
1921	1,345,994

They can be more easily compared by noting the increase per decade for each territory:

<u>CENSUS YEARS</u>	<u>MANITOBA INCREASE</u>	<u>NORTH-WEST INCREASE</u>
1871-1881	37,032	7,515
1881-1891	90,246	41,284
1891-1901	102,705	92,141
1901-1911	200,403	708,155
1911-1921	148,724	478,899

The graphs on the next two pages illustrate these same developments in easy-to-follow visual patterns.

POPULATION GROWTH OF
MANITOBA AND THE
NORTH-WEST TERRITORIES,
1870-1920



NUMERICAL INCREASE PER DECADE
IN POPULATIONS OF MANITOBA AND
THE NORTH-WEST



It can be seen from the above figures and graphs that a massive wave of immigration did enter the North-West after 1890 -- especially during the first decade of the 20th century -- but that the real effect of this immigration was felt not so much in Manitoba as in the North-West Territories, or provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. The graph showing Manitoba's population maintains a fairly constant slope from about the mid-1870s till the end of the period. The graph for the North-West, however, makes a drastic change from the mid-1890s, suddenly jumping to a very steep incline, representing a sudden boom in immigration that began with the territory's population far below Manitoba's and soon left Manitoba's far behind. The chart for numerical increase per decade makes it extremely plain that the demographic revolution of the 1900s was a phenomenon of the North-West Territories. In Manitoba, hardly more people entered the province in the 1890s than in the 1880s. More came in during the next decade, but the increase was still comparable to the increase between the 1870s and the 1880s. For the North-West, on the other hand, the slope turns dramatically upward from 1901, indicating that when people speak of the tremendous influx of population to the North-West during the early 20th century, they

really mean (or should mean) in all probability, the North-West Territories.

The argument becomes more convincing when one considers increase in population as a percentage of the population at the outset of a given period of increase. This is, in fact, more meaningful than numerical increases alone. After all, Ontario, for instance, shows a larger numerical increase in its population than does Manitoba during the decade 1901 to 1911, yet no-one speaks of Ontario being settled at that time.

In the first place, a province whose population is larger to begin with will have a larger (in numbers) natural increase even without immigration. In the second place, a large immigration will have far less effect on the character of a population which is large to begin with than on a smaller one, and similarly, an immigration which seems small in numbers may have a very important effect on a population which is small to begin with. For these reasons, the significance of immigration can better be judged by looking at the percentage increase per decade of the western areas, especially comparing them with the percentage increase in population of Canada as a whole or with eastern provinces whose populations were considered to have been relatively stable in the period -- or at least formed.

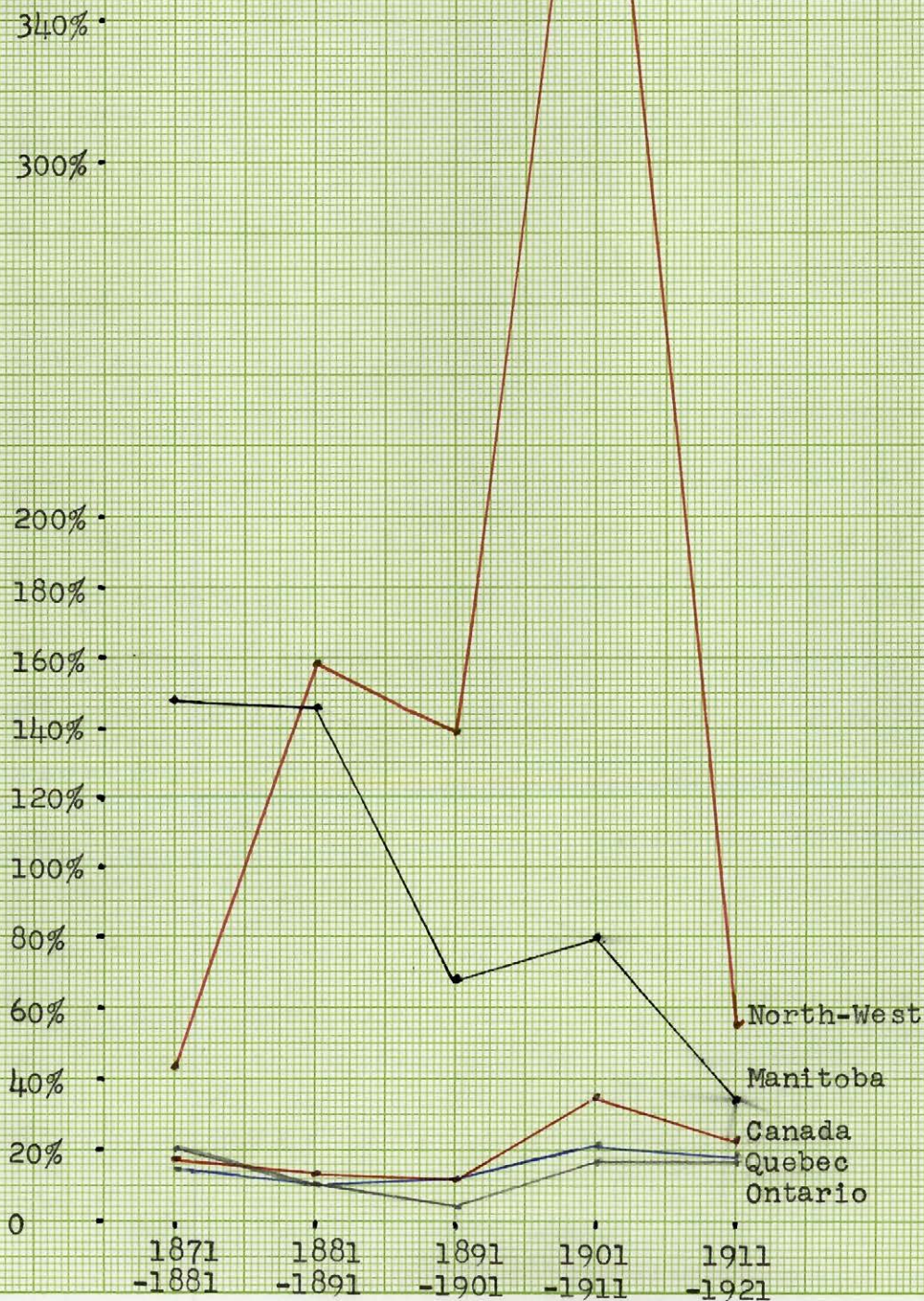
The chart on the next page compares the percentage increases per decade in the populations of Manitoba, the North-West Territories, Ontario, Quebec, and Canada. In table form they are seen as follows:

AREA	PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN POPULATION FOR ⁴⁵				
	1871- 1881	1881- 1891	1891- 1901	1901- 1911	1911- 1921
Manitoba	147	145	67	79	32
North-West	42	158	138	446	55
Ontario	19	10	3	16	16
Quebec	14	10	11	21	18
CANADA	17	12	11	34	22

Again the area that particularly attracts attention is the North-West Territories (or Alberta and Saskatchewan). From 1891 on, Manitoba's rate of growth is constantly approaching the rate of growth of Canada as a whole. Manitoba's rate increases from the 1890s to the 1900s -- but not as much as the national rate increases! In the next decade Manitoba's rate of growth falls even below Canada's national rate for 1901-1911. After 1891, Manitoba's percentage increase per decade falls under 100 percent and remains so, while the North-West's only exceeds 100 percent by 1891, and doesn't

⁴⁵See the 1911 census, Vol. I, table VII, and the 1921 census, Vol. I, table 4. For populations of the North-West Territories from 1871 to 1901, see the 1901 census.

PERCENTAGE INCREASE PER
DECADE IN POPULATIONS OF
MANITOBA, THE NORTH-WEST,
ONTARIO, QUEBEC, AND
CANADA



fall below it again till 1921.

Manitoba and the rest of the North-West, then, clearly show different patterns of settlement. The North-West Territories do seem to have been settled by a sudden feverish burst of immigration around the turn of the century. But Manitoba's growth seems much more steady. It began earlier and was added to fairly evenly. By the 1890s the population was big enough for continued near-equal units of increment in successive decades to have continually decreasing potential to affect the character of the population.

In fact, by 1891, Manitoba had reached the order of population of some eastern provinces. Her 152,506 in a province of roughly the same size as New Brunswick can surely be compared with New Brunswick's 321,263. Prince Edward Island was running the apparatus of a provincial government with 109,078 (which would decline to 88,615 by 1921), and British Columbia too was a province, though its population was only 98,173.

Social and political, as well as demographical observations bear out the idea that Manitoba's character had already been formed by immigration received up to 1890. Professor Morton puts the formation of the new Manitoba at an even earlier period -- by 1881, he says, it had engulfed the old Manitoba,⁴⁶ and within a

⁴⁶Morton, W.L., op. cit., chapter 9.

few more years "the solid British-Ontario core of rural Manitoba had been formed."⁴⁷ Ontario's pattern of settlement, of land occupancy, had already triumphed in the 1870s.⁴⁸

The census backs up Prof. Morton. In 1891 it shows French-Canadians as only 7.3 percent of the provincial population. The proportion has kept so constant since then that the 1961 census could show 6.6 percent of Manitoba's population as having French as its mother tongue.⁴⁹

Finally, however small the immigration to Manitoba might have been between 1870 and 1890 as compared to that between 1890 and 1910 or 1920, it was nevertheless large enough to drown the French element in an English sea and to overthrow the provincial constitution. This makes it a vital 20 years of immigration.

Yet the figures we have cited show that immigration during this period was considerable even compared to the period of peak immigration after 1900.

⁴⁷Ibid, 222.

⁴⁸Ibid, chapter 8.

⁴⁹Dominion Bureau of Statistics, "Census of Canada, 1961" Population by Official Language and Mother Tongue. Advance Report No. AP-9, Catalogue No. 92-523.

When a province that size undergoes a 100,000 increase in population in a decade (as in the 1880s) it seems clear that the province does offer attractions to settlers, and, therefore, that we are not wrong in asking why French-Canadians did not go there while others went in such great numbers.⁵⁰

⁵⁰Therefore, too, students ought to give more attention to these 20 years of Manitoba development, instead of assuming they were negligible in importance because, supposedly, the North-West wasn't settled till after the 1890s. While Saskatchewan's great period of growth was indeed the first decade of the 20th century, it ought not be overlooked that the great Manitoba boom occurred just past the middle of the 20-year period we are interested in. Nor ought that boom to be pish-tushed into obscurity; its epic quality was on the U.S. scale. It is interesting to compare a description of Winnipeg at this time with one of Chicago during its great expansion of the 1850s. Each city was becoming the gateway to its country's west. The contemporary U.S. historian Thomas Ford wrote of Chicago: "The plats of towns, for a hundred miles around, were carried there to be disposed of at auction. The eastern people caught the mania. Every vessel coming west was loaded with them, their money and means, bound for Chicago, the great fairy land of fortunes...." Yet he hardly seems more enthusiastic than John Macoun, the contemporary historian of Manitoba, who wrote of Winnipeg: "The excitement during the fall of 1881 amongst real-estate owners was intense. Nothing to equal it had ever before occurred on Canadian or British soil. Thousands of dollars were made by operators in a few minutes. Vast fortunes were secured in a day. The excitement spread like wildfire all over the country. Cool-headed professional and businessmen, clerical as well as lay, left their callings in other parts of the country for the scene of the modern Canadian El Dorado. Real-estate agents became as numerous as the sands on the sea shore." Nor was it nothing more than a hollow, speculator's dream. Eastern papers were filled with the spectacular growth of

Several people, having heard the question, have still objected to the asking of it. "Why," they have exclaimed, "of course the French-Canadians didn't go to Manitoba, because they were going to New England!" It need hardly be pointed out, that such an answer answers nothing. Why did French-Canadians, then, go to New England (if that, in fact, is where they went) rather than to Manitoba? After all, New England certainly did not offer the same sort of conditions as Manitoba. It meant moving to industry rather than

Winnipeg, St. Boniface, and Emerson, and government-circulated before-and-after pictures showed the undeniable, magic-lantern, overnight change of Winnipeg from a mud-rut village to a dynamic (if minor) metropolis. By 1885, C.R. Daoust could make this commentary on the reactions of the Montreal volunteers as they reached Winnipeg: "On nous en avait tant raconté sur les merveilles qui ont entouré la naissance de cette fille des Plaines et sur les spéculations gigantesques qui s'y étaient, que l'empressement des volontaires à se répandre dans les rues de la ville ne surprendra personne." ("Cent-Vingt Jours De Service Actif" -- Montreal, Senécal, 1886 -- p. 33). Archbishop Taché described the growth of Manitoba at this period in more specific terms. Writing to Albert Lacombe from St. Boniface, 10 March, 1880, he exclaimed: "Nous ne sommes qu'au 10 mars: il fait encore un froid très vif, -36° dimanche, -34° hier, et voilà que déjà l'immigration commence sur une grande échelle. Plus de 850 immigrants sont arrivés pendant ces trois derniers jours." (In Dom Paul Benoit, "Vie De Mgr Taché" -- Montreal, Beauchemin, 1904 -- p. 381). On 9 April, 1882, Taché wrote to the curé of Boucherville that "il est venu 9,655 émigrants pendant le mois de mars." (Dom Benoit, p. 401). Already, on 28 May, 1881, he had realised the magnitude and significance of the immigration to Manitoba, writing to Bishop Grandin: "Le pays subit une transformation générale." (Dom Benoit, p. 402). Here, then, let us rest the case for the value of studying Manitoba's settlement before 1890. We ought not ignore the Archbishop's judgement.

agriculture, and of course it meant moving to a place where French language and Catholic schools had none of the special status they enjoyed in Manitoba. If all conditions had been identical in Manitoba and New England (and only if they had been identical), then it would have been nothing at all to explain French-Canadians' going to New England by the fact of its being closer to Quebec than Manitoba was. But the fact is that too many variables must be considered for us to accept mere proximity as an explanation.

Moreover, the picture of French-Canadians flocking to New England is itself too much of a distortion and oversimplification. In the first place, French-Canadians went to other regions as well, and in the second place, English-Canadians went to the United States -- even to the industrialised areas -- in even greater numbers than French-Canadians did. The U.S. Bureau of the Census shows 267,021 English-Canadians living in the U.S. east of the Mississippi in 1890 -- and only 229,662 French-Canadians. For the U.S. as a whole, the number of English-Canadians was 678,442, while French-Canadians numbered only 302,496.⁵¹ This should

⁵¹U.S. Dept of Commerce & Labour, Bureau of the Census, "A Century of Population Growth" (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1909) p. 226.

completely dispose of emigration to the U.S. as an answer to our question. The factor which will explain why French-Canadians did not go to Manitoba while English-Canadians did, will have to be something distinguishing French- from English-Canadians. Since emigration to the U.S. applies equally (in proportion to their populations) to both, it cannot be that factor.

Some other potential solutions can also be dealt with briefly. Perhaps, for example, the French-Canadians did not need a place to go to, did not need land. The emigration to the U.S. is itself an argument against that proposal. And here it should be pointed out specifically that almost a third of the 300,000 French-Canadians living in the U.S. in 1890 were living in the trans-Mississippi West -- an area offering (like Manitoba) open prairie land rather than factory employment. In fact, the need for land was probably even more acute among French-Quebeckers than among English-Ontarians. The basic areas of agricultural settlement in Ontario and Quebec were both parts of the same geological division -- the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Lowlands. Of this division, the portion lying in the province of Quebec -- longer settled and now far more exhausted -- comprised a considerably smaller area than that part that is in Ontario.

The overcrowding of the long-farmed and used-up⁵² lowlands in Quebec is seen not only in emigration to the U.S., but also in the move to colonise new lands in the northern regions of Quebec and in the interest shown by Quebeckers after Confederation in improving agricultural methods -- an interest that shows up in the rise not only of the Ste-Anne-de-la-Pocatière agricultural school, but also in periodical journals and newspaper supplements (such as the Journal d'Agriculture or the Semaine Agricole) devoted to the publicising of new methods for better using the restricted land resources of the old province.

The Quebec colonisation movement that began in the late 1840s and continued into the 20th century is a particularly dramatic sign of the need for land. To get it, farmers were even willing to colonise areas not suited for their agriculture, and from which they later had to withdraw -- sometimes at some expense to the provincial government. Northern Quebec colonisation involved occupance of a region "which,

⁵²eg. An ex-Quebecker who had settled in Manitoba wrote in 1884 that "je ne voudrais pas retourner pour cultiver nos terres épuisées." -- in "Le Nord-Ouest Canadien" -- "brochure compilée par un colonisateur de 9 ans d'expérience" (n.p., n.d.) p. 25.

through repeated effort and failure has proved itself generally unsuited to farming".⁵³ That such an area was occupied certainly argues a need for land by French-Quebec farmers. So do the pamphlets in which promoters of the colonisation areas vaunted the merits of these regions. The St. Lawrence Valley is overcrowded, begins a pamphlet entitled Au Nord, published by the Colonisation Societies of the Dioceses of Montreal and Ottawa⁵⁴ -- and the author of another pamphlet asks: "Où donc les pères de famille placeront-ils leurs enfants? où les fils trouveront-ils un établissement?"⁵⁵

The colonisation movement, the exodus to the United States and to the growing cities of Quebec itself, indicate a limitation on the opportunity for material success in the old-settled area of the province. A need for some new opportunity existed, therefore. For many French-Canadians that opportunity was Quebec colonisation or a move to the U.S., Montreal or Quebec City. We can justifiably ask, though, why that opportunity

⁵³Randall, J.R., "Settlement Of The Great Clay Belt of Northern Ontario & Quebec" quoted in Innes, F.C., "The Land Use And Settlement Of The Quebec Clay Belts" (Montreal, McGill University Thesis, 1960) 24.

⁵⁴"Au Nord" (St. Jérôme, 1883) 3.

⁵⁵Nantel, G.A., "Notre Nord-Ouest Provincial" (Montreal, Senécal, 1887) 11.

was not found in Manitoba, as it was for so many English-Canadians.

It is possible to hear a French-Canadian today answer the question by suggesting that the French-Quebecker of 1870-1890 was at a disadvantage in getting to Manitoba and getting land there -- that obstacles were thrown in his way, or, at any rate, that he was not given the assistance that other groups received. Some expression of this theory -- or at least the accusation it contains -- is to be found to a very slight extent even in the records of what people were thinking in Quebec between 1870 and 1890. Thus, in 1875, Le Courrier Du Canada, then in Opposition, printed this editorial:

Notre confrère Manitobain, dans son dernier numéro, fait appel à la presse française de Québec pour diriger le courant du repatriement vers le Nord-Ouest, dont il vante les avantages. Nous voulons bien, pour notre part, faire dans ce sens nos humbles efforts. Mais quelques milliers de piastres votés par le gouvernement fédéral seraient bien plus éloquents que tous que nous pourrions écrire. Si notre gouvernement fédéral pouvait un jour supposer que les mennonites ne sont pas exclusivement indispensables, et que nos compatriotes des Etats ont autant de droits que ces russes dont la religion est de ne pas défendre la patrie!⁵⁶

⁵⁶Le Courrier Du Canada, Quebec, 30 August, 1875. For party affiliations of newspapers, see Appendix C.

But such complaints are in fact more common in our day, made in retrospect, than they were during the actual period of 1870 to 1890. Indeed, a brief check-up on our part may satisfy us here that such accusations are in themselves a little unfair.

In point of fact, a French-Canadian organisation through which the federal government could give assistance to repatriates from the U.S. hadn't even existed until 1874, when the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba was founded to help French-Canadians moving from New England to Manitoba. Late that year the society requested that a reserve of two townships be set aside for it in Manitoba, to settle French-Canadian immigrants from the U.S. on. The Department of Agriculture supported the application, which it referred to as a request "for an appointment of lands ... on the same conditions under which they have been granted to the Mennonites and other immigrants."⁵⁷ By April, 1875, an order in council had not only granted a reserve to the society, but had also provided

⁵⁷Taché, J.C., letter of the deputy minister of agriculture to the minister of the interior, Ottawa, 6 November, 1874, Public Archives of Canada, Department of the Interior papers, Dominion Lands Branch, File 165914.

(as requested) that in each township settled, a free grant of one section would go to the society as a bonus.⁵⁸ By May the arrangement had been altered to give the society a more preferable location for its reserve.

Nor did federal assistance end there. The Department of Agriculture, whose business immigration was, was anxious to assist the movement of French-Canadians from the U.S. to the North-West. (The deputy minister was not only a French-Canadian -- he was the brother of Archbishop Taché of St. Boniface. The minister himself, during this period of establishment of the society's operations, was also a French-Canadian -- Letellier de St-Just). By 1876 the department had engaged Charles Lalime as a special agent to promote the return of French-Canadians from New England to the North-West,⁵⁹ and in the same year, Albert Lacombe, acting as the agent of Archbishop Taché, secured an arrangement whereby the federal government would pay a grant of \$17 per settler for French-Canadians

⁵⁸Public Archives of Canada, Department of Interior Papers, File 165914. These land bonuses were eventually commuted to a cash payment of \$1,600 to the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba.

⁵⁹Benoit, Dom Paul, "Vie De Mgr Taché, Archevêque De St-Boniface" (Montreal, Beauchemin, 1904) 298.

brought from the U.S. to the North-West.⁶⁰ Moreover, the federal government paid Lacombe as well for his expenses on trips to New England, where he tried to obtain French-Canadian settlers for Manitoba.⁶¹

These federal aids were given because Lacombe's French-Canadians were classed as foreign immigrants entering Canada from outside the country. Such aid could not be extended to French-Canadians of the province of Quebec. But neither was it given to English-Ontarians. They were helped either by private colonising companies, by societies of their own, or by public subscription. Prof. Morton cites as representative an item from the Manitoba Weekly Free Press of 25 May, 1875:

A short time ago a meeting was held in Southampton, Ontario, to consider the proposal to form an organisation for planting a colony in Manitoba.⁶²

Le Métis itself pointed out as early as 1871:

L'émigration qui nous vient d'Ontario s'y forme au moyen de souscriptions, et à Toronto seul le fonds de secours pour acheminer les émigrés vers la Rivière-Rouge s'élève à \$30,000.⁶³

⁶⁰Lacombe, Albert, letter to Archbishop Taché, Ottawa, 6 March, 1876, Archives Deschâtelets, Scolasticat St-Joseph, Ottawa, St. Boniface episcopal papers on microfilm, film 477. See also letter to Taché, Ottawa, 21 February, 1877, Film 507.

⁶¹Lacombe, Albert, Letter to Taché, Ottawa, 21 February, 1877, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, Film 507.

⁶²Morton, W.L., op. cit., 157.

⁶³Le Métis, St. Boniface, 15 June, 1871.

We do not, then, find any indication that French-Canadians were discriminated against by the government, with regard to receipt of assistance from Ottawa by settlers going to the North-West.

It could be suggested, however, that they were at a disadvantage in that, living farther from Manitoba than the Ontarians did, they were obliged to pay more for transportation to the North-West.⁶⁴ It cannot be denied that Montreal is farther east than Toronto, but just how important this really was as a check to French-Canadian efforts to colonise Manitoba will require a little more attention.

In the first place, if mere distance from Manitoba were the determining factor in explaining why certain groups did or did not go to settle there, then the difference between Quebec's and Ontario's emigration to the North-West would be far less than the difference between Quebec's and Nova Scotia's, since Halifax, say, is much farther east of Montreal than Montreal is of Toronto. Thus if the 350-mile difference between

⁶⁴This factor appeared as a problem to some French-Canadians interested in Manitoba settlement -- at least at the outset of our period. In an 1872 letter to Cartier, M.A. Girard asked whether it would not be "possible d'obtenir pour eux [the French-Quebeckers] quelque'avantage dans le transport, qui les mettraient [sic] sur le même pied que les immigrants qui partent de Toronto." -- M.A. Girard, letter to Sir G.E. Cartier, Manitoba, 15 June, 1872 -- Public Archives of Canada, The Cartier Papers: correspondence. M.G. 27, I, D4, vol. 5.

Toronto and Montreal were really the explanation for Quebec's contribution to Manitoba's population being less than Ontario's, and if, say, Quebec's contribution were one-half of Ontario's, then the 850 miles separating Halifax from Montreal should have reduced Nova Scotia's contribution to an even smaller fraction -- viz., $350/850 \times 1/2$, or one-quarter -- of Quebec's. In fact, if we consider the growth of Manitoba's population between 1880 and 1885, we see that the increase in Ontario-born is 0.8 percent of Ontario's 1880 population,⁶⁵ whereas the growth in Quebec-born was only 0.1 percent of Quebec's 1880 population. If distance were the determining factor, we would expect that Nova Scotia-born would have increased by only $350/850 \times 1/8$ or, $1/15$ of the Quebec element -- that is to say, that the increase in Nova-Scotia-born would represent 0.0007 percent of Nova Scotia's 1880 population. In fact, the increase represented 0.1 percent of Nova Scotia's population, the same as for Quebec.⁶⁶

⁶⁵Considering the increase as a percentage of the home-province's population is simply a way of providing a proper basis for comparison among provinces with widely varying populations.

⁶⁶The 1881 census gives the following provincial populations: Ontario, 1,926,922; Quebec, 1,359,027; Nova Scotia, 440,572. The increases in Manitoba's populations according to province of birth, between 1880 and 1885 can be derived from comparison of the figures in the 1881 Canadian census and the 1885 census of Manitoba. They are: Ontario-born, 14,996; Quebec-born, 1,891; Nova Scotia-born, 497.

It would be interesting, moreover, if it were possible to find out what portion of the Quebec-born in Manitoba were French- and what portion English-Canadians. Even from the information we have easily accessible we can see that a greater proportion of English-Quebeckers than of French-Quebeckers went to Manitoba.⁶⁷ Since both groups came from the same province -- i.e., the same distance from Manitoba -- the matter of distance cannot explain the difference between them.

The proposition that distance from Manitoba is

⁶⁷The increase in Quebec-born in Manitoba between 1880 and 1885 was 1,891. At the same time, the increase in those of French national origin was 1,241, of which those born in France accounted for 29. Let us say, for the moment, that the remaining 1,212 represent the French-Canadians who arrived from Quebec (and the figure is certainly much too high) -- then the remainder of the Quebec-born, or 679, were English-Quebeckers. (In fact other groups in Quebec too were interested in Manitoba settlement; e.g., see W. Wagner, "Einwanderung Nach Manitoba" -- Vericht des Regierungs-Landmessers W. Wagner an die Deutsche Gesellschaft zu Montreal, -- (Montreal, 1872. Even so, these groups generally by assimilation fall into the English-speaking category and their numbers are extremely small). These 679 represent 0.3 percent of Quebec's population of British-origin, while the 1,212 represent only 0.1 percent of Quebec's French-Canadian population. And even so, the difference must really have been much greater than that, since of the 1,212 which we have so far assumed were French-Canadians from Quebec, there were in fact a very large proportion from the United States, as well as a number of Métis who had been born in the North-West Territories. While the comparison between French- and English-Quebecker settlement in Manitoba shows that distance from Manitoba is not enough to explain entirely the paucity of French-Canadian emigration to that province, some more study aiming at comparing the settlement of English-Ontarians and English-Quebeckers would be necessary before the matter of distance could be completely disposed of.

an explanation of why French-Canadians went there in so much fewer numbers than English-Ontarians can be answered as well with arguments other than arithmetical ones. If Quebec was far from Manitoba, it was nevertheless true that railroads, extremely eager for passenger traffic, were prepared to offer greatly reduced rates to settlers going to the new country. This was particularly true for routes passing through the United States, where several different railroads were competing for the traffic. "Les compagnies de chemins de fer se disputent à qui aura nos immigrants," Albert Lacombe wrote to Archbishop Taché in 1877, explaining that he was being showered with offers to carry at specially reduced rates the group of emigrants he had gathered in the East to go to Manitoba.⁶⁸

In 1876, the receipt of the \$17 per immigrant was made dependent upon the settlers being taken to Manitoba by the all-Canadian route, but the arrangement was changed in 1877 to permit the French-Canadians to receive the money while leaving them free to choose

⁶⁸Lacombe, Albert, letter to Archbishop Taché, Montreal, 7 February, 1877, Archives Deschâtelets, Scolasticat St-Joseph, Ottawa, St. Boniface episcopal papers on microfilm, film 505.

whichever route they wished.⁶⁹ This meant that they were able to choose the railway that offered them the lowest rate of fare. Such a special rate could be applied to French-Quebeckers as well as those going from New England, since both groups left together in great parties usually organised at Montreal by Lacombe and Lalime.

But even if all French-Canadian emigrants had taken the Canadian Pacific route to Manitoba, what then would have been the effect of their extra distance from that province? During the early 1880s, the C.P.R. fare, second class, from Montreal to Winnipeg was \$17.⁷⁰ But for emigrant-settlers there was a special rate of \$15.⁷¹ A homestead of 160 acres could be obtained for a registration fee of \$10. The total cost, therefore, of getting to the land and obtaining it was \$25. But at the same time, what was the cost of getting to and

⁶⁹Lacombe, Albert, letter to Taché, Ottawa, 21 Feb., 1877, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 507.

⁷⁰"Le Nord-Ouest Canadien" (n.p., 1884?) 10.

⁷¹Advertisement headed "A Winnipeg Pour \$15.00", eg., in L'Etendard, Montreal, 4 April to 12 May, 1884.

obtaining land in a Quebec colonisation area? Even from as close as Ottawa, the rail fare to Temiskaming was \$5.50. Land cost \$30 for 100 acres.⁷² The total cost, therefore, was \$35.50 -- \$10.50 more than the cost of taking a homestead with 60 percent more land in Manitoba! Moreover, the Manitoba homestead had the advantage of being grassland rather than forest. Instead of having to put in unproductive seasons clearing the land, like the Quebec défricheur, the Manitoba settler could begin to cultivate his land from the beginning. This meant that a lower initial investment was necessary for the Manitoba settler, since he would be able to live off his land sooner.

It is perhaps not a good idea to compare Temiskaming with Manitoba during the 1880s. Quebec's colonisation movement had not yet reached that area in any force. The example rail fare and land price, however, are instructive. In the Ottawa Valley colonisation areas the same land price of 30 cents per acre was in effect.⁷³ This meant that 160 acres of land -- the

⁷²Innes, F.C., "The Land Use & Settlement Of The Quebec Clay Belt", 68.

⁷³"Au Nord" (pamphlet published by the Sociétés de Colonisation des Diocèses de Montréal et d'Ottawa) St-Jérôme, 1883 -- p. 8.

equivalent of a Manitoba homestead -- would cost the Quebec coloniser \$48. Yet even if he only took 100 acres -- and even if we consider that his rail fare was negligible -- the \$30 he had to pay for his land in the Ottawa valley was still more than the \$25 necessary to get to and obtain land in Manitoba.

Yet throughout this period (1870 to 1890) Quebec colonisation areas like the Ottawa valley, the valleys of the Rouge and the Lièvre, Lake Nominique, and so on, received far more attention from French-Canadian colonisers and got far more settlers than did the North-West.⁷⁴ All this indicates that the cost of settling in an area so far away from Quebec as Manitoba cannot be enough to explain the small numbers of French-Canadians who left the East to settle in the new province.

Another hypothesis worth looking at, which attempts to explain the small number of French-Canadians, in comparison with English-Ontarians, who

⁷⁴The division of attention between the Ottawa valley and Manitoba in the Colonisation files of the Montreal archepiscopal archives is interesting. The Ottawa valley had a near-monopoly of the interests of the Montreal diocese colonisers. The Canadian censuses of 1871, 1881, 1891 show this growth for the pioneer counties of Pontiac, Ottawa, Argenteuil, Chicoutimi and Saguenay; 1871 population: 86,527; 1881 population: 117,842; 1891 population: 139,084. The 1871-1881 increase was 31,315, and the 1881-1891 increase was 21,242.

went to the North-West, is the suggestion that English-Canada, being continually reinforced by immigrants from overseas, had a greater reservoir of population to draw on, was able to send more people to Manitoba because it was itself being continually replenished by a flow of people from overseas. In other words, the hypothesis suggests that Ontario's emigration to Manitoba does not represent a more significant loss of Ontario population than Quebec's emigration represents of that province's population. It suggests that Ontario's emigration was numerically and (for any given decade) proportionally larger than Quebec's only because Ontario was itself receiving a greater immigration.

Again, the proposal can be answered by reference to the census. The matter of French immigration from Europe is discussed elsewhere.⁷⁵ For the moment, let us simply consider the growth of the two provinces, Ontario and Quebec. In 1870, Ontario's population already outnumbered Quebec's by 1,620,851, to 1,195,516. In the decade that followed, Ontario's population increased by 306,071, while Quebec's only rose by 167,511. The increase represented a rise of 19 percent for Ontario, and only 14 percent for Quebec. But in the following decade, 1881-91, Ontario's

⁷⁵See Appendix D.

population increased by only 10 percent, while Quebec's increased at exactly the same rate! The trend continued even more strongly in the next decade, with Ontario's population increasing by only 68,626, or 3 percent, while Quebec's increased by 160,363, or 12 percent!⁷⁶

If Ontario's own population increase had really been what enabled it to send a greater proportion of its people to the North-West between 1870 and 1880, then in the next decade, with Ontario's and Quebec's growth rate the same, Quebec should have sent the same percentage of its population to the North-West as Ontario did. Yet we have already seen that in the decade 1881-1891 Ontario sent about eight times as great a portion of her population to Manitoba as Quebec did. Moreover, we have seen that Nova Scotia sent the same proportion of her population to Manitoba in that decade as did Quebec. Yet Nova Scotia's own population increased by only two-and-a-quarter percent that decade, while Quebec's increased by 10 percent!

One might suggest a number of other hypotheses to explain why French-Canadians went in such few numbers

⁷⁶Fifth Census of Canada, 1911 (Ottawa, King's Printer, 1912) Tables V, VI and VII, vol. 1.

(compared with English-Canadians) to the North-West between 1870 and 1890. We have seen that none of the hypotheses so far discussed is likely to provide a full explanation of the problem. However, in combination, some or all of them might be sufficient to provide such an answer. So might some additional hypotheses not here discussed. They may all be considered subjects suitable for further study.

But whatever other hypotheses may be studied of the nature of those we have so far considered, a search for the real answer can hardly be made without a consideration of what French-Canadians thought of the North-West and of going to settle there during the period with which we are concerned. In the final analysis, the settlement of the region depended on the personal decisions of people in other areas who either did or did not go to settle there. And such decisions depended on the attitudes, the ideas, the emotions which people had about the North-West. Even problems such as the cost of getting to Manitoba from Quebec as compared with the cost of getting there from Ontario, would only be relevant problems if French-Canadians recognised them as such. If they thought it was too difficult to get to Manitoba because it was far and expensive, then the cost was a relevant factor -- even

if there was no cost difference between Ontario and Quebec. That is to say, since going to Manitoba is the personal decision of the French-Canadian who wonders whether to go or not, the important thing is not whether the trip is expensive, but whether he thinks it is expensive.

What we wish to do in this paper, therefore, is to study the attitudes of French-Canadians toward the North-West between 1870 and 1890, and to examine their feelings about the territory as a place for them to go to settle. If lack of government assistance was the reason that they did not go to settle in the North-West, then our study should reveal that they thought they weren't getting the help from the government that was necessary for them to be able to go. If the cost of transportation was the reason, that too should show up in our study. But if some other factor was the real cause of why they did not go, then only by this sort of study can we find it. For our problem concerns human decisions, and a study of attitudes is a study of that upon which decisions are founded.

CHAPTER ONE

THE ACQUISITION OF THE NORTH-WEST

The final terms of the North-West's annexation provided that "it would not lead to the aggrandisement of the old Upper Canada, now Ontario, at the expense of Quebec, but would furnish a free field for the development of the people and institutions of both the provinces of the St. Lawrence."¹ One may justifiably wonder, however, whether the people of the French-Canadian province really wanted the opportunity thus presented to them.

The question arises from a difference in the treatment given the acquisition of the North-West by English- and French-Canadian historians. Those writing in English-Ontario maintain that Canada desired to take over Rupert's Land from the early 1850s onward. They tend to the opinion, moreover, that the desire to get the territory was one of the chief motivating causes of Confederation. Edgar McInnis, for instance, claims that on the one hand, "agrarian radicalism as embodied in the Clear Grit Party was attracted by the prospect of

¹Morton, W.L., op. cit., 117.

opening up new lands for settlement and immigration,"² while, on the other hand, Conservatives had their own reasons:

The old dream of Canada as the entrepot between Europe and the interior of North America was replaced by the still more grandiose vision of British North America as the half-way house between Europe and Asia. Its realization involved not merely the construction of the long-deferred Intercolonial as well as of a trans-continental railway, but the political union of the provinces that would facilitate the acquisition of the West.³

French-Canadian historians, on the other hand, tend not to mention that any Canadian desire for annexation of Rupert's Land existed before 1869. In French-Canadian histories the negotiations of that year, which finally acquired the territory for Canada,⁴ may come as an unexpected move for which the reader is quite unprepared. Indeed, Robert Rumilly, who gives more attention to the matter than other French-Canadian historians, even suggests that Rupert's Land was

²McInnis, Edgar, "Canada, A Political and Social History" (New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1960) 269.

³Ibid., 289.

⁴The Canadian delegates left Montreal for England on 3 October, 1868. The Hudson's Bay Company shareholders accepted the deal on 24 March, 1869. Cartier got back to Montreal on 15 April, 1869, McDougall a few days earlier.

acquired against the will and behind the back of French-Canada. Going farther than other French-Canadians who simply do not recognize the North-West question as forming part and parcel of the Confederation concept, Rumilly denies that the West was even talked about till after Confederation had been accepted. He writes:

L'idée de la Confédération adoptée, plusieurs lui imprimèrent une certaine ampleur. Brown, Cartier et MacDonald [sic] désirèrent l'expansion vers l'Ouest. Mais pour le public, un aggrandissement territorial représentait un surcroît de charge.... Non seulement on n'avait pas créé de courant populaire, mais le peuple, surtout dans le Bas-Canada, fut totalement étranger à la naissance et aux progrès de cette idée.⁵

French-Canadians, says Rumilly, had the same idea of the North-West that Voltaire had of Canada. "Qu'on ouvre les journaux de l'époque: le Manitoba y est traité de 'terre infertile', de 'solitude désertique', de 'gouffre à engloutir nos taxes'; et personne ne prévoit ses progrès, en population ni en ressources."⁶

⁵Rumilly, Robert, "Histoire De La Province De Québec" (Montreal, Valiquette, n.d.) I, 23. The quoting of Rumilly here and below, as of McInnis above, is not intended as reference to authority to support any argument or contention. Rather, it is to show what turned this study to certain lines of inquiry. The lack of attention (or negative attitude) on the part of French-Canadian historians, as compared with English-Canadian historians, leads one to wonder whether, while Ontario in the 1860s was much in favour of North-West acquisition, Quebec might have been either opposed or unconcerned.

⁶Ibid., 159.

Moreover, claims Rumilly, the resistance of the Red River settlers only increased resentment in Quebec at the acquisition of what was already proving so costly and difficult a territory to hold.⁷

If French-Canadian attitudes toward the acquisition of the North-West were really as hostile as Rumilly represents them to have been -- or even if they were non-existent or apathetic -- then there is nothing strange in the slowness of French-Canadians to settle in that region. If they really saw it as a "terre infertile" or a "solitude désertique", they can hardly be expected to have been eager to attempt farming there. And if they thought its population violently hostile to Canadians (or French-Canadians), they would hardly be enthusiastic about going to risk their lives or their peace.

How accurate, then, is Rumilly's picture of Quebec public opinion? Does it correspond to fact? Or does the paucity of comment by other French-Canadian historians -- implying that Quebec opinion was not concerned with the North-West till 1869 -- represent a truer picture? A study of what French-Canadian attitudes

⁷Ibid., 167.

toward acquisition of the North-West really were on the eve of that acquisition would seem to be a useful first step in the search for the causes of the slowness of French-Canadian settlement in the North-West. Such a study would be tantamount to a general survey of French-Canadian attitudes toward the North-West itself at the outset of the 20-year period, 1870-1890, and this sort of survey would seem to be a necessary operation in the search for hypotheses which could then be developed with reference to the sources of the following 20 years.

To begin with, then, it can hardly be maintained that French-Canadians were complete strangers to the idea of acquiring Rupert's Land until a late date. As early as 1857 it was the French-Canadian editor of the Journal de Québec, Joseph Cauchon, who prepared the Canadian Government's brief to the British House of Commons select committee, claiming that the North-West should really be given to Canada on the basis of French claims to the North-West allegedly pre-dating Charles II's 1670 charter to the Hudson's Bay Company.⁸ At a time when Cartier himself was opposed to the annexation of the territory for fear that it would enhance Upper-Canada's position in the Union at the expense of Lower

⁸See Wade, Mason, "The French Canadians" (Toronto, Macmillan, 1956) 395.

Canada's, this other French-Canadian, with a propaganda outlet at his disposal, was already actively working for the project.

By 1864, French Canada could not longer be thought to be in the dark about the prospects of Rupert's Land being annexed to Canada. The 1864 Quebec conference provided in its resolutions for the entry of the North-West into the confederation, and every newspaper in the province covered that conference and its resolutions. In 1865 when the provincial legislature debated the Confederation question -- including the North-West part -- and when the delegates came back from England with progress made on the North-West project, the newspapers had more occasion to put the matter before the public and to debate it at length. And in those years during which the plan of Confederation was being so hotly discussed on platforms and in meeting-halls throughout British North America, French-Canadians could not long remain ignorant of the fact that acquisition of the North-West territories was part and parcel of the Confederation scheme.

Aside from newspapers, our chief remaining record of that debate, outside of the legislative

assembly,⁹ is to be found in the pamphlets and printed accounts of speeches, meetings, and assemblies. Of course, the influence of pamphlets, newspapers, and so on, on public opinion in Quebec was necessarily related in some measure to the literacy rate of the province, and therefore, account should be taken of that rate in evaluating opinion.¹⁰

Bearing that in mind, though, one may look first at pamphlets and then at the newspapers of the pre-Confederation and pre-North-West-annexation period. Limited though their influence may have been, they certainly had some, not only on the people who read them, but also on the people who heard about them in subsequent discussions.

⁹It will be noted that parliamentary debates are not used here as a source of French-Canadian opinions, except as they were reproduced in pamphlet form or in newspaper articles. This is especially a rule with debates of the binational legislative assembly of the united Canadas or House of Commons of the Confederation. There, French-Canadian leaders were speaking to an audience largely English, and public relations had necessarily to be a factor determining what they said. But what an M.P. told the House of Commons in English was not necessarily what his own newspaper told his constituents in French. (See P.B. Waite, "The Life and Times of Confederation" -- Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1962 -- 138). What the M.P. said in the House, therefore, did not necessarily have any effect or bearing on French-Canadian public opinion, unless it was printed in a newspaper or pamphlet to be circulated among a wider public than that which could hear his voice as he spoke at Ottawa.

¹⁰See below, Appendix A.

A glance at the available pamphlets in which were argued the pros and cons of the Confederation scheme before 1867 is enough to suggest a reason why an historian could conclude that North-West annexation was a post-Confederation idea. In general, those pamphleteers who attacked Confederation, attacked it on other grounds, while those who supported Confederation assumed it as a basis from which they pursued their arguments.

One of the earliest pamphlets to appear was the 1865 "Discours Sur La Confédération", an account of speeches made at a public meeting by two semi-retired politicians, C.S. Cherrier and Charles Laberge, and by the English-speaking editor of Montreal's True Witness, G.E. Clerk. Not one of the three mentioned the scheme to acquire the North-West, though they all attacked the Confederation plan. Subsequent history has shown us that the annexation of the territory and its settlement by an English-speaking population contributed to the proportional diminishing of the French element in Canada's population, but this pamphlet ignores the question of Rupert's Land altogether. Indeed, its authors are convinced that in Confederation French-Canada will be overwhelmed by an English majority even with

only the four provinces of the east uniting. This is because they see in the federal government a real legislative union in disguise. Confederation's "objet le plus essentiel," complains Mr. Cherrier, is "de noyer la représentation du Bas-Canada et par la meme de porter une atteinte funeste à son existence politique."¹¹ And this fear that French Canada will be drowned in the new political set-up is not based on an anticipation of an Anglo-Manitoban population added to that of Canada. Rather, it is based on the certainty that "c'est en vain qu'on s'efforce de la déguiser du nom de confédération.... Cette Union quasi législative n'est qu'un acheminement vers une union législative entière et absolue."¹²

This same fear is expressed in another pamphlet, "Discours Sur La Confédération", which also appeared in 1865. It contained the text of a speech given in the legislative assembly by Henri-Gustave Joly on February 20, 1865. Joly claimed that if the Confederation was to have enough centripetal force to hold together, its central government would have to be so strong as to make the confederation in reality a legislative union. And in such a union, with representation

¹¹Cherrier, C.S., et al, "Discours Sur La Confédération" (Montreal, Lanctot, Bouthillier, & Thompson, 1865) 3.

¹²Ibid., 13.

by population the rule for election of members to the central government, the French element would be drowned in an Anglo-Saxon sea. Because this would happen even with a confederation of the four provinces of Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia, it was unnecessary to push this argument on to the consequences of admission of an Anglo-Manitoba to the union.

Yet Joly spoke of the acquisition of Rupert's Land in another connexion. "Quant à l'ouverture du territoire presque sans bornes du Nord-Ouest," he said, "il est impossible de calculer les dépenses que ces travaux entraîneront."¹³

It was the expense that here and in other Quebec opposition was the main argument against acquisition of the North-West. It was feared the territory would be unproductive, would contribute nothing to the Canadian purse, while requiring great expenditures for its defence and development. When a pro-government spokesman said the territory would add to Canada's extent a parcel of land as big as all European Russia, Joly replied: "Oui, mais comme la Russie d'Europe, pourra-t-il jamais supporter une population de 60 millions, et nourrir du surplus de

¹³Joly, H.G., "Discours ... Sur La Confédération" (Quebec, Darveau, 1865), 20.

son blé, une bonne partie de l'Europe?"¹⁴

This sort of opposition to annexation of Rupert's Land did not fear the overpowering effect of a large English population in the North-West, since it did not believe the North-West was capable of supporting a large population of any kind. It was concerned with the welfare of Canada as it existed in 1865 or even 1867, and thought this would suffer from the expense of the proposed territorial expansion. Even Joseph Royal, who was later to play so important a role in the history of French Manitoba, wrote in the Revue Canadienne of September, 1865, that the North-West would be a "source de ruine et d'embarras"¹⁵ for the new Confederation. He thought of the territory as a white elephant, and wondered what Canada would do with it once it got it.

If Joly referred to the North-West at all in his speech on Confederation, it was in reply to those pro-Confederation arguments which envisaged an enormous enrichment of old Canada by the federal union of the eastern colonies which would bring about the acquisition of the territory. These pro-Confederation arguments

¹⁴Ibid., 21-22.

¹⁵La Revue Canadienne, bound edition of all numbers for 1865 (Montreal, 1865) 568.

attempted to win support for Confederation by impressing people with the grandeur of the over-all scheme. Thus Joseph Cauchon called the federal union a great question "qui remue jusque dans son sol toute l'Amérique Britannique du Nord, qui encercle, dans son cadre immense, deux océans et presque la moitié d'un continent...."¹⁶

In his 1865 pamphlet, originally printed in serial form in his Journal de Québec, Cauchon asked his readers to "porter un regard attentif sur la carte de l'Amérique Britannique du Nord et de mesurer l'étendue du territoire qui doit être soumis au gouvernement fédéral en projet."¹⁷ The territory of old Canada was enormous in itself. "Mais qu'est-ce donc auprès de ces prairies de l'Ouest, dont la pensée même est incapable de mesurer les horizons infinis et dont la fertilité est de tous les moments et de toutes les saisons?...."¹⁸

In the same year, 1865, Cartier told a banquet assembly in Ottawa to be proud of their parliament

¹⁶Cauchon, Joseph, "Discours ... Sur La Question De La Confédération" (n.p., n.d.) 1.

¹⁷Cauchon, Joseph, "L'Union Des Provinces De L'Amérique Britannique Du Nord" (Quebec, A. Côté & Cie, 1865) 58.

¹⁸Ibid., 59.

buildings, which, he said, were "dignes de l'assemblée des sages législateurs d'un pays qui va s'étendre de l'Atlantique au Pacifique."¹⁹ He too was assuming that acquisition of the North-West was part and parcel of the Confederation plan in order to impress people with the grandeur of the plan itself.²⁰

This sort of attitude was not necessarily concerned with the actual value of the territory. It sought to impress people with the size of the land to be acquired. Thus an anonymously written pamphlet of 1867, Réponses Aux Censeurs De La Confédération, pointed out that "lorsque l'Île du Prince-Edouard, Terre-Neuve, L'Île Vancouver, la Colombie et le Territoire du Nord-Ouest nous seront unis, nous serons la seconde puissance du monde par l'étendue du territoire."²¹ The pamphlet did not say what material benefit it expected would accrue to Canada from the annexation of the western lands. Neither did Henry Lacroix, who published in the same year his Opuscule Sur Le Présent Et L'Avenir Du Canada. He wrote:

¹⁹Tassé, "Discours De ... Cartier", 465.

²⁰But of course annexation of the North-West was not central to French-Canadian arguments -- either pro or con -- about Confederation. It was referred to -- but so were many other things. See below, 183-4.

²¹"Réponses Aux Censeurs De La Confédération" (St-Hyacinthe, 1867) 4.

Lorsque le Canada aura complété l'Union, que les provinces encore détachées se lieront à lui, cette Puissance, immense par son territoire, riche par ses produits de toute espèce, et offrant à l'émigration des attraits dont on ne connaît encore la valeur, cette puissance comptera parmi les nations.²²

Here was the same grand conception, the same appeal to the imagination to justify Confederation by picturing future territorial aggrandisement. But what was the real value of the western lands? "On ne connaît encore la valeur."

In the newspapers, the question of acquiring the North-Western territories was discussed more fully. Although those newspapers which opposed Confederation generally opposed acquisition of the North-West, while those which supported Confederation also supported the annexation of Rupert's Land, still they discussed the North-West as a more or less separate question.

Newspapers took sides according to their party affiliations,²³ never substantially changing their attitude from the time annexation of the North-West by the planned Confederation was first discussed in the legislative assembly, until the land was finally annexed

²²Lacroix, Henry, "Opuscule Sur Le Présent Et L'Avenir Du Canada" (Montreal, 1867) 12.

²³See below, Appendix C.

once and for all. Thus while La Minerve consistently took a line of unrestricted support for Cartier's project, Le Pays set the pace for the Opposition newspapers when, in criticizing the planned Confederation, it came to this point:

Mais voici le plus beau de l'affaire; il s'agit d'acheter le territoire de la Baie d'Hudson et pour cet objet, si l'indemnité est raisonnable et les garanties suffisantes, le cabinet anglais s'engage à garantir l'emprunt. Quand nous avons des millions d'acres de terre à coloniser, des dettes énormes à payer, des fortifications à construire, une milice à organiser et à maintenir sur le pied d'un million par année, quand les déficits annuels s'accumulent, il faudrait encore emprunter pour acheter un pays sauvage dont nous ne retirerions que de nouvelles charges et de nouvelles dépenses durant un demi siècle à venir. La proposition est si saugrenue qu'il ne faut pas s'étonner que les ministres anglais y aient consenti, sachant bien qu'elle ne serait sanctionnée ni par le Canada, ni par les autres provinces.²⁴

Again, the Union Nationale might predict that annexation of Rupert's Land would only help drown French-Canada in an Anglo-Saxon sea,²⁵ at a time when the two Canadas were still united. But the opposition to the acquisition of the territory was mainly based on the conviction that the land would be a source of expense and hardship, giving no income or other benefit.²⁶

²⁴Le Pays (Montreal) 6 July, 1865, 2. For circulations of newspapers, see below, Appendix B.

²⁵L'Union Nationale (Montreal) 19 September, 1865, 2.

²⁶See, for example, L'Ordre (Montreal) 14 August, 1865, 1.

In this dispute, the Liberals showed themselves to be the real conservatives of the country, while the Conservative party, they thought, was embarking on a programme of the utmost recklessness. The Opposition wanted to avoid grandiose schemes, wanted to play it safe, not to invest in expansion but to consolidate present positions. Thus, Le Canadien opposed North-West annexation by saying:

Nous espérons que l'on finira par comprendre qu'il vaut encore mieux travailler, tous ensemble, dans le but d'asseoir solidement la confédération, conserver nos propres limites, coloniser nos propres terres incultes, au lieu de chercher à aggrandir la sphère d'action de notre gouvernement, étendre notre territoire actuel, et puis se préparer, pour cela, à repousser les tribus sauvages, dans la vaine espérance, que nous réussirons à coloniser de suite cette région dont la plus grande partie, par sa position géographique, est impropre à une culture rémunérative [sic].²⁷

Soon after, the paper saw positive evidence that the North-West would be a burden rather than an asset for Canada. News came from Red River that a plague of grasshoppers had destroyed the colony's crops, while the great scarcity of buffalo had deprived the settlers of their usual fall-back resource. The Nor' Wester was cited as saying that Red River wanted to

²⁷Le Canadien (Quebec) 22 May, 1868, 2.

join Canada, but first wanted food from Canada. In an article headed "Détresse à la Rivière Rouge", Le Canadien commented:

Nous ne savons pas trop ce qu'il y aura à gagner à faire entrer dans la confédération des gens à qui il nous faudra envoyer de quoi manger. Il semble qu'il y a déjà bien assez d'affamés dans notre propre pays. Dans tous les cas, ce ne peut pas être là le chemin qui conduit à la prospérité.²⁸

The pro-North-West papers did not always answer this argument. They were often so concerned with praising the government that they seemed not to have any critical faculty at all. La Minerve, for example, printed a long article the day Cartier arrived at Montreal after negotiating the purchase of Rupert's Land, in which it praised the government leader for his job. "Enfin," said La Minerve, "nous avons acquis ou nous sommes à même d'acquérir près de 200,000,000 d'acres de terre à trois quarts de cent de l'acre. Qui ne se sentirait fier d'un pareil résultat?"²⁹ But not once, up to and including the issue in which that article was printed, did La Minerve give any specific evidence that the territory was even worth three-quarters of a cent per acre to Canada. The paper seemed willing to praise

²⁸Ibid., 7 September, 1868, 2.

²⁹La Minerve (Montreal) 15 April, 1869, 2.

Cartier for the purchase of any sort of land at all -- or to praise him for any action at all.

In Ottawa, Le Canada seemed even more eager to lavish its unreserved praise on Cartier and McDougall. When a copy was received by the paper of the memo presented by the Canadian delegates to the Colonial Office, stating the Canadian Government's claims and proposals, the editorialist called it a masterpiece. "Aucun détail n'est passé sous silence," he eulogised, "aucune nuance n'est négligée; rien dans le passé comme dans le présent n'échappe à leur sagacité."³⁰

Without going into details about the resources of the North-West, Le Canada was at least ready to back up its praise of the government with some encouragement about the territory itself. On April 3, 1869, it printed an extract from the New York Herald, praising the value of the North-West, and calling for Canada to end the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company. The editorialist contrasted the Herald's attitude favourably with that of Canadians who refused to believe in the value and the future of Rupert's Land. "Le Herald, journal américain, leur apprend qu'il y a là d'immenses sources de richesses à exploiter," claimed Le Canada. "Nous le savions, mais ce témoignage arraché à un

³⁰Le Canada (Ottawa) 8 April, 1869, 2.

journal, qui est loin de se montrer toujours l'ami des canadiens, est bon à noter dans les circonstances actuelles."

The editorialist then went on to anticipate Turner by claiming the key to the phenomenal development of the United States had been the constant presence of an un-opened country -- a frontier region -- into which the American people could constantly advance. The American republic had grown with the slogan "Go ahead, go ahead."

Ne craignons pas [concluded the editorialist] de suivre l'exemple qu'ils nous ont donné sous ce rapport, il nous sera profitable. Une carrière de prospérité est ouverte devant nous; entrons-y vaillamment, sans crainte de nous y égarer, en répétant nous aussi: en avant, en avant!³¹

Le Canada might well cry "en avant, en avant!" But when it came to real proposals for developing the North-West, even the staunchest pro-government papers hesitated. Thus, the Journal Des Trois-Rivières, on June 4, 1869, praised the North-West for its

forêts inépuisables, des pouvoirs d'eau sans nombre, des mines d'une valeur inestimable et plus de soixante-et-quinze millions d'acres de terre de la plus grande fertilité et autant, qui sans être aussi riches, sont bien loin d'être à dédaigner.³²

³¹Le Canada (Ottawa) 3 April, 1869, 2.

³²Le Journal Des Trois-Rivières (Trois-Rivières) 4 June, 1869, 2.

But this same newspaper, less than three weeks later, sounded this note of warning:

Nous espérons que les députés de la province de Québec, maintenant que ce territoire est à nous, sauront veiller à ce que le gouvernement fédéral n'approprie pas de trop fortes sommes pour l'établissement du Nord-Ouest. L'acquisition quoi qu'avantageuse n'en est pas moins un certain fardeau pour la Puissance et ce serait une injustice à commettre pour les autres provinces au profit seul d'Ontario, que de faire de trop fortes dépenses....³³

Le Journal de Québec, whose editor had been the first important French-Canadian actively to advocate acquisition of Rupert's Land by Canada, showed the same cold feet in the end. In 1865 this paper had called for immediate annexation of the territory:

Si nous néglignons trop longtemps d'ouvrir nous-mêmes ces territoires à la colonisation, si nous ne les faisons défricher sous nos soins, sous notre protectorat pour ainsi dire, nous courons risque que d'un jour à l'autre, les Américains qui l'avoisinent viennent à s'en emparer....³⁴

Again, when the territory was finally acquired -- or at least, when the arrangement had been made -- the Journal de Québec described the new acquisition with pride:

Les immenses contrées du Nord-Ouest aggrandiront le Canada d'une superficie de deux millions, deux cent mille carrés [sic].

³³Ibid., 22 June, 1869, 2.

³⁴Le Journal De Québec (Quebec) 14 August, 1865, 2.

Ces pays nous sont peu connus, mais, s'il faut en croire les explorateurs, ils présentent des ressources incomparables. C'est à peu près le climat de la Russie, avec un sol en certains endroits très-fertile, des prairies incomparables et des richesses de toutes sortes. Lord Sil Kirk [sic] pensait que trente millions d'hommes pourraient tirer leur subsistance dans ces immenses solitudes fermées pendant longtemps à la civilisation, mais qui appellent aujourd'hui dans leur sein des milliers d'individus que la misère, le manque de ressources chasse des villes européennes.³⁵

Yet the same paper, in a few days, was treating with sarcasm the fact that "tous les jours, on nous gratifie d'un nouveau plan dont la réalisation assurerait, dans l'esprit de son auteur, la prospérité du Nord-Ouest, le développement de ses ressources et par contre-coup le bonheur du Canada." Of these plans, the idea of a transcontinental railway was singled out for special criticism. "Nous croyons," wrote the editorialist, "que, d'ici à long temps, les ressources du pays ne nous permettront pas de relier ces deux extrémités du pays par une voie ferrée."³⁶

³⁵Ibid., 29 May, 1869, 2.

³⁶Ibid., 12 June, 1869, 2.

Whether such newspapers³⁷ supported the actual purchase of the territory simply to follow the government line, or whether they sincerely believed it was a good investment to ensure that the North-West would be Canadian rather than American at that distant (to them) time when opening it up would be feasible -- still, when it got past the stage of getting or not getting the territory, they weren't ready to do anything with it. They did not really seem to believe that anything could be done with it -- at least at present -- by French or English-Canadians, and even when it would be settled, it was by emigrants chassés des villes européennes that they expected it would be done.

Thus, in 1870, when the government was looking for a lieutenant governor to replace McDougall, and the Toronto Leader opposed the naming of a French-Canadian on the grounds that within five years the North-West would be completely English, the Journal de Québec only replied that "Le Leader escompte l'avenir à sa façon

³⁷As also, eg., the Conservative Courrier De St-Hyacinthe, which, in the 16 April, 1869, issue of its weekly edition, p. 5, congratulated Cartier and McDougall on their acquisition of so vast a territory with such great potential, but revealed, in spite of itself, what it really thought of the country's immediate potential, when it quoted Sir Stafford Northcote as telling the Hudson's Bay Company shareholders that "notre commerce n'en sera nullement affecté et nos relations avec les indiens continueront comme par le passé."

sans tenir compte de bien des circonstances qui pourront empêcher ses compatriotes de se fixer dans cette contrée."³⁸ The paper appears in no way to have counted on a French-Canadian emigration to the North-West and was sceptical about the possibility of any considerable number of English-Canadians going there either.

These newspapers often give the impression that their interest in the North-West -- even where they had a positive interest in it -- was not based on the motives one might expect. Unlike the traditionally-pictured frontier farmer, who looked always for a new field into which he could expand, into which he could move himself, these French-Canadians seemed to want the West as a place from which they could import wealth back to the St. Lawrence valley. Thus, when La Minerve spoke of the riches of the West, it spoke of bringing to Montreal the silks of China and the spices of India:

Le Nord-Ouest ... c'est la grandeur et la richesse, c'est l'empire du commerce; c'est le dernier trait d'union entre l'Europe et l'Asie; c'est le chemin de l'or australien, des shawls, du cashmere, des diamants de Golconde, des soies de la Chine, des épices de Malabar et des Moluques, etc.³⁹

³⁸Ibid., 10 February, 1870, 2.

³⁹La Minerve (Montreal) 26 May, 1869, 2.

A glowing enough ode to the West, but it doesn't mention sending settlers to the territory. Rather, it is concerned with the wealth to be carried across the North-West from a more distant place -- wealth that would be brought to Montreal whose port would grow great by the further shipment of it to the markets of Europe.

As for the North-West's potential as an agricultural area, the real attitudes of the pro-North-West French-Canadian press are perhaps expressed most plainly by Le Nouveau Monde. When Cartier and McDougall returned from Britain, this paper approved of their accomplishment. "Nul doute," it said, "que le succès qui a couronné la mission de MM. Cartier et McDougall en Angleterre ne soit reconnu et apprécié comme il le mérite par les députés de toute nuance."⁴⁰ According to the paper, what Cartier had done in England was to "avoir réussi à reculer les bornes [du Canada] jusqu'à l'océan pacifique, et à donner à la colonisation plus de cinquante millions d'acres d'un sol vierge, riche et fertile."⁴¹

But the paper did not hide its doubts, either.

⁴⁰Le Nouveau Monde (Montreal) 29 May, 1867, 3.

⁴¹Le Nouveau Monde, 17 April, 1869, 1.

When it felt the English-Canadian press was exaggerating the value of the territory, it exclaimed:

Le territoire du Nord-Ouest n'a besoin
cependant ni d'être décrié ni d'être surfait;
il a ses avantages comme il a ses
inconvenients, et n'est pas du tout la Terre
Promise décrite par les rédacteurs du Nor'
Wester.⁴²

It was the Nouveau-Monde that first printed, in serial form, Bishop Taché's Esquisse Sur Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique, running it during the summer and fall of 1869, and then printing it in pamphlet form that October. The conclusions the paper drew from the Esquisse are clear from the way it triumphantly reprinted part of a review of the pamphlet by the Journal De Québec. "La lecture de ce travail," said the review, "refroidira le zèle des colons qui ont l'intention d'aller se fixer dans le Nord-Ouest. Mgr Taché ne trace pas de ces régions un tableau bien agréable."⁴³

In fact, Taché was not inclined to regard the potential of the North-West with as much pessimism as his commentators. As early as 1859 he had contributed a section to S.J. Dawson's Report On The Exploration

⁴²Le Nouveau Monde, 6 April, 1869, 1.

⁴³Le Nouveau Monde, 4 Nov., 1869, 1.

Of The Country Between Lake Superior And The Red River Settlement, calling for an immigration of French-Canadians to the Red River country. Dawson's Report gave an encouraging picture of the prospects of the territory, and the presence of Taché's Letter From The Bishop of St-Boniface as a part of it tends to identify Taché's view of the territory with Dawson's. In his letter, the bishop acknowledged that Canadian immigration to the North-West had already begun and was bound to continue. "This immigration," he said, "cannot fail to increase."⁴⁴ Certainly, the Bishop of St-Boniface knew that if immigration to the North-West was bound to continue and even increase, it was because the North-West was of value, and held definite incentives for the Canadian emigrant. It is clear that Taché's attitude cannot be summed up in the sentence which Rumilly quotes from the Esquisse Sur Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique: "Que ferait une population nombreuse au milieu de ces plaines?"⁴⁵

In fact, Taché's own feelings were divided. He explains the problem himself in his Letter in

⁴⁴Taché, A.-A., "Letter From The Bishop Of St. Boniface", in Dawson, S.J., "Report On The Exploration Of The Country Between Lake Superior And The Red River Settlement" (Toronto, John Lovell, 1859) 44.

⁴⁵Quoted in Rumilly, op. cit., 158.

Dawson's Report. Until now, he says, the Red River settlement has lived peacefully, far from the rest of the world, isolated from the evils and the troubles of civilisation. The influx of immigrants would end the isolation and the tranquility of the settlement. Taché knew full well ce que ferait une population nombreuse in the territory, and that was precisely what bothered him. "Whatever may be the result", he wrote (and it is apparent that he was not optimistic about that result), "the movement is an actual fact, and we must cease to be what we have hitherto been, an exceptional people."⁴⁶

A good and conscientious pastor, Taché was concerned about the welfare of his flock. Whatever would become of the poor French Métis in the midst of an English-Canadian immigration to the territory, it wasn't likely to be good. The bishop, therefore, was naturally chagrined at the prospect of a considerable Canadian immigration to the territory. This showed up in his writings about the North-West. Not wanting people to come to the place, he did not write very enthusiastically about what it had to offer. Thus, in his Esquisse, Taché expressed doubts about the value of the territory as a place for settlement:

⁴⁶Taché, A.A., "Letter From The Bishop of St. Boniface" in S.J. Dawson, "Report....", 44.

J'ai lu les rapports magnifiques sur ces pays; on en faisait ressortir tous les avantages; on indiquait particulièrement la quantité de bois. Le livre en main, j'ai vu le pays décrit, et je me suis demandé: Qui donc rêve, ou de l'auteur ou du lecteur?⁴⁷

And yet, from this general pessimism about the land's potential, Taché excepted

les prairies du haut de la branche nord de la Saskatchewan, où le voisinage des montagnes Rocheuses assure une partie du bois nécessaire aux établissements qu'on y formerait. J'excèpte encore la vallée de la Rivière Rouge et le bas de l'Assiniboine, parce que là les prairies touchent encore à la forêt.⁴⁷

What he was excluding here so cavalierly -- which his reviewers failed to notice -- was an area described by the Bleu papers as 75,000,000 to 100,000,000 acres of fertile land! Moreover, if the bishop's general conclusions were less than enthusiastic, his actual description of the territory left more room for optimism. His English translator thought the Sketch would serve to encourage people to settle in the North-West.⁴⁸ And indeed, a desire to see more immigration

⁴⁷Taché, A.A., "Esquisse Sur Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique" (Montreal, Le Nouveau Monde, 1869) 11.

⁴⁸Taché, A.A., "Sketch Of The North-West Of America" (Montreal, Lovell, 1870) translator's preface: "....The facts, which his Lordship's long residence there enables him to give from personal experience, shew conclusively, that the climate, soil and mineral resources of the country are such as must render it highly attractive to the emigrant."

was the other side of the bishop's own attitude -- provided it was French-Canadian immigration. For if his Métis flock was going to have to face a wave of immigrants from Canada in any case, it was desirable that they at least have the support of a French-speaking Catholic group from Quebec with which to face the Ontarians who would come.

Thus, as early as 1859, recognizing the inevitability of Canadian settlement of the North-West, Taché wrote:

I am a French Canadian in heart as well as by origin, and I should undoubtedly prefer to see our lands occupied by some of our brave and respectable inhabitants from Lower Canada.... Besides, no-one has a better right to occupy the valley of the Red River, or even the valley of the Saskatchewan, than the Canadians of French origin. Our fathers were the hardy champions of civilisation who first penetrated these regions ... and nothing could be more natural than that our brethren should once more take possession of the land discovered by their ancestors.⁴⁹

This ambivalent attitude was probably typical of Catholic churchmen who had at heart the welfare of the French-Métis of the North-West. Their first choice would have been to see the territory remain isolated, but, given the inevitability of Canadian emigration, they came to view as desirable that a considerable part

⁴⁹Taché, "Letter From The Bishop of St. Boniface", in Dawson, S.J., "Report etc. ...", 44-45.

of this emigration should be French-Canadian.

The dichotomy of this attitude coincided with that of the Quebec newspapers, but in a way that could not help the missionaries' cause. When Taché's pessimism, inspired by a desire to keep out English-Canadian immigrants, was printed in the French-Canadian press, it became a discouragement to the very people who could have helped defend the Métis against the effects of Anglo-Ontario emigration to the North-West. Papers opposed to acquisition of the territory could point to the Sketch as evidence of its lack of value. And the rest of the press, willing to encourage the investment of

300,000 to buy Rupert's Land, could use the Sketch to discourage any further immediate use of funds to develop the land thus obtained. For indeed, the review of the papers of French-Quebec between 1864 and 1870 indicates that they were all basically opposed to excessive expenditure on the North-West territory. The difference was in where they drew the line dividing what was and what was not excessive. For the Opposition, the very purchase was an overstepping of the bounds, while for the pro-government papers, the purchase, but nothing more, was within bounds. None of the papers -- pro-government or opposition -- seemed to envisage any immediate use of the land. Pro-government papers

repeatedly referred to it as a long-term investment. No-one foresaw immediate settlement of it -- not by English-Canadians, and certainly not by French-Canadians.

* * * * *

And what of the Red River insurrection? Did it -- not the consequences or suppression of it, but the very fact of it happening -- persuade French-Canadians, as Rumilly suggests, that the purchase of the North-West had indeed been a bad thing?

Certainly, papers that had opposed acquisition of Rupert's Land from the outset, could not always refrain from a sort of 'I-told-you-so' attitude, as news from the North-West began to tell of Mr. McDougall's problems. Moreover those papers most vehement in opposing the acquisition of the territory, were often the first to print news of the troubles. Thus, by October 8, 1869, Le Canadien was carrying word that the natives were restless at Red River, and it commented:

Le territoire du Nord-Ouest sera donc instamment et toujours un objet d'affaiblissement et de ruine pour nous.

C'est en vain que nous dépenserons notre argent pour le coloniser et le gouverner. Il ne saurait être peuplé que par la trop pleine de la population américaine, et cela prendra bien des années encore.

Avant ce temps la Puissance du Canada sera tombée dans la grande confédération américaine.

Les difficultés que va susciter la
gouverne de ce territoire avec nos voisins,
n'auront d'autre effet que de nous appauvrir
et de hâter notre annexion inévitable avec
les Etats-Unis.⁵⁰

This fear of a ruinous war in the North-West was probably natural enough at a time when North-American newspaper columns were full of the war that the United States army was fighting against the Indians of the U.S. West. Hardly a day went by without some story of massacre, battle, or raid. It was easy, therefore, for Le Canadien to be frightened by the news that the Red River natives were getting ready to resist the Canadian take-over. The number of Indians in the territory was not known, but the threat seemed terrifying enough for Le Canadien to comment: "Du train que vont les choses, l'émigration ne sera pas très pressée de se jeter sur ce territoire aussi dangereux que peu fertile."⁵¹ Four months later, the paper was still pessimistic, seeing no chance that Canada could hold the territory in the face of the sort of opposition it had so far met. Commenting on the sending of an expeditionary force to Red River, the paper said:

⁵⁰Le Canadien, 8 October, 1869, 2.

⁵¹Le Canadien, 10 November, 1869, 2.

Les frais de ce long et pénible trajet seront nécessairement très considérables et tout cela, pour obtenir par les armes, la possession d'un territoire payé beaucoup trop cher, qui ne nous occasionnera que des dépenses et des troubles sans profit aucun, et dont il est fort douteux que nous puissions jamais garder la possession.⁵²

What really disturbed these papers that had all along opposed acquisition of the territory was that its natives did not seem even to recognize the right to the land for which Canada had supposedly paid the Hudson's Bay Company £300,000. In effect, then, Canada had paid the £300,000 for something which the company could not sell since it had not owned it to begin with.

Le Pays warned that the £300,000 was nothing, that Canada had not yet begun to pay for this western land of troubles:

Le ciel se couvre et les nuages s'amoncellent du côté du Nord-Ouest; les embarras de notre nouvelle acquisition commencent déjà à se faire sentir. Nous avons toujours eu assez de vanité pour ne point hésiter à arrondir nos domaines; nous avons même joui jusqu'ici d'assez de crédit pour tirer des traites sur l'avenir, mais avons-nous bien réellement ce qu'il faut pour coloniser des régions éloignées, aux trois quarts désertes, ou occupées par une population hostile à nos tentatives....

Ce qu'il y a de sûr c'est que les Indiens contestent à la Compagnie le droit à la propriété des terres qu'elle nous a vendues. Or si des colons tentent un établissement dans le pays au milieu de ces difficultés, n'est-il pas à craindre qu'il

⁵²Ibid., 7 February, 1870, 2.

ne soient inquiétés et même en très grand
péril?⁵³

But not all the Opposition newspapers were so eager to use the insurrection as an excuse to attack the government again for the purchase of the North-West. L'Ordre was almost willing to let by-gones be by-gones in order to deal with the present situation:

Nul doute que les hommes prévoyants, qui avaient insisté sur la nécessité de mûrir davantage la mesure de l'acquisition de ce territoire et de consulter la volonté et les intérêts de sa population, avant d'entrer en négociations avec la compagnie de la baie d'Hudson, pour le transfert des droits de cette dernière, ne se prévalent de l'échec subi par la politique de la puissance pour remettre en évidence les opinions qu'ils avaient émises précédemment.

Dans tous les cas, la décision qui sera le résultat des discussions soulevées à cet égard, sera d'une gravité très grande.⁵⁴

Those papers which had all along supported the acquisition of the North-West were not changed in their opinion by the opposition of the Red River settlers. Certainly, they were embarrassed, and they tried to belittle the significance of the opposition, and to hide the facts of it as long as they could. This difference between the pro-Government and Opposition papers is well illustrated by the treatment given the

⁵³Le Pays, 20 October, 1869, 2.

⁵⁴L'Ordre, 17 February, 1870, 1.

story of the first encounter between McDougall and the Métis. The Opposition version was that McDougall had been forced to leave the territory and Provencher had been made a prisoner by the Métis when he had tried to negotiate with them. But La Minerve printed a rather different version, and Le Courrier De St-Hyacinthe was quick to copy it. According to this story, McDougall did meet opposition from the Red River Métis. But as soon as Provencher stepped forward to explain Canadian intentions to them, the Métis, overjoyed at seeing this French-Canadian among the leaders of the new government, changed their attitude drastically. "L'accord se fit," concluded La Minerve, "et ceux qui étaient venus pour scalper le nouveau Lieutenant-Gouverneur le conduisirent en triomphe à Winnipeg."⁵⁵

When these papers finally did recognise the fact of the Red River resistance they generally took one of two attitudes: they either condemned the rebels (as they called them) and desired that they be crushed immediately,⁵⁶ or else they sympathised vaguely with the Red River settlers, but claimed that a peaceful

⁵⁵La Minerve, 16 November, 1869, 2.

⁵⁶Le Canada, for example was furious at any talk of appeasing the Métis. On 27 November, 1869, it exclaimed: "C'est cela, cinq cents hommes, sur une population de quinze mille âmes, se soulèvent contre le nouveau régime établi au Nord-Ouest, et il faudra en passer par les volontés de cette poignée de rebelles." (p. 2)

agreement could certainly be concluded, showed great optimism about the missions of De Salaberry and Thibault, and hoped for a quick end to opposition so that the work of setting up a Canadian government in the North-West could get on.⁵⁷

Most moderate in their response to the Red River resistance were papers like the Nouveau Monde, the Journal De Québec, or the Journal Des Trois-Rivières -- papers which were not as close to the situation, either because they were not so close to the Government as was La Minerve, Le Canada, or Le Courrier De St-Hyacinthe, or because they had not advocated a go-quickly policy with regard to settling the newly-acquired territory in the first place.

Thus, the first three papers carried stories during November, 1869, about McDougall's difficulties, as if they were confirmed and accepted as true. But La Minerve added a sceptical comment to its accounts, which Le Courrier De St-Hyacinthe was quick to reprint: "Nous persistons à ne pas croire à ces bruits, tant

⁵⁷Le Nouveau Monde was least willing to blame the Métis. It chose rather to blame the Nor' Wester and its friends for "toutes ces correspondances exagérées sur la richesse du territoire, tous ces mensonges ridicules sur son avenir comme pays agricole". (16 November, 1869, p. 1). But now that we are in this situation, continued the paper, let's negotiate in good faith, and settle this matter so we may occupy the territory peacefully.

qu'ils ne seront pas mieux établis."⁵⁸ And while Le Canada blared out its condemnation of the "poignée de rebelles" at Red River, Le Journal De Québec sympathised with the Métis. It allowed that the fault for the trouble might well lie with the Canadian party at Red River, and added that "le gouvernement capable d'approuver sa conduite mérite la haine de tous les peuples, et la malédiction de Dieu."⁵⁹ The Journal Des Trois-Rivières agreed that "il nous paraît presque certain que la cause du soulèvement des colons du Nord-Ouest doit être attribuée à l'impopularité personnelle de M. McDougall et à la conduite mauvaise et imprudente de ses émissaires."⁶⁰ Both these Journaux joined Le Nouveau Monde in hoping that the Canadian government would meet the just demands of the Métis, to bring a fast and inexpensive peace to the territory.

In point of fact, the only papers angry at the Métis were the Conservative party newspapers, which, for party reasons, had supported fully the acquisition of the territory, and for whom the rebellion (as they

⁵⁸Le Courrier De St-Hyacinthe, 26 November, 1869 (weekly edition), in the bound edition for 1869-1870, 919.

⁵⁹Le Journal De Québec, 4 January, 1870, 2.

⁶⁰Le Journal Des Trois-Rivières, 11 January, 1870, 2.

called it) was clearly a political embarrassment. What, after all, would become of Cartier's triumph of April, if it should turn out that he had arranged for Canada to pay 300,000 just for the right to put down an insurrection?

Le Canada actually tried to put this political liability to use. Considering the possibility that Canadian troops might have to be sent to the North-West to restore order, the paper suggested:

Après avoir consolidé le pouvoir du
gouvernement canadien dans les nouvelles
régions du Nord-Ouest, ces braves
militaires pourraient échanger le fusil et
la baïonnette contre la hache et la charrue
du défricheur.⁶¹

But the suggestion itself indicates the probable motives for Le Canada's position. The reference to the "hache ... du défricheur" indicates an ignorance of the nature of the territory acquired -- a prairie grassland where forests would not have to be cleared away by the pioneers as had been necessary in eastern Canadian settlement. A support for the acquisition of the territory, therefore, unfounded on knowledge of the territory itself, was most likely motivated by a loyalty to the party that

⁶¹Le Canada, Ottawa, 23 November, 1869, p. 2.

arranged the acquisition. The paper's own lack of real interest in settlement of the North-West by ordinary Canadians -- or belief in its possibility -- is also suggested by the proposal that the value of sending a military force to the country was to supply it with colonisers. That is, the paper would seem not to have believed that people would go unless sent as soldiers.⁶²

This general survey of French-Canadian attitudes toward the North-West at the outset of the period 1870-1890 reveals, therefore, a range of opinion going from complete assurance of the valuelessness of the territory (seen in Opposition papers) to a vague belief in its value. The latter feeling was rather unsure and hesitant about what really could be done with the land and how quickly. There certainly is no evidence of a widespread feeling that French-Canada had a stake in the new country, a chance to profit by going to it. This range of attitudes may contrast strongly with those of English-Canadians, and would seem to indicate a useful line for further investigation, since if French-Canadians had a much lower or less certain opinion of the value of the North-West than the

⁶²A prominent precedent in French-Canadian history was, of course, the settlement in Canada of soldiers of the Carignan-Salières Regiment, the largest single group of settlers to arrive during the French Regime.

English-Canadians did, one could explain, at least partly, thereby, the fact that they went to settle there in so much fewer numbers.

Some other lines for further investigation are also suggested by the survey. In Bishop Taché's fears that English-Canadian immigration to the North-West would endanger the security of the French Métis, and in his feeling that French-Canadian immigration would support the Métis position -- a feeling that identified French-Canadians with the Métis and with the dangerous position into which he felt they were being placed -- there is another possible hypothesis. If French-Canadians felt that by going to the North-West they were exposing themselves to some danger, they would be less likely to go.

Finally, there was a certain tone in the arguments of Opposition papers that may suggest yet another approach. 'Hasn't Canada enough land of its own to colonise,' they asked, 'without tacking on this great foreign country as well?' Would the North-West, then, be considered a foreign country even after annexation, whose needs for development would compete with those of the old Canada? This question too deserves to be considered at greater length.

The survey, then, having suggested these avenues of investigation, these possible hypotheses, it would seem proper to consider each separately, looking to see whether the evidence of the 20-year period that followed will support them as theories to explain the paucity of French-Canadian settlement in the North-West during those 20 years.

CHAPTER TWO

THE FERTILITY OF PRAIRIE LAND

If French-Canadians thought the North-West was an infertile land, a place where prosperity or success would be difficult or unsure, their attitude would certainly help to explain why they did not go to settle there. It has just been seen, in fact, that such an opinion was held by many journalists, politicians, or publicists in Quebec about the time that Rupert's Land was acquired by Canada. What could have been the origin of this feeling? How widespread was it, and what eventually became of it?

A marked difference between English- and French-Canadian attitudes toward the fertility of the North-West can be traced to the nature of the contacts which French-Quebec and English-Ontario had had with the North-West up till the time of its purchase by Ottawa. While that territory had been completely cut off from Ontario, it had, ever since 1818, been part of the ecclesiastical province of the archdiocese of Quebec. The Church was an important source of information about the North-West for Quebec -- and this because the Church

was obliged to make repeated appeals to Quebec for help in easing the misery of its Red River parishioners.

From the beginning to the end of the pre-Confederation period, reports from the Manitoba clergy were discouraging. In his 1836 Mémoire Ou Notice Sur L'Etablissement De La Mission De La Rivière-Rouge, Bishop Provencher told his readers that during his early days at Red River, though he and his fellow clergymen dined at the governor's own table, "nous n'y voyions point de pain, ce qui devoit durer six ou sept ans."¹

Four years after his arrival at Red River, Provencher was back in Quebec, trying to raise money for the succour of his parish. And even as he was being made a bishop, Quebec was digesting his stories of Red River floods, famine, cold, and swarms of grasshoppers that made agriculture impossible.²

¹Provencher, J.N., "Mémoire Ou Notice Sur L'Etablissement De La Mission De La Rivière-Rouge" (Rome, 1836) 2.

²Provencher's stories were soon verified by the return to Quebec in 1826 of some 60 French-Canadians who had tried unsuccessfully to practise Red River agriculture since 1818. See Provencher, op. cit., 2, or Giraud, Marcel, "Le Métis Canadien" (Paris, Institut d'Ethnologie, 1945) 632.

Forty years later, French-Canadians in Quebec were still getting the same picture of Red-River life from Monseigneur de St-Boniface. Bishop Taché in 1866 referred to his Vingt Années De Missions Dans Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique as "vingt années de dévouement et de sacrifices".³ Sacrifices by missionaries on the distant plains were only to be expected, but Red River was not just a centre for the northwestern missions -- it was an agricultural settlement, a Canadian colony. "La population catholique de la Rivière-Rouge se compose presque exclusivement de Canadiens ou de leurs descendants," Taché reminded Quebeckers in 1861. "Bien des familles canadiennes ont là de leurs membres."⁴

And it was this population that was making repeated calls to Quebec for assistance, repeated assurances that its life at Red River was hard and desperate -- certainly in comparison with life in the old province. "Souvent," Taché wrote to the Quebeckers in 1861, "les pauvres Missionnaires du Diocèse de St-Boniface ont dû se priver, se gêner beaucoup pour

³Taché, A.A., "Vingt Années De Missions Dans Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique" (Montreal, Senécal, 1866) 2.

⁴Taché, A.A., "Lettre ... Donnant A Mgr. De Montréal Le Récit Des Malheurs De Son Diocèse Depuis Deux Ans" (Montreal, 1861) 9.

nourrir des personnes dont les parents vivent ici dans le luxe et l'abondance."⁵

Taché's letter of 1861 told not just of the hardships of lone missionaries, but of the priest of an organized parish who lost both legs to frostbite in a prairie blizzard. It described fires that destroyed not a simple mission station, but a bishop's cathedral, a school, a hospital, a convent. Not an Indian convert but a poor old Canadian had been killed in the fire. This is significant in a comparison of Quebec's with Ontario's relationship with the pre-Confederation North-West. Assiniboia's English-speaking settlers came not from Canada but from Europe; her French-speaking settlers came from Quebec. This meant that even if Ontarians ever were asked to support religious activities in the territories during this period -- even if in asking for this support missionary societies painted pictures of hardship and misery -- the Ontarians would still have been able to keep free of pessimistic attitudes toward agriculture in the North-West. Missionaries among the savages were expected to endure hardships, but their hardships were irrelevant to the ease or difficulty

⁵Ibid., 9.

with which agriculture could be undertaken in a settled prairie colony. With such a colony Ontario had no contact during most of the pre-Confederation period. Yet French-Quebec did have such contact, since it had provided the French-speaking settlers of Assiniboia and since it remained the "big brother" to the Assiniboia Church.

Thus, the first that English-Ontario heard of the North-West's farming potential was a Toronto professor's reference to it as a "Paradise of Fertility".⁶ But French-Quebeckers had been hearing for decades that it was a hard land where survival required the "dévouement que le Catholicisme seul peut inspirer".⁷

Nor were the North-West clergy alone in planting this idea in the minds of French-Canadians. The Quebec clergy did its part, while helping to collect money for the aid of St. Boniface. Thus, in 1869, Bishop Laflèche of Trois-Rivières was instructing his clergy:

Vous savez que les missions de la
Rivière Rouge sont bien affligées depuis
quelques années. Le Bon Dieu les a visitées
à diverses reprises. Le digne Evêque de

⁶From Prof. Hind's Report, quoted in Morris, Alexander, "Nova Britannia" (Toronto, Hunter, Rose & Co., 1884) 29.

⁷Taché, A.A., "Lettre ... A Mgr De Montreal...."
10.

Saint-Boniface, Monseigneur Taché, est actuellement au milieu de nous, et il espère que les Canadiens, avec leur générosité ordinaire, sauront trouver encore une obole pour le pauvre missionnaire et pour le pauvre colon de la Rivière Rouge. J'engage donc Messieurs les Curés à faire dans leur église, après l'avoir annoncée le dimanche précédent, une quête....⁸

Appeals from the pulpit on Sunday were likely to reach all segments of all communities. They probably had far more effect than La Minerve's editorial eulogies -- especially on illiterate or semi-literate workers or farmers among whom one would expect to find the potential colonists of the North-West. The effectiveness of such pulpit appeals is shown in the success of public subscriptions for the relief of the Red River colony. In the autumn of 1868, in the diocese of Ottawa alone, more than \$2,025 were raised by this means. And the list of contributions given in Le Canada shows that money came not only in sizeable amounts from named contributors, but very often from the sort of "man-in-the-street" who gave 50 cents and called himself "un

⁸Laflèche, L.F., Mandements de Mgr L.F. Laflèche, vol. 1, circulaire 5, 5 août, 1869, Archives de l'Evêché de Trois-Rivières.

ami".⁹

Nor were the people of Ottawa alone in showing their awareness of Red River distress. Montrealers responded to L'Ordre's pleas that French-Canadians should show again their already-famous generosity by helping their "frères affligés" of Manitoba, who were suffering from the disasters of fire, hurricane, and grasshoppers.¹⁰ No wonder L'Ordre concluded that Ottawa was wrong to "acheter des territoires qui, comme celui de la Baie d'Hudson, sont moins propice que le Canada à la Colonisation."¹¹ The paper feared to be involved with "de lointaines colonies dont l'établissement et la possession coûteront au trésor fédéral des sacrifices que notre pays n'est pas en position de faire."¹²

Here, then, is what prompted Le Canadien's exclamation: "Nous ne savons pas trop ce qu'il y aura à gagner à faire entrer dans la confédération des gens à qui il nous faudra envoyer de quoi manger."¹³ Fifty

⁹Le Canada (Ottawa) Sept. 26, Oct. 1, 3, 27, 1868.

¹⁰L'Ordre (Montreal) 9 September, 1868, 1.

¹¹Ibid., 13 April, 1869, 1.

¹²Ibid., 23 September, 1868, 1.

¹³Le Canadien (Quebec) 7 September, 1868, 2.

years of Catholic service in the North-West, by repeatedly asking for help from Quebec, had constantly reinforced an impression that the prairies were a land of desolation, where people had to be supported from the outside, that to go there was to become a charity case. What was more natural than that Quebec's papers should describe it in 1869 as a sterile desert and infertile solitude?

Protestant Ontario, not receiving such appeals for help, heard nothing sure about the North-West until the 1850s when a few of its advanced guard began to make the trip out there. And they -- even if they saw misery in the settlement -- did not see infertility in the land. On the contrary, the experts among them saw that it was **extremely** fertile, and political motives lead them to spread this opinion widely back in Ontario. If there was misery at Red River, the local population could blame only its own indolence, according to these Ontarians. Or they might blame the "misgovernment" of the Hudson's Bay Company. Such explanations were unacceptable to the Catholic clergy. On the one hand, they could not feel racial contempt for their own flock as British-Ontario expansionists could. On the other hand, they were loath

to condemn the Company. The Church's attitude, on the contrary, was practically that "les intérêts de la colonie furent ... identiques à ceux de la fameuse compagnie."¹⁴

It has been seen that then-Bishop Taché¹⁵ was not eager to have a great flow of immigration from Canada to Manitoba. He feared it would overwhelm the present population. What he would most have preferred was a continuation of the status quo. This meant that if there was distress at Red River, he could not blame the Hudson's Bay Company regime for it, since to the preservation of that regime he was himself dedicated. In this, he was behaving as Catholic missionaries had behaved ever since their first activities in America -- by forsaking the interests even of his homeland, if necessary, to devote himself to the interests of his flock.¹⁶

But men like Hind and Dawson were agents of the Canadian government, and while Taché was interested

¹⁴Morice, A.G., "Histoire Abrégée De L'Ouest Canadien" (St. Boniface, 1914) 40.

¹⁵Taché became bishop after Provencher's death in 1853, and was made archbishop in 1871.

¹⁶The most striking examples of this sort of behaviour are probably the habit of French Jesuits in New France to refer to their lay compatriots here as "les Français" -- thus excluding themselves from that category -- and the attempts of the Jesuits to erect Christian Indian societies completely unattached to European nations -- eg. Huronia and Paraguay.

in the protection of the present Red River population, they were interested in the aggrandisement of Canada. Moreover, the first Ontarians to move to Assiniboia in the 1850s, unlike the Catholic churchmen, continued to think of themselves primarily as Canadians. They wanted to see the extension of Canadian power over this territory, and they found it convenient to condemn the Hudson's Bay Company. Distress at Red River could be used as evidence -- not of the badness of the land -- but of the need for a new political regime.

Yet English-Canadians wanted to see their province expand in this direction only because they already thought the land of value. Their desire for western expansion resulted from their acceptance of the reports of men like Hind and Dawson.

Thus English writers and speakers, influenced by such reports, began to call for annexation of Rupert's Land to Canada. They thought that, being good land, it would be an asset to Canada, and a territory likely to be settled quickly. But French-Canadians, influenced by the years of appeals from Catholic clergymen for aid to the Red River settlement, were slower to be influenced by these new reports,

slower to see the value of the territory.¹⁷

Thus in 1858 Alexander Morris quoted from Prof. Hind's report to back up his assertion that the Red River settlement "forms a nucleus round which will gather a dense population scattered over those vast prairies, covered with the rankest luxuriousness of vegetation, and holding out to settlers rich inducements to go in to possess the land." This "paradise", maintained Morris, using Prof. Hind's own word, must be opened up

¹⁷This natural difference was accentuated by the political implications that annexation of the North-West by the Union prior to 1867 might have had. The hope that an English-populated North-West would throw the political balance to the side of the English in the Union (when the move to get representation by population had failed) was a ready motivation for English propagandists to publicise the reports of the western explorers. French-Canadian leaders, fearing exactly the same consequences that the English hoped for, would, on that account, refrain from publicising those reports. Yet even this political factor couldn't have existed unless the English had had enough confidence in the fertility of the North-West to believe it could support a considerable [English] population. This confidence the English could have because -- unlike the French -- they had had no unpleasant earlier contacts. The French didn't really think the English could succeed there either.

by annexation to Canada.¹⁸

Similarly, A.J. Russell, in his 1869 pamphlet in favour of the acquisition of Rupert's Land, included the whole of S.J. Dawson's 1868 Report On The Line Of Route Between Lake Superior And The Red River Settlement.

Here, English-Canadians could read that:

These prairies are, for the most part, of rich alluvial loam.... So vast is the region, and the soil throughout the greater part of its extent so good, that it is no exaggeration to say the cultivable areas may be reckoned by hundreds of millions of acres....

A region which thus, in a state of nature, supports animal life in profusion, must be naturally rich, as regards its soil and climate. It is, in fact, fitted to sustain as dense an agricultural population as any area of equal extent on the face of the globe.¹⁹

Quebec readers could not find such observations in French -- not before Rupert's Land actually was acquired by Canada.²⁰ No wonder, then, that when Bishop Taché's Esquisse Sur Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique was published in 1869, its French-language readers

¹⁸Morris, Alexander, "Nova Britannia" (Toronto, Hunter, Rose & Co., 1884) 29.

¹⁹Dawson, S.J., "Report On The Line Of Route Between Lake Superior And The Red River Settlement" contained in Russell, A.J., "The Red River Country, Hudson's Bay And North-West Territories Considered In Relation To Canada" (Ottawa, G.E. Desbarats, 1869) 200.

²⁰Or if they were, there is no trace of them to be found today in any Quebec library or list of pamphlets printed at that time. Some Conservative newspapers, however, did refer to the English reports during the debate on annexation of Rupert's Land.

could find it discouraging to settlement in Manitoba, while those who read it in English found it encouraging. No wonder too, that by 1870, "everyone in Ontario had heard of the new frontier, with its prairie land that held neither stone nor stump to check the plough.... Already thousands of Ontario farmers had moved to the prairies of the mid-western United States; now hundreds decided to seek the prairies of Manitoba."²¹ For English-Canadians, the question of whether or not the prairies could support successful agriculture was not an issue by 1870²² -- everyone knew that they could. But in Quebec, French-Canadians had still to settle the matter to their own satisfaction.

After 1870 it was nothing new to find in English literature the assurance that "the Prairie Section of the Canadian North-West ... contains large tracts of the finest agricultural lands in the world."²³ Yet in French-Canada, it wasn't until 1880 that

²¹Morton, W.L., "Manitoba: A History" (Toronto, U. of T. Press, 1957) 156.

²²The only question was how much greater the North-West was than any other agricultural land in the world. See Charles Horetzky's "Brief Sketch of The North-Western Regions".

²³Canadian Pacific Railway, "Manitoba, The Canadian North-West" (1883?) 1.

L'Événement could say:

Tout le monde admet que les plaines du Nord-Ouest sont extrêmement fertiles et qu'elles peuvent alimenter par l'agriculture une population deux fois plus considérable que la population actuelle des Etats-Unis.²⁴

It has been seen that in 1870 such a pro-North-West paper as Le Journal De Québec had so low an opinion of the territory's potential that it made fun of the Toronto Leader's supposition that annexation of it to Canada would be followed by a current of Canadian emigration to it. It was not that Le Journal just did not think French-Canadians would go there. It did not expect any Canadians to go there. Some French-Canadian papers persisted in holding this opinion, despite the fact that English-Ontarians did begin to go to Manitoba right from 1871. Thus, when Governor Archibald returned to Nova Scotia in 1872, L'Événement attributed his resignation only to unhappiness with the hardships of Manitoba itself. "Ce lointain séjour," commented the paper, "cet exil glacé ne tente personne.... On y gèle tout debout et on y mange toute l'année du buffle enragé. Mieux vaut être simple jardinier à Nice...."²⁵ Such was the opinion of Quebec City's

²⁴L'Événement (Quebec) 8 April, 1880, 2.

²⁵L'Événement, 17 April, 1872, 2.

largest-circulation newspaper, the third-largest in the province.²⁶

It is hard to consider properly the rôle that newspapers might have had in determining attitudes toward the fertility of the North-West. As newspapers were extremely partisan, they felt obliged to conform to the party line. Thus, while the Conservatives were in power, Conservative newspapers maintained that the North-West was valuable land. Cartier's La Minerve, Langevin's Courrier Du Canada -- these papers never belittled the North-West's potential, naturally enough. Even Le Canadien, which as late as 1871 accused the government of wanting to "enrichir avec nos deniers, ces contrées abandonnées de tout le monde,"²⁷ did an about-face in 1872, as soon as Conservatives L.H. Huot and L. Turcotte took over the paper from François Eventuel. Suddenly the acquisition of the North-West became an "excellente affaire", and those who criticised it "ne connaissent absolument rien de la richesse et de l'étendue de ce beau pays."²⁸ The responsibility of office! Once the Liberals came to power at Ottawa and in turn began to

²⁶See Appendix B.

²⁷Le Canadien, 25 October, 1871, 2.

²⁸Le Canadien, 19 July, 1872. Also on the connexion between editorial opinion and party affiliation, see Appendix C.

promote the development of the North-West, Liberal papers too had to stop calling the territory a sterile desert. L'Événement simply pointed out that "l'ancien régime a légué au pays un héritage qu'on aurait bien fait de n'accepter que sous bénéfice d'inventaire,"²⁹ and then let the whole thing go at that.

But if, by 1875, Quebec's French newspapers were no longer openly condemning the lands of the North-West, this does not mean that they were very loudly praising them either. In fact, they were usually mum. If one takes a random sampling of the coverage given to Manitoba and the North-West Territories by French-Canadian papers at this time, one finds it extremely small. In June, 1876, Le Courrier Du Canada did not carry a single line that had anything to do with the prairie regions. Le Canadien carried about five inches in the form of tiny items lifted from Le Métis of St-Boniface -- enough to report that a group of French-Canadians arrived at St. Boniface and attended mass celebrated by Archbishop Taché. The Journal De Québec carried the greatest lineage in this month with 13 inches of articles that in one way or another related to

²⁹L'Événement, 17 April, 1875, 2.

Manitoba or the territories. But this too was in the form of tiny items lifted from Le Métis with nothing reported or asserted in the Journal's own right. Moreover, the column was buried among the ads of page four. The story is the same for other months, other papers: French-Canadians may not be reading condemnations of the prairies any more, but neither are they reading frequent praises.³⁰

And if the newspapers were doing little to dispel the old ideas about the sterility of the plains, very little other material was being made available to inform the French-Canadians about their true value either. In 1876, an officer of the Société de Colonisation De Manitoba was still complaining that in Quebec, people did not know yet what the province was like:

³⁰Pro-government papers found it necessary to recognize the value of the North-West now and then in connexion with some political issue, particularly the Canadian Pacific Railway. But references are so infrequent or so indirect or so conditional (see chapter four) that it is hard to see how readers could have been much influenced by them into believing that the West was good -- except as a catch-word.

Il n'est donc pas étonnant qu'on nous demande encore s'il y a beaucoup de sauvages à Winnipeg et aux alentours, s'ils sont à craindre et s'il y a du danger d'être scalpé par eux. Je puis être un peu exagéré, mais il est certain que Manitoba est peu connu au dehors....³¹

Part of the reason for the reluctance of French-Canadians to be convinced of the fertility of the plains was the old attitude created by the St. Boniface Catholic clergy -- as Bishop Taché himself soon found out. Once the acquisition of Rupert's Land by Canada had become an accomplished fact, there was no longer any question for Taché of whether he should encourage or discourage immigration to the territory. The English-Canadians, he knew, would come in any case, and now the only way to protect his flock would be to reinforce them with a similar immigration of French-Canadians. He therefore persuaded the Archbishop of Quebec and the Bishops of Montreal, Ottawa, St. Hyacinthe, Rimouski, and Trois-Rivières to join with him in issuing a circular to the Quebec clergy in October, 1871, urging them to promote settlement of Manitoba by their parishioners.³² "L'acquisition du

³¹Société de Colonisation de Manitoba, "A Nos Compatriotes Des Etats-Unis Et Du Canada, Emigrez A Manitoba" (n.p., n.d. -- 1876?) 1.

³²But see below, 195-6.

territoire du Nord-Ouest," read the circular, "la création de la province du Manitoba, offrent un avantage réel à ceux qui n'aiment pas le défrichement des terrains boisés...." It continued:

Il n'est pas nécessaire de passer la frontière canadienne pour trouver les riches prairies de l'Ouest.... Un octroi gratuit de 160 acres de bonne terre de prairie est promis par le gouvernement à tout homme de 21 ans qui voudra aller se fixer dans ces nouvelles contrées.³³

Not stopping at that, Taché sent to Quebec priests of his own diocese to act as agents to promote emigration to Manitoba. In May, 1872, he wrote to Bishop Bourget of Montreal that he was sending "M. Proulx à Montréal dans l'intérêt de la colonisation de notre province. J'ai la conviction que Votre Grandeur voudra bien permettre à cet excellent prêtre l'accomplissement de sa mission."³⁴ Men like Proulx, and Fathers Lacombe and Beaudry, toured Quebec as Taché's agents, speaking in various parishes, and praising the fertility of the prairies.

³³Taché, A.A., et al, Circulaire au clergé de toute la province ecclésiastique de Québec, en date du 23 octobre, 1871, signée par Nosseigneurs l'Archevêque de Québec et les évêques de Montréal, Ottawa, St-Hyacinthe, Trois-Rivières, St-Germain-de-Rimouski, et St-Boniface, Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal, filed under Colonisation.

³⁴Taché to Bourget, St. Boniface, 21 May, 1872, Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal.

Finally, in 1874, Taché sent his own private circular to the Quebec clergy, urging them to encourage an emigration to Manitoba from Quebec. Good land was available in Manitoba, he said, for only a nominal price, and the soil was of extreme fertility.

But Taché's efforts now did little to convince French-Canadians of the benefits of settlement in Manitoba, and his own earlier writings were thrown into the teeth of his agents. In 1874, Father Lacombe wrote to him that the Esquisse Sur Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique was being held up as proof that the bishop himself did not really believe in the value of the province he was promoting. Taché was forced to defend himself against himself. In 1874 he wrote to Lacombe, who was working for the cause in Quebec and New England:

Vous me demandez de donner quelques explications pour détruire l'effet désavantageux qu'aurait produit mon Esquisse Sur Le Nord-Ouest. L'explication est bien facile et la voici: Dites à ces braves gens de lire la brochure et je les défie de trouver quelque chose de désavantageux sur les places que nous voulons coloniser. Ce qu'il y a de désavantageux, c'est sur les plaines désertes, où personne ne songe à aller ou à envoyer les autres. Dans un pays de l'immensité de celui-ci, ce qui est très vrai sur un point est souvent très faux à cent lieues de là, comme partout du reste.³⁵

³⁵Taché to Lacombe, St. Boniface, 26 February, 1874, quoted in Benoit, Dom Paul, "Vie De Monseigneur Taché" (Montreal, Beauchemin, 1904) 198.

But Taché's explanations at this time were not very successful. As late as 1881, Le Métis was still explaining away Taché's Esquisse. The paper complained that French-Quebeckers, "au lieu de lire cet intéressant travail, ou bien ont imaginé des choses que l'auteur ne dit pas, ou bien ont méconnu ce qu'il a dit."³⁶

But the discouraging impression of the Esquisse corresponded too well with the impressions Quebeckers had been receiving of the North-West ever since Provencher went there as a missionary in 1818. They would not change their minds easily now in response to Taché's ad hoc explanations. Other ways had to be found to get around the issue of Taché's pamphlet. One way was tried in 1874 with the publication at Montreal of a pamphlet entitled Etude Sur Les Territoires Du Nord-Ouest Du Canada, by J.C. Langelier. This pamphlet was in effect a remake of Taché's earlier work; the great bulk of the pamphlet was simply cribbed from the 1869 Esquisse. It gave Taché's information -- but without his comments. Langelier took steps in his introduction

³⁶Le Métis, St. Boniface, 10 March, 1881.

to make sure that the same information would have a different effect this time. First he referred to Taché's booklet itself; it was, he said, the work on the North-West best known by French-Canadians. But, "le livre de Mgr. Taché est un ouvrage scientifique tandis que celui-ci est un livre d'information pour ceux qui désireraient émigrer au Nord-Ouest."³⁷ This was an interesting piece of side-stepping. Taché's work was a scientific one. Ah, well, no wonder no-one understood that it was really favourable to the potential of the North-West. Now Langelier could continue with impunity:

Il est bien établi que ce pays offre des avantages presque incomparables à l'immigrant; le sol est excellent et en beaucoup d'endroits, le plus fertile qu'on puisse trouver, sans compter qu'il est tout défriché et prêt à recevoir la charrue....³⁷

Yet Langelier's work was not a success. Two years after its publication, the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba admitted that the pamphlets it was sending out to information-seekers were Manitoba Et Le Nord-Ouest Canadien by Dr. Schultz's friend Thomas Spence,³⁸ and the report of the Mennonite leader Jacob

³⁷Langelier, J.C., "Etude Sur Les Territoires Du Nord-Ouest Du Canada" (Montreal, Senécal, 1874) iii.

³⁸Spence praised the territory alright, but see below, 173.

Schantz.³⁹

It was not until 1880 that the next pamphlet written for French-Canadians by a French-Canadian appeared. This was Eli Tassé's Le Nord-Ouest. Tassé was no simple colon. An educated Quebecker, he had gone to Manitoba in 1875 to join a small but dynamic group of intellectuals gathered together by Taché to organise and lead the French-Manitoba community. Deeply involved in the activities of the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba, Tassé wrote Le Nord-Ouest to attract an immigration of French-Canadians partly from Quebec, but mainly from the United States:

Ah! chers amis, vous qui êtes condamnés au
labeur ennuyeux et malsain des manufactures,
venez ici goûter la douce liberté de

³⁹Société de Colonisation de Manitoba, "A Nos Compatriotes....", l. The society got both these pamphlets free from the federal government for distribution. Spence's work had been translated into French and published by Ottawa in 1875 -- but Ottawa's concern was not to encourage French-Quebeckers to shift from their province to Manitoba. It was, rather to fill the prairies by increasing Canada's total population with an immigration from abroad. The pamphlets were translated into French in an attempt to encourage immigration from France, Belgium, Luxembourg, and Switzerland -- and were sent to the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba not to be used on Quebeckers but on French-Canadians living in the United States who might be persuaded to immigrate back to Canada. The federal government, in fact, was not particularly concerned with moving Canadians from any of the eastern provinces into the North-West. It was more concerned with Europeans, and Europeans of French language, therefore, often found out about the fertility of the Canadian plains before the French-Quebeckers did. See Appendix D.

propriétaires indépendents.... Qu'il est doux pour un père de famille de pouvoir se dire; voici mes enfants autour de moi, avec des propriétés à eux, leur assurant pour toujours, s'ils le veulent, une vie aisée et paisible.⁴⁰

The climate in Manitoba was the world's healthiest, wrote Tassé, and the soil the world's most fertile. Every grain grew abundantly, and most wonderful of all were such vegetables as potatoes, turnips, parsnips, beets, cabbage, carrots, and onions. ("Ils sont vraiment superbes. On s'étonne de leurs dimensions qui paraissent extravagantes.")⁴¹

While Tassé wrote his pamphlet to spread the word about Manitoba's fertility, Taché's agents -- both laymen and clerics -- continued to make the rounds of the Quebec and New England parishes. In June of 1880, T.A. Bernier, another member of the St. Boniface brain-trust, came east to report to the French-Canadian National Convention on the situation of the French-Canadians in Manitoba. He told the convention:

Le sol, d'une fertilité étonnante donne plus que la vie aux habitants de notre province. Et il n'y a pas un père de famille qui ne puisse établir avantageusement ses enfants autour de lui, quel qu'en soit le nombre.⁴²

⁴⁰Tassé, Elie, "Le Nord-Ouest" (Ottawa, Imprimerie du Canada, 1880) 48.

⁴¹Ibid., 21.

⁴²Bernier, T.A., notes for speech to National Assembly, 26 June, 1880, archives du Collège Ste-Marie, Montreal.

Yet, the message was not often repeated. One has only to look at a list of pamphlets published in Quebec at this period -- or to look (in order to compare between what was available in English and in French) at the pamphlet lists of the Public Archives of Canada. In 1880, 14 pamphlets on the North-West in English to Tassé's one in French. In 1881, 12 in English, none in French. Not till 1884 does another French-language pamphlet appear, Le Nord-Ouest Canadien ... par un colonisateur de 9 ans d'expérience -- apparently anonymously written by Tassé himself. This contained many passages cribbed from the 1880 pamphlet, but it was more directed toward the French-Quebeckers this time, rather than the French-Canadians in the U.S. After describing the fertility of the land and the ease with which one could establish himself on it, the author concluded:

Voyez donc d'après ce que vous venez de lire, quand même il y aurait un déficit dans la récolte ou dans la quantité de terre cassée, le colon au bout de cinq ans se trouverait avec une bonne ferme bien fournie de bestiaux, toute payée, et de plus, avec ~~une~~ somme considérable d'argent à son crédit dans la banque.⁴³

⁴³Anon., "Le Nord-Ouest Du Canada" par un colonisateur de 9 ans d'expérience (n.p., 1884?) 15.

Finally in 1887 T.A. Bernier, then become superintendent of Catholic schools in Manitoba, wrote a pamphlet on Le Manitoba: Champ D'Immigration. He summed up the North-West's potential in this way:

Le Manitoba possède donc un sol extrêmement fertile, et d'une exploitation aussi facile que variée....

L'herbe de nos prairies, abondante et nutritive, est propre à former d'excellents sujets tant pour la boucherie que pour l'industrie laitière.

Par l'ouverture du Pacifique, tous les marchés du monde sont pour ainsi dire mis à notre portée....⁴⁴

And that was the last; no more French pamphlets for French-Canadians were published till after 1890 had swept away once and for all the "little Quebec" of the West.

In fact, some of the federal government's French pamphlets to encourage European immigration did get circulated in Quebec during this period. To what extent, however, is not clear. During the 1870s, certainly, not enough. The first French-language pamphlet that was not just a translation from English was too obviously aimed at Europeans to have been sold

⁴⁴Bernier, T.A., "Le Manitoba: Champ D'Immigration" (Ottawa, 1887) 48. Though the booklet was published by the federal government to promote non-Canadian immigration, its text was chiefly aimed at Quebecers.

at all in Quebec. Le Canada Et L'Emigration Européene was written to tackle the problem that "en France, on se fait généralement une idée aussi fausse que peu avantageuse du Canada."⁴⁵ Moreover, like most of the pamphlets written for European consumption, it contained long passages on the Canadian political structure, the eastern provinces, general social and economic as well as religious conditions in the Dominion, with the section on Manitoba and the North-West Territories, hidden near the back, covering only eight and three-quarter pages as compared to 23 1/4 on the eastern provinces (11 1/4 on Quebec alone). It is hard to believe that many French-Quebeckers would have bothered to read through the great bulk of such a booklet simply to come across the few pages that would tell them the prairies were fertile. This would apply to other Government of Canada publications of a similar nature that appeared in French from time to time, notably the Guide Du Colon Français, Belge, Suisse, Etc., published with such frequency -- especially during the later 1880s and the 1890s -- as to be almost an annual review.

⁴⁵Canada, Dept. of Agriculture, "Le Canada Et L'Emigration Européene" (Ottawa, 1874) 3.

Several other federal government immigration pamphlets, however, did get to the Quebec market -- especially in cases where the author or translator (like T.A. Bernier in his Manitoba: Champ D'Immigration) used his commission from the federal government to attract to the North-West the sort of immigration he wanted to see -- that is, of French-Canadians either from Quebec or from the United States. In 1878, 1881, and 1886, government pamphlets and leaflets⁴⁶ -- sometimes even printed by Quebec printers -- were circulated among French-Canadians. In 1884, a Quebec publisher even set out on his own to publish a pamphlet derived from a federal government source originally printed in English. This new pamphlet, L'Agriculture Dans Le Nord-Ouest Du Canada: Résultats Pratiques, set out once more, this time by means of testimonials from people who had actually settled or toured in the North-West, to show that the prairies were indeed rich agricultural land. A delegate from a French agricultural society is quoted as reporting to his colleagues in France:

⁴⁶Such as "Province De Manitoba & Territoire Du Nord-Ouest" (1878), "Le Manitoba & Les Territoires Du Nord-Ouest" (1881), "Le Grand Occident Canadien" (1881), "Esquisse Générale Du Nord-Ouest Du Canada" (1886).

J'avoue, messieurs, que comme agriculture le Far West a été un spectacle merveilleux pour moi. Quelle prodigieuse fertilité et quelle immense étendue!⁴⁷

But in this pamphlet of 1884 are to be found indications that even at that time the value of the prairies was not properly recognised by French-Canadians. One is struck by the assertion:

Il est établi, hors de conteste, que le Nord-Ouest du Canada constitue la plus belle région agricole du monde. On ne peut trouver nulle part ailleurs une telle étendue de terrains aussi riches, aussi faciles à cultiver. Ce fait est attesté par tous ceux qui ont visité notre grand territoire du Nord-Ouest.⁴⁸

If the pamphleteer had now to announce that it was "établi, hors de conteste" that the North-West was fertile, one may well suspect that many French-Canadians still did not know it. The mere fact that he had to emphasise it so determinedly indicates that there remained readers to whom it had to be emphasised. He confessed himself that what his testimonials were intended to do in the pamphlet was still to demonstrate, "de la manière la plus concluante que l'agriculture dans

⁴⁷Anon., "L'Agriculture Dans Le Nord-Ouest Du Canada: Résultats Pratiques" (Quebec, Dussault, 1884) 4.

⁴⁸Ibid., 3.

le Nord-Ouest Canadien offre des avantages incontestables."⁴⁹

But the demonstration had been too long in coming, and it had been too rarely repeated. Already, in 1879, Le Métis of St. Boniface had remarked:

On est loin de 1873, et il est interdit aux Français de Manitoba de songer, comme alors à tenir la direction des affaires.... Il ne peut plus y avoir de premier ministre français à Manitoba.... L'élément français, qui formait la moitié de la population il y a six ans, n'en forme plus qu'un quart ou un cinquième.... Il est réduit présentement à ne compter que sur 5 ou 6 sièges dans une chambre de 24 membres.⁵⁰

By the time it could finally be announced that the North-West's value was "établi, hors de conteste", the franco-Manitobans had been put into so small a minority position that it was not likely they would ever recover. And this position promoted other attitudes among Quebec's French-Canadians which, even though the fertility of the prairies was finally recognised, served to keep them from settling just the same.⁵¹

What would have been necessary to make the French-Canadians sure enough, early enough, of the

⁴⁹Ibid., 5.

⁵⁰Le Métis, 22 November, 1879. Le Métis was even underestimating the situation. The 1880-81 census showed the French formed less than a 6th and closer to a 7th of the Manitoba population.

⁵¹See chapter 3.

prairies' fertility? Not the sort of inattention the matter got from the Quebec press. Not the paucity of pamphlets which were addressed to French-Canadians. Certainly not the few travel books of the 1880s that dealt with the West, such as J.E.T. Barrette's 1881 Récit D' Aventures Dans Le Nord-Ouest,⁵² which allowed that the "avantages matériels de ce nouveau grenier du monde" were "dignes d'être chantés dans toutes les langues par quelque nouvel auteur de Mille & une Nuits."⁵³

What would have been necessary was the sort of column that Le Métis printed often, but which Quebec newspapers too seldom reprinted. This sort of column, appearing frequently in the Quebec press, would surely have done more to create the impression that the North-West was fertile than the periodic editorials of partisan editors formally acknowledging the party line and paying an ignorant lipservice to a fertility with which they were themselves unfamiliar:

⁵²or Dionne, N.E., "Etats-Unis, Manitoba, Et Nord-Ouest: Notes De Voyage" (Quebec, Brousseau, 1882), or Beaugrand, Honoré, "De Montréal A Victoria Par Le Transcontinental Canadien" (Montreal, 1888). These, however, were not even pamphlets, but serious books for the kind of reading that might be done by an educated city professional, but not likely by a poor farmer or worker -- the kind of man who would go to Manitoba as a real settler on the land.

⁵³Barrette, J.E.T., "Récit D'Aventures Dans Le Nord-Ouest" (Montreal, Daniel, 1881) 13.

Les grains ont une magnifique apparence dans toute la province.

Tout donne à espérer que la récolte de foin sera abondante.

On prétend que si les beaux temps continuent les fraises seront en abondance....

Un certain nombre de Canadiens arrivés, la semaine dernière, ont obtenu de Mgr Taché une certaine quantité de terrain prêt à recevoir la semence, et ont semé de l'orge et des patates.

Une quarantaine de Canadiens-français nouvellement débarqués à Dufferin ont pris des homesteads dans un township voisin de la frontière. On dit que les nouveaux venus sont enchantés du pays.

On nous prie d'informer les Canadiens qui arrivent qu'il y a de magnifiques terres à vendre dans toutes les paroisses à des prix variant de \$100 à \$1000 avec termes. Il y en a aussi à affermer.⁵⁴

If the Quebec press did not frequently carry such columns, its editors, like its readers, were still too much influenced by the old, pre-1870 impressions of the North-West, too slow to recognise themselves its agricultural significance.

In fact, the situation was something of a vicious circle. Colonisation pamphlets, promoting the North-West and promising success to those who would go to settle there, were generally published and circulated

⁵⁴Le Métis, 8 June, 1876, 3.

by colonising companies that had got grants of prairie land from the federal government on condition that they bring out settlers to colonise a portion. English-Canadians, because they first appreciated the potential of the North-West, were the first to apply for such grants. Thus, Cartier had hardly returned from England in 1869 with the arrangements completed for Canada's acquisition of Rupert's Land, when a John Graham of Toronto sent him a memo from several other Toronto gentlemen "interested in having the North West Territory opened up with the least possible delay."⁵⁵ By 1877, the Surveyor General of Canada was reporting to the Minister of the Interior that of 12 grants of land made to colonisation companies to that time, only one was to a French-Canadian group, the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba.⁵⁶ And in 1882, of 104 grants made under a new government plan to encourage this sort of operation, not a single one was made to a French-Canadian individual or society.

⁵⁵Letter from James Graham to George-Etienne Cartier, Toronto, 10 May, 1869, The Cartier Papers, personal correspondence, Public Archives of Canada.

⁵⁶Public Archives of Canada, Department of the Interior records, files 13765 and 44447.

This circumstance only served to accentuate the difference in the enthusiasm of English- and French-Canadians about the value of the North-West. Since the recipients of grants were obliged to settle them with colonists, they had to undertake a programme of propaganda, to advertise the value of the land, by pamphlets, advertisements, and so on. As the vast majority of these colonisers were English, so English-Canadians received a far greater amount of pro-North-West propaganda than did French-Canadians. Thus, if their initial slowness in recognising the fertility of the plains kept French-Canadians from applying for these grants and embarking on colonising enterprises, this very paucity of French-Canadian grantees, with the resulting lack of propaganda, prolonged that non-recognition.

Indeed, whatever reasons the French-Canadians had for not going to the North-West, their reluctance to go dissuaded profit-seeking colonisers from trying to get them there. If it was not worth investing in advertisements to attract French-Canadians, then so much the slower, for lack of such advertisements, were the French-Canadians to recognise the benefits of going.

Thus, the C.P.R. tried advertising for a while in the Quebec press,⁵⁷ but soon gave it up. And in 1883 the railroad published its pamphlet, Manitoba, The Canadian North-West, in English, but published nothing in French during this period.⁵⁸

So one may resume the factors which tended to give French-Canadians a lesser opinion of the West's fertility than that held by English-Canadians. They were an early attitude that the West meant hardship and the need for charity, prompted by 50 years of appeals for help from the St. Boniface clergy; the absence of repeated reports in the French-Canadian press about what sort of success immigrants actually were having; a scarcity of pamphlets and other propaganda material praising the fertility of the plains for French-Canadian readers; and the fact that the longer ignorance of the prairies' worth existed in Quebec, the longer as a consequence of it Quebeckers refrained from participating in those activities which would have tended

⁵⁷For instance, for about 3 months in 1884 in L'Etendard (16 April to 19 July). This was the usual time of year of peak movement into the prairies. But the ad was never repeated -- nor even in other papers.

⁵⁸Albert Lacombe finally wrote a pamphlet in French for the C.P.R. in the 1890s.

to spread information about the prairies.

The result was that late in 1884 Le Courrier Du Canada was still wishing in print that the opposition newspapers would finally wake up to the value of the West,⁵⁹ and in the federal election of 1887 Conservative campaign pamphleteers still found it necessary to justify the money that the government had invested in the development of the West by boasting of that country's ... promise.

⁵⁹Le Courrier Du Canada (Quebec) 8 September, 1884.

CHAPTER 3

THE DANGERS OF BEING A MINORITY

"Le meurtre du 16 novembre," said a French-Canadian senator, referring to the execution of Louis Riel, "fut le dernier acte du drame tragique qui se joue depuis vingt ans au détriment des Catholiques et des Canadiens français."¹

A pamphleteer, condemning the execution, wrote of Riel: "Son véritable crime était de représenter l'élément français dans le Nord-Ouest, en face d'un gouvernement qui a décrété que le Nord-Ouest serait une terre anglaise."²

The Riel affair left French-Canadians with a conscious conviction that English-Canadian policy was to exclude ~~them~~ from the North-West. They had felt a vague but increasing uneasiness on that score ever since the territory was acquired. Senator Bellerose's drama began with the discussion of Rupert's Land in the Confederation Debates. The plot was discouraging to French-Canadian settlement in the territory.

It was interesting that Rupert's Land was part of the whole Confederation question, for Confederation itself

¹Senator Bellerose, "L'Orangisme Et Le Catholicisme" (Montreal, l'Etendard, 1886) 10.

²"L'Histoire D'Un Crime" (n.p., n.d.) 2.

seemed a menace to many French-Canadians. Of all the political regimes Canada had endured since the Conquest, claimed Papineau, Confederation was "le plus coupable de tous".³ Its threat to overwhelm French-Canadians in an Anglo-Saxon sea was only sharpened by the acquisition of the North-West. English Upper Canada had arranged the union with the maritime provinces to gain ascendancy over French Lower Canada. "Et pour assurer davantage sa prépondérance, il fait consentir M. Cartier à l'achat du Nord-Ouest."⁴

Advocates of Confederation did not deny that French-Canadians would constitute a minority in the new federal organisation. They stressed the safeguards that the creation of the province of Quebec would give their nationality. In the new province French-Canadians would be in the majority; they would be secure.⁵

But this defence of Confederation restricted it to one province, as far as French-Canadian interest was concerned. The rest of the British North American union was left to the English.⁶ Nor was there any reason to

³Papineau, ³Papineau, Louis-Joseph, "Discours A L'Occasion Du 23^e Anniversaire De La Fondation De L'Institut Canadien" (Montreal, le Pays, 1868) 5.

⁴L'Ordre (Montreal) 18 August, 1865, 1.

⁵See below, 182-184.

⁶See Chapter 4.

expect, before the Red River troubles of 1869-70, that a Manitoba Act would be passed to guarantee French-Canadian rights in the North-West.

The Manitoba Act did seem to indicate that the prairie part of the Dominion would not be closed to French-Canadians. They would have the same rights and protections there as in Quebec. Yet even as the Act was being written, events were undoing the effect it might have had. As the Red River troubles were reported in Quebec, French-Canadians found reason to believe that they could expect little enough protection even in a province whose constitution was written by Cartier himself and calquée sur celle de Québec.

This feeling was based on an identification of French-Quebeckers with the Manitoba Métis. Journalists often identified the Métis' cause openly and specifically with that of French-Canada.⁷ More often, a feeling of solidarity expressed itself in reluctance to condemn the Métis as "rebels", in a tendency to understand or sympathise with their cause.⁸ Only gradually did this sympathy turn to open espousal.

French-Canadians were largely driven to identify themselves with the Métis by the attitude of many English-

⁷See, for example, Le Canadien (Quebec), 3 Jan., 1870, and especially, 11 Feb., 1870. Also, Le Pays (Montreal) 18 Nov., 1869, L'Ordre (Montreal) 26 Nov., 1869, or Le Courrier De St-Hyacinthe, 11 Feb., 1870.

⁸See, for example, Le Nouveau Monde (Montreal) 16 Nov., 1869, or Le Journal Des Trois-Rivières, 26 Nov., 1869.

Canadians. William McDougall took the lead in describing the Red River resistance as a French Catholic movement. The troubles at Red River, he proclaimed, were in fact a "treason" by "foreign Jesuits, foreign adventurers, Canadian outlaws, Hudson Bay Company employees, and their ignorant dupes -- the poor half-breeds...."⁹ Loudly and publicly, McDougall referred to "the armed insurrection of Ritchot & Co.", to "Bishop Taché and his co-conspirators"¹⁰ and to "the Chevalier of St. Gregory (Cartier, who) took charge of the measure (the Manitoba Act) on behalf of the priesthood" in order to establish Manitoba as a "French Catholic Province".¹¹

McDougall charged that "an attempt is being made with the aid of Lower Canada Lawyers, and a subservient Governor, to supercede the English judicial system, by one more agreeable to Bishop Taché and his foreign priests."¹² And he was ready to explain just who these foreign priests were:

Your Jesuit allies with their treacherous doctrines, their blood-stained hands, and their indiscriminate hostility to human progress in whatever form ... seem to have alighted on the northern shores of the great lakes of America,

⁹McDougall, William, "The Red River Rebellion" (Toronto, Hunter, Rose & Co., 1870) 7.

¹⁰Ibid., 40.

¹¹Ibid., 46.

¹²Ibid., 46.

and to have spread themselves, under the name of Oblats, over the vast regions of the North-West. They will fight hard to retain possession.¹³

These charges were published in pamphlet form, and were spread by McDougall personally in an 1870 speaking tour of Ontario. They were not ignored by the Quebec press. French-Canadian readers received regular reports on McDougall's tour and his speeches.¹⁴ Their effect on Quebec feeling was manifested in the editorial reactions of the newspapers. Le Journal Des Trois-Rivières hit back:

Si M. McDougall croit qu'en faisant circuler ces mensonges il détournera l'attention publique de sa propre impopularité, il se trompe étrangement. ... Il nous paraît ... presque certain que la cause du soulèvement des colons du Nord-Ouest doit-être attribuée à l'impopularité personnelle de M. McDougall et à la conduite mauvaise et imprudente de ses émissaires.¹⁵

French-Canadian indignation was further aroused by the aftermath of the so-called insurrection of Red River Métis. The military expedition was not popular in Quebec. By the autumn of 1870 papers were already complaining about the "tyrannie et les procédés illégaux des volontaires canadiens et d'Ontario".¹⁶

¹³Ibid., 50.

¹⁴See, for example, the Journal de Québec in late January and early February of 1870. By February 15, the Journal was accusing the entire Ontario Grit press of this kind of fanaticism.

¹⁵Le Journal Des Trois-Rivières, 11 Jan., 1870.

¹⁶Le Canadien (Québec) 3 Oct., 1870.

In the first week of October the murder of Elzéar Goulet became known. Press commentary showed at once the effect that Ontario opinion was having on that of Quebec. Le Canadien pointed out bitterly that Ontarians never stopped clamouring for vengeance for Scott, yet silently ignored the murder of Goulet. "La voilà," exclaimed the paper, "la conduite de ces fanatiques qui ont une soif si ardente de la justice, de la liberté du sujet et du respect aux lois."¹⁷

A month later Le Courrier De St-Hyacinthe printed a letter from Manitoba that had enough appeal to French-Quebec sensitivity to get it re-printed in at least one other large-circulation paper. It complained: "Les fanatiques de Toronto sont tombés sur le pays comme le fléau des sauterelles qui l'affligent depuis si longtemps."¹⁸

The effect of all these reports was to create an impression that to be Catholic and French in Manitoba was to be subject to persecution and denials of justice. "L'expédition militaire à la Rivière-Rouge," concluded Le Canadien, "allait visiblement pour y exercer un acte de vengeance contre la population française et catholique."¹⁹

¹⁷Le Canadien, 5 Oct., 1870, 2.

¹⁸As re-printed in Le Canadien, 4 Nov., 1870.

¹⁹Le Canadien, 15 Mar., 1871.

Even a good Conservative like Benjamin Sulte admitted that the French-Manitobans were badly treated. Wolseley himself, according to Sulte, was not free of blame in encouraging misconduct among the Ontario volunteers, "la plupart déjà trop disposés à exercer des représailles contre les catholiques et les français de Manitoba".²⁰

Reports of assaults and attempted assaults on the French and Catholics of Manitoba continued to appear throughout 1871. Le Journal De Québec even printed an unconfirmed story that Riel himself had been murdered. The extravagant terms of the report show how ready French-Canadians were to accept accounts -- however far-fetched -- of anti-French persecutions in the North-West. According to Le Journal's account, Riel had been poisoned while reading an anonymously-written letter he had received in the mail. It was suggested that Riel had taken in some sort of poison -- apparently through the pores in his fingers -- while reading the letter.²¹

According to Le Métis, English-Ontario aggressiveness led to the stealing of Metis' lands as well as to physical violence. During the summer of 1871, as the numbers of immigrants from Ontario to Manitoba swelled,

²⁰Sulte, Benjamin, "L'Expédition Militaire De Manitoba, 1870" (Montreal, Senécal, 1871) 43.

²¹Le Journal De Québec, 14 Jan., 1871.

disputes over land claims were regularly reported. Le Métis asked about the immigrants:

Sont-ils partis d'Ontario avec l'intention
arrêtée de dépouiller de leurs terres les gens
du pays, ou bien ont-ils été conseillés d'agir
ainsi en arrivant au milieu de nous?²²

By early 1872 French-Quebeckers were reading an interesting pamphlet summary of Manitoba's first year as a province. It reinforced all fears that the French and Catholic elements were unsafe in the North-West. English-Canadian behaviour in Manitoba ever since the troubles of 1869-70 was taken as evidence that French Catholics could only expect ill treatment in the North-West:

Les hommes qui se disent les champions de la loyauté, dont on fait semblant d'admirer le courage, l'esprit d'ordre et de modération; ces hommes se réunissent pendant quatre jours et deux cadavres souillent le sol où ils se sont donnés rendez-vous. Les troupes arrivents à Fort Garry: c'est l'Expédition de paix et de civilisation.... Des orgies comme Winnipeg n'en avait jamais vues inaugurèrent l'ère nouvelle, et quelques jours après, encore un cadavre! celui d'un homme lâchement assassine en plein jour! Quelle est cette victime? Ce n'est pas la peine dis (sic) les journaux d'Ontario: c'est un métis français; c'est un mécréant de moins, ajoute le Daily Telegraph....

²²It may be claimed, as many English-Canadians certainly did claim, that the land in dispute was not really stolen, since the Métis themselves had not properly claimed it according to regulations. But the legal niceties of the matter are not really relevant here. What is relevant -- both here and in other matters, such as the New Brunswick school question -- is what opinions were held in Quebec. French-Canadian popular feeling might often hold as wrong and unfair what was, nevertheless, quite proper in law and constitutional interpretation. It is clear that no matter how right the Ontarians were in claiming the Métis had no real title to the land, the French press still felt the Ontarians wanted to "dépouiller de leurs terres les gens du pays". -- Le Métis (St. Boniface) 13 July, 1871.

Quelques semaines plus tard ... un métis anglais ... un vieillard est tué, mais comme il n'est point d'Ontario, à peine signale-t-on le fait. S'il avait eu un nom français, on ne craindrait pas de s'en réjouir, étant un métis anglais on se contente de garder le silence.²³

The anti-French behaviour of individual Ontarians seemed, moreover, to receive government support. Ontario offered 5,000 dollars for the "murderers" of Scott, and Ottawa showed no signs of granting the amnesty it had promised to Taché. Though Riel and Lépine rallied the Manitoba Métis in 1871 to resist an expected Fenian invasion, their loyalty was still doubted and denied in the English press. Five years were to go by before the amnesty question could be settled, and before those years were over, French-Canadians saw Riel chased from the House of Commons, and even from the country, by the would-be avengers of Scott.

Meanwhile, other matters, not having to do directly with the North-West, built up a French-Canadian feeling that Confederation offered no safety outside of Quebec. Once it was seen that French Catholics were subjected to bad treatment in Manitoba, Quebeckers began to look at other provinces too, to see how they treated their French and Catholic citizens. As early as January, 1871, Le Canadien complained of injustice in Ontario:

²³"Ontario & Manitoba: La Vérité" -- par un Canadien qui a visité Manitoba pour y découvrir la vérité. (n.p., n.d.) 5.

Les Catholiques dans le Haut-Canada sont au nombre d'un demi million d'âmes. Dans le sénat il n'y a pas un seul membre catholique nommé par le gouvernement.

Les journaux d'Ontario qui crient si fort au fanatisme, doivent admettre que le Bas-Canada sait rendre plus de justice à la population protestante et anglaise.²⁴

This sensitivity to the dangers of being a Catholic or French minority outside of Quebec was particularly affected and reinforced by the New Brunswick schools issue. This question, like that of the amnesty, dragged on for years after 1871. True, papers editorialised on it only when party feelings moved them to. Enemies of the Conservatives used it to attack that party till 1873, and Conservatives used it to attack the Liberals till 1878. But both parties' newspapers hated the law.

Whatever may be the correct legal opinion of the New Brunswick school act, it is important here that as widely-circulating a paper as Le Monde referred to it as "cette mesure inconstitutionnelle".²⁵ Belief in the law's unconstitutionality led to a conviction that English-Canadians and the federal government were treating French Catholics in bad faith. When Ottawa failed to disallow the provincial act, Le Monde complained it had abandoned the cause and the rights of French-Canadians:

²⁴Le Canadien, 4 Jan., 1871.

²⁵Le Monde (Montréal) 3 Jan., 1872, 4.

Le ministère a honteusement abandonné la cause catholique et l'un des principes essentiels du programme conservateur.... Pour contenter le sentiment catholique et canadien outragé, il a cru qu'il suffirait de nous renvoyer généreusement à la miséricorde des fanatiques du Nouveau Brunswick.²⁶

L.O. David, the noted French-Canadian journalist, active throughout this period, recalled later how French-Canadians interpreted the affair:

Etait-il vrai, oui ou non, qu'avant la Confédération les catholiques de cette province eussent des écoles séparées qui, en vertu de la loi existante, recevaient leur part du produit de la taxe scolaire? Certainement oui. Alors une loi, décrétant qu'à l'avenir les écoles communes seules seraient subventionnées, ne constituait-elle pas une violation de l'article 93 de la constitution?...²⁷

The conclusions which, David says, French-Canadians drew, point up the increasing fear among them that outside the province of Quebec their rights could not be counted on in Canada. Commenting on the refusal of Ottawa to disallow the New Brunswick act, David writes:

Ce résultat donne une idée assez exacte de ce qui arrivera toutes les fois qu'une question religieuse et nationale sera soulevée ... et on verra souvent des hommes de bonne foi affirmer que dans l'intérêt de la paix et pour le bien de la minorité française et catholique, il vaut mieux céder que de provoquer des conflits funestes.²⁸

²⁶Ibid., 3 June, 1872, 1.

²⁷David, L.-O., "Histoire Du Canada Depuis La Confédération, 1867-1887" (Montreal, Beauchemin, 1909) 48. It is to be noted that although a later edition is used here, the book was written within the 1870-90 period. David was one of the founders of the Bien Public, and of the Union Nationale before that. He became editor of La Tribune after the 1878 elections. In this book, therefore, he was writing about events he had been personally acquainted with as a journalist.

²⁸Ibid. 51.

By 1875 the New Brunswick and Manitoba questions were firmly associated in French-Canadian thoughts. Le Canadien complained that the position of New Brunswick Catholics was "plus grave qu'elle ne l'a jamais été", and went on to comment:

L'on serait tenté de croire qu'il y a une immense conspiration contre la race française dans le dominion. Foulés aux pieds à Manitoba, écrasés au Nouveau-Brunswick, nous sommes menacés d'anéantissement.²⁹

Soon after, the paper described the "conspiracy" at greater length:

Le catholicisme subit en ce moment, dans la puissance du Canada, le joug d'une lourde tyrannie.

A Manitoba, les chefs métis sont condamnés à mort, privés de leurs droits, enfermés dans les prisons, chassés du sol britannique, parce qu'ils ont commis le crime d'avoir été baptisés au sein de l'église catholique....

La question des écoles a découvert à Nouveau-Brunswick la même intolérance, le même mauvais vouloir qui se manifestent dans l'affaire de Manitoba.³⁰

It was the amnesty question, more than anything else, that had so long kept Manitoba in the public eye of

²⁹Le Canadien, 3 Feb., 1875.

³⁰Le Canadien, 17 Feb., 1875. After commenting on the insecurity of French-Canadians in other provinces, the paper showed a strong sense of security in the majority position of French-Canadians in Quebec. It invited "nos concitoyens de la puissance qui n'appartiennent pas à la religion catholique à réfléchir sur la tolérance et la libéralité avec lesquelles la province de Québec agit à l'égard de la minorité protestante qui habite le Bas-Canada."

French-Quebec. In 1874 the Mackenzie government appointed a committee to investigate the matter. By then, French-Quebec opinion was so strong and so unanimous that A.-A. Dorion had to warn Mackenzie of its possible dangers:

I think that as soon as the report of the committee on the N West troubles is printed, it ought to be taken into consideration and a copy of it transmitted to the Colonial Office with a view to obtain some action on the part of the Imperial Govt in the sense of a pardon or amnesty for those concerned in those troubles. The sympathy for Riel and his companions is getting stronger and stronger in Lower Canada and it will soon be a difficulty in the way of any Government. It is I know difficult question to deal with, but I hope you will find some means of disposing of it finally, otherwise it will constantly revive whether by the reelection of Riel or by the several trials to take place -- and which I suppose will have no other result than to inflame public mind.³¹

The public mind had other things than trials to inflame it that year. Archbishop Taché, not content to depend on the committee's report, presented his own account of the problem in a special booklet, "L'Amnistie", published in Montreal. He argued that an amnesty had been clearly promised by the federal government. The conduct of the Manitoba government, from the time of its establishment, was entirely based on the understanding that an amnesty was to be granted. To show the need for an amnesty, Taché resumed the grievances which French-Manitobans had had since 1870:

³¹Dorion, A.-A., letter to Alexander Mackenzie, Montreal, 10 June, 1874. Public Archives of Canada, Mackenzie Papers, microfilm, M-198, 529-530.

Des métis français étaient de temps en temps brutalement assaillis, tout comme l'un d'entre eux avait été lâchement assassiné quelques jours après l'arrivée du lieutenant-gouverneur. Les chefs métis de l'ex-gouvernement provisoire, plus que tous les autres, couraient des dangers de la part de ceux qui ne prenaient pas même la peine de dissimuler leur haine et leur vengeance.³²

The committee's report was even more explosive material than the archbishop's pamphlet. Circulated in French in the province of Quebec, reviewed, summed up and editorialised on by all the press, the report reheated old passions, and reminded French-Canadians quite bluntly of the treatment they might expect if they too went to Manitoba.

Quoted in the report was an 1870 letter from then-Bishop Taché to Joseph Howe. It gave this account of English-Canadian motives in Manitoba:

On ne saurait s'y méprendre; il est évident que la prétendue loyauté de ceux qui parlent le plus fort est due entièrement à la déception qu'ils ont éprouvée en ne réussissant pas, aussi rapidement qu'ils le désiraient à s'emparer de tout le pouvoir dans le Nord-Ouest, afin de créer, comme ils le disent ouvertement "un autre Ontario par ses croyances et sa politique". Pour atteindre ce résultat, ils détruisent ou éloignent de leur terre natale les "serfs", les noirs protégés de l'évêque Taché, les pauvres canadiens-français du Nord-Ouest.³³

Another piece of evidence presented in the committee report was a letter that Lieutenant-Governor Archibald had written to Sir John A. Macdonald in the autumn of 1871.

³²Taché, A.-A., "L'Amnistie" (Montréal, le Nouveau Monde, 1874) 59.

³³In Canada, Parliament, "Rapport Du Comité Spécial Sur Les Causes Des Troubles Du Territoire Du Nord-Ouest En 1869-70" (Ottawa, Taylor, 1874) 28-29.

"Beaucoup d'entre eux [les Métis]," Archibald had written, "ont été tellement battus et ont subi tellement d'outrages qu'ils croient vivre dans un état d'esclavage."³⁴

The testimony Archibald gave in person at the committee hearings enlarged on the sufferings of the French-Manitobans. From the beginning, he claimed, many of the volunteers who came to Manitoba in 1870 -- and again, of those who came at the time of the 1871 Fenian scare -- came primarily to avenge the death of Scott. There developed among them "une haine contre la race française toute entière". Moreover, according to Archibald's testimony, "quelques-uns des immigrants d'Ontario partageaient les sentiments des volontaires." This contention Archibald supported by the story of how a group of Ontario settlers stole Métis property on the rivière aux Ilots de Bois, driving off the Métis owners, and re-naming the river the Boyne. In this, said Archibald, the Métis saw not only a determination to take away all their property, but also an insult to their religion. "Ils semblèrent croire que leurs propriétés, leur race et leur foi allaient être foulées aux pieds...."³⁵ And in case anyone felt that this sort of thing was a problem of the past -- an unpleasantness that had disappeared since the bad days of 1869-71 -- Archibald put his most striking

³⁴Ibid., 156.

³⁵Ibid., 140.

fears in the present tense:

Malheureusement, un dangereux esprit de bigoterie domine une section de notre population ... qui parlent réellement comme si les Métis français devaient être balayés de la face du monde.³⁶

What French-Canadian would want to settle in the midst of such a population -- especially reading Archibald's prediction for Manitoba's future:

L'élément anglais est inévitablement destiné à prévaloir dans Manitoba. L'immigration remplira le pays d'une population d'origine anglaise....³⁷

Hardly had the committee report appeared when pamphlet reaction began to urge the sending Au Piloni of the Conservative government leaders for their treason to French Canada -- treason "démontrée par les témoignages recueillis devant le comité du Nord-Ouest".³⁸ The pamphlet, pointing out that Manitoba had for several years been "la grosse question" preoccupying Quebeckers,³⁹ emphasised again the sufferings of the French-Manitobans:

Les témoignages recueillis devant le comité du Nord-Ouest montrent clairement que, du commencement à la fin, les Métis français ont été indignement trompés.... On les a dupés et joués sans merci ni trêve.⁴⁰

³⁶Ibid., 157.

³⁷Ibid., 142.

³⁸L'Evénement, "Au Piloni" (Québec, L'Evénement, 1874) title page.

³⁹Ibid., 3.

⁴⁰Ibid., 9.

When the government presented its version of an amnesty that included a five-year exile for Riel and Lepine, feelings ran higher than ever:

Qu'il me suffise de dire [wrote a parliamentary correspondent] que si c'est là le plan définitivement arrêté entre les grits et les représentants de la province de Québec, ces derniers ont accepté lâchement un compromis déshonorant et forfait à l'honneur.⁴¹

The partial amnesty of 1875 was far from satisfying all French-Canadian opinion. Archbishop Taché went into print with another pamphlet, insisting that a complete and general amnesty had been promised in 1870.⁴² But while the 1875 compromise did not settle the matter to everyone's satisfaction, it did settle it once and for all. Tache probably expressed a general French-Canadian resignation when he wrote to L.R.Masson:

Aujourd'hui notre position est changée à Manitoba, du moins à l'article de la violence dont nos pauvres gens étaient les victimes journalières, avant le simulacre d'Amnistie qui a été accordée.... Cette fausse amnistie n'est certainement pas ce que nous devons désirer mais il n'en est pas moins vrai qu'en pratique elle est mieux que rien.⁴³

⁴¹Echo de Lévis, "Correspondances Parlementaires: Séssion Fédérale De 1875" (Lévis, l'Echo, 1875?) 9. While the author of Au Pilon blamed the Conservatives for not granting an amnesty, the Echo's correspondent blamed the Liberals for the same thing. Whichever party they blamed, both men were agreed in their dislike of the situation.

⁴²Taché, A.A., "Encore L'Amnistie" (St. Boniface, Le Métis, 1875).

⁴³Taché, A.A., letter to L.R.Masson, St. Boniface, 20 Oct., 1875. In Taché, A.A., Correspondance, 1870-1881. Collection Gagnon, Montreal Municipal Library.

Meanwhile, other threats had appeared. The guarantees contained in the Manitoba Act were already being attacked by **English-Manitoban** propagandists:

In 1874 the Free Press began an attack on the use of French as an official language in the province. It was pointed out that the provincial government was just a tool of the French element in the population so long as the two languages were on the same footing, and that great reductions in expenditure could be made if only English were used officially.⁴⁴

By 1877, both the French language and the separate schools were under strong and steady attack. Archbishop Taché found it necessary to go into print again, this time with a defence of the separate school system.⁴⁵

It was in 1879, with the Royal-Norquay political crisis,⁴⁶ that Quebec opinion became widely conscious of the danger to which French institutions were exposed in the North-West. The crisis showed clearly that the guarantees of the Manitoba Act were themselves vulnerable. Le Nouveau Monde was one of the first Quebec papers to sound the alarm. By the beginning of June it had already pointed out that the English majority in Manitoba had dark plans for the French minority. "Cette majorité ne vise ni

⁴⁴MacFarlane, R.O., "Manitoba Politics And Parties After Confederation", in the 1940 Report of the Canadian Historical Association, 48. The expense argument was a sham. See Hector Langevin's speech in the 1890 Commons debate on the abolition of French in the North-West Territories.

⁴⁵Taché, A.-A., "Denominational Or Free Christian Schools In Manitoba" (Winnipeg, Standard Printing, 1877).

⁴⁶For a brief account of the crisis, see W.L.Morton, op. cit., 188 et. seq. Also see A.-G. Morice, "Histoire Abrégée...."

plus ni moins qu'à abolir l'usage officiel de la langue française...."⁴⁷

In the first week of June, Le Canadien was talking of the "persécution de notre race au Manitoba", and charging that the "but de la majorité est de tyranniser la minorité et de l'éloigner des charges publiques."⁴⁸ Other papers soon joined in. Here was a new demonstration of the danger of being French-Canadian in Manitoba. L'Événement called Norquay's policies a "déclaration de guerre"⁴⁹ against the French-Manitobans, while the Courrier Du Canada warned that: "il s'agit de l'avenir de notre race dans ce vaste territoire," and called on every French-Canadian to be aware that "sa nationalité et sa langue sont proscrites de la chambre d'assemblée d'une province."⁵⁰

As the Manitoba situation remained critical, Le Métis provided Quebec newspapers with a new provocative article. It purported to be an account of a meeting between Norquay and the English members of the Manitoba assembly. In this report, Norquay was said to have proposed to the meeting new measures to weaken the position of the French-

⁴⁷As reprinted in Le Canadien, 2 June, 1879, 2.

⁴⁸Le Canadien, 6 June, 1879, 2.

⁴⁹L'Événement (Quebec) 11 June, 1879, 2.

⁵⁰Le Courrier Du Canada, 9 June, 1879, 2.

Manitobans. "Gouvernons le pays sans eux, malgré eux, et contre eux, s'écria-t-il en finissant cette harangue animée du fiel le plus empoisonné contre le parti français...."⁵¹

Le Courrier Du Canada warned of the appeal such a harangue would have to English-Manitobans:

Il a fait appel au fanatisme, et le fanatisme lui a répondu. Tous les francophobes ont trouvé ce volte face admirable au point de vue de leurs sentiments fanatiques....

Les autres, non dominés par la francophobie, qui ont appuyé le cabinet dans son odieuse attaque contre les droits de la population française l'ont suivi et appuyé, par lâcheté.⁵²

The paper was obliged to admit that "nous avons fait des pertes probablement irréparables."⁵²

In the following year, T.A. Bernier, representing the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba at the Convention Nationale, was forced to make a depressing confession:

Cette région, autrefois toute française, et que la fière race des Métis nous avait conservée, est maintenant passée sous une autre domination, laquelle, à l'exemple de ceux qui voulurent autrefois nous anéantir sur les bords du St-Laurent, ne nous accorde pas toujours nos justes droits. A Ottawa comme à Winnipeg, les intérêts français sont souvent méconnus. Nos réclamations sont pour la plupart étouffées dans quelque bureau.⁵³

⁵¹Le Canadien, 16 June, 1879. The report is perhaps another example of the readiness of French-Canadians to accept extravagant accounts of persecutions, like the story of Riel's poisoned letter.

⁵²Le Courrier Du Canada, 17 July, 1879, 2.

⁵³Bernier, T.A., Projet de Rapport de la 6^e Commission de la Convention Nationale sur la Situation des Canadiens au Manitoba. Archives du Collège Ste-Marie, Montréal.

This sense of exclusion from the North-West showed up strongly at the time of the North-West Rebellion. As in 1870, the struggle of a primitive against a civilised culture⁵⁴ was seen as a fight of French Catholics against English protestants. And as in 1870, too, the French-Canadians identified themselves with the Métis. As early as March, 1885, the surgeon of Montreal's 65th Battalion wrote to Militia Minister Adolphe Caron to ask for a reversal of the order sending the battalion to the front:

Vous n'ignorez pas, sans doute que plusieurs de nos principaux officiers sont les amis intimes et les anciens compagnons de collège de Louis Riel et que tous nos hommes considèrent les métis comme leurs compatriotes et ne sont pas éloignés de croire que les réclamations des métis sont faites au point de vue national et sont aussi justes que l'étaient celles de nos ancêtres de 1837....

Il est bien entendu que le 65^{me} Battalion (sic) fera son devoir s'il est appelé à marcher, mais, si vous me permettez de vous dire mon sentiment, je crois qu'il serait plus politique au point de vue de l'opinion publique, d'envoyer les autres Bataillons (sic) de l'avant et de garder le 65 comme réserve ou arrière garde....⁵⁵

An anonymous soldier's mother wrote to Caron in an angrier mood:

Ce que nous voulons c'est la justice,
donnez aux Métis ce qu'ils vous demandent....

⁵⁴As in G.F.G. Stanley, "The Birth Of Western Canada".

⁵⁵Lachapelle, E.V., letter to Adolphe Caron, Montreal, 28 March, 1885. Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 27, I, D3, Vol.192.

Vos amis conservateurs mêmes vous blâment.
 Il en est encore temps, réparez le mal que
 vous avez fait, appelez le 65^{me} et le 9^{me}
 bataillons qui seront plus dans leur rôle à jour
 des mottes de neige qu'à les exposer à refuser de
 se battre contre de compatriotes.⁵⁶

It was as the leader of their "compatriotes" that Riel was seen by the French-Canadians who agitated first to prevent and then to avenge his death. Conservative propaganda did not deny that the interests of French Canada were at stake in the North-West issue, so much as it attacked Riel personally, as the self-seeking betrayer of his French-Canadian followers. Thus, Adolphe Caron told the House of Commons that Riel had "hautement trompés" the Métis, and that his purpose in organising the rebellion had been only to get \$35,000 from the federal government, rather than to defend the Métis' rights.⁵⁷

This was the most important argument by which French-Canadian Conservatives attempted to justify their conduct. They attacked "Le Véritable Riel, Jugé par les Missionnaires du Nord-Ouest. Ils le déclarent indigne de la confiance publique. Riel a tout fait dans son intérêt personnel."⁵⁸ The Métis were portrayed as the innocent dupes

⁵⁶Letter to Adolphe Caron, n.p., n.d. Public Archives of Canada, Caron Papers, M.G. 27, I, D3, Vol.199.

⁵⁷Caron, Adolphe, "Discours Sur La Question Riel" (n.p., n.d.) 3. The Conservatives tried at first to show the Métis were unjustified in their complaints against Ottawa. eg., see "La Question Riel: Les Grievs Des Métis" (n.p., n.d.). But when agitators produced a list of 76 petitions vainly submitted by the Métis between 1878 and 1884 ("Documents Officiels Constatant Les Nombreuses Plaintes Et Réclamations Des Métis Du Nord-Ouest"), the Conservatives had to change their attack.

⁵⁸"Le Véritable Riel" (Montréal. Imprimerie Générale,

of an evil Riel. Riel's apostasy was emphasised. So was his alleged willingness to abandon the Métis' cause in return for a sum of money from the federal government. When he could not get the money, "il résolut de se venger."⁵⁹

The aim of this sort of propaganda was to distinguish Riel personally from the Métis. The Métis themselves could not be attacked, for French-Canadians identified themselves too closely with them. Conservative propagandists, therefore, were all for the Métis cause -- but against the rebellion. Even the Métis fighters were admired, and Conservatives rejoiced at the clemency shown them. But Riel was different. The Métis had not wanted to take up arms; he had tricked them into it. He did not really have their interests -- the French-Canadian interests -- at heart at all.⁶⁰

⁵⁹Tassé, Joseph, "La Question Riel" (Ottawa?, 1886?) 6.

⁶⁰Ibid., 7 et seq. See also "Rébellion Du Nord-Quest: Faits Pour Le Peuple" (n.p., n.d.), or Caron, Adolphe, "Discours Sur La Question Riel" (n.p., n.d.). The attack on Riel's religious deviations, especially important in trying to discredit him among French-Canadians, can be seen in the anonymously-prepared pamphlet, "Riel Contre L'Eglise Catholique". Published 15 months after his death, the pamphlet contained what purported to be a letter, in Riel's handwriting, calling on an unspecified addressee to join in a revolt against the Church of Rome.

The attempt to discredit Riel failed. Bleu propagandists had to try a third approach. Now they side-stepped the issues of the affair, arguing that aside from the justice or injustice of Riel's execution, French-Canadians ought to accept it without resistance, in order to prevent further **retaliations** against them. They should not form a National Party lest the English-Canadians do the same. In a national division, French-Canadians, being fewer, would inevitably lose.⁶¹

The use of this argument could only reinforce the idea that the Riel issue was a national one for French Canada. French-Canadians knew well enough that the English had treated it as such. Even French-Canadian battalions helping to suppress the rebellion had been badly received in some English areas. Métis and French-Canadians as far away from the scene of the rebellion as Winnipeg had suffered.⁶²

Moreover, the suppression of the rebellion and the hanging of Riel corresponded to a pattern of French-Canadian exclusion from the North-West ever since 1870. French-Canadians now saw the Riel affair as the climactic

⁶¹Chapleau, J.A., "La Question Riel: Lettre Aux Canadiens-Français" (n.p., n.d.); "Electeurs, Attention, Ne Vous Laissez Pas Tromper" (n.p., n.d.); Chapleau, J.A., "Discours A L'Occasion De La Motion Censurant Le Ministère Pour Avoir Permis L'Exécution De Louis Riel" (Montreal, Imprimerie Générale, 1886); Archambault, J.L., "Conservateurs Et Libéraux: Etude Politique" (Montreal, 1887).

⁶²Beauregard, George, "Le 9^e Bataillon Au Nord-Ouest" (Quebec, Gringas, 1886) 23.

stage of such an exclusion. Perhaps the whole rebellion had been provoked by English-Canadians who would use it as an excuse to persecute the Métis.⁶³

So the dimensions of the movement that followed the sentencing of Riel were only such as could be worked up by a national issue. Leading members of the Conservative Party confessed to each other in private that the movement was far more than one of party. Thus Arthur Dansereau wrote to Chapleau as early as August 5, only four days after the sentence was pronounced:

Je ne te parle pas de Riel: le diable est
aux vaches d'un bout à l'autre de la province....
Tu n'as pas d'idée de la violence avec laquelle
nos meilleurs amis s'expriment.⁶⁴

The trial itself, reported in all newspapers, did much to make the movement so strong. Riel had been tried and condemned by an English judge and jury. The trial had been conducted in English. When a French-Canadian physician, testifying as a medical expert for the defence, asked permission to answer to cross-examination in French (because the English prosecuting attorney had confused him), the Queen's Counsel exclaimed with impunity: "If the man wants to hide himself under the French, he can do so."⁶⁵

⁶³"Louis Riel, Martyr Du Nord-Ouest" (Montreal, La Presse, 1885) 10.

⁶⁴Dansereau, Arthur, letter to J.A.Chapleau. PAC, Sir J.A.Chapleau Correspondence, 1881-1896; M.G. 27, I, C3.

⁶⁵Canada, "The Queen vs Louis Riel" (Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1886) 125.

A few days after Dansereau wrote to Chapleau, L'Etendard was complaining not only that the trial had been unfair, but that "c'est pourtant ce que l'on entend faire à tous nos métis français."⁶⁶

Suddenly, French-Quebeckers were more alert than ever to the situation of French-Canadians in the North-West. Suddenly, disturbing articles appeared in the press:

On m'informe qu'il y a un mouvement ici, pour exclure la langue française, devant les tribunaux et dans les actes officiels. On me dit même qu'on fait circuler des requêtes à cet effet.⁶⁷

In Montreal, even the anti-agitation Le Monde printed:

Les fanatiques du Nord-Ouest après avoir poussé les métis à la révolte, ne pouvaient s'arrêter en aussi beau chemin. Maintenant qu'ils ont compromis ceux qu'ils voulaient perdre, ils demandent l'abolition de la langue française au Nord-Ouest. Ils voudraient que notre langue fut assimilée à la langue sauvage. D'après eux, on ne devrait parler qu'une langue dans le Nord-Ouest: l'anglais. Qu'il y ait des gens qui pensent à faire abolir la langue française, c'est faire preuve de fanatisme, mais qu'on en demande l'abolition c'est une absurdité et en même temps une insulte à la nationalité canadienne-française.⁶⁸

The identification of Riel with the Métis' cause, and the cause of the Métis with that of French Canada, can be seen in the petitions and letters sent to

⁶⁶L'Etendard (Montréal) 8 Aug., 1885, 2.

⁶⁷Le Canadien, 6 Aug., 1885.

⁶⁸Le Monde, 8 Aug., 1885.

Ottawa after the trial. The County Council of Deux Montagnes wrote: "La cause de Riel est celle de tous les métis du Nord-Ouest,"⁶⁹ and 1,503 people in the riding of Rimouski claimed:

Que la cause de Riel est celle de tous les métis du Nord-Ouest, dont il a été constitué le défenseur; qu'on ne saurait ignorer les droits de ceux-ci sans leur refuser la justice qui est due à tout citoyen libre....⁷⁰

A petition from citizens of Cranbourne Twp., Dorchester County, considered the Métis as French-Canadian settlers:

Qu'il paraît qu'on n'a pas voulu admettre les témoignages allant à démontrer les insultes et les provocations auxquelles les colons ont été soumis par les fonctionnaires du gouvernement, et les injustices dont ils ont été les victimes par la privation de leurs terres et autres propriétés....⁷¹

And the municipal council of Montmagny County posed the problem as a national one:

Que l'acquittement de Jackson, métis anglais, sérieusement compromis dans les troubles du Nord-Ouest, déclaré irresponsable de ses actes, sans preuve, sans procès, par le simple effet du concours empressé de la Couronne et du tribunal, est une (sic) acte de partialité révoltante et un défi lancé non seulement à nos compatriotes métis du Nord-Ouest, mais à tous les Canadiens-français....⁷²

⁶⁹Canada, Parliament, "Epitome Des Documents Parlementaires Relatifs A La Rébellion Du Nord-Ouest, 1885" (Ottawa, Maclean, Roger & Cie, 1886) 246.

⁷⁰Ibid., 257.

⁷¹Ibid., 270.

⁷²Ibid., 262.

When Riel was finally executed, feelings ran higher than ever:

Riel est mort et la ville maudite qui a bu son sang, les hordes de sectaires qui l'ont demandé à bouche rageuse, à cris sinistres, exécrationnelles, en sont encore tout plongés dans une infernale orgie de fanatisme et de haine contre le nom français....⁷³

In Montreal, L'Etendard, not waiting for confirmation of the awaited news, speculated on the 16th about the feelings English-Canadians must have on that day:

Le 16 novembre, 1885, aura été un jour de réjouissances féroces, pour les sanguinaires fanatiques d'Ontario et du Nord-Ouest.

Mais en même temps, c'est un jour de souveraine humiliation pour la race canadienne-française. Car il n'y a pas à s'y méprendre, le stigmate de l'infamie que le fanatisme et la lâcheté de nos ennemis vont imprimer sur le front de Riel, c'est à la face de tout un peuple qu'ils le destinent.⁷⁴

At Quebec, Le Canadien's editors waited till the next day's confirmation before commenting on the execution:

La société canadienne française est violemment insultée en ce jour: on nous a blessé au coeur, et si nous ne protestons pas contre la honteuse exécution de Riel nous donnerions droit aux Anglais de dire que notre nationalité est morte. Nous savons tous que l'on a voulu nous mettre le couteau sous la gorge, à nous tous Canadiens-français.⁷⁵

This idea of Riel's execution as an attack on the whole French-Canadian nation could not be answered easily. Conservatives protested that "Riel sur l'échafaud

⁷³"La Mort De Riel Et La Voix Du Sang" (n.p., n.d.) 4.

⁷⁴L'Etendard, 16 Nov., 1885, 2.

⁷⁵Le Canadien, 17 Nov., 1885.

ne personnifie pas pour nous la race canadienne-française, pas même la race métisse."⁷⁶ But the position was hardly tenable -- especially when Archbishop Taché, most respected of the North-West's French-Canadians, and friend of the Conservative Party, entered the fray. Publishing both at St. Boniface (with the title "La Situation") and at Quebec ("La Situation Au Nord-Ouest"), Taché refuted the contention that Riel alone was responsible for the rebellion. He claimed the Métis had had legitimate complaints against the government, and that they had called Riel to represent them because of their complete confidence in him. As for Riel himself, he was mad. The archbishop whose missionaries had been killed during the rebellion could not consider Riel a great hero. But neither could he join the Bleu propagandists in calling him an evil and vengeful schemer.

But if Riel was mad, so much the more reason to believe that race hatred had killed him. The contrast with the treatment of Jackson emphasised this. Why then had Riel been killed? "Pourquoi il est mort? Parce qu'il était Français."⁷⁷ Taken either as a hero or as a lunatic, Riel was not a man who merited hanging. The conclusion was natural:

⁷⁶Le Courrier Du Canada, 16 Nov., 1885, 2.

⁷⁷"La Mort De Riel Et La Voix Du Sang", 15.

Si Riel a été pendu, c'est parce qu'il était de cette race Métisse, qui est Canadienne-Française par le sang et par les croyances et que ceux qui se croient les conquérants du Nord-Ouest ont juré d'exterminer.⁷⁸

The identification of Riel with the French cause in the North-West was inescapable. The enemies of Riel were the enemies of the Métis and of everything French:

Des gens, qui ont entrepris de supprimer au Nord-Ouest la langue française, y ont trouvé dans la rébellion le moyen d'exercer contre les malheureux Métis une repression impitoyable.⁷⁹

Much more was at stake, therefore, than Riel's life:

L'affaire du Nord-Ouest est une question décisive de laquelle dépend peut-être et l'avenir de notre race, et le rôle social que nous avons à jouer sur ce continent.

Non pas précisément parce que Riel a été exécuté: les intérêts et le sort d'un seul individu sont, après tout, bien secondaires dans une question de cette nature. Mais parce que la solution apportée à la question du Nord-Ouest, ou si l'on veut à la question Riel, le sort fait à quelques douzaines de malheureux Métis qui souffrent aujourd'hui dans les cachots de Régina, donnent la mesure de la somme de justice et d'impartialité qu'on entend appliquer à toute une nationalité, à l'une même des nationalités les plus fortes du Canada, lorsqu'il lui arrive d'être la minorité.⁸⁰

French-Canadians had to face the depressing fact that they were a minority in the North-West. Suddenly they remembered that the French-Manitobans had been suffering the consequences of the minority position long before the 1885 rebellion. Propagandists now recalled that "les

⁷⁸"L'Histoire D'Un Crime" (n.p., n.d.) 1.

⁷⁹"Louis Riel, Martyr Du Nord-Ouest", 10.

⁸⁰"Question Nationale Au Nord-Ouest" (Montreal, l'Etendard, 1886) 2.

vandales Orangistes ... ont maintenu un règne continuuel de terreur dans le Nord-Ouest, pendant plus de quinze années."⁸¹ Not content with hanging Riel, were they not now campaigning for the abolition of the French language in the North-West? Even before the rebellion, had they not been able to "persécuter, dix années durant, le groupe des métis français du Nord-Ouest, conspirer leur extermination à main armée, les voler de leurs héritages?"⁸² Now it was clear what had been going on ever since the entry of the North-West into the Dominion:

Le grand complice du mauvais genie qui médite la ruine du Canada, et il est toujours le même, c'est une francophobie rageuse et malhonnête.

Quels n'eussent pas été les progrès du Canada, si le développement de notre riche Nord-Ouest eût été ouvert loyalement et impartialement à toutes les compitions [sic] honnêtes, à toutes les énergies!...

On a voulu faire du Nord-Ouest un pays essentiellement Anglo-saxon de race et de langue, et en bannir tout élément français catholique.

Or, comme la majorité de la population établie était française et catholique, il fallait la détruire ou l'expulser....

Et c'est là ce qui explique la série de forfaits commis au dépens des nôtres....⁸³

The great conclusion from the Riel affair, therefore, was that French-Canadians, already a minority, must expect to be excluded and bullied in the North-West.

⁸¹"Le Gibet De Regina" (New York, Thompson & Moreau, 1886) 146.

⁸²"Le Mot De La Fin" (n.p., n.d.) 2.

⁸³"Question Nationale Au Nord-Ouest", 14.

The federal government itself was apparently against them. Thus, the answer to government apologists who claimed that Riel and his followers had disturbed the peace and security of the North-West was:

Vous êtes bienvenu vraiment à parler de la sécurité à établir dans le Nord-Ouest! Je vous demande un peu de quelle sécurité on peut jouir dans un pays dont le gouvernement autorise la spoliation des habitants, méprise leurs requêtes et fait pendre les fous!⁸⁴

In Quebec after 1885 there was a new acceptance of the North-West as an English domain. In the winter of 1888-89, Le Canadien spoke of the forecasts for a great number of immigrants to the North-West in 1889 without even considering that French-Canadians should or would go. "La province de Québec fournira aussi son contingent," wrote the paper, but then specified: "Il paraît qu'une cinquantaine de familles irlandaises et écossaises du seul comté d'Argenteuil se préparent à partir."⁸⁵

Two years after the Riel affair, fear of bad treatment by the English majority was the most conspicuous objection to French-Canadian settlement in Manitoba. T.A. Bernier was obliged to answer it at length in his 1887 pamphlet, written to encourage such settlement. "Nous ne sommes pas noyés au milieu de nationalités étrangères,"

⁸⁴Tremblay, Ernest, "Riel: Réponse A Monsieur J.A. Chapleau" (St-Hyacinthe, l'Union, 1885) 77.

⁸⁵Le Canadien, 23 Feb., 1889, 2.

he wrote. "Nous sommes seulement dépassés...."⁸⁶ It was up to the French-Canadians themselves to make this situation a temporary one:

Si nous leurs laissons toute la place au Manitoba et au Nord-Ouest, ils la prendront, c'est évident; mais celle que nous prendrons, ils ne nous l'ôteront point, notre histoire nous l'enseigne....

Nulle influence n'est assez forte en Amérique, pour empêcher une famille d'obtenir sa place à bord des convois de transport, et de s'établir où bon lui semble; les franchises politiques et municipales appartiennent à tous les sujets de l'empire....⁸⁷

But the challenge was not attractive, and not even credible. The propaganda of 1885, with its assurances that the English and the federal government were determined to drive out the French-Canadians from all the lands of the North-West, was still familiar enough to give the lie to Bernier's lesson in history: that "celle que nous prendrons, ils ne nous l'ôteront point." The great disappointment of the Riel affair had wiped out most of what had remained of French-Canadian hopes and expectations of extending their influence to the North-West. The agitation of 1885 had encouraged a turning away from those parts of Canada where French-Canadians were in a minority (everywhere, that is, but Quebec) and a concentration of attention in the home province. In Quebec, at least, the French-Canadians

⁸⁶Bernier, T.A., "Le Manitoba, Champ D'Immigration" (Ottawa, 1887) 142.

⁸⁷Ibid., 21-22.

were a majority, and the power that belongs to a majority could be theirs:

La province de Québec est à nous, c'est notre propriété, et disons aux Anglais que nous voulons la garder. Pas de concession: pouvoir absolu chez nous, des gouvernements français partout.

Plus de maire anglais à Montréal, et le drapeau français à l'hôtel-de-ville.

Plus de députés anglais où notre nationalité domine....

Lecture en français des procès-verbaux des conseils municipaux, de l'assemblée législative, de la Chambre des Communes, du Sénat....⁸⁸

By 1890 the pamphleteer's conviction that only Quebec "est à nous" was officially as well as effectively true. The tide of English immigration had finally brought the abolition of French-Canadian rights in Manitoba which so many French-Quebeckers had all along thought could never endure.

It is a supreme irony that this situation should have been brought about, in large measure, through the efforts of the man who most dreaded it -- Archbishop Taché. It has been seen more than once that Taché was uncomfortably conscious of the danger of English immigration to the North-West. Unfortunately, his fears were reflected in his calls for immigration from Quebec. Their sense of imminent danger tended to discourage, rather than encourage, such immigration. As early as 1872 a note of near-hysteria can be seen in his appeals. He wrote to Bourget:

⁸⁸Deriares, Jules, "Riel: Patriotisme vs Loyauté" (n.p., 1885) 7.

Quel malheur si nous n'avons pas une immigration Canadien-Française!... Ô Monseigneur laissez moi vous conjurer de trouver dans votre zèle ardent et éclairé les moyens de nous procurer cette assistance rendue indispensable dans les circonstances actuelles.⁸⁹

In his 1874 circular to the Quebec parish priests, Taché was still describing the North-West situation as critical. The French-Manitobans comprised "une population qui semble ~~devoir~~ être bientôt noyée par un flot d'émigration hostile."⁹⁰

Again in 1876, Taché's agent, Lacombe, addressed the priests of Montreal, Trois-Rivières, and Quebec dioceses in a similar vein. "Si on ne prend pas la chose en sérieuse considération," he warned, "et des moyens énergiques pour faire face à l'élément protestant anglais, qui nous envahit là-bas, bientôt nous ne compterons plus dans la balance des affaires politiques."⁹¹

Such appeals tend to be self-defeating. By emphasising the danger which the French-Manitoban population faced, Taché and Lacombe only convinced French-Quebeckers of the risks involved in going West.

⁸⁹Taché, A.-A., letter to Mgr Bourget, St. Boniface, 22 March, 1872. Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal.

⁹⁰Taché, A.-A., circular letter to the Quebec clergy, June, 1874. Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal.

⁹¹Lacombe, Albert, letter to M. le Curé, Montreal, 19 March, 1876, Archives Deschâtelets, Scolasticat St-Joseph, Ottawa. Papers of the St. Boniface archepiscopal archives on microfilm. Film 478.

Taché⁴ was probably aware of the problem. He hoped members of the Quebec clergy would be able to put the matter diplomatically to their parishioners. But he was not willing to expose his needs to the publicity of a press that might point out too clearly the hazards involved in responding to his appeals. In his 1874 circular to the Quebec clergy, he warned:

Pour assurer le succès du projet en question il vaudrait mieux, je crois, qu'il ne fut pas livré à la publicité des journaux.⁹²

But the Quebec clergy could not be depended on to help either. For Quebec's parish priests, the idea of sending their flocks to join the minority in Manitoba was unattractive. The amnesty issue, the New Brunswick schools issue, Norquay's attempt to proscribe the French language -- all these seemed good reasons for Quebec pastors to keep their flocks at home.

The result was a coldness toward Taché's plight. "C'est terrible," wrote Lacombe, "nos prêtres Canadiens ont bien peu de dévouement, pour nous aider, dans nos efforts pour la colonisation chrétienne et Catholique de nos pays du nord ouest."⁹³

This coldness was shared by French-Canadian lay leaders as well. From Ottawa, Jean-Baptiste Proulx, Taché's

⁹²Taché, A.-A., circular to Quebec clergy, June, 1874. Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal.

⁹³Lacombe, Albert, letter to Taché, Quebec, 28 December, 1872. Archives Deschatelets, St. Boniface papers, film 335.

other agent, wrote of his experiences with French-Canadian political leaders. They did not seem to believe really that the French position could be maintained in the West:

Partout de bonnes paroles, j'attendrai les effets. -- M. Cartier, ta, ta, ta, c'est bon, c'est bon, il faut faire de Manitoba une province française. Les Ontariens sauteront par dessus et gagneront la Saskatchewan, ta, ta, ta. -- 94

From Montreal, Proulx described the general disposition of the Quebec clergy: "paroles décourageantes, indifférence, objections sans queue ni tête, tout au plus encouragement froid."⁹⁵

The coldness of the Quebec clergy led Taché to promote the organisation of lay societies to aid and encourage emigration from Quebec to Manitoba. In 1874 the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba was formed; in 1875 it began its operations. The next year Lacombe opened his colonisation "bureau" in Montreal, and Taché procured the engagement of Charles Lalime by the Dept of Agriculture.

The Royal-Norquay crisis interrupted the progress made by these initiatives. Awareness of the dangers of the minority position in Manitoba, till then clearly understood only by members of the clergy and a few top political leaders, now became widespread throughout Quebec.

Lacombe and Lalime continued to tour the New

⁹⁴Proulx, J.-B., letter to Taché, Ottawa, 5 June, 1872. Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 310.

⁹⁵Proulx, J.-B., letter to Taché, Montreal, 11 June, 1872. Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 310.

England towns. There they were still well received by community leaders. But New England French-Canadians had no special cultural rights to worry about. In Quebec, on the other hand, there was a perceptible cooling after the Norquay affair.⁹⁶

It was now that Elie Tassé's pamphlet appeared, with a long passage assuring French-Canadians that their cultural rights were secure in Manitoba. "Nous sommes représentés dans le cabinet," wrote Tassé, "et l'Acte de Manitoba consacre l'usage de notre langue dans la législature et devant les tribunaux, qui sont présidés par trois magistrats dont l'un, l'honorable M. Joseph Dubuc, appartient à notre nationalité. Les lois sont aussi publiées en français." And again: "Nos compatriotes sont donc certains, en arrivant à Manitoba, de pouvoir pratiquer leur religion, et d'élever aussi leurs enfants d'une manière chrétienne."⁹⁷

The assurance was apparently not assuring enough. Four years later, when the pamphlet "Le Nord-Ouest Canadien" was published, the author still found it necessary to answer fears that the North-West was closed to French-Canadians by the tremendous tide of English immigration. He quoted a letter to Faucher-de-St-Maurice by the geographer Onesime Reclus:

⁹⁶eg. See Lacombe's letter to Taché, from Quebec, 16 April, 1880. Archives Deschâtelets, St-Boniface Papers, film 611.

⁹⁷Tassé, Elie, "Le Nord-Ouest", 9.

Je parle avec ferveur du Canada et du Manitoba; je crois bien fermement à notre victoire définitive en Amérique, vous êtes au nord, vous avez une fécondité supérieure, vous avez plus et de meilleures traditions que nos voisins.... Ce qui se passe dans les cantons de l'Est, se qui se passe sur l'Outaouais est le symbole de l'avenir. Seulement il est nécessaire que vous ayiez partout un noyau. L'arbre grandira tout seul. C'est pour cela que l'émigration canadienne vers le Nord-Ouest est d'une importance capitale! travaillez-y de toutes vos forces. S'étez là-bas des états Canadiens qui finiront par se réunir et par être la terre ferme.... Ne craignez rien. Votre tour viendra. Mais pour que l'arbre croisse, il faut le planter. Qu'il ait seulement des racines, il s'élèvera du taillis étranger.⁹⁸

This invitation to become a "noyau" buried in an Anglo-Saxon garden did not hide the danger of the French-Manitoban situation. Respectable French-Quebeckers took a far more pessimistic view of it:

La position des Canadiens-Français dans le Nord-Ouest doit être l'objet tout spécial de notre sollicitude. Vu la proportion considérable de l'élément étranger qui, chaque jour, va grossir la population de nos territoires, c'est peut-être, de toutes les parties du Canada, celle où notre élément court le plus de risques de voir son influence tout-à-fait neutralisée.⁹⁹

Such fears and hesitations about the place of French-Canadians in the North-West contrasted strongly with the English-Canadian assurance that the "future citizen of the North-West of Canada will have Norse, Celtic, and Saxon blood in his veins."¹⁰⁰ And this contrast

⁹⁸"Le Nord-Ouest Canadien" (n.p., n.d.) 4.

⁹⁹L'Etendard, 30 May, 1884, 2.

¹⁰⁰Spence, Thomas, "The Prairie Lands Of Canada" (Montreal, Gazette, 1880) 6.

must certainly explain in large part the contrast in English- and French-Canadian settlement patterns on the prairies. A confident people, sure of its majority, poured onto the prairies where it had nothing to fear. But the other, timid people, feared to advance into what seemed clearly a dangerous position.

CHAPTER 4

THE PATRIE -- WHERE WAS IT?

An English-Ontarian, leaving his province to settle in Manitoba, was moving from one part of his country to another. In terms of the British Empire, so vast that the sun never lost it to view, he was hardly displacing himself at all. In terms of his own civic or patriotic sense, his identity as citizen or subject, as part of an ethnic or cultural entity, he was hardly changing his situation at all. He was rather shifting than leaving. After the annexation of Rupert's Land, English-language pamphlets and articles did not speak of emigrating from Canada to go to the North-West; the North-West -- its border so unclear that it even merged with Ontario -- was part of the fatherland.

For French-Canadians the identification of the North-West as a part of the patrie never enjoyed such vogue. In the last chapter it appeared that French-Canadians could never give full credence to the legal promises of the Manitoba Act, and that between 1870 and 1890, events in the North-West and in other predominantly-English provinces encouraged a growing

conviction among French-Canadians, that a movement was afoot to exclude them from as much as possible of the Dominion, and that wherever they were in a minority, they would become victims of that movement. Only in the province of Quebec, where alone they were in a majority, could they expect to be safe.

But beyond this rather negative feeling was a more positive attitude, much older than the events of 1870-90, that directed French-Canadian patriotic feelings toward the province of Quebec, creating an exclusive concern with that province as the patrie of French-Canadians. Such an attitude appeared in the opposition to the acquisition of Rupert's Land even before 1869-70. Underlying all the arguments about the expense of obtaining and holding the North-West was a feeling that the territory was something separate from Canada itself. Even after annexation, it would be a burden for Canada -- or an asset to Canada -- but not a part of Canada. The concern about the expense of developing the North-West showed that the development of the larger Canada (with Rupert's Land) was less important than the development of the old Canada, the nucleus, the real homeland. This is seen particularly clearly in the repeated assertions that there was too

much to be done in old Canada -- too many projects to be completed, too much open land to be settled -- for Canadians to afford turning their attentions and resources to this new country. In 1868 Le Canadien warned:

L'achat de ce territoire sera peut-être plus ruineux que profitable pour la Puissance qui loin de sentir le besoin d'aggrandissement territorial, doit plutôt sentir qu'il lui faut des colons pour habiter les terres immenses qu'elle a déjà et qui demeurent incultes.¹

And in 1869, when Cartier came back from London, L'Ordre showed where its editors' real interests were as it complained of the government:

On le voit bien jeter des millions sur millions pour aggrandir les limites de la Confédération, pour acheter des territoires qui, comme celui de la Bai d'Hudson, sont moins propice que le Canada à la Colonisation; mais rien, absolument rien de pratique n'est fait pour le bien-être intérieur du peuple.²

Indeed, the real object of French-Canadian interests was even narrower than Le Canada. Rumilly suggests that the true subject of French-Canadian patriotism at the time was the province of Quebec itself.³ So do some English-Canadians. "At Confederation,"

¹Le Canadien, 23 September, 1868, 2.

²L'Ordre, Montreal, 13 April, 1869, 1.

³Rumilly, Robert, "Histoire De La Province De Québec", I, 106.

writes Prof. Cooper, "the Province of Quebec became for all practical purposes the political entity that the earlier nationalists had so earnestly desired."⁴

In fact, the relative narrowness of French-Canadian patriotism was far more ancient than Confederation. Even during the French Regime the St. Lawrence valley had constituted a distinct colony whose inhabitants had little to do with other parts of New France. Acadia's erratic history brought it into little contact with what was then called Canada. Louisiana, founded by Canadians, was soon separated from them and set up as a distinct colony whose connexions were directly with France or with the Antilles. The Ontario, Ohio, and North-West countries were traversed and exploited by Canada, but never formed a part of it. Canadians temporarily resided, but never permanently settled in these territories, and more than once, even Fort Frontenac, as close as the eastern tip of Lake Ontario, was abandoned when the St. Lawrence Valley colony was threatened. It is possible that had Canada remained French, it might one day have expanded into at least a part of these regions, making

⁴Cooper, J.I., "French-Canadian Conservatism In Principle & In Practice, 1873-1891" (Montreal, McGill University thesis, 1938) 10.

perhaps at least Ontario a part of itself. But conquest prevented such a development.

The British took Canada at a moment when its resources were all concentrated in the St. Lawrence valley for defensive purposes. The settled part of what they took was to become the southern part of the province of Quebec. Conquest made it and all of eastern and northern North America British. Suddenly there was no such thing as a French-Canadian patrie, and if the policy laid down by the Royal Proclamation of 1763 were to be carried out, there might eventually be no such thing as French-Canadians. The existence of French-Canadians was assured by the Quebec Act of 1774, that of their patrie by the Constitutional Act of 1791.

British immigration into Canada after the American Revolution threatened for a time to bring about the loss of those guarantees of French-Canadian national survival gained in the Quebec Act. A large English population, having inevitably to be granted the institutions of an English society, would tend to overwhelm the French-Canadians, who would lose the institutions of their society while the English gained theirs.

But Haldimand's fear of settling immigrants from the rebel colonies near the border of those

colonies sent the new-comers into the area west of the old French colony. This made the Constitutional Act possible. The Act showed French-Canadians that even if all the rest of North America became thoroughly British, they, under the British crown still, could expect to be able to remain French. "The French subjects," Pitt told the House of Commons, as he ushered through the bill, "will thus become convinced that the British government has no intention of imposing English laws upon them." Perhaps some day the Canadians might choose to assimilate with the English on their own accord. Meanwhile, "it must be admitted that they ought to be governed to their satisfaction."⁵

Thus the British Government created in Lower Canada a French-Canadian patrie, at the same time as it recognised that immigration was making and would make the rest of British North America English. That the preservation of a French-Canadian nation and country had been the intention of the British government in 1791 was taken for granted by Lord Durham in 1838. The famous report-writer judged that what Britain had done in 1791 had been "to engage for the preservation of

⁵Quoted in Wade, Mason, "The French Canadians" (Toronto, Macmillan, 1956) 88.

French institutions, for the existence of a Nation Canadienne." He claimed Britain had contrived "the division of Canada into two provinces, for the purpose of isolating the French."⁶

The French-Canadian feeling that Britain had granted a patrie in 1791 is seen in the opposition to union with Upper Canada in 1822 and in 1840. When English arguers maintained that the interests of Lower-Canada were nothing but local or parochial ones based on narrow prejudices, the Spectateur Canadien replied:

As if the language, laws, and institutions of a people could be considered mere prejudices; as if the particular interests of a country could be counted for naught in that very country!⁷

This clear linking of the French-Canadian people with the country of Lower Canada remained during the period of union with Upper Canada. The administration, at any rate, maintained the distinction between Canada East and Canada West throughout the period.

Confederation recognised the failure of the union to assimilate the French-Canadian nationality. It officially restored the patrie granted in 1791. For

⁶Lord Durham to Glenelg, Quebec, 9 August, 1838, in Waite, P.B., ed., "Pre-Confederation" (Scarborough, Prentice-Hall, 1965) 109.

⁷Wade, "The French Canadians," 131.

the people of Canada-West Confederation may have seemed an attractive idea because it included the chance to annex the West and build a new country from sea to sea. For French-Canadians the idea was made attractive because it separated Canada-East from the rest of British North America, and set up the province of Quebec. As early as 1858, Conservative pro-Confederation propaganda was praising the new system that would give separate governments to separate provinces in a co-operative union of nation-states:

C'est aux gouvernements séparés des provinces, c'est aux nationalités que nous laissons le soin de ces choses, supérieures en importance aux plus grands progrès: là les éléments nationaux et religieux pourront à l'aise opérer leur mouvements de civilisation, et les populations séparées donner cours ... à leurs aspirations et à leurs tendances.⁸

In answer to those French-Canadians who saw in Confederation a disguised legislative union, Conservatives emphasised the centrifugal tendencies of the new organisation. The record of Sir E.P. Taché's legislative assembly speech shows this emphasis:

If a Federal Union were obtained it would be tantamount to a separation of the provinces, and Lower Canada would thereby preserve its autonomy together with all the

⁸Taché, J.C., "Des Provinces De L'Amérique Du Nord Et D'Une Union Fédérale" (Québec, Brousseau, 1858) 151.

institutions it held so dear, and over which they could exercise the watchfulness and surveillance necessary to preserve them unimpaired. (The honourable gentleman repeated this portion of his speech in French, for the express purpose of conveying his meaning in the clearest and most forcible manner to his fellow-members from Lower Canada, who might not have apprehended so well the English).⁹

As the new constitution went into effect, Conservative publicists rejoiced at the restoration of the patrie:

On nous a séparés du Haut-Canada, nous nous appelons la Province de Québec, nous avons un gouverneur Canadien-français, le deuxième depuis l'établissement du pays, nous allons avoir notre propre gouvernement et nos propres chambres, où tout se fera par et pour les Canadiens-français, et en français. Il faut être renégat, ou, ce qui revient au même, annexioniste, pour ne pas se trouver ému jusqu'aux larmes, pour ne pas sentir son coeur battre d'une joie indescriptible et d'une bien légitime fierté à la pensée de ces glorieux résultats du patriotisme et de l'énergie indomptable de nos hommes d'état, de nos chefs politiques qui ... ont décidé ... à nous rendre à nous mêmes, à nous restituer notre autonomie complète et à confier le dépôt sacré de nos traditions nationales à un gouvernement choisi parmi nous et composé des nôtres.¹⁰

If Liberals argued that French-Canada would be drowned in an Anglo-Saxon sea, losing its national

⁹In Reid, J.H.S., et al, ed., "A Source-Book Of Canadian History" (Toronto, Longmans, Green, 1959) 218.

¹⁰Anon., "Contre-Poison: La Confédération C'est Le Salut Du Bas-Canada" (Montreal, Senécal, 1867) 3.

identity in the Confederation, the Conservative answer was not to deny that French-Canada would be a minority in the new regime -- but rather to suggest that that minority could have an exclusive identity, separate from the majority. And the limits of that identity were those of the province of Quebec. Thus at the outset of the Confederation era there was a relinquishing to the English of the greater Canada -- even, since the Manitoba Act was unforeseen, the North West -- and a concentration on the province of Quebec as the true patrie of French-Canadians.

It may not seem strange that French-Canadians should in 1867 have given up Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. The English were already firmly entrenched in those provinces. But why should they have ignored as well the North-West, where, after all, people of French-language formed a majority of the (non-Indian) population? Partly because of the habit, already long-time formed, of considering the homeland to be Quebec, or Lower Canada or Canada-East. Partly again because of the relations between Quebec and the North-West in the pre-annexation period. After 1822 the Hudson's Bay Company took its employees for the North-West trade mainly from northern Scotland, the Shetlands and Orkneys. French-Canada's only remaining connexion with

the country was through its missionaries. But missionaries are precisely people sent away from the patrie. A religious relationship with the North-West did not imply or require a national identification, as economic or political relations might. Indeed, the fact that French-Canadians were repeatedly called on to give financial aid to these missions only emphasised the fact that they were foreign. Each time the congregations were asked to donate, they were given a heroic reminder:

Les premiers Missionnaires de la Rivière-Rouge sont les premiers apôtres que le Canada ait donnés à la terre étrangère. C'est sur les rives de la Rivière-Rouge qu'a été planté la tombe des premières héroïnes Canadiennes, qui ont arraché leurs coeurs aux douceurs et aux affections de la patrie, pour aller si loin.¹¹

By the time that Manitoba and the Territories were thrown open to colonisation, French-Quebeckers were accustomed to the idea that "nos séminaires fournissent des apôtres aux missions étrangères, à la Rivière-Rouge et aux Etats-Unis."¹²

¹¹Taché, A.A., "Lettre ... Donnant A Mgr De Montréal...." 10.

¹²Masson, Philippe, "Le Canada-Français & La Providence" (Québec, Brousseau, 1875) 53. This idea of Red River as a field for foreign missions does not contradict what was noted in Chapter Two (about the results of the constancy of the religious contact. An idea that Red River was a settlement of Canadian-type agriculturalists was not the same as an idea that it was part of Canada, just as an awareness of U.S. development was far from considering the U.S. to be part of the patrie -- even with French-Canadians settled in it.

This association of the North-West with the United States was reinforced by something more than religion and far more urgent to 19th-century French-Canadians than were their foreign missions. The matter was national survival, and the threat posed to it by the emigration of French-Canadians to the United States. This emigration was a definitely-established movement by the period of the union, though a French-Canadian historian of the 1870-90 period puts it earlier than that, while showing that 19th-century French-Canadians had at least a partial awareness of the sort of emigration it was:

Le mouvement d'émigration vers les Etats-Unis commença à prendre des proportions sérieuses en 1830, alors que les nouvelles lois protégeant les manufactures nationales imprimaient déjà aux industries de nos voisins une activité et un développement qui appelaient les bras de l'étranger.¹³

This was no frontier movement, no pioneer expansion to open new areas to agriculture. On the contrary, it was basically not even so much a movement from Canada to the United States, as a transfer from the rural to the urban world, from the country to the city. The commercial and industrial development that drew workers to the factory towns of New England was

¹³Sulte, Benjamin, "Histoire Des Canadiens-Français, 1608-1880" (Montreal, Wilson & Cie, 1882) 133.

manifested to a certain degree in Canada itself, and to that degree the exodus from the farms of Quebec was directed to Montreal and Quebec as well as to Lowell and Worcester, Fall River and Woonsocket. For the rural parishes, the effect of Montreal's growth was the same as that of Boston's. Parish priests reporting to their bishops on the annual censuses of their parishes would mention emigrants to Montreal in the same tone as emigrants to the U.S.¹⁴ and intellectuals like Casgrain, Crémzie and Garneau would deplore the urbanisation of Quebec itself as much as the exodus to the United States.¹⁵

But because New England's industrial development so far outstripped that of Canada, it was naturally in the United States that the greatest demand for urban workers was to be found. This gave to a rural-urban movement the appearance of a Canada-U.S. movement. Thus the problem was seen as an emigration of French-Canadians from the patrie. It was a two-fold problem -- a problem to the nation canadienne-française and a problem to the patrie of that nation. On the one hand,

¹⁴eg. See the annual parish reports for the diocese of Montreal over a period of several years, say 1870-1875 or 1880. Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal.

¹⁵See Ethier-Blais, Jean, "La Cité: Ferment Intellectuel Et Symbole De Demain" in Le Devoir, 7 November, 1964, 26.

French-Canadians who went abroad to live in the midst of the Anglo-Saxon ocean would lose their national characteristics, would be absorbed, assimilated into the mass of the society around them. From a religious point of view they would be corrupted, morally degraded by American influences. On the other hand, the emigration from Quebec, by reducing the number of French-Canadians in that province, threatened their numerical predominance there, leaving a possibility for "foreigners" to take over even the ancient homeland.¹⁶ Fear of depopulation was especially significant during the later part of the union period. As Canada West's population increased and English-Canadians began to threaten the French with representation by population, it became particularly urgent to conserve French-Canadian forces in Canada-East. Emigration was bad because it reduced the population of the homeland, leaving it vulnerable to new English-Canadian attacks. In the past, the argument of numbers had served to maintain the national position of French Canada.¹⁷ English

¹⁶See letter of the Bishop of Rimouski (Mgr Langevin) to Le Canadien, 3 May, 1872.

¹⁷As in 1774 when it was considered that since the population of Canada was predominantly French, it was reasonable to maintain French institutions. In 1791 too, when Pitt said the Canadians should be governed to their own liking, he was assuming the numerical predominance of the French-Canadians in Lower Canada. After the union, it was their numerical importance that enabled the French-Canadians to maintain their language and national institutions despite the legal disadvantages.

immigration now made maintaining those numbers a matter for conscious exertion.

Since emigration was bad because it tended to depopulate the patrie, it did not really matter where emigrants went once they had left. In that sense, Red River was the same as the United States. Indeed, in pre-Confederation laments about emigration, the North-West is generally referred to in the same breath with the United States. Even in popular literature, the problem of emigration was discussed, with Red River and New England both placed in the same category. Charles Guérin, the pioneer hero of French-Canadian fiction, confronted the problem in this way:

... Plusieurs jeunes gens de sa paroisse étaient sur le point d'émigrer à l'étranger.... Les uns voulaient s'en aller dans les pays d'en haut, ce qui veut dire la baie d'Hudson, la Rivière-Rouge, voir même la Colombie et la Californie; les autres dans l'Amérique, ce qui veut dire le Maine, le Vermont, le Michigan ou l'Illinois.

After identifying Red-River with Maine, Vermont, Illinois and California, the author has his hero reprimand the would-be emigrants for the "Lacheté qu'il y avait d'abandonner son pays, sur les dangers que l'on courait de perdre sa foi et ses moeurs à l'étranger...."¹⁸

¹⁸Chauveau, Pierre, "Charles Guérin" (Montreal, la Revue Canadienne, 1900) 349. The novel originally appeared in serial form in the Revue in 1846-7, and was first published in book form in 1852.

The hoped-for solution to the problem of emigration -- popularised by novels like Charles Guérin and Jean Rivard Le Défricheur -- was the colonisation of the unoccupied lands in the province of Canada-East, in the patrie. Colonisation was intended both to stem the flow to the United States and to stop the movement to the cities. Assuming that French-Canadians were moving to the American cities because of a shortage of farming lands in the old part of the province, the directors of the colonisation movement tried to encourage them to take possession of new lands in unopened parts of the province. After all, they asked, "la nature a-t-elle été ingrate envers notre patrie? N'a-t-elle pas beaucoup fait au contraire pour l'habitant du Bas-Canada?"¹⁹ The patrie, still defined as Bas-Canada, has lots of land available for exploitation by its self-exiling sons. Then, "Emparons-nous du sol!"²⁰ Colonisation became an act of patriotism, because French-Canadians, by settling in the province, were able to maintain their national identity, while their continued presence gave numerical support to the French-

¹⁹Douze Missionnaires Des Twps De L'Est, "Le Canadien Emigrant" (Quebec, Côté & Cie, 1851) 17.

²⁰Ibid., 2.

Canadian strength of the homeland.

Non, il ne serait pas canadien, il ne serait pas canadien-français, disons-nous, celui qui n'aurait pas à cœur la prompte colonisation des terres incultes du Bas-Canada par ses compatriotes.²¹

By the 1860s societies, like the Société de Colonisation du Bas-Canada, were being formed with the aim of promoting "la colonisation des terres incultes du Bas-Canada, par nos compatriotes, d'empêcher leur émigration en pays étranger, de rappeler ceux qui sont déjà partis...."²² By then it was a commonplace that colonisation was the "moyen pour les Canadiens de conserver leur nationalité" -- indeed, that "l'établissement de jeunes Canadiens-Français sur le territoire du Canada, est la première condition requise pour la conservation de notre nationalité."²³ The idea was moving enough to inspire odes:

Coloniser! c'est assurer la conservation de notre nationalité; c'est réformer les moeurs, agrandir le règne de la civilisation, et faire bénéficier le pays de ses travaux.²⁴

²¹Ibid., 2.

²²"Constitution & Règlements De La Société De Colonisation Du Bas-Canada" (Montreal, Plinguet & Cie, 1861) 3.

²³Beaudry, D.H., "Le Conseiller Du Peuple" (Montreal, Senécal, 1861) 166.

²⁴Drapeau, Stanislas, "Etudes Sur Les Développements De La Colonisation Du Bas-Canada Depuis Dix Ans" (Quebec, Brousseau, 1863) 569.

And the pays, the patrie, was still Lower-Canada. By the 1860s, Ontario, flush with the success of its population growth (despite an emigration of its own to the United States), reinforced by continued English immigration, was looking to the North-West as an area into which to expand -- not so much to tack it on to Ontario as an annex, an extra unit, as to have Ontario roll over it, absorb it, merge into it. Lower Canada, French-Canada, was still fighting to hold its own. Or at least it thought it was. By the late 1840s the success of its struggle for national survival had no doubt been assured, but the habits of thought of the period of struggle remained.²⁵ Colonisation thus was identical with the maintenance of French-Lower-Canada. Colonisation of another area -- the North-West, for

²⁵Reinforced by a feeling that emigration was a problem unique to Quebec. Thus, Le Canadien claimed on 14 May, 1873: "Un fait qui doit frapper tout le monde, c'est que ce sont les hommes de notre race qui émigrent et non les autres; aujourd'hui nous aurions une population plus considérable que celle de la province d'Ontario, si les 800,000 Canadiens-Français qui habitent les Etats-Unis vivaient au milieu de nous et enrichissaient le pays de leur travail et de leur industrie." This idea of the situation, though common, was in fact grossly distorted. The United States census for 1870 showed only 493,464 Canadians -- English and French -- living in the U.S. The number didn't pass the 800,000 mark till the 1890 census, and still, the proportion was 678,442 English-Canadians to 302,496 French-Canadians. -- U.S. Dept. of Commerce & Labour, "A Century of Population Growth" (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1909) p. 226.

example, was a contradiction of terms. Red River in no way formed part of the patrie, and might very well have interests quite opposed to those of the patrie:

Je ne puis m'expliquer, Messieurs (the president of the société de colonisation told a colonisation congress in 1864), comment il peut se faire que lorsque des étrangers viennent se présenter aux portes des Canadiens pour en obtenir des secours,... qu'ils réussissent si bien à s'emparer de leurs coeurs et de leurs bourses et que lorsque nous voulons faire quelque chose pour nos progrès nationaux, nous trouvions la plus grande apathie.

Par exemple, il n'y a que quelques mois, Mgr Taché se présentait au diocèse de Montréal ... pour faire une collècte en faveur de ses missions de la Rivière Rouge....

Voilà Messieurs dans l'espace de vingt mois, \$13,500 qui partent du Diocèse de Montréal ... pour aller aider et secourir des étrangers; et lorsqu'il s'agit de nous ... voilà un grand mois que le comité de la colonisation pour Montréal, remue ciel et terre pour pouvoir faire quelques fonds pour aider le mouvement qui promet si bien en faveur de la colonisation....²⁶

Thus the North-West was in competition with Quebec itself, and Quebec, being the patrie, had a prior claim. Such was indeed the argument of the

²⁶In "Coup D'Oeil Sur La Colonisation" (Montreal, La Minerve, 1864) 48-50. The preference which the speaker claimed Red River was getting was not, of course, one of men for settlement; it was of money to rebuild the burned cathedral. (See Taché's "Lettre ... Donnant A Mgr De Montréal"....) What the speaker wanted was not men to colonise (note his last line) but money to help them do it. While colonising was recognised as laudable, it wasn't as clearly a work of charity as was the rebuilding of the cathedral.

newspapers against the acquisition of the North-West in 1869. Such was the background of L'Ordre's mocking, "Il parait que nous n'avons pas dans ce pays assez de terres incultes...."²⁷ and of Le Canadien's answer to Cartier's assertion that Rupert's Land would provide space for Canada's surplus population and immigrants:

Oui, il est nécessaire d'ouvrir des terres à la colonisation pour y placer le surplus de notre population, mais ce surplus ne serait-il mieux sur nos propres terres que sur les bords de Saskatchewan?²⁸

Between 1870 and 1890, then, two related attitudes, derived from the problems of an earlier period, tended to keep French-Quebeckers in their own province, and to prevent their leaders from encouraging them to go to the North-West. For the ordinary French-Canadian there was the feeling that Quebec -- not the rest of Canada that included the North-West -- was his homeland, and that to go to Manitoba was therefore to expatriate himself. For patriots, clergy, journalists, there was the feeling (which assumed the former one as well) that emigration to that foreign province of Manitoba would tend to depopulate French-Quebec, menacing the security of the patrie itself.

²⁷L'Ordre, 14 August, 1865, 1.

²⁸Le Canadien, 31 May, 1869, 2.

Fear of depopulating Quebec was perhaps the greatest stumbling-block to Taché's pro-Manitoba colonisation movement. It obliged him to give his calls for settlers such a tone as practically to negate their positive effect. The circular of 1871 set the tone for what followed throughout the period. Asking priests to encourage their parishioners to go to settle in Manitoba, it bowed to fears of depopulating Quebec by adding this all-important proviso:

Notre pensée n'est pas de demander aux paisibles et heureux habitants de la province de Québec, de changer une position certaine et avantageuse pour les incertitudes et les risques d'une émigration lointaine; mais s'il en est auxquels il faut un changement et auxquels il répugne de s'imposer les rudes labeurs de bûcherons, à ceux-là, Monsieur le Curé, veuillez indiquer la province de Manitoba.²⁹

This provision not only repudiated the idea of encouraging people who hadn't already decided on their own to leave their parishes -- it even advised curés not to suggest to such people to go to Manitoba before first trying to interest them in Quebec colonisation. (The "rudes labeurs de bûcherons" refers to the need to clear away forest as a first step in colonising in Quebec, in contrast to the ease of breaking

²⁹Circular to the clergy of the ecclesiastical province of Quebec, 23 October, 1871, Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal.

prairie on the treeless plains of Manitoba.) Moreover, there is even an acceptance in this passage of the idea that Quebec alone is the patrie, in the use of the expression "une émigration lointaine" in reference to the move to Manitoba.

This early circular recognised an order of priorities which even the most enthusiastic promoters of Manitoba would have to respect in the future. In 1889, Bishop Laflèche of Trois-Rivières (a personal friend of Taché, and considered by him to be a faithful supporter of his projects) was still giving the same order of priorities, and still calling Quebec alone the "country" of the French-Canadians. He wrote a letter to Le Canadien, explaining his position with regard to North-West colonisation:

Ce qu'il y a de mieux pour un Canadien c'est de rester en son pays où il ya a encore tant de bonnes terres couvertes de riches forêts et qui n'attendnet que des hommes de coeur et de bonne volonté pour être mises en valeur. Quant à ceux que de pénibles circonstances forcent à laisser la province de Québec, c'est vers le Manitoba qu'ils doivent se diriger.³⁰

In fact, throughout the period, 1870-1890, Quebec's own colonising projects were in constant

³⁰In Le Canadien, 14 March, 1889, 2.

competition with French-Manitoba's -- and, to make the matter more complicated still, the same members of the clergy were involved in the sponsorship or other support of both movements. Thus Bishop Bourget, so deeply involved in the colonisation of the Ottawa Valley, at the same time supported the Manitoba movement with enough enthusiasm to merit enthusiastic thanks from Taché:

Comment vous remercier pour tout le bien que vous nous faites, en particulier pour l'encouragement que vous voulez bien donner à l'oeuvre de la colonisation dans Manitoba.³¹

If confusion was created in the minds of Quebeckers, statements like that of Bishop Laflèche always remained to show which region had priority. That such confusions did arise is shown by a letter from a puzzled young French-Canadian to the Journal d'Agriculture:

Permettez-moi de vous demander, par l'intermédiaire de votre intéressant et instructif journal, duquel je suis un lecteur assidu, où vous conseillerez le plus d'aller fonder un établissement agricole, à trois personnes jeunes encore pouvant disposer d'un capital d'à peu près cinq à six cents dollars, plus trois chevaux et attelages. On parle beaucoup de Manitoba, mais veuillez, je vous prie, me dire si dans la province de Québec il n'y a pas autant de chance de bonne réussite; par exemple, dans la Beauce, Arthabaska ou Wolfe? Enfin, Monsieur, vous m'obligeriez grandement en me donnant votre avis là-dessus, car je vous

³¹Taché, Ä.A., letter to Bishop Bourget, St. Boniface, 7 Jun^e, 1876, Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal.

assure que les trois jeunes hommes en question sont fort embarrassés pour le choix d'un canton propice à un bon établissement; j'entends sur une terre vierge en bois debout, si c'est la Province de Québec, ou prairie, si c'est Manitoba.³²

The paper's immediate answer was vague. On the one hand it said that "ils peuvent très-bien s'établir et réussir sur nos terres en bois debout, soit dans les cantons de l'Est, soit dans l'Ottawa, soit au Saguenay." But on the other hand, "quant à Manitoba, nous ne saurions décourager ceux qui songent à s'y établir."³³ The paper suggested that the young men should write to the people involved in the colonisation of each area -- the curé Labelle for Quebec, Lacombe for Manitoba -- for more direct guidance.

But not long after, the paper gave a much clearer definition of its position. It recognised that many farmers in the long-settled parts of Quebec were beset with difficulties which made it attractive for them to move away from their home regions. Three alternatives were available to such people: to go to the cities, that is, to the U.S., to go to a Quebec

³²In Le Journal D'Agriculture, Montreal, May, 1878, 174 of bound edition for 1878.

³³Le Journal D'Agriculture, May, 1878, 174 of bound edition for 1878.

colonisation area, or to go to Manitoba.

The essential was that people should not choose the first alternative, emigration to the United States. The preferable alternative was Quebec colonisation, but the paper was forced to lament that far too few people were willing to undertake the forest clearing necessary in northern Quebec settlement. French-Canadians were called on to wake up and realise the vital importance of colonising their own province. Meanwhile, and only "en attendant" such an awakening, the paper was obliged to support Manitoba settlement as a second-choice measure to check emigration to the U.S.:

En vue du mouvement vers les Etats-Unis que nous déplorons, nous avons cru devoir attirer l'attention de nos concitoyens sur les avantages supérieurs de la colonisation, dans nos forêts d'abord; puis à Manitoba, pour ceux qui refusent d'aller s'établir dans les bois.³⁴

This position is quite representative of that taken in general by the Quebec French-language press. It shows clearly the line to be taken by those pro-Conservative papers that supported acquisition of the North-West in 1869 but did not want to pursue any course that led to immediate development of the area.

³⁴Journal D'Agriculture Illustré (The illustré was added in May, 1879) March, 1880, 1.

Manitoba settlement was seen as a good thing only to prevent the worse evil of emigration to the United States. Thus readers were advised:

Avant de songer à émigrer aux Etats-Unis, où il va se perdre, religieusement et politiquement parlant, qu'il réfléchisse aux avantages supérieurs à tous les points de vu, que lui offre la colonisation de la riche et nouvelle province de Manitoba.³⁵

And again: "Eh bien! nous le demandons à tous ceux qui émigrent: ne serait-il pas infiniment plus avantageux, au point de vue moral et matériel, d'émigrer à Manitoba qu'aux Etats-Unis."³⁶ Both of these appeals were addressed not to French-Canadians in general, but to those already involved in emigration from the province of Quebec. L'Etendard addressed its pro-Manitoba propaganda only to "cette partie importante de notre population que l'esprit de voyages, ou le désir de faire plus promptement fortune, incite à nous quitter pour les Etats-Unis."³⁷ And even while urging these people to go to Manitoba, the paper reminded the bulk of its readers that they should be "travaillant principalement au développement de la population de notre province par l'extension à donner à l'agriculture,

³⁵Le Canadien, 23 May, 1873, 4.

³⁶Ibid., 13 June, 1873, 2.

³⁷L'Etendard, 20 February, 1883, 2.

à la colonisation, et aux industries utiles...."

There is nothing unusual about a Quebecker wishing to see the province of Quebec developed. But the midst of an appeal for Manitoba development is hardly the expected place for the expression of such wishes. Yet even brochures written specially to promote the settlement of Manitoba by French-Canadians had to bow to the prerogatives of Quebec. Thus, J.C. Langelier, in the first such pamphlet written in French for French-Canadians, argued that "il est de fait qu'il s'y produit un certain courant d'émigration aux Etats-Unis. Or il est évident qu'il est beaucoup plus avantageux d'émigrer au Nord-Ouest."³⁸ In 1880, Elie Tassé was even more specific about the address of his message: "Nos nationaux des Etats-Unis ... c'est pour eux que nous écrivons surtout."³⁹ In the same year, T.A. Bernier, in the midst of his emotional appeal for immigrants to Manitoba, presented to the Convention Nationale, expressed again the already-old condition:

Notre intention toutefois, n'est pas de dépeupler la Province de Québec au profit de Manitoba. Cet acte ne serait ni logique ni

³⁸Langelier, J.C., "Etude Sur Les Territoires Du Nord-Ouest Du Canada", iv.

³⁹Tassé, Elie, "Le Nord-Ouest". Letter of introduction. Preface.

patriotique. Mais vous le savez, il y en aura toujours qui voudront s'éloigner de la terre de leurs aïeux. C'est à ceux là que nous offrons les avantages incontestables de notre province. Si nous pouvions les amener avec nous, Québec ne perdrait rien, et nous y gagnerions beaucoup.⁴⁰

And even in 1887, when the need for support for the French-Manitoban community was urgent, Bernier's pamphlet only advised that "ceux qui songent [already] à quitter la province de Québec devraient venir au Manitoba."⁴¹ To show he meant it, Bernier included in the pamphlet a letter from a Quebec priest who made sure it was understood that Bernier was only trying to "attirer chez vous ceux de nos cultivateurs qui seraient tentés d'aller chercher fortune aux Etats-Unis."⁴²

Did the authors of English-language pamphlets promoting North-West immigration tell their readers to settle Ontario first (or Great Britain, if the pamphlet was aimed at a British readership)? One would be hard put to it to find an example of such an attitude.⁴³ The restricted tone of French-Canadian promotion of the

⁴⁰Bernier, T.A., Projet de Rapport ... etc., Collège Ste-Marie.

⁴¹Bernier, T.A., "Le Manitoba: Champ D'Immigration" 69.

⁴²Ibid., 7.

⁴³Since it is not possible to quote something not included in a book, one can only invite the reader to try himself to find anything comparable to the priority of Quebec in a selection of English-language pamphlets -- say, the ones cited below,

North-West stands in clear contrast to the unbounded enthusiasm of the English-language literature. The latter is marked by its concentration on the subject at hand -- the North West -- without considering the effect that settlement of this country would have on the areas from which settlers would come. It was only concerned with "Western Canada -- Free Homes For All in the Great Provinces of Manitoba, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Alberta."⁴⁴

The problems involved in trying to bring French-Canadian immigrants to Manitoba from the province of Quebec led Taché and his associates to concentrate their efforts among the French-Canadians of the United States.⁴⁵ "Il est certain," wrote Lacombe in his 1876 letter to Quebec parish priests, "que nos efforts vont se diriger surtout du coté des Etats-Unis pour en rapeller nos compatriotes...."⁴⁶ Not only were pamphlets addressed more and more directly to French-

⁴⁴Anon., "Western Canada" (Winnipeg, 1892) title page.

⁴⁵There was also an economic reason for concentrating on the U.S. French-Canadians. Not only did the government give grants of land to the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba for the settlement of repatriated French-Canadians (since they were immigrants and added to Canada's population), but as well, starting in 1876, the grant of \$17 per man was given for immigrants brought in from the U.S. and settled in Manitoba.

⁴⁶Lacombe, Albert, letter to M. le Curé Montreal, 19 March, 1876, Archives Deschatelets, St. Boniface episcopal papers, microfilm 478.

Americans, but Lacombe spent more and more time with Lalime in New England as the problem of Quebec recruitment of settlers became clearer.

Yet even here the problem of Quebec's priority was met. French-Canadians, even if they lived in New England, still considered Quebec itself to be the homeland, and were sometimes patriotically annoyed by Lacombe's operations. Thus the president of a French-Canadian patriotic society interested in colonisation wrote from Massachusetts to a Canadian clergyman involved in Ottawa valley colonisation. Asking for men to be sent to New England to lecture to public assemblies on the advantages of colonisation in Quebec, he went on:

Les Révérends Pères Mecelo et Lacombe n'ont-ils pas recruté par ce moyen un grand nombre de nos compatriotes pour aller les établir, l'un pour le compte du gouvernement des Etats Unis, l'autre dans les intérêts du Pacifique Canadien?⁴⁷

Nor was the request without a response. Even New England was not left as a free field for recruitment by Taché and his group. Competition with the Ottawa valley, the Eastern Townships, and so on, developed here as in the old parishes of Quebec. Advertisements were

⁴⁷La-Palme, Janson, letter to R.P. Harel, S.C.D.O., Lawrence, Mass., 14 June, 1885, Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal, Colonisation File.

circulated not only in U.S. French-language papers but also in pamphlets for U.S. readers. "Aux Canadiens Des Etats-Unis," they read, "Revenez Aux Pays. Venez vous emparer des magnifiques terres encore non exploitées de la province de Québec." And the usual follow-up:

Cela vaut mieux que de végéter vous et vos familles dans les manufactures américaines, au détriment de votre santé et trop souvent de vos meilleurs intérêts, loin de votre pays, de vos parents et de vos amis.⁴⁸

But in fact, the whole attempt to get colonists from among those people who had already moved or were on the point of moving to the industrial towns of New England -- whether for Manitoba or for the colonisation areas of Quebec -- was the least effective sort of attempt that could have been made. The move from a farm to a town is a move away from nature, away from the country, and thus away from the frontier. Naturally, then, it involves a different - probably an opposite -- psychological predisposition or inclination to that involved in the move to a new colonising area, that is, to a frontier. Asking French-Canadians to

⁴⁸Advertisement on outside back cover of pamphlet, Tassé, Joseph, "Aux Canadiens Français Emigrés" (Ottawa, Le Canada, 1883). It will be recalled as well that part of the aim of the Société de Colonisation du Bas-Canada as early as 1861 had been "de rappeler ceux qui sont déjà partis."

move not to New England but to the frontier (whether in Manitoba or in Quebec) was really asking for much more than a simple geographically directional or even political change. It was asking for a complete reversal of disposition, life-aims, personality. The problem of emigration was thus far more complicated than was realised by most French-Canadians of the period, and neither Quebec colonisation nor Manitoba settlement was appropriate to check it, since neither answered the psychological needs of people disposed to emigrate to New England industrial towns.

It may be true that most of the French-Canadian immigration that Manitoba did get came from the United States,⁴⁹ but in any movement there are always some people who fail and become discouraged, and are ready to try any new change that may offer some new sort of hope or opportunity. Thus, some movement from New England is not unnatural in any case. Moreover, not all the U.S. French-Canadians who went to Manitoba were from the industrial east. Some came from American western and middle western agricultural areas where they or their fathers had earlier pioneered -- came not in

⁴⁹See Dom Benoit, "Vie De Mgr Taché" 299, 384. Or Lacombe, Albert, letters to Taché, Montreal, 7 February, 1877, Archives Deschatelets, St. Boniface episcopal papers, microfilm 505, & Worcester, Mass., 10 March, 1877, film 509.

response to calls or promotions, but (like good frontiersmen) on their own.⁵⁰

In sum, New England's industrial French-Canadians were not the flock among which Manitoba's pastors might find the lambs they needed, and the real question of finding immigrants for Manitoba's French population would depend on what could be got from Quebec. But there the pastors ran into the most acute competition from Quebec itself. From the Quebec government, whose own interest in Quebec colonisation can be seen in its creation of a special ministry to be concerned with it, to Taché's own fellow-clergymen, the needs of Manitoba were answered by Quebecers inevitably with the needs of Quebec. Thus when Lacombe pleaded the need to counter-balance the tremendous flow of immigration from Ontario, he got this response from the Bishop of Sherbrooke:

Permettez-moi de vous faire remarquer que la position du diocèse de Sherbrooke ressemble beaucoup à celle du Manitoba, en présence de l'élément protestant anglais qui nous domine.

L'influence des catholiques, dans le diocèse de Sherbrooke, est à peu près nulle.

⁵⁰Elie Tassé, in his 1880 brochure, prints testimonials from a sampling of U.S. French-Canadian immigrants, of whom 7 were from Massachusetts, 4 from Rhode Island, 4 from New Hampshire, 1 from Vermont, 1 from Michigan, 2 from Illinois, 1 from Missouri, and 1 from the Dakota territory.

Depuis que je suis à Sherbrooke, je fais tout ce que je peux pour attirer les Canadiens français dans les Cantons de l'Est, et pour y retenir les familles catholiques qui s'y sont établis.⁵¹

The bishop was refusing Lacombe the right to recirculate the letter of the bishops' of 1871.

Archbishop Taché was unimpressed by such arguments, but a letter he wrote to Bishop Laflèche in 1880 shows how persistent they were, and how much in need of convincing were even Taché's most faithful friends and supporters in Quebec:

Je n'ai pas d'inquiétude pour la province de Québec, que je crois à l'abri de toute absorption par les étrangers.... Les forêts de la province de Québec, cher ami, ne vous échapperont pas, mais nos vastes prairies nous échappent.⁵²

Quebec's need, argued Taché, was not as great as that of Manitoba, where Ontarians were flowing in to take the land French-Canadians might have had.

The prospect of Ontarians pouring into the North-West was a discouraging one to French-Manitobans and to would-be French-Manitobans, as was seen in the last chapter. On the other hand, for the majority of

⁵¹Bishop of Sherbrooke, letter to Albert Lacombe, Sherbrooke, 27 March, 1876, Archives Deschatelets, St. Boniface episcopal papers, film 479.

⁵²In Dom Benoit, "Vie De Mgr Taché" 384.

Quebec-orientated French-Canadians, there was something even pleasing in it. From the pre-Confederation period they had derived the habit of considering Ontario the arch-rival of the patrie. The security of the nation canadienne-français, they thought, depended on a relatively even ratio in the two provinces' populations. Now the Courrier du Canada could report with glee that "la province d'Ontario se dépeuple presque. Ses fermiers, ses cultivateurs émigrent en masse au Manitoba...." Far from advising its readers to put themselves in the way of this Ontario movement, the paper continued:

Nous ne voulons pas conseiller à nos cultivateurs qui ont leurs terres, de laisser notre province pour aller ouvrir de nouvelles terres. Nous avons besoin ici de toute notre population.⁵³

This cavalier attitude toward the filling of the North-West by Anglo-Saxons⁵⁴ shows the thoroughness of French-Canadian concentration on the province of Quebec. So does this confession by a contemporary historian and public official:

⁵³Le Courrier du Canada, 18 June, 1879, 2.

⁵⁴The noting of this attitude is not inconsistent or contradictory with what appeared in chapter 3. Le Courrier itself pointed out in the same article that "l'élément anglais veut évidemment fonder dans ce territoire une province toute anglaise." This was, after all, just another factor reinforcing the tendency to look at Quebec as the home of the French-Canadian nationality.

Si nous sommes tentés parfois de suivre de l'oeil les Canadiens émigrant aux Etats-Unis ou au nord-ouest, c'est pour constater avec douleur l'abandon du sol natal.... Pour nous l'intérêt immédiat n'existe plus que dans la province de Québec, soit dans la politique locale.⁵⁵

The persistence of this isolationism can also be seen in the succession of tactics attempted by the Manitobans to break it. At the outset there was an attempt to encourage French-Canadians by showing they already had a head start -- an option on Manitoba taken out by the voyageurs of old and by the Métis and missionaries of Red River. The 1871 circular reminded:

Ces contrées si nouvelles pour les individus, ne le sont pas pour le Canada. C'est l'énergie de nos pères qui les a découvertes; c'est le zèle de nos missionnaires qui les a régénérées et préparées à l'ère de prospérité qui semble les attendre. Ces contrées lointaines ne sont donc pas la terre étrangère. Environ la moitié de la population y parle le français et est d'origine canadienne, en sorte que dans toutes les paroisses, on est certain de trouver des parents ou au moins des amis.⁵⁶

Without implying that the North-West was actually a part of the patrie, this line of propaganda postulated

⁵⁵Sulte, Benjamin, "Histoire Des Canadiens-Français" 155. Here too the concentration on Quebec is partly a result of what was seen in chapter 3. In the pre-Conquest period, he says, the North-West was ours. But, "dans les vastes territoires découverts par nos pères règne à présent une autre race."

⁵⁶Circular of the Bishops to the clergy of the ecclesiastical province of Quebec, 23 October, 1871, Archives de l'Archeveché de Montréal.

a French-Canadian proprietorship over it. Lacombe reminded French-Canadians of this claim at a St-Jean-Baptiste celebration in 1874. "Vous, Canadiens-français, qui avez découvert la Rivière Rouge," he harangued them, "laissez vous envahir ses bords par d'autres?"⁵⁷

Again, the circular of 1871 first presented the second argument against Quebec isolationism -- that a strong French-Canadian population in Manitoba would only be a support to the position of Quebec and of French-Canada within the Confederation:

En colonisant une partie du Manitoba, les Canadiens-français s'assurent, dans la législature fédérale, l'équilibre qu'ils possèdent aujourd'hui, et qu'ils perdent nécessairement s'ils ne sont point en nombre dans le territoire du Nord-Ouest.⁵⁸

In his 1874 circular Archbishop Taché came back to the point:

Ce projet (of sending French-Quebeckers to settle in Manitoba) ... ménagerait à la Province de Québec une alliée qui, à un moment donné, pourrait payer largement la dette de reconnaissance....⁵⁹

⁵⁷In Rumilly, "Histoire De La Province De Québec" I, 309.

⁵⁸Circular of the Bishops to the clergy of the ecclesiastical province of Quebec, 23 October, 1871, Archives de l'Archeveché de Montréal.

⁵⁹Taché, A.A., Circular letter to Quebec clergy, June, 1874, Archives de l'Archeveché de Montreal.

And in 1887 Bernier in his pamphlet was still giving the argument circulation. He quoted Father Nolin -- another promoter of Manitoba in the Montreal area:

La colonie canadienne de Manitoba ...
forme un centre français qu'il importe de
développer dans les intérêts de la nationalité
canadienne et de la Province de Québec elle-
meme.⁶⁰

But Bernier himself came more directly to the point, and his forcefulness in giving the third and most straightforward answer to Quebec isolationism is final evidence of the importance of that mood as a factor preventing emigration to Manitoba. Under the heading "Le Manitoba C'est Aussi La Patrie" Bernier sermoned:

Le Manitoba est une terre canadienne....
Sur les bords de la rivière Rouge, nous
pouvons, à l'égal des saines populations qui
habitent la vallée du St-Laurent, réclamer nos
droits de premiers occupants du sol....

Aujourd'hui, ces plaines immenses et
fertiles ont fait retour au Canada, à la
Nouvelle-France, pour ne plus s'en détacher,
espérons-le.

Le Manitoba est donc notre pays; dans
ses limites nous sommes au sein de la patrie....

Quand nous cherchons à attirer nos
compatriotes vers nous, notre action ne peut
donc être assimilée à celle dont le but serait
d'encourager l'émigration aux Etats-Unis....

Le Manitoba, nous le répétons, c'est la
patrie; c'est une terre sur laquelle notre race,
au lieu de s'étioier, de s'amoindrir, grandira,
vigoureuse, forte, saine, vaillante, imbue des
idées religieuses, sociales, patriotiques et
traditionnelles, qui ont créé la nationalité
canadienne-française.⁶¹

⁶⁰In Bernier, T.A., "Le Manitoba: Champ
D'Immigration" 17.

⁶¹Ibid., 16.

Such a long and serious protestation could only be the response to a widespread feeling in Quebec that Manitoba was not also the patrie. And indeed, at the end, as at the beginning of this period, people and papers still referred to the exodus from Quebec as one single phenomenon, whether directed to New England or to Manitoba.

The competition of Quebec's own colonisation areas was stronger than ever. While attempts to promote emigration to Manitoba were far from meeting universal approval in Quebec, the attempts to get people into the northern Quebec colonisation areas were never attacked. The curé Labelle wrote to Bishop Fabre in 1880:

Cette oeuvre de colonisation plait à tout le monde. C'est la seule oeuvre dans ma paroisse qui n'a rencontré aucune critique.⁶²

This was partly due to the success of Labelle's own propaganda. He had already been urging for years, and he continued to urge his compatriotes of Quebec to go "Au Nord" to colonise. In the Ottawa valley was an area to be settled, accessible from Montreal, within the patrie, and so rich that:

C'est bien le cas de dire que tous nos petits cultivateurs de vieilles paroisses se feraient colons s'ils connaissaient la bonne fortune qui les attend dans les cantons du Nord.⁶³

⁶²Labelle, report on colonisation to Mgr Fabre, 1880. Archives de l'Archevêché de Montréal, colonisation file.

⁶³Curé Labelle, "Au Nord" (St-Jerome, 1883) 8.

Here was what French-Canadians thought of when they thought of colonisation, of frontier settlement. "Où donc les pères de familles placeront-ils leurs enfants? Où les fils trouveront-ils un établissement?" asked the pamphleteer. And the answer was unhesitating: "Dans les cantons du Nord."⁶⁴

(By 1898 the Société Générale de Colonisation was reporting that of 1,539 people it had sent to various colonising areas in the previous year, 1,475 had gone to areas in Quebec, 57 had gone to Ontario and only seven had gone to Manitoba).

Why then had French-Canadians supported the acquisition of the North-West in the first place? For it appeared in chapter one that opposition to the acquisition of Rupert's Land had not been unanimous. Is there a contradiction between the support for the move in 1869 and the lack of interest that appeared in this chapter?

Not if one recalls the form of the support or the reasons expressed in 1869. The interest in the North-West had been not in acquiring an extension of the patrie, a field for French-Canadian expansion and

⁶⁴Nantel, G.A., "Notre Nord-Ouest Provincial" (Montreal, Senécal, 1887) 11.

settlement, but in acquiring an area which might be exploited (filled with European immigrants) for the benefit of Quebec itself. La Minerve had spoken of acquiring the China trade for Montreal; Le Journal de Québec and the Journal des Trois-Rivières, both having supported the purchase of Rupert's Land, opposed immediate measures to have it developed for settlement by Canadians.

This commercial interest of the Quebec entrepôts in the trade of the West continued strong in the period that followed. It supported construction of the CPR not to carry French-Canadian settlers to the West, but to carry the products of the West to Montreal and Quebec -- products from as far west as China:

L'établissement d'une ligne de steamers rapides entre l'Angleterre, l'Asie et l'Afrique sera certainement, après la construction du chemin de fer du Pacifique, l'entreprise qui touchera le plus à notre avenir matériel.

En effet, des steamers rapides sur l'Atlantique et le Pacifique nous donneront la clé du commerce universel. Nous pourrons lui offrir la route la plus courte, la plus directe.⁶⁵

Even Quebec-colonisation-minded Louis Beaubien was interested in the North-West and in the CPR for the benefit that Quebec itself would obtain from "le

⁶⁵Le Canadien, 8 February, 1889, 2.

commerce de l'Ouest".⁶⁶ L.G. Desjardins was more specific in his speeches to the Quebec legislative assembly:

Ce que nous devons vouloir avant tout, par-dessus tout, pour le plus grand bien de la province, c'est que notre chemin de fer du Nord soit, en premier lieu, de fait, et pour toujours la continuation du chemin de fer canadien du Pacifique, et aussi d'autant d'autres lignes que possible qui, avec celle du Pacifique, lui assureront, ainsi qu'à Montréal et à Québec, le commerce de l'Ouest....

Quelles sont donc ces fertiles contrées de l'Ouest dont nous voulons attirer les produits vers nous pour les transmettre ensuite aux consommateurs européens?.... Dans un siècle, elle contiendra une population de 150 millions.⁶⁷

But not of French-Canadians. The interest was in what Quebec could "attirer vers nous" not send away. It was an interest that wanted the development of the North-West, that wanted to believe the country fertile, useful, productive. But it was not an interest in sending French-Canadians to Manitoba. It was not an interest in colonising the North-West by the people of Quebec. Colonising interests were directed not to Manitoba, but to the northern areas of Quebec itself.

⁶⁶Beaubien, Louis, "Les Chemins De Fer: Nos Communications Avec L'Ouest" (Quebec, 1875).

⁶⁷Desjardins, L.G., "Discours ... Sur La Résolution Relative A La Vente De La Partie Ouest Du Chemin De Fer Québec, Montréal, Ottawa & Occidental" (Quebec, 1882) 27.

CHAPTER 5

CONTEMPORARY OBSERVATIONS

The evidence consulted in the previous chapters comprised records of what people wrote or said about the North-West between 1870 and 1890. They represented direct expressions of opinion. There also exist accounts by contemporaries who observed the opinions first-hand at the time. These latter may serve as a useful check on the conclusions drawn from the former.

Men like Albert Lacombe were in an excellent position to observe these opinions. The reactions they got from people they approached, the questions asked at their public assemblies, and the objections raised to their urgings -- all these comprise the opinion with which this paper is concerned. These men came into contact not just with the literate elite who wrote newspapers or the political activists who published pamphlets, but with the ordinary people who were the real potential settlers of the North-West. The degree to which their observations of French-Canadian opinion correspond to the conclusions of the previous chapters will indicate the value and accuracy of those conclusions. It will also indicate the value of the media

used as sources of opinion.

Few records are available of the men who worked for Taché on the promotion of North-West colonisation. The Abbé C.A. Beaudry, who eventually became chief French-Canadian colonising promoter for Manitoba,¹ only received a request from Taché to undertake the work in 1887,² and did not begin till the following year. Even then, his activities were mainly confined to the publication of a semi-monthly newspaper dedicated to the publicising of Manitoba colonisation opportunities.³ Jean-Baptiste Proulx, the priest whom Taché sent to Montreal in 1872, did little for the cause after that year -- though he did travel to Europe in 1885 with the Curé Labelle to try to attract French emigrants to the Canadian North-West.⁴

¹La Voix Nationale, Montreal, October, 1927, advertisement of the Missionnaires Colonisateurs re North-West colonisation.

²Beaudry, C.A., letter to Taché, La Présentation, 14 September, 1887, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 875.

³Le Colonisateur Canadien, Montreal.
Publication of the paper continued through the 1890s.

⁴Proulx, J.B., letter to Taché, Montreal, 3 February, 1885, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface Papers, film 754.

It was Albert Lacombe who carried the weight of this job during most of the years of this period; he travelled East at least nine times between 1872 and 1886. Fortunately, Lacombe was a prolific letter-writer. During his trips to the East he wrote more than two hundred letters to Archbishop Taché⁵ -- letters which often contained reports on the progress of the work, and on the reactions he was getting.

The reports of men like Lacombe may show up indirectly in places other than their letters. Pamphleteers, writing for groups like the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba, often cited the common objections to North-West settlement in order to refute them. Their ideas of what were the common objections were naturally based on the reports of men like Lacombe, and together with the reports themselves will constitute the principal source for study in this chapter.⁶

⁵The letters are in the St. Boniface arch-episcopal archives. Microfilm copies are in the Archives Deschâtelets, at the Oblates' Scolasticat St-Joseph in Ottawa. Also of interest are some letters Lacombe wrote to Bishop Grandin of St. Albert. These are now in the Edmonton episcopal archives, and on microfilm in the Archives Deschâtelets.

⁶If these sources had been examined before the conclusions from study of the others had already been formed, it would have been possible to "fix" or "cook up" these conclusions to make them correspond to the observations of Lacombe et al. It must be pointed out, therefore, that in this case, the sources upon which were based the conclusions of the previous chapters were all consulted and the conclusions already formed before these other sources -- particularly Lacombe and Proulx -- were

Doubts about the prairies' fertility were a much more important objection to contemporary observers than could be seen from the sort of evidence consulted in chapter two. The ordinary man who was the potential settler had to be concerned primarily with the question of whether he could make a living in the North-West. His cultural identity and the demographic strength of the patrie were necessarily questions of a secondary nature for him. And the opinions of such men were naturally more evident in Lacombe's public assemblies than in the columns of La Minerve, Le Canadien, or L'Événement; they showed up more in the questions addressed to the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba than in the pamphlets of political propagandists.

It has already been seen, in fact, that the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba considered misinformation about the prospects of successful settlement in Manitoba as being, in 1876 at least, a primary

looked at. In these circumstances it was possible to use the materials of the previous chapters to make a prediction about what would be found in Lacombe and the others. That is, that they would mention the three factors considered in chapters two, three, and four. Their mentioning these factors would verify that they were the factors preventing greater settlement of the North-West by French-Canadians.

obstacle preventing French-Canadian immigration to the province. The problem was still apparently common in 1884, for the colonisateur de neuf ans d'experience wrote that people often claimed the North-West was too far north, too near the arctic, to be settled and developed.⁷

The need for information to combat French-Canadian ignorance about the value of the territory was expressed clearly by both Proulx and Lacombe from the time of their first attempts to encourage settlement there. Proulx suggested that regular articles should appear in Le Métis, to be reprinted in Quebec newspapers, vaunting the advantages of North-West colonisation.⁸ Lacombe, after consulting with Proulx, was more explicit about the need for dispensing information:

J'ai vu Mr Proulx, qui a bien peu réussi, pour avoir des émigrants, et je crois que nous ne réussirons jamais, tant que nous n'aurons pas ici un comité, qui se chargerait de donner les directions et les renseignements nécessaires à ces émigrants.⁹

Till such a committee was finally set up by Lacombe in 1876, French-Canadians received either no

⁷"Le Nord-Ouest Canadien", 30.

⁸Proulx, J.B., letter to Taché, n.p., 1872, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 336.

⁹Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 5 August, 1872, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 320.

news or bad news about conditions in Manitoba. In 1874, a report that grasshoppers were again plaguing Manitoba had a frustrating effect on Lacombe's work. The coloniser wrote to St-Boniface, hoping he could get an answer that would deny the story:

Veuillez lire, Mgr, cet imprimé ci-joint et me télégraphier avant mon départ, si véritablement les sauterelles ravagent Manitoba et préparent une grande misère à la population?¹⁰

Bad impressions of conditions in Manitoba not only discouraged farmers from going there, but also discouraged the clergy of Quebec from advising their parishioners to go. Stories told by fellow-clergymen returned from the North-West missions sometimes reinforced the discouraging impression. Thus, Lacombe reported to Taché in 1876:

Je rencontre bien peu de sympathies pour notre immigration de la part du clergé. MM. Poulin et Hicks ont fait une bien triste peinture de Manitoba.¹¹

The clergy's own responsibility for French-Canada's bad opinion of the North-West was even more

¹⁰Lacombe, letter to Taché, Ottawa, 30 July, 1874, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 419.

¹¹Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 21 February, 1876, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 475.

significant than that. Lacombe's letters bear out the suggestion that Taché's own writing and earlier attitude had been instrumental in persuading Quebeckers that Manitoba was a bad place:

Il y a une chose en ce pays qui voudrait paralyser notre oeuvre de colonisation à Manitoba, c'est qu'on me jette souvent à la figure qu'il n'y a pas encore bien des années Mgr Taché et quelques-uns de ses prêtres étaient sans cesse à parler et à écrire contre les avantages que présente aujourd'hui Manitoba. V.G. je reçois une lettre ce matin de quelqu'un qui a été piqué, me disant: "Si cette émigration n'a pas réussi, c'est que Mgr Taché a fait tous ses efforts dans les commencements pour empêcher les gens de s'y rendre (avec une très bonne intention sans aucun doute) mais quand on a tant décrié une contrée, le sol, le climat, les moyens d'existence, &c, &c, on ne doit pas être surpris de voir le courant se diriger d'un autre côté. Quand on parlait des ressources de ce pays, je me rappelle avoir entendu Mgr Taché rire aux éclats et plaindre la naïveté de ceux qui croyaient à la colonisation de la R.R."

Et puis voilà -- 12

¹²Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 6 April, 1876, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 480. An interesting expression of this idea of Taché's responsibility is found in the reaction to the Riel execution. In the pamphlet "Le Gibet De Régina" (New York, Thompson & Moreau, 1886), published under the pseudonym, "Un Homme Bien Renseigné", there appears the accusation that Taché's 1869 booklet was responsible for the fact that French-Canadians did not settle in the North-West, but left it for the English to take over: "Je crois sincèrement que sa brochure lui fut inspirée par une conviction louable, mais une chose est certaine, indiscutable: le Manitoba et la Saskatchewan ont été, dès le début, sont encore et resteront sous le contrôle absolu des Canadiens d'origine anglaise...." (p.28) Scattered autobiographical information in the 1886 pamphlet suggests that the "homme bien renseigné" may have been J.N.A. Provencher, member of McDougall's cabinet in 1869, and editor of La Presse in 1886. It is not impossible that this was the same man who wrote the above letter to

Taché's words and writings probably had most effect on fellow-clergymen and on people sophisticated enough to read a work as little journalistic as his Esquisse Sur Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique. The real potential emigrants, Lacombe found, were at least as likely to be affected by the accounts of unsuccessful emigrants, returning East after failure in the North-West.

Le retour de quelques-uns de nos émigrants nous cause beaucoup de mal, pour notre mouvement en général, et beaucoup de déboires à moi en particulière.... Insensés ou plutôt imbéciles! ils ne comprennent pas le bien qu'on veut leur faire....¹³

Such first-person influences made it easier for French-Canadians to accept newspaper and other accounts of bad conditions in Manitoba:

Les mauvaises nouvelles venant de Manitoba, parlant de pluies torrentielles, d'inondations, de manque d'ouvrage &c font une bien mauvaise impression sur l'esprit de ceux qui ont toujours vu en noir nos oeuvres et nos établissements dans ce pays. Pour moi (et il me semble que j'en ai déjà assez l'expérience) il me paraît que ça ira encore bien loin avant que nos compatriotes de la Province de Québec comprennent ce qu'ils devraient faire....¹⁴

Lacombe. Provencher would probably have been in contact with Taché at a time when the latter was trying to discourage annexation of the North-West by Canada, and might have heard him debunking the territory. But the importance of what Lacombe says is not in the single letter he quotes. It is in the fact that "on me jette souvent à la figure" the same argument.

¹³Lacombe, letter to Taché, Salem, Mass., 11 June, 1877, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 520.

¹⁴Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 10 July

On the eve of his departure from the East in 1877, Lacombe again attributed his failure to the same cause: "Bien peu d'émigrants m'accompagneront," he wrote to Taché; "les nouvelles de Manitoba ont un peu découragé...."¹⁵ In New England, the problem was the same as in Quebec. After addressing a public assembly in Fall River, Lacombe wrote:

On m'a fait de nombreuses et très
spécieuses objections. Des hommes préparés
et possédant leur sujet et dont quelques-uns
avaient été à Manitoba, ont dit les choses
les plus décourageantes et même capables de
jeter le ridicule sur le pays.¹⁶

After six days of touring Massachusetts with another priest named Fillion, Lacombe reported to Taché that everywhere they went, "on nous attend pour répondre à beaucoup d'objections soulevées par quelques-uns qui ont été à Manitoba et ne l'ont vu qu'en noir."¹⁷

It has been seen that Lacombe's observations bear out the hypothesis that earlier influences of the

1877, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 522.

¹⁵Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 16 July, 1877, Deschâtelets, film 523.

¹⁶Lacombe, letter to Taché, Fall River, Mass., 15 February, 1877, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 506.

¹⁷Lacombe, letter to Taché, Worcester, Mass., 10 March, 1877, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 509.

North-West clergy contributed largely to the pessimism of the French-Canadian attitude. It was also suggested in chapter two that the pessimism continued to be common through the 1870s and even into the 1880s because of a mistrust by French-Canadians of many of the pamphlets that were circulated in French in praise of the land. This too Lacombe's experience seems to bear out. As late as 1880 he wrote this report to St. Boniface:

Mais surtout le clergé désire qu'on publie une brochure, sur Manitoba, ... signée par V.G. ou un de vos prêtres, et cela pour donner confiance à nos gens de campagnes. Quand j'ai représenté qu'on avait déjà des brochures assez détaillées sur Manitoba, on m'a répondu qu'on se défiait toujours de livres, publiés sous les auspices du Gouvernement, et faits en vue de spéculation.¹⁸

While the "gens de campagne" needed more information about the material value of the North-West, Quebec's educated elite were concerned about other problems. Fear of depopulating Quebec dominated the attitude of the educated, from the clergy to the provincial government leaders. The latter had gone as far as they would ever go toward encouraging French-Canadian settlement in Manitoba, when they were

¹⁸Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 14 April, 1880, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 611. Perhaps this letter led to the writing of Elie Tassé's pamphlet, "Le Nord-Ouest", published in the same year.

interviewed by Proulx in 1872. He reported their position to Taché:

Le gouvernement de Québec: "En principe nous sommes contre le dépeuplement de notre province; ceux qui doivent émigrer, nous aimons mieux laisser aller à Manitoba, qu'aux Etats-Unis...."¹⁹

In general, Quebec community leaders, lay and clerical, reacted coldly to Proulx's activities. "Les hommes de Québec," wrote Proulx, "paraissent craindre une croisade publique de ma part...."²⁰

It was this educated class in French-Canadian society that could have produced the propaganda and encouragement that would have changed attitudes toward the value and opportunity of the North-West. Yet Lacombe found the same fears of harming the patrie among both lay and clerical leaders that Proulx had found. In 1876 Lacombe visited Taché's home town to enlist the support of M. de Boucherville himself. The reaction of that community leader was disappointing:

Loin de m'encourager pour notre affaire d'émigration, il m'a assuré qu'il ferait tout en son pouvoir pour empêcher les Canadiens de

¹⁹Proulx, J.B., letter to Taché, Ottawa, 5 June, 1872, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 310.

²⁰Ibid.

la Province de Québec d'émigrer à Manitoba.
Il m'a dit d'aller chercher ceux des Etats-
Unis....²¹

In 1880 T.A. Bernier came East to address the Convention Nationale on behalf of the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba. By then, the Society had become so accustomed to hearing of Quebec fears of depopulation, that Bernier commented on them. He reminded the Convention with subtle understatement that "il est des esprits qui s'alarment peut-être de la propagande faite au nom de notre province,"²² and went on to promise that the Manitobans had no desire to depopulate the mother-province.

Lacombe's letters also show that the argument was extremely common by then. After visiting the Archbishop of Quebec, he had to report a coolness in that prelate's attitude. "C'est toujours la vieille histoire," wrote Lacombe, "on craint de dépeupler la province de Québec, en faveur de Manitoba...."²³ Lacombe wasn't surprised by the Archbishop's attitude.

²¹Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 1 March, 1876, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 476.

²²Bernier, T.A., *Projet de Rapport de la 6^e Commission de la Convention Nationale Sur La Situation Des Canadiens Au Manitoba* (Quebec, 26 June, 1880)

²³Lacombe, letter to Taché, Quebec, 16 April, 1880, Deschâtelets, film 611.

He had already explained the mood of the Quebec clergy to Archbishop Taché:

De nouveau je m'en vais aller trouver les Evêques, leur proposer mon plan et écouter leurs remarques. Ils sont vraiment découragés, en voyant les milliers de nos cultivateurs, qui abandonnent leurs fermes, pour s'en aller faire fortune aux Etats.²⁴

Part of the reason this discouragement about emigration to the U.S. was extended to Manitoba, was that U.S. railroad land agents were often too successful in seducing Manitoba-bound Canadians away from their intended destination. Lacombe wrote that two of the best families sent to Manitoba in early 1880 were lured away en route and ended up in Dakota.²⁵

Contemporary French-Canadians working in the St. Boniface colonisation movement were probably struck more by the fears of depopulating Quebec than by any other form of opposition. Their reliance on co-operation from Quebec community leaders brought them into contact

²⁴Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 6 March, 1880, Deschâtelets, film 606.

²⁵Ibid. This problem was certainly not uncommon. Hansen & Brebner claim that for Canadians going West at this time, "approximately five percent of those who entered [the U.S.] at Duluth bound for Manitoba failed to appear at the border, and they were listed as 'lost' in transit." -- M.L. Hansen & J.B. Brebner, "The Mingling Of The Canadian And American Peoples" (New Haven, 1940) 179.

with the objections of those leaders more than with ²³⁰ those of the masses. Bernier's son, writing his father's biography, was probably repeating that coloniser's opinion of what had prevented French-Canadian settlement in Manitoba, when he wrote:

En vain notre courageuse phalange manitobaine disait: "Messieurs, nous ne voulons pas déraciner du sol natal les Canadiens français qui sont prospères et bien installés dans vos admirables paroisses bas-canadiennes. Notre propagande ne s'adresse qu'à ceux qui ont décidé ou sont forcés de quitter la province de Québec."

Les contradicteurs ne voulurent rien entendre. Et c'est ainsi que le mouvement manitobain, commencé dans la plausibilité, finit par devenir une impossibilité.²⁶

It is not clear to what extent the limitation of French-Canadian concern to the province of Quebec was the result of a fear that the rest of the country was being closed to French-Canadians in any case. Certainly, there was some connexion between the two attitudes. Lacombe, complaining in 1877 about the Quebec-centred feelings of the French-Canadian clergy, connected them with the opinion that the English character of the North-West was a fore-gone conclusion. He wrote to Taché that he often harangued Quebeckers about the necessity of supporting the efforts of the

²⁶Bernier, Noël, "Fannystelle" (St. Boniface? Société Historique de St. Boniface, 1939?) 19. Dom Benoit also was impressed by the importance of this objection. In his "Vie De Mgr Taché" he calls fear of depopulating Quebec the most important impediment to French-Canadian settlement in Manitoba. (198, 384).

North-West clergy "pour conserver ce pays à notre vieille Foi et à notre nationalité", but that usually, "on rit de ma naïveté...."²⁷

It was apparently only after the crisis of 1885 that French-Canadians believed clearly and consciously in an active attempt by the English to exclude them from the North-West. The Riel affair shaped what had been till then only a vague uneasiness or faint suspicion. Thereafter, the idea continued to gain currency. Bernier noted its progress two years after the crisis. "Nous entendons souvent," he wrote, "reprocher aux races anglo-saxonnes de vouloir s'emparer du Nord-Ouest et en faire des provinces anglaises."²⁸ He admitted, moreover, that it was commonly said that certain public figures had sworn to make Manitoba an English province.²⁹ And then he went on, leaving no doubt about what had become the most important objection to his society's attempts to promote French-Canadian immigration:

²⁷Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 10 July, 1877, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 522.

²⁸Bernier, T.A., "Le Manitoba, Champ D'Immigration" (Ottawa, 1887) 21.

²⁹Ibid., 22.

Les Canadiens sont presque noyés dans le Manitoba, ils vont disparaître, pourquoi aller par là, ont dit quelques compatriotes. C'est la dernière raison et la plus sérieuse que l'on ait donnée pour s'opposer à l'émigration de nos compatriotes au Nord-Ouest.³⁰

The harm that such ideas could do when common among the Quebec clergy and lay leaders was often surprising to Taché and Lacombe. Lacombe had spoken of the coolness of the Quebec clergy from the beginning. By 1876 he had even spoken of treachery:

Il y a par ici quelques prêtres qu'on croirait des amis, qui sont loin de favoriser les intérêts de Manitoba surtout par leurs discours.³¹

A decade later, the St. Boniface colonisers were no longer surprised by the lack of co-operation from Quebec. "Il faut le dire," wrote Bernier in 1887, "souvent, dans le but de favoriser des oeuvres locales, ou de garder auprès du clocher natal certaines familles prêtes à s'en éloigner, on a dépeuplé le Manitoba. Nous en avons en mains la preuve écrite."³²

³⁰Ibid., 29.

³¹Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 30 May, 1876, Deschâtelets, film 486.

³²Bernier, op. cit., 80.

Archbishop Fabre, who succeeded Bourget at Montreal, did not share his predecessor's enthusiasm for the Manitoba movement. When the Abbé Beaudry applied for permission to speak about Manitoba in the churches of the Montreal archdiocese, Fabre refused, giving as excuse that a certain Père Nolin already had permission to talk about Manitoba in the archdiocese.³³

³³Fabre, letter to Beaudry, Montreal, 4 March, 1888, Archives de L'Archevêché de Montréal. No record can now be found of any activities that Nolin may have engaged in for the promotion of Manitoba settlement.

Missing records are in fact a prominent element in the sources now available on the subject of this study. On the masthead of Beaudry's newspaper, the Colonisateur Canadien, the official publisher is listed as the Société Générale de Colonisation et de Rapatriement. Any records of the society's existence, other than the newspaper itself, are now missing. So is any trace of the "bureau" that Lacombe organised at Montreal. At present, an organisation called the Voix Nationale continues to promote colonisation in the North-West. One of the older officers of the organisation remembers that when it was founded (in 1927) it inherited the papers of all the various bodies that had previously been concerned with the matter -- and claims, moreover, that they were all passed on to the Bibliothèque St-Sulpice. At the Bibliothèque St-Sulpice there is a great quantity of unexamined and unclassified documents that is at present inaccessible. When the job of sorting them out is finished, it may be found that the records in question are among them. Without waiting for that, a student who is able to get to St. Boniface may find the papers of the Société de Colonisation de Manitoba there.

It seems likely, however, that the evidence that might be revealed by such papers would corroborate what has been found so far. For not only do these conclusions emerge from a reading of the surviving records of opinion (as recorded between 1870 and 1890), but the judgements and experiences of expert observers from Proulx to Lacombe to Bernier bear them out as well.

Three conclusions, then, emerge from a study of opinion between 1870 and 1890, and are verified by a study of contemporary observations of that opinion. They indicate three sorts of attitudes that would tend to keep French-Canadians from settling in the North-West: a disbelief in the material value of the prairie land; a fear that to go to the North-West was to expose oneself and one's national identity to danger; and a conviction that the province of Quebec alone was the patrie of French-Canadians, so that to go to the North-West was to expatriate oneself.

The first of these attitudes was probably more important among farmers, the people who might actually have settled in the North-West. Concern for the national identity or for the welfare of the patrie was more important among the educated classes who might have organised and assisted a movement to the North-West. Thus, educated French-Canadians opposed emigration from Quebec both to the North-West and to New England. Farmers or labourers, often less concerned about national identity, were willing to emigrate. But their low opinion of the prairie land directed emigrants to the United States instead of to Manitoba. It will be seen, moreover, that something more profound than a simple opinion turned this movement to the New England factories rather than to the North-West frontier.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS

A common bond links the three attitudes that have been noted. In a most general sense it appears as a common bond of demoralisation. This demoralisation of the French-Canadians manifested itself in pessimism, fear, and limitation of objectives: pessimism with regard to the North-West's material value, fear of the dangers to be faced there by a French-Canadian minority (and pessimism with regard to French-Canadians ever being a majority in the North-West), fear of depopulation of Quebec, and, more generally, a limitation of horizons to the bounds of that province.

These attitudes contrast strongly with what has been typically represented as the frontier character, the boundless, materialistic optimism and enthusiasm of the North American frontiersman. Turner, whose work on the North-American frontier is classic, maintains that the characteristics which typify the frontiersman are acquired on the frontier, not brought to it from his home:

The wilderness masters the colonist. It finds him a European in dress, industries, tools, modes of travel, and thought. It takes him from the railroad car and puts him in the birch canoe.

It strips off the garments of civilisation and arrays him in the hunting shirt and the moccasin. It puts him in the log cabin of the Cherokee and Iroquois and runs an Indian palisade around him. Before long he has gone to planting Indian corn and ploughing with a sharp stick; he shouts the war cry and takes the scalp in orthodox Indian fashion. In short, at the frontier the environment is at first too strong for the man.¹

Of course, the whole frontier hypothesis could hardly exist without attributing to the frontier's own influence the characteristics which typify the frontiersman. This is the basis of a common Canadian approach as well as American;² it is what Prof. Lower implies when he says that certain Canadian social characteristics were "forest-born".³

But Turner's description, and the whole frontier hypothesis with it, appear to involve a good deal of psychological assumption. Were the frontier characteristics made famous by Turner created at the frontier, or were they already the characteristics of a

¹Turner, F.J., "The Frontier In American History" (New York, 1921) 4.

²Zaslow, Morris, "The Frontier Hypothesis In Recent Historiography" in the Canadian Historical Review, 1948.

³Lower, A.R.M., "Colony To Nation".

man who would go to and survive at the frontier?

J.B. Bickersteth, the English, protestant missionary who actually lived for a time on the frontier -- the frontier of the Canadian North-West -- observed that change did in fact appear in the personality of the settler after a period of living in the new country. The European immigrant in particular, he noted, underwent a change in manners, became less scrupulous.⁴ Yet, aside from the limited change in manners, which he ascribed to the influence of neighbours, rather than the wilderness, Bickersteth noted the importance of what a settler was to begin with. People from certain societies were better able to survive and succeed at the frontier than those from other societies. "An entirely English settlement is seldom very progressive," he wrote, referring to Englishmen from England, rather than from Ontario. "The presence of a few bustling Americans or Canadians creates an atmosphere of push."⁵

Since a man's personality is largely shaped by the society in which he lives, the importance of a

⁴Bickersteth, J.B., "The Land Of Open Doors" (Toronto, Musson Book Co., 191-).

⁵Ibid., 244.

settler's social origin is not in any way surprising. Psychologists are unanimous in maintaining that personality is established with virtual permanence by the time adulthood is reached.⁶ Sociologists have found this significant:

Of all the elements which go to make up a society, its mentality is the most difficult to destroy. A man may be uprooted from his surroundings and taken to the antipodes or shut up in a cell, but the society to which he belongs will continue to live in him, in his beliefs and in the entire content of his mental life and the knowledge he takes with him. If such a man has the strength, or if he meets some of his fellows, he may build in some distant spot a society almost identical with the one he left behind.⁷

This certainly explains the observation of Hansen and Brebner that the pioneers of a given frontier came from certain specific origins. It explains too the need for an Aufmarschgebiet to provide the settlers of a new frontier.⁸ A Davey Crockett had to be born in frontier Tennessee to be the frontiersman he was. Men like John Schultz and Charles Mair had not just lived for a time in Ontario; they had been born there. Their personalities had been formed in Upper

⁶See, eg., Morgan, C.T., "Introduction To Psychology" (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1956) 241.

⁷Bouthoul, Gaston, "Traité de Sociologie" in Mannoni, O., "Prospero And Caliban: The Psychology Of Colonisation" (London, Methuen & Co., 1956) 109.

⁸Hansen, M.L., & Brebner, J.B., "The Mingling Of The Canadian And American Peoples".

Canadian society.

The manifestation of supposedly frontier characteristics in men like Schultz and Mair appears too quickly after their arrival at the Rupert's Land frontier for one to suppose that they were not imported from Ontario. This remains so even if they did not behave in the same way before leaving Ontario as they did after arriving at Red River:

It is true that an adult man carries with him wherever he goes all that he is, and experience is powerless to add or subtract anything of any importance. What a man is, however, is not all manifest; he contains latent possibilities. In other circumstances -- at the Antipodes, for instance -- there is an inevitable shifting of the boundary between the latent and the manifest personalities. Thus, although it is the same material a man takes with him into the new environment, it assumes a new shape there, partly as a result of the difference in social pressure but also, and more particularly, as a result of the inner pressures of the man's own personality.⁹

One must be concerned, therefore, with the essential rôle of a society in determining the performance of any of its members at a frontier, and, of course, in determining the attitude and approach of the society's members toward the frontier.

⁹Mannoni, O., op. cit., 109.

And what sort of societies have produced frontiersmen or colonisers? Always they seem to have been societies characterised by a certain element of dynamism, mobility, or dislocation of their parts. North American frontier historians have pictured frontiersmen-producing society as a wild one, in which individual men, free to follow their own initiatives, follow them actively with unconcerned optimism. The North American Aufmarschgebiet was only a semi-settled area, whose inhabitants could and did move around within it, and indeed, only left it when the bearers of a more static society began to settle among them.¹⁰

This frontier society was not created in a generation. The Anglo-American colonists spent a century and a half in the Atlantic coastal area, in contact with Europe, before at last confronting the Appalachians and the interior wilderness. A century and a half of gradual adaptation to new conditions, still tied to Europe's long apron string while facing the frontier, developing the society that would produce Turner's frontiersmen.

¹⁰Hansen & Brebner, "The Mingling Of The Canadian And American Peoples" Chapter 1.

And even those first colonisers who came from Britain in the seventeenth century to help build the first American Aufmarschgebiet -- even they had come from a special society characterised by mobility. For a century, by the time the British-American colonies were founded, Britain had been shaken by such a violent economic and social revolution, that civil war was produced by it at the same time as were the colonies. For generations the enclosures had been dislocating English farmers -- generations not only of wandering landless around the English countryside, but also of learning that they could survive anyway.

A special period of time -- a period of dislocation or movement -- seems necessary to prepare a society to send out colonists. An Aufmarschgebiet, it appears, can be created during what one might call an Aufmarschzeit. The Israelites were required to wander forty years in the desert before they could settle the land of Canaan -- long enough not just to permit the older generation to adapt itself to new conditions, but for that generation that had known Egyptian slavery to die off completely, and for a new generation of desert-born nomads to take over. The origins of the Greeks remain obscure, but those of their great colonisation

movement are clear:

The expansion of the Greeks beyond Greece proper and the coasts of the Aegean, the plantation of Greek colonies on the shores of Thrace and the Black Sea, in Italy and Sicily, even in Spain and Gaul ... must not be regarded as a single or isolated phenomenon. It was the continuation of the earlier expansion over the Aegean Islands and the coast of Asia minor....¹¹

Mediaeval colonists too came from societies already characterised by mobility. The Vikings, whose colonisation movement carried them as far east as Russia and as far west as America, had spent centuries in their Scandinavian homelands forced into lives of mobility by the scarcity of arable land,¹² before embarking on their great rush of settlement. Norway was an Aufmarschgebiet in which was prepared the settlement of Vikings in Ireland. Ireland prepared the settlement of Iceland, and Iceland that of Greenland. Characteristically, the founder of the Greenland settlement was an outlaw, banished from Iceland after conviction on a charge of murder.¹³

¹¹Bury, J.B., "History of Greece" (London, Macmillan, 1959) 86.

¹²Heaton, Herbert, "Economic History of Europe" (New York, Harper, 1948) 72.

¹³Characteristic, that is, of Turner's frontiersman, who values his own initiative and freedom above an impersonal law. Eric the Red explored Greenland and planned its colonisation during the three years (982-985) of his exile from Iceland.

The expansion of Muscovy and the growth that led Russian colonisation across Asia followed a long period of dislocation caused first by the Mongol invasion and its destruction of the Kievan state. Further invasions by the Swedish and Teutonic Knights left Novgorod alone in Russian hands. The defeat of the Teutonic Knights on Lake Peipus by Alexander Nevsky, Prince of Novgorod in 1242 was the beginning of a constant tradition of aggressiveness that enabled Alexander's heirs, as princes of Muscovy, to extend their power in two continents. The growing friction between Moscow and its neighbours, and later between Moscow and the Tartars, kept Russian conditions unsettled, dynamic. When Ivan the Terrible finally reduced the Tartar stronghold of Kazan, three centuries after the battle of Lake Peipus, opening vast territories to colonisation east of the Volga, an aggressive people was ready to move into them.¹⁴ The steady expansion of Muscovite authority during those three centuries had permitted the steady settling of territory recovered from Tartar domination. The

¹⁴Charques, R.D., "A Short History of Russia" (New York, Dutton, 1958) 65.

Russians, thrown into an unsettled state by the original conquest, forced to live in the forests, had gradually become frontiersmen, and the steady pushing back of the frontier had perpetuated the frontiersman psychology.

In the West, colonisers were again produced by societies already put into turmoil by military or religious disturbances. The appearance of the frontier-clearing Cistercians in the 12th century and the whole colonising movement that preoccupied Europeans throughout the 12th and 13th centuries followed the mobilisation of European manpower for resistance against Saracen, Viking, and Magyar invaders in the 8th to 11th centuries. Dislocation of farmers by the invasions had left an uprooted society ready to re-commence settlement and to push into new colonisation areas.

In each of these cases a colonisation movement followed a period of mobilisation. Each society that became colonising had successfully met some obstacle. Sometimes it was a military obstacle, like the barbarian or infidel invaders for mediaeval Europeans; sometimes an economic obstacle, like the establishment of a settlement on America's Atlantic seaboard, or the dislocation caused by Britain's 16th-17th century

economic revolution; and sometimes both, like the combined obstacles of Tartar might and forest frontier for mediaeval Muscovites.

French Canada in 1870 was far from the condition of any of these successfully colonising societies. It was not a society in movement, and, far from having successfully met and overcome an obstacle, it was a society that considered itself conquered, had failed in 1837 and 1838 to liberate itself, and had finally been obliged to settle for a compromise with the conquerors. Politically, the compromise took the form of acceptance of the Union and again of Confederation. In the latter French-Canadians could at least regain a partial sovereignty over their ancient Canada, but limited their national horizons at the same time. The economic compromise involved a withdrawal from competition with the English,¹⁵ and a concentration on subsistence agriculture, uncommercial in intent and unchanging in method, with a consequent abandoning of increasingly exhausted farm land as rising industrial

¹⁵See lists of merchants in the fur trade, 1760-1780, for example, in Reports of the Archives of the Province of Quebec.

towns offered employment and cash wages.¹⁶

In a sense French-Canadians had indeed confronted an obstacle in the Conquest, and had successfully ensured their national survival in spite of it. But they had not got rid of the Conquerors, nor undone the Conquest itself. Expulsion of a conqueror, repulsion of an invader, are aggressive, expansive actions; they imply motion, outward motion. What the French-Canadians had achieved had been achieved by conservation, by stasis.

The Conquest cut off immediate prospects of French-Canadian growth by immigration. Not that immigration had contributed largely to French-Canadian population growth in the period prior to the Conquest. The spurt of immigration that marked Talon's term as Intendant was the last notable influx of population during the French Regime.¹⁷ After almost a century of growth by natural increase, the French-Canadian population had already become a distinct and formed entity, a separate national group, by the time of the Conquest. This the conquerors recognised, and referred to the conquered, accordingly, as "the

¹⁶See Séguin, M., "La Conquête Et La Vie Economique Des Canadiens" in "L'Action Nationale" December, 1946.

¹⁷See Edgar McInnis, "Canada", 55.

Canadians" rather than "the French".¹⁸

The Royal Proclamation of 1763, drawing the boundary of the province of Quebec close in around the limits of the seigneuries,¹⁹ made the extent of the province correspond surprisingly closely with the extent of settlement (or of settleable land). It created the impression that the province, if not already completely settled, was not so unsettled that the heirs of the present population could not properly fill it. Such, indeed, was the impression of early British administrators. Murray and Carleton based their policies on it, with Carleton writing to London in 1767:

Having arrayed the strength of His Majesty's old and new Subjects, and shewn the great Superiority of the Latter, it may not be amiss to observe, that there is not the least Probability, this present Superiority should ever diminish, on the Contrary 'tis more than probable it will increase and strengthen daily.... While this severe Climate, and the Poverty of the Country discourages all but the Natives, its Healthfulness is such, that these multiply daily, so that, barring Catastrophe shocking to think of, this Country must, to the end of Time, be peopled by the Canadian Race, who already have taken such firm root, and got to so great a Height, that any new Stock transplanted will be totally hid....²⁰

¹⁸eg. See General Murray's Report on Quebec, 1762, Document No. 51 in Waite, P.B., ed., "Pre-Confederation" (Scarborough, Prentice-Hall, 1965) 46-7.

¹⁹In Kerr, D.G.G., "A Historical Atlas of Canada" (Toronto, Nelson, 1959?). Compare Plate No. 27 (p.24) with plate No. 41 (p.31).

²⁰In P.B. Waite, ed., "Pre-Confederation" 52-53 (Document No. 56).

The old areas of the province were indeed soon filled. On January 10, 1824, the Montreal Gazette reported that Papineau had told the legislative assembly: "seigneurial land in situations fit for cultivation is now nearly all taken up...."²¹ This encouraged French-Canadians to consider the province as already settled. Lord Durham noted the attitude in his Report:

The English population ... looked on the American Provinces as a vast field for settlement and speculation, and in the common spirit of the Anglo-Saxon inhabitants of that continent, regarded it as the chief business of the Government, to promote, by all possible use of its legislative and administrative powers, the increase of population and the accumulation of property....

The Assembly [i.e. the French-Canadians] ... looked on the Province as the patrimony of their own race; they viewed it not as a country to be settled, but as one already settled; and instead of legislating in the American spirit, and first providing for the future population of the Province, their primary care was, in the spirit of legislation which prevails in the old world, to guard the interests and feelings of the present race of inhabitants, to whom they considered the new-comers as subordinate....²²

What Lord Durham called "the spirit which prevails in the old world" -- the feeling that Quebec was an already-established country with an already-

²¹In Ibid., 77 (Document No. 82).

²²Craig, G.M., ed., "Lord Durham's Report" (Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, 1963) 37-38.

settled population -- involved, of course, a rejection of mobility. If a population is considered to be settled, it is not moving. Nor did French-Canadians (by all accounts) wish to move. Durham himself described them as a "stationary society"²³ and Durham's chief investigator, Stewart Derbyshire, claimed they described themselves in the same way:

Locomotive faculties they seem to have none. Each man desires to dig the same piece of ground, & no more, that his father dug before him.... "Our people," he [Papineau is reported to have] said, "don't want english capital nor english people here -- they have no ambition beyond their present possessions, & never want to go beyond the sound of their own Church Bells."²⁴

Whether this tendency to remain from generation to generation on the same land was the result of a natural conservative character, normal in any mature society, or whether it was the result of the fact that the government did not create new seigneuries into which the French-Canadians could expand,²⁵ the result was immobility, and a frame of mind accustomed to it.

²³Ibid., 28.

²⁴In P.B. Waite, "Pre-Confederation" 86-87 (Document No. 93).

²⁵As in M. Séguin's article, "La Conquête Et La Vie Economique Des Canadiens".

When, in the 1840s, overcrowding and exhaustion of the soil in the old-settled regions became an important problem, a conservative spirit was seen partly as creating, partly as perpetuating the problem. A special report, written for the provincial government in 1850, gave this explanation:

Le sol primitif possédant par lui-même une richesse extraordinaire, produisant sans engrais ... des récoltes abondantes, rendait en ce sens le travail de l'homme inutile ou de moindre utilité: la virginité du sol et sa durabilité permettait que pendant des années on put retirer de la terre la même récolte.... C'est ainsi que notre sol s'en est allé s'appauvrissant jusqu'à ce qu'épuisé il a cessé de produire le blé... Le mal a surgi si à coup, il était si peu attendu de la classe agricole qui jouissait sans souci des biens du présent, que le découragement a saisi bien des coeurs qui se sont résignés avec l'apathie du désespoir à un mal qu'ils ont cru au-dessus de leur pouvoir de faire cesser.²⁶

By the time that Manitoba colonisation became a possibility for Canadians, Quebec had taken some steps to meet its agricultural problem. But the reports of the directors of the province's agricultural school at Ste-Anne de la Pocatière show that conservatism was too strong in French-Canadian agricultural society. New cures to new problems were not readily accepted. In the report for 1876-7, director Narcisse Proulx wrote:

²⁶In P.B. Waite, ed., "Pre-Confederation" 81 (Document No. 87).

Notre culture canadienne a besoin de progresser. Tout le monde reconnaît son état d'infériorité et la nécessité d'entrer franchement dans la voie des améliorations. La routine et les préjugés ont encore trop de partisans; il faut qu'ils soient combattus par tous les moyens possibles.²⁷

In the report for 1877-8, L.H. Massue, president of the province's Conseil d'Agriculture, complained that students arrived at the college "sans aucune notion de progrès agricole,"²⁸ but that, despite their great need for education, their fathers could not be persuaded to let them go away from the farms long enough to receive it:

D'ailleurs, quoique les idées de progrès agricole aient fait beaucoup de chemin dans ces dernières années, la masse des cultivateurs ne comprend pas encore suffisamment l'importance de ce progrès, pour qu'on puisse exiger d'elle des sacrifices trop considérables.²⁹

Thus conservatism perpetuated itself from generation to generation. The conservatism of fathers unwilling

²⁷1'Ecole d'Agriculture de Ste-Anne de la Pocatière, "Rapport ... 1876-77" (Ste-Anne de la Pocatière, H. Proulx, 1877) 2.

²⁸1'Ecole d'Agriculture de Ste-Anne de la Pocatière, "Rapport ... 1877-78" (Ste-Anne de la Pocatière, H. Proulx, 1878) 5.

²⁹Ibid., 11.

to send their sons to agricultural school meant that only 12 students attended its courses regularly during the 1876-7 academic year.³⁰

The immobility of French-Canadian agricultural society corresponded to an ideal held by urban intellectuals. Followers of Wordsworth or German romantics, they saw the agricultural life as complete opposition to dynamism.

Pour eux, la culture, c'était essentiellement le repos de l'âme, un accord parfait entre l'être et le monde où il vit, mais un accord qui ne pouvait sourdre que de la paix de l'esprit et des sens.³¹

The concept of nationality was, in true romantic style, an extension of the rural peasant community, the village united by blood relationship as well as propinquity. It praised the desires which Derbyshire attributed to Papineau's French-Canadians of never wanting to leave the neighbourhood of the church spire.

Heureux qui le connaît, plus heureux qui l'habite, Et, ne quittant jamais pour chercher d'autres cieux les rives du grand fleuve où le bonheur l'invite, sait vivre et sait mourir où dorment ses aïeux!³²

³⁰l'Ecole d'Agriculture de Ste-Anne de la Pocatière, "Rapport ... 1876-77". In the same year, enrollment at the Ontario Agricultural College was 101.

³¹Jean Ethier-Blais, op. cit.

³²Crémazie, Octave, "Le Canada" in "Oeuvres Complètes" (Montreal, Beauchemin & Valois, 1882) 138.

Immobility thus became not only a way of life for rural French-Canadians, it had also become an ideal for the intellectuals, the educated leaders of French-Canada.³³

Yet even the agricultural crisis did not throw French-Canadian society into mobility. It did not leave people dislocated, because new urban factories were ready to absorb them just as quickly as they left the farms. Moving from farm to factory, the French-Canadian was never without the one or the other. Typically, he began the change only by leaving the farm temporarily, working for a season in the U.S., then, quitting the farm permanently only after finding a permanent position across the border. This is not at all the sort of dislocation seen in the other cases of societies mobilised for colonisation. In those cases people were first forced to leave their old homes, and only then, after a certain period of homelessness, could they begin settling in new ones.

In the conditions of mid-19th-century French-Canada, colonisation appeared not as a way of creating

³³It is interesting that Pierre Chauveau, first prime minister of the province of Quebec, was the author of the novel Charles Guérin, whose heroes, a group of city intellectuals and professionals, only find peace and personal fulfilment by abandoning the city for pioneer farming in the Eastern Townships.

a new world, but as a way of preserving an old one, not as a way of making a new life for colonists, but as a way of preventing them from making a new life in the city. It has already been seen that in French-Canadian colonisation literature there was a strong preoccupation with "la conservation de notre nationalité". The organisers of the movement, however, wished to conserve more than a nationality; they wanted to maintain a way of life.

It was natural that the Church should have a particular interest in the colonisation movement. Its concern was in the moral welfare of its parishioners. Its own leaders were educated in the same seminaries and classical colleges that implanted the romantic agricultural ideal in the minds of the lay intellectuals. To them, the milieu of industrial America was a threat to the Christian virtues of the French-Canadian parish. The brochures that decried emigration and promoted colonisation were largely written by priests. Church-sponsored societies spread the colonisation propaganda and raised funds to help young farmers get started on the new lands.

Under these circumstances, the plan for French-Canadian colonisation outlined by the Curé Labelle in

1879 is not surprising in its un-frontiersmanlike attitude. "Il faut adopter un plan de colonisation," wrote Labelle, "en rapport avec les moeurs, les idées, les habitudes, et les besoins religieux et moraux des Canadiens-Français."³⁴ The plan aimed at minimising the dislocation involved in pioneering, by creating as much as possible of the old milieu in the new region before the arrival of the pioneers:

Le sentiment religieux chez les Canadiens-Français est plus fort que l'or, l'argent et la misère, parce que son point d'appui est au ciel. Faites vivre un prêtre dans un canton, construisez une modeste chapelle pour y dire la messe, et la colonisation de cette localité se fait comme par enchantement pourvu que l'on colonise graduellement et que l'on suive la zone des bonnes terres....³⁵

The same conservative motives and ideals involved in Quebec colonisation were to be found among the French-Canadian colonisers of Manitoba. They saw French-Canadian settlement in the North-West as a means of preserving the French-Catholic culture in the region. In his pamphlet on Manitoba colonisation, T.A. Bernier expressed the motives:

³⁴"Projet De La Société De Colonisation Du Diocèse De Montréal Pour Coloniser La Vallée De L'Ottawa Et Le Nord De Ce Diocèse (Montreal, Imprimerie Canadienne, 1879) 6.

³⁵Ibid.

Nous le comprenons, le colon doit d'abord chercher son intérêt; mais pour nous, la colonisation du Manitoba ne se réduit pas à une simple question d'intérêts matériels; il s'y mêle des motifs d'un ordre national....³⁶

Shortly after, the Société des Missionnaires Oblats de St-Jean-Baptiste ou des Missionnaires Colonisateurs pour les Besoins de la Colonisation en Canada formulated a plan for French-Canadian colonisation, mainly in the North-West. Its motives showed the usual conservative ideals:

Prévenir l'émigration de nos compatriotes; ramener dans le sein de la patrie ceux dont la Foi est exposée à l'étranger; fixer notre peuple au sol; le détourner du luxe, de l'oisiveté, de l'ivrognerie, du blasphème; lui faire aimer la vie simple et paisible des champs....³⁷

The method by which these ends were to be attained recalled Labelle's plan for the Ottawa valley. The missionaries themselves would first go into the region to be settled, and there establish a religious settlement. This would form a nucleus around which the French-Canadian farmers could settle:

Pour atteindre ce but les missionnaires O.S.J.-B. se proposent, à l'exemple des religieux du Moyen-Age, de prendre la solitude pour théâtre de leurs opérations "Vox clamantis in deserto."³⁸

³⁶Bernier, T.A., "Le Manitoba: Champ D'Immigration" 81.

³⁷Paradis, C.A.M., "Société Des ... Missionnaires Colonisateurs...." (Montreal, 1890) 13.

³⁸Ibid., 14.

When the lay settlers came to the region, they would find the important amenities waiting for them. Their move from the old St. Lawrence parish to the new prairie one would be as little as possible a change:

A son arrivée le colon trouvera toutes choses bien chères à son cœur: le prêtre, l'église et l'école pour ses enfants. "Parare Domino plebem perfectam."³⁹

If this sort of scheme was tailored to the needs, habits, and attitudes of the French-Canadians, as Labelle claimed it was, then it only bears out the contention that French-Canadian society in 1870, by its conservatism and stability,⁴⁰ was the opposite to the sort of society that can produce frontiersmen. The conditions it sought to create for its colonists were far from those that attracted frontiersmen.

The typical frontiersman was attracted to the wilderness not by the spiritual amenities it offered, but by the opportunity for material gain. Bickersteth's observations suggest that the attitudes of Bernier and the colonising missionaries were irrelevant:

³⁹Ibid., 15. It is interesting to recall the origins of Montreal while thinking of this plan for colonisation.

⁴⁰The nature of the move to the city must be taken into account in reading the word "stability".

This may be true of the American -- I don't know -- but it is certainly true of the Westerner, who is a product of many cosmopolitan influences. His motto seems to be, "I am in this world simply to get out of it all I can for myself."⁴¹

Bickersteth went so far as to claim: "Everyone in the West is out to make every red cent they [sic] can, and the preacher is almost always considered to be on the same quest."⁴² This lack of respect for the clergy was only one sign of the irrelevance of religious facilities for the typical frontiersman. Bickersteth found attendance at his services was poor:

People, who in more civilised climes were probably good church-goers and sent their children to Sunday-school, have now long since got absolutely out of the way of going to any place of worship on Sunday.⁴³

While the frontier may not master the colonist in the way described by Turner, it nevertheless confronts him with a material situation that must force itself upon his attentions. The mere problem of physical survival is so huge, so immediate, that the pioneer must

⁴¹Bickersteth, J.B., op. cit., 93.

⁴²Ibid., 56.

⁴³Ibid., 38.

be practically obsessed with it simply to live. This was not recognised by French-Canadian colonisers, for the Curé Labelle had a peculiar idea of the frame of mind of that people:

Le Canadien ... sait que l'homme ne vit pas seulement de pain, que s'il est pauvre sur la terre, il est riche dans le ciel et, si la mort se présent à lui, à sa femme, à ses enfants, avec son *triste* cortège, le médecin des âmes est là pour lui ouvrir les portes de la Jérusalem céleste. Peut-on reprocher à un chrétien de préférer le ciel à la terre?⁴⁴

But how is all this connected with the claim that a basic demoralisation or negativism was to be found in the French-Canadian attitudes toward North-West colonisation between 1870 and 1890, and with the three basic attitudes found in earlier chapters?

In the first place, the Church's concept of what colonisation's aim was, of how it fit into French-Canadian life, determined the nature of the appeal that was made to French-Canadians to settle on the prairies. Since supplying individual settlers with great material rewards was not the aim of the movement, the offer of such rewards did not figure as prominently in its appeals

⁴⁴"Projet De La Société De Colonisation Du Diocèse De Montréal Pour Coloniser La Vallée De L'Ottawa Et Le Nord De Ce Diocèse" 7.

as it did, say, in contemporary English-language propaganda.

English colonising pamphlets for the North-West, whether published by government or by private companies, appealed to the material self-interest of readers. "At the present prices of produce," claimed a typical English-language pamphlet in 1880, "a farmer in this vicinity SHOULD MAKE A FORTUNE in two or three years...."⁴⁵ There were no conditions attached; settlers were promised a fortune, invited to come in search of material wealth.

French-Catholic colonisers could not make such invitations, because, as Bickersteth pointed out:

When a man dedicates every particle of brain in his head and every muscle in his frame to the all-absorbing passion of dying a rich man -- when he sacrifices every interest in life, and throws even the most sacred scruple to the winds in the craze for an ever larger balance at the bank -- you can understand that religion (if it stands in the way) must necessarily, like everything else, go to the wall.⁴⁶

French-language pamphleteers took care, therefore, not to attract colonists with too material a preoccupation, not to make people think they were coming to the North-

⁴⁵"The Letters Of Rusticus: Investigations In Manitoba And The North-West" (Montreal, Dougall & Son, 1880) 13.

⁴⁶Bickersteth, J.B., op. cit., 91-92.

West to get rich quickly. The very first words of the brochure by the colonisateur de neuf ans d'expérience were:

Le Manitoba et le Nord-Ouest Canadien ne sont ni bons ni avantageux pour le jeune monsieur qui voudrait vivre à rien faire, ou pour le spéculateur qui voudrait faire de l'argent à gros coups sans ne jamais ôter son habit et sans ne jamais transpirer....⁴⁷

This cautious attitude of the French-Canadian colonisers was motivated by the essentially conservative aims of their colonisation movement. To preserve stability in the French-Canadian community, to extend the harmony of the small, rural, church-centred village, necessitated a qualitative selection of immigrants. Married men with families were preferred for their stability. The ratio of men to women in Manitoba in 1872 was 20 to one, wrote Joseph Royal to George Cartier. "Vous en conviendrez avec nous, ce n'est pas là la bonne émigration...."⁴⁸ It was a scruple which English promoters -- concerned only with getting the

⁴⁷"Le Nord-Ouest Canadien" 1.

⁴⁸Royal, Joseph, letter to George Cartier, St. Boniface, 1 June, 1872, Public Archives of Canada, Cartier Papers, Correspondence, M.G. 27, I, D4, vol. 5.

land filled -- did not have to pay attention to. In fact, the method of getting established in the North-West, recommended by English-language pamphlets, worked best with single men. It suggested that the immigrant should begin as a hired labourer in the new land:

A young man without family, willing to work and save, would secure himself a home in a few years, provided he had only ten dollars to purchase a homestead claim. Work is to be had at high wages, and he could work for other parties part of the time, and then hire help again in turn to assist in putting up a small homestead house. After that he could plough and fence in a few acres for a crop in the following Spring. The next year he could earn enough to buy a yoke of oxen and other cattle, and thus, in a short time, he might become, comparatively, an independent farmer.⁴⁹

To French-Canadian intellectuals, hired labour on the CPR seemed too reminiscent of the factory towns of New England. The availability of work in the North-West was either denied,⁵⁰ or ignored. Consequently, pamphleteers found themselves inviting only "ceux qui ont assez de patience et qui sont bien décidés à se soumettre à toutes les exigences d'un pays

⁴⁹Anon., "Province of Manitoba: Information For Intending Emigrants" (Ottawa, Grison, Fréchette, 1874) 48.

⁵⁰eg. Morin, J.B., "La Vallée De La Saskatchewan" (Joliette, 1893) 28.

nouveau, et possèdent des moyens suffisants pour leur permettre de vivre pendant un an...."⁵¹ This amount was variously estimated, but generally within the range of \$400 to \$600.⁵² The colonisateur de neuf ans d'expérience suggested a man would need \$550 to get established on a free homestead, but advised readers to buy CPR land in a good location rather than to take a free homestead in a bad one.⁵³ National motives prompted this advice. By settling in specific areas, rather than on scattered homesteads, French-Canadians could be near each other, the better to maintain their identity.

Thus, strategic as well as idealistic considerations led French-Canadian pamphleteers to put a price on the right to settle in the North-West. But English-language writers were promising "any man whose capital consists on his arrival of little but brawny arms and a brave heart" that within a very few years he

⁵¹Canada, Dept. of Agriculture, "Le Grand Occident Canadien" (Ottawa, 1881) 15.

⁵²eg. Canada, Dept. of Agriculture, "Le Manitoba Et Les Territoires Du Nord-Ouest" (Ottawa, 1881). This is not a pamphlet with numbered pages, but a single long sheet printed on both sides and folded like an accordion.

⁵³"Le Nord-Ouest Canadien" 10. Elie Tassé, in his pamphlet of 1880, suggested that the French-Canadian settler ought to think of spending between \$340 and \$1,240 just for his land. ("Le Nord-Ouest", 38).

could become "the proud possessor of a valuable farm, which has cost him little but the sweat of his brow."⁵⁴

The Hudson's Bay Company published a booklet of prairie success stories in 1881, describing the cases of settlers who had arrived three and five years before without any money, and who were now worth vast sums of money.

"Numerous similar instances," concluded the authors, "can be met with by any one driving through the country."⁵⁵

The CPR promised that a man who came with some capital already at his disposal was set to lead a princely life, but that "an energetic man will find time to earn something" if he arrives without capital, "either on the railway or by working for neighbouring farmers, and in addition to this there is the chance of obtaining a partial crop the first year."⁵⁶

The French-Canadian picture, contrasting to this in its negative attitude toward certain kinds of

⁵⁴Spence, Thomas, "The Prairie Lands of Canada" (Montreal, Gazette, 1880) 10.

⁵⁵The Hudson's Bay Company, "Manitoba And The North-West" (London, Sir Joseph Causton, 1881) 15.

⁵⁶Canadian Pacific Railway, "Manitoba, The Canadian North-West" (n.p., 1883?) 12.

immigrants and toward the possibility or advisability of looking for a job to get started in the North-West, was spread quickly from the Church and its associate lay colonisers to the general reading public. The attitudes of Taché and his associates were reflected in Le Métis. And articles from Le Métis were picked up and re-printed in Quebec newspapers, thus appearing before the French-Canadian readers of the East:

Winnipeg regorge d'immigrants, la très-grande majorité n'ont pas de famille. Ce n'est pas là la meilleure immigration. Beaucoup sont repartis en voyant qu'ils avaient été trompés sur l'ouvrage et les prix de la main d'oeuvre. Ce qu'il faut ce sont des cultivateurs sérieux.⁵⁷

More direct, more serious, was the influence of men like Lacombe himself. Much as he wanted to bring French-Canadians to Manitoba, Lacombe was not ready to accept all who were willing to go. He and Taché insisted that emigrants should have the amount of money recommended by the pamphlets. In 1874, when grasshoppers destroyed a great part of the Manitoba

⁵⁷Le Courrier Du Canada, 12 June, 1877, 2.

crop, Lacombe had Taché's brother wire the archbishop from Ottawa to ask whether Lacombe ought still to bring to Manitoba the French-Canadians he had gathered in Quebec. The reply instructed that "emigrants with means to support themselves may come," but that "poor people ought not to come this year."⁵⁸ Lacombe's claims to have rejected hundreds or thousands more emigrants on his own in later years were even more spectacular. The first appears in a letter to Taché of 1876:

Je suis accablé de gens qui veulent aller à Manitoba. "Pauvres gens, leur dis-je, que voulez vous venir faire chez nous, vous n'avez à peine de quoi payer votre passage."⁵⁹

Bad times in the East made widespread unemployment, and people without jobs were ready to try anything. Government newspapers, probably wanting to get rid of a public embarrassment and responsibility, encouraged the unemployed to leave the province.

Un bon nombre de jeunes gens sont sans emploi; ceux-ci devraient se diriger immédiatement vers le Manitoba où ils

⁵⁸Taché, A.A., telegramme to J.C. Taché, St. Boniface, 1 August, 1874, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers on microfilm, film 419.

⁵⁹Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 30 May, 1876, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 486.

trouveraient un établissement assez facile
et surtout avantageux....⁶⁰

The result was a certain pressure on Lacombe. "Dans ce moment," he wrote to Taché, "je suis assomé par cette foule de gens qui veulent aller à Manitoba."⁶¹ Lacombe began to emphasise negative arguments in his public assemblies:

On m'a taxé dans mes discours sur les avantages et les desavantages de Manitoba d'avoir représenté les choses trop en noir. "C'est très bien, ai-je dit, au moins vous ne m'accuserez pas d'exagération."⁶²

In private, he discouraged would-be émigrants more directly:

Si je voulais, je pourrais soulever une grande émigration à Manitoba, la chose est très facile à l'heure qu'il est, mais par mes explications publiques ou privées, j'arrête plusieurs familles prêtes à partir et que je prévois ne devoir pas réussir, pour le moment, à Manitoba -- .⁶³

It was not just a temporary necessity in a time of Manitoba depression, but a permanent policy of

⁶⁰Le Courrier Du Canada, 18 June, 1879, 2

⁶¹Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 6 June, 1876, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 486.

⁶²Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 22 April, 1876, Archives Deschâtelets St. Boniface papers, film 484.

⁶³Lacombe, letter to Taché, Worcester, Mass., 14 April, 1876, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 481.

selected immigration:

Je suis assommé de gens qui viennent me demander pour aller à Manitoba. C'est terrible la misère et le manque de travail partout en ce pays! Je les renvoie et je leur dis que nous n'avons pas besoin d'eux là-bas.⁶⁴

A few selected emigrants were encouraged, however, at the same time. "Cependant," wrote Lacombe, "un certain nombre de bonnes familles partiront de la Province de Québec."⁶⁵

Typical of the sort of colonisation scheme that Lacombe liked to promote was an 1884 plan, worked out jointly by the Archdiocese of St. Boniface and the CPR, to found a model colony of French-Canadians near Qu'Appelle. Lacombe sent a circular letter to the Montreal Diocese clergy, describing the sort of people he wanted for the colony:

5. Les familles aujourd'hui invitées à aller prendre possession de cette contrée, devraient être préférablement de jeunes ménages, dans toute la vigueur de l'âge et de la bonne volonté....

6. On exige que ces colons aient des certificats d'honnêteté et de bonne conduite, qu'ils n'aient pas de dettes et qu'ils soient sobres. De plus, qu'ils aient au moins \$400 devant eux, pour leur aider à faire les premiers travaux d'installation.⁶⁶

⁶⁴Lacombe, letter to Taché, Montreal, 7 February, 1877, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 505.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Lacombe, circular letter to the priests of the diocese of Montreal, Montreal, 5 April, 1884, Archives Deschâtelets, St. Boniface papers, film 750.

After describing the rigorous requirements for colonists, Lacombe added an extra warning even to these qualified few:

Malgré les avantages qui sont offerts, ces nouveaux colons doivent se rappeler qu'il leur faut du courage et de la persévérance, pour ne pas céder devant les difficultés et les contrariétés qui, nécessairement, doivent se rencontrer dans de semblables entreprises.⁶⁷

The desire to establish immigrants immediately in stable, agricultural communities, the fact that colonisation's purpose was to extend the traditional way of life of the St. Lawrence parishes, revulsion at the idea of bringing in single men to work as hired labourers -- all this helps to account for Lacombe's attitude. Moreover, a pragmatic consideration was most certainly involved. A defence was necessary against harm that could be done by French-Canadians who had been to Manitoba, failed, and returned to the East. The effect of their stories could, of course be countered partly by argument, usually ad hominem. Le Canadien quoted Le Métis in 1877 as having claimed that the only people who, having tried and failed in Manitoba, returned to the East to spread false rumours, were lazy vagabonds of no personal merit. "Ils

⁶⁷Ibid.

n'auraient jamais dû sortir de leur trou; quelques-uns y sont retournés; qu'ils y restent in pace." ⁶⁸ And in his 1880 pamphlet, Eli Tassé mocked them by pointing out:

La terre promise valait sans doute mieux que l'esclavage dur et pénible que les Egyptiens faisaient peser sur les Israélites. Combien, cependant, de ces derniers regrettaient l'Égypte à cause du voyage à travers le désert! ⁶⁹

A less desirable way of countering the influence of such people was to make sure that emigrants did not expect too much in the first place. "Souvenez-vous," wrote the colonisateur de neuf ans d'expérience, "qu'il a fallu deux siècles pour vous donner le confort que vous avez autour de vous aujourd'hui. N'essayer pas à les rivaliser dans le Nord-Ouest dans un an ou deux...." ⁷⁰ This strategy, however, involved the risk that readers' expectations of what Manitoba offered would be so much toned down, that no-one would find it worth-while going.

⁶⁸Le Canadien, 8 June, 1877, 2.

⁶⁹Tassé, Elie, "Le Nord-Ouest", 48.

⁷⁰"Le Nord-Ouest Canadien", 11.

The third way to fight the effect of North-West failures was the sort of selecting of settlers that Lacombe attempted. If he could manage to get to Manitoba only those people who seemed likely to succeed, then the news that would come back to Quebec and New England would only be good.

The strategy, however, involved the danger of under-estimating the ability of would-be settlers. In this sense it was a manifestation of the basic demoralisation that has been pointed out. It was not to be expected from a typical frontiersman. "One of the characteristics of people in a pioneer region is their unbounded optimism."⁷¹ But the turning away of so many would-be settlers involved an evident pessimism, a fear that they would fail if they were accepted.

Perhaps there were reasons why French-Canadians might be expected to fail more at the frontier than English-Canadians. The lamentations of the directors of the agricultural school at Ste-Anne de la Pocatière suggest an unwillingness or inability of French-Canadian farmers to adapt to new conditions.

⁷⁰"Le Nord-Ouest Canadien", 11.

⁷¹Dawson, C.A., & Younge, E.R., "Pioneering In The Prairie Provinces: The Social Side Of The Settlement Process" (Toronto, Macmillan, 1940) 286.

Their methods and operations were geared too often to subsistence farming, not enough to the commercial agriculture of the prairies. In the North-West, the farmers from Quebec usually applied their old methods to the new land:

Agricultural development took place slowly during the early years. Settlers were forced to emphasize self-sufficiency. Cattle and other livestock production rather than wheat-growing were the main means of livelihood. As a matter of fact the agriculture of these colonies was quite similar to that carried on in the more isolated sections of rural Quebec at that time.⁷²

Failure to apply more progressive techniques -- the same problem faced at Ste-Anne de la Pocatière -- led to displacement of French-Canadian settlers by new waves of English immigrants:

Because of their greater farming efficiency the newcomers easily displaced the more unstable French-Canadian voyageurs and métis who hitherto had occupied the land. That such a displacement had not taken place earlier was due to the fact that the earlier migrants, namely the French-Canadian settlers, had colonised en masse.⁷³

In fact, the suggestion that French-Canadians were less able to cope with the conditions of prairie

⁷²Dawson, C.A., "Group Settlement: Ethnic Communities In Western Canada" (Toronto, Macmillan, 1936) 344.

⁷³Ibid., 348.

settlement than were, say, the English-Canadians, is not surprising. It has already been seen that conditions in French-Canada in 1870 were far from those of other societies which had successfully produced colonisers or frontiersmen. Ontario's, on the other hand, was such a society. The rapid increase of its population in the early and middle 19th-century brought the settlement of its available lands. Increases of 497,000 or 109 percent in the 1840s, and 444,000 or 47 percent in the 1850s⁷⁴ compare well with Manitoba's increase for any census decade, or with the North-West's for any decade except 1901-1911. They indicate the sort of growth that immigration brought to a country being settled, a country whose frontier was being opened.

It hardly seems necessary to show at any length that Ontario in this period was in fact a society likely to produce frontiersmen. Hansen and Brebner long ago established mid-century Canada-West as an Aufmarschgebiet for settlers of the U.S, middle west.⁷⁵ The men Ontario sent to Manitoba were equally Turnerian frontiersmen. How else consider their

⁷⁴The rounded numerical increases are taken from Edgar McInnis, "Canada", 255.

⁷⁵Hansen & Brebner, op. cit., 14, 135 et. seq. It is not a new idea that Grits demanding acquisition of the North-West in the 1850s and 60s represented a frontiersman element in Ontario that needed a new frontier.

behaviour in the North-West?

The Westerner defended himself and resented governmental restrictions.... The idea of the personality of law was often dominant over the organized machinery of justice. That method was best which was most direct and effective.⁷⁶

This Turnerian description certainly applies to the Ontarians of Manitoba. The forcible release from prison of a protestant minister convicted of performing an abortion on a girl he had himself seduced, the subsequent jail-breaks engineered by the Ontario party at Red River, the desire for vengeance among the Ontario volunteers of 1870, the killing of Goulet, violence to other Métis, references to Taché as a criminal, traitor, or rebel, and the seizure of Métis lands -- all these suit the picture which Turner drew of real frontiersman behaviour.

These considerations, then, lead one to expect that failure on the prairie frontier was more likely for French-Quebeckers than for English-Ontarians. This would tend to account for a greater proportion of returners among French-Canadians, with, consequently, more spreading of pessimistic accounts, bitterness, and lack of confidence among French-Canadians in the East.

⁷⁶F.J. Turner, "The Frontier In American History", 253.

But the performance -- the failure -- of compatriots on the frontier can have a further bad effect on other potential emigrants. The very fact of their failure -- even while English-Ontarians were succeeding -- sets a sort of standard by which the others judge their own abilities, and even by which they set their own aspirations:

The level of aspiration is not constant. Even in a task in which the individual has had no previous experience, he will establish an aspiration level. He seems to do it on the basis of the most plausible frame of reference. If "knowledge" about the behaviour of other groups is given him, he will use this as a frame of reference.⁷⁷

Seeing one's fellows, the members of that class with which one identifies, failing at a certain level of achievement, one tends to lower one's own aims, to work for a lower level of attainment oneself, to restrict one's goals. Thus, the sight of French-Canadians returning as failures from the North-West, while English-Canadian colonisation of the prairies progressed at a rapid rate, reinforced a tendency to think of the North-West as a place for the English, and

⁷⁷Valentine, W.L., & Wickens, D.D., "Experimental Foundations of General Psychology" (New York, Rinehart & Co., 1949) 226.

North-West colonisation as a goal at which French-Canadians could not realistically aim. A characteristic, though later, development was the idea that French-Canadians ought not aim at settling on the plains immediately. They should provide themselves with the security of a chain of settlement based in Quebec and extending without a break across Ontario to Manitoba. It was a common argument when Louis-Philippe Gagnon spoke of it to a 1919 colonisation congress at Chicoutimi:

Si je ne me trompe, un argument assez spécieux a été souvent développé dans l'Est et il semble avoir trouvé crédit auprès d'un grand nombre, à savoir qu'il est beaucoup mieux, pour les Canadiens français, de coloniser d'abord le nord-ouest du Québec, puis d'empiéter sur l'Ontario, afin de venir donner ensuite la main aux compatriotes des plaines.⁷⁸

Gagnon's reply to the argument ("Emparons-nous des terres fertiles où qu'elles se trouvent.")⁷⁹ was in a sense irrelevant. The idea of creeping to Manitoba across Northern Ontario represented a limitation of

⁷⁸Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Canadienne-française, "Le Problème De La Colonisation" (Montreal, 1920) 90.

⁷⁹Ibid.

aspirations. French-Canadians were willing to occupy the poor land of Northern Ontario, because they believed themselves incapable of succeeding on the better land of Manitoba.

Conquest taught French-Canadians to curb their own ambition. One does not expect to rise so high under a foreign ruler as under a familiar regime. Decades of exclusion, not only from public office, but also from military and other positions, tended to create a habit of self-restriction. The resulting demoralisation was described by Pierre Chauveau:

Tandis qu'il faudrait toute une population de gens hardis jusqu'à la témérité, actifs jusqu'à la frénésie, vous rencontrez à chaque pas des imbéciles qui rient de tout, qui se croient des gens bien supérieurs, lorsqu'ils ont répété un tas de sornettes sur l'incapacité, sur l'ignorance, sur la jalousie, sur l'inertie, sur la malchance (il y a de ces gens-là qui croient au destin comme des mahométans), sur la fatalité, qui empêchent leurs compatriotes de réussir, ce qui est en effet un excellent moyen de tout décourager et de tout empêcher.⁸⁰

This discouragement -- so far from the optimism of the frontiersman -- became, in fact, an acceptance of defeat in certain areas, a turning to

⁸⁰Chauveau, Pierre, "Charles Guérin" (Montreal, Revue Canadienne, 1900) 49.

restricted domains. It became the sort of attitude lauded by Labelle when he claimed that the French-Canadian "sait ... que s'il est pauvre sur la terre, il est riche dans le ciel...." When the Queen's birthday honours list in 1879 contained the names of six Canadians but only one French-Canadian, L'Événement commented characteristically that titles and honours were not necessarily a sign of the real worth of a society. The paper then made this revealing observation:

Au collège, les meilleurs élèves, ceux qui ont le plus d'avenir dans la tête du moins, ne sont pas toujours ceux qui obtiennent les prix; et c'est, croyons-nous, dans les petites classes qu'on distribuent [sic] le plus de récompenses.⁸¹

This was the sort of self-consoling attitude that accepted English control of the North-West perhaps a little too quickly, that found the terres incultes de la province de Québec more worth developing and settling with French-Canadians.

It was this demoralisation, this lack of self-confidence, that bolstered conservatism -- a conservatism whose virtues were not the independent, erratic ones of the frontier, but the steady, sobre

⁸¹L'Événement, 28 May, 1879, 2.

ones of the meek labourer. (When, in 1884, a French-Canadian was named auditor-general of the eastern judicial district of Manitoba, L'Etendard of Montreal pointed him out as "un exemple de ce que peuvent le travail, la régularité, l'amour du devoir, unis à une conduite irréprochable.")⁸²

These considerations explain the three basic French-Canadian attitudes toward North-West settlement. Firstly, they were cautious about the material value of the land. After seven years in the Peace River Country, for instance, the missionary Christophe Tessier was unable to commit himself on the region's value.⁸³ His hesitancy was markedly similar to that of the Quebec press, which in so many instances refused to acknowledge the value of the prairies.

Secondly, they accepted too readily the "English Fact" in the North-West. For this, Bernier castigated them in his 1887 pamphlet: "Au lieu de recriminer, il serait plus pratique, plus juste, et plus patriotique d'imiter nos concitoyens d'origine

⁸²L'Etendard, 30 May, 1884, 2.

⁸³Tessier, Christophe, letter to Charles Horetzki, Ft. Dunvegan, 6 October, 1872, Public Archives of Canada.

anglaise...."⁸⁴ (It might also have been useful to stand up and oppose them more forcefully than was sometimes done by French-Canadian leaders. Was it diffidence that led Wilfrid Laurier, in the debate on Riel's expulsion from the House of Commons, to concede that "there have been too many facts raked out of oblivion and laid to the charge of the member from Provencher to permit of his being absolved...."⁸⁵ Why did Chapleau, after pleading at Lépine's trial that Scott had not been murdered, accuse Riel in 1885 of having murdered Scott?⁸⁶ Was it national lack of confidence that made Chapleau thank the "hon. gentlemen opposite for their moderation, their sincerity and their patriotic stand,..."⁸⁷ as they

⁸⁴Bernier, T.A., "Le Manitoba:Champ D'Immigration" 22.

⁸⁵Barthe, Ulric, ed., "Wilfrid Laurier On The Platform" (Quebec, Turcotte & Menard, 1890) p. 22.

⁸⁶Chapleau, J.A., "La Question Riel: Lettre Aux Canadiens-Français" (n.p., n.d.). Another French-Canadian Conservative pamphlet, apparently published in 1887 (Electeurs, Attention, Ne Vous Laissez Pas Tromper) claimed that in 1870 Riel "faisait brutalement et inutilement fusiller Scott, déposé encore vivant dans son cercueil." (p.6)

⁸⁷Chapleau, J.A., "Speech ... On The French Language In The North-West" (Ottawa, Brown Chamberlin, 1890) 1.

abolished the French language in the North-West?)

Finally, demoralisation is seen in the confining of French-Canadian attentions within the limits of the province of Quebec. They further restricted themselves to the conservative limits of a stable, idealised society. Both these limitations militated against enthusiasm for the North-West and North-West colonisation.

It has been suggested that demoralisation resulted from the Conquest. It may, in fact, have been older than the Conquest. Even the first governors of English Quebec commented on the meekness of the habitants. That quality is not a virtue of the frontiersman. One cannot, in this post-Tawney world, resist the temptation to suggest that it may have been a virtue more Catholic than protestant. Certainly there seems a good deal of St. Augustine in what has been cited of the Curé Labelle. The Missionnaires Colonisateurs took their inspiration from mediaeval monasticism.

The characteristics commonly recognised as those of the North American frontiersman -- independence, individuality, opposition to institutions as opposed to

people -- are characteristics which Prof. Tawney might well describe as protestant. So are the characteristic acceptance on the frontier of material ambitions, the dedication to work for material rewards. The French-Canadian concern, on the other hand, with the community rather than with the individual, with the harmony of the rural, church-centered village rather than the single family, and with the family rather than with the single man, appears to belong more to the Catholic tradition and ideal of the social organism.⁸⁸

The usual frontiersman, after all, is still a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant. His name is always Davey, Mike, or Jim. It is interesting that Latin America has had no frontiersmen. Its Catholic populations have remained mainly along the coasts, so that even today a man as perceptive as Walter Lippmann can claim that Latin America's chief problem is the need to colonise its interior, to open its frontier.⁸⁹

The rôle of the Church in the formation of frontiersmen and of the frontiersman characteristics is

⁸⁸See the first section of R.H. Tawney's "Religion And The Rise Of Capitalism".

⁸⁹Lippmann's articles followed a 1965 tour of Latin America.

the subject of another thesis. Some studies have already been done on frontier religion, but they tend to consider how the frontier influenced religion (especially North American Methodism)⁹⁰ rather than how religion shaped the approach to the frontier. This latter sort of study would naturally be undertaken with the assumption that in the main, the frontiersman personality is not a product of the frontier, but that the frontier is, rather, a place at which only people who come to it with a certain personality are able to thrive. This agrees with a basic and universally-acknowledged observation of general psychology; that the personality is formed by the time adulthood is reached; and it is a basis upon which the observations of this whole thesis fit into a system.

In a way, the findings of this study are purely negative; they concern a people who were not frontiersmen.⁹¹ But perhaps consideration of such a people may

⁹⁰Walsh, H.H., "Research In Canadian Church History" in the Canadian Historical Review, 1954.

⁹¹The Métis, of course, were the children of French-Canadians who had gone to the North-West. But those French-Canadians were not frontiersmen. A frontiersman is not just an adventurer; he is not a nomad. He moulds his surroundings; he builds. The fur trade employees did none of that. Nor were they quite as independent as real frontiersmen. They were, after all, servants of a company. And the company expected them to accept discipline. The North-West Company, according to Innis, required applicants for jobs to produce letters from their curés attesting to their moral quality. (H.A. Innis, "The Fur Trade in Canada" 242.)

be useful in the study of the frontier itself, for it seems to indicate that the study of frontiersmen ought to turn away a little from the frontier. Canadian historians have already realised that in the history of this country, attachments to Europe, and to Canadian metropolitan centres, counter-acted to some extent the influence of the frontier, so that the developments of our history are caused by interaction of frontier and metropolitan influences.

But a different sort of assault on the old frontier hypothesis is suggested here. Not everyone can become a frontiersman. Each person's behaviour, adjustment, evolution on the frontier depend on the society from which he came to begin with. What is suggested, therefore, is not a study of the metropolitan counter-weight to the frontier, but of the metropolitan origin of the frontiersman himself.

APPENDIX A

LITERACY IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC 1870-1890¹

The tables on the following page show that as late as 1891 only 69 percent of Quebec's school-age and older population was able to read. By 1901 the percentage of school-age and older population able to read in Quebec had reached 82 percent. This represents a 32 percent increase in readers during that 10-year period. Unfortunately, the 1891 census was the first to give figures on literacy.

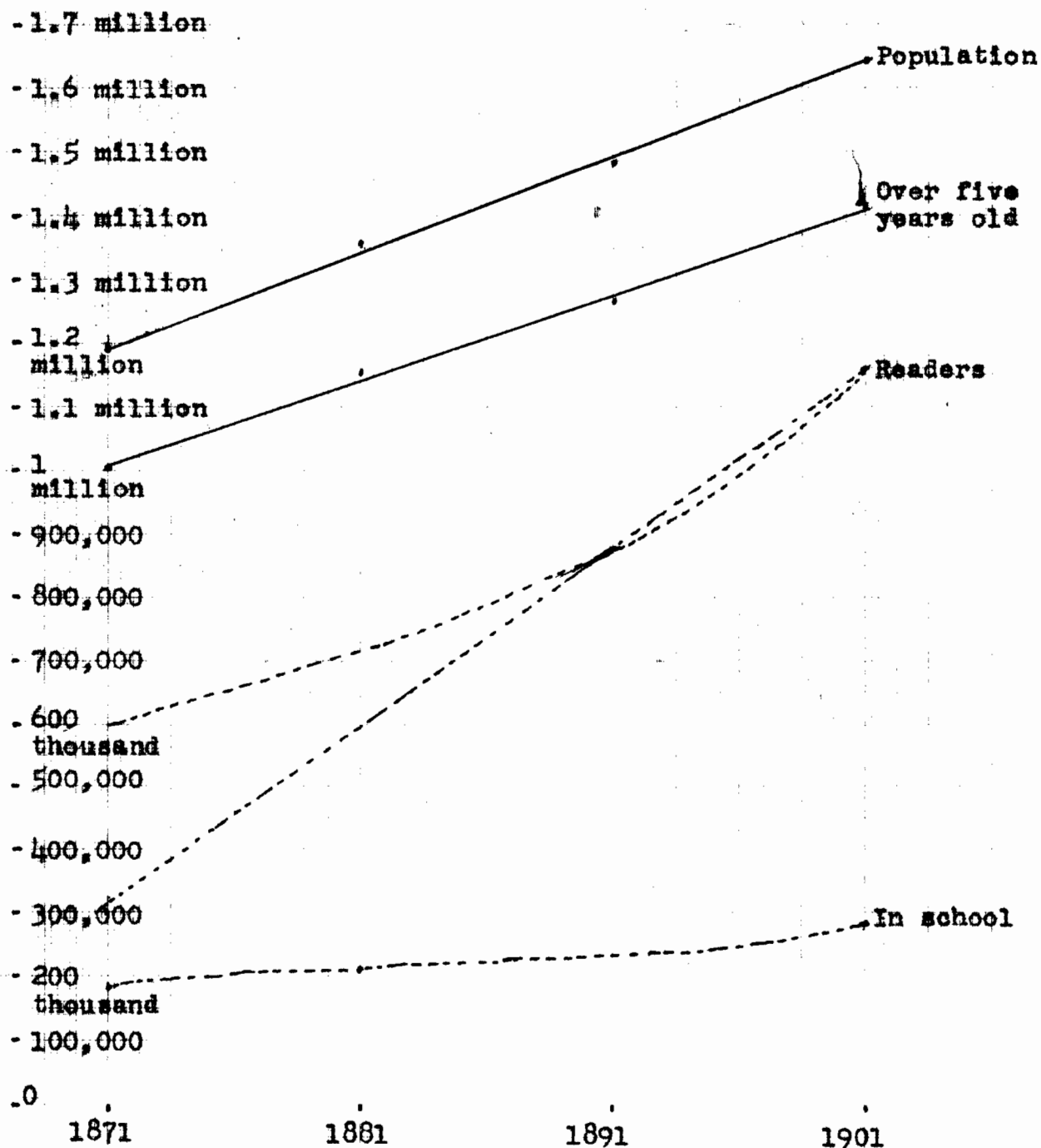
Extrapolating backwards from the 1901 and 1891 figures gives only about 300,000 readers for 1871 -- 30 percent of the school-age and older population. This figure, however, seems improbably low, considering the growth of school attendance in the province between 1871 and 1901. It seems natural to assume that ability to read will vary fairly closely with school attendance. The latter grew fairly evenly with the school-age and older population, remaining at about 18 percent between

¹Since the influence of newspapers, pamphlets, etc. on public opinion is somewhat limited by the literacy rate, the extent of literacy must be taken into account in a study of this sort.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND LITERACY IN
QUEBEC, 1871 - 1901

	<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>	<u>1901</u>
Population of Quebec	1,191,516	1,359,027	1,488,535	1,648,898
Population 5 years and older	1,009,038	1,152,548	1,269,546	1,411,295
Number going to school	185,306	209,623	-	281,681
Number able to read	-	-	878,610	1,161,307
		<u>1871</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1891</u>
School-goers as percentage of 5+ population		18%	18%	-
Readers as %age of 5+ population		-	-	69%
School-goers as %age of readers		-	-	24%
				4.1
	<u>1871-1881</u>	<u>1881-1891</u>	<u>1891-1901</u>	
% increase in 5+ population	14%	10%	11%	
% increase in school-goers	13%	-	-	
% increase in Readers	-	-	32%	
			<u>1881-1901</u>	
% Increase in school-goers	13%		34%	
% Increase in readers	-		-	

POPULATION, LITERACY, AND SCHOOL
ATTENDANCE IN QUEBEC FROM 1871
TO 1901



1871 and 1881, and growing to only about 20 percent by 1901. Yet the increase from 1881 to 1901 was 34 percent. Drawing the curve for reading ability to correspond with the school attendance curve (page 287), gives about 60 percent of the school-age and over population able to read in 1871. (This too is probably high since an increase in literacy would follow in time an increase in school attendance).

Moreover, in considering this matter of literacy, one should probably note that for a certain number of people who are able to read, reading is, nevertheless, so difficult a matter as to be as little done as possible. For instance, of the 878,610 people able to read in 1891, some 94,584 were not able to write. One can easily imagine that for such people, reading would be so painful an operation that they would not do it unless it were absolutely necessary. It can probably be depended upon, therefore, that these people did not read newspapers or political pamphlets.

It should also be noted that the non-readers and painful-readers are likely to be found in just those classes of society most likely to be concerned with Manitoba and North-West colonisation. The colonisation of the prairies was an agricultural movement, and potential settlers would be farmers from the eastern

provinces, or unemployed workers from the cities looking for a fresh start with a free farm. Less likely as potential settlers were professional, managerial, commercial people -- the very ones most likely to be able to read. Thus the people with whom one is most concerned as potential settlers of the North-West are the very ones whose views are least likely to be reflected in or directly influenced by the printed word.

On the other hand, the importance of the printed word is not small. Arguments picked up by one man in a newspaper or pamphlet would be passed on to others by word of mouth. The movement of emigration to Manitoba had to be in some measure organised or directed by French-Canadian leaders -- reading men. Their attitudes -- influenced by what they read -- determined whether they would facilitate or prevent, encourage or oppose French-Canadian settlement in Manitoba. The printed word might well determine the line of oral argument to be taken by community leaders at Albert Lacombe's great public assemblies.

APPENDIX B

CIRCULATIONS OF QUEBEC FRENCH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS IN THE 1870s

(From the American Newspaper Directory,
George P. Rowell & Company, New York)

<u>NAME OF PAPER</u>	<u>1873</u>	<u>1875</u>	<u>1877</u>	<u>1879</u>
LA MINERVE (daily)	4,950	5,400	3,000	3,000
(weekly)		9,500		
(3-weekly)	5,000	4,800	2,500	
(wkly) with <u>La Semaine</u>				
<u>Agricole</u>			7,500	5,000
LE NOUVEAU MONDE (daily)	1,250	1,780	3,817	5,000
(3-wkly)	500	600	1,425	
(wkly)	2,200	1,800	2,509	
LE NATIONAL (daily)	1,560		2,500	
(wkly)	1,600		1,200	
LA SEMAINE AGRICOLE	7,750		See under La Minerve	
LA REVUE CANADIENNE (Mens)	1,500	1,200	1,492	1,000
L'EVENEMENT (daily)	1,800	1,200	1,400	5,000
(3-wkly)	1,500	1,000	1,100	
(wkly)			960	2,000
JOURNAL DE QUEBEC (daily)	960	800	600	
(3-wkly)	1,200	850	400	
LE CANADIEN (3-wkly)	3,000	2,000	500	
(daily)			800	1,000
(wkly) with <u>Le Cultivateur</u>			960	0.750
LE COURRIER DU (daily)				1,000
CANADA (wkly)	1,440	1,500	1,500	1,000
LE COURRIER DE (3-wkly)	2,450	2,153	2,134	2,000
ST-HYACINTHE (wkly)		4,008		

(wkly) with Le Journal d'Agriculture			4,000	3,000
LE JOURNAL DES TROIS-RIVIERES (s-wkly)	2,500	1,100	800	500
GAZETTE DE SOREL (s-wkly)	1,000			
(3-wkly)		1,700	1,000	
(wkly)		2,000	1,200	2,000

s-wkly: semi-weekly. 3-wkly: three times a week.
mens: monthly. wkly: weekly.

APPENDIX C

RELATION OF PRESS OPINION ON NORTH-WEST TO PARTY AFFILIATION

1. Conservative Party Newspapers

LA MINERVE, 15 April, 1869, "Enfin, nous avons acquis ou nous sommes à même d'acquérir près de 200,000,000 d'acres de terre à trois quarts de cent de l'acre. Qui ne se sentirait fier d'un pareil résultat?"

LE COURRIER DE ST-HYACINTHE, 16 April, 1869, "Tous ceux qui savent en quoi consiste la richesse d'un peuple, reconnaissent que cette acquisition augmentera considérablement nos ressources.... Pour ce qui est de la qualité du sol, le Nord-Ouest renferme à peu près 75,000,000 d'acres d'excellentes terres...."

LE CANADA (Ottawa), 10 April, 1869, "On estime son étendue à 198,000,000 d'acres. On sait jusqu'à présent que de cette quantité, de 75,000,000 à 100,000,000 sont propres à la culture, et qu'on peut dès aujourd'hui y fonder des établissements. Combien de terrains restants, maintenant regardés comme incultivable, seront mieux appréciés, lorsqu'ils auront été bien explorés."

LE COURRIER DU CANADA, 18 June, 1879, "Ne laissons pas les Anglais seuls s'emparer d'un territoire aussi important, et destiné peut-être à être le centre populeux de la Confédération."

LE JOURNAL DE QUEBEC, 14 August, 1865, "Si cette riche vallée de la Saskatchewan, si ces fertiles prairies du Nord-Ouest n'avaient pas eu à subir le faix d'un monopole aussi anormal, nous pourrions avoir là des colonies aussi peuplées, aussi riches que les états du Minnesota et du Wisconsin dont elles ne sont séparées que par la ligne frontière."

2. Castor or Church-affiliated Papers

L'ETENDARD, 20 February, 1883, "Ces provinces sont à nous, pour notre part, comme au reste de la Confédération. Pourquoi continuerions-nous à faire si peu de cas d'un patrimoine qui, si nous ne nous hâtons pas, passera complètement à un élément pour lequel notre langue, notre religion et nos moeurs sont tout à fait étrangers?"

LE NOUVEAU MONDE, 17 April, 1869, "Cette annexion d'un territoire immense nous coûtera peu de chose, s'il doit pendant longtemps nous être d'une

utilité comparativement assez contestable:
on ne saura donc mettre en doute la sagesse
d'en avoir fait l'acquisition dans les
circonstances actuelles."

LE JOURNAL DES TROIS-RIVIERES, 4 June, and 22 June,
1869, "Ce vaste pays contient des forêts
inépuisables, des pouvoirs d'eau sans nombre,
des mines d'une valeur inestimable et plus de
soixante-et-quinze millions d'acres de terre
de la plus grande fertilité.... Nous
espérons que les députés de la province de
Québec, maintenant que ce territoire est à
nous, sauront veiller à ce que le gouvernement
fédéral n'approprie pas de trop fortes sommes
pour l'établissement du Nord-Ouest."

3. Rouge or Liberal Newspapers

L'ORDRE, 23 September, 1868, "On regrettera toujours les
tentatives du gouvernement d'aggrandir le
cercle de la Confédération avec de lointaines
colonies dont l'établissement et la possession
coûteront au trésor fédéral des sacrifices
que notre pays n'est pas en position de faire.

LE PAYS, 20 April, 1869, "Il paraît que ce qu'il y a de
plus beau dans les territoires de la baie

d'Hudson dont M. Cartier a fait l'acquisition avec notre argent pour le Haut-Canada, sont, du moins si l'on en croit les récits des voyageurs les plus dignes de foi,... les aurores boréales. Il est vrai d'un [sic] million et demi de piastres forment au assez joli denier; mais on n'a rien pour rien en ce monde."

L'UNION NATIONALE, 5 September, 1865, "On prétend que toute la portion Bas-Canadienne à l'exception de M. Galt s'opposent fortement à l'exécution de ce projet.... Voici encore une occasion pour nos ministres de montrer leurs forces dans le cabinet et leur dévouement à la cause nationale."

L'EVENEMENT, 19 May, 1873, "La Confédération, elle, courtise les îles volages, roucoule en Colombie et s'égare au Nord-Ouest; elle se fait un sérail et gaspille dans la compagnie de petites provinces les ressources des grandes.... Déjà, le Nouveau-Brunswick se prévaut de ce que nous avons fait pour la Colombie et Manitoba pour crier famine et exiger double ration."

Because newspaper attitudes depended so largely on party affiliation, a given newspaper's position naturally depended on whether its party was in or out of office. Thus, in 1865 or 1869 as the Conservative government was moving toward acquisition of Rupert's Land, Conservative papers supported the policy, while Rouge papers opposed it. Similarly, until 1874, Rouge or Liberal papers criticised the Conservative Government for not granting a complete and general amnesty to the people who had resisted the Canadian take-over in 1869-70, while, when the Liberals were in power, the Conservative papers criticised the non-granting of a complete and general amnesty, and Liberal papers defended the partial measures of 1875.

The relation of party affiliation to editorial viewpoint is seen interestingly when a change in ownership or editorship changes party allegiance of a paper. In 1868, under François Eventurel, Le Canadien opposed acquisition of the North-West:

Nous croyons aujourd'hui, encore plus fortement que lors de la discussion parlementaire, au sujet de l'achat de ce territoire, que nous aurions bien tort de tant nous hâter d'acheter un domaine, qui ne serait, pour le moment du moins, qu'un objet d'embarras et de dépenses énormes, dont nous devons nous passer.¹

¹Le Canadien, 22 May, 1868.

After 1872, however, under the new directorship of L. Turcotte and L.H. Huot, the paper supported the Conservatives, who assumed the value of the North-West and wanted to see it settled:

Eh bien! nous le demandons à tous ceux qui émigrent: ne serait-il pas infiniment plus avantageux, au point de vue moral et matériel d'émigrer à Manitoba qu'aux Etats-Unis. A Manitoba vous gagnerez plus, vous pourrez avec ce que vous gagnerez dans six mois, vous établir sur une magnifique propriété, vous faire un bel avenir, avoir tous les avantages de la religion et de l'instruction et vivre au milieu de vos compatriotes....²

²Le Canadien, 13 June, 1873.

APPENDIX D

EUROPEAN EMIGRATION AND NORTH-WEST SETTLEMENT

The English-speaking population of the North-West was greatly added to by the settling of emigrants from overseas. The French-speaking population did not receive such support.

Emigration from France to the North-West never reached any great proportions. If there were any French-born settlers in Manitoba in 1870, they could only have been a handful of the 1,565 whites numbered by the census. The 1881 census showed 81 French-born people in the province, and the 1885 provincial census showed 110.

There was certainly an attempt by Ottawa to promote French-speaking emigration from Europe. The Department of Agriculture, responsible for immigration, published a steady stream of French-language brochures to sell Canada to the French, Swiss, and Belgians.¹ A

¹eg., "Le Guide Du Colon Français, Belge, Suisse, Etc." (Ottawa, published in revised editions throughout the 1880s and 1890s; "Le Canada Et L'Emigration Européenne" (Ottawa, 1874); "La Colonisation Française Au Canada" (Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1891); "Province De Manitoba Et Territoire Du Nord-Ouest" (Ottawa, 1878); "Esquisse Générale Du Nord-Ouest Du Canada" (Trois-Rivières, 1886). Other pamphlets, prepared by private Canadian individuals or societies, included Frédéric Gerbié's "Le Canada Et L'Emigration Française" (Quebec, Darveau, 1884), and J.B. Proulx's "Le Curé Labelle Et La Colonisation" (Paris, Imprimerie de l'Oeuvre de St-Paul, 1885).

permanent immigration officer was stationed in Paris, and special commissions were sent, like that of Labelle and Proulx in 1885, to give special encouragement to French-speaking European emigration.

There was some reaction in France and Belgium. French agricultural societies, like their English and Scotch counterparts, sent their own delegates to inspect the North-West at first hand. Their reports, as well as those of French and Belgian travellers and journalists, helped direct at least some interest toward Canada.² Wealthy individuals in France, inspired usually by religious motives and encouraged by Archbishop Taché, helped too by financing the establishment of French colonies in the North-West.³

But the results were small. The French were not obliged to emigrate as were the persecuted Mennonites

²French publications included: Passy, Louis, "Etude Sur La Colonisation Et L'Agriculture Au Canada" (Paris, Chamerot, 1887); Benoist, Charles, "Les Français Et Le Nord-Ouest Canadien" (Bar-Le-Duc, 1895), while Belgian works included: Verbist, Abbé P.J., "Les Belges Au Canada" (Turnhout, 1872), and Vekeman, Gustave, "Lettres D'Un Emigrant" (Brussels, Loge, 1883). The latter was originally published as a series of articles in a Brussels newspaper. Eventually, even the Belgian vice-consul at Ottawa, Robert De Vos, wrote a brochure to encourage North-West settlement by his compatriots -- "Canada: La Colonisation Agricole Dans L'Ouest" (Brussels, 1901).

³eg. La Comtesse d'Albuféra. See Dom Benoit, op. cit., 747.

or the land-starved Icelanders. The German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine in 1870 created some hope that emigrants from those provinces would seek to preserve their French identity in Canada. But the French Empire offered better attractions. The French government was currently promoting settlement in Algeria, which was much closer to home than the Canadian North-West. It did not suffer from the image of "a few acres of snow". It was as French in culture as was Canada. And it was French politically too. The Alsacian who went there remained a French citizen -- and that was, after all, why he left home.

But there was another potential source of strength for the French-Catholic population of the North-West. Why did the non-French, non-English immigrants assimilate with the English rather than with the French? The Ruthenes, for instance, might have chosen to learn the language of their French-Canadian fellow-Catholics.

It would seem that a serious study of French-Canadians and non-British immigration to Canada might be interesting and useful. Meanwhile, one possible reason for the integration of these groups with the British population is rather striking: French-Canadian xenophobia.

An exclusiveness about the French-Canadian establishment can be seen from its earliest beginnings. The first Acadian settlement was composed equally of protestants and Catholics, but conflict between the two groups led Champlain to the conclusion that it would be better to maintain a purely homogeneous community in the new world. The feeling was taken up by the Jesuit superior, Lallemant, from the time of his arrival in Quebec in 1625, and when the Company of One Hundred Associates was set up by Richelieu two years later, its charter stipulated that "it will not be permitted, however, to transport aliens ... but rather the colony must be settled by French Catholic citizens...."⁴

After the Conquest the exclusion of all but French Catholics was obviously impossible. While French-Canadian opposition to immigration was strong, and was considered one of the main causes of the conflict that led to the rebellions of 1837 and 1838, there was clearly nothing that could be done about the arrival of British settlers in the country. French-Canadians had to be reconciled to the immigration of Englishmen, as their conquerors. But other immigration could be more

⁴In Nish, Cameron, ed., "The French Regime" (Scarborough, Prentice-Hall, 1965) 18, Document 20.

openly and actively resented. The expulsion of the Jew, Ezekiel Hart, from the Lower Canadian legislative assembly, the inclusion in the Frères Chasseurs programme in 1838 of a provision for the killing of all Jews in Lower Canada and the expropriation of their property,⁵ were perhaps manifestations of a hatred of immigration that, in terms of religion at least, differed even more from the ideal of 1627 than did the British protestant group. This hatred was still alive between 1870 and 1890 -- especially among the ultramontane elements in French-Canada. The Castor newspaper, L'Etendard, exhibited it in a lament for republican France. The cause of the motherland's downfall, according to the newspaper, was "la tourbe d'athés, de libres penseurs, de juifs et autres étrangers qui aujourd'hui trépignent sur le corps défiguré de notre malheureuse mère-patrie, pour insulter à ce que nous avons de plus cher."⁶

Anti-semitism was only one expression of French-Canada's xenophobia. Resentment of all non-British groups of immigrants can be seen in the newspapers of the 1870-1890 period. The stigmatisation of

⁵Mason Wade, "The French-Canadians", 190.

⁶L'Etendard, 3 February, 1883, 2.

the Mennonites by Le Courrier Du Canada as "ces russes dont la religion est de ne pas défendre la patrie"⁷ was still only a part of it. All the continental European groups came in for their share of deprecation. T.A. Bernier claimed that French-Canadians "vaudraient mille fois mieux, à tous les points de vue, que des Islandais",⁸ and Bishop Grandin complained about all "foreign" settlement in the North-West:

On nous envoie pour peupler ... nos terres ... des gens de toute nation, de toute religion, et trop souvent des gens sans foi et sans religion; on va chercher bien loin des Mennonites, on reçoit même des Mormons qu'on semble vouloir donner comme exemple à nos Pieds-Noirs.... Ne trouvez-vous pas, Messeigneurs, que c'est là un mal sérieux?⁹

Most striking of all was the French-Canadian antipathy to the French of France. Bernier was moderate about it; he only maintained that the French-Europeans (the Swiss and Belgians as well as the French) were culturally unsuited to pioneering in the North-West -- a task for which he thought the French-Canadians, on the contrary, were admirably fitted.¹⁰ But the

⁷Le Courrier Du Canada, 30 August, 1875, 2.

⁸Bernier, T.A., "Le Manitoba: Champ D'Immigration", 78.

⁹Grandin, V.J., "Un Suprême Appel", 4.

¹⁰Bernier, T.A., "Manitoba: Champ D'Immigration" 78, 81.

differences between French-Canadians and French went far beyond their adaptability at the frontier. Jean d'Artigue was not the only -- and far from the last -- Frenchman to find integration with the English-Canadians preferable or easier than assimilation with the French-Canadians.¹¹

Again, it was the most Catholic-minded of the French-Canadians who most disliked the more secular Frenchmen of post-revolutionary times. The 1789 civil constitution of the French clergy had once and for all determined the dedicated opposition of Canadian Catholicism to republicanism and the other "masonic" evils of 19th-century France.¹² The promoters of North-Western colonisation, therefore, while willing to accept selected immigration sent by devout Catholic aristocrats in France, were more than hesitant about encouraging an all-out movement of French-speaking Europeans to the territory:

Car Mgr Taché établissait peu de confiance dans les immigrants "comme ceux qui vinrent de Paris" en 1872, jouisseurs et socialistes, n'apportant guère que des vices au Nouveau Monde.¹³

¹¹See Artigue, Jean d', "Six Years In The Canadian North-West" (Toronto, Hunter, Rose & Co., 1882).

¹²Even today it is not uncommon for French immigrants to be referred to by French-Canadians as "mangeurs de curés".

¹³Dom Benoit, op. cit., 383.

The Jesuit scholar Lewis Drummond explained the French-Canadian attitude to the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba in 1886:

Doubtless we love what is lovable in our French ancestors; but we thank God that our race was planted here before the French manners were corrupted by the vices of the last century, and before the French mind was unsettled and dwarfed by the follies of the French Revolution. If France wishes to send us men of the lewd, half-monkey, half-demon type, such as those who are secretly misgoverning her at present, we beg of her to keep them at home. We are deeply grateful for the conquest, because it saved us from irreligion and from French radicalism.¹⁴

Clerical dislike of French secularism found its counterpart in ordinary French-Canadian dislike of strangers with strange ways. By 1907, A.G. Morice was writing that he had heard it said that the French of France were, of all immigrant groups, the one least liked by the French-Canadians. He reproved his compatriots, and urged them to give the Europeans a chance. Their children, he wrote, would grow up as good French-Canadians.¹⁵

In 1870, the non-British, non-French-Canadian population of Manitoba was practically nil. By 1880,

¹⁴Drummond, Lewis, "The French Element In The Canadian North-West" (Winnipeg, The Northwest Review, 1887) 14.

¹⁵Morice, A.G., "Aux Sources De L'Histoire Manitobaine" (Quebec, Cie de l'Événement, 1907) 117.

6,962 people born in European or Asian countries were living in the province; by 1885, there were 9,325. Assimilated with the French-Canadian instead of with the English-Canadian community, they would have provided the numerical strength needed to keep alive the French language in the North-West. One might wonder what part French-Canadian antipathy toward foreigners played in preventing such assimilation, in preventing such reinforcement of the French-speaking element in the North-West.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. General, Historical & Biographical Books

- Barabé, P.-H., "Quelques Figures De Notre Histoire". Ottawa, Editions de l'Université, 1941.
- Benoit, Dom Paul, "Vie De Mgr Taché, Archevêque De St-Boniface". Montreal, Beauchemin, 1904.
- Bernard, Antoine, "Nos Pionniers De L'Ouest". Quebec, La Survivance Française, 1949 (?).
- Dansereau, Arthur, etc., "George-Etienne Cartier". Montreal, Beauchemin, 1914 (?).
- David, L.-O., "Histoire Du Canada Depuis La Confédération: 1867-1887". Montreal, Beauchemin, 1909.
- _____. "Mgr Alexandre-Antonin Taché, Archevêque De St-Boniface". Montreal, Cadieux & Derome, 1883.
- Dawson, C.A., "Group Settlement: Ethnic Communities In Western Canada". Toronto, Macmillan, 1936.
- Dawson, C.A., & Younge, E.R., "Pioneering In The Prairie Provinces: The Social Side Of The Settlement Process". Toronto, Macmillan, 1940.
- Giraud, Marcel, "Le Métis Canadien". Paris, Institut d'Ethnologie, 1945.
- Hansen, M.L., & Brebner, J.B., "The Mingling Of The Canadian And American Peoples". New Haven, 1940.
- Innis, H.A., "The Fur Trade In Canada". Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1962.
- Lecompte, Edouard, "Un Grand Chrétien: Sir Joseph Dubuc". Montreal, Imprimerie du Messager, 1923.
- McInnis, Edgar, "Canada: A Political And Social History". New York, Holt, Rinehart And Winston, 1960.
- Morice, A.-G., "Aux Sources De L'Histoire Manitobaine". Quebec, Cie de l'Événement, 1907.
- _____. "Dictionnaire Historique Des Canadiens Et Des Métis Français De L'Ouest". Kamloops, 1908.

- _____. "Histoire Abrégée De L'Ouest Canadien". St. Boniface, 1914.
- _____. "History Of The Catholic Church In Western Canada". Toronto. Musson Book Co., 1910.
- Morton, A.S., "A History Of The Canadian West To 1870-71". London, Nelson, n.d.
- Morton, A.S., & Martin, C., "History Of Prairie Settlement And 'Dominion Lands' Policy". Toronto, 1938.
- Morton, W.L., "Manitoba: A History". Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1957.
- Pope, Joseph, "Memoirs Of ... Sir John Alexander Macdonald". Ottawa, Durie & Son, n.d.
- Rumilly, Robert, "Histoire De La Province De Québec". Montreal, Valiquette, n.d. Vol. I, Cartier, and Vol. V, Riel.
- _____. "Mercier". Montreal, Editions du Zodiaque, 1936.
- Stanley, G.F.G., "The Birth Of Western Canada". London, Longmans, Green, 1936.
- Tassé, Joseph, "Les Canadiens De L'Ouest". Montreal, Imprimerie Canadienne, 1878.
- Turner, F.J., "The Frontier In American History". New York, 1921.
- Wade, Mason, "The French Canadians, 1760-1945". Toronto, Macmillan, 1956.
- Waite, P.B., "The Life And Times Of Confederation". Toronto, University Of Toronto Press, 1962.

II. Collections of Documents & Speeches

- Barthe, Ulric, ed., "Wilfrid Laurier On The Platform". Quebec, Turcotte & Menard, 1890.
- Kennedy, W.P.M., "Statutes, Treaties, And Documents Of The Canadian Constitution". Oxford, 1930.
- Nish, Cameron, "The French Regime". Scarborough, Prentice-Hall, 1965.

Prang, M.E., & Brown, R.C., "Confederation To 1949".
Scarborough, Prentice-Hall, 1966.

Reid, J.H.S., etc., "A Source-Book Of Canadian History".
Toronto, Longmans, Green, 1959.

Tassé, Joseph, ed., "Discours De Sir Georges Cartier".
Montreal, Senécal & Fils, 1893.

Waite, P.B., "Pre-Confederation". Scarborough, Prentice-Hall, 1965.

III. Newspapers & Periodicals.

Le Canada . Ottawa.

Le Canadien. Quebec.

Le Colonisateur Canadien. Montreal

Le Courrier De St-Hyacinthe. St. Hyacinthe.

Le Courrier Du Canada. Quebec.

L'Etendard. Montreal.

L'Événement. Quebec.

Le Journal D'Agriculture. Montreal.

Le Journal De Québec. Quebec.

Le Journal Des Trois-Rivières. Trois-Rivières.

Le Métis. St. Boniface.

La Minerve. Montreal.

Le Monde. Montreal. Same as Le Nouveau Monde.

Le Nouveau Monde. Montreal.

L'Ordre. Montreal.

Le Pays. Montreal.

La Revue Canadienne. Montreal.

L'Union Nationale. Montreal.

IV. The North-West Before 1870

- Aubert, F., Letter to his Brother, Missioner of the same Congregation (O.M.I.), St. Boniface, 29 June, 1846. In the United States Catholic Magazine And Monthly Review, July, 1848. Vol. VII, No. 7.
- Dawson, S.J., "Report On The Exploration Of The Country Between Lake Superior And The Red River Settlement". Toronto, John Lovell, 1859.
- Dugas, Georges, "Histoire Véridique Des Faits Qui Ont Préparé Le Mouvement Des Métis A La Rivière-Rouge En 1869". Montreal, Beauchemin, 1905.
- _____. "L'Ouest Canadien". Montreal, Cadieux & Derome, 1896.
- _____. "Un Voyageur Des Pays D'En Haut". Montreal, Beauchemin & Fils, 1890.
- Hargrave, J.J., "Red River". Montreal, John Lovell, 1871.
- "Lettre De Mgr Taché, Evêque De St. Boniface, Donnant A Mgr De Montréal Le Récit Des Malheurs De Son Diocèse Depuis Deux Ans". Montreal (?) 1861 (?).
- Provencher, J.-N., "Lettres De Mgr J.-N. Provencher". In the Bulletin de la Société Historique de St-Boniface, Vol. III.
- _____. "Mémoire Ou Notice Sur L'Etablissement De La Mission De La Rivière-Rouge, & Ses Progrès Depuis 1818". Rome (?) 1836 (?).
- Tache, A.-A., "Esquisse Sur Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique". Montreal, le Nouveau Monde, 1869. Also in English, "Sketch Of The North-West Of America", translated by D.R.Cameron. Montreal, Lovell, 1870.
- _____. "Vingt Années De Missions Dans Le Nord-Ouest De L'Amérique". Montreal, Senécal, 1866.
- Trémaudan, Auguste-Henri de, "Histoire De La Nation Métisse Dans L'Ouest Canadien". Montreal, Editions Albert Lévesque, 1936.

V. Confederation & Rupert's Land

Cauchon, Joseph, "Discours Sur La Question De La Confédération"
n.p., n.d.

_____. "L'Union Des Provinces De L'Amérique Britannique
Du Nord". Quebec, A.Coté & Cie, 1865.

Cherrier, C.S., etc., "Discours Sur La Confédération".
Montreal, Lanctot, Bouthillier, & Thompson, 1965.

"Contre-Poison: La Confédération C'Est Le Salut Du Bas-
Canada". Montreal, 1867.

"Correspondance Et Documents Relatifs Aux Evénements
Récemment Survenus Dans Les Territoires Du
Nord-Ouest". Ottawa, I.B.Taylor, 1870.

Fabre, Hector, "Confédération, Indépendence, Annexion".
Quebec, l'Événement, 1871.

Joly, H.G., "Discours Sur La Confédération". Quebec,
Darveau, 1865.

Lacroix, Henry, "Opuscule Sur Le Présent Et L'Avenir Du
Canada". Montreal, 1867.

Morris, Alexander, "Nova Britannia". Toronto, Hunter, Rose
& Co., 1884.

Papineau, L.-J., "Discours A L'Occasion Du 23^e Anniversaire
De La Fondation De L'Institut Canadien". Montreal,
Le Pays, 1868.

"Réponses Aux Censeurs De La Confédération". St. Hyacinthe,
1867.

"Report Of The Select Committee Of The Senate On The Subject
Of Rupert's Land, Red River & The North-West
Territory". Ottawa, Taylor, 1870.

Taché, J.C., "Des Provinces De L'Amérique Du Nord Et D'Une
Union Fédérale". Quebec, Brousseau, 1858.

VI. Difficulties of the Métis, 1869-1884

Canada, Parliament, "Précédures Et Jugement Touchant La
Mise Hors La Loi De Louis Riel". Ottawa, 1875.

_____. "Rapport Du Comité Spécial Sur Les Causes Des
Troubles Du Territoire Du Nord-Ouest En 1869-70".
Ottawa, I.B.Taylor, 1874.

_____. "Statement Of Claims Made On The Dominion Government Consequent Upon The Insurrection In The North-West Territories". Ottawa, Taylor, 1871.

"Cinq Années D'Administration Réformiste". n.p., n.d.

"Correspondances Parlementaires: Session Fédérale De 1875". Lévis, l'Echo, 1875 (?).

L'Événement, "Au Pilon". Quebec, L'Événement, 1874.

Forget, Eucher, "Louis Riel Et Les Troubles De La Rivière-Rouge". Montreal, Université de Montréal thesis, 1950.

McDougall, William, "The Red River Rebellion". Toronto, Hunter, Rose, & Co., 1870.

"Ontario Et Manitoba: La Vérité". n.p., n.d.

"Revue De La Session Parlementaire De 1875" n.p., n.d.

Riel, Louis, Correspondance Louis Riel - Mgr Bourget. In the Revue D'Histoire De L'Amérique Française, Vol. XV, No. 3, December, 1961.

Sulte, Benjamin, "L'Expédition Militaire De Manitoba, 1870". Montreal, Senécal, 1871.

Taché, A.-A., "L'Amnistie". Montreal, le Nouveau Monde, 1874.

_____. "Archbishop Taché On The Amnesty Question". St. Boniface, the Canadian Publishing Co., 1893.

_____. "Denominational Or Free Christian Schools In Manitoba". Winnipeg, Standard Printing, 1877.

_____. "Encore L'Amnistie". St. Boniface, Le Métis, 1875.

_____. "Fenian Raid". St. Boniface (?) 1888 (?).

VII. The North-West Rebellion

Archambault, J.L., "Conservateurs Et Libéraux: Etude Politique". Montreal, n.p., 1887.

Beauregard, George, "Le 9^e Bataillon Au Nord-Ouest".
Quebec, Gingras & Cie, 1886.

Bellerose, Senator, "Discours à l'Assemblée à St-Hyacinthe,
le 8 décembre, 1885, pour protester contre
l'exécution de Riel. n.p., n.d.

_____. "L'Orangisme Et Le Catholicisme". Montreal,
Imprimerie de l'Etendard, 1886.

Canada, Parliament, "Epitome Des Documents Parlementaires
Relatifs A La Rébellion Du Nord-Ouest, 1885".
Ottawa, Maclean, Roger & Cie, 1886.

Canada, "The Queen vs Louis Riel". Ottawa, Queen's Printer,
1886.

Caron, Adolphe, "Discours Sur La Question Riel". n.p., n.d.

Chapleau, J.A., "Discours A L'Occasion De La Motion
Censurant Le Ministère Pour Avoir Permis
L'Exécution De Louis Riel". Montreal, Imprimerie
Générale, 1886.

_____. "La Question Riel: Lettre Aux Canadiens-Français".
n.p., n.d.

"La Croisade Anti-Française Et Anti-Catholique Dirigée Par
Sir John A. Macdonald". Montreal, Imprimerie de
l'Etendard, n.d.

Daoust, C.R., "Cent-Vingt Jours De Service Actif". Montreal,
Senécal & Fils, 1886.

Deriares, Jules, "Riel: Patriotisme vs Loyauté". n.p., 1885.

"Documents Officiels Constatant Les Nombreuses Plaintes Et
Réclamations Des Métis Du Nord-Ouest". n.p., n.d.
Probably published by l'Etendard in 1886.

"Electeurs, Attention, Ne Vous Laissez Pas Tromper". n.p.,
n.d.

"Elections De 1887 -- La Vraie Question". n.p., n.d.

L'Etendard, "Polémiques Et Documents Touchant Le Nord-Ouest
Et L'Exécution De Louis Riel". Montreal, l'Etendard,
1886.

"Facts For The People: The Northwest Rebellion". Ottawa,
1887. Also: "Faits Pour Le Peuple: Rébellion Du
Nord-Ouest". n.p., 1887.

"Le Gibet De Régina: La Vérité Sur Riel". New York,
Thompson & Moreau, 1886.

Girouard, Désiré, "Discours Sur L'Exécution De Louis Riel".
n.p., n.d.

"L'Histoire D'Un Crime". n.p., n.d.

"L'Insurrection Du Nord-Ouest, 1885". Montreal, le Monde,
1885.

"Louis Riel, Martyr Du Nord-Ouest". Montreal, la Presse,
1885.

"La Mort De Riel Et La Voix Du Sang". n.p., n.d.

"Le Mot De La Fin". Voici le vote! Conspiration armée
contre les Métis français. Le Chef METIS sacrifié
aux ORANGISTES!... n.p., n.d.

Mousseau, J.O., "Une Page D'Histoire". Montreal, W.F.Daniel,
1886.

Ouimet, Adolphe, "La Vérité Sur La Question Métisse Au
Nord-Ouest". Montreal, 1889.

"Le Peuple vs Sir John". n.p., n.d.

"La Question Riel: Les Grieffs Des Métis". n.p., n.d.

Taché, A.-A., "La Situation". St. Boniface, 1885.

_____. "La Situation Au Nord-Ouest". Quebec, J.O.Filteau,
1885.

Tassé, Joseph, "La Question Riel". n.p., 1886.

Tremblay, Ernest, "Riel: Réponse A Monsieur J.A.Chapleau".
St. Hyacinthe, l'Union, 1885.

"Le Véritable Riel". Montreal, Imprimerie Générale, 1887.

VIII. National Difficulties After 1885

Chapleau, J.A., "Speech On The French Language In The
North-West". Ottawa, Brown Chamberlin, 1890.

Faucher de St-Maurice, N.H.E., "Les Etats De Jersey Et La
Langue Française". Montreal, Senécal & Fils,
1893.

- _____. "La Question Du Jour: Resterons-Nous Français".
Quebec, Belleau & Cie, 1890.
- Grandin, V.-J., "Un Suprême Appel". L'Evêque du Nord-Ouest
supplie tous les amis de la justice au Canada de
l'aider à protéger ses ouailles contre les Tyrans
d'Ottawa. n.p., 1891.
- Langevin, Hector, "Speech On The French Language In The
North-West". House of Commons Debates. n.p.,
n.d. But probably Ottawa, 1890.
- Taché, A.-A., "Ecoles Séparées: Partie Des Négotiations A
Ottawa En 1870". n.p., 1890.
- _____. "Une Page De L'Histoire Des Ecoles De Manitoba".
St. Boniface, Le Manitoba, 1893.
- _____. "Two Letters On The School Question". n.p., 1889.
- Tassé, Joseph, "The French Question". Montreal, Imprimerie
Générale, 1888.

IX. Colonisation Pamphlets

- "L'Agriculture Dans Le Nord-Ouest Du Canada: Résultats
Pratiques". Quebec, Dussault, 1884.
- Bernier, T.A., "Le Manitoba: Champ D'Immigration". Ottawa,
1887.
- Blais, M.J., "Le Manitoba". Ottawa, Imprimerie de l'Etat,
1898.
- Canada, Dept of Agriculture, "Esquisse Générale Du Nord-
Ouest Du Canada". Trois-Rivières, 1886.
- _____. "Le Manitoba Et Les Territoires Du Nord-Ouest".
Ottawa, 1881. A fold-up leaflet.
- _____. "Province De Manitoba Et Territoire Du Nord-Ouest".
Ottawa, 1878.
- Dugas, Georges, "Manitoba Et ses Avantages Pour L'Agriculture".
n.p., n.d.
- Lacombe, Albert, "Un Nouveau Champ De Colonisation: La Vallée
De La Saskatchewan". n.p., n.d.

Langelier, J.C., "Etude Sur Les Territoires Du Nord-Ouest Du Canada". Montreal, Senécal, 1874.

Morin, J.-B., "En Avant La Colonisation! La Vallée De La Saskatchewan". Joliette, 1893.

_____. "Le Nord-Ouest Canadien Et Ses Ressources Agricoles". Ottawa, Imprimerie de l'Etat, 1894.

_____. "La Terre Promise Aux Canadiens-Français: Le Nord-Ouest Canadien". Ottawa, Imprimerie de l'Etat, 1897.

"Le Nord-Ouest Canadien". Brochure Compilée Par Un Colonisateur De Neuf Ans D'Expérience. n.p., n.d.

Paradis, C.A.M., "Société Des Missionnaires Oblats De St-Jean-Baptiste Ou Des Missionnaires Colonisateurs Pour Les Besoins De La Colonisation En Canada". Montreal, 1890.

"Rapport Du Congrès De La Colonisation Tenu A Montréal Les 22, 23, & 24 novembre, 1898". Montreal, Imprimerie de la Patrie, 1900.

Société de Colonisation de Manitoba, "A Nos Compatriotes Des Etats-Unis Et Du Canada, Emigrez A Manitoba". St. Boniface(?), 1876(?). A four-page tabloid.

Spence, Thomas, "Manitoba Et Le Nord-Ouest Canadien". Ottawa, Dept of Agriculture, 1875.

Tassé, Elie, "Le Nord-Ouest". Ottawa, Imprimerie du Canada, 1880.

X. Travel Literature

Barrette, J.E.T., "Récit D'Aventures Dans Le Nord-Ouest". Montreal, W.F.Daniel, 1881.

Beaugrand, Honoré, "Mélanges: Trois Conférences". Includes "De Montréal A Victoria Par Le Transcontinental Canadien". Montreal, 1888.

Bouthillier-Chavigny, C.M.C. de, "A Travers Le Nord-Ouest Canadien". Montreal, Senécal & Fils, 1893.

Dionne, N.E., "Etats-Unis, Manitoba, Et Nord-Ouest: Notes De Voyage". Quebec, Léger Brousseau, 1882.

Lamothe, Henri de, "Cinq Mois Chez Les Français D'Amérique". Paris, Hachette, 1880.

Routhier, A.-B., "De Québec A Victoria". Quebec, L.-J. Demers & Frère, 1893.

XI. The Prairies and European Emigration

Benoist, Charles, "Les Français Et Le Nord-Ouest Canadien". Bar-Le-Duc, 1895.

Canada, Dept of Agriculture, "Le Canada Et L'Emigration Européene". Ottawa, 1874.

_____. "Le Grand Occident Canadien". Le plus vaste champ qui soit maintenant ouvert à la colonisation. Ottawa, 1881.

"La Culture Mixte, L'Elevage Du Bétail Et Les Mines Dans Le Grand Ouest Canadien". n.p., n.d.

De Vos, Robert, "Canada: La Colonisation Agricole Dans L'Ouest". Brussels, 1901.

Drapeau, Stanislas, "Le Guide Du Colon Français, Belge, Suisse, Etc.". Ottawa, Government of Canada, 1887.

Foursin, Pierre, "La Colonisation Française Au Canada". Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1891.

Gerbié, Frédéric, "Le Canada Et L'Emigration Française". Quebec, C.Darveau, 1884.

Passy, Louis, "Etude Sur La Colonisation Et L'Agriculture Au Canada". Paris, Chamerot, 1887.

Proulx, J.-B., ed., "Le Curé Labelle Et La Colonisation". Paris, Imprimerie de l'Oeuvre de St-Paul, 1885.

Vekeman, Gustave, "Lettres D'Un Emigrant". Brussels, Loge, 1883.

Verbist, P.J., "Les Belges Au Canada". Turnhout, 1872.

XII. English-Language Colonisation Literature

Canadian Pacific Railroad, "Manitoba, The Canadian North-West". n.p., 1883(?).

Hudson's Bay Company, "Manitoba And The North-West". London, Sir Joseph Causton, 1886.

"Letters Of Rusticus: Investigations In Manitoba And The North-West". Montreal, Dougall & Son, 1880.

"Province Of Manitoba: Information For Intending Emigrants". Ottawa, Grison, Frechette, 1874.

Russell, A.J., "The Red River Country, Hudson's Bay & North-West Territories Considered In Relation To Canada". Ottawa, G.E.Desbarats, 1869.

Spence, Thomas, "The Prairie Lands Of Canada". Montreal, Gazette, 1880.

"Western Canada". Free Homes For All in the GREAT PROVINCES of Manitoba, Assiniboia, Saskatchewan AND Alberta. Winnipeg, 1892.

XIII. Quebec's Provincial Interest

Amusart, Joseph, "Causons Du Pays Et De La Colonisation". Montreal, Granger Frères, 1891. Joseph Amusart was a pseudonym for Benjamin Sulte.

Association Catholique de la Jeunesse Canadienne-française, "Le Problème De La Colonisation". Montreal, 1920.

"Au Nord". St. Jérôme, les Sociétés de Colonisation des Diocèses de Montréal et d'Ottawa, 1883. The booklet was written by the Curé Labelle, though he did not get a by-line on the title page.

Auclair, E.-J., "Le Curé Labelle: Sa Vie & Son Oeuvre". Montreal, Beauchemin, 1930.

Beaubien, Louis, "Les Chemins De Fer: Nos Communications Avec L'Ouest". Quebec, 1875. A speech in the Quebec legislative assembly.

_____. "Discours: Agriculture & Colonisation". Montreal, Senécal & Fils, 1894.

Beaudry, D.-H., "Le Conseiller Du Peuple". Montreal, Senécal, 1861.

"Constitution Et Règlements De La Société De Colonisation Du Bas-Canada". Montreal, Plinguet & Cie, 1861.

"Coup D'Oeil Sur La Colonisation". Montreal, la Minerve, 1864.

Desjardins, L.-G., "Discours Sur La Résolution Relative A La Vente De La Partie Ouest Du Chemin De Fer Québec, Montréal, Ottawa & Occidental". Quebec, 1882.

Douze Missionnaires des Twps de l'Est, "Le Canadien Emigrant". Quebec, Coté & Cie, 1851.

Drapeau, Stanislas, "Coup-D'Oeil Sur Les Ressources Productives Et La Richesse Du Canada". Quebec, Léger Brousseau, 1864.

_____. "Etudes Sur Les Développements De La Colonisation Du Bas-Canada Depuis Dix Ans". Quebec, Brousseau, 1863.

Ecole d'Agriculture de Ste-Anne de la Pocatière, "Rapport, 1876-77". Ste-Anne de la Pocatière, H.Proulx, 1877.

_____. "Rapport, 1877-78". Ste-Anne de la Pocatière, H.Proulx, 1878.

Ethier-Blais, Jean, "La Cité: Ferment Intellectuel Et Symbole De Demain". In Le Devoir, Montreal, 7 November, 1964.

Masson, Philippe, "Le Canada-Français Et La Providence". Quebec, Brousseau, 1875.

Montpetit, A.-N., "Colonie Française De Metgermette". Quebec, Blumhart & Cie, 1874.

Nantel, G.-A., "Notre Nord-Ouest Provincial". Montreal, Senécal & Fils, 1887.

Société de Colonisation du Diocèse de Montréal, "Projet Pour Coloniser La Vallée De L'Ottawa Et Le Nord De Ce Diocèse". Montreal, Imprimerie Canadienne, 1879. The Curé Labelle wrote this one too without a by-line.

Sulte, Benjamin, "Histoire Des Canadiens-Français, 1608-1880". Vol. VII. Montreal, Wilson & Cie, 1882.

Tassé, Joseph, "Aux Canadiens Français Emigrés". Ottawa, le Canada, 1883.

XIV. Church Archives

1. Archevêché de Montréal: Archives de l'Archevêché:
Letter-books of the Archbishops of Montreal,
1865-1890.
All correspondence received from the diocese (or
archdiocese) of St. Boniface, 1865-1890.
Files on Colonisation, 1865-1890.
2. Collège Ste-Marie: Archives du Collège:
Projet De Rapport De La 6^e Commission De La
Convention Nationale Sur La Situation Des
Canadiens Au Manitoba. T.A. Bernier's handwritten
notes for his speech to the Convention Nationale.
Quebec, 26 June, 1880.
3. Evêché de Trois-Rivières: Archives de l'Evêché:
Mandements de Mgr L.-F. Laflèche, deuxième évêque
de Trois-Rivières, Vol. I, circulaire No. 5.
5 août, 1869
4. Scolasticat St-Joseph: Archives Deschâtelets:
Correspondence of the Diocese (or Archdiocese)
of St. Boniface, 1869-1890. Especially, correspondence
Albert Lacombe - A.-A. Taché. Microfilm.
Correspondence Albert Lacombe - V.-J. Grandin, In
Papers of the Diocese of Edmonton (St-Albert). Film.

XV. Public Archives of Canada

- Caron, Sir A.P., General Correspondence, 1868-1890.
- _____. North-West Rebellion Correspondence, 1885-6. This
is official correspondence of Caron as Minister
of the Militia.
- Cartier, Sir George-Etienne, Correspondence, 1869-1872.
- Chapleau, J.A., Letters from C.A. Dansereau.
- Interior, Dept of, Dominion Lands Papers, 1870-1890.
- Laurier, Sir Wilfrid, Correspondence re Louis Riel.
- Macdonald, Sir John A., General Correspondence, 1870-1890.
- _____. Manitoba and North-West Land Matters, 1880-1886.
- _____. North-West Rebellion: Correspondence on Riel's
execution.

Mackenzie, Alexander, Correspondence. Especially on the Lépine amnesty, on Louis Riel, and on the General Amnesty.

Pacaud, Ernest, Letters from Wilfrid Laurier on Liberal policy, 1877-1903.

Tarte, Israel, Correspondence, Vol. I.

Tessier, R.P.Christophe, Letter to M.Horetzki, Ft. Dunvegan, 6 October, 1872.

XVI. Statistics

Canada, "Census Of Canada". Ottawa, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911, 1921.

Canada, Dept of Agriculture, "Census Of The Province Of Manitoba". Ottawa, 1886.

_____. "Census Of The Three Provisional Districts Of The North West Territories, 1884-5". Ottawa, Maclean, Roger & Co., 1886.

Rowell, George P. & Co., "American Newspaper Directory". New York, Rowell, 1873, 1875, 1877, 1879.

U.S. Dept of Commerce & Labour, Bureau of the Census, "A Century Of Population Growth". Washington, Government Printing Office, 1909.

The 1877 enrollment of the Ontario Agricultural College was supplied by the Registrar of the University of Guelph.

XVII. Miscellaneous

Artigue, Jean d', "Six Years In The Canadian North-West". Toronto, Hunter, Rose & Co., 1882.

Bernier, Noël, "Fannystelle". St. Boniface(?), Société Historique de St-Boniface, 1939(?).

Bickersteth, J.-B., "The Land Of Open Doors". Toronto, Musson Book Co., 191-.

Boily, Marie-Louise, "Nos Braves Pionniers En Terre Manitobaine". La Broquerie, 1951.

- Bury, J.B., "History Of Greece". London, Macmillan, 1959.
- Butler, Sir W.F., "The Great Lone Land". Toronto, 1910.
- Charques, R.D., "A Short History Of Russia". New York, Dutton, 1958.
- Chauveau, Pierre, "Charles Guérin". Montreal, la Revue Canadienne, 1900.
- "Les Conservateurs Et La Politique Nationale De 1878 A 1882". St. Hyacinthe, le Courrier, 1882.
- Cooper, J.I., "French-Canadian Conservatism In Principle And In Practice, 1873-1891". Montreal, McGill University Thesis, 1938.
- Craig, G.M., ed., "Lord Durham's Report". Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, 1963.
- Crémazie, Octave, "Oeuvres Complètes". Montreal, Beauchemin & Valois, 1882.
- Drummond, Lewis, "The French Element In The Canadian North-West". Winnipeg, The Northwest Review, 1887.
- "Elections De 1887: Aux Electeurs Du Canada". Quebec, Darveau, 1887.
- Heaton, Herbert, "Economic History Of Europe". New York, Harper, 1948.
- Innes, F.C., "The Land Use And Settlement Of The Quebec Clay Belts". Montreal, McGill University Thesis, 1960.
- Jolys, J.-M., "Pages De Souvenirs & D'Histoire". n.p., 1914.
- Kerr, D.G.G., ed., "A Historical Atlas Of Canada". Toronto, Nelson, n.d.
- MacFarlane, R.O., "Manitoba Politics And Parties After Confederation". In the 1940 Report of the Canadian Historical Association.
- Mannoni, O., "Prospero & Caliban: The Psychology Of Colonisation". London, Methuen, 1956.
- Morgan, C.T., "Introduction To Psychology". New York, McGraw-Hill, 1956.

Prud'homme, L.-A., "L'Elément Français Au Nord-Ouest Et Son Action Bienfaisante". Ottawa, Société Royale du Canada, 1933.

"Rapport Du Comité Permanent De L'Immigration Et De La Colonisation". Ottawa, Maclean, Roger & Cie, 1878.

Séguin, Maurice, "La Conquête Et La Vie Economique Des Canadiens". In l'Action Nationale, December, 1946.

Taché, A.-A., "Correspondance, 1870-1881". Typed copies of original correspondence between Archbishop Taché and L.R.Masson, 1870-1881. In the Gagnon Collection of the Montreal Municipal Library.

_____. "Oraison Funèbre De Mgr Bourget". Montreal, Librairie St-Joseph, 1885.

_____. "Rapport A Messieurs Les Directeurs De L'Oeuvre De La Propagation De La Foi". In the Bulletin of the Société Historique de St. Boniface, Vol. V, 1915. St. Boniface, le Manitoba, 1915.

Thibault, Charles, "Hier, Aujourd'hui, Et Demain: Origines Et Destinées Canadiennes". n.p., n.d.

Valentine, W.L., & Wickens, D.D., "Experimental Foundations Of General Psychology". New York, Rinehart, 1949.

"Vingt-Cinquième Anniversaire De L'Episcopat De S.G. Mgr Taché, Archevêque De St-Boniface". Montreal, Plinguet, 1875.

Zaslow, Morris, "The Frontier Hypothesis In Recent Historiography". In the Canadian Historical Review, 1948.